Contact

Research Symposium Annual Edition

Six papers explore the three themes and issues presented at the Fall 2010 conference

This issue offers the refereed proceedings of the 11th Annual Research Symposium, part of the 37th Annual TESL Ontario Conference held in Toronto in October 2010. The themes that provided the focus of the Research Symposium were as follows:

- *How Research Informs Language Learning and Classroom Management*

- *Sociocultural Theory and Its Relevance to Classroom Teaching*

- *The Influence of Research and Second Language Acquisition Theory on Teaching and Teaching Materials*

As in previous years, the three themes covered topical issues that affect the classrooms and practice of ESL professionals in varied ways. Teachers who encounter problems and challenges related to these themes on a daily basis in their classrooms look for background information and practical ideas that will help them meet their learners' needs and the needs of their own professional development. In organizing the Research Symposium around topical themes and in publishing the proceedings, TESL Ontario offers ESL professionals relevant information on recent research and new initiatives; this information informs both classroom practice and the development of the profession.

Following past practice, the different themes were selected in consultation with the TESL Ontario membership and in conjunction with the Ontario Regional Advisory Committee

(ORLAC), the Ministry of Culture and Immigration, and Citizenship Canada. Presenters were invited to submit a written version of their oral presentation after the Research Symposium. Readers reviewed the manuscripts; those papers included here offer readers a focus on pedagogical challenges that classroom teachers, administrators, and other ESL professionals deal with on an ongoing basis in trying to provide learners with optimal learning conditions. We are confident that readers will find the selected papers interesting and relevant to their teaching and professional development. We hope that they will feel inspired by the ideas presented, launch their own inquiries into an aspect of their teaching context, and then report their insights at future TESL Ontario conferences.

On behalf of TESL Ontario, we express our thanks to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (Canada) and the Ministry of Culture and Immigration (Ontario) for supporting the Research Symposium and the publication of this special issue of *Contact*. Their commitment to this important event for ESL professionals has been a source of encouragement and strength for our association and its members over the past decade. We look forward to continued cooperation and support from the different ministries involved in language, immigration, settlement, and training issues. We also wish to thank all the presenters who participated in the different topics of the Symposium for sharing their expertise and insights. Without them, we could not have organized the Symposium and compiled these proceedings.

Finally, we thank the many individuals who contributed in one way or another to the success of the Research Symposium. We particularly wish to thank Gary Graves, whose skills and commitment made this web edition possible, Tania Pattison, the editor of the *Contact* newsletter, and TESL Ontario administrative and office staff for supporting us in organizing and preparing the Research Symposium and for the opportunity to compile this refereed Research Symposium issue of *Contact*. Without their continuing support, our work would have been more difficult and considerably less pleasant. ❖

Hedy McGarrell

Robert Courchêne

Co-editors

Contact us

Contact welcomes articles of general interest to association members, including announcements, reports, articles, calls for papers and news items.

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Introduction

This special refereed issue of *Contact* presents contributions from the Research Symposium organized for TESL Ontario, October 2010. The symposium brought together several important experts from across Canada who shared their research findings on a number of themes and, where possible, considered potential implications and applications to classroom teaching at all levels. Contributions from all three themes of the 2010 Research Symposium are addressed in these proceedings.

The papers selected for inclusion examine a range of complex and often interrelated issues that are explored through different methodologies and in different contexts. They are grouped according to theme and, within each theme, presented in alphabetical order.

Theme 1—How Research Informs Language Learning and Classroom Management

Two papers from the *How Research Informs Language Learning and Classroom Management* theme are included in these proceedings. In his paper "Breaking Barriers to CALL in the Classroom," **Ken Beatty** draws on his experience with CALL to list some of the reasons that have prevented CALL materials from being integrated more successfully with language teaching and learning practices. He suggests that a cohesive research agenda and greater involvement in materials development and classroom research by teachers would likely lead to noticeable improvements.

The second paper on this theme is **Jérémie Séror**'s "Exploring the Contributions of Second Language Socialization Research for Language Teaching." Séror draws on data from his recent study of second language (L2) writers' and instructors' perspectives of feedback practices for writing development to illustrate the unique potential language socialization research has for the examination of the subtle and often unacknowledged dimensions of everyday interactions between students and teachers in classrooms. Insights gained from his work using a second language socialization lens suggest that the feedback teachers offer their students on written texts has subtle and possibly unexpected consequences.

Theme 2— Sociocultural Theory and Its Relevance to Classroom Teaching

Three papers are included on the theme of *Sociocultural Theory and Its Relevance to Classroom Teaching.* While two of these papers were presented at the Research Symposium, a third paper was included as it provides a valuable additional perspective that bears directly on the Symposium theme. **Julie Byrd Clark** in her paper "The Significance of Investing in Sociocultural Approaches for Language Learning and Policy in a Globalized World" explores the meaning of multilingualism and multiculturalism for young people. She focuses on the experiences of Canadian youth as they navigate what it means to be and become *officially* bi/multilingual while trying to integrate into the social and professional world. She argues that to facilitate successful integration in a pluralist society, social approaches and interdisciplinary practices to language learning need to be recognized.

The second paper, **Farahnaz Faez**' "Working with Internationally Educated Teachers: A Sociocultural Perspective," explores how sociocultural perspectives on teacher education can inform the preparation of internationally educated teachers. In her work, Faez shows the importance of sociocultural perspectives in viewing the linguistic identity of these teachers as well as their participation in teacher preparation programs. The data discussed are from a larger qualitative study of 25 linguistically di-

verse teacher candidates and four teacher educators. Faez' findings illustrate how internationally educated teachers negotiate their linguistic identity within a specific social context and underline how a supportive community of practice provides them with valuable opportunities for participation.

In her paper "Teaching and Researching with a Listening Attitude" **Barbara Graves** proposes that teaching and learning from a sociocultural perspective is an ethical practice whereby teachers and learners are transformed as they interact together. At the heart of these interactions is a listening attitude. Drawing on data from multilingual children and international graduate students, she considers what teachers and researchers can learn by listening attentively.

Theme 3—The Influence of Research and Second Language Acquisition Theory on Teaching and Teaching Materials

The papers presented on the third topic at the Research Symposium could not be included. However, we are pleased to include a recent study on the topic of *The Influence of Research and Second Language Acquisition Theory on Teaching and Teaching Materials* that serves to illustrate how theoretical developments can influence language teaching and teaching materials, i.e., the kinds of influences discussed during the Symposium. In their study, **Deborah Lee** and **Hedy McGarrell** report on an exploration of how developments in corpus linguistics can inform the development of textbooks, in particular, grammar textbooks. Their study shows that textbooks that draw on corpus materials to guide the selection of contents are more likely to reflect actual language use than textbooks that are based on author intuitions or conventions.

We have enjoyed preparing this special Research Symposium issue for readers of *Contact*. To grow, members of the TESL profession need to continue to investigate research and teaching practice; this continual striving for more sophisticated research questions and teaching techniques allows them to meet the challenges encountered in their classrooms. We hope that the articles contained in this issue will inspire teachers to experiment with a new methodology or new techniques in their classrooms. ❖

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Breaking Barriers to CALL in the Classroom
By Ken Beatty, Anaheim University

Abstract

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has been in use in the classroom in one form or another since the 1950s. During this time, a dominant model for its use in teaching and learning has failed to emerge. This is partly because of the lack of a research agenda that could identify measurable gains in learning based on empirical evidence; researchers simply have not found the perfect way or ways to learn language with computers and to integrate computers with classroom teaching and learning practices. Instead, a series of approaches, based on disparate technologies and software, have been introduced, often dependent on the interest and dedication of the individual teacher.

Opposing new technologies

The implementation of CALL in the classroom faces many challenges. Central to these challenges are teacher concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of CALL, particularly considering investments of time and funding. This paper begins with objections to new technologies and reviews barriers to CALL; then, it turns to imagining how teacher concerns might be addressed so as to make better use of computers in the classroom for language teaching and learning.

The history of objections to technology is probably as old as education itself. Lane (2010) notes that debates about the detrimental effects of new technology were expressed by the Greeks when Socrates opposed an innovation new to his time, written books, suggesting that they were poor substitutes for a scholar's memory. However, opposition to more modern technologies in the language classroom often have merit and need to be systematically addressed to ensure that innovations, particularly those aimed at providing CALL, appropriately serve teacher and

learner needs and are balanced against the necessary investments of time and money. These concerns include both the technologies themselves and the ways they are implemented. [1]

A key concern with the implementation of CALL in the classroom has been the absence of specific approaches or methods that recognize the role of the computer alongside that of a teacher. Instead, computers tend to be characterized as one or more of a variety of tools: encyclopaedias of information, sound and video players, testing machines, fancy typewriters, and other tools depending on the functions for which computers are used by the teacher and learner.

Computers were first used in the 1940s in audio-lingual methods, providing audio input for learners to repetitively practice set vocabulary items and sentences. What made a computer different from a tape player or a record player was its ability to structure what needed to be taught around a learner's particular strengths and weaknesses. Essentially, those parts of a learning program that were already understood could be easily skipped over. At the same time, the computer could assess the learner's performance—usually through simple mastery tests—to decide when to do so.

This binding of individualized assessment to materials selection was a feature of one of the earliest computer systems, *Programmed Logic/Learning for Automated Teaching Operations* (PLATO), which was developed in 1959 by the University of Illinois working with a commercial partner, Control Data Corporation (Merrill, Hammons, Vincent, Reynolds, Christensen & Tolman, 1996). PLATO was intended as a teaching machine, not just for language learning but for various disciplines, and it included one of the first spelling checkers. For teaching Russian, it provided tailored feedback on learner errors: "The central concept of PLATO is individualization of learning. Each student proceeds through the material in privacy at his own pace" (Curtin, Clayton, Finch, Moor and Woodruff 1972, p. 360, as cited in Kenning & Kenning, 1990). This individualization aspect was essentially a move toward learner centeredness.

However, PLATO, like countless other computer systems and programs, has disappeared. These systems and program have often been replaced by so-called innovations that delivered instruction differently, but not necessarily in better ways. Part of the reason for this replacement has been that new technologies sometimes sacrifice pedagogy because of technical shortcomings. For example, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and mobile telephones were both embraced as new ways of delivering content, but their small screens restricted what could be offered as well as the learner's opportunities to interact with the in-

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1. For a fuller explanation of issues discussed in this paper, see Beatty (2010a) and Davies, Walker, Rendall , & Hewer (2011).

formation. These devices' small keys and/or stylus are more awkward to use than a full-size keyboard.

As second language (L2) teaching practices have moved away from behaviourist principles to more communicative approaches, CALL programs have not always kept up. Warschauer (1996) describes CALL as going through a change of focus from behaviouristic CALL, to communicative CALL, and finally to integrative CALL. However, these foci operate in ways that are parallel to some current L2 teaching approaches while not achieving others. For example, PLATO is an example of a program based largely on behaviouristic principles. A more communicative language learning software program would be expected to have certain features. In particular, it should do the following:

- Focus more on using forms rather than on the forms themselves.

- Teach grammar implicitly rather than explicitly.

- Allow and encourage students to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate pre-fabricated language.

- Not judge and evaluate everything the students do incorrectly nor reward them with congratulatory messages, lights, or bells.

- Avoid telling students they are wrong and, instead, be flexible to a variety of student responses.

- Use the target language exclusively and create an environment in which using the target language feels natural, both on and off the screen.

- Not try to do anything that a book can do just as well (Underwood, 1984, p. 52, as cited in Warschauer 1996).

At least two of these features—encouraging students to *generate original utterances* and being *flexible to a variety of responses*—are difficult for computer programs to achieve in a fashion that allows the learners' input to be assessed in meaningful ways. For example, some software programs such as Questionmark Perception can allow for flexible responses in which

> ...the participant types in a single word or a few words to indicate their [sic] answer. You define right or wrong words or phrases in advance by entering a list of acceptable answers. The grading logic can also allow scoring based on the presence or absence of keywords or key phrases and check for misspellings **(http://www. questionmark.com/us/ perception/authoring _windows_qm_ qtypes.aspx)**.

However, even such flexible programs cannot easily distinguish among answers that have incorrect syntax or extraneous words that change the meaning of the sentence. For example, the following two sentences have the same words but different meanings that would be difficult for a computer to explain: *Not a single man was lost. A single man was not lost.* They require teacher intervention to assess the answers in context,

and this means that automatic feedback features of the computer are not appropriate.

Warschauer's third stage mentioned above, integrative CALL, suggests that the computer is used as a tool for the learner to explore language: "In this role, the programs do not necessarily provide any language material at all, but rather empower the learner to use or understand language. Examples of *computer as tool* include word processors, spelling and grammar checkers, desk-top publishing programs, and concordancers." (1996, n.p.)

Warschauer notes that new approaches have not replaced older ones, and that CALL programs with behaviourist models continue to be widespread. Among the most popular of commercial CALL programs is Rosetta Stone (**www.rosettastone.ca/**). Its 31 versions of different languages and varieties (e.g. British English and American English) largely feature audio-lingual drills and gap-filling tasks that are not in keeping with current communicative approaches.

Beyond these problems, there are several reasons why CALL has not been more widely adopted. These reasons include teacher reluctance to engage in new and changing technologies because of other demands on their time or concerns that the technologies will not support their particular teaching and learning goals. Another reason is

> "...early literature on CALL raised teacher concerns that computers would someday replace them; it is unlikely that this will ever be the case."

a lack of support in terms of time and funds to learn new technologies and personnel to maintain and upgrade them. A third reason is evolving delivery platforms: computers and other classroom technologies continue to change, which makes some teachers question the investment of time and resources. These points are expanded below.

Teachers' reluctance to adopt new approaches

Teachers are often, and understandably, reluctant to adopt new approaches to teaching and learning. As Ahmad, Corbett, Rogers, and Sussex (1985) noted, the early literature on CALL raised teacher concerns that computers would someday replace them; it is unlikely that this will ever be the case because of the complexity of what a teacher does in the classroom, in terms of problem solving and expressing empathy, as well as in making decisions based on diverse personal criteria and those of the context and the learners. In this regard, Pennycook (1989) says, "...teachers make a whole series of decisions about teaching based on their own educational experiences, their personalities, their particular institutional, social, cultural, and political circumstances, their understanding of their particular students' collective and individual needs, and so on" (p. 606).

Dunkin and Biddle (1974) similarly note that "teaching is a complex activity that reflects many factors" (p. 31) and outline how four types of variables impact on learning:

Figure 1. Presage variables (adapted from Beatty 2010a, p. 148)

Presage variables	Presage variables in a CALL context
Teacher formative experiences	Materials developers' collective experiences
Teacher training experiences	Ideas of models of instruction
Teacher properties	Technical affordances of the program

1. Presage variables: teacher formative experiences, teacher training experiences, and teacher properties.

2. Context variables: learner properties, and school, community and classroom contexts.

3. Process variables: teacher classroom behaviour and student classroom behaviour.

4. Product variables: immediate learner growth and long-term learner effects.

Looking at Dunkin and Biddle's presage variables in particular, there are parallels to CALL programs when they act as language teachers (Figure 1).

The breadth of these variables acts against standardization of CALL materials into common approaches. For example, many software programs might be likely to embrace aspects of the grammar translation method, the audio-lingual method, the communicative approach and even, for some interactive children's programs, total physical response.

Other problems include the fact that some teachers may feel that money spent on technology would be better devoted to traditional professional training of both new and experienced teachers. In other cases, teachers might be reluctant to embrace new technology because of the particularly rapid evolution of technology that sometimes leaves a large investment of a teacher's time wasted. Teachers who aspire to make use of leading-edge technology often find themselves saddled with technology that has been sarcastically labelled *bleeding edge*: products brought to market with insufficient research and testing that fail to live up to expectations.

Such products are sometimes rushed to market with commercial intentions to fund more workable later versions. For example, the first version of the Apple iPad was brought to market without a video camera. The second version of the iPad featured two video cameras, but these are of such low resolution, that they feature limited utility beyond video chatting. The next iteration of the iPad can be expected to include one or more cameras with enhanced resolution as well as other modifications. Eventually, software purchased for the first iPad may not function on later iPad iterations.

On a personal level, having worked with computers for 25 years in academic contexts and having administered a computer lab for ten of those, I have shared the frustrations of many teachers with changes in software programs. Popular programs are often revised in upgrades that may not work with content created for previous versions or are incompatible with older computer operating systems.

But even for generally dependable software or hardware, it is exasperating when it fails to operate as planned, often leaving a teacher without an alternative way to present the same information. For these and other reasons, the cognitive overhead of learning new (and frequently undependable) hardware and software can be extremely frustrating, particularly for teachers who are not computer literate; such teachers tend to be from a generation of educators that did not encounter computers during their own university studies.

In some cases, teachers fail to see the relevancy of new computer skills for L2 students. This is particularly the case if L2 learners spend time developing new technology skills that might be spent focusing on core reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. This is often the case in the second language classroom, where teachers may feel that the task of learning basic skills, such as keyboarding and on-screen navigation, are an additional and unnecessary challenge for L2 learners, particularly younger ones.

A lack of support

There is sometimes a lack of support for technology, both in training and continued funding. Training is often left to teachers to organize themselves in their spare time, without additional compensation. There is a common expectation in many schools that at least one teacher will be able to 'figure out' the software and hardware and provide peer-training opportunities.

When many new software and hardware programs are introduced in schools, funding is often provided for hardware without commitment to maintenance or software upgrades. Many schools are now including forward budgeting to cover maintenance and upgrades, but this sometimes brings its own problems as schools are locked into purchasing contractually serviced computers. As a result, they are blocked from purchasing newer, less expensive, yet more advanced machines.

Evolving and incompatible platforms for CALL

Few technologies have evolved so rapidly over the past quarter century as have computers. Desktop machines from a generation ago do not have the same computing power or storage as are found in current ones. At the same time, various new platforms for computing and the delivery of CALL have been used, from desktop and laptop computers to personal digital assistants, mobile telephones, Apple iPods and iPads and web-based cloud applications. Storage has similarly evolved in incompatible ways, moving from tape, to 5.5 inch floppy disks, to smaller rigid 3.25 disks, to CD-ROMs, to DVDs, USBs and online storage making use of what is called *cloud computing*. Cloud computing is more than file storage; programs can be stored on the cloud as well—replacing, for

Figure 2. Locus of control between the program and the user (Chandler, 1984, p. 8)

Tutorial	Games	Simulation games	Experimental simulations	Content-free tools	Programming languages
Programmed instruction: drill and practice	Computer as player or referee	Computer as game-world, e.g. Empire-style games and the adventure genre	Mathematically-based models of processes such as scientific experiments	Word processors, sound and graphics manipulators, databases, scientific instruments, control technology	Logo BASIC Smalltalk
Hospital model: User as patient	**Funfair model:** User as emulator	**Drama model:** User as role-player	**Laboratory model:** User as tester	**Resource centre model:** User as artist or researcher	**Workshop model:** User as inventor

(Continued from page 11)

example, Microsoft's Office software with similar programs offered for free by Google Docs. The only disadvantage is that one needs to be constantly connected to the internet to take advantage of cloud software services.

The result of these and other changes has been that both hardware, and the software that runs on them, become quickly outdated. The latest hardware to obtain quick and widespread popularity is the Apple iPad. It shows great promise for CALL opportunities, as it is compact and tactile; one can manipulate images on-screen with one's fingers. In addition, the cost of software is more affordable through an online application store model relying on largely independently developed programs (called *apps*; short for *applications*) priced to sell at low prices in attempts to attract high numbers of users.

A spectrum of choices

Early attempts at using the computer as a pedagogical tool were aimed at making it function as a surrogate teacher, or as a replacement for language labs and language master cards, as commonly used in the audiolingual method. The common approach, considering what a computer might do and finding ways to take advantage of it, has been a pervasive approach to computer-based language materials development. The most basic features of early computer systems were the computer's ability to give tailored feedback and use students' performance to direct them to higher-level tasks. Computers in the classroom eventually made use of multimedia to give students a richer experience than was available from a textbook.

However, CALL in the classroom has come to be recognized for a spectrum of possibilities. Chandler (1984) identifies six of

these, dividing CALL opportunities along a locus of control from the computer to the learner. As outlined in Figure 2, at the computer end of control are tutorials in which the learner has few or no opportunities for spontaneous interaction. At the distal end of the locus are programming languages that allow students to create their own teaching and learning programs. Even though this classification is more than a quarter century old, it is general enough to still cover the types of CALL that continue to be produced today. For example, the already mentioned Rosetta Stone fits into the *Tutorial* model while the popular MIT programming language for young learners, Scratch (see **http://scratch.mit.edu/**), fits into the *Programming Languages* category. What Warschauer (1996) labels as integrative CALL can be seen in Chandler's *Content-free tools.*

In my experience, students today are likely to see a computer as a tool, somewhat like a Swiss Army knife, that offers many functions (as outlined in Figure 2) to be called upon as needed. It is necessary for teachers and learners to undertake needs analyses to ensure that appropriate choices are made from the array at their disposal. In terms of a model of instruction, a range of approaches, from the grammar translation method, to audio-lingual method, to the communicative approach, are likely to be manifested in different degrees but are unlikely to serve as an implicit organizing strategy within a CALL program.

> "In my experience, students today are likely to see a computer as a tool, somewhat like a Swiss Army knife…"

Tailoring CALL

One of the major drawbacks of commercial CALL materials is that they are often excessively general, in order to take advantage of international marketing opportunities. The result is that they seldom address local learning needs. An L2 learner in a large coastal city in one country may have need of specialized language that an L2 learner living in a mountain village in another country may not share. Similarly, general materials aimed at most students may overlook those who are more able or less able.

Many language textbooks reflect the culture of the author and publisher and are unlikely to be locally contextualized. For example, textbooks published in the USA often feature zip codes that are not used elsewhere. It is necessary for teachers and learners to find opportunities to tailor CALL materials to address locally relevant and timely issues. Traditionally, the teacher has developed new materials to address issues not covered in a textbook, but this can be a more difficult task in a CALL environment. Fortunately, many students are increasingly computer literate and, with guidance, may be able to help provide both technical expertise and pedagogical assistance; knowing what a computer is capable of might suggest new ways in which it can be exploited. For example the above-mentioned authoring program Scratch can be used by students to create learning

games that could be played by other students. Creating the game can be a language learning opportunity in itself.

Building awareness

Building an awareness of what is already available from commercial publishers as peripheral teaching and learning materials is important if one is to avoid reinventing the wheel. Textbooks should be considered rich resources in the classroom if teachers take advantage of all that is available. Commercial textbooks increasingly have associated audio files (for an example of a reader with an audio CD, see Beatty, 2007) and dedicated websites with additional support materials such as printable worksheets, but language learning textbooks may also feature test banks that allow teachers to construct multiple tests on the same subject and deliver them either in print or online (see Beatty, 2004).

Other resources allow teachers to use interactive whiteboard materials (see Beatty, 2010b) to teach, or manage classes through learning management systems (see My Academic Connections Lab: **pearsonlongman.com/ae/myacademicconnectionslab**) that feature opportunities for students to retrieve and complete assignments, review class content, and chat online with their teacher and each other. Pennycook (1989) notes:

> As any teacher who has taught through any of the alleged upheavals over Method can testify, there is a remarkable disparity between, on the one hand, the dictates of 'experts' and teaching textbooks, and on

the other, actual classroom practice. This suggests a close relationship between academic thought and textbook publication, but little between these and the knowledge produced by teachers in their daily practice (p. 606).

Because of this disconnect, some teachers mistrust the intentions of some publishers, thinking—sometimes rightly—that they are more concerned with selling materials than with supporting the teaching and learning process. But textbooks are increasingly likely to form a large part of teachers' professional development as they present a clear model for organization of both content and teaching methodology. For example, an L2 series may offer a student book with structured content and exercises, a teacher's guide to exploit them, and other resources such as online tests. Together, these resources offer every step of a lesson from warm-up activities to final assessments. As Akbari (2008) says, "The concept of method has not been replaced by the concept of postmethod but rather by an era of textbook-defined practice. What the majority of teachers teach and how they teach…are now determined by textbooks" (p. 647).

Giving feedback

In attempting to improve CALL, it is necessary for teachers to work with software publishers in feedback loops to create improved materials, making them aware of holes in the curriculum and any shortcomings in materials. Similarly, teachers should be actively involved in reading and writing published reviews of CALL software. As part of

this process, teachers and learners can also be involved in research projects, particularly action research, in looking at how CALL materials are best implemented in the classroom. Although such approaches may not have immediate returns, they help to improve the discipline of CALL over time.

Using Web 2.0

The term *Web 2.0* has been used since 1999 (see DiNucci, 1999) to describe a series of web-based services that are more interactive than traditional websites that simply supply information and links to other information. Web 2.0 applications include a range of services such as podcasting (creating audio content for a kind of virtual radio station), blogging (writing opinion pieces), vlogging (producing video comments) social bookmarking (ranking approval of media content), social networking (keeping in touch with others and sharing information) and mashups (combining media in new ways, such as combining statistics and maps or even statistics and music). The key feature of Web 2.0 is its accessibility to learners. The services are often free and can be used in many languages to break down barriers between what are normally called 'producers' and 'consumers,' but what might as easily be called 'teachers' and 'learners.' There are limits, however, as presentation can overwhelm content, and students can make and fossilize the same vocabulary

> "The key feature of Web 2.0 is its accessibility to learners."

and grammatical errors, whether writing on paper or online.

Conclusion

Even if one should wish to do so, it is unlikely and even unjustifiable that one could turn back the clock and resume teaching and learning languages without the benefit of computers. Most would agree that it would impoverish students to be denied the rich media available through CALL today. However, for language teaching and learning to be successful, the tools employed in CALL need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they adhere to pedagogical principles and are both efficient and effective.

Beyond this necessity of reviewing CALL materials, it is important that teachers engage in influencing the pedagogical content and approaches in CALL programs. Such engagement can include a spectrum of actions, from increasing their and others' awareness of what constitutes CALL and how it can help students, to critiquing CALL programs to give feedback to software publishers, to getting involved in the production of CALL materials, enlisting the help of students, peer teachers, and experts in areas of programming and design. Without teacher involvement, CALL programs are unlikely to move forward in pace with theoretical innovations. ❖

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Exploring the Contributions of Second Language Socialization Research for Language Teaching

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the theoretical framework of language socialization and its contributions to second language (L2) research. After briefly introducing language socialization research, this article draws on a recent study of L2 writers and instructors' perspectives of feedback practices for writing development to illustrate the unique potential language socialization research has for the examination of the subtle and often unacknowledged dimensions of everyday interactions between students and teachers in classrooms.

Introduction

Discussions of theory and research in education are frequently associated with a wide range of analytical frameworks and approaches, each with its own focus, which can be used to examine the underpinnings of the work accomplished by teachers and the questions they see emerging from these practices. As a second language teacher/researcher, I strongly believe in this close relationship between research and practice. Indeed, a substantial amount of my research has been motivated primarily by the desire to better understand the beliefs, motivations, and processes underlying my teaching as well as its impact for both my students and myself.

In this article, I would like to share my experiences working with one particular analytical lens I have found useful in achieving this goal: the theoretical framework of lan-

guage socialization (Duff, 2007; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Zuengler & Cole, 2005). In the following I provide a brief overview of this particular framework's contribution to the study of L2 development and its implications for the understanding of the basic, daily interactions that are at the centre of the language classroom. Examples of the insights gained from my own explorations of L2 writing feedback interactions are then used to further illustrate the potential language socialization research has to unearth the subtle, often unacknowledged, dimensions of the complex act that is L2 learning and teaching. In particular, I explore the powerful role feedback interactions can play in shaping L2 learners' sense of not only the value of their texts and language, but also their understanding of the specific actions and strategies associated with the process of becoming successful writers.

Language socialization: A brief overview

Broadly defined, language socialization research focuses on the examination of the processes through which newcomers to discourse communities negotiate membership

"...language socialization research focuses on the examination of the processes through which newcomers to discourse communities negotiate membership and competency..."

and competency through extended participation in language-mediated activities (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Rooted in linguistic anthropology, language socialization research has specifically focused on how all language-mediated activities (everything from child–mother interactions, to dinner talk conversations, to classroom interactions) represent a form of initiation into the norms and conventions associated with language use in specific cultures or communities, while simultaneously indexing and helping to reinforce specific sets of values and ideologies rooted in the social contexts in which these activities and practices are taking place (Duff, 2007).

This focus on language-mediated activities as vehicles for the (re) production, transformation, and change of society (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002) aligns itself with a larger body of research that has focused on the discursive nature of sociocultural factors affecting how individuals learn, use, and negotiate languages (Watson-Gegeo, 2004) and display through language competence alignment and membership in various communities (Morita, 2004). With this perspective, language development thus becomes not only a tool for the communication of ideas, or a matter of language input, but rather a crucial means through which, from one interaction to

another, participants work together to make sense of, organize, negotiate, participate in, and control social life (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007).

Classic language socialization studies have traditionally focused on caregiver–child exchanges and the impact of recurrent patterns of interaction on the development of young children's specific subjectivities, stances, and positions as novice members of their communities and cultures (see, for example, Clancy, 1999; Quay, 2008; Schieffelin, 1990). Clancy's (1999) study, for instance, offered a fascinating look at how Japanese mothers' conversations with their young children helped model the use of specific affect words, socializing them into particular means of expressing and experiencing feeling and emotions while also explicitly socializing them to avoid alternate expressions. Similarly, language socialization research has also examined the impact of interactions and exchanges in contexts other than the family unit, including, for example, the socialization processes found in community-based organizations such as scout troops (Guardado, 2009) and in professional work contexts (Duff, Wong, & Early, 2000). In the field of educational research, language socialization research has also been employed in the investigation of the interactional organization of classroom interactions and the role these play in guiding students into specific cultural values and patterns of behaviour (see, for example, Cook, 1999; He, 2000; Talmy, 2008).

"A critical insight emerging from this work has been a greater awareness of the conflictual and often nonlinear nature of L2 development."

Second language socialization

Over time, language socialization's potential for the study of the processes through which individuals are initiated into communities, not only as children but also as adults as part of life-long processes, has sparked interest in the exploration of the socialization processes at work in the cases of L2 development (Duff, 2010). This work has examined L2 and literacy development as the product of daily learning interactions (both formal and informal) and the social, cultural, and linguistic knowledge these interactions convey to L2 learners (Schecter & Bayley, 2004). A critical insight emerging from this work has been a greater awareness of the conflictual and often nonlinear nature of L2 development. Unlike the case of children interacting with their caretakers in their mother tongue, L2 socialization research highlights how L2 learners may at times be resistant to the socialization processes they experience and/or face a lack of acceptance and recognition from the target community meant to welcome them (Talmy, 2008). Language socialization has thus helped better understand the constant struggle and negotiation involved in L2 development (Wortham, 2005) as well as the intimate interplay between microlevel literacy events and macrolevel contextual forces in L2 learning contexts (Séror, 2009).

A classic example of L2 socialization research includes Morita's (2004) investiga-

tion of the variable forms of participation, including the role of silence and its multiple meanings, sources and consequences, available to six Japanese female international students attending an all-English University. In each case, the women are shown through their interactions with peers and their instructors to draw on and enact multiple identities as they are socialized into academic communities and in turn negotiate and contest their participation and legitimacy as part of those communities. Duff (1995, 2001, 2002) similarly, has drawn on language socialization theory to explore second language classroom interactions, including the sequencing and distribution of talking turns, and the discursive positioning of teachers and students in public schools. Duff's (2002) study documented, for instance, how despite a teacher's sincere attempts to engage with "quiet" ESL students by asking them to talk about their cultural backgrounds, ESL students eager to fit in and avoid being treated as newcomers often remained quiet during this line of questioning, opting to resist being positioned as "expert foreigners" on non-Canadian topics.

This type of L2 socialization research, amongst others, has helped highlight how as L2 learners enter a new discourse community they are not only initiated to specific linguistic practices, but are also being introduced to specific social constructions and identities which students will not always assume without

problems. What results is a conceptualization of language learning that acknowledges explicitly that L2 development is rarely straightforward or easily predictable (Duff, 2003) and that it may not even, in some cases, match the explicitly stated goals of the educational institutions where the learning/socialization is meant to take place (Atkinson, 2003; Séror, 2009).

Illustrating the language socialization approach: Examples from an investigation of L2 writing feedback

To further illustrate the implications of L2 socialization research for the study of teaching practices, I now draw on examples of my own work with L2 learners and their experiences of learning to write in university content courses. These examples stem from a longitudinal study of feedback interactions between instructors, L2 writers, and their peers to investigate the impact of feedback interactions in socializing these students into specific conventions, skills, and representations of writing relevant to their academic trajectories (Séror, 2008). [1]

In briefly situating this study, I would first like to note that this work stems directly from my own experiences teaching L2 writers in academic settings. As one of the many university instructors working with increasing

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1. This paper reports on findings which are a subset of a large body of data collected for this study. See Séror (2008) for a full report and discussion of the findings of this study as well as Séror (2009) for a related discussion of the link between feedback practices and institutional forces.

numbers of students for whom the dominant language of instruction in higher education is not their mother tongue, I have witnessed first-hand the challenge that formal academic written discourse represents for L2 students. Indeed, whereas academic writing is a difficult skill to develop for any student (Lillis, 2001), even when working within one's mother tongue, research clearly shows that it is particularly challenging for students having to acquire this skill in an L2 (Canagarajah, 2002; Casanave, 2002; Hinkel, 2002; Paltridge, 2004).

As part of my work helping L2 learners learn to write, I have regularly invested a great deal of time providing feedback to my students on their written texts. Over time, I became curious to explore from a language socialization perspective the impact this work was having on my students, even when these interactions were frequently short or limited to the margins of a page. Feedback practices were, after all, another form of language-mediated activity—one, which in the context of content courses in particular, represented a rare opportunity for instructors and students to enter in one-on-one dialogues with the potential to allow teachers to fulfil what Reid (1994) has referred to as their role of "liaison between students and discourse communities" (p. 279).

> "I became curious to explore from a language socialization perspective the impact this work was having on my students, even when these interactions were frequently short or limited to the margins of a page."

Informed in its objectives and design by the language socialization framework, this study drew on qualitative inquiry methodology (Cummins, Davison, & Duff, 2007) to track students' and their instructors' evolving perspectives of the role and impact of feedback provided on written assignments in content courses over the course of two semesters (eight months). Following the distribution of a recruitment letter, and an information session to discuss the objectives and implications of the study, five focal students (three females and two males) generously gave their informed consent to participate in this study.

These five students were all members of the same international exchange program and in their second year of study, taking self-selected content courses at a large western Canadian university, where their exchange program was hosted. During the eight months of the study, I conducted bi-weekly semi-formal interviews with the students that allowed me to track these students' progress and experiences with their writing assignments in their various classes. To help triangulate and further enrich my understanding of the ideas discussed by students in these regular interviews, I also kept regular field notes and participated in informal conversations with the focal students, conducted

class observations of a select number of their courses, and archived all relevant class documents provided by the students including course and assignment outlines as well as copies of students' assignments and the various types of feedback they received on their writing. The objective throughout was to capture a rich, detailed description of these students' experiences learning to write in content courses, including a record of their reactions and thoughts on the impact feedback was having on their development as university L2 writers. These perspectives were further enriched by semi-formal interviews with five of the instructors who worked with these students during the study and who also kindly officially consented to share their thoughts on their own classroom practices and the role of feedback in their classrooms.[2] Data analysis of the findings followed a recursive cycle of reviewing and triangulating the various data sources to generate detailed descriptions of events and themes categorized as relevant patterns (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) and further verified for credibility through member checks with the focal participants as well as debriefing by peers in the field (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Socialization in the margins: A brief overview of the findings

To summarize briefly, one of the main themes that emerged from this study was an interesting contrast between students' and instructors' conceptualization of ideal feedback practices versus those feedback practices described and observed to be happening in reality. In essence, as all the focal students reflected and talked about the feedback they received on their writing and how this feedback compared to what they would have liked to or expected to receive, a general description of the shape they felt ideal feedback should take emerged.

The students first noted that the best feedback would be provided at relevant and timely moments in the writing process, preferably as part of a multi-draft process so that feedback received might actually be used to improve a text before it was submitted for a final mark. The best feedback would also be readable and easy to understand, with specific advice about what to do to improve their writing (in contrast to simply stating the existence of a problem) and would also clearly indicate how the mark attributed to the writing had been decided (these comments were linked to strong preference for electronic feedback, which was deemed to be easier to read and decipher, and the use of feedback with specific criteria-based evaluation grids). Moreover, even if students understood that this was not always practical in light of their instructors' heavy schedules, focal students' desire to better understand their instructors' comments and advice to them also meant that

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2. In order to protect the anonymity of these participants, pseudonyms are used throughout this paper for the names of the participants. Additionally, the titles of the specific classes taken by the participants have also been changed to generic ones to further protect the identity of the students and instructors involved.

students felt that the best feedback occurred in face-to-face interactions that allowed for dialogue and questions.

Finally, but most importantly, although these students noted the usefulness of grammar corrections, they also made it clear that in the context of content courses in particular, they also desired feedback that would respond to the content of their texts. They wanted feedback on the ideas and arguments they had spent a great deal of time putting together as they composed the assignments they were submitting to their instructors. Illustrating this desire shared by all focal students, when I asked Kaito, for instance, what kind of feedback he would prefer in a perfect world, he noted:

> Uh, just I hope ... I want to get very detailed feedback. Like in terms of not only grammar but also content. Correcting lots of grammar, grammatical mistakes is really helpful for me, but also content also of course. Yeah, because the main purpose is expressing my own ideas so, like, both of them. If they [the teachers] can, I want to get both.

Readers will likely not be surprised to learn that despite this clear sense of the feedback students felt would best help them learn to write, the reality experienced by the focal students was one where feedback was in fact often short, handwritten, colloquial, and far from easy for students to interpret. Moreover, the face-to-face conferences students desired for their ability to clarify with their instructors the meaning of the feedback they received were

extremely rare and short in duration. Students frequently cited their instructors' busy schedules or both the explicit and implicit statements made in class regarding how little time they had (e.g. "She told us not to e-mail her" or "She cancelled her office hours today"). In the majority of cases, students in this study chose not to follow up or risk bothering their instructors to inquire about specific feedback comments, even when it was clear in the interviews that they could not understand them.

Additionally, whereas a focus on language issues and sentence-level errors was frequent in the feedback that students received, this type of feedback was much less frequently accompanied by specific advice on how to fix these errors. Perhaps worst of all for students were the many cases where they felt that the instructor had essentially failed to respond adequately to their ideas. As noted by Naoko and Kaori for instance:

> Actually I expected he would talk more about the ideas...but he just mentioned about ideas for three sentences. He mostly just talked about grammar... (Naoko).

> They just look at grammar mistakes, not content (Kaori).

Kaito further noted, that with the exception of one instructor, Mr X., where he got longer comments and face-to-face feedback on content and grammar, "I think the other classes, I didn't get anything, just a few sentences."

To illustrate the type of feedback described above by students in this study, Figure 1 offers a brief sample of the feedback received by Naoko on one of her papers.

Figure 1. Sample of feedback received

strategies are able to be applied to the social/affective strategies of O'Malley and Chamot (1990).

These data show that women are more likely to communicate with or cooperate with other people to learn a new language and use mental control to manipulate a learning activity to be successful and reduce one's anxiety of using a non-native language.

run-on → split into several sentences

Discussion

As I mentioned in finding 2, women use particularly more social/affective strategies than men do. Why does this happen? I do not think this is a random or coincident thing, ~~but this fact~~ *fact* that women use more strategies of social/affective than

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(Continued from page 23)

On this paper, the feedback Naoko received predominantly attended to grammatical corrections, including punctuation changes and errors identified through circled or underlined sections, with at times alternate wording and structures provided by the instructor. In contrast, with the exception of a brief and vague end comment, very little feedback was provided to respond to the ideas being expressed in this text.

To summarize, whereas students believed in the importance of feedback for writing development, it became clear that based on their experiences with this form of interaction with their content instructors, good feedback was seen much more often as the exception to the rule. Naoko, the recipient of the feedback cited above, captured this feeling well, stating that good feedback was simply not something she had been socialized to expect:

> Usually I got feedback from my teacher, but it was short. And it was not useful for me. The class was useful, but the feedback was not so useful. I did not expect so much feedback because it was too short. I expected feedback, but I did not

(Continued from page 24)

expect good feedback. That's the pattern I have always experienced.

Exploring findings of this study from a language socialization perspective

In trying to decipher the meaning of these findings, on one hand, one may quickly note that these findings simply add weight to a well-established pattern of research that has long reported on L2 writers' unhappiness with feedback from their instructors (Casanave, 2003; Dong, 1998; Goldstein, 2005). However, from the perspective of a language socialization framework, despite the fact that the students felt that for the large part feedback practices experienced during their stay abroad were not effective, an important question remains. Indeed, if one accepts the argument that *all* language-mediated activities help index specific domains of "knowledge, beliefs, affect, roles, identities, and social representations" (Duff, 1995, p. 508), then one might wonder what these interactions were actually communicating to students about learning to write in their second language. A closer look at the data collected for this study provided an answer to this question, revealing that even if the feedback was not actually helping students explicitly, it was nevertheless carrying subtle but powerful messages that students picked up. In their interviews when discussing their conceptualization of what writing was and how it could be approached and developed, the students then echoed these messages.

To illustrate this point, I discuss in detail below the example of the socialization effect observed in the study as emerging from feedback similar to the one described above focusing predominantly on surface-level errors at the expense of feedback on ideas.

Focusing predominantly on surface-level issues: Sending the wrong message

On reflecting on the socialization impact of feedback practices that favoured attending to surface-level errors while leaving largely unaddressed the content of students' texts, one can, of course, note that surface-level editing can indeed make a text more presentable. In addition, a great deal of research suggests that many students both appreciate and expect this type of feedback (Ferris, 2003). However, many writing experts are increasingly aware that what counts as a successful piece of writing is much more complex than producing grammatically correct sentences and spelling (Ravelli & Ellis, 2004). Missing in this type of feedback are references to the complex patterns of moves and configurations of grammatical features beyond the sentence level that differentiate academic writing from other English genres such as spoken English and regular narrative texts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Hyland, 2000; Swales & Feak, 2004).

More importantly, as will be illustrated below, there was evidence in the experiences of these focal students, that the frequent use of feedback focused on surface-level editing could have the unintended effect of socializing students to value above all else the necessity of eliminating these types of errors in their texts. This pattern echoes the warning offered

(Continued from page 25)

by Harwood, Austin, and Macaulay (2009) that certain types of proofreading can sometimes convey "the wrong message to writers, giving them the impression that surface-level problems are where problems lie, when in fact they may also have problems with their subject knowledge, the organization in their argumentation" (p. 168) . Indeed, at different times in the interviews, students revealed that were internalizing the message that being a good writer meant being able to produce an error-free text and that unless you could produce such a text, your ideas could well be dismissed or ignored. This is exactly what happened with Naoko (the student who received the feedback cited above), as she described in a series of interviews during the second semester of the study an interesting dilemma she faced while putting together her major final paper for her communications class.

Naoko's case

Early in the second semester, during one of our biweekly interviews, Naoko informed me that she had decided to focus specifically on writing the best paper possible for the final assignment of her communications class. In making this statement, Naoko explained that she was motivated by her growing awareness that this paper would become the last concrete piece of evidence of her work and progress during her two-year study abroad experience. Indeed, Naoko referred only half-jokingly to this assignment as her "thesis" and was clearly determined to do as well as she could on this assignment.

Putting her words into action as the semester progressed, Naoko worked hard in the planning and composition of this paper.

She started working early on its initial drafts and specifically arranged to make time to visit her professor (two brief visits) as well as writing tutors at the local writing centres to ask for advice and feedback prior to handing in her final version. Of interest for this paper, however, was the revelation Naoko made a few days before handing in her paper. She reported that she had to decide whether she was going to withhold deliberately from her final paper information and resources related to her topic she had uncovered at the last minute. She noted that she was aware that the information she had just found was more recent and was important for the argument she was making in her paper. Nevertheless, she also explained that for her to include this information at this point, after having had her drafts proofread by the writing tutors, would entail the risk of "messing up" the organization and grammatical correctness of the paper she had put together until now. Naoko noted that this was not an easy decision for her. She knew that omitting the new resources would involve taking a risk since they represented part of the literature which was more recent and which made a significant difference to the thesis that she had chosen to defend.

On the other hand, Naoko was convinced that integrating the new information at such a late time, after having already spent a great deal of time ensuring everything was correct, entailed the risk of adding incorrect language to her paper that would negatively affect its quality in her instructor's eyes.

After much hesitation, Naoko ultimately decided to withhold from her final paper the additional information sources she had discovered. In doing so, she did express her worries that in making this decision she was taking a risk since she felt that her professor

might notice the missing literature. It is difficult to say whether her instructor could have been expected to notice the missing references and withheld arguments. Regardless, Naoko was operating on the assumption that the professor, as an expert on the topic, could well raise the point that she had missed some of the latest developments relevant to the topic of her paper. However, it was also clear that for her, in her desire to obtain the best grade possible, despite the fact that she was writing for a content course, in this case, the structure and grammatical qualities of her text would trump content.

Reflecting on the implications of Naoko's decision

In reflecting on Naoko's case from a language socialization perspective, Naoko's decision demonstrates how she had learned to value texts which avoided any grammar mistakes, and which were clear and easy to read as a crucial element of academic writing in her classes. In other words, Naoko's socialization into the ways and conventions of academic discourse had convinced her that it was less risky to have a well-organized and structured paper than it was to have a paper with accurate ideas but with the potential for more language problems. She had learned this lesson in part from the fact that language and grammar had been such a central focus of the feedback she had previously received.

In the end, Naoko's strategy revealed itself to be effective. On receiving her paper, Naoko proudly announced that she had done well, and she noted with both relief and some surprise that the feedback from the professor had not explicitly commented on the informa-

tion she had deliberately withheld and removed from her paper. Naoko received a good mark on her paper: A-. This mark was accompanied with 86 feedback items, including seven substantive comments, 54 comments focused on editing her writing, 20 check marks and a rather positive end comment which celebrated how well written and organized the paper was. The end comment read:

> *Naoko,*
>
> *You have written a very well organized paper. You relate the difference in learning strategies nicely to differences in social structure, and use a theoretical framework well.*
>
> *Try giving more background on data sources.*
>
> *Good work!*

In our interview, I asked how she interpreted this feedback and the consequences of her decisions. Naoko noted that, ultimately, although there was indeed a comment focusing on the need for her to be more specific about her sources (she had in fact been deliberately vague to avoid discussing the contradictory evidence), the feedback did not address the missing information at all. She interpreted this to mean that the instructor had valued her clear and well-organized writing while the missing content in her paper had possibly gone relatively unnoticed.

An excerpt of our conversation below illustrates how this pattern of both what was present in the feedback as well as what was absent worked to reinforce, for Naoko, a particular view of writing, in this case a hierarchy that placed the organization and language of a

written text ahead of its ideas and, as suggested in her own words, the "facts" it was supposed to be conveying.

I strongly suspect that Naoko's instructor never imagined his feedback, in conjunction with the combined effect of previous feedback patterns received in the past, might contribute to Naoko's sense of academic writing as an activity that places organization and structure over the values of ideas, or even the value of using recent and more interesting literature. In fact, it is very likely that this is not at all what the professor would have wanted her to learn from his feedback and that he would much have rather that she walk away from his class with the belief that the ultimate quality of a text should depend at least as much on the strength of its ideas as on its form. Yet this is not the message Naoko had internalized.

Naoko's case highlights well the unpredictable and uncontrollable nature of language socialization processes, as well as the long-term and cumulative impact of minor events such as patterns of feedback well beyond the draft of a specific text. More important perhaps is that Naoko's example demonstrates the need to consider carefully not only what the predominant focus of feedback interactions with students are, but also which areas and topics are perhaps being left unaddressed and thus more open to interpretation and guessing (sometimes with unintended and undesired consequences) on the part of students.

Example 1. Transcript of conversation with Naoko

J: What were the negative things you had expected?

N: I wrote down some uh example, and it's too much information for me so I just kind of erased, erased erased, and I just wrote so, broad thing. But, he mentioned about that.

J: Uh huh.

N: "You should be more specific", and y e a h , "Give more examples". Yeah, before that, he also told me like that, so this time too (laughs).

J: So you knew about it but you took the information out because…?

N: Because it takes so long time and I was kind of… laughs) I don't know…I ignored the information (laughs).

J: Interesting.

N: But he doesn't mention that I used the old resources so…I was expected maybe he's going to mention about that. But he didn't say.

J: Why do you think he didn't mention it?

N: I don't know, but I guess, if I put that data it's going to be mess this paper, and it's not going to be organized, so I think that point, maybe (laughs).

J: So are you saying that maybe organization [is more important than the…

N: (overlapping me) [organization is more important than yeah, than the facts. (we both laugh).

J: That's interesting, isn't it? Do you think that's true? That the way you write and how you organize is more important?

N: Yeah, yeah, I think so.

Conclusion

In reflecting on the insights gained from my experiences with language socialization research, I am reminded that my original interest in this form of research stemmed from asking myself whether what I was doing with my feedback was actually making a difference for my students. Although it may not have provided the type of answer I was expecting, language socialization research has helped me understand that, ultimately, the answer to that question is a resounding yes. Whether it is a question mark on the page, the direct correction of a grammar point or a long message encouraging students to simply practice more, feedback is never without meaning, even if it is not provided in an ideal form, if it does not immediately help the students, or if the impact is not the one I intended.

Herein lies for me the true value of language socialization research. As a research lens, applied to the study of second language learning and classroom management, it is particularly well suited to examine and raise awareness of the subtle but powerful messages (explicit and implicit) sent out to L2 students in the daily gestures and interactions of the classroom, even the minor ones. In so doing, language socialization research shines light on what many teachers already know instinctively: that the success or failure of second language classrooms is very much a function of small details, the collective impact of seemingly mundane decisions such as seating arrangements, turn-taking and questioning routines—and, yes, the messages we write to students in the margins of their writing assignments. Language socialization teases out the potential of these gestures and their force as language mediated, culturally significant events which become the vital components of the groundwork required to generate the relationships, beliefs and identities needed to foster language development.

In the specific case of second language writing feedback, language socialization research reaffirms the need to pay close attention to the fundamental link between the various discursive choices available to instructors in designing feedback and the processes through which students ultimately interpret and potentially internalize what has been focused on and valued in the feedback as part of their growing understanding of the larger process of L2 writing development. From a practical perspective, this reinforces calls in the literature (see, for example, Ferris, 2007; Goldstein, 2005) for a more explicit and reflective tracking in classrooms of the prevalent modes of interaction used to provide feedback to students (face-to-face conferences, handwritten comments, and/or electronic feedback, for instance) as well as the areas of focus being addressed by the feedback being offered. To what degree, for instance, and in what proportions is the feedback commenting on grammar and structure versus the ideas and content presented in the text? To what extent is feedback included that focuses on language issues which go beyond surface-level errors? What other types of writing knowledge, including dimensions such as genre knowledge, audience expectations, and interpersonal stances, are (or are not) being addressed?

In finding the answer to these questions, language socialization research contributes to raising instructors' awareness of why their feedback takes the discursive shape it does, and of what circumstances and reasons may be motivating their decisions; it finally

increases their sense of the impact these choices have on the type of messages being conveyed to students as a result. These are powerful insights for both language and content instructors searching to understand what they need to do to generate the relationships, beliefs, and identities needed to foster second language development. Ultimately, the degree of attention paid to the details of classroom discourse implied by language socialization research may not simplify the task of helping students negotiate their way into new discourse communities (if anything, it makes the complexity of the teaching act and the many decisions linked to it more visible). Language socialization research does, however, make it easier to plan consciously the small things that can be accomplished with students to ensure that, despite the difficulties associated with second language learning, these students have the best chances of resisting the powerful forces that would otherwise discourage or, mislead them, potentially keeping them on the margins of the discourse communities they are seeking to enter. ❖

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The Significance of Investing in Sociocultural Approaches for Language Learning and Policy in a Globalized World

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Abstract

Drawing from an interdisciplinary two-year ethnographic study, this paper discusses the importance of sociocultural approaches to language learning and to the development of linguistic repertoires. The paper examines the complex significance of multilingualism for Canadian youth of Italian origin participating in French university language learning and teacher education programs. In doing so, the author highlights the relationship between identity and language acquisition from a sociocultural perspective through the experiences and investments of Canadian youth as they navigate what it means to be and become officially bi/multilingual in the urban landscape of Toronto. The findings presented demonstrate that languages and identities cannot be categorized into neat, separate compartments with clear boundaries in the brain, but can lead us to think differently about language, to a point where heterogeneity is valued. While the context of the study presented is that of French language learning, its findings are pertinent for ESL language educators as many of the themes from the participants' narratives cut across disciplinary boundaries and reflect dominant discourses surrounding linguistic competence, proficiency, accent (vis-à-vis the 'idealized native speaker') and citizenship. More importantly, the data illustrate that investments in certain representations of languages and identities can have significant outcomes for both students and citizens. Pedagogical implications are drawn from the analysis, and will hopefully allow readers to reflect upon their own investments (be they social, ideological, affective, historical, or local) and ways of thinking about languages and identities.

What is sociocultural theory and why do social approaches to language learning matter?

Over the past 20 years, there has been a significant shift in second language acquisition as increased mobility, immigration, and transnational ties have given rise to different ways of looking at languages, people, and education. With the impact of globalization in multilingual societies, the emergence of a new economy, and research advances in sociology and anthropology, both researchers and practitioners have become increasingly interested in looking at the relationship between identity and language acquisition from a sociocultural perspective. It is helpful to explain briefly, however, what is meant by 'sociocultural' as it relates to the research presented in this paper, and to illustrate why sociocultural approaches are significant in terms of what they can offer researchers, teachers, and learners.

First and foremost, there are many researchers who conduct sociocultural research (Byrd Clark, 2009; Gee, 2000-2001; Iannacci, 2008; Kramsch, 2006; Miller, 2004; Norton, 2000; Swain, 2000; Thorne & Lantolf, 2007; Toohey, 2001), although recent debates have sparked some controversy over what constitutes sociocultural research, and who can claim to be a sociocultural researcher (see Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010). Generally speaking, sociocultural theory (SCT) has been referred to as the theory of the mind, essentially meaning that higher-level human cognition in the individual has its origins in social life, reflecting the interconnectedness of the cognitive and the social (Johnson, 2009; Lantolf, 2000; Wertsch, 1991). Most dominant thinking around SCT has been largely influenced by and associated with Vygotsky (1978) and has been described as a means to represent human thoughts and to make sense of the world. In other words, knowledge is not the transmission or appropriation of skills; rather, it is socially constructed by individuals and mediated through social activities (see Swain, 2000). While I do not dispute the many contributions of a Vygotskian SCT (see Swain et al., 2010), my interpretation of SCT is not limited to one way of representing theory, which is why I choose to build upon Vygotsky's work and employ sociocultural approaches to understanding how language is also socially constructed (as well as how power operates through language). Having said this, there are two basic tenets of SCT that are applicable and relevant to the research presented here:

1. That the mind is social in nature (see Wertsch, 1991).

2. That language in use plays a central role in mediating human actions (see Iannacci, 2008).

For my purposes, I am concerned with the ways in which people negotiate or make sense of themselves and the world through language. From this end, my sociocultural research (Byrd Clark, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) focuses on the ways in which individuals talk about their linguistic practices and their self-representations or positionings in different contexts; in other words, how they use language(s) as "languages are a product of the deeply social and cultural activities in which people engage" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 1). I am also particularly interested in how relations of power are managed, negotiated, and challenged through people's everyday language practices, as well as how and why people engage in the learning and teaching of languages.

Sociocultural research is based on interpretative perspectives (not accepting things or reality at face value) drawn largely from ethnographic research, which was historically inspired by sociology and anthropology (Hymes, 1966). Having said this, one of the most important aspects of sociocultural research is that it challenges traditional positivist[1] ways of thinking about learners, languages, and learning in general; it creates opportunities to move beyond an essentialist view of identities and languages as static, unitary, and fixed, shifting toward a more interdisciplinary understanding of identities and languages as fluid, multiple, and a site of struggle, constructed in linguistic interaction (Byrd Clark, 2007, 2008, 2009; Cameron, 2000; Labrie, 2002; Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985). English language learners as well as French language learners (in Canada) are a highly heterogeneous and complex group of learners with diverse gifts, educational needs, languages, and social backgrounds. They are individuals with multi-layered social and historical trajectories with particular life experiences, who draw upon these histories in each interaction.

Increasingly complex linguistic repertoires and a growing number of youth with multiple (hybrid) identities and transnational ties represent some of the ways in which Canada is changing. This complexity is difficult to observe via census data or large surveys. It does, however, lend itself to ethnographic work in urban spaces where young adults and immigrants tend to settle and where population influx and intergroup contact is high (Lamarre, 2010), and in rural areas where diversity is gradually increasing. In my two-year ethnographic research (Byrd Clark, 2008), the focus on the investments of Canadian youth became very important: how and why they were engaged in the study of French, in particular. Through these multi-layered engagements, I was able to observe how social processes, such as social categorization, work, as well as how and why individuals invest in certain ideologies and discourses of languages and identities. More importantly, I could observe how such investments and the discourse surrounding them became meaningful for the youth or had a purpose for them. For example, at different times I witnessed how the participants became attached to certain ways of thinking (and being) and how these attachments, in turn, had an impact on their conceptions of self-esteem, legitimacy, and worthiness (as will be evident in the participants' upcoming samples). Again, this illustrates the significance of sociocultural research, as the social has an impact on the cognitive and affective realms (socialization having an impact on the ways in which we come to see and represent ourselves as well as how we 'feel' about our linguistic practices). Furthermore, sociocultural research creates spaces for individuals (both the researcher and the partici-

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1. Positivism, also known as the scientific method, assumes that reality exists separately from the knower and can be captured through careful systematic processes of data collection and analyses. For positivists, knowledge is considered objective, universal, and neutral, representative of general truths, as an object that can be captured and/or measured with scientific methods. Positivism pays attention to issues of reliability and validity in order to control for bias.

pants) to potentially become reflexive of their own investments and of their own identifications, as well as others' interpretations of them in different spaces. This is very important for educators, as this research offers the capacity for them to become more aware of how and why they think, speak, and act in the ways that they do in particular settings with particular people. Developing this kind of reflexivity may help teachers to see the impact of such investments on their students' learning, particularly as regards the delivery of their programs, and the ways in which they engage them.

Background

For the purposes of my study, it is necessary to contextually situate and discuss the ways in which official language policies and discourses have historically and politically operated in Canada. Examining these discourses will help provide an understanding of the ways in which people think about languages and how these thoughts often tend to reflect the ways in which languages have been represented at the macro, or national, level. As will be evident in the upcoming sections, the participants' data samples reflect such discourses.

Renowned for its federal policies, Canada's Official Languages Act (1988) and the Canadian Multicultural Act (1985), Canada has been represented as a bilingual and plu-

> "In Canada, federal initiatives… are often directed at language teachers to contribute to producing effective human capital…"

ralist country for over forty years. Despite immigration and increased mobility, official educational policies and curriculum have not expanded to include the explicit development of multilingual repertoires or societal multilingualism in classrooms. In 2008, through its initiative, *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality*, the federal government invested $1.1 billion in ways to support official French/English bilingualism in both the public and private sectors. This initiative, however, has neither accounted for nor capitalized on the resources of the growing number of multilingual immigrant youth (Byrd Clark, 2010; Cummins et al., 2005).

In Canada, federal initiatives (such as the one mentioned above) are often directed at language teachers to contribute to producing effective human capital (Byram, 2010) in the form of well-developed citizens of the world in this new knowledge economy. According to Cummins (2009), teachers can create learning environments in which all students feel worthy and valued. Nevertheless, official language policies in Canada continue to reproduce solutions based on the language–nation–state ideology (Hobsbawm, 1990; Lamarre, 2010) reminiscent of the 1960s and 70s (e.g. one language, one people). These so-called solutions have to do with relations of power and with how language is represented.

From a Western philosophical perspective, representations and different conceptualizations of language can be traced

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back to Plato and Aristotle. Plato was obsessed with an ideal or idealized form, whereas Aristotle appeared more intrigued by practical reason and the performance of language use. Plato's conceptualisation of an ideal form is important for understanding how a formalist and cognitive approach to language materialized, as we see particularly in the works of Noam Chomsky (1965).

The notion of the 'idealized native speaker' intersects with positivist ways of understanding language (and reality, for that matter) as an abstract object that exists outside its use, as something that is rational, universal, cognitive, neutral, and above all, organized. As Hall (2002, p. 31) noted, in the traditional psycholinguistic approach, language is assumed to be universal abstract systems, and individual learners are conceptualized as "stable, internally homogeneous, fixed entities in whose heads these systems reside". While Chomsky and other linguists reacted against the limited views of structural behaviourist theories (e.g. Skinner, 1957), his conceptualizations of language as an abstract structure, have likewise not accounted for the significance of social processes and linguistic heterogeneity, specifically, the ways in which people engage with languages, and how and why they do what they do with languages in different places at different times. This Chomskyian conception of language continues to have a profound impact in the field of language education in Canada (namely French as a Second Language/FSL), specifically as regards the notions of competence and performance for FSL teachers (and learners). As Kramsch (2006) argues, the competence of the language teacher should not be based on the capacity of one's performance in one lan-

guage in a specific context, but rather "as the ability to translate, transpose, and critically reflect on social, cultural, and historical meanings conveyed by the grammar and the lexicon" (p. 103, as cited in Pennycook, 2010, p. 141).

Consequently, such representations of language are directly tied to the paradoxical and contradictory discourse of the Canadian State, most notably, the framework of official bilingualism (English–French). This discourse is tied to nineteenth- and twentieth-century models of homogeneous, authentic nationalism (Anderson, 1991; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2006), which expounded the dominant ideology that languages are bounded wholes that are linked to the construction and reproduction of a homogeneous community (one language, one people). But languages are not bounded wholes, and neither are the people who are part of a community uniquely homogeneous (Pennycook, 2010; Rampton, 1995). However, recognizing difference can become problematic because an individual may belong to several cultural and linguistic communities (Quell, 2000). That said, many individuals find themselves in a perpetual tension between self-chosen, invested identities and others' attempts to position them differently. This tension between a dominant ideology of national homogeneity and actual heterogeneity has important implications in liberal states for multilingual identities, the development of linguistic repertoires, and social justice (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001). I have noted this tension unfolding in the analyses of the responses of participants in my study.

While the language–nation–state ideology no longer applies or reflects the social realities of today's youth, educators need to be reminded of the impact that these repre-

sentations and linguistic ideologies can have on their own and their students' ways of thinking about languages. With schooling, one can observe how some of these representations and discourses upholding a standard language appear to be normalized and presented in a neutral, universal, and democratic fashion (see Bourdieu, 1982). This Chomskyan conception of language tends to look at a language learner as being 'competent' or 'not competent' and prescribes an L1 (as complete linguistic competence) and L2 (as incomplete linguistic competence) as separate entities. Through this conception, multilingualism is viewed as the mastery of three separate systems of a monolingual multilingualism (Pennycook, 2010).

As such, many French as a Second Language (FSL) university and teacher education programs in Ontario (as well as ESL programs) struggle with the tensions between finding ways to promote diversity and having to operate under an ideological competence-skills based model of language (Chomsky, 1965). This model views language learning as the mastery of "unitary, determinate practices that people can be trained in" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 44), rather than viewing linguistic repertoires as heterogeneous and multidimensional, shifting in different social and learning contexts.

To recapitulate, this formalist approach demands the management of actual internal heterogeneity dealing with perceived incursions of one language into another as well as repressing practices like code-switching and language switching. These everyday linguistic practices are rarely acknowledged or accorded any legitimacy in school classrooms (see Bourdieu, 1977, 1982; Byrd Clark, 2007, 2008).

Keeping these historical and political representations of languages and identities in mind, I turn to the rationale of my study, how it relates to TESL, and the articulation of important concepts, approaches, and data collection procedures.

Methodology

This two-year ethnographic sociocultural study focused on Italian Canadian youth from varied linguistic and social backgrounds in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). They engaged in the study of French beyond high school and wanted to become teachers of French. The main guiding questions of the study are as follows:

1. How and why do self-identified Italian Canadian youth invest in the acquisition of French as co-official language?

2. In what ways have these investments had an impact on their ways of self-identifying and viewing languages?

In this study, I wanted to understand, in particular, not only how and why the youth invested in the acquisition of French as co-official language, but additionally, whether these investments influenced their ways of thinking about languages and identities. Specifically, my analysis focused on how nine core participants (chosen from a larger sample of 25 participants) conceptualized and talked about their own linguistic practices, experiences, and self-identifications in relation to how they were seen by others in different contexts.

Defining the notion of investment

The notion of investment is useful when discussing a person's engagement in and with language learning (Byrd Clark, 2008, 2009, 2010; Norton, 2000; Norton Pierce, 1993, 1995). In terms of how individuals represent themselves or desire to be represented, I build upon Norton's conceptualization of the term 'investment'; however, my contribution expands this conceptualization by demonstrating that investment is much more complex because it shifts and allows for the overlapping of social experiences as well as social reproduction and social transformation (see Byrd Clark, 2008, 2009). I argue that investment must take into account the varied degree (s) to which an individual invests in social categories, ideologies, discourses, and representations of languages, cultures, and language learning in relation to certain ways of being (Foucault, 1980; Gee, 2000–2001) at different moments through different interactions. Language learning is not so much an investment in the *target* language as it is an investment, and an awareness of the investment, in ideologies and representations of such a target language and culture (Byrd Clark, 2009). In this paper, I will show how individuals invest in different ideologies, representations, and conceptions about multilingualism and being Canadian, as well as how and why these investments are meaningful to them.

Relevance of the study to TESL

While this study focuses on the participants' investments in French, it is an important study to share with ESL language teachers for several reasons. First, there are many linguistically and culturally diverse students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) and who may likewise participate in French as a Second Language (FSL) programs (such as Core French or Immersion) in Ontario. From K–12 education as well as in teacher education programs, the number of linguistically and culturally diverse students is increasing (e.g. Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Mady & Turnbull, 2010; Miller, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2006). Some of the challenges and opportunities in working with students who speak additional languages (other than English and/or French) who are both ELLs and French language learners (FLLs) may be similar. In making brief general comparisons as regards instruction, one can see that traditional methods-based approaches rather than sociocultural approaches to language learning have been dominant in classrooms (e.g. Iannacci, 2008).

Second, the *S* in *ESL* and *FSL* signifies 'second' (or 'subsequent' where individuals already speak two or more languages) and, as described in the aforementioned section, the 'second' relates back to the Chomskyian conception of language (a prescribed 'L1' and 'L2') and does not accurately apply or reflect the social realities of today's youth who have hybrid, transnational identities and for whom English or French is an additional language (Byrd Clark, 2010; Geva, Gottardo, Farnia, & Byrd Clark, 2009; Lamarre & Lamarre, 2009). While several of the participants (as well as their parents) in Byrd Clark's study (2008, 2009) are bilingual in Italian and English, they also self-identify as Franco-Ontarians (having attended French language schools in Ontario).

Third, much work is available on the native-speaker/non-native speaker dichotomy, linguistic insecurity and discrimination, and notions of accent (e.g. Davies, 2004; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Kubota & Lin, 2008; Lippi-

Green, 1997; Skutnabb-Kangas & Garcia, 1995) in applied linguistics as pertains to English, but very little of this work has been taken up in FSL in Canada, with the exception of Byrd Clark (2008, 2009, 2010). That said, dominant discourses of homogeneity, standardization, and native-speaker accent certainly overlap and continue to be perpetuated in both the fields of ESL and FSL.

On a final note, this study offers a unique opportunity for those interested in processes of immigration to see (in some ways) the social transformation of Italian Canadians as a historically constructed immigrant group. There is a shift when we examine the experiences of Canadian youth of Italian origin, who have grown up in the 1980s with official bilingualism and multiculturalism, and who make comparisons with the experiences of their parents (many of whom suffered linguistic discrimination and were ostracized for their ways of speaking English, as well as for speaking their linguistic varieties of Italian in public; see DeMaria Harney, 1998).

Lastly, both the approaches and the data presented in this paper can be applied and used for critical discussions on language and identity, both in advanced TESL courses and in other language learning contexts.

> "To complement the methodological approaches, my theoretical framework is located within an interdisciplinary, social constructivist, discourse analytic framework."

A multidimensional approach

To observe and coherently discuss such complex investments, this study uses a multidimensional approach, combining critical ethnography (e.g. Goldstein, 2004), discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995); and reflexivity (Aull Davies, 2010). This sociocultural approach further acknowledges the political nature of the research process and considers the researcher and research participants as affiliates in the co-construction of meaning. As a researcher, I am, at the same time, reflexive of my language learning experiences, investments, and negotiation of identities (e.g. a woman, a critical ethnographer and sociocultural researcher, a former teacher, and a person of Italian origin). I employ critical ethnography because it allows me not only the possibility of looking at the who, what, why, and where, but also a passage to uncover the ways in which meanings are interpreted as well as constructed and what the consequences are for speakers as a result of their negotiation of identities and linguistic performances. The use of such an approach makes visible the multi-faceted, contradictory, and complex representations of being and becoming a multilingual and multicultural Canadian citizen.

To complement the methodological approaches, my theoretical framework is located within an interdisciplinary, social constructivist, discourse analytic framework

(Bakhtin, 1981; Bourdieu, 1991; Byrd Clark & Labrie, 2010; Fairclough, 1995; Giddens, 1991; Goffman, 1967; Hall, 1990, 2006) which combines sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, cultural studies, applied linguistics, post-structuralism, and some socio-psychological conceptualizations.

Data collection and analysis

Data was collected during an 18-month period (from January 2006 to July 2007) on three main sites: two university campuses and one teacher education program. As mentioned earlier, I had originally worked with 25 self-identified Italian Canadian youth between the ages of 18 and 25, but I had focused on a smaller group of nine core participants for a more in-depth ethnographic study. After gaining ethical and departmental approval from university officials, Deans, instructors, and students, I collected data (mostly face-to-face) in multiple sites (at the universities, at the participants' homes with their families, at peer networking sites with their friends, via e-mails) employing multiple field methods (observations, interviews, focus groups, and popular culture sources including video production). During this time, I collected diverse data. For instance, I had three to four 90-minute interviews (audio and video recorded) with each of my core participants, 11 months

> "As I used multiple methods in this study, I had a triangulation of data to draw out counter patterns..."

of classroom observations of six different classrooms, five recorded focus groups, as well as interviews with parents, instructors, and family members (recorded in Italian, English, and French). As I used multiple methods in this study, I had a triangulation of data to draw out counter patterns and verify the data. This provided the depth and richness of data that I looked for within my ethnographic journey. As such, my study investigated language learning investments in French as official language and the overlapping discourses of *italianità* (what it means to be Italian), citizenship, multilingualism, and worldliness in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

My analysis of the data also employed face and construct validity (Rist, 1990) for verification and interpretation purposes. This data was transcribed and coded manually. The analysis also took into account word choice used while speaking, reduplication, affirmation and contextualization cues, along with gestures, gazes, pauses, changes in tone, pitch, and frequency. Initially, I used a white board, designing a large table, which was particularly useful as it allowed me to analyze the participants' data into overarching themes, such as French as symbolic capital, conceptions of citizenship/ *Canadianité*, notions of culture, investment in French, investment in Italian, multilingualism as capital, teaching and teachers, self-identification and identity negotiation, ideologies, representations of *italianità*, investments

in social identities, gender, race, class, religion, and sexuality, and experiences in transnational spaces. I listened to the audio-taped recorded interviews at least three times; first to listen and take notes, second to listen, transcribe, and highlight sections of text, and third to code for themes, clarifications, and follow-ups. These themes emerged directly from the interview data. I coded and cross-checked these overlapping themes from the interviews with other interviews (such as special-themed interviews, and video-recorded interviews with participants and their family members) and conducted a discourse analysis using these themes, triangulating this data with other types of data (such as focus groups, and e-mail correspondences).

The discourse analysis was conducted through a careful investigation of each participant's interview data as well as doing a cross-analysis with other participants. This analysis was helpful in allowing me to identify recurring discourse themes. For the purposes of this article, I draw primarily on the data analysed from the semi-structured interviews of three participants in particular. I selected the data from these samples in particular to elicit the importance of looking at ideas of languages and identities through a sociocultural perspective, especially for teachers. Cummins (2000) in his research has also underscored the importance that educators hold in the shaping and developing of language learners' identities.

Participants and overlapping themes

As stated in the previous section, I have chosen to focus on three participants, Monica, Vanessa, and Anna Maria (all self-chosen pseudonyms) not only because they are highly articulate and reflective of their language learning experiences, but also because of the ways in which they self-represent, talk about their experiences, and locate themselves within the discourses of multilingualism and citizenship. To clarify, the nine core participants come from different French language learning programs: French language school (French as a first language) and French as a Second Language programs, including both French Immersion and Core French programs. However, the three selected for special focus, Monica, Vanessa, and Anna Maria, are all first generation Canadians, who have come from Core French backgrounds. All three wish to become teachers of French and, at the time of this study, were completing a teacher education program. Both Monica and Vanessa can speak their family's linguistic varieties of Italian; Monica, who had also studied Italian at school, expressed being proud of speaking her family's 'dialect', whereas Vanessa expressed shame, wishing she had been taught the 'real' Italian. Anna Maria is upset and feels cheated that she cannot speak either Punjabi or Italian (as her mother's origin is East Indian and her father's is Southern Italian). Growing up under the Official French/English Bilingualism Act (1968) and the Official Multiculturalism Policy (1971) in Canada, the youth here are invested in French (and as mentioned, for some, Italian) as symbolic capital, and at the same time, they are interconnected by such investments as well as their claimed ethnic identities as Italian Canadians.

Upon observing university and teacher education French courses (designed for students who wish to become teachers of French (FSL which in this case includes Core, Extended, Immersion, and French as a First Language), I found that a great number of stu-

(Continued from page 42)

dents enrolled in these courses are Italian Canadians or Canadians of Italian origin[2].

To date, little research has looked at how and what kinds of decisions Italian Canadian youth make regarding French language learning or multilingualism. This is significant, as Italian Canadians represent one of the largest 'ethnic' communities in Toronto, as well as within the province of Ontario. According to the 2001 census, the highest concentration of Italian Canadians is found in the province of Ontario (781,345) and in the city of Toronto itself (429,690). Even with the continuing immigration from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, Italians are listed as the seventh largest community group in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001). Nevertheless, the specific position of youth of Italian origin is particularly illuminating given the historical links between Italians and Francophones in Canada. They have been unified, historically and collectively, through a Latin-based language and the Catholic religion.

To look at the discourse of language and see how it links to ideologies of the Canadian Nation-State as well as social identity construction, it is helpful to understand how the participants position themselves around the value of the French language. It is important to link what the participants say in the following excerpts to the ideology of bilingualism insofar as what counts as a 'legitimate' Canadian and to the contradictory and complex nature of their social realities. In the three overlapping themes (listed in the following section), I demonstrate the relationship between language, ethnic identity, and citizenship. When I asked the participants to talk about why they are interested in teaching French, they unanimously stated that being bilingual in English and French would offer them more career opportunities and access to increased social, geographic, and economic mobility. English for the participants appears to have an assumed position. In other words, they do not seem worried about their access to this particular resource. It is French, as a symbolic resource, that holds significance here, and as a valued commodity in the globalized economy, marking someone as an idealized Canadian. Italian, on the other hand, is positioned as an additional language not assigned as high a value in the linguistic market, as local Italian programs in Ontario continue to be phased out from local school boards.

By exploring the participants' everyday discourse and continued investment in French language acquisition, one can observe certain ideas about languages and identities, the complexity of identity negotiation, and the value of language(s) as a means of upholding, maintaining, or gaining access to upward social and economic mobility. I have organized these samples under three overlapping themes: (1) Investing in language for belonging, imagining, and a 'neutral space; (2) Conceptions of Canadianness through lived ex-

2. Some of the youth self-identified as "Italians," and then at other times in different spaces, self-identified as "Italian Canadians." At the same time, there were others who self-identified as Canadians of Italian origin as well as some who self-identified as "half or part Italian" and "Francophone." See Byrd Clark, (2009), for a detailed distinction of the terms being used.

periences; and (3) Discourses of competence and 'not being good enough' from the classroom. All of the themes overlap in that the participants' discursive practices intersect with socio-affective, cognitive, and social realms: their investments are multidimensional (ideological, socio-affective, political, imposed, economic, cognitive, etc.), and all are linked to certain representations of languages and identities, as seen in the following excerpts.

Investing in language for belonging, recognition, and a 'neutral space'

In this first theme, we hear the voices of Vanessa and Anna Maria, two first generation Italian Canadian women. However, the ways in which they self-identify are very different. Vanessa, as I will show in the next overlapping theme, self-identifies as a Canadian of Italian origin who speaks French, and Anna Maria claims that she does not know how to self-identify and struggles with having to construct a label for herself. In these first two excerpts, their investments in French convey several interesting dimensions: a longing to be recognized as special, gifted, a place to belong to and as a means of legitimacy.

> *Vanessa:* I love Italian, like, of course, it's part of who I am, it's my mother tongue (gah) but I don't know, I've always had this thing for French, I love it, when I hear people speaking it, I just want to stop whatever I'm doing and listen, ah absorb it all in, I-I always wanted to be part of that world, I wanted something more … you know I didn't just want to be like you know (short pause) I wanted something more than just to

be seen as an Italian from Woodbridge […] I love the French language even if this is not nice to say even more than the Italian language. I don't know, I think it's knowing a language, knowing something that not everyone else around me knows and in a way I think it's a bit it has to do with being powerful in a way […] it's something that you have that not everyone else has…

For Vanessa, French represented more than a commodity; it was also positioned as a possession that would render her unique and special, of being seen as "more than an Italian from Woodbridge." Vanessa's reference to French as a valued possession is intriguing, as something that "not everyone else has" and one that changes how she was seen, imagining that this investment would give her power or access to power that not everyone else had. This understanding also builds upon Norton's (2000) material conception of investment, in this sense, because Vanessa imagined her investment in French would give her a wider range of, and access to, symbolic and material resources (speaking with multiple people of different nationalities, being able to communicate) and, as such, her investment would equally empower her, giving her recognition of possessing a highly valued resource that she construed not "everyone else has."

There is also an emotional and ideological attachment to speaking French, as Vanessa states, "I love the French language," positioning language as a unitary, fixed, homogeneous, and imagined entity and yet as something for which she has a passion. However, intertwined with Vanessa's passion is also an awareness (shown by other participants) of being able to integrate into the cur-

rent job market. Vanessa positions the French language (although not explicitly here, she refers to Standard French from France) as a symbolic instrument of power. She imagines that when she communicates in French, she will not only be understood, but "believed, obeyed, respected, and distinguished" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648) as a legitimate speaker, giving her the "right to speak" and the "power to impose reception" (to be heard).

Anna Maria's sample shows that while individuals want a sense of place, solidarity, and belonging, where they belong or who they are is not so easily defined. The ways in which they are expected to perform imposed identities, the way others expect them to be, to sound, or to look, are also difficult.

> *Anna Maria*: Well you know when I'm with one side of the family, I'm one thing, and when I'm with the other side of the family, I'm another, but at the same time I'm really not a part of either … I'm not really Sikh or Catholic. I could really adapt to either culture, but I just don't know which way to go […] people will associate me with whatever they are […] I know what I have to do, I have to code-switch so I guess the middle ground is the Canadian identity, cause it's neutral, like being Belgian, I have to be Belgian because I have these conflicting demands and expectations of me. That's also how I feel about French, it's a neutral place for me…

In this passage, Anna Maria is caught between the throes of having to categorize herself as juxtaposed between the politics of identity in

relation to Canadian multiculturalism as well as the wider societal aim to impose a fixed identity upon her. She describes the conflicting expectations and linguistic, cultural, and religious representations (i.e. Catholic = Italian; Sikh = East Indian) surrounding her, and yet, while confused, she rejects being categorized or having to label herself as one category or the other. Using humour, she challenges this discourse and creates a space for herself through what she claims as the "middle ground": being a Canadian, a Belgian, or learning French. Anna Maria indicates "people will associate me with whatever they are." This demonstrates that her multiple identities are fluid; she is a work in progress, as we all are, and she can perform identities that allow her to problematize and perhaps blur boundaries. But, Anna Maria expresses anger in regards to her heterogeneous position and, at times, feels her multiple identities exclude her from belonging to either her Italian or East Indian culture. But this again relates to how discourses of culture, ethnicity, race, and language are perpetuated throughout social institutions—family, media, and school—that act to produce and distribute resources of knowledge as homogeneous collectivities rather than reflect heterogeneous social realities. Anna Maria's discourse also shows the impact of the ideologies: one needs both language and religion to tap into a culture and be a legitimate member of the culture. She likens French to a neutral space. Perhaps this investment in French provides a space in which she can claim a sense of ownership, belonging, and what she conceives of as legitimacy as a Canadian, and having equal footing with other fellow Canadians. But there are no 'neutral spaces'; things are always contextually situated, as the next passage will demonstrate.

(Continued from page 45)

Conceptions of Canadianness through lived experiences

> For teaching practicum, the kids were like, "Miss, are you from ..." and I said "Non, je suis canadienne." They were like, "No you can't be Canadian, you don't look Canadian," and I said, "What looks Canadian?" (Anna Maria, 2007).

This example brings out several interesting dimensions. First, it reflects both the negotiation of multiple identities as well as the socially constructed and imposed notions of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) regarding ways of being, looking, and sounding. Also, what stands out most for me is the counter-hegemonic discourse here, in Anna Maria's example, where she actively and doubly challenges the hegemonic discourse of what a 'real' Canadian looks like. Additionally, she challenges her own discourse as she describes French as a neutral place for her, (above) and then in this passage, in the French classroom, demonstrates that there are no neutral places (spaces). Although it is not articulated in the passage, Anna Maria has interpreted (she shared this with me during her interview) the students' conceptions of a Canadian as the representation of someone who is 'white' (of course, 'being and becoming white' is a whole discourse in and of itself). Last, Anna Maria's position here appears more constrained, particularly within the intersections of class, race, and gender. Mahtani, according to Hier and Bolaria (2006, p. 135), argues that Canadian multicultural policy constructs specific social-spatial boundaries between 'Canadians' and 'Non-Canadians' by asserting that to be understood as 'authentic' or 'real' Canadian implies being understood as white or European. Thus, those designated as 'ethnics' or who fall under the 'visible minority' status are placed outside the discursive parameters of Canadianness. They are, consequently, assumed to be 'foreigners'. Anna Maria is positioned as a 'visible minority' and that is brought to her attention very clearly while she conducts her teaching practicum with students who challenge her Canadianness: what it means to be and look like a 'legitimate' and 'authentic' Canadian and teacher of French, in this case. Through her discursive practices, Anna Maria simultaneously draws upon her agency and aptly challenges the students' stereotyped images of what a Canadian 'looks' like.

The next example demonstrates how identities shift in different interactions and different geographical locations. It shows that what might be possible and could flow in urban spaces with the multidimensional distribution of linguistic varieties might appear more constrained in rural spaces.

> *Vanessa*: [laughs] Um, going away to university, I think that's what opened my eyes realizing that I was in a city, Waterloo, a city that didn't have many Italians, so, well a girl I lived with, like, one of my roommates, she's like, "Oh, what are you?" And I said, "Oh, I'm Italian. She said, "Oh cool, you were born in Italy? And I go, "N-n-n-n-o, um, I'm Canadian, my parents were born in Italy," so she was a little confused, so realizing in Woodbridge, in Vaughan, and maybe even in Toronto, you're used to saying, you know, "Oh, I'm Polish, I'm Slovakian, I'm Spanish," and it's fine because people understand what you're saying, but when you're going to a different city from people who live in rural areas, like the girls

I lived with they were like rural farm girls, they told me that I had an accent, that I spoke differently, you know they're like Canadian, Canadians out in Waterloo, and um you come to that university and you say you're Italian, they're expecting you to be from Italy, and I think that's ah that's where you get the discrepancy, so it depends where you are."

Julie: What's a Canadian Canadian, like what do you mean by that?

Vanessa: Like, I don't know, I think of hockey, Tim Horton's, um people whose families have been here for several generations, like a typical Canadian, one that has blonde hair and blue eyes.

Vanessa attributes different values to, and ways of being in, diverse geographical locations. What is also intriguing is the way in which Vanessa describes how what is acceptable in one space is not always acceptable in another. For example, she relays that in Toronto, it appears more socially acceptable that people identify themselves in relation to their ethnic identities, whereas in a more rural area, like Waterloo, the meanings and claiming of self-identification change. Here Vanessa's discourse shows the images associated with being Canadian (hockey, Tim Horton's) as well as what counts for Vanessa as a legitimate and 'authentic' Canadian, "someone whose family has been here for several generations, like a typical Canadian, one that has blonde hair and blue eyes" (usually the description of Nordic and Germanic groups). As many Canadians with brown and green eyes have been in Canada for several generations, these categorizations seem naïve and simple. However, individuals such as Vanessa are attached to these

images and attach real value to and invest in such representations and ideologies, whether consciously or not.

Discourses of competence and 'not being good enough' from the clasroom

Monica: I was placed with a lot of students that were either francophone or they had done French Immersion so I just felt very inferior, I just felt like my my knowledge of the French language wasn't as good as theirs and I went through like a silent period. I wouldn't participate ever in class, I wasn't happy and ah I just felt very inferior, I went from okay I'm the best, the top student in my high school in French to all of a sudden you know, I felt like the worst student in French. (preliminary interview, February 2006)

Vanessa: During my first year at university, I didn't feel like an outcast because we had mostly all grammar courses, but in my second year, I cried every day. I just remember the Chair of the Department was teaching the course, and had put up overheads, I tried taking notes, but I couldn't understand everything...compared to everyone else, my French wasn't up to par compared to everyone else even though the professor said I spoke well, "for someone who attended Core French"...I thought I was going to quit.

In several of the university French classes I observed, FSL students seemed to be at a greater disadvantage compared to their Immersion (FSL) and French as a First Language (FFL) counterparts. Upon acceptance, students, who

enter university having completed four years of high school Core French and wish to major or minor in French, are placed in what appears to be an advanced literature survey course. They are not allowed to take beginning French courses, even if they would like to do so. Similar to Monica's experience above, many of the former Core French students struggle in this first entry class, and must work doubly hard to keep their investments in French, particularly when they have been taught through a different approach, which does not explicitly focus on receptive skills. A lot of the participants commented that they were not often used to hearing French spoken at a faster and more fluid, spontaneous pace. When interviewing participants, I heard countless times how they did not feel "good enough" or as "competent" as the other students in the class and were afraid to speak. Many who had taken the course stated that they didn't know why they 'stuck it out' but were happy to have survived the course and been able to continue. This entry course is clearly not designed with these students in mind, and appears to be used as some sort of gatekeeping, streaming, or tracking procedure, as there remains no transition course or alternatives at this time on either university campus. For many of the Core French students, this entry course works against them, instilling standard language ideologies while positioning them (the students) as linguistically inferior. All but one of the participants (with the exception of Vanessa and Monica, who both attended different universities) in this study with Core French backgrounds took this course and continued to pursue further studies in French either as majors or minors.

In the two samples, Vanessa's discourse mirrors Monica's in that she enters a space (the university French classroom) where her knowledge of French is not valued, and she is made to feel "incompetent" and "not up to par with other students" in the course. What is also striking is the way that the professor positions her, reinforcing her linguistic insecurity by stating, "You speak well for someone who attended Core French." This to me signifies a left-handed compliment, or as a means of social differentiation: you speak well for a (whatever the label). In this example, it conjures up exclusion, and 'othering'. There is a hierarchy established in this phrase, constructing a dichotomy by positioning one speaker as legitimate and 'correct' and the other as not, as inferior. It also reminds us that French and language learning, in general, appears to be something that must be mastered to perfection. We are reminded of the Chomskyian conception of language: a monolingual multilingualism or pluralisation of monolingualism (as suggested by Pennycook, 2010). Labrie (personal communication, 2007) has questioned this discourse, stating, «On apprend la géométrie comme matière à l'école, mais on n'est pas obligé de devenir maîtres de géométrie, il n'y'a pas les mêmes attentes pour les élèves de maîtriser la géométrie, alors, pourquoi est-il nécessaire pour les gens de maîtriser les langues?» (Translation by Byrd Clark: We learn geometry as a subject at school, but we're not expected to become masters of geometry, there aren't the same expectations for students to master geometry, so why is it necessary for people to master languages?)

An interesting question is raised, asking why so many people, teachers in particular, are invested in discourses of native speaker and standardization in relation to the development and legitimacy of a trilingual repertoire. Why is it not okay for people to be

able to function in languages, why do we feel the need/pressure/desire to become 'perfect' speakers? What is perfect anyway? More importantly, why are we made to feel so ashamed if we cannot achieve this conceived and 'defined by standards' perfection, appropriateness, and representation of 'native-speaker' competence? Why do we feel that we don't have the right to speak in particular places with certain people at different times? Much of this has to do with the ways in which languages and language education are presented in the classroom, most observable through teachers' discursive practices, and the messages that students in the classrooms receive and appropriate from them. Not to get completely off-topic, but it would be fascinating to see what would happen if the Queen of England started speaking in Ebonics and declared Ebonics as the 'national language'.

However, discrimination and stigmatization are not experiences reserved exclusively for Core French students. During my detailed observations, I observed Francophone students, students who self-identify as Franco-Ontarians, are being corrected and told that they are not using *le bon français* (see Byrd Clark, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010). In addition, these ideas about languages (the ways that one thinks he/she should speak) surfaced in the Italian language classrooms, as seen in Monica's discursive sample.

> *Monica*: Yeah, I am happy that I speak dialect, but like I would never speak it with my professors, well especially this one professor, I am always really careful when I'm around her, if I ever spoke in dialect, she would correct me and look at me like I was stupid or you know, like I was low class, ah, second class…

Monica was made aware of the value (or devaluing) of her linguistic repertoire and the consequences of speaking in her linguistic variety of Italian with certain people. In some ways, she must appropriate and "play by the rules of the game" (Thompson, 2005, p. 744) to attain what is ideologically conceived of as legitimate competence. Monica knew that the professor, who was in a position of power, did not approve of her linguistic variety of Italian, and therefore felt she must adhere to speaking the standard variety with this professor to 'get ahead', whether that be earning a high grade or obtaining a reference letter in the future from this professor.

Pedagogical implications and conclusion

In the last section, I showed how in my analysis the participants positioned themselves and were positioned in diverse contexts by multiple people through various interactions. I pointed out the different kinds of messages that the participants received in regards to their investments and construction of social identities. In this sense, a picture emerges of how complex and fluid investments in ideologies and representations of languages and identities are. At the same time, I see how powerful discourses such as multiculturalism and bilingualism, which I have incorporated within the discourse of Canadianness, as well as discourses of standardization, incorporating native speaker and homogeneity, can be and the impact that they can have on people's investments. To recapitulate, then, sociocultural research creates spaces to become reflexive of individuals' investments and of their own identifications as well as others' interpretations of individuals in different spaces. Individuals can become more aware of how and why they think, speak,

and act in the ways that they do in particular settings with particular people. This is important, as learners can no longer be categorized or treated as homogeneous, static, sedentary, or unidimensional entities. Instead, how they construct their humanity, their ways of being, doing, and thinking through discourse or their social and linguistic practices, and how these shift in contexts, interactions, and moments are considered. Before judging, labelling or categorizing a student as 'difficult', 'L1 dominant', 'incompetent', or 'having language learning problems', individuals, teachers especially, need to step back and, even though there are many constraints at school or in various places of employment, to reflect on their own use of language, and on the impact labels have on students' development of self-esteem, identity construction, and chances for success. Individuals need to think about the ways in which they have been labelled or categorized and get in touch with their own ideological attachments and investments, so that they can take action and create policies and pedagogy that more accurately reflect people's everyday linguistic and social practices. In doing so, we, as social agents, can imagine and put in motion a different social reality—one that offers more opportunities and fewer constraints on being and becoming 'multilingual' Canadians. ❖

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SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CLASSROOM TEACHING

Working with Internationally Educated Teachers: A Sociocultural Perspective

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Abstract

How can sociocultural perspectives on teacher education inform the preparation of internationally educated teachers? This article demonstrates the significance of sociocultural perspectives in viewing the linguistic identity of internationally educated teachers as well as their participation in teacher preparation programs. This article draws from data collected through a qualitative study of 25 linguistically diverse teacher candidates and four teacher educators. In-depth semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and observations were utilized as sources of data. The analysis is informed by sociocultural orientations of identity (e.g. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Norton, 2000, 2001) and the community of practice framework (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The findings illustrate how internationally educated teachers negotiate their linguistic identity within a specific social context and how a supportive community of practice provides opportunities for their participation.

Introduction

The "social turn" in second language education (Block, 2003) has drawn applied linguists' attention to the need for research that is socioculturally informed (e.g. Block, 1996; Firth & Wagner, 1997; Lantolf, 1996, 2000). Firth and Wagner's (1997) critique of mainstream, cognitive-oriented approaches to the study of language and language education has been instrumental in shifting the field to research that is situated and context-based. Their critique called for alternative understandings of the study of language and language education that includes:

1. The significance of social contexts.

2. The learners' (*emic*[1]) perspectives.

3. Individuals' multifaceted and complex identities.

In this article, I draw on data collected from 25 linguistically diverse teacher candidates (TCs) to demonstrate the significance of social contexts and emic perspectives in viewing the linguistic identity of Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs)[2]. In an era of globalization, with an unprecedented number of profession-

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1. This is a term used in qualitative research to refer to the point of view of the participant who is an insider to the culture and context under study. This term is used in contrast to the term *etic* which refers to the point of view of the researcher who is an outsider to the culture and context being studied.

(Continued from page 54)

als crossing borders, understanding individuals' identities[3] is paramount to understanding factors that contribute to their successful social and professional integration.

I start by providing background literature on the traditional view of linguistic identity (the native/non-native dichotomy) and then turn to sociocultural perspectives of identity. Next, I present a brief overview of the notion of community of practice (COP) and its relevance for teacher education programs. I then turn to the study, a one-year qualitative research project examining the linguistic identities of 25 teacher candidates from diverse linguistic backgrounds and their experiences (and participation) in a teacher education program. The study is discussed in two parts. In the first part, I use two cases to illustrate that linguistic identities should be viewed using a sociocultural lens. The second part of the article highlights the significance of sociocultural theory in viewing IETs' participation in various COPs. I draw on data collected through interviews and observations within a supportive COP and exemplify social practices that provided opportunities for IETs' participation.

Linguistic identity: the native/non-native dichotomy

The native/nonnative dichotomy has created considerable discussion and controversy (e.g. Inbar-Louri, 2005; Liu, 1999; Mahboob, 2010; Park, 2007) over the past two decades in applied linguistics and, more specifically, in the teaching profession. These discussions have centered on defining the terms (e.g. Davies, 1991, 2003; Paikeday, 1985); attributing characteristics to each group (e.g. Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Medgyes, 1994); investigating attitudes (e.g. Mahboob, 2003, 2004; Moussu, 2002, 2006; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999); and problematizing the terms (e.g. Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 1992). These arguments have resulted in claims that the native/non-native dichotomy is oversimplified and problematic (e.g. Benesch, 2008; Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999; Costino & Hyon, 2007; Moussu & Llurda, 2008; Ortmeier-Hooper, 2008). Benesch (2008) notes that discourses of partiality (i.e. demographic partiality, linguistic partiality, and academic partiality) are associated with these labels, which have their roots in a monolingual ideology. In addition, the native/non-native dichotomy implies that linguistic identity should be viewed as *fixed* and *unitary,* indicating that individuals possess one identity and their identity is unchangeable. In spite of the widespread criticisms against the use of a problematic dichotomy, no resolution has been provided for the dilemma of identifying individuals' linguistic identity in a globalized economy. The question addressed in this article is: What insights can sociocultural orientations provide in viewing individuals' linguistic identity?

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2. I use the term Internationally Educated Teacher to refer to teacher candidates/pre-service teachers who have completed a significant portion of their education in an international context.
3. This research focuses on participants' linguistic identity. #

(Continued from page 55)

The sociocultural framework takes a constructivist stance in viewing identity (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Norton, 1997, 2000, 2001; Pennycook, 2004). From this perspective, identity is situated, multiple, fluid, and contextually negotiated (Harklau, 2000; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Norton, 2000; Thesen, 1997). Harklau's (1999, 2000) work in particular illustrates how English language learners (ELLs) shift their identities, and thus she reported that identity is inherently dynamic and shaped in social contexts. The dynamic nature of identity implies that identity is fluid and therefore can evolve across time and space. Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001) note, "Individuals do not simply position themselves in a community; rather, there is a dialogic struggle between the learner and the community out of which *emerges* the learner's position and identity" (p. 149, italics added). This point is also significant as it implies that participants' identities are *constructed* in social contexts. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, (1998) emphasize the influence of the social and cultural context in which identities are shaped, highlighting that various identities may be formed in different social contexts. In my work (Faez, 2007; in press), I argue that the dialogic, dynamic, multiple, and situated view of identity should be used in examining the *linguistic* identities of teacher candidates.

> "The dynamic nature of identity implies that identity is fluid and therefore can evolve across time and space."

Community of practice

Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term *community of practice* (COP) to emphasize that learning is a fundamentally social and situated phenomenon that occurs primarily by actively participating in the social activities of a community and constructing identities within this community. This framework, positioned within an anthropological orientation, emphasizes the relationship between learning and the social context in which it occurs, a relationship that Lave and Wenger refer to as *situated learning*. A central feature of situated learning is a process they refer to as *legitimate peripheral participation* (LPP) by which newcomers gradually become members of the community by interacting with more experienced members (*old-timers*[4]). Lave and Wenger emphasize that certain conditions within social communities may facili-

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4.   Lave and Wenger (1991) use the term *old-timer* to refer to members of a community who are recognized as legitimate members.

tate or restrict the participation of newcomers. Newcomers must be viewed as *legitimate* participants and thus be accepted by others (*old-timers*) and be granted access to resources and opportunities for success. *Peripherality* is viewed positively as a way to describe newcomers' varying degrees of participation in the community. COP pays attention to social practices that facilitate cognitive processes and learning (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010). Thus, from a COP perspective, learning is the result of newcomers' legitimate participation and their move from the periphery towards full participation.

What does a COP perspective mean for IETs and teacher education programs? IETs may be granted different levels of legitimacy within various COPs (TESL programs, classrooms, cohorts) that could result in various degrees of success and satisfaction for them. Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasize that power relationships within various communities can have a considerable impact on individuals' access to resources in ways that can either promote or prevent their participation. Thus legitimate participation is not always a smooth transition from the periphery; one may be marginalized and denied access to participation. This orientation emphasizes the process of learning as gaining membership. Therefore, professional identity formation of teacher candidates and especially IETs is far more complex than simply gaining a knowledge-

base; it is a situated process whereby IETs gradually move towards full participation by being granted legitimacy.

The study

The participants in this study were teacher candidates enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program preparing to become Kindergarten through Grade 12 (K–12) teachers in Ontario[5]. The one-year qualitative investigation examined the native/non-native self-ascription and self-assessed level of English proficiency of 25 linguistically diverse teacher candidates compared to those of their instructors (Faez, 2007). Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews with teacher candidates and teacher educators. Classroom observations were also conducted in their teacher education programs. I use two cases from this study to illustrate that *linguistic* identities should be viewed using the sociocultural lens which emphasizes the dynamic, situated and dialogic nature of identities. In other words, similar to identity, *linguistic identities* are not unitary and fixed. Instead, they are dynamic and negotiated in social contexts and thus should be explored in the process of their development. I use field notes from classroom observations as well as data from interviews with the TCs and an exemplar teacher educator to illustrate how a supportive COP provides opportunities for TCs' participation. While this study was conducted within a

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5.   These teacher candidates were not working towards becoming ESL teachers and/or specialists but since 30% of the population in Ontario is foreign born, they will be teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students in their mainstream classrooms.#

Bachelor of Education program, the results and implications of the larger study have resonance for Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) programs as well as other teacher education programs with a diverse student population.

Mary

Mary was a teacher candidate in her early 30s originally from the Czech Republic who had immigrated to Canada in her late teens. She had spent some time in the UK studying English intensively prior to her move to Canada. In Canada she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Engineering and later decided to become a teacher. She had little contact with people from the Czech Republic and used English for all her communication needs. At the time of the study, she believed that she had a higher level of proficiency in English than in her first language. On a scale of one to ten, she identified her level of language proficiency in Czech as eight and in English as nine. This self-identified high level of proficiency was validated by the instructors who worked with Mary. Her instructors assigned a ten on a ten-point scale to her level of language proficiency. This is how Mary discussed her linguistic identity:

> Mary (M): I think I am a non-native, a non-native speaker of English

> Interviewer (I): Why?

> M: It's confusing isn't it? I am really more comfortable in English than in my first language. But I guess because I was not born here, I can't claim native status when I am in Canada.

> I: Can you claim a native-English speaking status somewhere else?

> M: When I wanted to teach abroad, I had to say I was a native English speaker. They only hire native speakers and I can pass as a native speaker.

> I : Hmm, interesting.

> M: It all depends, right?

> I : Depends on what?

> M: The circumstances, the people, the situation, the purpose, and the list goes on. I think I can pass as a native English speaker.

> I : Why do you think you can pass as a native English speaker?

> M: Well, I am relatively proficient in English and I am white.

Mary attested to a higher level of proficiency and comfort in English than in her first language, but she was not certain about her native or non-native identity. She said she "thinks" she is a non-native speaker. She felt that the native/non-native dichotomy was "confusing". In Canada she claimed a non-native English speaking status because she was not born in that country. If she wanted to teach abroad, she would claim an English-speaking identity because she was proficient in English and she could "pass" as a native-English speaker because she was white. Thus, for Mary, linguistic identity was not fixed or unitary; in fact, it was situated and dynamic and depended on the context. In the Canadian context, she was adamant about her non-native status. If she were to teach abroad, she would negotiate a native English speaking

identity and she believed she could be accepted as one since she was proficient and white.

Jack

Jack was originally from India. He was a landed immigrant who had moved to Canada three years prior to the study. Jack believed he was fully proficient in English and granted himself a ten but showed confusion and discrepancy in his native/non-native designation. In a written questionnaire, he indicated he was a non-native English speaker. In an interview conversation, he claimed a native English speaking status. The teacher educators who worked with him did not see him as a native speaker.

One of them commented, "His speech is slow and laboured; he is not a native speaker, well, I should say he is a native speaker of Indian English." Using a scale of one to ten, one teacher educator assigned him an eight and the other a six. When asked about why he had shown a discrepancy in identifying himself as a native or non-native, Jack explained:

> Well, I don't know how to identify myself. I am from India so English is our official language. We all speak English and everybody is proficient in English back home. So I am a native speaker. But in Canada, depending on who I am talking to, it is different. Some people see me as a native speaker, and some don't. Actually, more people don't, because they think I am not born here and I have an accent, an Indian accent. So I have to be careful with who I say what to.

Jack identified English and Talugu as his first languages and granted himself a ten in both languages. He indicated that he didn't know how to identify himself. He showed confusion in identifying himself as a native or non-native speaker of English. There was a conflict in how he positioned himself at different times. At one point, he said he was a non-native and during the interview he claimed he was a native speaker. It is possible that when Jack was completing the online questionnaire he indicated he was a non-native speaker because he did not know who would be interpreting his claim. Later, in his interview, knowing that I was not born and raised in Canada, he might have felt comfortable claiming a native speaking identity.

However, Jack's self-perceived native English speaking status was not validated by the teacher educators who worked with him. Thus, for Jack, linguistic identities were dynamic and he negotiated his linguistic identity according to the social context. Jack also claimed he was a native speaker of Talugu, alluding to the fact that for him, linguistic identities were multiple and not unitary.

As these two cases have shown, and as findings of the broader study indicate, *linguistic* identities should be viewed using the sociocultural lens that emphasizes the dynamic, situated and dialogic nature of identities. In other words, similar to identity, *linguistic identities* are not unitary and fixed. Instead, they are dynamic and negotiated in social contexts and thus should be explored in the process of their development. I now turn to the second part of the paper, the notion of community of practice and its implications for working with IETs.

A supportive community of practice

It is useful to clarify what are considered communities of practice in which IETs seek membership. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), a 'community' could be defined as broad as a society or as narrow as a classroom. The metaphor is used to refer to the entire dynamic, context, and members rather than a physical space. IETs are simultaneously involved in multiple and overlapping COPs. Thus, each course or cohort within a teacher education program constitutes a COP in which IETs seek membership.

Mary and Jack were enrolled in what I call a supportive community of practice. This cohort focused on effective instructional strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs) who were learning English at the same time as other curriculum content. Issues related to diversity, antiracist education, and inclusive classroom environments were emphasized within this cohort. The teacher educator, Lisa, an English-speaking immigrant to Canada, had personal and professional experiences with diversity-related issues. She had lived and taught abroad and had some level of competence in Bulgarian, Swedish, Spanish, and German. When living abroad, she had personally experienced culture shock where people misinterpreted her and she was confused about how the system worked. She married a man of colour who was a refugee to Canada. There-

> "'Community' could be defined as broad as a society or as narrow as a classroom."

fore, within her immediate family she had experienced racism and discrimination. These experiences had provided her with invaluable insights into the hardships that linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse individuals experience. She had over 30 years of experience as a teacher educator and language teacher. She was extremely sensitive and knowledgeable about diversity-related issues and was an advocate for marginalized individuals in the society. Given Lisa's background and experience, it is not surprising that establishing a supportive learning environment by creating a community in which all members were granted legitimate membership and participation was paramount.

According to her students, this mission was successfully materialized by various practices and standards that she adhered to throughout the academic year. For example, prior to the academic year, she had e-mailed the potential candidates and welcomed them to the program, introducing herself and other prospective students. This attempt had resulted in communication among students prior to the start of the program, which in turn increased their comfort level with each other. Lisa not only promoted sensitivity to linguistic and cultural diversity in her lessons, she also modelled the practice in her teaching. This practice allowed IETs to become and feel like legitimate participants. Lisa commented:

> Well I hope you've got a sense of what I am trying to do in the program and that the program not

only proposes to help them work with language learners and students of various cultural backgrounds but is actually sensitive to the needs of students of various cultures in the program as well. And actually, that's not all that easy because it's such a pressured program. There isn't the time to do some of the more detailed and one-on-one work that some of them would need.

According to her students, Lisa 'practiced what she preached.' She took numerous measures to ensure that the needs of IETs were met in her class. She used a number of icebreaker activities and in doing so was particularly attentive to the needs of IETs. For example, she used a questionnaire entitled, "What languages do you speak?" to get a sense of students' comfort level with the languages they attempted to learn. In doing this, Lisa capitalized on the experiences of individuals who spoke more than one language. She recommended that TCs use such activities for ELLs in mainstream classrooms. This strategy was not only empowering for IETs but it also allowed Lisa to have a better understanding of the linguistic backgrounds of her students. From a COP perspective, the icebreaker activity allowed IETs to gain membership in the community and become legitimate participants. Following this activity, she opened the discussion to concepts such as equity, privilege, social justice, marginalization, and power in society as they relate to education. Lisa introduced these concepts for raising teacher candidates' (TCs') awareness of diversity-related issues in mainstream classrooms. She also wanted TCs to reflect on their personal experiences with issues of privilege and discrimina-

tion. By using a "Who am I?" pie chart she asked the TCs to identify for themselves how privileged they were as individuals compared to the general public. This activity was informative for IETs and somewhat challenging for old-timers who spoke English as their first language and who had been born and raised in Toronto. The ideas of white privilege and economic advantage were eye-opening concepts for them. This activity allowed old-timers to realize the wealth of experience that IETs who were mainly immigrants and 'non-white' could bring with them to the program in helping them understand challenges associated with diversity. Many of the TCs thought that the first day activities helped raise their awareness to diversity-related issues but more importantly promoted a sense of community.

The other practice that Lisa strongly believed in was a "strong emphasis on group work" and making social connections in class. She advocated this practice for high school students and she adhered to it herself in her teacher preparation classroom. The formation of a community was important to enhance TCs' comfort level with each other, specifically for IETs in the program. IETs felt that because of the community that Lisa created within their classroom, there was a lot of support available to them.

Participation

According to Lisa, the difference between the TCs who were educated in Canada and the IETs was that the IETs initially participated less in class, an observation supported by previous research (Harklau, 1999; Duff, 2001; Morita, 2002, 2004). For this reason, Lisa was sensitive to the issue from the outset of the program. By utilizing various strategies, she attempted to create an environment where all

members felt they were granted membership. She gradually assisted IETs in becoming full participants. For example, during the first few sessions, she asked everybody to hand in a piece of paper at the end of each class and identify the number of times they participated during that class period. This strategy helped her identify candidates who did not actively participate and those who participated more than the average TC. Lisa highlighted that she eventually had to call on some TCs to ensure their participation. On the other hand, she had to remind some students of their over-participation. She believed that by utilizing this strategy, by the end of the year, TCs had become more competent in taking turns during discussions.

From a COP perspective, the IETs "are likely to come short of what the community regards as competent engagement" (Wenger, 1998, p. 101). Therefore, Lisa's attempts to grant these members legitimacy are extremely important. Sufficient legitimacy in the community allows for "their inevitable stumblings and violations to become opportunities for learning rather than a cause for dismissal, neglect, or exclusion" (p. 101). The community that Lisa formed had instilled harmony and enthusiasm in its members. Several participants commented that they perceived themselves as advocates for change for future generations. Within the program, these TCs often relied on each other when struggling with academic and/or emotional challenges. I observed that many indi-

> "Several participants commented that they perceived themselves as advocates for change for future generations."

viduals who spoke English as a first language were often willing to spend time reading, editing, and refining other participants' journals or assignments. IETs were pleased to have the support of their peers. Compared to other IETs who often find writing, particularly writing journals and reflective assignments, difficult (Gambhir, 2004), the hardship for IETs in this cohort was alleviated as a result of the support they received from their peers.

In their group work, the TCs were generally open and willing to work with individuals from different linguistic backgrounds. The ideas that Lisa promoted in terms of viewing ELLs in classrooms not as deficient learners, but as individuals who enrich educational programs by bringing linguistic diversity, were implemented in this cohort. Lisa and other English-speaking members of the class often asked IETs to share their perspectives and challenges of learning a language with others. They viewed IETs not only as legitimate participants but also as sources of knowledge due to their insights into the language learning process. This observation does not conform to the research findings to date (e.g. Gambhir, 2004; Morita, 2002). IET participants are generally found to be reticent and reluctant to speak, especially in the presence of native speakers (Morita, 2004). However, within the supportive community, many of the concerns of IETs in terms of participation and membership were diminished. They felt they had equal opportunity to participate and gain

membership.

Lisa's equity and outreach role had ignited such a passion in the group that they all wanted to work with each other, help each other, and help others in any way possible. By comparison, IETs indicated that they were not comfortable doing presentations or speaking in other classes due to the fear of speaking in front of their peers, an experience similar to prior findings (Gambhir, 2004; Leki, 2001; Morita, 2002). Mary commented that presentations were generally challenging, but not in Lisa's class compared to other classes. She attributed this comfort level to the supportive community in that cohort. She believed that within Lisa's cohort, relationships were paramount to the task whereas in other classes developing a sense of community was not emphasized:

> I know everybody in this class [in Lisa's class] and she has made an effort in wanting everyone to work with each other. She has made us realize that everyone has something to offer, whereas, in other classes people aren't as interested in getting to know you. I could work …, and love to work with people in the class [in Lisa's class]. There is a better feel of team work in the class. In other classes, they just want to do their own thing and you were second. So it was harder to do presentations because there was a more uncomfortable air to the room.

Jack expressed frustration at not being able to participate in classroom discussions in one of his classes. He needed time to gather his thoughts and was not able to articulate them immediately after the teacher educator asked the question. He was thus unable to participate fully in class as a result of his need for more time. He thought that the instructor could perhaps give everybody some time to think before participants were granted permission to talk. By doing so, teacher candidates like Jack would also be able to participate and gain membership. Thus non-participation of IETs in this class could be attributed to the community of practice in which they were engaged. These participants required access to a wide range of opportunities for participation including legitimacy as well as access to "old-timers" or other members of the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Commonly held stereotypes that IETs tend to be reticent to participate and passive did not consistently apply to the participants in this study (see Morita, 2002 for a similar discussion). Within the different COPs in the program, IETs sometimes encountered teacher educators or associate teachers who viewed them in terms of their limitations as novice teachers or speakers of English as a second language, thus restricting their participation and membership. IETs also spent time with instructors like Lisa who facilitated their participation by empowering them and helping them to recognize their expert identities as successful language learners and empathic

"They all wanted to work with each other, help each other, and help others in any way possible."

teachers. Therefore, while IETs were considered as legitimate participants in one COP, their experiences revealed that they were also denied access/marginalized in some other COPs. Perhaps, one of the reasons Lisa was able to establish such a positive COP was partially because of her own personal experiences; she also seemed to be a natural as a teacher, able to capitalize on the experience and background her students brought to the class.

Discussion and implications

What is the significance of sociocultural perspectives in working with IETs? There are two implications that can be drawn from this paper. First, sociocultural perspectives offer a dynamic view of linguistic identity allowing for a better representation of individuals' linguistic identity. As presented in the case of Mary, she was confused with the native/non-native dichotomy. While she felt that her high level of proficiency qualifies her as native speaker to the point that she could possibly "pass" as a native speaker, at the same time, she believed that since she was not born in an English-speaking country, she could not claim a native English speaking identity in Canada. As revealed in the case of Jack, he showed discrepancy in identifying himself as a native or non-native English speaker. In one context, he referred to himself as a non-native English speaker and in another situation he claimed a

> "The native/non-native designation could lead to misrepresentation of individuals who cannot easily identify and be identified."

native English speaking identity. He also thought he was a native speaker of two languages (i.e. English and Tagulu).

The native/non-native designation could lead to misrepresentation of individuals who cannot easily identify and be identified as native or non-native. The native/non-native dichotomy perpetuates a fixed and unitary vision of linguistic identity and as such falls short for a broad range of individuals. Therefore, linguistic identities should be viewed using a sociocultural lens, as multiple and dynamic and hence should be explored in the process of their development in social contexts. This reconceptualised view of linguistic identity is extremely significant in an era of globalization in which individuals do not necessarily live and work in their countries of birth. As such, it is important that teacher educators be mindful of simply dichotomizing teacher candidates as native English speaking or non-native English speaking in educational contexts and of assuming certain roles and attributes for each group.

A second implication relates to the notion of community of practice, which emphasizes that learning is a situated activity and occurs as a result of legitimate participation of members. Different kinds of communities were constructed for IETs in this study, and the participation of members varied accordingly. While Lisa's course developed into a supportive COP in which the members worked collaboratively both inside and outside the classroom, the same TCs' participa-

tion was restricted in other courses. In addition, there were different expectations of classroom participation in various courses. While participation was essential in Lisa's class, the same did not hold true in other courses. Furthermore, TCs' contributions were also valued differently. In Lisa's classes, the insights of IETs were recognized as invaluable in understanding ESL-related issues. IETs were recognized as valuable members for their insights into the language learning experience. Lisa drew on such experiences in various lessons. By doing so, she not only equalized the playing field for participation of all TCs but also made her lessons more realistic. In other courses, the insights of IETs were not necessarily valued as highly as in Lisa's classes, which may have also resulted in IETs' non-participation. These differences reveal the significance of establishing a supportive community within a teacher education program to address the needs of TCs from various backgrounds.

As this study revealed, by recognizing the valuable experiences of IETs, Lisa served a number of purposes in her classroom. She:

1. Allowed for more participation of IETs who are usually stereotyped as being reticent to participate.

2. Empowered them by referring to their expertise as successful language learners.

3. Allowed for other TCs to benefit from their first hand language learning experiences.

4. Modelled good pedagogy for linguistically and culturally diverse students.

5. Allowed for the co-construction of ESL-inclusive pedagogical knowledge by these discussions.

Lisa's classes developed into a supportive COP in which IETs felt like legitimate members. IETs' participation was not restricted; neither were they reticent to participate due to their marginal position.

Creating a community of practice in teacher education programs

Using the case of two linguistically diverse teacher candidates and a supportive community of practice, this article elucidates the significance of sociocultural perspectives in teacher education programs. The two cases provide an excellent example that *linguistic* identities should be viewed using a sociocultural lens in which the dialogic, dynamic, and multiple nature of identities is recognized. Given the increasing diversity in teacher education programs, it is important to recognize that teacher education communities do not include monolingual and homogeneous groups of TCs. Teacher educators are encouraged to take an active role in legitimizing the participation of all TCs, especially IETs who might struggle to participate, or who tend to be marginalized in classroom discussions. IETs can serve as resources with valuable insights into cross-cultural understanding and language learning. It is therefore crucial to value the unique perspectives, knowledge, and experiences that diverse TCs bring to the program. These considerations are essential in today's diverse teacher education programs and would allow for a view of increasingly heterogeneous communities that are constantly evolving and transforming. ❖

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SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CLASSROOM TEACHING

Teaching and Researching with a Listening Attitude
By Barbara Graves, University of Ottawa

Abstract

In this paper I propose that teaching and researching from a sociocultural perspective is an embodied, dynamic, and ethical practice whereby all participants are transformed as they interact together. At the heart of these interactions is a listening attitude. I consider what teachers and researchers can learn by listening responsively to learners, and I suggest new spaces of possibility that challenge the discourses of accountability and standards that marginalize multilingual learners. I would like to demonstrate how working within such an expanded theoretical perspective leads us to consider how identities are shaped by the quality of the engagements experienced both in and out of school.

Introduction

Respect and affirmation are the basis of any relationship and, in classroom interactions, respect and affirmation are central to motivating second language learners to engage actively and enthusiastically in academic effort (Cummins, 2001, p. 132).

The theme of the 2010 conference, "Research and Teaching: A Collaborative Process" is one which I see as motivated by a theoretical perspective informed by sociocultural theory. In this paper I propose that teaching and researching from a sociocultural perspective is an embodied, dynamic, and ethical practice whereby all participants are transformed as they interact together. At the heart of these interactions is a listening attitude. I consider

what teachers and researchers can learn by listening responsively, and I suggest new spaces of possibility that challenge the discourses of accountability and standards that marginalize multilingual learners. My goal is to contribute to a theoretical and practical argument that joins other educators in arguing against the deeply entrenched pedagogical assumption that learning is a linear progression beginning in the concrete and moving to the abstract, starting with the simple and moving to the complex (Davis, 2004; Maturana & Varela, 1987; Roth & Lee, 2007; Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1993; Vygotsky, 1978; Wells, 2000).

Much of the early thinking about mind and learning took place within the theoretical framework of individual psychology. However, as psychological and educational researchers have endeavoured to extend their investigations to include the real-world contexts of complex performance, they have come to realize that trying to understand cognition from the perspective of a single discipline is simply too limiting (Cole, 1996; Davis & Sumara, 2006; Donald, 2004; Wertsch, 1998). As Donald (2002) indicates:

> We have lived comfortably with the myth of the isolated mind throughout most of our history ... But we are edging closer to the truth. We are collective creatures, even to the texture of our awareness (p. 326).

Sociocultural theory is theory of human development mediated by language and cultural artifacts that emphasizes the mutual constitutions of persons and the experienced world. It is a perspective that challenges bi-nary oppositions such as mind–body, theory–practice, and cognition–emotion that have long structured our educational practices. As a result, the very language, topics, and research questions found within sociocultural approaches differ from those of more traditional L2 research (Hawkins, 2004; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2001). Among the recurring themes are issues of social justice, and equity, with a focus on culture and community. A central topic concerns identities which are often understood by examining literacies, discourses, and participant narratives. In Johnson's (1987) words:

> Meaning includes patterns of embodied experience and preconceptual structures of our sensibility (i.e., our mode of perception, or orienting ourselves, and of interacting with other objects, events, or persons). These embodied patterns do not remain private or peculiar to the person who experiences them. Our community helps us interpret and codify many of our felt patterns. They become shared cultural modes of experience and help to determine the nature of our meaningful, coherent understanding of our "world" (p.14).

In line with this thinking there is an ongoing body of work in cognitive neuroscience that is interested in studying the biological roots of personal knowing. From this perspective, cognition is understood as embodied action that depends on experiences from having a body with sensorimotor capacities and emotions (Johnson 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Maturana & Varela, 1987; Varela, Thompson,

& Rosch, 1993). The mind is understood as both embodied and collective.

Since the particular interest in this paper focuses on the learning of language, it is important to consider that this approach understands language itself as a complex emergent social phenomenon, as pointed out by Donald (2004):

> Lexicons and grammars emerge at the group level, not in isolated individuals. They exist in the spaces between people, and regulate their cognitive transactions (p. 254).

Similarly, with respect to how we learn language, Abram (1997) emphasizes the role that our physical body plays in the process:

> We do not, as children, first enter into language by consciously studying the formalities of syntax and grammar or by memorizing the dictionary definitions of words, but rather by actively making sounds—by crying in pain and laughing in joy, by squealing and babbling and playfully mimicking the surrounding soundscape, gradually entering through such mimicry into the specific melodies of the local language, our resonant bodies slowly coming to echo the inflections and accents common to our locale and community. (p. 75)

In this paper, I would like to demonstrate how working within such an expanded theoretical perspective leads one to consider how identities are shaped by the quality of the engagements experienced both in and out of school. I propose that in order to appreciate the knowing and reasoning of young children, teachers and researchers need to listen deeply to their thinking (Paley, 1986). While the value of deep and effective listening may resonate with many educators, I would also suggest that it is not a simple task to accomplish. I would like to share an experience I had many years ago, when I was working as an early childhood educator, that gave me some insight into both the value of listening and the difficulty of doing so. I mean *really* doing so.

At four years of age, TJ loved to paint at the upright easel, and that morning when he arrived at our bilingual preschool, I had just finished putting out the new paints. There were ten pots of the most drop-dead gorgeous colours you could imagine, each in its own container, each with its own brush. As soon as he saw them he grabbed a smock and set to work. Very systematically, he applied the paint in swirls and dollops, to create colourful impressions. And as he worked, a tapestry emerged that was stunning in its beauty and detail. After about 20 minutes he had completely covered the large sheet, and I thought to myself, "His folks are going to be thrilled when they see this."

But TJ wasn't finished. He now began a different activity—mixing the paints. The same care and attention that he had lavished on his painting, he now devoted to the careful stirring, pouring and blending of the paints, periodically wiping his hands on his smock as this was a messy business. He continued to work until he had transformed all the paints into a uniform, sludgy brown. As he raised his arm and began to arc the brush,

(Continued from page 70)

covered in brown paint, across his painting, I almost shrieked, "STOP! YOU'RE WRECKING IT!" I was very close to grabbing his arm, but I managed to hold back. You see, I understand myself as a liberal and tolerant educator. Even though it made me uncomfortable, I believed that this painting was his property and he had every right to wreck it. But I couldn't watch. And so I busied myself with the other children and only periodically glanced over at TJ who continued to work intently with his ten pots and ten brushes of brown sludge. Finally he was done. The entire paper was one uniform brown surface.

"Barbara," he said, "would you help me take my picture down and carry it to the drying table?"

"Sure, puppy."

And so together we unclipped it from the easel. It was tricky work as the painting was heavy and soppy from all the paint. As we waddled our way to the large table we used for drying our artwork, TJ said earnestly, "You know, Barbara, my mother is never gonna guess what's under here." I was stunned.

How inappropriate was my somewhat patronizing but well-intentioned view that TJ should be allowed to *wreck* his picture. It led me to consider that perhaps I did not leave enough space to learn about the intentions that the children may have for their actions.

A typology of listening

As a way to help think about listening I draw on three modes of listening as articulated by Davis (1997), which are informed by

Levin's extended philosophical essay in which he argues in favour of the value of understanding oneself as auditory agent (1989). Davis' focus on listening applies specifically to the kinds of listening found in classrooms. The three types of listening he describes are the *evaluative*, the *interpretive*, and the *hermeneutic*. Most common is *evaluative listening*, an interaction which typically involves a teacher asking a student a question and then evaluating the student's response. This bears a strong resemblance to the initiate–respond–evaluate (IRE) sequence of teacher–student classroom discourse (Mehan, 1979), a type of interaction which is less of a conversation and more of a test.

The second category of listening that Davis describes is *interpretive listening*, in which the teacher has a genuine interest to engage with a learner and listens in order to understand the thinking of the learner. This shares many features of instructional conversation (IC) applied by Tharp and Yamauchi (1994) in their work with Native Americans and second language learners. In their view, instructional conversation is a "dialog between teacher and learner in which prior knowledge and experiences are woven together with new material to build higher understanding" (1994, p. 1). It is not difficult to see how this approach, when applied in the language classroom, may lead to enhanced understanding. There is a constraint, however, and it lies in the fact that the goal of the teacher during the conversation is to keep the learner on track and re-direct unnecessary trajectories to the topic at hand. An underlying assumption of this approach suggests that the teacher has nothing to learn from the student. In his discussion of interpre-

tive listening, Davis sees this as a serious limitation.

Finally, with respect to the third mode of listening, Davis draws on continental philosophy, specifically on Gadamer's work on conversation (1990) to put forth what he calls *hermeneutic listening.* This is a listening attitude in which the teacher not only has a genuine interest in what the learner knows and is thinking (as in interpretive listening), but is also willing to engage in an extended conversation with the learner without any clear expectation of where that conversation will take them. Accompanying this is a conviction that something new and important may emerge from the interaction. At the same time "the notion of hermeneutic listening is intended to imply an attentiveness to the historical and contextual situations of one's actions and interactions" (1997, p. 370). Davis describes this listening mode as negotiated and participatory, in which both teacher and learner are transformed.

One way of understanding this transformative relationship is as an adaptive and dynamic learning system in which teaching and learning are not understood as separate entities. Teaching and learning comprise a mutually constitutive dynamic process in which the teacher is also the learner, and the learner is also the teacher. In order to represent this view of the relationship, I follow Roth's use of the Sheffer stroke (Roth, 2005; Roth & Lee, 2007) which allows me to present teaching and learning as teaching|learning, a dialectical entity of non-identical terms which are mutually constituted. Teaching|learning assumes a participatory role in forming individual and collective knowledge.

Nonetheless, the possibility of hermeneutic listening poses challenges for both teachers and researchers as it requires that we disrupt some deeply entrenched practices and attitudes. At a minimum, it requires that our research and teaching practices enable conversational spaces for our interactions with children.

Challenges for the teacher

While it is has become commonplace to speak of teaching as listening*,* it is seldom encountered in practice. Many teachers are not clear on how these activities and roles are actually realized in classrooms. It seems to me that the two major challenges teachers face are how to assess what learners know, and how to accomplish the curriculum given the time constraints. This has been a long-standing challenge for classroom teachers who experience a crowded curriculum as a sequence of topics to be covered, a perspective which stands in the way of engaging learners in conversational interactions. These two aspects, assessment and curriculum, become dynamically inter-woven when we consider a teaching|learning environment.

As a small illustration of this, I am drawing on interview and observational data collected in a multi-age classroom over a two-month period to bring forth the instructional practices of a teacher who has been successful with this approach. One of the goals of this teacher is to develop a learning community in which the children are encouraged to pay attention to and listen to one another. This has practical applications for the assessment that goes on, as she describes:

I was working with a child and we were working on some spelling as we were editing one of his stories. The child sitting beside him turned and said, "I know a lot of those words that you're working on, and I learned some strategies. Do you want me to share them?" And then he turned to me, and he said, "I could do this, and you could work with [another student] and he suggested another child. It was great because one child had identified to me that he was having trouble with some spelling, he was talking about it. Another child who had expertise in that area then could say, "I could help." Now isn't this what we want? As a world we're trying to bring children up to be able to participate in communities where we help each other (teacher interview, 2002).

As the teacher considers the child's role and developing identity both in the classroom and in the world, there is evidence that this practice extends beyond the epistemological to include ontological considerations as well. The teacher has enabled a learning environment where the students assume much of the responsibility for what goes on in class, and this results in having more than one teacher in the class.

In another assessment conversation between the teacher and a child, the focus is on the child's agency as she expresses her own view of her competence. As the teacher describes it:

When she was in grade 2 we had studied *Danse Macabre* by Saint-Saëns. When we got to the reports, I had written that she could hum *Danse Macabre* by Saint-Saëns. When she read her report she said to me, "Oh Judith, I can't. I'm missing a few bars." We talked about it and she wanted it changed on her report card. So we went over to the computer, we opened it up and [wrote] "can hum most of *Danse Macabre*." Now how empowering is that for a grade 2 student? How amazing to want to have on her written report something that when you think of it is less than what I had said about her. Isn't that amazing that a child would be so clear and so comfortable about herself that she could say, "No, it's less than what you wrote and I want it to be accurate" (teacher interview, 2002).

To my mind, the child's sense of responsibility for her own assessment is a powerful endorsement of this type of educational practice.

For this teacher, assessment is an ongoing activity that she carries out during each day, and at the end of every school day she records her observation notes for each child. As she describes it:

I do assessment between 2:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Assessment goes hand in hand with planning. I have a file for every child on the computer, and it's set up as a report card so that if you came in today and you said to me, as a mother of a child in my class, "Well how's my child doing?" I could just print

it off ... It's like a roll of film, twenty-four shots. Some of them are well focused and some of them are fuzzy ... It might be that a child's having difficulty ... I'll note that there and then. I will think for my planning for tomorrow, "I'm going to take that child aside for five minutes or ten minutes and do a mini review on this" (teacher interview, 2002).

What I find striking about this process, is that daily planning is dependent on what the teacher learns from the children the previous day, not on the sequence of topics determined by curriculum documents or textbooks. Through focused attention on the children's language, reasoning, and actions, in conjunction with her own knowledge, the teacher is able to build on the children's understandings and inventions and works to connect them to the mandated curriculum. In order to be prepared to accomplish this, she suggests that teachers need to *know* the curriculum not as a sequence of discrete topics but as an integrated conceptual framework within which they can work. More specifically, as she describes it, to be able to help the children connect their own knowledge and solutions to specific curricular topics, she needs to know and understand the curriculum content for the level she is currently teaching as well as for the previous and successive levels. In this way, the more traditional process of dealing with curricular topics in some predetermined order becomes inverted as the teacher works to connect the expressions, thinking, and knowing of the learners to the established curriculum expec-

tations. Clearly, such an educational practice requires that learners are allowed and provided many ways to express themselves.

Challenges for the researcher

While the value of deep and effective listening will also resonate with researchers, they too face challenges that require them to scrutinize their epistemological assumptions about their research participants, and the role of those participants in the research process. These considerations are particularly important and challenging when working with children whose agency is often ignored. This issue was highlighted in a recent paper in which Maguire (2005) drew on the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) and dialogic work of Bakhtin (1986) to consider some of the ethical issues researchers need to consider when engaging child participants who live in multiple language and cultural contexts. In particular, Maguire calls attention to their personal agency and to the value of their perspectives which, if listened to, can alter a researcher's assumptions throughout the conduct of the research. For example, as the following extract from her data reveals, a young multilingual research participant inserts her own agency and asks a question which, if taken up by the researcher, will interfere with the researcher's agenda:

Interviewer: What would you do if you were in charge of making a good bilingual program?

Child: Give kids choice.

Interviewer: Give kids choice. Tell me a little more about ...

Child: For example, last week my teacher told us we had to write a story about how bunnies live. Quite frankly, I don't know how bunnies live. Do you know how bunnies live? And do you really care? (Maguire, 2005).

In another example, Maguire shows how a young participant may not be compliant and can effectively resist the researcher's agenda:

Maguire: What do you like best about story writing?

Tom: Nothing, I can't talk.

Maguire: You can't talk?

Tom: No, I don't speak English (in English) and my lips don't want to move today.

I am intrigued by Tom's description of his lips not wanting to move and would like to continue the conversation he has initiated. This has the potential to lead to a better understanding of Tom's perspective, and could also provide a substantive amount of additional language expression that could inform our inferences about what he knows. As Maguire suggests, there is much to learn from listening closely to these young research participants:

One must be ready for the unexpected conversational turns that can easily present an ethical and/ or methodological dilemma as the previous excerpts from interviews

with children illustrate. That children can comply, assent or dissent in research activities, or even challenge researchers' agendas is rarely documented in mainstream educational research which focuses on or about children or first and second language acquisition inquiries that have tended to largely focus on children's fluency and proficiency, or issues of program type, evaluation and assessment of their language performance and acquisition of specific linguistic features of a particular language (Maguire, 2005).

Concluding remarks

If the protests of children were heard in kindergarten, if their questions were attended to, it would be enough to explode the entire educational system (Deleuze, 1972/1977, p. 207).

Drawing on my own experiences as a researcher and a teacher, and in collaboration with other educators, I am becoming increasingly convinced that the extent of children's capabilities is underestimated. What is known is how much, or how little, students learn about what teachers or researchers think they should know at any given time, and this seriously constrains understanding of their knowing.

In 1892, Charles Eliot, President of Harvard University, wrote, "It is a curious fact that we Americans habitually underestimate the capacity of pupils at almost every stage of

(Continued from page 75)

education from the primary school through the university" (as cited in Oakes, 2005, p.18). Over one hundred years have not resulted in change to this disposition, its tenacity persists in secondary schools structured around systems of tracking, in elementary schools committed to the value of homogenous reading groups, and in curriculum documents comprised of linear sequences of content knowledge moving from simple to complex, and from concrete to abstract. If these learning models were implemented in daily lives, the ideal family would likely be one comprised of septuplets with all the children at the same age, learning the same things together. Similarly, with these models in mind, if language educators were to set themselves the goal of teaching a first language to their children, they would most probably begin with 'A' words of one syllable, and only once these were successfully learned would they face the pedagogical choice of either moving on to 'B' words of one syllable or 'A' words of two syllables. The apparent foolishness of these suggestions simply highlights the disparity between the richness and complexity of these lived experiences and the more narrow structures of current educational practices. Teachers and researchers need to be listening. In the words of Freire,

> The climate of respect that is born of just, serious, humble, and generous relationships in which both the authority of the teacher and the freedom of the students are ethically grounded is what converts pedagogical space into authentic educational experience (2001, p. 86). ❖

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THE INFLUENCE OF RESEARCH AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THEORY ON TEACHING AND TEACHING MATERIALS

Corpus-Based/Corpus-Informed English Language Learner Grammar Textbooks: An Example of how Research Informs Pedagogy
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Abstract

Corpus linguistics has been shown to have potentially beneficial applications for language teaching and learning, including language that more closely resembles actual language use, yet these applications have been slow to be incorporated into textbooks and language teaching for English Language Learners (ELLs). To illustrate the relationship, this study sought to determine whether corpus-based or corpus-informed grammar textbooks written for ELLs better reflect findings of corpus analysis as compared to those textbooks in Biber and Reppen (2002) which are neither corpus-based nor corpus-informed. The three case studies conducted by Biber and Reppen were also conducted in the present study. The results were compared between studies and to findings of corpus analysis as presented in the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999). The first case study examined the issue of which grammatical features to include in a grammar textbook with the focus being adjectives. Findings indicated that overall, corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks better reflect findings of corpus analysis. The second case study examined the issue of order of subject presentation with the focus being the simple aspect and the progressive aspect. Findings again indicated that corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks better reflect findings of corpus analysis with the exception of two textbooks. The third case study examined the issue of lexis by focussing on the 12 most common lexical verbs. Corpus-based and corpus-informed textbooks again represent findings of corpus analysis more accurately than textbooks that are not corpus-based or corpus-informed. In conclusion, the discussion points out some of the remaining differences and implications.

Introduction

Corpus linguistics is a methodological basis that facilitates linguistic research through large bodies of actual language—corpora—using computer-assisted techniques. A corpus typically consists of authentic spoken or written texts produced by native or non-native speakers of a given language. The texts in a corpus tend to be collected purposefully to reflect a specific type of language. For example, one of the earliest large corpora, the Brown Corpus (Francis, 1992), contains close to one million words of texts collected from written, primarily academic, English. A more recent corpus, the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE), is a collection of close to 1.8 million words of transcribed academic speech (Simpson, Briggs, Ovens & Swales, 2002; Simpson-Vlack & Leicher, 2006)[1] These corpora reflect language users' linguistic performance and permit qualitative or quantitative descriptions of language use based on empirical data (Leech, 1992). Analyses based on corpus material are relevant to different areas of linguistic inquiry, including learning and teaching English as an additional language, as they may illuminate aspects such as style, register, grammatical structures, vocabulary, as well as frequency of occurrence of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Conrad (2000) defines corpus linguistics as "the empirical study of language relying on computer-assisted techniques to analyse large, principled databases of naturally occurring language" (p. 548).

Three specific areas of language teaching practice and research have been influenced by corpus linguistics. These areas are:

A) The development of instructional materials.

B) The analysis of learner language.

C) Classroom instruction.

Materials development, especially textbook development, is of particular interest in the following. By providing information about the frequency of use of linguistic features, corpus linguistics can guide decisions about priorities in ELL teaching materials (Conrad, 2000) to ensure that these materials reflect actual language use. McCarten (2010) confirms that corpora offer information on a broad range of issues including vocabulary, grammar, lexico-grammatical patterns, and discourse management. Yet, while corpora and corpus-based research are increasingly used to assist materials writers' decisions on what to include in a textbook, this trend has been slow to develop.

Numerous studies have compared corpus findings with ELL textbook presentations of particular linguistic features. These studies challenge textbook descriptions and suggest that the design of teaching materials could

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1.   See Lee (2010) for a description of a range of corpora.

greatly benefit from the empirical information about language use provided by corpus linguistics. Researchers including Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998), Cheng and Warren (2007), Di Vito (1991), Gilmore (2004), Harwood (2005), Hunston, (2002) and Koprowski (2005) have pointed to mismatches between language descriptions and models in textbooks and actual language use as reflected in corpora. Several researchers have suggested that materials writers rely too heavily on introspection, intuition, and experience rather than on empirical data provided by corpora (Hunston, 2002; Quirk, 1974; Svartvik 1992). Biber and Reppen (2002), referring to grammar texts in particular, argue that writers' decisions are typically based on traditional approaches to grammar textbooks and "on their beliefs about language use, in many cases without even acknowledging that decisions are being made" (p. 200). At the same time, these researchers have pointed out that much of the experience a native speaker has with language is not accessible through introspection. This inaccessibility explains why "…native-speaker language teachers are often unable to say why a particular phrasing is to be preferred in a particular context to another, and the consequent rather lame rationale 'it just

> "Intuition is considered a poor guide to judgments about collocations, frequency, semantic prosody and pragmatic meaning, and details of phraseology."

sounds better' is a source of irritation to learners" (Hunston, 2002, p. 20). As a result, intuition is considered a poor guide to judgments about collocations, frequency, semantic prosody and pragmatic meaning, and details of phraseology. McEnery, Xiao and Tono (2006), echoing Hunston's concerns about native speaker intuition, suggest that corpora offer many advantages over intuition. To avoid overreliance on intuition and possible misrepresentation of actual language use, Biber and Reppen (2002) suggest frequency information that is based on corpora analyses as one possible decision-making resource with an empirical basis that materials writers could utilize. Corpora that reflect the language variety, functions, and contexts, serve to clarify questions of language use that materials writers need to consider when they make decisions about items to include in a textbook. McCarten (2010, p. 415) agrees that "[a] corpus can assist a course-book writer in several ways, including constructing a graded lexico-grammatical syllabus and finding appropriate texts and realistic settings for the presentation and practice of target language."

Kaltenboeck and Mehlmauer-Larcher (2005) examined both the potential and limitations of computer corpora for language teaching and learning and suggest that corpora are particularly suitable for questions around vocabulary and grammatical patterning. The

occurrence of vocabulary items in different text types, for example, can help establish preferences regarding formal–informal or spoken/written use. A search of the British National Corpus, with a written and spoken corpus each of one million words (Cobb, 2011) shows that the vocabulary item 'chat' occurs twenty times in the spoken but only twice in the written corpus, suggesting that the item is a feature of oral rather than written language. Collocations, defined as the co-occurrence of words, are another area where corpora offer valuable insight. Kaltenboeck and Mehlmauer-Larcher (2005, p. 72) offer the example of two similar expressions, *at the end* and *in the end* to show how a corpus query indicates that the first of the two prepositional phrases tends to be followed by a prepositional phrase starting with *of*, while the second is not but instead takes more varied clausal complements. When materials writers and teachers aim to match target vocabulary to the general context it is used in (e.g. spoken or written discourse) and present target vocabulary with its surrounding grammatical patterning, computer corpora can help ensure models and information do not mislead learners.

Recent interest in corpora and an increasing number of corpus-based studies, combined with in-house development of corpora by several of the larger ESL–EFL publishing companies (e.g. Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, and Pearson Longman) coincide with the marketing of a growing number of textbooks that are either corpus-based or corpus-informed. The underlying assumption is that textbooks informed by corpus material will result in descriptions and models that more accurately reflect language use compared with textbooks based on

intuition, experience or convention and thus will promote successful language learning. These assumptions still need to be confirmed through appropriate research investigations. Of interest to individuals choosing textbooks, to individuals using them to teach, and particularly to individuals using them to learn a language, is an investigation of what it means for a textbook to be corpus-based or corpus-informed and how exactly either claim is reflected in materials design. Contents of a corpus-based textbook could be expected to reflect frequencies of vocabulary and grammatical patterns observed in a relevant corpus, while a corpus-informed textbook would likely reflect at least some of the frequencies found in a relevant corpus.

Whether textbooks based on corpus information reflect actual language use remains to be seen as little published research has explored recent textbooks, especially course texts that are claimed to be based on corpus material. To begin to address this gap in the literature, this study examines whether grammar textbooks designed for ELLs and claimed to be corpus-based or corpus-informed more closely reflect findings of corpus analyses in comparison to comparable traditional textbooks. Biber and Reppen (2002) selected three areas typically covered in grammar texts and found a mismatch between how grammar was presented in textbooks that were neither corpus-based nor corpus-informed and the grammar of authentic language as reflected in corpus analyses. This study presents a comparative analysis whereby the three case studies conducted by Biber and Reppen are partially replicated with grammar texts that are described as being either corpus-based or corpus-informed. Three of the questions explored follow Biber

and Reppen's study while the fourth question examines differences between the two types of grammar texts:

1. Does each textbook include a section on adjectives? Which types of adjectives are included?

2. Does each textbook include sections on the progressive aspect and the simple aspect? Which is introduced first?

3. Which of the 12 most common lexical verbs[2] (according to the *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (LGSWE)*, Biber et al., 1999) appear in sections on the present progressive and the simple present tense? How frequently do they occur?

4. How do the answers to the questions above compare to findings reported in Biber and Reppen (2002) and to corpus-based analyses reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999)?

Biber and Reppen's study

In their study, Biber and Reppen (2002) compare information presented in six English as a Second/Subsequent Language (ESL) grammar textbooks with empirical find-

ings from the *LGSWE* corpus. Appendix A lists the textbooks included in their comparison. Based on the premise that materials writers, in particular writers of grammar textbooks, need to make several decisions when approaching the writing task, Biber & Reppen (2002) identify three specific decisions writers need to make. They need to decide what material to include and what material to exclude; they need to determine how to sequence the selected material; and they need to choose the words that will be used in presenting this material. For each of the above three issues that writers of grammar textbooks face, Biber and Reppen (2002) conduct one case study:

A) The focus is on noun premodifiers in their discussion of which material to include and which to exclude, as well as how much space to allot to features included.

B) The focus is on the simple aspect and the progressive aspect in their discussion of how to sequence material.

C) The focus is on lexical verbs used in sections covering the present progressive and simple present tense in their discussion of the lexis to choose to illustrate a grammatical feature.

For each of the three case studies, data from the textbooks sampled is contrasted with find-

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2. A lexical verb functions only as a main verb, not as an auxiliary verb; a main verb can function without an accompanying primary verb or modal verb (Biber et al., 1999, p. 358).

(Continued from page 82)

ings of corpus research as reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999).

In addressing the issue of which material to include and which to exclude, as well as how much space to allot to features included, the first case study focussed on adjectives. Biber and Reppen (2002) report that five of the six textbooks surveyed included lessons on adjectives; four included material on participial adjectives; but only one "included discussion or illustration of nouns functioning as nominal premodifiers" (p. 202). Biber and Reppen contrast these findings with corpus-based analyses as reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999). In conversation, the common adjective (e.g. 'big') is the most frequent adjective type. In contrast, in written registers, particularly in the news and in academic writing, nouns are used much more frequently as premodifiers. In newspaper writing, nouns act as adjectives nearly as frequently as common adjectives. In all four registers, participial adjectives are comparatively rare.

Biber and Reppen (2002) conclude by acknowledging that a focus on common adjectives can be justified in lower level textbooks where the focus is often on conversational English. They argue, though, that the subject of nouns functioning as nominal premodifiers should be covered to a greater extent than the less frequent participial adjective, particularly at intermediate and advanced levels. This last contention is supported not only with fre-

quency information, but also with the argument that "premodifying nouns can express a bewildering array of meanings, with no surface-level clues to guide the reader" (Biber & Reppen, 2002, p. 202) making this form a potentially challenging one for students[3].

The second case study focused on the progressive and simple aspect in order to address the issue of how to sequence material. Biber and Reppen (2002) report that four of the six textbooks sampled introduce the progressive aspect in the first chapter and that "three of these books introduce the progressive before covering the simple present; two others introduce the progressive in the same chapter as the simple present" (p. 203). Biber and Reppen then report findings of corpus-based analyses as reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999) which indicate that although the progressive aspect is more common in conversation compared to the other three registers and may therefore appear frequently in dialogues in ESL–EFL textbooks, "it is not at all correct to conclude that progressive aspect is the unmarked choice in conversation" (Biber & Reppen, 2002, p. 203). On the contrary, simple aspect is by far the unmarked choice, occurring 20 times more often than progressives (Biber & Reppen, 2002). Biber and Reppen conclude by arguing that by introducing progressive aspect first, materials writers are implicitly suggesting that progressives are more important and more common

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3. Quirk (1974) similarly argues that noun plus noun sequences, i.e. premodifying nouns "conceal a bewildering array of relationships that have never yet been fully explicated" (p. 165).

than corpus-based research suggests. Such materials, Biber and Reppen (2002) argue, may be at the root of teachers' comments "on the overuse of the progressive by students" (p. 205), an overuse they argue is not surprising.

To address the issue of which words to choose to illustrate a grammatical feature, the third case study focussed on lexical verbs used in sections covering the present progressive and simple present tense. Biber and Reppen (2002) contend that although there seem to be a great many common verbs, there is a group of only 12 lexical verbs that occur more than 1,000 times per million words in the corpus. This group comprises *say*, *get*, *go*, *know*, *think*, *see*, *make*, *come*, *take*, *want*, *give*, and *mean*. The group of 12 verbs is particularly frequent in conversation where they "account for nearly 45% of all lexical verbs" (Biber et al., 1999, p. 373). Based on that information, Biber and Reppen (2002) posit that lower-level textbooks, particularly those focussing on conversation, should include "extensive practice of these words" (p. 205). Grammar textbooks, though, also have the function of introducing new vocabulary according to Biber and Reppen, and frequency information could act as tool for materials writers' use to ensure systematic vocabulary selection. Biber and Reppen (2002) advocate the use of frequent words especially for students at lower levels as such words "will be more useful to students receptively and in production, whereas relatively rare words will prove less useful" (p. 205).

Upon examination of the six grammar textbooks in their sample, Biber and Reppen (2002) found that "some of the most common verbs were included in at least some of these textbooks, including *take*, *come*, *like*, *want*, *know*, and *mean* (and the primary verbs *be*, *have*, and *do*)" (p. 205). While *like* is not one of the 12 most common lexical verbs, it is common, occurring more than 1,000 times per million words in one register of the LSWE Corpus. Biber and Reppen continue by reporting that *get*, *go*, *see*, *make*, *give*, *say*, and *think* (i.e., 7 of the 12 most common lexical verbs) were not used in the lessons on progressive or simple present tense in any of the six textbooks surveyed. Biber and Reppen (2002) report "many moderately common verbs (e.g. *try*, *put*, *use*, *leave*)" as being "disregarded in most books" (p. 206). They also mention that "many textbooks include examples containing relatively rare verbs, such as *wear*, *cry*, *revolve…*" (Biber & Reppen, 2002, p. 206).

Biber and Reppen (2002) conclude with the recommendation that frequency information be an important consideration for both materials writers and teachers, citing Ellis (2002), who writes of the importance of frequency effects in language acquisition. Given that corpus-based grammatical descriptions have become readily available, it is reasonable to expect materials writers and teachers to base information presented to students on this empirical research rather than on intuitions to "increase the meaningful input that is provided to learners" (Biber & Reppen, 2002, p. 207). Without discounting other factors considered key to L2 acquisition, Biber and Reppen state that a pedagogy reflecting actual use "can result in radical changes that facilitate the learning process for students" (p. 20).

The current study: method and research design

The first step in this study was to confirm that the textbooks used in Biber and Reppen (2002) were neither corpus-based nor corpus-informed. This information was confirmed at the onset of the investigation. Two titles, however, *Basic Grammar in Use* (Murphy, 1993) and *English Grammar in Use* (Murphy, 1985) could not be obtained according to the publication dates given by Biber and Reppen. The first editions of both textbooks were therefore used as they were closest to the publication dates given by Biber and Reppen. It was confirmed that the author of these titles had not made use of a corpus in the writing of the books.

The next step involved the selection of ESL–EFL grammar textbooks. The key difference in the selection process is that while Biber and Reppen (2002) reported selecting texts that were popular, widely used, or highly regarded, the current study sought texts reported by the publisher to be either corpus-based or corpus-informed. Texts in both studies (a) were written for students of English; (b) fall into three broad levels including elementary to low-intermediate, intermediate, and high-intermediate to advanced; and (c) were written for the purpose of classroom instruction, self-study, and/or reference material. The next step in this study was to conduct each of the three case studies undertaken in Biber and Reppen. These are described below under the title 'data analysis'. Finally, this study compared its results to those of Biber and Reppen to determine whether their results hold true for texts that are corpus-based or corpus-informed.

A wide range of publishers of grammar textbooks for English language learners were included in the selection process, including Cambridge University Press, Harper-Collins, Houghton Mifflin, Oxford University Press, Pearson Longman, and Thomson ELT. Seventeen textbooks were identified through this process. Of the 17 textbooks identified, eight were chosen for this study. Textbooks of limited length (i.e. 70–80 pages), combined focus (e.g. grammar and writing), very high learner level (e.g. approaching proficiency), and a different organizational structure (e.g. lexical) were eliminated. Following Biber and Reppen (2002), textbooks were limited to low-intermediate, intermediate, and intermediate-to-advanced levels. The number of textbooks in each of the three levels comprising the sample in Biber and Reppen is equally represented in this study, with this study including one additional textbook at the elementary-to-pre-intermediate level and two at the intermediate-to-advanced level. See Appendix B for a complete list of textbooks selected for use in the present study.

One variable which could not be matched between the sample used in the present study and the one used in Biber and Reppen (2002) was variety of English. Eight textbooks in this study employ British English and one is said by the publisher to employ international English, whereas in Biber and Reppen, two textbooks use British English and the remaining four use American English. Because features of textbooks both in this study and in Biber and Reppen were compared to findings of corpus research detailed in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999), it is important to note that the *LGSWE* offers a balance of American and British English, therefore making it relevant for analysis of textbooks using either American or British English.

The current study: data analysis

The textbooks selected for this study were examined to determine:

1. Whether they include sections on (a) common adjectives (attributive adjectives); (b) participial adjectives; (c) nouns that function as adjectives.

2. Whether they cover the progressive before the simple present, at the same time, or in subsequent lessons.

3. Which of the 12 most common lexical verbs (according to the *LGSWE*, Biber et al., 1999) appear in sections on the present progressive and the simple present tense.

For ease of comparison, results were reported as in Biber and Reppen (2002). For example, Biber and Reppen report how many of the six texts surveyed include sections on common adjectives, participial adjectives, and nominal adjectives. A similar reporting of results was followed for the second case study; the authors report how many texts cover the progressive before the simple present, at the same time, or after. Results of the third case study involved listing which of the 12 most common lexical verbs are included in at least some of the texts and which are not included in any of the texts examined. Results of this study are reported similarly in order to simplify comparison. Comparison of results involved determining whether texts that are corpus-based or corpus-informed better reflect corpus research.

To measure how frequently the 12 most common lexical verbs appear in sections on the present progressive and the simple present tense, chapters on the present progressive and simple present tenses in all textbooks surveyed were scanned, to permit a digital copy that could then be searched electronically for the lexical verbs in question. All possible forms of each verb were searched for. For example, for the most common lexical verb *say*, the following comprised the search terms *say*, s*ays*, *saying*, and *said*. A manual process of counting instances of all possible forms of each verb followed as verification. Because noun forms of these verbs could occur (e.g. *name*, *walk*, *painting*, *building*), both counting methods included a manual check to ensure each lexical verb found was indeed functioning as a verb.

Findings

Grammatical features included and excluded: adjectives

Biber and Reppen's (2002) investigation of adjectives reveals a mismatch between the types of adjectives discussed in grammar textbooks and findings of corpus analysis. The mismatch, they argue, centres on the coverage of less common participial adjective and the lack of coverage of the more common nominal adjective. Of the eight textbooks surveyed in the present study, seven include sections or units on common adjectives, six include sections or units on participial adjectives, and six include sections or units on nominal premodifiers.

Common adjectives

Findings of corpus analysis (Biber et al., 1999) indicate that common adjectives are the most frequent premodifier in all four reg-

isters examined (conversation, fiction, news, and academic). Textbooks surveyed by Biber and Reppen (2002) reflect these findings: they report five textbooks of the six surveyed as including sections on adjectives. All textbooks surveyed in the present study include units (three textbooks), part of units (two textbooks), or both (two textbooks) on common adjectives except one at the elementary to low-intermediate level (*Collins Cobuild Elementary English Grammar*). In that one textbook, however, such adjectives do appear in adjective-related chapters, for example, on the use of *so/such* + adjective, but there is no discussion of common adjectives as a topic of its own.

Participial adjectives

The *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999) declares participial adjectives to be "relatively uncommon in comparison with adjectives and nouns" (p. 589). One might expect, then, that this topic would be covered to a lesser extent than the more popular types of premodifiers: common adjectives and nouns. Findings of Biber and Reppen (2002) indicate what could be perceived as a mismatch: according to their analysis, four of the six textbooks they surveyed included discussion of participial adjectives. The topic of participial adjectives is allocated space in textbooks almost to the same degree as the far more popular common adjective.

Similarly, six of the eight textbooks surveyed in the present study include sections or units on participial adjectives: one textbook at the elementary to low-intermediate level (*Language Links*: *Grammar and Vocabulary for Self-Study*) and one at the high-intermediate/

advanced level (*Exploring Grammar in Context*) do not include discussion of this topic. Four of the six textbooks which do include discussion of this topic devote one unit to it; all four are at the elementary and intermediate levels. In three of the four textbooks, units consist of two pages with one offering an explanation of participial adjectives and one providing exercises to practice the structure. One of the four textbooks, *Developing Grammar in Context* (intermediate), devotes five pages to participial adjectives: approximately one page is devoted to explanation and exercises comprise the other four pages.

The remaining two textbooks devote part of a chapter to the topic. In *Longman Advanced Learners' Grammar*, an explanation of participial adjectives is given on one page and exercises constitute approximately two and a quarter pages. In two of the three exercises, though, participial adjectives are only part of the focus: of 35 questions, 12 relate to participial adjectives (approximately half a page). In *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English* and the accompanying handbook, a half page is used to discuss participial adjectives and one exercise is provided in which three of the seven questions pertain to participial adjectives. Overall, the advanced level textbooks offer either the same or less explanation of participial adjectives and provide fewer exercises in comparison to the elementary level and intermediate level textbooks.

Nominal Premodifiers

According to the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999), in all registers, nouns are the second most common way of modifying other nouns. More specifically, such nouns "account for

(Continued from page 87)

almost 40% of all premodifiers in news, and c. 30% of all premodifiers in academic prose" (p. 589). Given this level of frequency, it would seem reasonable to expect textbooks, particularly at the more advanced levels, to cover this topic. The paucity of such coverage, though, is revealed by Biber and Reppen (2002), who found discussion of nominal premodifiers in only one of the six textbooks they surveyed.

Textbooks deemed corpus-based or corpus-informed fare better: six of the eight textbooks surveyed in the present study include sections or units on nominal premodifiers. Two devote one unit to the topic (*Collins Cobuild Elementary English Grammar* and *English Grammar in Use*); the other four include discussion of the topic as part of a unit (*Developing Grammar in Context*, *Exploring Grammar in Context*, *Longman Advanced Learners' Grammar*, and *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English* and accompanying handbook). In both cases where a unit is devoted to the topic of nominal premodifiers, units consist of two pages; one page offers an explanation of the topic and the other provides related exercises. In the intermediate-level textbook, *Developing Grammar in Context*, only a sentence with an accompanying example is offered as explanation of nominal premodifiers; however, 13 examples are included throughout the chapter introduction and 12 nominal premodifiers appear in exercises 1, 3, and 4 (all of which are on the topic of adjective order). In all three of the intermediate-advanced level textbooks, numerous exercises on the topic are provided. In *Exploring Grammar in Context*, 2¾ pages are devoted to exercises; in *Longman Advanced Learners' Grammar*, 2 pages of exer-

cises are provided; in *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English Workbook*, 1 page of exercises focuses on the topic with another two exercises providing limited practice (of 11 questions, 3 deal with nominal premodifiers). The three intermediate-advanced level textbooks differ, though, in how much explanation of nominal premodifiers is offered. In *Exploring Grammar in Context*, authors include information on where nominal premodifiers are often found (in newspaper headlines and names for services and organizations) in the instructions to two different exercises. No further explanation is offered. In *Longman Advanced Learners' Grammar*, the explanation of nominal premodifiers covers approximately half a page. Offering the most detailed explanation is *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English* with approximately 4¼ pages devoted to the discussion of this topic. One of the textbooks that did not cover nominal premodifiers was at the elementary level (*Language Links*: *Grammar and Vocabulary for Self-Study*); the other was at the intermediate level (*Collins Cobuild Intermediate English Grammar*). In the latter case, though, the point is made that when a noun is used in front of another noun, adjectives are not put between them; the adjectival role of nouns appearing in front of other nouns, though, is not discussed.

Order of grammatical topics: progressive aspect and simple aspect

Results of corpus analysis as reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999) indicate that the simple aspect is the most common by far in all four registers examined, comprising about 90% of all verbs. The second most common aspect is reported as being the perfect aspect, followed by the "slightly less com-

mon" (p. 461) progressive aspect. Biber and Reppen (2002) report four of six textbooks surveyed as introducing progressive aspect in the first chapter. Of the four, they report three textbooks as discussing the progressive before simple aspect. Finally, Biber and Reppen report two textbooks of the six surveyed as covering progressive aspect in the same chapter as the simple present. They argue that given this mismatch between what corpus analysis has gleaned on the frequency of aspects and textbook presentation of aspects, students may falsely believe progressive to be the unmarked choice.

Results of the present study indicate a reversal of Biber and Reppen's (2002) overall findings (see Figure 1). In Biber and Reppen, the majority of textbooks introduce the progressive aspect before the simple (i.e. in four cases out of six); in the present study, the majority of textbooks introduce the simple aspect first (i.e. in five cases out of eight). Also, in contrast to the findings of Biber and Reppen, the present study found that three of the eight textbooks surveyed discussed both aspects in the same chapter; however, in only one of those three textbooks was progressive aspect covered first. Biber and Reppen found two of six textbooks surveyed to include both aspects in the same chapter. Also, in contrast to results presented by Biber and Reppen is the fact that in the textbooks surveyed for the present study, simple aspect is discussed in its own unit before progressive aspect (the latter also in its own unit) in two textbooks of the eight surveyed. One of these textbooks is at the elementary level (*Language Links*) and one is at the intermediate level (*Developing Grammar in Context*).

Figure 1. Overall presentation of simple and progressive aspects.
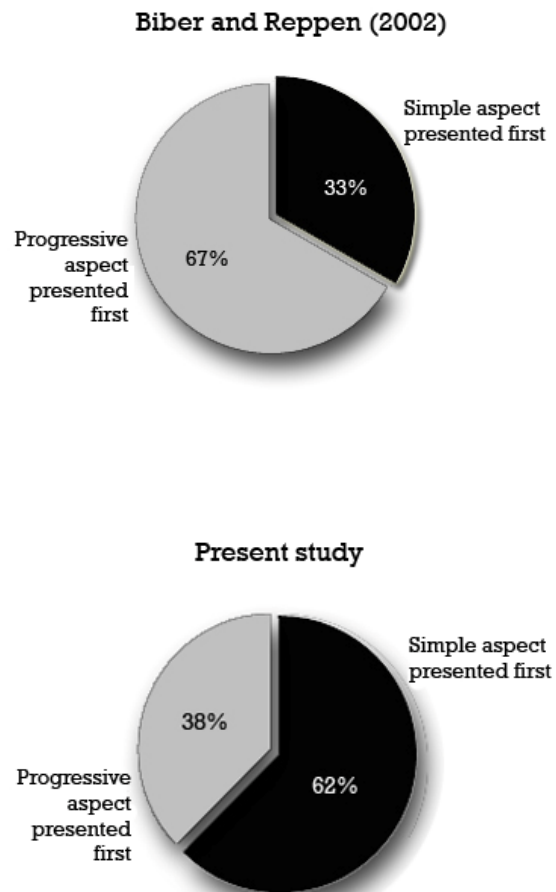
Figure 2. Frequency of the 12 most common verbs as they occur in sampled lessons in the present study.
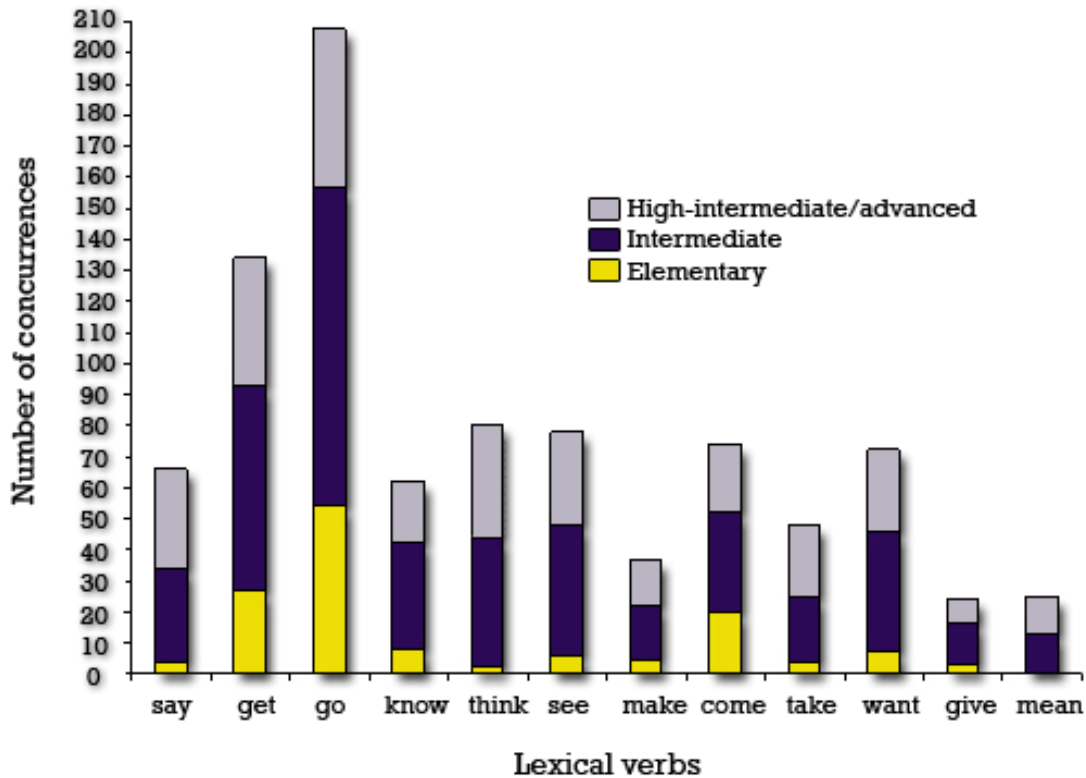
Similar to the results of Biber and Reppen (2002), though, the present study found that one textbook (*English Grammar in Use*) out of the eight surveyed introduces progressive in the first chapter. This is the same textbook, but a later corpus-informed edition, that covered only the progressive aspect in the first chapter in Biber and Reppen's study. Clearly, being corpus-informed did not mean, for this textbook, that it necessarily better reflected findings of corpus analysis.

Lexical verbs used in discussion of present progressive and simple present tenses

Corpus analysis reported in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999) reveals that 12 lexical verbs occur over 1,000 times per million words in the corpus studied. These verbs are most frequently used in conversation where they comprise almost 45% of all lexical verbs; they occur least frequently in academic language comprising 11% of all lexical verbs (p. 373). Biber and Reppen (2002), arguing for the importance of including these commonly used verbs in textbooks, report

Figure 3. Frequency of selected lexical verbs in sampled lessons in textbooks surveyed by Biber and Reppen (2002) and those surveyed in the present study.
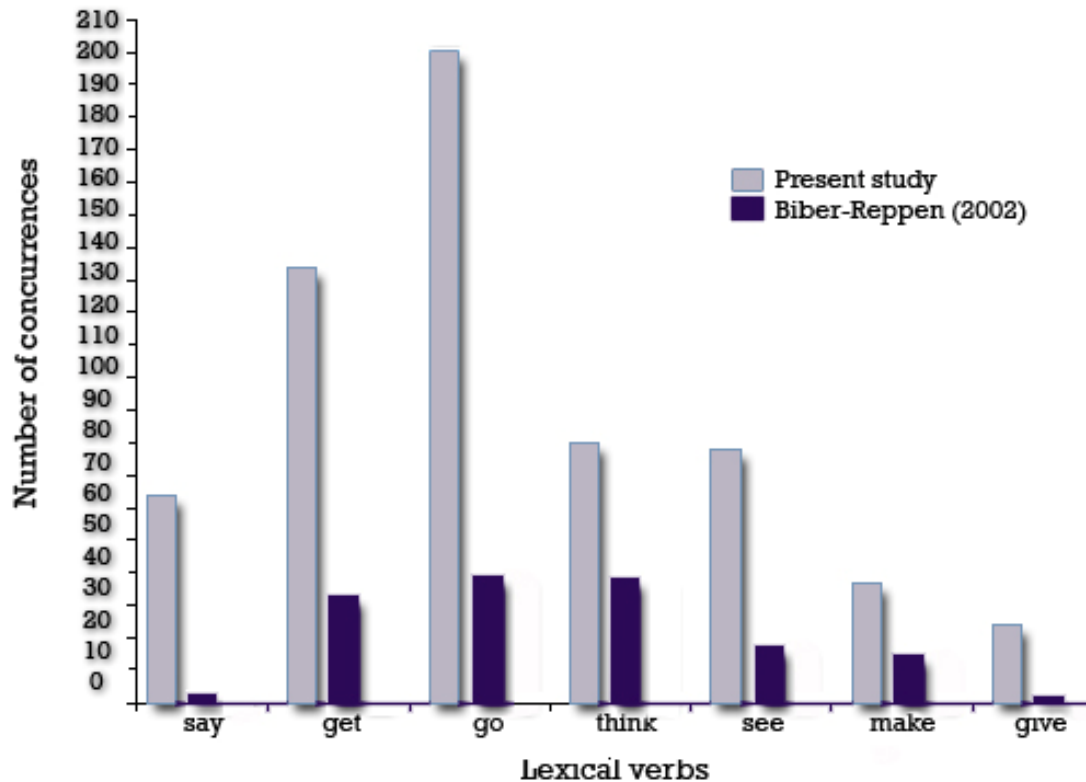
that seven of the twelve are absent from the sampled lessons (i.e. lessons on the present progressive tense and simple present tense) of the textbooks they surveyed.

An examination of corresponding sampled lessons for the present study revealed the presence of all 12 most common lexical verbs (see Figure 2). Of these verbs, only one, *mean*, was not used in either elementary level textbook in the discussion of the present progressive and simple present tenses. The lexical verbs *think* and *give* did

not occur in one of the elementary level textbooks (*Language Links*) but occurred in the other. In the remaining three intermediate level textbooks and three high-intermediate/advanced level textbooks, all 12 verbs appeared in the sampled lessons except *give* which was not used in one high-intermediate/advanced level textbook (*Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English*).

More detailed information on the seven lexical verbs Biber and Reppen (2002) reported as missing from the sampled lessons

(Continued from page 91)

of textbooks surveyed is presented in Figure 3. Data[4] on the frequency of the same verbs as they occur in corresponding lessons in the textbooks sampled in the present study are also provided. Although a direct comparison cannot be made since this study surveyed eight textbooks and Biber and Reppen surveyed six, the verbs are 2x–21x more frequent in the textbooks surveyed for the present study, which cannot be explained by the addition of two textbooks to the sample.

Overall, corpus-based textbooks did indeed better represent findings of corpus analyses conducted for the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999). In the first case study where adjectives were examined, Biber and Reppen (2002) discovered a mismatch between the frequency of nominal premodifiers as reflected in corpus analysis and textbooks surveyed. Despite these adjectives being fairly common and the second most common way of modifying other nouns, only half the textbooks they surveyed discussed these adjectives. Textbooks surveyed in the present study, though, found that six of eight textbooks included discussion of this topic, two even devoting entire units to the subject. Thus, one mismatch is nearly righted in textbooks based to some extent on corpus analyses.

In the second case study, the progressive aspect and simple aspect were examined. Again, Biber and Reppen (2002) found a mismatch: although the simple aspect is the most common by far in all registers according to corpus analysis conducted in the *LGSWE* (Biber et al., 1999), they found that the majority of textbooks surveyed introduce the progressive aspect before the simple aspect. Textbooks deemed corpus-based or corpus-informed fared better: the majority of textbooks introduce the simple aspect first.

In the third case study, the frequency of lexical verbs was examined. Corpus analysis reveals what the 12 most common lexical verbs in English are. Biber and Reppen (2002) argue that some are not included in the sampled lessons in the textbooks surveyed, although a recount reveals that said verbs do appear in the sampled lessons, though infrequently. In comparison, the same 12 lexical verbs appear and occur frequently in the sampled lessons of the textbooks surveyed for this study.

One mismatch identified by Biber and Reppen (2002) remained, however. Biber and Reppen found a mismatch between the frequency of participial adjectives in the textbooks they surveyed and the frequency indicated by corpus analysis: five of the six textbooks surveyed included discussion of this topic despite this type of adjective being comparatively uncommon. Textbooks surveyed for the present study placed a similar emphasis on this type of adjective: six of the eight textbooks surveyed covered this topic.

Discussion

Findings indicate that the corpus-based and corpus-informed grammar text-

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4. Based on a recount of data in Biber and Reppen (2002); some small differences were observed.

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books examined in the present study better reflect findings of corpus analyses as compared to grammar textbooks neither corpus-based nor corpus-informed. In the first case study where adjectives were examined, 75% of textbooks in the present study cover the topic of nominal adjectives (the second most common adjective type) as opposed to only 50% of the textbooks in Biber and Reppen (2002). In the second case study, nearly 63% of the textbooks in the present study present the far more common simple aspect before the less common progressive aspect in comparison to slightly over 33% of textbooks in Biber and Reppen's study. Finally, in the third case study, although all 12 of the most common lexical verbs (as identified in the *LGSWE*, Biber et al., 1999) occur in some of the sampled lessons in both Biber & Reppen's (2002) and the present study, upon closer examination, differences emerge. In the present study, as in Biber and Reppen, three verbs do not appear in the sampled lessons in at least one textbook; however, in the present study, only three books are involved, whereas in Biber and Reppen five books are involved. In other words, in only one of six textbooks sampled by Biber and Reppen do all 12 of the most common lexical verbs appear in the sampled lessons compared to five of eight textbooks in the present study. Furthermore, *say*, "the most common verb overall in the LSWE Corpus and the only verb to be extremely common in more than one register" (Biber et al., 1999), is missing from the sampled lessons of four of the six textbooks sampled in Biber and Reppen (2002) and none of those sampled in the present study.

The one mismatch identified by Biber and Reppen (2002) that was not redressed by corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks relates to the topic of participial adjectives. In Biber and Reppen, five of the six textbooks sampled include discussion of the topic; in the present study, six of the eight textbooks include discussion of the topic. Because participial adjectives are "relatively uncommon in comparison with adjectives and nouns" (Biber et al., 1999), one might expect coverage of this topic to be delayed to the intermediate level or advanced level, but in the present study, one textbook at the elementary level covers the topic while one at the high-intermediate/advanced level does not. In Biber and Reppen (2002), the only low intermediate textbook does not include discussion of participial adjectives which, although Biber and Reppen question the inclusion of these adjectives over nominal premodifiers, seems understandable. Overall, though, corpus-based or corpus-informed grammar textbooks do better reflect findings of corpus analyses.

Given the call in literature for earlier and more frequent presentation of frequent patterns/lexis in language learning textbooks (Biber & Reppen, 2002; Di Vito, 1991; Hunston, 2002; Koprowski, 2005; Lee, 2006), one might expect corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks to be the answer to the call. Textbooks based on corpora and corpus research would, theoretically, be in an excellent position to be objective in their portrayal of the language and be free of authors' intuition and introspection (Hunston, 2002; Quirk, 1974; Svartvik, 1992). As indicated in the present study though, this is not necessarily the case.

When determining which topics to cover, most of the textbooks surveyed in the present study do indeed offer discussion of the more frequent patterns; however, one ele-

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mentary-level textbook does not include discussion of the common adjective (the most common type); one elementary level textbook includes the topic of nominal adjectives (the second most common adjective type) while the other does not; and one intermediate level textbook does not include the topic of nominal adjectives while the other two do. It is unclear why an elementary-level textbook that is corpus-based or corpus-informed would disregard the adjective type that corpus analysis reveals is "by far the most common type of noun premodifier" (Biber et al., 1999, p. 589). Nominal adjectives present a more complicated problem. Although they occur frequently (Biber et al., 1999), they "express a bewildering array of logical relations" (Biber et al., 1999, p. 590; Quirk, 1974) and thus might be challenging particularly for language learners at the elementary level. Given what research shows about this type of adjective, then, it is interesting that one elementary textbook author chose to discuss this difficult topic while the other, perhaps rightly, did not. The one intermediate level textbook that avoids the topic is the only one of the three textbooks surveyed at this level to do so. One might expect learners at this level would be able to grasp the concept of these adjectives and, given the wide range of meanings the adjectives can cover, it seems reasonable not to leave coverage to the advanced level textbooks.

This apparent differential use of corpus research is also evident in findings on aspect. Again, given what corpus analysis reveals, one would not expect to find any corpus-based or corpus-informed textbook that presents the progressive aspect before the simple aspect, the latter of which comprise

about 90% of all verbs (Biber et al., 1999). This problem is similar to that detailed by Di Vito (1991), who found more frequently occurring features not being presented before less frequently occurring ones (in the formation of negation) as well as frequent and uncommon features being presented alongside one another with no mention of frequency of use (object pronouns and relative pronouns). It is unclear why the authors of two textbooks surveyed in the present study could, aware of corpus research, include the progressive aspect in a chapter of its own before presenting the far more common simple aspect.

Finally, it is noteworthy that all 12 of the most common lexical verbs were not found in all sampled lessons in the present study. Given that this group of 12 verbs "account for nearly 45% of all lexical verbs in conversation" (Biber et al., 1999, p. 373), one might expect that of all the textbooks surveyed, the elementary level textbooks in particular would include all 12 of these verbs, but in fact both elementary level textbooks surveyed in the present study failed to include at least one of the 12 verbs; one book actually missed three. Koprowski's (2005) call for textbooks to include lexis that occurs frequently seems to have gone at least partially unheeded. While the textbooks surveyed in the present study do fare better than those surveyed in Biber and Reppen (2002), being corpus-based or corpus-informed does not ensure that even something as basic as lexis matches findings of corpus analysis.

Although use of corpus research, that is, use of accurate descriptions of language, should result in "better-informed decisions" (Gavioli & Aston, 2001) and more principled materials, that is not necessarily the

case, as the present study shows. Overall, corpus-based and corpus-informed grammar textbooks do seem to represent findings of corpus research more accurately; however, the majority of textbooks surveyed in the present study had at least one area of mismatch between the information it presented and findings of corpus analysis for the three features investigated. Therefore, before choosing a corpus-based or corpus-informed textbook, it might be marginally helpful to take a closer look at the book to determine whether the authors detail how findings of corpus research were used in the writing of the textbook and also how explicit findings of corpus research are made throughout the book for the benefit of teachers and learners alike.

One of the implications of the outcomes of this study is that materials writers may need more direction as to how best to incorporate corpus research into textbooks designed for language learning: of the five books written for materials writers examined in the present study[5] only one included discussion of the use of corpus data in language learning. Perhaps the lack of available guidance is, at least in part, to blame for the finding that not all textbooks surveyed in the present study equally reflect findings of corpus research. In the meantime, descriptive grammars based on corpus research are available; it is hoped that materials writers make use of these references so as to portray a more accu-

rate picture of the language rather than convey an inaccurate picture and misleading prescriptive rules. This sentiment is echoed by Lee (2006) who argues against prescriptivism and for a representation of language in textbooks that is more in step with how the language is currently being used.

Given the importance of vocabulary development for language learners, it seems crucial for materials writers to ensure that choice of lexis is purposeful. Particularly at lower levels, uncommon words should not be included at the expense of more common ones. Koprowski (2005), who studied the usefulness of lexical phrases in three English textbooks, found almost one third of such phrases to be of limited use based on frequency and registers they occurred in. The present study, though it surveyed only corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks, still found that three textbooks missed the mark, so to speak, as far as lexis goes. Koprowski's (2005) recommendation that lexis included in textbooks be "maximally useful" and exclude "superficial and rare items" (p. 331) is clearly well founded.

Given the present study's finding that textbooks that are corpus-based or corpus-informed do not equally reflect findings of corpus research, those choosing such textbooks could make more informed decisions if authors explicated precisely how a corpus or corpus research informed their writing. For

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5. Byrd's (1995) edited volume *Material Writer's Guide*, McDonough and Shaw's (2003) *Materials and Methods in ELT*, McGrath's (2002) *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*, and Tomlinson's (2003) edited volume *Developing Materials for Language Teaching* do not list the word *corpus* or *corpora* in their indexes; only Tomlinson's (1998) edited volume *Materials Development in Language Teaching* lists the term *corpus data* in its index and has 10 entries under it.

instance, in addition to stating which corpus was used, it is important for users to know whether a corpus or corpus research informed the choice of subjects, lexis, examples, order of subject presentation, and so on. Requiring authors to be more transparent in how a corpus or corpus research was used in materials writing would empower users to be able to make more informed decisions when choosing textbooks. For example, users wishing to avoid textbooks presenting learners with what Lee (2006) calls a "monolithic concept of 'English'" (p. 86) would likely prefer a textbook that draws on both a corpus and corpus research for a variety of purposes rather than one that only uses excerpts of a corpus in examples scattered through a textbook. I would encourage authors to be forthcoming as to precisely how their textbooks are corpus-based or corpus-informed and to share with users decisions motivated by corpus research.

Conclusion

To conclude, in terms of the three case studies from Biber and Reppen (2002), this study shows that corpus-based or corpus-informed grammar textbooks written for English language learners more closely reflect, at least to a point, findings of corpus analysis. At the same time, though, a few questionable decisions seem to have been made by authors, which leads to the question of precisely how corpora and corpus research are being used in the decision making processes involved in materials writing. Some decisions may have been made based on corpus analysis, while others may have been made based on intuition. No doubt, more research on corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks will en-

able materials writers and publishers to become better informed as to the strengths and shortcomings of their textbooks which might, in turn, lead to more informative textbooks that better reflect actual language use.

Another question to be addressed in future research is how corpus-based or corpus-informed textbooks relate to ELLs progress in L2 development. The need for language descriptions and models in textbooks that are truly reflective of actual language use has been voiced by researchers, language teachers, and learners alike. Biber and Reppen (2002), for example, argue that to facilitate the language learning process "frequency should play a key role in the development of materials and in the choices that teachers make in language classroom" (p. 206–7). Whether the availability of language learning materials that integrate pedagogy and research to provide a better fit between language models used in the classroom and language encountered in the real world results in more successful language learning remains to be explored in future research. ❖

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Appendix A

Textbooks Used in Biber and Reppen (2002)

Elementary to Low-intermediate	*Basic Grammar in Use* (Murphy, Altman, & Rutherford, 1989)
Intermediate	*Focus on Grammar* (Fuchs, Bonner, & Westheimer, 1999
	Fundamentals of English Grammar (Azar, 1992)
	English Grammar in Use (Murphy, 1986[6])
Intermediate to Advanced	*Grammar Dimensions 3* (Thewlis, 2000)
	Oxford Practice Grammar (Eastwood, 1992)

6.   The 1986 edition could not be located for the current study; the closest available, 1985, was used.

Appendix B

Textbooks Used in Comparative Analysis

Elementary to Low-intermediate	*Collins COBUILD Elementary English Grammar* (Willis & Wright, 20003
	Language Links: *Grammar and Vocabulary for Self-Study* (Doff & Jones, 2005)
Intermediate	*Collins COBUILD Intermediate English Grammar* (Sinclair (Ed.), 2004)
	Developing Grammar in Context (Nettle & Hopkins, 2003)
	English Grammar in Use (Murphy, 2004)
Intermediate to Advanced	*Exploring Grammar in Context* (Carter, Hughes, & McCarthy, 2000)
	Longman Advanced Learners' Grammar (Foley & Hall, 2003)
	Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber et al., 2002); *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English Workbook* (Conrad et al., 2002)

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8:45 – 9:30	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions
9:30 – 10:00	Refreshment Break	Refreshment Break	Refreshment Break
10:00 – 11:00	Plenary & Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Plenary & Concurrent Sessions
11:00 – 12:45	Annual General Meeting	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions
1:00 – 2:00	Concurrent Sessions	Plenary & Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions
2:30 – 3:15	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions
4:00 – 4:45	Concurrent Sessions	Concurrent Sessions	
5:00 – 6:15	Welcome Reception		
7:15 – 8:00		Gala Dinner and Entertainment	