An Overview & Analysis of the Multiliteracies Pedagogy in Language Learning:
Literacy-based Language Learning

A Project

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DEDICATION

My teaching philosophy has been profoundly influenced by the work of Dr. Hugh Richmond on nontraditional methods in engaging students with literature. I first took his Shakespeare and film class where we compared diverse cinematic interpretations. Later, I was privileged to perform the role of Eve in Dr. Richmond’s Milton project, a dramatic production of *Paradise Lost* performed at Berkeley, and included in a documentary he produced for the BBC. I have never experienced poetry at a deeper level. Later Dr. Richmond advised me on my undergraduate thesis project wherein I produced an Aristophanes play as a contemporary sitcom. These projects showed me that traditional literary analysis provides only limited comprehension of text, that deeper meaning is revealed through interaction with the text in transformative activities. My study of the Multiliteracies pedagogy is an exploration of theory substantiating this approach in language learning. And so it is to Professor Richmond I dedicate my thesis. He planted the seeds.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Guadalupe Valdéz, my first linguistics instructor, inspired this thesis project. I have, over the years, pondered feedback she gave me on a case study I did on a low proficiency L2 performing at a high level in a mainstream GATE English class. I have, as well, found the research Dr. Valdéz has done on the effects of language policy to be especially valuable in explaining many of the contradictions and injustices I encountered as a classroom teacher.

As a graduate student, my understanding of the needs and challenges facing language students has been greatly enriched by the phenomenal research on heritage learners done by Drs. Maria Carreira and Elena Kagan. I am indebted to Dr. Carreira, who, in her class on teaching heritage learners, presented a rich repertoire of methodologies for teaching heritage learners, including project-based learning.

I want to thank Dr. Frieda Fichtner for providing so much of my foundational knowledge in second language acquisition, and especially for introducing me to the Multiliteracy pedagogy for language learning. Since that introduction, I have, of course, read writings by the New London group, particularly Drs. Cope and Kalantzis. Dr. Claire Kramsch’s book and articles on this topic have also provided powerful illumination. I am also grateful to Dr. Richard Kern for the brilliant, insightful analysis of literacy in his two books. Additionally, I acknowledge the profound influence Paolo Freire’s ideas on the transformational power of literacy have had on my ideas about teaching.
I am very grateful to my thesis project advisor, Dr. Sarah Anderson, for her mentorship and guidance with this project. She is an amazing language teacher I intend to emulate. I also want to thank Dr. Saundra Wright for providing feedback and serving on my committee, as well as providing caring, wise direction in the ESL tutoring center. Finally, I want to thank Dr. Kimihiko Nomura for being such a flexible, understanding supervisor for this culminating project.

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Language learning at the university level has for some time been divided in theoretical and practical approaches, with lower division courses taught communicatively following precepts of linguistic and psycholinguistic theory, while upper division courses have been content-based, and teaching has largely been based upon literary theories. The Multiliteracies pedagogy is an attempt to bridge that chasm, to unify instruction through a text-centric approach that presents language as meaning-making design decisions to be analyzed and artfully employed. Meaning, from this perspective, is situated. Deciphering
meaning requires comprehension of disparate relational aspects and points of view, and
effective meaning-making requires consideration of audience perception. It is a pedagogy
that endeavors to inculcate literate, translingual, transcultural agility.

But language learning is a cognitive process, individual in nature, and influenced
by affective factors like identity and investment. This pedagogical paper will analyze
Multiliteracies pedagogy in relation to these factors and professional mandates, and con-
sider how it aligns with diverse research. Additionally, efficacy of literacy-based instruc-
tion will be evaluated in a case study, and principles of the Multiliteracies pedagogy will
be applied to lesson and course design. Finally, curriculum and implementation issues
will be considered in relation to reflection on personal experience in language learning
and teaching, and to an extended observation of a Spanish class.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. A New Design for Language Learning

Language learning is undergoing a major paradigm shift from communicative to literacy-based instruction. This change in pedagogical orientation reflects growing frustration over learning outcomes that demonstrate scant linguistic competence beyond basic interpersonal skills in the majority of university students. Enrollment in upper division language courses has also declined dramatically in recent years. Experts blame these problems on the structural organization of university language programs, and on the focus of communicative teaching on the banalities of functional and situational content. Additionally, educators, confronted with findings proving that high level proficiency requires seven to ten years, have reevaluated the goal of students achieving near-native proficiency, and found it to be unrealistic. The overall objective of language learning, for some time, has been communicative competency, linguistic proficiency in accepted socially situated usage. Today’s language experts contend that objective is inadequate for our era, and proffer, instead, the goal of translingual and transcultural competency, the ability to nego-
tiate between and across languages and cultures, the ability to mediate and translate with
cultural sensitivity, and the ability to discern contextual factors affecting discourse.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy has been proposed as a suitable framework for de-
veloping higher proficiency and translingual and transcultural competency. It is a text-
centric approach that involves students using the target language to “interpret, transform,
and think critically about discourse”. (Paesani, et al., 2016, p.3) Whereas communicative
language teaching (CLT) focused on negotiation of meaning in socially prescribed situa-
tions, the Multiliteracies pedagogy views meaning making as design choices, and re-
volves around analysis and employment of these design choices.

The communicative approach borrowed the nurturing model of first language
development, whereas Multiliteracies utilizes a team-based, analytical model. It seems
reasonable to assume that acquisition would be altered by variants in affectual environ-
ment. Does adult language learning require the emotional scaffolding of first language?

Additionally, language learning is, by nature, extremely variable, and influenced by iden-
tity and investment factors. Does the Multiliteracies pedagogy allow for differentiation?

Moreover, much research in language learning centers on reducing cognitive load to fa-
cilitate the exhaustive demands of language acquisition. The analytical emphasis of Mul-
multiliteracies presupposes a heightened cognitive load which seems incompatible with the
processing needs of language acquisition. The construct of multiliteracies, additionally,
built in no repetition and minimizes modeling. It has been assumed heretofore that, as
these practices are necessary components to first language acquisition, they are also req-
quisite to second language acquisition. Is adult language learning so different from first
language acquisition that these factors can be ignored?

In this pedagogical paper, I will address these issues as I survey the historical
foundation of Multiliteracies pedagogy in the broad view of language learning, consider-
ing research in second language acquisition, writing, literacy, and cognitive psychology
in relation to professional mandates. I will, as well, discuss the use of Multiliteracies in
relation to other current methodologies in a case study from my own experience teaching
English Language Development. Finally, I will present the course design for a Multilit-
eracies-based university level writing class targeted to second language learners, and I
will discuss how this design enacts professional mandates and theoretical principles.

But language learning is a cognitive process, individual in nature, and influenced by af-
fective factors like identity and investment. This pedagogical paper will analyze Multilit-
eracies pedagogy in relation to these factors and professional mandates, and consider how
it aligns with diverse research. Additionally, efficacy of literacy-based instruction will be
evaluated in a case study, and principles of the Multiliteracies pedagogy will be applied to lesson and course design. Finally, curriculum and implementation issues will be considered in relation to reflection on personal experience in language learning and teaching, and to an extended observation of a Spanish class.

Definition of Terms

• Language: The socially situated and systematic use of sounds (and sometimes signs) to express complex meaning, a unique capacity of humans.

• Literacy: the ability to understand and engage in meaning-making activities in all aspects of daily life.

• Comprehensible input: language that can be understood, whether or not the listener understands the discrete vocabulary or language forms. Language can be made comprehensible through visual and gestural clues, and through contextual linguistic clues.

• Proficiency: Degree of ability to accurately use language. Receptive and productive proficiency may vary.

• Communicative language teaching: Language teaching method employing purposeful, communicative activities as a primary means of instruction, with the ultimate objective of learners being able to use the target language functionally in authentic scenarios.

• Multiliteracies: Pedagogical perspective of literacy as socially situated and multimodal. Multiliteracies proponents argue language instruction should prompt learners to recognize patterns of meaning, patterns which learners can adapt and transform for their own
purposes. Additionally, the Multiliteracies approach focuses learners on analyzing how
meaning is affected by modality, context, purpose, and reception.

- Modality: Way in which information is encoded for presentation or communication
- Semiotics: The study of signs, arbitrary manners of conveying meaning
- Communicative competency: Ability to understand and utilize language in a socially
  appropriate manner for authentic purposes
- Translinguality: The ability to operate between different languages
- Transculturality: The ability to operate between different cultures
- Cognitive load: The amount of information working memory can hold at one time
- Constructivism: Educational theory that views language acquisition as a dynamic
  process of accretion, adaptation, and hybridization of existing knowledge
- Schema: a pattern of thought or behavior that the human mind uses to organize cate-
gories of knowledge

Limitations of the Study

Analysis of this pedagogy is based upon the framework of the pedagogy as presented in A
Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching, along with related
research, and personal teaching experience with a similar approach. The analysis does not
include data on learner outcomes from classes employing this methodology. Conclu-
sions, as such, are purely hypothetical.
1. Theoretical Underpinnings of Language Acquisition

For many years teachers thought the process of learning a second language required explicit teaching of grammatical structures, extensive drilling, and memorization of rules and patterns. In these methodologies, cultural study was mostly limited to desultory examination of stereotypical customs and folklore, with brief exposure to works of art, literature, and historical episodes from the target culture. Serious reevaluation of these audio-lingual, grammar-translation, and cognitive methods began in the 1960s in response to Noam Chomsky’s ideas on the natural capacity of humans to generate unique utterances through a discrete combinatorial system utilizing an innate executive function he termed “Universal Grammar” (UG). He argued that language development “could be better understood as the growth of cognitive structures along an internally directed course under the triggering and potentially shaping effect of the environment.” (1980, p.3) Linguistic ability, he explained, emerges naturally with exposure to language in a social setting at a young age. Access to this
UG seemed to drop off at puberty. This critical development period was initially attributed to the lateralization process in brain development:

Later cognitive psychologists conjectured that declining neuroplasticity and memory capabilities also contribute. The critical period thesis hypothesis has been buttressed by studies of stunted language development in individuals deprived of socialization in their young childhood, most notably “Genie.” (Fromkin, et al, p. 102; Ellis, 1997, p. 67-68; Gopnik et al, 1999, p. 254-408). Since then, researchers have observed that even deaf children naturally develop complex grammar when socialized, and, in at least one situation, spontaneously create a novel language in order to facilitate that instinctual ability. (Oppenheimer, 2013, p. 256 & 259)

In the 1980s Stephen Krashen extended Chomsky’s ideas to second language acquisition, proposing that second language, like first language, emerges naturally through extensive exposure to comprehensible input in the target language:
“...we acquire language and develop literacy when we understand messages, that is, when we understand what we hear and what we read, when we receive “comprehensible input” Language acquisition is a subconscious process; while it is happening we are not aware that it is happening, and the competence developed this way is stored in the brain subconsciously. (2009, p.81)

Krashen, also, advanced the Monitor Hypothesis which separated the cognitive function of language acquisition from the “monitor” function of correcting and editing speech. In Krashen’s view, the monitor function impedes oral language fluency, but he conceded that it was helpful for some individuals. Krashen proposed, additionally, in the Affective Filter Hypothesis that environmental and emotional factors can obstruct language acquisition. In his Input Hypothesis, he further elaborated on communicative input, explaining that for growth to occur, input had to be targeted to just beyond the learner's zone of proximal development in interlanguage, what he termed “I + 1”. Finally, Krashen proposed that language competencies developed, invariably, in a natural order, irrespective of teaching. Krashen’s ideas were presented as a comprehensive language instruction curriculum in the book, *The Natural Approach* (1983), a collaboration of Terrell and Krashen.

A teaching revolution ensued as a result of this new conception of language acquisition as facilitated through immersive experience in authentic meaning-making.
The drills, rote memorization of vocabulary lists, and decontextualized conversational phrases, and translation were replaced by “communicative language teaching” pedagogy, or CLT, which employed immersive activities generally focused on interpersonal communication, but nominally addressing “big and little C” culture of the target language.

Great emphasis was placed on creating a low stress environment, and direct instruction of grammar was discouraged. Many textbooks, however, continued to be organized according to the traditional sequence of grammar instruction, and some teachers resisted adopting a communicative approach, while experts equivocated. Terrell (1991) argued “that some informal evidence exists that adults do not automatically use input to develop competence in the way Krashen has suggested” and that “it may also be the case that a conscious knowledge of grammar may play a greater (or even lesser) role in language acquisition and processing than Krashen posits”. (p.53) While conceding that research supported Krashen’s hypothesis of the immutable natural sequence of language acquisition, as well as the fact that grammar study is not an “important factor in second language acquisition”, Terrell, nonetheless, suggested that explicit grammar instruction (EGI) can be beneficial as an advance organizer of language forms, and scaffolds learners in the segmentation and binding processes of comprehension of structures. Additionally, he posited
that EGI can facilitate meaning-form focus in complex morphology, as well as provide
reliable grammatical feedback for monitoring, a strategy he cited as commonly employed
by adult learners. (p. 58-60)

In the early 1980s educators became increasingly concerned about lagging acade-
mic performance of language learners (L2s). Cummins (2008) noted that English lan-
guage learners attained conversational fluency after about two years of instruction, but
generally did not attain peer-level proficiency for academic purposes for 5-7 years:
“Conversational aspects of proficiency reached peer-appropriate levels usually within
about two years for exposure to English but a period of 5-7 years was required, on aver-
age, for immigrant students to approach grade norms in academic aspects of English
(e.g., vocabulary knowledge).” (p. 72-73) He termed conversational fluency “basic inter-
personal communication skills” (BICS), and academic proficiency “cognitive academic
language proficiency” (CALP), and noted that CALP is acquired in the social context of
schooling and entails “command of the oral and written registers of schooling”. (2000,
pp. 67) Cummins argued that the conflation of these two different proficiencies resulted
in educational policy that exited L2s from bilingual and ESL programs before they had
attained the necessary proficiency to be successful in “context-reduced” instruction. Sub-
sequent to this research, ESL and bilingual programs initiated content-based language learning and sheltered instruction to better scaffold L2 learning, and new placement and exit exams were developed incorporating criteria that considered the particular linguistic demands of academic tasks. This widening perspective of the language learning endeavor in the United States was reflected in the renaming of English as a Second Language (ESL) to English Language Development (ELD).

Language policy at this point became fraught with politics. Nativist “English Only” proponents vocally opposed expansion of language programs to provide longer periods of support for L2s. At the same time, evidence was piling up that L2s, at the middle and high school level, were increasingly being "locked into ESL ghettos from which they seldom exit" as “movement between regular and college prep classes and ESL/Sheltered classes is generally limited.”(Valdés, 2004, p. 26) Valdés blamed “…conflicting definitions and conceptualizations of academic language” and further stated that “limited understanding of bilingualism and of the academic demands made by academic interactions will lead to the continued segregation of language minority children even after they have reached a stable level of bilingualism”. (p.10) To address these issues, Valdés called for restructuring of L2 teacher training and L2 reclassification procedures.
She also noted as problematic the lack of consistency between theoretical models in the
different facets of English language instruction: ESL, Bilingual, TESOL, and mainstream
English instruction.

During this period, the notion of “academic English” itself was assailed by
academia and community activists, who asserted that the imposition of this standard priv-
ileged the ruling class that spoke this particular variety of the language. Demands were
made for the recognition of the validity of nonstandard “Englishes”, for more inclusivity
in literature selections, and for sensitivity and curriculum adapted for the special needs
of students speaking non-standard varieties of English. In 1996 the schools of Oakland,
California declared “Ebonics”, known to linguists as African American Vernacular Eng-
lish (AAVE), as “the primary language of African American children”, and subsequently
required that Language Arts curriculum development implement a contrastive analysis
approach to language learning that treated “Ebonics” as a valid, systematic language, at a
par with standard English. Popular opposition was fierce, but linguistic experts prevailed
in convincing policy makers that AAVE, indeed, manifested a distinct linguistic structure
from standard English, and that teaching students to recognize these differences could
improve the dire outcomes of African American students in reading and writing. (Rickford, 1999, p. 273).

A radical reappraisal of writing instruction was also underway, partly in response to the highly critical 1963 NCTE Report, “Research in Written Composition”, (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones & Schoer). Prior to the 1960s, writing instruction was product-oriented, and focused on the application of prescriptive grammar. In the 1970s and 1980s instruction, instead, focused on modeling and practicing the writing process utilized by expert writers. Emphasis was placed on inculcating practices of brainstorming, peer review, revision, and the development of personal voice. As well, the teacher’s role evolved from expert, fount of knowledge, and critical editor, to facilitator of collaborative communities of practice. Process-oriented writing instruction, however, produced limited outcomes. Applebee (1986) noted that “process-oriented instruction easily degenerates into an inappropriate and lockstep formula” (p. 102). He advocated a reconfiguration of writing instruction that prompted student agency in rigorous problem solving. Valdés (2004) called for content-centered writing instruction that focused on helping students develop ideas. (p. 30) Hairston (1982) argued for writing evaluation to focus on the degree of success in achieving intent. She also cited the emerging view of writing as a re-
cursive process that facilitates intellectual growth, and reflection. In the 1990s critics, as well, challenged the socio-political “agenda” of English writing instruction, and its role in perpetuating colonial and hegemonic social stratification. Additionally, research documenting differences in the way L2s engaged in the writing process prompted calls for a less ethnocentric, more multiculturally sensitive pedagogy. (Silva, 1993, pp. 2-3) At the same time, however, educators were challenged to devise instruction for diverse learners that would develop discourse strategies appropriate for university success.

Within the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), educators were becoming increasingly aware of the limitations of an approach limited to comprehensible input (CI), even if meaningfully rich and engaging. Swain and Lapkin documented the plateau of French students using CLT methodologies in their 1995 study. They cited the prominent role of output, rather than input, and focus on form, in the development of high levels of proficiency, noting that “conscious knowledge of rules is associated with greater L2 accuracy”, and that the “communicative need” of output tasks forced learners to “think about the form of their linguistic output”, moving them “from semantic to grammatical processing”. (pp.372-373) Swain subsequently became an influential proponent of the necessity of “pushing” cognitively rich output to provoke deeper processing of language
than input-oriented strategies facilitated. She urged a metacognitive output approach that prompted students to “notice” gaps between intended meaning and reception, analyzing the structural differences between learner utterance and conventional usage,

…the meaning of ‘negotiating meaning one's message' needs to be extended beyond the usual sense of simply 'getting one's message across'. Simply getting one's message across can and does occur with grammatically deviant forms and sociolinguistically inappropriate language. Negotiating meaning needs to incorporate the notion of being pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately. (Swain, 1985, pp. 248-9 [in Swain, 2005, p. 642])

During this era, research in cognitive psychology introduced consequential data about learning, including particularly salient findings about processing limitations of working memory. Piaget, in 1952, published his influential work, The Origins of Intelligence in Children, in which he proposed that children construct knowledge in a building block fashion, constantly assimilating and accommodating their existing understanding. Piaget described these blocks of understanding as schema, “a cohesive, repeatable action sequence possessing component actions that are tightly interconnected and governed by a core meaning.” (p. 7) Miller, following up on this idea, in 1955, hypothesized that humans circumvent memory limitations through grouping of information into meaningful
units. He noted that working memory can only effectively process “7 + or - 2” items at time, unless information is organized into “chunks”:

In order to speak more precisely, therefore, we must recognize the importance of grouping or organizing the input sequence into units or chunks. Since the memory span is a fixed number of chunks, we can increase the number of bits of information that it contains simply by building larger and larger chunks, each chunk containing more information than before… Our language is tremendously useful for repackaging material into a few chunks rich in information. I suspect that imagery is a form of recoding, too, but images seem much harder to get at operationally and to study experimentally than the more symbolic kinds of recoding. It seems probable that even memorization can be studied in these terms. The process of memorizing may be simply the formation of chunks, or groups of items that go together, until there are few enough chunks so that we can recall all the items. (p. 10-12)

Conversely, Schiffren & Atkinson (1968) proposed a model of human information processing that posited sensory input as going into a short term memory bank where, if it is “rehearsed”, is subsequently encoded in long term memory. Otherwise, the input is supplanted by new information, is discarded, or decays. Baddeley & Hitch (1974) redefined short term memory as a limited capacity processing unit they termed “working memory”.

Working memory, in their view, is composed of separate systems: the visuospatial sketchpad which processes visual and spatial information, the phonological loop which processes verbal information, and the episodic buffer which acts as a backup bank and interacts with long term memory. These subsystems are supervised by the “central execu-
Sweller subsequently introduced his “Theory of Cognitive Load” (1988), wherein he recommended limiting cognitive demands on working memory so as to optimize learning.

Central to Cognitive Load Theory is the notion that working memory architecture and its limitations should be a major consideration when designing instruction. The most important learning processes for developing the ability to transfer acquired knowledge and skills are schema construction and automation. According to Cognitive Load Theory, multiple elements of information can be chunked as single elements in cognitive schemas, which can be automated to a large extent. Then, they can bypass working memory during mental processing thereby circumventing the limitations of working memory. Consequently, the prime goals of instruction are the construction and automation of schemas. However, before information can be stored in schematic form in long-term memory, it must be extracted and manipulated in working memory. Work within the cognitive load framework has concentrated on the design of innovative instructional methods that efficiently use the working memory capacity. (Paas, et al., 2004, p. 63-64)

Sweller (1988) identified cognitive load elements as intrinsic, referring to the inherent difficulty of content; extraneous, distracting or superfluous stimuli; and germane, mental resources used for automatization and storage of input as schema in long term memory. Effective instruction, in his view, minimized extraneous and intrinsic cognitive load. Germane cognitive load, he argued, could be minimized with careful instructional design.

In his Theory of Multimodality (1998, 2000) Mayer noted that cognitive load was decreased if information was presented in separate sensory modalities, and that trans-
fer, or retention, was increased with use of dual modality of input transmission, particularly with use of audio and visual modality together. That effect was undermined, however, when information was presented in a redundant fashion, as with the presentation of text identical to audio narration. He recommended “pre-training”, preparing learners for a lesson by first teaching them necessary terms and presenting key concepts. In this way students have schema, or context, to interpret and understand the lesson, and intrinsic cognitive load is subsequently reduced. Mayer observed, as well, that cognitive load was reduced with spatial and temporal contiguity of presentation content, and the use of enhancement strategies that “cued” learners to focus on key points. In accord with previous research, Mayer recommended segmentation of input. He noted the importance of pre-assessment of knowledge as cognitive overload occurred when ascertainment of expertise was imprecise. Mayer’s research focused particularly on multimedia application, an instructional aspect which has had dramatic impact with the technological revolution. His research in that field showed that uptake was improved with learner control over progress, that a combination of words and graphics was optimal, and that retention was improved with a friendly, conversational voice. Interestingly, his research noted that performance was not improved by inclusion of visual representation of the narrator.
Not all cognitive psychologists accepted the information processing model, however. Craik and Lockhart proposed, instead, a “Levels of Processing” model. They theorized that sensory input that is structural or phonemic is shallow processed through rehearsal, and is retained for a relatively short term. Deep processing of input, and encoding into long term memory, occurs with semantic elaboration rehearsal, when meaningful analogies or images are connected to the input. Craik and Tulving’s follow-up study in 1975 showed that learners demonstrated better recall with deep processing, semantic elaboration rehearsal. Linking learning to multiple associations has been shown to produce greater recall and transfer.

Memory relies on encoding and retrieval, so learning designers need to think about how the material gets into long-term memory, but also about what the learner can do to retrieve it later… Asking your learners to do something with the information causes them to retain it longer and it increases the likelihood that the information will be encoded into long term memory. The organization of long-term memory has an impact on a learner’s ability to retrieve material. The material will be easier to retrieve if it is grounded in a rich context and accessible in multiple ways (i.e. on multiple shelves). Matching the emotional context of learning to the emotional context of retrieval improves the likelihood that the learner will be able to successfully use the material. Storytelling leverages an existing mental framework, and therefore information given in story forms can be easier to retain than other types...There are many different types of memory, and utilizing multiple types can improve the likelihood material is retained. (Dirkson, 2016, 120-121)
Modern conceptions of learning have been greatly influenced, as well, by sociocultural views of education, especially Vygotsky’s “Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development”. Vygotsky (1978) viewed meaning creation within social interaction as the critical determinant in cognitive development. Vygotsky also introduced the concept of “zone of proximal development” (p. 86), which refers to a learner’s capability with assistance of an expert, a transitional stage that leads to proficiency. Bruner (1976) expanded upon this idea, suggesting that educators purposefully consider implementation of instructional support or “scaffolding” that is gradually withdrawn as learners develop proficiency:

> It involves a kind of “scaffolding” process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts. This scaffolding consists essentially of the adult “controlling” those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner’s capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence. The task thus proceeds to a successful conclusion. We assume, however, that the process can potentially achieve much more for the learner than an assisted completion of the task. It may result, eventually, in development of task competence by the learner at a pace that would far outstrip his unassisted efforts. (Wood, Bruner & Ross, p.90)

Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989), in concert with Lave, promoted “situated cognition”, the idea that knowledge is inextricably linked to the activity, culture, and context in which it is produced and used. In their view, “cognitive apprenticeship” is a more authentic, valuable, and utilitarian means of learning as students “need to be exposed to the
use of a domain's tools in an authentic activity -- to teachers acting as practitioners and using these tools in wrestling with the problems of the world”. (p. 38) Lave and Wenger (1991) observed apprenticeship situations and subsequently theorized that learning is optimized with engagement in communities of practice, “community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise”. (Wenger, 1998, p.45) Wenger specified three requirements for viable communities of practice: commitment to a domain of competence, sustained relationships between participants, and a shared practice culture. Social participation and identification with the community are transformative in Wenger’s view as community “refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities” (Wenger, 1999, p.4).

Cognitive psychology’s influence on modern pedagogy, including second language acquisition, has been considerable. As Derry (1996) points out, “Most educational and cognitive psychologists today believe that all meaningful learning is a form of knowledge construction.” (p. 169) Moreover, the sociocultural basis of learning is accepted, along with the conceptual tenet of the role of the instructor in scaffolding schema
development. Constructivists, however, diverge in ontological perspective. Derry distinguishes modern information processing theory from radical constructivism, and views cognitive schema theory (CST) as having “significant potential for building conceptual bridges” between these two views of cognitive constructivism. She observes that constructivists diverge as to whether they view knowledge as socially situated (radical constructivism) or an individual process (information processing). She also points out that constructivists differ in epistemological orientation with ideologies anywhere between “the pure empiricist notion that mind is shaped by nature in a relatively passive way” to the radical view that “all knowledge is perspectival, the result of purposeful activity-based construction on the part of learners.” In between, she notes, are “various hybrid information-processing hypotheses that explain thinking in terms of interactions between data-driven environmental influences on the one hand and deliberate, reflective mental construction on the other hand.” (p. 164)

Modern information processing-based practice is premised on the conception of input being filtered through working memory by an executive controller, and then either stored in long term memory, or discarded. Knowledge is viewed as declarative or procedural. Elaboration and organization are seen as the primary engine of declarative learn-
ing, whereas composition and skill-building are utilized for developing procedural knowledge. Reflection is a component in both types of learning. Instruction is organized around the development of mastery in sequential objectives, and expertise is assessed by performance in authentic, domain-specific activity. Much of contemporary pedagogy, including language instruction, implements this construct.

Radical, or “strong” constructivism proceeds from Piaget’s schema theory and the guiding principle that “understanding comes about through reflection, and reflection is a process that students must carry out for themselves.” The job of the teacher is “fostering reflective abstraction”. Direct transmission of content is viewed pejoratively.

“Greater value is placed on knowledge that is a product of social sense-making processes in which students become engaged, activities involving debate, design, and modeling. Thus, in constructivist classrooms, specific concepts and ideas then not to be taught directly through explanation but may be “named” as students construct them in the context of work and discussion”. (Derry, p. 166)

University level composition studies have largely adopted a “strong” constructivist pedagogy, and these ideas are strongly impacting educational reform. The multiliteracies movement is built upon this cognitive architecture.

Cognitive schema theory (CST) proponents see working memory as the site of thinking and learning, a process that occurs when prior experience and knowledge
(schemas) are activated through instructional input that enables the learner to contextualize new information, and assimilate and accommodate it in the creation of new schemas that are then stored in long term memory. CST distinguishes three basic types of schemas: 1) memory objects (cognitive representations, either simple or complex); 2) mental models (schematic organizational strategies); and 3) cognitive fields (patterned memory activation resulting from particular stimuli). Research has demonstrated that attention to cognitive field facilitates understanding, and can be critical to comprehension.

...interpretation and later recall of experience is strongly influenced by background, domain, situational, and world knowledge activated in the learner’s cognitive field. The interpretive dominance of the cognitive field was found to increase as discourse became difficult or ambiguous. In fact, if learners’ active cognitive fields did not supply an interpretive context prior to presentation of instruction, difficult or ambiguous lessons were not understood or learned. In brief, when events in the world are incomplete so that standing alone they make little sense, they are “filled in” by learners’ sense making efforts, which cause ideas from the active cognitive field, and these additionally generated elaborations, to become part of the interpretation and memory for the discourse. (Der-ry, p. 167)

For language learning, CST research has obvious implications. Input can only be comprehensible with substantial consideration of learners’ lack of context to organize cultural and linguistic cues. Moreover, learning to compensate for this lack of context is fundamental to progress. Instructors need to help
students develop interpretive strategies and openness to new ways of thinking.

In fact, The 2007 MLA Report, created to provide an action plan for a university language learning system in crisis, stipulated the inculcation of a “translingual” and “transcultural” mindset as the central mission of language learning:

The language major should be structured to produce a specific outcome: educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence. Advanced language training often seeks to replicate the competence of an educated native speaker, a goal that postadolescent learners rarely reach. The idea of translingual and transcultural competence, in contrast, places value on the ability to operate between languages. Students are educated to function as informed and capable interlocutors with educated native speakers in the target language. They are also trained to reflect on the world and themselves through the lens of another language and culture. (p. 3-4)

The report also recommended a reconfiguration of university language learning, implementing an integrative, multiple path, content-based approach to language learning.

Kramsch, an author of the report, in her book *Culture and Culture in Language Teaching* (1993), advocates for interdisciplinary culture classes with attached discussion sections in the target language. This kind of crossing boundaries is in stark contrast to the discipline-specific approach of radical constructivists. Kramsch promotes a vision of language as meaning-making through social interaction. She advocates for clear establishment of the
link between linguistic form and social structure, and reflection upon both target and native culture. (p. 205-206)

These changes were proposed as a remedy for plummeting enrollment in upper division language education at the university level. In addition, the MLA Report called for a unified approach to language learning across all four years of education. Language is usually taught communicatively for two years at the university level. Upper division classes, however, are content-based, usually focusing on literature, linguistics, or history. Critics contend that this “bifurcation” of language studies insufficiently prepares students to contend with the sudden demands to read and write academic level discourse in upper division content-based courses (Warner, et al., p. 120). At the same time, upper division students are not aided in the continuing quest for language acquisition. It is assumed that immersion will result in incidental learning. Research has not substantiated that claim, as Hulstijn (2013) explains,

Readers do not always notice unfamiliar words when reading a text. If they do, guessing the meaning is not always possible. Moreover, many people possess poor inferencing skills. Thus an incidental task (i.e., a task without forewarning that a retention test will follow) allowing learners to process new vocabulary only superficially or even skip new words altogether will produce little knowledge of new words.... The last ten years have witnessed the publication of dozens of studies (e.g., Peters, Hulstijn, Sercu, & Lutjeharms, 2009), giving
empirical evidence for the claim that the low incidence of vocabulary acquisition through reading ("input only") can be substantially boosted by techniques that make students look up the meaning of unknown words, process their form–meaning relationship elaborately, and process them again after reading ("input plus"). (p. 4)

**New Visions of Literacy**

Meanwhile, the education field as a whole, began to see literacy in a new way. The previous model of literacy privileged the written word as presented in academic discourse. Historically, literacy entailed acquisition of this mode of expression, familiarity with the accepted canonical works, and adherence to the accepted interpretation. Paolo Freire’s political view of literacy, in particular, has questioned this paradigm, and his ideas have had a major influence on contemporary education. He challenged the traditional model as the “banking” or “digestive” conception of literacy (1970). Freire advocated, instead, a liberational role for education, and literacy, in particular. He rejected the traditional passive role of students as empty vessels to be filled, and argued that teachers do not have a monopoly on knowledge, saying:

The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teaches. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on "authority" are
no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it. Here, no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are "owned" by the teacher. (p. 80)

Additionally, Freire stipulated that literacy could not empower students unless it was connected to their world. Instead of bridging worlds, traditional literacy practices, he argued, alienated the disenfranchised.

As understood in this concept, man is a passive being, the object of the process of learning to read and write, and not its subject. As object his task is to "study" the so-called reading lessons, which in fact are almost completely alienating and alienated, having so little, if anything, to do with the student's socio-cultural reality. (1985, p. 46)

In Freire's view, canonical works, with their inherent marginalization of the poor, demoralize, exclude, and reinforce social stratification. Literacy education, in his view, should instead focus on its transformational capacity:

Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators.” (1970, p.53)
In 1994, the New London Group, a multinational group of renowned literacy educators, created a new literacy pedagogical framework, Multiliteracies, that applied Freire’s social justice ideas in conjunction with Wenger’s communities of practice. With a stated purpose to “rethink the fundamental premises of literacy pedagogy in order to influence practices that will give students the skills and knowledge they need to achieve their aspirations,” they also considered the changing nature of work in which the hierarchical command structure of Fordism was now obsolete. In this new era of “fast capitalism”, they argued, the workplace culture is built on teamwork and mentoring, and workers are expected to be multi skilled and flexible. Moreover, the collaborative environment demands greater interpersonal skills and employs more use of informal discourse. The new workplace, as well, is a place of democratic pluralism, where diversity is seen as an asset, a condition necessitating the cultivation of “cultural and linguistic repertoires” to facilitate collaboration.

In particular, the New London Group addressed linguistic diversity in “Englishes”, rejecting the notion of inculcating “standard” English, promoting, instead, the necessity of negotiating meaning between “Englishes” in our globalized world.
The New London Group, as well, challenged the traditional privilege bestowed on the written word.

Meaning is made in ways that are increasingly multimodal -- in which written-linguistic modes of meaning are part and parcel of visual, audio, and spatial patterns of meaning… new communications media are reshaping the way we use language. When technologies of meaning are changing so rapidly, there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitutes the ends of literacy learning, however taught. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1994, p. 5-6)

The dynamic contextualization of meaning is construed as the most fundamental premise in multiliteracies theory, which views textual meaning as situational, deriving from purpose and audience, but also from intertextual, often multimodal, associations.

Instruction in literacy, then, focuses on describing and explaining “patterns of meaning” as expressed in linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial, and or multimodal representation.

Design is the central metaphor in Multiliteracies pedagogy. Meaning-making, in this construct, is selecting elements from "Available Designs" and either combining or altering them (hybridization), or referentially juxtaposing them in “intertextual chains” of meaning. Either of these processes transform the text, producing the “Redesigned”.

The Redesigned is founded on historically and culturally received patterns of meaning. At the same time, it is the unique product of human agency: a transformed meaning. And, in its turn, the Redesigned becomes a new Available De-
sign, a new meaning-making resource. Through these processes of Design, moreover, meaning-makers remake themselves. They reconstruct and negotiate their identities. Not only has the Redesigned been actively made, but it is also evidence of the ways in which the active intervention in the world that is Designing has transformed the designer. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1994, p.23)

The act of constructing meaning, in this view, results in personal transformation. Indeed, the instruction of literacy, itself, is presented as a means for designing “social futures”.

Behaviors and attitudes, and ways of interacting and looking at the world are hypothetically transformed as a result of the instructional model. It is hoped, as well, that meaning-making agility empowers students and leads to expanded “life chances”. Moreover, the methodological construct is presumed to lead to fuller participation in societal pursuits as the learner comes to identify as a competent interpreter and maker of meaning, able to exert agency to design, as well, personal futures from the “available designs”, and to apply multiliteracies analytical skills to flexibly adapt to changing circumstances.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy is implemented in a flexible structure in which teachers are encouraged to develop a repertoire of activities that integrate analysis and practice in the design process. Instruction is focused on four factors:

- Situated Practice based on the world of learners’ Designed and Designing experiences,
- Overt Instruction through which students shape for themselves an explicit metalanguage of Design;
- Critical Framing, which relates meanings to their social contexts and purposes; and
- Transformed Practice in which students
transfer and re-create Designs of meaning from one context to another. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1994, p. 31)

Predicated on the idea that knowledge is "situated in sociocultural settings", the multiliteracies pedagogy immerses learners in communities where, under the tutelage of "expert learners", they can enact authentic literacy practices. This Situated Practice engages learners in activating previous knowledge and leveraging community resources to participate in disciplinary discourse.

In Overt Instruction students critically analyze their learning experience under the scaffolded guidance of the instructor who helps facilitate awareness of nuance. It is in this segment of instruction that learners develop a metalanguage to describe and explain content. “The goal here is conscious awareness and control over what is being learned -- over the intra-systemic relations of the domain being practiced.” (Cope & Kalantzis, 1994, p. 33)

Learners analyze relational context in the Critical Framing component, exploring and comparing distinct perspectives grounded in divergent ideologies, and they interpret cultural and social ramifications. It is, in this stage, that students articulate an understanding of the complexities of textual meaning.
Through Critical Framing, learners can gain the necessary personal and theoretical distance from what they have learned; constructively critique it; account for its cultural location; creatively extend and apply it, and eventually innovate on their own, within old communities and new ones. (Cope & Kalantzis, 1994, p. 34)

The culmination of the learning process, from a Multiliteracies perspective, results when the learner utilizes the unit content, or “Available Designs”, in transformative ways -- creating the “Redesigned”. This Transformed Practice is an opportunity for the learner to reflect upon the text and to reinterpret it in new ways. Cope and Kalantzis note that “There is ample evidence that people do not learn anything well unless they are both motivated to learn and believe that they will be able to use and function with what they are learning in some way that is in their interest.” (p. 33) In Transformative Practice the learner is motivated to deeper comprehension, and becomes invested with the text as it is related to a product of personal expression.

**Language Learning in a Rapidly Changing World**

The aftermath of the horrific events of 9/11 prompted a reckoning on the need for multilingual and multiculturally sensitive experts as an issue of national security. The National Security Language Initiative resulted, with significant investment in training programs and exchanges for students and teachers primarily in less commonly taught
languages of vital security interest. (Powell & Lowenkron, 2006; Spellings & Oldham, 2008) At this same time, migration of peoples throughout the world increased dramatically, and global tourist and business travel became increasingly common as airlines proliferated. Television, in particular, along with music, radio and print media, broadcast the styles and proclivities of the dominant western cultures. Few regions were un contaminated by the spread and domination of globalization and its lingua franca, English.

In the past, foreign language proficiency was cultural capital, a demonstration of privilege and refinement. In the globalized world, language proficiency became economic capital:

Knowledge of a FL has become what Heller and Duchene (2012) call an “added value”, that enables speakers to better meet their consumer needs such as bringing their message across and getting the commodity they want, but it can also give the additional symbolic power and prestige. (Kramsch, 2014, p. 301)

While policy experts were exhorting the critical need for greater understanding of diverse global cultures, foreign language proficiency went from being a style accessory to a commodity, to be traded upon for economic advancement.

The advent of the Internet accelerated these cultural changes, and complicated foreign language instruction with new ways of using language. Genres of communication proliferated and overlapped and meshed with greater modality and hybridity, and
CLT’s static stance towards language was proving inadequate for preparing students to deal with this dynamism. Critics also lambasted CLT’s narrow focus on interpersonal communication, its “touristic” approach to culture, and its lack of critical thinking. As Kramsch (2014) noted,

“… globalization has changed the conditions under which FLs are taught, learned, and used. It has destabilized the codes, norms, and conventions that FL educators relied upon to help learners be successful users of the language once they had left their classrooms. These changes call for a more reflective, interpretive, historically grounded, and politically engaged pedagogy then was called for by the communicative language teaching of the eighties. (p. 301-302)

At the same time, the status of Spanish as a competing world language rose, as a result of rising populations of Spanish-speaking immigrants in the United States, a common border and history, and the realization of marketability in speaking the third most commonly spoken language in the world. Increasingly educational experts began, as well, to realize that heritage learners, not just of Spanish, were a tremendous national resource, and that nurturing their linguistic abilities should figure into world language objectives. Findings of The National Heritage Language Survey (2011) indicated a clear need for differentiated instruction in this population as heritage learners (HLs) have unique backgrounds resulting in disparate linguistic problems with both English and the heritage language.
On the basis of these findings, we have argued that a community-based curriculum represents an effective way to harness the wealth of knowledge and experiences that students bring to the classroom and to respond to their goals for their [heritage language] HL. Finally, the survey shows that classes with HL students are characterized by substantial student diversity. To deal effectively with issues of diversity, it is critical for instructors to understand their students individually as well as collectively and apply this knowledge to differentiating instruction by learner needs. (Carreira & Kagan, p. 64)

American language policy finally recognized the multilingual, multicultural richness of its own population.

It also became apparent, at this time, that the objective of achieving near-native competence was unrealistic for most undergraduate FLs. Research in cognitive science indicated a period of many years for most students to achieve high level proficiency. “It may take as long as 7 to 10 years for nonnative speakers to reach the average level of performance by native speakers on standardized tests, as found in the Collier (1987) and Collier and Thomas (1988) studies.” (Collier, 1989, p. 525) As a result, experts, in tandem with the MLA report by the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Language, began calling for a new paradigm modeled on the cultural and linguistic dexterity of multilinguals:

“What does it mean to take the multilingual individual as the model of instruction? It means the focus is no longer on discrete and testable skills but on processes: Awareness of Language with a capital L, cognitive flexibility, metaphoric imagination, symbolic
Researchers began exploring ways to develop this translinguality, along with transculturality, retaining aspects of the communicative approach that had proven productive of interpersonal skills. At the same time, there was renewed interest in form-focused, grammar-oriented study as a means to develop academic language. (Ellis, R. 2001) CLT methodologies remained extremely popular, however, as various educators amassed cultish followings (and financial gain) by promoting idiosyncratic communicative teaching techniques largely unsubstantiated by research. Kramsch notes the divergent emphases of World Language Standards and the MLA ad hoc committee report, along with emerging research in cognitive psychology, as muddying perspectives on language learning. Moreover, she observes, language experts have conflicted as to whether they accept language acquisition as employing an “information processing” model of input and output, or view language development as a product of socialization and apprenticeship. She suggests, instead, an ecological perspective “which captures the dynamic interaction between language users and the environment as between parts of a living organism” as a way of “bringing together frames from different disciplines to illuminate the complex relationship under investigation”. (2002, p. 3)
In 2000, Kern, in his groundbreaking book, *Literacy and Language Teaching*, proposed a similar “synthesis” approach that would “reconcile communicative language teaching approaches, with their emphasis on face-to-face verbal interaction, with the development of learners’ ability to read, discuss, think, and write critically about texts.” He argued for “enveloping the ‘textual’ within a larger framework of the ‘communicative’” (p. 5) Kern, furthermore, advocated for a multiliteracies perspective, with its “expanded” view of literacy as “not only the ability to produce and interpret texts, but also a critical awareness of the relationships between texts, discourse conventions, and social and cultural contexts.” (p. 6) This metalinguistic focus on relational aspects of language, he asserted, would yield a “a balanced perspective on form and meaning”. Moreover, he contended, it recognized the dynamic, contextual nature of all language. (p.10) Kern’s new conception of language pedagogy embraced the central metaphor of the New London Group’s Multiliteracies theory -- design -- as a way of framing language study, and of establishing a mindset open to the critical reflection necessary to create transculturality:

“...foreign language reading instruction ultimately needs to provide some mechanism for allowing students to recognize mismatches between their own background knowledge and the cultural assumptions made in the text, as well as to foster in learners a stance of receptiveness to unfamiliar meanings involving new or modified schemata. A major goal for the literacy-based classroom, then, is to encourage the sharing and comparison of multiple perspectives on what
meanings seem ‘natural’, in order to illuminate the underlying schemata that have given rise to those particular perspectives.” (p. 96-97)

The concept of “Available Designs”, thus, facilitates self-reflection, and appraisal of multiple perspectives as choices in response to position, stance and objective, subject to interpretation based on situational, historical, and cultural factors. Moreover, the focus on the “Redesigned” empowers learners to exert agency in reformulating meaning, an inherently political perspective. As Kern states,

“..both reading and writing can be seen as acts of meaning construction, in which individuals make connections between textual elements and existing knowledge structures to create new knowledge structures. This view takes us beyond a conception of literacy as a process of decoding and encoding information, and leads us to a conception of literacy as a process of creating and transforming knowledge. (p. 29)

Within the broad scope of text, Kern cites the linguistic value of stories, especially, as exemplars of language use, authentic culture, and memory. Moreover, he notes, the cultural focus on particularity evokes a more comprehensive, less stereotypical perspective, and a window into the mindset of native speakers. Finally, stories elicit empathy through reader identification with characters and their dilemmas. He observes, as well, that the “evanescence” of oral discourse limits critical reflection of form. The complexity of language, he explains, is more comprehensible in written discourse.
Kern’s views on language and literacy, in particular, along with the foundational theories of the New London Group and Kramsch’s ideas on culture, have strongly influenced the pedagogical construct proposed in Paesani, et al., *A Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate For Foreign Language Teaching* (2016). This curriculum for foreign language teacher education proposes a comprehensive, four year university curriculum that encompasses communicative, cultural, and form-focused goals, but orients instruction around meaning design in a manner that facilitates transcultural and translingual flexibility and agility. It employs the New London Group’s methodology of Situated Practice, Overt Instruction, Critical Framing, and Transformative Practice in text-centered critical analysis. This approach “emphasizes interdependence among speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills and focuses students’ attention on the interactions between linguistic form, situational context, and communicative and expressive functions” (Kern 2003, p. 51 in Paesani, et al.)
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

Methodology

I will implement four steps in analyzing the Multiliteracies Pedagogy. First, I will compare how the pedagogy aligns with professional mandates. Then I will evaluate the articulation of the Multiliteracies pedagogy with recent findings in cognitive psychology. Third, I will consider affective issues in second language acquisition. Finally, I will extrapolate results of literacy methodology in a case study.

1. Aligning Methodology with Pedagogical Mandates

Language educators in the United States today orient their pedagogy around divergent methodologies and theories, but universally recognize the authoritaria guidance of the ACTFL Standards for World Language in setting pedagogical goals and evaluating outcomes. Language proficiency, in this document, is viewed as a component of the overall objective of intercultural competence. Notably, ACTFL stresses the interdisciplinary nature of language learning, the importance of considering diverse perspectives, and the necessity of authentic interaction. The implication of these goals is that language learning is becoming less insular, and contextualized in the broader acade-
mic community and world. Classroom instruction is seen as just one facet of the language learning experience.

The 2007 MLA report, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World*, is a response by language experts to the drastic decline in enrollment in language classes at the university level. This document is a call for change. It indicts the incoherence of the university language course sequence, and proclaims the learning outcome of near-native proficiency to be unrealistic, and the goal of communicative competency to be inadequate. The MLA Report proffers a new overall goal for language learning: translingual and transcultural competence, the ability to negotiate between languages and cultures. The MLA Report also calls for more critical rigor, and deeper and broader cultural immersion to be instantiated in an integrated curriculum that “situate(s) language study in cultural, historical, geographical, and cross-cultural frames; that systematically incorporate(s) transcultural content and translingual reflection at every level…” In addition, the MLA Report advocates for multidisciplinary courses and policy and organizational changes in the university.

*A Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching*, published in 2016, presents a comprehensive methodological approach to applying Multilit-
eracies theory in language learning. It is highly critical of CLT as a foundational framework of instruction, but recognizes the value of communicative activities as techniques to be integrated into a multiliteracies curriculum. A Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching addresses the goals and standards of the ACTFL Standards for World Language, and formulates a concrete plan for implementing the goal of translingual and transcultural competency. It is a reflective, metacognitive, and analytical approach in which students interact with and transform “texts”. Language use is seen as designing meaning.

The ACTFL World Readiness Standards for Learning Language proposes a multi prong approach to language pedagogy that focuses on the Five C’s, overall goals in language learning: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities. A set of eleven standards are specified, as well, each specifying performance outcomes aligned with overall goals.

The Communication goal addresses competency in three different kinds of interaction: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational, and requires proficiency in conversation, informational reading and writing, interpretation, and presentation of information. It stipulates that a primary objective of language study is for students to
“Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes.” CLT methodologies have been very successful in producing the BIC level proficiencies associated with the goal of Communication, particularly, in oral expression. As previously noted, CLT techniques have been less successful in developing academic writing and interpretive skills. Most CLT practice, for better or worse, has revolved around this Communication goal, focusing instruction on task-based situational and interpersonal interactions.

...many scholars have argued that CLT’s various transformations over the past decades have resulted in a watering down of the concept of communicative competence and of the content of FL instruction... Although we do not advocate a complete abandonment of CLT or communicative competence, we do believe that the role these concepts plan in FL programs should be reconsidered, given the problems related to departmental bifurcation, curricular coherence, and pedagogical approaches identified here. We see two main limitations of CLT in its current form: (1) its heavy focus on oral, functional language use, and (2) its superficial treatment of cultural and textual content...

When speaking takes priority over other language modalities, reading and writing typically function as secondary support skills, developed to practice language forms rather than to interpret cultural content. A further result of this practice is that language is used in generic contexts to achieve instrumental goals such as ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions, or describing a memorable party one attended. (Paesani, et al. 2016, p. 7)

Cultural competency is addressed by the Cultures goal, which enjoins learners to cultivate deep understanding of the how, what, and why of cultural practices and prod-
ucts, to “investigate, explain, and reflect upon the relationships” between practices and perspectives, as well as products and perspectives. Critics of CLT’s implementation of this goal have noted its tendency towards superficial, touristic, snapshot perspectives of culture. Kern, in particular, has argued that deep understanding of culture must be focused on particular experience to not devolve into stereotypes. He contends that “stories” provide an authentic, contextual perspective, and he promotes culture be taught through analysis of text rather than the situational interactions common in CLT.

It is not knowledge of an assortment of scattered facts that helps people to become culturally literate, but rather understandings of the contexts and relationships that bring coherence to facts. It is knowledge of the stories and ideas that connect facts and make them meaningful, not the facts themselves, that can help learners to contextualize and interpret what they read. (p. 31)

Other critics maintain that traditional teaching methodologies like CLT decontextualize culture, and, accordingly, distort perspective. “Subjectivity [of speakers] is locked into the historical experience of groups” (Freadman, 2014, p. 368) or, in Kramsch’s words, “collective memories” enable us to “understand what a text relies on but does not need to say.” (2014, p. 301) Moreover, the idea of intercultural competency has become obsolete. Transculturality is now the goal of language learning: “The language major should be structured to produce a specific outcome: educated speakers who have
deep translingual and transcultural competence. The idea of translingual and transcultural
competence places value on the multilingual ability to operate between
languages.” (MLA Report, 2007, pp. 3-4)

A robust language curriculum, according to ACTFL, also involves students in
making conscious “Connections” between disciplines and evaluating diverse perspec-
tives. The university construct of language learning, in recent years, as mentioned earlier,
has employed a two part structure to language learning, with communicative activities in
the first two years, and content-based classes in linguistics, history, and humanities in the
second two years. Diverse perspectives, as such, are evaluated on an interpersonal level
during the communicative section, and through other disciplines in upper division cour-
ses. This “tendency to use teaching practices that separate form from meaning and com-
munication from content and context (Swaffar & Arens, 2005 in Paesani p. 2) separates
language learning from authentic use, and fails to prepare students for the analytical rigor
of upper division classes. There is an implicit assumption that “Meaning is treated as a
property of the text, and therefore unproblematic once the reader has mastered the text’s
linguistic elements. It is assumed that a solid knowledge of normative textual forms will
provide the necessary foundation for students’ success in subsequent literary and cultural
studies.” (Kern, 2000, p. 3) The MLA Report recommends that the bifurcated university language learning structure be replaced by a coherent curriculum to develop translingual and transcultural competence.

“in which literature, film, and other media are used to challenge students’ imaginations and to help them consider alternative ways of seeing, feeling, and understanding things. In the course of acquiring functional language abilities, students are taught critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception. They acquire a basic knowledge of the history, geography, culture, and literature of the society or societies whose language they are learning; the ability to understand and interpret its radio, television, and print media; and the capacity to do research in the language using parameters specific to the target culture.” (p. 4)

The MLA report, however, has been criticized for not specifying a methodology that supports students in this endeavor. Nevertheless, CLT does not develop the kind of reflection and analytical skills necessary to express the complexity of transculturality. As Kramsch notes, transculturality “...requires sophisticated linguistic and political interpretation. Reflecting on the world and oneself means reflecting on the way that our and the Other’s realities mutually construct each other through symbolic systems like language, texts, films, and the Internet… (2010, p. 6) The Multiliteracies Framework proposes language instruction in an integrated literacy construct in which the learner engages in practice in-
interpreting, transforming, and thinking critically about discourse in reflective activities that connect the learner to the target culture.

It is, from beginning to end, about the traffic in meaning through reflection, translation, and an awareness of the power of language in discourse. By holding up a foreign linguistic mirror to our students’ familiar world, we are helping them defamiliarize this world and problematize communication across borders. We are not reinforcing their sense of linguistic or cultural universality; rather, we are engaging them in the vital necessity of translation, without recourse to the common language of shared economic interests and shared political beliefs but with the hope that what language has divided, language can also bring together.” (Kramsch, 2010, p. 19)

Facilitating learner ability to intellectually dissect and connect ideas across cultures and disciplines is basic to the language teaching mission, and fundamental to facilitating communication in any mode at an advanced level.

Kern promotes, as well, synchronous [internet-based] chat rooms as a rich means of fostering diverse perspectives within the classroom. Its unique “structure of participation”, he notes, develops multi-linearly in an associative manner. While the teacher may initiate a topic of discussion, direction of discourse arises spontaneously, and collaboratively, and without expectation of teacher approval. The construct, Kern found, elicited linguistic creativity and play, and resulted in high levels of student participation.
I found that students had over twice as many turns, produced two to four times more sentences, and used a much greater variety of discourse functions when working in synchronous conferencing [chat] than they did in oral discussion. Furthermore, the distribution and direction of turns differed radically in the two conditions, with much more direct student-to-student exchange in the synchronous conferencing condition. (1995, p. 241)

Kern notes that synchronous conferencing [chat] contributes especially to sense of audience, and the “readerly writing” perspective as students are “writing while thinking in terms of the ways one’s writing can be interpreted by a reader, or a variety of readers.”

Kern advises teachers, additionally, to print out transcripts of these chat sessions to be used for recursive Multiliteracies reflection on the discourse.

The Comparisons component of the ACTFL World Standards for Language Learning states that learners should develop insight into linguistics. That process should involve investigating, explaining, reflecting, and comparing languages. This standard reflects a reappraisal of the role of form-focused instruction, a facet of language learning devalued under CLT. Recent research suggests that students benefit from the development of metacognitive strategies in language analysis. (Ellis, 2006) Additionally, the Comparisons goal extends to culture, stating that learners should investigate, explain, and reflect upon differences and similarities between cultural concepts in the target culture and their own, a point of view consistent with the MLA report which stipulates learners should,
throughout their language education, be “trained to reflect on the world and themselves through the lens of another culture”. (MLA Report, 2007, p. 4)

The curriculum for the Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching is especially focused on the standard of Comparison. The basic premise of Multiliteracies theory is that language is meaning-making, and that all meaning is contextual, construed in relation to adjoining linguistic forms, and in relation to intent, audience, stance, and formal conventions.

Meaning design… is a dynamic process of discovering form-meaning connections through the acts of interpreting and creating written, oral, visual, audiovisual, and digital texts. To establish such form-meaning connections, we must attend to the written, verbal, and visual forms of a text, the text’s structure and organization, and our own cultural knowledge and experiences. Because establishing form-meaning connections depends on both the content of a text and how learners interact with it, we can say that design has a dual function: It may refer to the process of creating or interpreting a text or to a particular product -- that is, the text itself and its configuration of structures. (Paesani, p. 23: Paraphrasing Kern, 2000)

As well, meaning is viewed as intertextual and affected by historical and cultural context. Considering these various factors in interpreting and making meaning, and comparing alternative structures and contexts, is the basic activity in the Multiliteracies methodology. In the Overt Instruction stage of instruction learners employ metacognitive strategies to analyze discourse and reflect upon its role in meaning making. Language
production is viewed as conscious choices from a repertoire of tools to be utilized for particular affect and purposes. Analysis of texts develops expression of cognitive concepts and reveals culture, and historical experience and points of view. The Critical Framing component of the methodology, in particular, encourages learners to compare diverse ways of envisioning or responding to a text, and to reflect upon these possible designs in relation to the original text.

Saliently, the Multiliteracies curriculum attempts to bridge the development of CALP level discourse with the interpersonal, situational domains of communicative practice, comparing strategies of engagement in different registers, genres, purposes, and modes. Meaning design, in the Multiliteracies view, is inherently a multimodal enterprise. Cope and Kalantzis list six ways of “patterning” meaning: Linguistic Design, Visual Design, Audio Design, Gestural Design, Spatial Design, and Multimodal Design. Language, or meaning design, from this perspective, is a constant process of “hybridity and intertextuality” (Cope & Kalantzis) that reflects what Kern calls the “constant tension between convention and innovation” (Kern). Moreover, comparing divergent interpretations, and challenging conventional assumptions is considered, in Multiliteracy theory, as requisite to developing transculturality:
As we left the non-controversial waters of grammar-translation or even structurally-oriented ways of teaching foreign languages, and moved into more communicatively-oriented approaches, the concept of challenge-as-action was useful to stress the fact that learners had to learn how to act upon their environment, not just name it in grammatically and lexically correct sentences. However, foreign language education, in so far as it offers alternative ways of naming and interpreting the world, has to provide also challenges of the second kind, namely the opportunity to think through and to question existing practices. An educational philosophy that stresses only doing things with words runs the risk of helping maintain the social status quo; it has difficulty dealing with the teaching of culture, because cross-cultural competence, unlike pragmatic competence, is predicated on paradox and conflict and on often irreducible ways of viewing the world. (Kramsch, 1993, p. 240)

Communities, the final goal of the ACTFL World-readiness Standards for Language Learners, calls for learners to enact their linguistic and cultural competencies in participatory activities with multilingual communities at home and around the world.

Practical implementation of this standard has proven difficult for many instructors. The concept of community has largely, as a result, been limited to classroom settings devoid of representation by the target culture, except for the teacher who might be a native speaker. The “authentic” activities of CLT involve learners in mimicking encounters with the target culture, possibly using authentic cultural products. The MLA Report calls for more genuine cultural interaction: expansion of study abroad, service learning, and internship programs, as well as campus-based multicultural organizations in order to facili-
tate student involvement with the target community and practice the kinds of negotiation
of meaning necessary for translinguality and transculturality. Moreover, the MLA Report
enjoins a broad view of community enactment, encouraging learners to engage in
translingual and transcultural discourse across disciplines. It advocates for in-
terdisciplinary courses taught in English, but supplemented by credit-bearing discussion
sections taught in the target language.

*The Multiliteracies Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching* addresses opportunities for interaction with target communities offered by the Internet, ex-
horting that it be used

...to generate, communicate, and negotiate meanings (1) through language, in-
cluding the many modes and features that often supersede linguistic expression
in digitally mediated texts; and (2) within various affinity spaces where indi-
viduals are connected by shared interest or endeavor, where knowledge is dis-
persed and distributed across people and platforms, and where learning takes
place through participation and collaboration with scaffolded assistance provid-
ed as needed. (p. 266)

Notably, *The Multiliteracies Framework for College Foreign Language Teaching* does
not specify how affinity participation can be integrated in classroom implementations.

Additionally, multitudinal sites connect learners with target language speakers for
classroom-based pen pal projects on the Internet. The challenge for teachers, with these
interactions, is to frame this authentic discourse in activities that foster critical reflection of language and cultural perspectives, to create “a dialogic space in which the processes of analysis and interpretation are modeled and co-constructed by the teacher and students together.” (Kern, p. 255) Kern models a particularly interesting Multiliteracies implementation of a pen pal interaction featuring a cross-cultural dialogue on the film, La Haine. (p. 249-256) The discussion ultimately becomes heated as cultural misunderstandings proliferate. Students have to negotiate diverse perspectives, and the conflict provides rich impetus for them to analyze the design of their messages, and to dissect where meaning broke down. In these kinds of activities, Community interactions engender critical thinking and metacognition, along with transcultural awareness.

The Communities standard also enjoins educators to foster autonomous lifelong learning, to guide students in setting goals, in monitoring and reflecting upon their progress. Proficiency in language results only after years of meaningful engagement in the language. Students must be encouraged in this endeavor. Neither CLT or Multiliteracies do much to facilitate autonomous learning. Articulation with Findings in
2. Articulation with Recent Findings in Cognitive Psychology

Does the Multiliteracies pedagogy facilitate the acquisition of language forms in a way that results in productive proficiency? The sheer complexity of language makes conscious learning and practical application of metacognitive knowledge a daunting task. Krashen contended that conscious “monitoring” of language use raises the “affective filter”, and impedes linguistic development. What we know about limits of cognitive load, as well, suggests that productive language proficiency is only possible with considerable schematic development, and with repetition. Barcroft (2004) identifies five principles for effective vocabulary acquisition:

(1) present new words frequently and repeatedly in the input; (2) use meaning-bearing comprehensible input when presenting new words; (3) limit forced output during the early stages of learning new words; (4) limit forced semantic elaboration during the initial stages of learning new words; and (5) progress from less demanding to more demanding vocabulary-related activities. (p.203)

Explicit modeling of language use is required to facilitate this intentional repetition. It is unlikely that unmodified multimodal literature, alone, would provide the necessary linguistic reinforcement. Strict, radical constructionists eschew direct instruction and modeling, and, like much of modern education, views the teacher’s role as facilitator of communities of practice. Certainly, the language teacher enacts this role in facilitating output-based practice activities in CLT classrooms. In CLT, however, this student-centered activity is linked to meaningful, comprehensible input, explicit modeling by the
instructor. Multiliteracies theory is predicated on the idea that students build meaning from previous experience and knowledge. Language learners, however, have few “Available Designs” for meaning-making at their disposal. In fact, processing linguistic knowledge through prior experience, the L1, can result in interference. To learn a language requires thinking and making meaning in a new cultural and linguistic mindset. In the L1, learners develop cultural and linguistic competency within a social context involving the guidance of a parent. In the L2, the mentorship and modeling of a teacher, the expert, is also critically important. The expert scaffolds learner progress from the interlanguage to the next level with rich input, and “pushes” cognitively rich output. Without this “I +1 (Krashen, 1983), learners plateau in language acquisition.

It is the frustratingly common experience of language learners to understand a complex discourse, but be utterly unable to articulate that understanding in the target language. Cognitive science is just beginning to unravel the complex processes of second language acquisition, but it is clear that productive fluency requires automatization of linguistic schemata. Krashen observes distinctly different processing locations in the brain for automatic, formulaic speech, and creative language:

“The neuro-linguistic evidence, then, points to the fact that automatic speech is neurologically different from creative language in that it is localized on both
sides of the brain, as opposed to just the left hemisphere, and can be preserved in cases of aphasia. If AS is related to routines and patterns, then routines and patterns may have a fundamentally different mental representation than other kinds of language.” (1981, p. 86-87)

Speakers, at all levels, utilize routine structures, in addition to creative language, in unplanned speech and other discourse. Formulaic speech is often functional or expressive of identity.

“L2 learners acquire a large number of formulaic chunks, which they use to perform communicative functions that are important to them and which contribute to the fluency of their unplanned speech... On the one hand, learners internalize chunks of language structure (i.e. formulas). On the other hand, they acquire rules (i.e. the knowledge that a given linguistic feature is used in a particular context with a particular function. In other words, learners must engage in both “item learning” and “system learning”... An explanation of L2 acquisition must account for both item and system learning and how they interrelate. (Ellis, R. 2001 p. 12-13)

L2 learners are especially reliant on routines for communication. Fillmore, in her studies of playground language, noted that L2 children made extensive use of automatized routines in their interlanguage, observing beginning students using routines in 52 to 100 percent of utterances. Notably, some of those students were still dependent on this formulaic language at the year’s end. Krashen, in discussing Fillmore’s work observed,

“Their use of routines and patterns was due to the fact that their communicative needs exceeded their linguistic competence, and they were forced to make the most of what they had. This resulted in the tremendous use of routines and pat-
terns...Patterns and routines may develop due to high frequency in input in advance of linguistic maturity, but such automatic speech is independent of the creative construction process... (1981, p. 97, 87).

Experts also cite the value of direct instruction in formulaic language in the development of academic language. (Zwiers, 2014, p. 50-52) Barcroft (2016) notes, “It has been estimated that over half of everyday communication consists of formulaic language.”

Formulaic language facilitates expression of complexity. It is a valuable crutch to scaffold intellectually difficult communication, “The greater the working memory demands of the processing task, the greater the need to rely on formulas” (Ellis, N., p.156). Krashen infamously championed a controversial reading method, Whole Language, in the 1980s. He introduced the premise that extensive reading in the L2 results in incidental acquisition of vocabulary and advanced level discourse. Various educators, building upon Krashen’s idea, and a false analogy with language acquisition, advanced the idea that learners can spontaneously develop reading ability if the learner is immersed in a rich reading environment. Proponents of Whole Language derided the instruction of phonics altogether. The methodology was proven a failure. It is generally understood today that writing is a technology, a complicated, artificially contrived, dynamic code that can only be learned with explicit instruction and practice. Certainly, L2 educators have a respon-
sibility to enlighten students to literacy intricacies of the target language, to help students build skills in interpreting and effectively using the increasingly complex code of written language. This focus, while valid for developing reading, writing, and analytical skills, does not result in language acquisition, however. Pinker (1994) calls language “an instinct to acquire an art”. (1) If we accept that proposition, then we must entertain the idea that a certain amount of discipline and repetitive practice is required to perform the skill “artfully” and automatically.

Kirsner (1994) has shown that there are strong effects of word frequency on the speed and accuracy of lexical recognition processes (speech perception, reading, object naming, and sign perception) and lexical production processes (speaking, typing, writing, and signing), in children and adults as well as in L1 and L2. He proposed a life-span practice model to explain these frequency effects whereby processing speed can be explained simply by reference to the power law of learning (Anderson, 1982; Ellis & Schmidt, 1997; Newell, 1990), which is generally used to describe the relationships between practice and performance in the acquisition of a wide range of cognitive skills. That is, the effects of practice are greatest at early stages of learning, but they eventually reach asymptote. We may not be counting the words as we listen or speak, but each time we process one there is a reduction in processing time that marks this practice increment, and thus the perceptual and motor systems become tuned by the experience of a particular language. The immediacy of oral discourse, as well, precludes much critical analysis of the grammatical context. (Ellis, N., p.152)

Research has clearly shown little success for incidental vocabulary acquisition because this exposure has limited repetition. Experts have concluded that a learner needs at least
ten to eighteen meaningful exposures to a word used in context before it is acquired, and
more for extended collocation of the word in sophisticated usage. (Uchihara, et al., 2019)

It can be assumed that proficiency with grammatical structures requires at least as much
instantiation, along with considerable practice.

3. Affective Issues in Multiliteracy Language Learning

The sociocognitive perspective of Multiliteracies positions language learning as
an intellectual process, but many language learners prefer a pragmatically oriented peda-
gogy that is more experiential than analytical, where students find their affective needs
met by a playful environment supportive of creative risk. Krashen’s Monitor Theory con-
tends that second language acquisition is impeded by inhibition and stress. In careful
consideration of this idea, CLT practitioners have made social bonding and play a priority
in instruction. CLT views the nurturing environment of first language instruction as an
exemplary model of supporting language growth. Multiliteracies employs, instead, a
model that replicates the social structure of interaction in the contemporary world of
work. Collaboration and consensus are emphasized. Individuality is subsumed in group
enterprise. Personal growth is evaluated as job performance (Transformed Practice).

While the academic rigor achieved through the Multiliteracies approach is laudable, its
social construct can be seen as impersonal and overly focused on preparing students for workforce needs.

Like Multiliteracies theorists, Norton (1995) argues that language learning should include discussion of historical and social factors implicit in language usage, factors which “support the interests of a dominant group within the society”. She argues that learners also need to assert themselves in genuine interactions. She sees success in language learning, thus, as critically dependent on establishing an “invested” learner identity that prompts the learner “to claim the right to speak outside the classroom”. Multiliteracies and CLT decontextualize language in classroom simulations of the real world where L2 participation is play, and motivation is created by the teacher and grades. The institution of school endows learners with membership in a community, purpose, and a structure that facilitates the language learning process, but the interactions are artificial. Outside the classroom, L2 engagement is often inhibited by identity issues, issues which mediate and often inhibit investment and personal transformation. Norton proposes bridging school and the real world language connections with the target language through “classroom-based social research”:

I define classroom-based social research (CBSR) as collaborative research that is carried out by language learners in their local communities with the active
guidance and support of the language teacher. In many ways, language learners become ethnographers in their local communities… learners will develop their oral and literacy skills by collapsing the boundaries between their classrooms and their communities… a crucial component of CBSR is the use of the written word for reflection and analysis. (p. 26)

As a means of facilitating investment and identity in language learning, many educators have recently employed innovative Project-Based Learning (PBL) endeavors to connect learners with local target language communities. At Brandeis University, Irina Dubanina's advanced Russian students interview elderly monolingual speakers of Russian about their past experiences in the war. These oral histories are later collected and bound into a book with accompanying photographs, and copies of the book are distributed to all participants. Students, in the process of collecting these stories, acquire cultural, historical, and geographical background about Russia, and they interact with native speakers in an authentic, valuable activity, with scaffolded professorial guidance, in collaboration with fellow students. Alegra Ribadeira, at Colorado State University, has similarly engaged Spanish students in gathering and publishing collections of folk remedies, stories, and recipes from interviews with the local Spanish speaking community. Recently students created a guide to dining published on the Internet.
Project-based learning has been shown to dramatically engage students, and can effectively be differentiated for variable proficiencies as learners work at their own pace, and exert agency in defining the project. The independent nature of the work enables teachers to work with individual students or to give mini-lessons to small groups. PBL naturally fosters teamwork as learners share experience and common purpose. A merged sense of cultural identity results as learners become linked to the target culture. These developments spur learner enthusiasm for language learning. Cultural knowledge is enriched, and language proficiency increases substantially as students are exposed to new registers, dialects, and vocabulary. Moreover, PBL employs authentic language tailored to local usage.

But there needs to be a move toward teaching for real language use. Not teaching for academic use or use of the language in a monolingual setting. We need to stop teaching monolingual Spanish. We need to teach Spanish to use in the U.S. and how to navigate the varieties used here, as well as navigating Spanish and English. We need to take a more local approach—the Spanish used where we are rather than the imagined other place. Different dialects of Spanish come here and share the space with English. Many Spanish speakers have 12 Dimension 2020 challenges in academic English use. So talk about English, talk about both languages. (Carreira, et al., 2020, p. 11-12)

Project-based learning requires that students take ownership of their learning. Learners have a degree of choice and are responsible to manage their time and monitor
their progress. They have to develop strategies to accomplish their goals. These skills of autonomous learning are especially valuable to language learners because language acquisition requires far more input time than classrooms can provide. To attain a high level of proficiency, students have to learn to teach themselves. The ACTFL Community Standards, in particular, address this need for learners to be able to self-monitor and reflect upon learning. Autonomous learning is additionally facilitated by the relationships created in PBL, relationships that often result in enduring communities of practice.

A diversity of proficiency is the norm in language classes, and progress in language development is naturally individual, influenced by myriad factors. Moreover, students have diverse goals in language learning. The reality of learning styles is debated today, but individual students clearly respond differently to methodologies. Moreover, particular language learners, such as heritage learners, have unique needs that require differentiated instruction considering identity and community. PBL provides a flexible curriculum and a community connection that affirms the heritage learner’s identity.

Today we embrace the idea of a growth mindset, believing that most students can succeed in accomplishing most of their learning goals -- but they might not all do it
in the same way. To facilitate this goal, we have to be open to different learning paths and different approaches to instruction.

4. Case Study

In 2016 I taught English Language Development (ELD) in a low income middle school in a small city in northern California. The student population of these classes was predominantly composed of heritage learners of southeast Asian descent, largely Hmong and Mien, and included a small percentage of Latinos. The population of the school and city, in contrast, was 80% white. Students were placed in this class because of scores on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) which endeavored to identify and serve students with deficiencies in reading, writing, speaking, and listening modes in English. All students whose home language was not English were required to take this test of English proficiency. Only these students. Some of the ELD students were among the highest academically performing in the school’s general population, yet they were forced to withdraw from their elective class, and shunted into ELD with second language learners to get remedial assistance. Understandably, the ELD students were disaffected. They resented the fact that their white peers did not have to take the CELDT test. And they felt stigmatized, American born, but clearly second class citi-
zens. Every one of those heritage learners, if they had the power, would have rejected the well intended intervention of ELD.

In this case study I will profile an eighth grade ELD class in which both a literacy-based and project-based learning approach were used. I will compare the outcomes of each approach with this population and consider theoretical implications.

The day before school started I was hired to teach five classes of Spanish at this middle school. Three weeks into the semester, I was summarily informed that my schedule had changed. I now had two Spanish classes and three ELD classes. The school, apparently, had compliance issues in their service of language minority students. The administration realized, upon viewing my resume, that they could use my ESL experience, along with my secondary English credential, to meet governmental requirements. Years before I had taught high school ESL to mostly refugee and migrant worker populations, and EFL in private academies in Spain. I had, at that time, never heard the term “heritage learner”, so I was initially confused when I discovered my new students were all native born Californians, and fluent in English.

I was not happy about my schedule change, but my new students were livid. Their schedules, also, had been reorganized, not to their liking. Moreover, they had started the school year thinking they had “graduated” out of ELD. They were thrilled to be
fully part of the general school population, and then they were yanked out. My students were angry, but, more than that, humiliated. They found placement in ELD mortifying.

I was given no curriculum or books to teach ELD (or Spanish, for that matter) so I felt free to experiment with these classes. Moreover, defusing the animus was obligatory to any meaningful instruction. I needed a curriculum these disaffected students could buy into, so I had them brainstorm suggestions for a class that would meet requisite standards. Upon recognizing that the school had no newspaper, the students seized on the idea of making ELD a journalism class. I went with it, but I also integrated a multiliteracies curriculum centered upon literature relevant to the cultural identity and interests of this population. In retrospect, I realize that the split focus diminished enthusiasm for the class. As a new teacher, however, I felt compelled to align my curriculum with other teachers at the school. Now, having studied about other project-based learning programs, I see that the language needs of heritage learners are optimally met by real world challenges like this newspaper, where students are invested in the outcome, and their identity is affirmed. Moreover, I realize now that the text-centered activities of a Multiliteracies curriculum can be implemented on media of all types, and incorporated into project-based learning. We privilege literature inordinately in academic study, often to the detriment of learning outcomes.
Creating any curriculum on the fly is difficult, but the logistical and technical issues of project-based learning present special challenges. When I did this journalism class, classroom access to computers was still limited. I had fourteen students in this class, but only ten chromebooks that I had to share with another classroom. No camera equipment. I let the students use my cellphone to take pictures because their phones were ancient and cracked for the most part. We had no desktop publishing software, so created work-arounds in Word. The students generated story ideas, and volunteered for reporting. Design issues and editing were tackled collaboratively. This class published three newspaper issues. Another class published two issues. Publication was on paper, distributed at lunch time, and online, often showcased by other teachers.

Twelve of the fourteen students avidly participated in the newspaper with minimal supervision. They took ownership of their individual stories, organized their own research and interviews, and wrote their articles with care. Two of the students goofed off most of the time. I acted as editor in chief, but, in truth, the students cooperatively managed the enterprise. They were justifiably proud after publishing the first edition. At that point, I switched class time to a conventional language arts format with a literacy approach. I told the class we’d take a break from journalism. I delegated the next issue of the newspaper to another ELD class. This was a huge mistake. The class was invested in the newspaper. Along with creating the newspaper, they created new identities for them-
selves as journalists. They were special -- until I let another class do their job. They went on to produce two additional newspaper editions over the course of the year, but with less enthusiasm and pride.

The majority of my students were heritage learners from southeast Asian cultures, but had little knowledge of the history and geography of this area of the world. I thought that my curriculum should, thus, educate about and affirm their heritage background. It is a practice, I have since learned, experts in heritage learning espouse. In this case, however, students seemed uncomfortable with the focus on their heritage culture, particularly in any reference to the Vietnam War. I think, maybe, the scars from that period are still raw within their families, and that this generation 1.5 wanted to disassociate from the refugee image. They were middle school cheerleaders and football players. They wanted to be stereotypically American, and I kept reminding them that they weren't by making them read novels about Cambodia and Vietnam.

The students were placed in ELD mainly because of deficits in their reading and writing skills. In truth, their abilities were probably at a par with most of their white peers who were not tested. The general population of the school was low-performing. K-12 education, at that time, was very focused on developing academic language skills, writing, in particular, but also oral presentation. Student-centered collaborative task-based activity using the target language to explore authentic issues illuminated
through culturally appropriate literature study was viewed as the most effective teaching model. My predecessor, however, was grammar-based, and my students were subsequently trained to expect their ELD period to consist of endless grammar exercises, which were less demanding and preferable, in my students view, to reading, writing, and presenting ideas. Moreover, as they told me over and over, they already had a language arts class.

All of these students were fluent in interpersonal communication, but some struggled in the presentational mode. I had a few extroverts in that class, but there were also students who were uncomfortable in the spotlight, and fumbled inarticulately in presentations. Language proficiency, however, was not a factor in these struggles. It was in reading, writing, and basic interpretive tasks that I could see the imprint of my students’ unique linguistic backgrounds. Their lexical foundation was inadequate for comprehension of grade level novels. Additionally, they had difficulty maintaining focus even on elementary level novels. Clearly, these students had little experience reading. Their writing was idiosyncratic and reflected the grammar of their heritage languages, even though most of these students were not fluent in that language. Their interpretations would sometimes be strangely poetic, but more often were stilted or insensible. Much of the handwriting looked like the flowing script of Thai or Lao, even though it was, in reality,
English. Two Latino boys would hardly write at all, were utterly resistant to encouragement, and mostly shut down during writing activities.

Midway through the year a second language learner (L2) from China, Jennifer, joined our class. I was assigned an instructional aide to help with this student, but Jennifer resisted tutorial assistance, and insisted on participating in all class activities from day one, even though she could barely communicate. A week after arrival, Jennifer, following the example of her classmates, gave an oral presentation on Singapore. She had maybe ten slides that she described alternating three words -- big city, beautiful city, big beautiful city. She spoke with utter conviction and confidence. It was a stunning performance. A few weeks later, during a sharing session, Jennifer related a story of a playground incident. It was very funny. She laughed throughout. We did, too, even though we didn’t understand. Every few words Jennifer punctuated her conversation with the word “fucking”. She apparently had made some colorful, amusing friends and was learning to fit in. Jennifer refused differentiated coursework. She didn’t understand class content and her assignments were incomprehensible, but she was untroubled as long as she was part of the class. Of course, when the class put together the final edition of the newspaper, she chose a story to report. Without help from her classmates or me, Jennifer interviewed a teacher who won an award, and then wrote a terrific, well-constructed article.
I did not work at that school the following school year, so I did not see if students improved on CELDT test scores. A couple of the high achievers might have finally tested out. Most of the students made little progress in their reading and writing. Rate of completion of assignments was very low. Comprehension of reading was also very low. When working on the newspaper, students were concerned with message and writing quality. Other writing was just about getting grades. Most of the students didn’t get good grades in any of their classes.

Jennifer demonstrated remarkable compensatory skills, but not linguistic competency. Her phenomenal newspaper article was not reflective of underlying proficiency. Clearly she would have been much better served by placement in a class with other L2s as the curriculum in this class was incomprehensible to her for the most part.
CHAPTER IV

REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

Literacy is but one of many aspects of the language learning endeavor. Saliently, literacy must be taught, whereas other facets of language, even in a second language context, can be acquired without instruction. Language emerges naturally with social stimulation within the first few years of life in human beings. Literacy is not possible until language is developed. In most cultures, literacy isn’t inculcated until at least the age of five, when the complexity of grammar is highly developed, and a vast collocation of vocabulary has been acquired. In western cultures it is common for individuals to spend decades reading and studying to develop a literate sensibility. Before the printing press, literature was disseminated orally in stories, songs, poems, plays, and rituals. Being literate, in this era, required a knowledge of archetypes and history, a sense of meter and rhyme, and attention to patterned tropes, music, and onomotopoeia. And it required memory training. Then the written word became the dominant mode of cultural transmission and access to education and books became necessary for literacy. For many years, social stratification was largely enforced through limitation of access to power to only the literate. Today, in the United States, virtually everybody has access to education and books, yet this social stratification persists, supported by institutions that define the literate person as having vast reservoirs of knowledge, dexterity with abstruse vocabulary and verbal expression, and the ability to decipher and analyze complex written text. Everybody
is educated and can read, educated to the point of social utility, but access to power requires the ability to decipher and skillfully employ the language of privilege.

Proponents of literacy-based learning seek to develop in students language skills suitable for high level employment. The Multiliteracies pedagogy, as well, endeavors to inculcate acumen in discerning contextual relationships that affect meaning and message, with the additional goal of producing translingual and transcultural proficiency. It is a flexible methodology that embraces multimodality and the recognition and appreciation of diverse perspectives. It incorporates communicative techniques to some degree, along with form-focused metacognitive analysis. It is constructivist, student-centered, and transformational. But is literacy-based learning an optimal methodology for language acquisition?

In the case study cited above where a dual methodology was employed, literacy-based instruction was not effective, even though care was taken to select culturally sensitive materials in a variety of modalities, and to engage students in fun, transformational activities. All facets of the Multiliteracies pedagogy were implemented: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. Into activities accessed prior knowledge and prompted questions for exploration, while close readings involved students in metacognitive analysis. At various points students were encouraged to explore different points of view in interpretation, and to explore different framing of events from various historical and cultural perspectives. Culminating activities involved students in creative transfer. All the boxes were checked. In the end, students acquired some geo-
graphical, historical and cultural knowledge, and considered ethical issues, but they did not make notable gains in language development. It is unlikely, as a result of this literacy-based instruction, that these learners were able to break out of the ELD “ghetto”.

(Valdés)

Effective instruction requires consideration of diverse affective and cognitive needs, and learning objectives. In this case, my students’ affective needs would have been better met by devoting all classtime to the school newspaper. They were invested in the project, and it inspired them to stretch and develop their writing skills. The newspaper also gave my students a positive identity and allowed them “to claim the right to speak”, (Norton) interviewing their classmates and teachers, and expressing ideas in writing. Publishing a newspaper was a real world task, a job they could imagine doing. As school journalists my students were apprenticing for a better social future. When they worked on the newspaper, they cared about their work, not about grades. They did not, however, care about literature or institutionally-based writing assignments.

Differentiating instruction is difficult with traditional whole class instruction. I could have catered to the linguistically diverse needs of this class much better using mini-lessons and tutorials within a project-based learning curriculum. A multi-literacy approach could easily be applied to teaching journalistic writing, with portfolio assessment to gauge progress. If I were to teach this class again, I would add a broadcasting component with a video newscast and audio podcast. Many of the students in this class were
uncomfortable with public speaking. Technology can allow inhibited students to practice speaking skills without the stress of a live audience.

The workshop format, however, fails to facilitate reading development. To address that need, I would have whole class mini-lessons on Monday and Wednesday where students would analyze exemplary journalistic writing. On Tuesdays and Thursdays mini-lessons would focus, instead, on metacognitive strategies in story revision. On Fridays, the mini-lesson would be substituted for a staff meeting where students would discuss their work, solve problems, and collaborate in planning future stories. Vocabulary study would derive from readings, and be practiced with Quizlet recall games attached to the mini-lessons.

As for Jennifer? She needs comprehensible input tailored to her level. Technology offers an imperfect solution. I could create a “flipped” curriculum for her, and upload communicative lessons to YouTube for her to interact with for homework. It’s possible the school administration could allocate a peer aide to be her “friend” during class, as well, considering she would not accept the adult aide. Jennifer would interact with her peers during workshop, but receive differentiated instruction in individual tutorials with me, in the same manner as the other students.

This project-based learning design is very literacy-based, but the content is not literature. In fact, a basic premise of Multiliteracies theory is that the concept of literacy has expanded to include the multiple ways we make meaning today — using text, along with audio, video, pictures, and or animation. () The ability to understand and create ef-
fective messaging with multimedia is considered a basic twentieth century skill. The Multiliteracies pedagogy and ACTFL standards also recognize that students need experience making meaning in a wide variety of genres, especially with genres used in real world applications. Journalism prompts students to conduct research, to listen to stories and transform them, to explore multiple points of view and framing, and to evaluate facts. These students are getting concurrent instruction, as well, in the interpretation and analysis of literature in their language arts class.

CHAPTER V

APPLICATION OF THEORY TO PRACTICE

1. Contextualizing Foreign Literature: Literacy-based Lesson Planning

Basic to the Multiliteracies pedagogy is the idea that language is relational, that meaning is always dependent on context. This tenet is especially important to consider in scaffolding L2 reading of literature. In addition to having to contend with deficit lexical and grammatical knowledge, second language readers lack the cultural context to make content comprehensible.

My initial experience teaching ESL reading was with war refugees at an inner city high school in Richmond, California. Some of my students had been illiterate before coming to this country, while others had to learn to read the romanic alphabet. My students found those hurdles less difficult than understanding American culture in readings. I will always remember how nonplused they were by the negative connotations of the word “ghetto”, having heard their native-speaking classmates refer to their own wonder-
ful, safe, modern neighborhood by this word. And I will never forgot their astonishment
at the fact that Americans suffered from “anorexia nervosa”, that people intentionally
starved themselves to death in this country. To make sense of readings, my students had
to learn American ways of thinking and being. They had to become transcultural as well
as translingual.

Preparing a literacy-based language learning sequence, thus, requires much more
than simply reading and dissecting thematic content. L2s need to acquire information
about relevant ideas, habits, history, issues and facts. relevant to the literary text. Of
course, learners also need practice with target vocabulary and forms in meaningful situa-
tions involving substantial repetition. Additionally, learners need to develop strategies to
interpret literature, they need practice presenting their interpretations in conventional
genres, and students need opportunities to reinterpret texts in new ways.

I designed a four week lesson sequence for a second year Spanish course with these
precepts in mind. The unit, Where the Real and the Fantastic Meet: The Stories of Julio
Cortázar, focuses on interpreting four short stories by Julio Cortázar. The first three
classes, however, are spent in exploration of underlying cultural issues. Students need
substantial background before they can understand this writer’s work. These background
lessons provide fertile opportunity to practice with target vocabulary and forms, and cre-
ate a complex web of collocations connecting the text to culture and learning experience,
helping to make the text and language lessons relevant and vivid.

On numerous occasions I provide students with English versions of homework to
facilitate the differentiation needs of diverse proficiency. In this internet age, students
will, on their own, find necessary crutches to facilitate comprehension. In my experience, L2s are more likely to assimilate new language if comprehension is made easy. If learners have to look up too many words, they just skim for main ideas, put the text in Google Translate, or find a “Sparknotes” version on the web. All response activities in this activity sequence are in the target language, however, so learners must ultimately use the target language to discuss or analyze text. As well, learners need to be able to read the text in the target language to do the response activities.

Cortázar writes strange, ambiguous stories that are difficult for L2s. This kind of material, however, is ideal for developing interpretive skills, the primary goal of this unit. Moreover, constructing a reading of a Cortázar story requires conscious decisions in contextual framing. It is easy, with his work, for students to see the multiplicity of possible readings, and to see that reading is not unlocking a code, but active construction of meaning.

Because classroom time is so limited, much foundational input is provided in homework as scaffolded readings or videos. The majority of classroom time is used for Situational Practice in analysis, problem solving, and interpretation using the target vocabulary and language forms. Overt instruction is implemented in interactive review, in eliciting interpretations, and in close readings. Critical Framing is addressed in the different perspectives presented on the axolotl and his plight. It’s also considered when students write a newspaper or magazine article. As well, Critical Framing skills are a primary focus in interpreting the stories. Students engage in Transformed Practice in their creative Wiki project. In this project, they present to their peers an in depth exploration of
one aspect of the unit. That exploration can be factual or creative. The only criteria for modality is that the project must be posted on the class Wiki site, so the project must be recorded in some way. Additionally, students are required to submit to the instructor a one page explanation and reflection on their project.

Memories are stronger when emotionally charged. (Dirkson, 2016, pp. 98-101) If I want learning, and language, to stick with my students, then the most powerful tool available to me is emotion. Whenever possible I try to find content that moves my students, makes them laugh, horrifies, or mystifies them. Deeper thinking results from feelings. In the pivotal story to this unit, Axolotl, the protagonist, after repeated encounters with a strange creature in the zoo, becomes that creature. Knowing that creature intimately changes the protagonist. It’s a great image of transculturality. I hope my students, after completing this unit, have similarly identified with various characters, and that, as a result, they comprehend the world differently.

I also try to enhance memory by constructing a complex web of associated meanings. As Barcroft (2016) observes, knowing a word means grasping the broad collocation of meanings associated with that word. (p. 2). Recall of any fact is similarly enhanced if the fact is connected to a variety of memories. (Dirkson, 2016, pp. 93-95) The axolotl, in this unit, is a major story character, and a metaphor, but also an endangered species, a mythic god, a biological wonder, and a traditional food endowed with medicinal qualities. Students will remember the axolotl, along with other components of the unit attached by association.
As well, different students respond to different stimuli. I endeavor to make lessons appeal to a variety of learning styles, and am sensitive to the fact that some students learn better by reading and some by listening. This unit includes reading excerpts from scientific articles and historical records, and short documentary films. It incorporates, as well, informal language from YouTube videos, short films, a children’s story, and a video-recorded student presentation by a native speaker on one of the stories. Similarly, the lesson sequence engages students in various genres of writing for various purposes, formal and informal.

Anxiety is detrimental to language acquisition. As such, I try to minimize student stress through careful scaffolding and sequencing of skill development. I make extensive use of collaborative learning activities to facilitate community and practice with the language. I conduct constant formative analysis and adjust curriculum as circumstances require. Additionally, I provide students with both high and low stakes opportunities to demonstrate mastery. Lessons are designed to have a balance of novelty and routine, and to provide students with opportunity to repeatedly practice skills necessary for the exam.

This lesson sequence integrates most of the ACTFL World Standards for Readiness. It engages students in various aspects of interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communication. This literacy-based unit also involves students in exploring big and little C culture — folklore and food practices, myth, literature, art, and history. Students investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationships between products, practices, and perspectives. The unit satisfies the Connections standards with particular strength as it engages learners in forging connections between diverse disciplines. The literature lesson is
strongly tied to ecology, anthropology, and history. The various lessons require students to use critical thinking and problem solving skills, and issues are explored from multiple diverse perspectives. The Cultural Comparisons standards are also strongly met by this lesson sequence that compares the cultures of various Latinoamerican communities with our own. Language comparison occurs during close reading, interpretation writing, and in interactive review segments. Community engagement, however, is limited to the classroom. Students gain virtual perspective from YouTube videos and letters, but no actual connection to a native speaker community is facilitated. Lifelong learning goals are unaddressed by this lesson sequence, as well. However, students practice using the internet to learn language, and practice self-scaffolding of their nascent language development in homework activities that show them they can continue to learn without a teacher.

2. Teaching Visual Literacy in a Language Learning Context

Underlying the Multiliteracies philosophy is the concept that meaning results from myriad design decisions. Choice of modality affects messaging and each modality has inherent affordances and limitations. Moreover, modalities overlap and color meaning in new ways as a result of their juxtaposition. The same sentence means different things when written in a textbook or spraypainted in graffiti on a wall. The addition of pictures further expands and changes meaning. Understanding semiotics has become a 21st century imperative as visual imagery increasingly dominates messaging.

Certain varieties of messaging are privileged in human society and called art. Historically, this designation has been an office of the elite, and predictably supported hegemonic agendas. Art today is still valued largely in relation to elite critical evaluation, but it is becoming increasingly democratic and diverse. Art is a room full of dirt in the
Metropolitan Museum. Art is a Warhol replica of a Campbell soup label. Art is graffiti and tattoos. A parody painting of the Simpsons recently sold for 14.8 million dollars. Traditional treatment of art in language study respected hegemonic evaluative norms, and considered historical environmental factors. A multiliteracies approach adds semiotic, critical, and transformative components. In a multiliteracies curriculum art is viewed in relation to sociological, historical, and biographical issues and affects, as well as technique and theme. Visual designers must, like writers or speakers, consider authorial intent, stance, framing, and audience, along with form and technique. Teaching art in the language classroom is enabling students to view artistic works as available designs, products of redesign reflecting relationships to other available designs and hybridization.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy views meaning, including art, to be socially situated. Learners are viewed as apprentice designers and critics, working at real world tasks in classroom communities of practice. This model meshes well with language student needs to engage in negotiation of meaning in purposeful activity. In this kind of collaborative group work students are empowered to critically evaluate artististry, and forced to support their opinions with logical argument. Learners must, as well, develop capacity to describe visual elements. Finally, learners have a receptive audience to present their own Redesigned works.

For this section I created a visual literacy unit, *How to Analyze Spanish Modern Art*. This unit endeavors to provide students with a strong framework to build discourse on art. It uses a task-oriented approach to involve students in experiencing and evaluating Spanish masterpieces of the modern era, and prompts learners to use these available designs as inspiration for their own masterpiece. The various collaborative activities are preceded by substantial, engaging multimodal input that is scaffolded and develops in complexity throughout the unit. Tasks are simple but engaging, and spur students to uti-
lize the input in creative ways. As well, tasks develop skills sequentially and interrelate in a cohesive fashion. Finally, assessment is varied and directly reflects the lesson activities.

Students use the target language in meaning-making exercises throughout this visual literacy unit. Prior to class they write responses in an online discussion forum. During class they participate in group discussions, and pair and collaborative task groups wherein they are obliged to continually negotiate meaning, state and defend their personal interpretations and opinions, and cooperate and come to consensus. After class, students publish their writing in a class Wiki and then must read and respond to at least two other students’ essays. Finally, students have to present to the class an artistic defense of their own creative project. Oral practice is varied and complex.

This unit is learner-centered and employs communicative techniques. The teacher primarily facilitates discussion, models activities, and clarifies listening input. Collaborative groups engage independently while the teacher circulates to make formative assessment and provide assistance when called upon.

*How to Analyze Spanish Modern Art* provides students with valuable knowledge applicable to other classes, travel, and general intellectual discussion. As well, the 3D, virtual reality, and animated paintings impart a uniquely whimsical, memorable perspective. Additionally, the multi-sensory component of the videos engage students of varying learning styles and “intelligences”. In particular, this unit employs linguistic, intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences throughout the lesson in various discussion and group work activities. As the focus of the lesson is art, spatial intelligence plays a particularly prominent role.

This unit demonstrates consistency in procedure. All collaborative activities are prefaced by modeling. Listening activities are scaffolded with organizers, and develop
sequentially in difficulty. Videos are short, but captivating and effective in providing cultural information and rich comprehensible input. There is sufficient variety in the activities to maintain student interest. The cultural content of this unit is dynamic and appropriate for second year university students. As well, the language demands will challenge students at an appropriate level as sufficient scaffolding is provided in the form of vocabulary exercises, sentence stems, and rich comprehensible input. The artwork, videos, and activities are provocative, and should lead students to challenge their cognitive abilities and engage in passionate debate.

3. Course Design Considerations in a Literacy-based L2 Writing Course

I propose, in this section, the design for a university writing course employing principles of the Multiliteracies pedagogy. It is a Freshman-level introductory English writing course designed for the needs of EFL students, but intended to appeal to native speaker students, as well. Implicit in this design is the belief that the university should be employing opportunities for native speakers and EFL students to interact, to share diverse points of view, to facilitate community, and to provide EFL students with exposure to authentic use of English in a peer level context.

Underlying the instructional objectives of this course is the goal of inculcating translinguality and transculturality. Connecting with other cultures is easily facilitated in a university context, without study abroad, by simply dismantling the barriers between disciplines.

4. Course Design Considerations in a Literacy-based L2 Writing Course

Central to the Multiliteracies approach is the synergism of meaning. What we mean to say is altered by means of transmission and by the receptive situation of our au-
dience. Understanding the audience, or receptive culture, is critical, as is understanding the way the particular technology of transmission affects the message. (Kern, 2015, p. 3) Language proficiency in the digital age encompasses all facets of multimodal communication. Text messaging and meme interpretation are as vital to intercultural competency today as the skills of ordering a meal in a restaurant and writing an essay. Teaching writing is teaching meaning-making in its myriad forms. Thus, contemporary writing instructors, in addition to teaching rhetorical techniques, are obligated to explore with students the way visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and multimodal factors interact to signify.

But the institutional function of Freshman composition comprises far more than writing. The disparate university disciplines expect that students, upon completing freshman composition, will be able to competently participate in their particular discourse communities. Freshman composition has come to be viewed as a “liminal” step, facilitating the transformation of callow high school students into university-level scholars. (Purdy & Walker, 2012, p. 9-10) As such, the role of introductory writing courses has expanded to instruction in strategies of reading the complex text of university coursework. For native speakers, the decoding aspect of reading becomes mostly automatized after a few years of practice. But reading is so much more. It entails a complex series of cognitive tasks that work together to build meaning from a text. To comprehend a text, the reader must understand the context in which it is presented, identify the genre of the writing, determine the authorial purpose and stance, use transitions to link ideas, weigh evidence, and evaluate point of view. Critical, deep reading, in fact, is profoundly analytical. A reader interprets intent and challenges its hypotheses, wrestling with the text intel-
lectually. To accomplish this feat with limited language proficiency is challenging, and often demoralizing for students. Limited vocabulary and minimal familiarity with formal registers impede even basic comprehension. Yet, extensive reading is seen by many experts as the critical key to advanced proficiency (Krashen, 2018). Moreover, academic success is utterly dependent on a learner’s ability to comprehend abstruse texts. A fundamental aspect of language instruction, as such, must be training in reading strategies that scaffolds second language reading and inculcates methods for autonomous grappling with complex text.

A Multiliteracies perspective views all literacy acts to be design deriving meaning from authorial intent, genre, purpose, context, the medium of transmission, and receptive response. The author of a text message considers all these factors, as does a speechwriter or an academic writing up research for a journal. The same factors are considered unconsciously by readers, whether they are doomscrolling news articles on a phone, reading a textbook, or scanning the billboards while driving down a highway. Certain kinds of message-making continue, however, to be privileged. Mastery of these forms provides access to power. It is therefore incumbent upon instructors to inculcate expertise in genres facilitating empowerment, in addition to the multiple other ways of meaning being employed in the new millennium. Therefore, in this class we will analyze the complexity of message-making in memes and texts and advertisements, but focus deeply on genres that provide entre to elite discourse communities. The academic research paper will, of course, be a central focus. Another unit will center on multimodal media analysis. The final unit will involve students analyzing and interpreting a complex narrative, so as to
identify, acquire, and employ sophisticated tools of storytelling, the most elemental, commonly utilized, and powerful genre in message making.

For English as a foreign language (EFL) students in the American university, introductory writing courses often provide a uniquely supportive community of practice that facilitates the transition to the American system of higher learning. Teachers are usually culturally sensitive and knowledgeable of second language writing issues, and generally embrace the responsibility of guiding EFL students in this new culture. The common experience facilitates friendships between EFL students, as well. At the same time, this cocoon insulates EFL students from the translingual, transcultural experience they were seeking in study abroad. The ACTFL standards stipulate that language programs should facilitate diverse perspectives, provide authentic cultural experiences, and connect learners with target communities. Yet introductory writing classes for EFL usually exclude native speakers altogether. EFL students often have the option of seeking tutorial assistance or conversational experience with native speaker peers outside of class. Forging lasting relationships in these situations is difficult, however, because of the tenuous, irregular nature of meeting.

Facilitating authentic language practice and cultural exchange with native speakers should be a basic mission of Freshman composition for EFL students. As Norton points out, it is difficult for many L2s to “claim the right to speak”. Freshman composition is a natural point to bridge this divide. Certainly it is possible to serve language learner needs within a heterogeneous situation. Moreover, interaction with diverse cul-
tures is a goal we are supposedly cultivating in the larger university. Segregating EFL students from the general population is not beneficial to either population.

For all these reasons, this writing course is designed for EFL students in a heterogeneous context. The instructional sequence scaffolds the development of skills in reading and multimodal writing. These skills are necessary for all students to thrive in higher learning. The foundation for this course is Kern’s *Language, Literacy, and Technology*. It is a profound meditation on the various ways technology mediates meaning. It is dense with transcultural and translingual reflections on meaning-making, illustrations ranging from the evolution of emoticons to Korean practices in subtitling game shows. It is a fascinating and challenging read that is accessible if carefully chunked and scaffolded. Kern’s book is an excellent text to inspire students to reflect upon the nature of communication. Moreover, it is a brilliant example of academic writing, and a very suitable work for practice in reading strategies.

Eight weeks of the course focus on Kern’s book, exploring multimodal writing from various perspectives. Readings will be scaffolded with into, through, and beyond activities to strategize reading and monitor comprehension. Major projects are due in four week intervals. The first project is a 2-3 minute podcast in which students elucidate on an aspect of communication. The culmination of this first unit of the course is a research paper, due at the eighth week, on a topic related to the intersection of language and technology. Class time will be devoted to instruction on academic writing and research, and students will work collaboratively on various stages of this writing process.
Weeks 8-12 will center on design principles and persuasive techniques, using excerpts from various texts and media resources. In addition to engaging with associated readings, students will collaboratively dissect images, filmic sequences, and examples of persuasive writing, considering authorial intent, stance, framing, audience, and rhetorical technique. The project for this unit is a 2-3 page essay analyzing messaging techniques in a particular example, a project that will be scaffolded by modeling, practice, and peer review activities.

The final month of the course will focus on multimodal storytelling techniques. Students will relate an event demonstrating awareness of the conscious application of narrative technique. That event can be personal, but can also be reportage. In any case, the writing should be approached as if it were to be submitted to a particular publisher. Care should be taken to consider ideological framing of the story, the perspective of the publisher, formatting conventions, audience expectations, and possible reverberations from revelation of this story. Along with the article, students are expected to attach a 2-3 paragraph explanation of their employment of narrative strategy. This activity will be modeled and practiced in collaborative group activities as preparation for the assignment.

The primary model of narrative structure we will be analyzing is the novel, *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley. It is a provocative dystopian indictment of the American age. Through acid satire it critiques the cold efficiency of our contemporary era. This literary masterpiece is short and remarkably accessible with its simple structure and limited vocabulary, a lexile level of 870L. In fact, this work is sometimes taught at the ninth and tenth grade level, but is, as well, a staple of higher education courses in a variety of
disciplines. The novel’s focus on the effects of technology on society correlates well with the theme of this course. The work, as well, explores many issues of topical relevance and interest to contemporary college students, including EFLs. It questions modern sexual morays, institutional mechanisms of societal stratification, and the use of hedonism (sex and drugs) as social control. It’s profound, clever, and funny.

For the first two units of this course, students respond weekly to prompts on readings in an online discussion forum. For the narrative unit students will, instead, maintain a blog detailing their interaction with the text. Both of these exercises are intended to prompt deep contemplation of readings. The routine unstructured practice, additionally, facilitates increased written fluency. (Elbow, 1973)

The grading system is intended to structure the learning experience and prompt engagement with content in a minimally stressful environment. The four high stakes projects are balanced by low stakes practice in guided reading and writing activities. The low stakes forum and blog assignments are designed, as well, to encourage free, creative expression. There are no exams, but occasional low stakes quizzes to encourage conscientious follow-through in reading assignments.

Mastery of objectives specified by rubric is the primary criteria for writing assessment, but individual growth is factored into grading. The heterogenous nature of any language class presupposes inequality in the playing field and variable rates in language development. In mindful consideration of Stiggins’ manifesto (2008), assignments are structured so that all students can be successful in this learning endeavor.
Design of classroom activities is intended to produce a productive, inclusive, supportive community of practice that enriches learning and supports affective needs of learners. Students are encouraged, as well, to work with tutors in the ESL writing center or the Writing Center in the Learning Center. Additionally, the instructor welcomes students to meet individually during office hours, and writing conferences with the instructor are mandatory for major projects.

CHAPTER VI

CURRICULUM ISSUES & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In this final section I will consider issues in curriculum and implementation of literacy-based pedagogy drawing upon reflections on my own experience learning and teaching language, and upon an extended observation of another teacher.

1. Literacy as prompt for discussion

When I was younger I spent a year studying Spanish at a language academy in Málaga, Spain. I was in an intermediate level class with European twenty-somethings who would rotate in and out at two or three month intervals. I also lived with some of these students in a boarding house for foreign students. I was the only English speaker. All communication, whether academic or social, was conducted in Spanish, in badly constructed, elementary-level constructions that, nonetheless, facilitated communication and social activity. Our classroom intercourse was text-based. For each class we would read an issues-based article and debate some aspect of it for the three hour period. Our young, very cool teacher encouraged the diverse points of view reflective of our multinational
background, and discussion, as a result, frequently spiraled into heated argument. But it was all in good fun. After class we hung out together at the beach and partied in the clubs of the Costa del Sol.

After about six months I realized that neither I nor my classmates had made substantial progress towards language proficiency. I subsequently moved into a homestay situation where I was immersed in authentic use of language. As a result, my proficiency with BICS level discourse greatly improved. After about four months I realized, however, that I had once again plateaued. I then tried to jumpstart the acquisition process with a regimented reading program focused on daily interaction with the newspaper, *El País*, and I made vocabulary lists, but I was unable to independently sustain this routine. I came to Spain with low intermediate proficiency. I left a year later with mid intermediate proficiency.

Consistent use of target language in purposeful activity did not produce much gain in proficiency for me because I did not have error feedback or enough modeling of advanced forms. In fact, some incorrect forms were probably fossilized because my friend group spoke a sort of pidgin. Class readings introduced academic language, but without reinforcement, without sufficient repetition to automatize forms and vocabulary. My interactions with *El País*, as well, were not effective for acquisition because there was no reinforcement of language. Vocabulary and forms didn’t make it into long term memory. The most effective language learning happened in the homestay because the cotidian nature of interaction resulted in rich repetition of authentic language. Retention of
this language was deepened by the emotional resonance and dramatic nature of the situation. Homestay language was, however, limited to casual discourse.

2. The Social Foundation of Literacy

Back in the States I worked sometimes as a teacher of Spanish 1. I embraced communicative strategies, and very competently and confidently communicated in the target language in this controlled environment, at the level of Spanish 1. When I had to speak on the phone with a Spanish-speaking parent, however, I struggled, and I was an inept and terrified translator for parent teacher conferences with Spanish speaking parents. One time I had to teach a U.S. history class in Spanish. It was a nightmare. The requisite vocabulary and discourse was far beyond my proficiency, so I spent hours preparing for each class, and I faked my way through. But it was as a kindergarten teacher that I was truly humbled. For eight weeks I taught Pre-K immersive Spanish in a low socioeconomic neighborhood in northern California. My students were dirt poor, mostly white from broken, troubled families. We also had one homeless black girl, four monolingual Spanish speaking students, and a couple Latino heritage speakers with very limited Spanish proficiency. One boy was autistic and one girl was bi-polar with personality disorders. In addition to teaching Spanish, I was expected to teach these children to read and do basic arithmetic, and I had to socialize them. Only one student had previously been to preschool. Did I mention I had no training in early education? My Spanish skills were grossly inadequate for the task. One of the monolingual Spanish speaking girls would frequently tease me, “Señora Peña, ¿Habla usted español? ¿De verdad?” “Claro, que sí.” I would respond. But I knew she was right. I was an imposter.
Bono el mono (the monkey) was our class mascot, and the model for class behavior. Bono had to be taught to wait his turn and raise his hand and share. Everyday Bono had a problem. “No, no, no — Bono. No puedes comer crayolas.” (You can’t eat crayons.) “Bono — tienes que levantar la mano.” (You have to raise your hand.) I would model, gently correcting Bono. Then Bono would misbehave again and again, and students would take turns using the words to help Bono behave. To thank us for teaching him how to behave in class, Bono taught my students to read. They learned their vowels by grunting them like monkeys: “a-e-i-o-uuuuu”, and then we attached the consonants, making the chant “ma-me-mi-mo-muuuu”, “ba-be-bo-buuuu”.

To get to the lunchroom my students had to learn to walk in line. We made a vibora (snake) out of a rope and then the children matched themselves by color to sections. The autistic boy, however, was obsessed with zorros (foxes). He was el zorro, and didn’t want to be part of the snake. After playing the traditional game, “La vibora de la mar”, where the children chain together as they sing a song, he acquiesced and joined the chain as long as we sang the song.

Language and literacy are both intricately bound to situational and social needs. In Spain, I communicated adequately to socialize and to express basic opinions in a structured class situation. That experience, however, didn’t translate to competence with formal parent teacher scenarios. Similarly, while I could fluently teach language at an introductory level, I floundered with the advanced discourse required of a history course. I had receptive comprehension of content, but could not produce with fluency because I hadn’t had practice using language on that level.
Ironically, kindergarten required a more complex proficiency than high school Spanish 1. In Spanish 1 I taught a finite syllabus of language. In immersion kindergarten I needed to be able to use language comprehensively — to teach, but also to coax, to comfort, to chide, and to warn. I felt especially disadvantaged as a Pre-K teacher by my lack of Spanish children’s songs and folk tales. Literacy for children is song, rhymes, story, games, and role plays, all modes of literacy employing extensive use of repetition to automatize language with positive affective reinforcement. This early literacy is a basic tool for socialization and a first step to reading. Saliently, the neural connections formed by these ritual literacy patterns are particularly strong, and can be very instrumental in the facilitation of language acquisition.

3. Teaching Language or Literary Analysis

As a grad student I set out to finally acquire advanced proficiency. I jumped into upper division Spanish classes. It was terrifying as I hadn’t been a language student in decades. Additionally, my classes were filled with heritage speakers who effortlessly conversed with perfectly accented fluency. I had no trouble understanding lectures, but was mortified by my inability to express an intelligent idea in Spanish. I wasn’t particularly challenged by readings for content classes except for literature, which surprised me. I was a lit major as an undergraduate, and originally taught English literature and writing. Literature was my forte, yet I struggled with comprehension in Spanish. Gradually, I learned to self-scaffold Spanish literature by using reading strategies. Before I read a Spanish text now, I find out about the author and their stylistics, and try to get a sense of
their historical and social situation. I skim the intro and covers, and sometimes read book reviews before diving in. I alternate listening and reading when possible. I also read the English version if I have time and can get my hands on it. I write in the text and highlight new vocabulary. I read articles on the work and then I try to read the text again, and, if I like it, again. I know I read *A Hundred Years of Solitude* at least six times.

My last semester I had a class in feminist Spanish literature. It was challenging and the teacher was intimidating, but wonderful. I learned a lot about facilitating literature discussions in her class. It was very interesting for me, as well, to see how other students handled the course. Very few highlighted or wrote in their text. Many times students read from a pirated copy of the text on their phone. They freely shared “Sparknote” type websites with summaries of plot and theme, and they whispered which texts you could find in English. Nobody but me looked up vocabulary. Who had time? Skim for main ideas and hope that’s good enough. Everybody loved the teacher, but there was still this strange fear in the eyes of all my classmates, something I had never seen in any of my other Spanish classes.

Even high proficiency speakers often struggle with the complex demands of literature. Reading requires reconstructing a foreign world, grasping the viewpoint of another person, piecing together a plot, and interpreting thematic meaning. On top of that, literature employs advanced vocabulary and poetic constructions that aren’t otherwise used in discourse. Language students need strategies to contend with this cognitively demanding enterprise.
This class, typical of most upper division language classes in literature, focused solely on literary analysis. Language development as a result of this class was subsequently minimal. If teachers want students to acquire language forms and vocabulary from reading, then these components must be addressed explicitly. Most students are inattentive to these issues, and research shows that incidental acquisition of vocabulary is minimal in reading.

4. Who Has the Time or Creativity?

As part of my graduate training I observed a high school implementation of TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Stories) in Spanish 1. The teacher had native-level proficiency, having grown up in Argentina. She was animated, energetic, and loved by her students, and she had just completed a TPRS training program. In fact, the district had recently put their Spanish textbooks in storage and adopted TPRS as their comprehensive language learning strategy, along with its literacy component that focused on *Pobre Ana*.

Students enthusiastically participated in the first TPRS lessons developed around a monster story students spontaneously dictated to the teacher. Then they eagerly wrote their own version of the story using the vocabulary they had generated in the group activity. Student and teacher enthusiasm dwindled, however, when the teacher implemented the same procedure again and again to create new stories. More and more English crept into discussion and students expressed boredom and frustration with progress.

Students initially were delighted with the subsequent introduction of the novel, *Pobre Ana*. They were thrilled that they could read in Spanish and could actually under-
stand most of the text, and they were amused by the familiar California setting and topical references. But they quickly became annoyed with the character of Ana, and bored with her story. The teacher alternated oral and silent reading. Oral readings would be punctuated at frequent intervals by comprehension checks. During silent reading, students would raise their hand for me or the teacher to clarify or translate. Writing activities focused on information recall and summarizing. Assessment was based on short answer exams testing recall of factual elements of the novel.

In these classes students engaged in the mechanical process of second language reading, but they didn’t interact with the text at a deeper level. Critical thinking skills were not employed, students reflected very little upon cultural issues, and no attention was paid to literary or linguistic design features. These students read for information, not for language development or cultural enrichment. The reading was not connected to personal experience or social issues or other disciplines. Comprehension of story was the sole objective. In the end, students acquired a few new vocabulary words and practiced basic grammatical forms used in the novel. Language development was minimal, and students acquired no real cultural sensitivity from the cliched portrait.

Notably, the teacher was supplied with no curriculum. Just Pobre Ana. Her administration assumed she could competently develop a comprehensive curriculum herself after having attended a TPRS workshop. Of course, they provided no payment for this curriculum development. And the administration implemented no oversight of results.

Curriculum development requires deep understanding of theory and content, it requires creativity and design sensibilities, and it is very time intensive. Investing in
quality curriculum is the best way to ensure that instructors implement optimal learning practices. If we embrace a Multiliteracies pedagogy, then we have to develop multimodal textbooks integrating situated practice, overt practice with form-focused activities, interpretive framing exercises, and creative, transformational activities. Organizations like ACTFL or CARLA can simultaneously provide teachers with online access to Multiliteracies lessons built around particular texts. Teachers can be provided with apps to analyze and breakdown lexical components of text for text-specific form-focused study. Teachers need tools, and they deserve compensation for curriculum development.

In K-12 education there is currently a movement against formal curriculum in language learning. This movement rejects the oversight of “ivory tower” intellectuals through textbook design. Advocates cite anecdotal success with methodologies developed by fellow K-12 teachers, methodologies like TPRS with little empirical research to back up claims. Textbooks are expensive, so it is not surprising that some administrations have adopted this stance as policy. Articulation and oversight issues will undoubtedly pose problems for this approach in the future.

At the university level controversy has erupted over the exorbitant cost of language textbooks. Some universities have begun to develop open access digital textbooks as a result. (https://acceso.ku.edu/). This development could facilitate a rapid development and dissemination of Multiliteracies-based curriculum in the near future.

5. Comprehension Isn’t Enough

A few years ago, in preparation for a trip to Italy, I took an online Italian course where I first encountered Pobre Ana in its Italian version. I, too, was quickly annoyed by
Ana and bored with the corny plot. I was shocked that such drivel would be part of a college course, even at an elementary level. I have since learned that *Pobre Ana* is among the most commonly implemented “literature” in American language learning today, and is popular overseas, as well. This tiny “easy reader” novel has been translated into dozens of other languages. It was produced by Blaine Ray, the progenitor of TPRS and is marketed by his company that promotes his methodology, workshops, and materials. Mr. Ray is a charismatic teacher who has amassed a cultish following for his popular language learning methodology that uses CLT techniques to create spontaneous stories. Mr. Ray is not a writer, a fact obvious in the first sentence of the novel, “Ana has problems with money and her family.” Neither is Mr. Ray much of an expert on second language acquisition. He is a high school Spanish teacher. *Pobre Ana* is the language learning equivalent of the phonics-focused Dick and Jane series used by educators in the fifties and sixties to teach elementary reading. It is without literary merit. In this book, Ray essentially transcribes one of his spontaneously generated stories in which he freely uses topical reference, humor, repetition, and tired clichés. Notably, the target language is not employed in an authentic manner, and characterization of the target culture is stereotypical and patronizing. The novel is comprehensible, but unsuitable for inculcating either translinguality or transculturality. Reading *Pobre Ana* is simply an exercise in the translation of clumsy Spanish. Nevertheless, I have created effective lessons using *Pobre Ana*. Of course, a good CLT teacher can make an effective language lesson out of a bag of groceries.
CLT teachers have, for some time, recognized the value of learners interacting with authentic examples of cultural products. The Multiliteracies movement has, as well, promoted expanding the notion of literacy beyond the traditional Big C literary canon. Today language classes commonly dissect television commercials and analyze graffiti, and second language learners practice writing email messages along with essays. There is general agreement that language students need practice with authentic language used in media of all types and purposes.

CLT implementations of literacy instruction frequently focus on utilitarian usage of materials, or use literature as a springboard to discussion. Alternatively, in CLT, literacy materials often provide a means for analysis of culture. Upper division language classes, conversely, generally focus on literary analysis. The Multiliteracies pedagogy integrates these various approaches and adds a metacognitive, form-focused dimension. Moreover, the Multiliteracies pedagogy views source material as Available designs, creative sources of inspiration.

The most basic task of the language teacher in presenting a text is framing it in a way that makes the text comprehensible, in a way that promotes transcultural understanding and critical thinking, in a way that spurs language development. In selecting materials for literacy-based instruction, the instructor certainly must consider authentic use of the target language in the text, cultural perspectives presented, artistry and messaging technique, and presentation of factual information. The overriding concern in text selection, however, must be whether the text can provoke language development and cultural understanding at a level appropriate to the population and purposes of the class.
This point of view on the role of reading in language learning is consistent with the ACTFL Worlds-readiness Standards for Language. A surprising number of language teachers today, however, are selecting reading materials based primarily on comprehensibility. These teachers distinguish themselves from other CLT practitioners, and call themselves CI or TCI (Teaching with Comprehensible Input) teachers. They are almost religiously devoted to the work of Steven Krashen, and dismissive of most other second language acquisition research. TCI proponents commonly reject the use of textbooks, and typically use TPRS and Total Physical Response (TPR) methodologies. (FOOTNOTE ASHER) An L2 reading methodology becoming popular with TCI adherents is Embedded Reading, a methodology developed by the teachers, Michelle Whaley and Laurie Clarcq. Learners, in this methodology, are first given a reduced, simplified, very short version of the text. They are subsequently given three more versions of the text, each employing more and more elaboration. (Example in Appendix 6) Supposedly comprehension of the initial text facilitates acquisition of the more advanced forms in subsequent readings. My Italian class employed Embedded Reading with folk tales. I found the methodology to be tedious and ineffective, but I am fascinated by the underlying premise linking the kind of elaborative repetition inherent in TPRS to reading. In the “circling” technique of TPRS students interactively create a silly story which the teacher uses to question students using the vocabulary, gradually modifying questions to require more sophisticated response. Initially, students are prompted to respond with yes or no answers, and then with short answers, and then with more elaborate responses. If implemented with humor, the technique produces a playful, gamelike use of language in which
output is scaffolded, and comprehension impressive. The repetition inherent in the exercise is effective. Gains from TPRS are limited, however, by the oral format which limits vocabulary, register, and discourse level. TPRS is fun, but Embedded Reading is not. When I did read the elaborated versions, I acquired no additional vocabulary or forms. Even though I was a highly motivated learner, I only bothered reading the elaborated versions of text if I needed additional information for an assignment.

Mindful of Krashen’s proposition that reading is the optimal route to advanced proficiency, when I embarked on my quest for advanced Spanish proficiency, I began reading a lot in Spanish. I noted little incidental acquisition of vocabulary, and reading continued to be a chore, so I subsequently began to experiment with methodology. I was initially intrigued by “listening while reading” research, (Valentini, Ricketts, Pye, & Houston-Price, 2018) and so tried this practice, but was not impressed by gains in retention. When I reviewed research in instructional design, I realized there is a cognitive processing problem in “Reading while listening”. Clark and Mayer (2011) note that duplication of meaning in two modalities actually decreases learning. (pp.200-220) In fact, I found I actually attended more to discourse forms, and comprehended story better when simply listening. I especially liked listening to the novels of Isabel Allende.

My final semester I had two demanding Spanish literature classes. Initially, I would read my required texts quickly for main ideas, and then reread slowly with a highlighter, scribbling notes as I went along. As the pace of classes picked up, and complexity of texts increased, I found myself in need of crutches, and a modified technique which now involved doing my quick read of the text in Spanish, followed by another quick read
in English, and then a close-read in Spanish. At that point I began to actually enjoy the close-read. I am an avid reader in English and a dilatante writer. I enjoy good writing. Once I didn’t have to deal with comprehension of language, I was able to enjoy the literary artistry and interact with Spanish texts on a deeper level. But I felt a little guilty, of course. I was cheating. Sort of.

Reflecting upon my illicit reading practices I now wonder if I stumbled onto something. We teachers make comprehension the point of reading when we test students on factual content of literature. We want our students to wrestle with the ideas and language in a text, but they can’t engage on that level until they’ve ascertained the literal aspects of the text.

I found my daughter reading Bambi aloud when she was three years old, reading a sophisticated narrative, reading with perfect pronunciation and phrasing. When she was done I quizzed her on the definitions of the more abstruse vocabulary. She knew the meaning of every word. I was terrified I was going to have to raise a genius. Lucky for me, it turned out my daughter was perfectly ordinary, bright, but nowhere near genius. She did not spontaneously teach herself to read. Bambi was her favorite book. She had made me read it to her hundreds of times. As a result, she memorized every word, every nuance of the story. In the process she picked up some advanced vocabulary, but as she didn’t have the opportunity to use these words, they gradually dropped out of her memory. She learned to actually decode text in kindergarten, like most kids.

While she did not know how to decode text, my daughter, at three, was an accomplished reader. She understood dramatic tension, characterization, foreshadowing, and so
much more. She was atune to the rhythm and nuance of language. She empathized with
the characters and grasped thematic implications. She read deeply. In the process, she de-
veloped in language proficiency. I facilitated this process until she was mature enough to
master the mechanical process of reading. Meanwhile, she was able to critically interact
with the text on a sophisticated level.

I am a believer in immersion in language instruction. In the classroom, I hardly
ever switch out of the target language. So I feel like I’m committing heresy when I say I
think that with L2s, deeper engagement with literary text can be facilitated by allowing
students to self-scaffold with English in preparation for immersive classroom activities in
the target language.

Determining the facts is only the beginning of comprehending any message. Any
message has to be interpreted in relation to a multiplicity of contextual factors. This kind
of deep reading is analytical at the idea and linguistic level, and is more likely to result in
language acquisition than simple reading comprehension because it requires high level
cognitive engagement. But acquisition is certainly improved through repetition of vocab-
ulary and forms, even at this level.

Optimal language acquisition and learning occurs when students are stimulated
emotionally and intellectually, and engaged in meaning-making. Reading becomes a con-
structive activity when learners analyze meaning relationally, when they consider differ-
ent interpretations, when they connect the story to their own lives, when they use the de-
sign of the story as inspiration for their own artistic endeavors. *Pobre Ana* and the repeti-
tive, dull “stories” of *Embedded Reading* facilitate only mechanical translation, no com-
prehension of deeper meaning. From a neural perspective, the cognitive bonds established from reading these simplistic texts are less complex than that of engagement with a sophisticated text. Fewer collocations will be formed. Less content will go into long term memory as a result.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The Multiliteracies pedagogy proposes to provide an integrated framework for all levels of language learning, one that would elevate learning outcomes to facilitate student participation at elite levels in the global economy. CLT methodology is incorporated into this text-centric approach, along with an emphasis on developing metacognitive strategies for dealing with language use in all modalities. Student agency is supported by defining the student role as apprentice designer whose work involves the evaluation and analysis of Available Designs, and creative, transformative practice in Redesign. Students interact interpersonally in communities of practice to resolve and evaluate various issues of language design, but also consider and compare Available Designs in cultural expression of all types. The ultimate objective of this pedagogy is the development of translinguality and transculturality.

Integrating all language learning into one framework proposes a commonality of purpose and needs in our students. In fact, students learn languages for a variety of purposes. Academic critics of CLT lambast the functional notional, touristic content of lower division courses, but many students are interested in exactly that kind of education. They want to travel, and they want to communicate with native speakers. Alot of stu-
dents aren’t interested in reading *A Hundred Years of Solitude* in Spanish. These same students, however, might be very interested in learning to read and write business proposals using foreign protocols. Other students come to languages to learn specifically how to interact with target language communities in health or other governmental capacities. Limiting the focus of our language courses to academic, traditional literary content is, perhaps, short-sighted and elitist.

Is it realistic to assume that there is a “one size fits all” methodology for teaching language? Certainly, teaching has to be tailored to each population, and designing instruction requires taking into account specific needs, objectives, and backgrounds of students being served. Certain groups of students, for example, thrive in heterogeneous groupings of diverse proficiency. My middle school ELD class was demoralized and stigmatized by being excluded from the general population for the well-meaning purpose of serving their differentiated language needs. Homogenous heritage learner writing classes at California State University Chico (Wright, 2021), however, have been very successful. Carreira & Kagan (2011) have argued that the particular identity needs of heritage learners are best met in a highly differentiated and homogenous setting. Clearly, my experience, and much research (Valdés, 2004) shows that this isn’t always the case.

In fact, the process of language learning is individual and variable. Some students are “ear learners”, and optimally acquire language through listening. Other students are “eye learners” and respond better to reading and visual input. (Reid, 1998) Cultural and personality traits, and learning styles further complicate acquisition of input, along with decisions on implementation of instruction. Of course, the sensibility and personality of
the instructor is also variable. Imposing a particular methodology, as such, would likely frustrate some teachers who regard curriculum implementation design to be a professional, and personal perogative.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy has been promoted as a solution to the “problem” of bifurcation in the university language learning structure. First language proceeds in a similar pattern, however, with the normal period of four to six years of speaking and listening skill development before instruction in literacy. Upper division educators claim students enter content-oriented classes unprepared for the academic rigor of content classes. Multiliteracies proponents contend that a literacy approach will provide that preparation. It is also possible that two years of university instruction does not provide enough exposure to comprehensible input to adequately prepare students for academic discourse level challenges. In fact, most professionals regard CLT methodology as successful in promoting BICS level discourse. Maybe students need more time engaging with comprehensible input, longer or more classes at the lower level. It would be interesting to see outcomes if a literacies-based class were paired with a CLT class at the lower level. Would the extra time and sheltered instruction in literacy result in higher outcomes? I worked with this kind of program in K-12 ESL, and it achieved excellent results. Students in newcomer ESL programs at the K-12 level traditionally spend two or three periods a day in ESL classes, with one class focused on reading and writing skills, and the other on communicative activities.

Development of literacy skills must be a central objective of all language instruction, but it doesn’t necessarily follow that other facets of language instruction should be
subjugated to that purpose. A robust language program should provide learners with opportunities to use language in multiple ways. It seems likely that more students would be attracted to language programs if more options, or paths, for language study were provided. Universities, in fact, are experimenting with discipline-oriented language programs. A particularly interesting program at Carnegie Mellon offers a masters program in French film. Kramsch (1993) and the MLA Report (2007) also encourage the development of interdisciplinary courses with content delivered in English and attached discussion sections in the target language. Such an approach not only expands the diversity of perspectives in a class, but also connects language to other disciplines, producing enriched neural collocations. In other countries, like Canada, university students are required to do one semester of service-learning. The Communities component of the ACT-FL 5C’s would be powerfully addressed with a service-learning or project-based learning component in their university education. Additionally, universities should offer language students options for intensive immersive experiences within their own campuses. Study abroad has been proven to be the most powerful force for achieving advanced proficiency, but it’s not possible for all students. A proximal experience could be provided within the campus confines. Students could live in a Spanish house and commit to speak only Spanish for a semester. Summer or January intensives could provide similar immersion experience with courses in language, but also culture, film, music, and cooking. Finally, the lifelong learning aspect of the Communities objective should be addressed by universities with the development of internet resources and links to virtual communities where students can continue their journey in language learning. Currently we acknowledge that
the period of university study is inadequate to develop high level proficiency, but we pro-
vide no path for students to continue learning independently.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy aligns with the MLA Reports mandate, but alone it f
dals to address the disparate needs of language learners. Certainly university educators
need to rethink the structure of language learning, but in consideration of a broader range
of needs that extend beyond literacy.
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Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World

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Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World

Background

23 May 2007

The Modern Language Association supports a broad, intellectually driven approach to teaching language and culture in higher education. To study the best ways of implementing this approach in today’s world, the MLA Executive Council established an Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, chaired by Mary Louise Pratt, who served as the association’s president in 2003. The committee was charged with examining the current language crisis that has occurred as a result of 9/11 and with considering the effects of this crisis on the teaching of foreign languages in colleges and universities. It began working in 2004 and submitted its report to the Executive Council two years later. Committee members have made presentations at the MLA convention and at other public venues, including events sponsored by federal agencies, professional associations, and universities. This summary of the committee’s and the Executive Council’s deliberations offers background and context for the association’s recommendations regarding the challenges and opportunities facing language
study in higher education. While the recommendations address issues specific to the United States, they may be applicable to other contexts and countries.

In fulfilling its charge, the committee found itself immersed in a dynamic, rapidly changing environment marked by a sense of crisis around what came to be called the nation’s language deficit. The United States’ inability to communicate with or comprehend other parts of the world became a prominent subject for journalists, as language failures of all kinds plagued the United States’ military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and its efforts to suppress terrorism. Initiatives in critical languages began multiplying in educational institutions all over the United States. Government language schools scrambled to redefine priorities and mount new programs. New federal funds for language study appeared, most tied to defense and security needs. MLA data show that college and university enrollments in Arabic nearly doubled between 1998 and 2002, from 5,505 to 10,584 (Welles 9, table 1a). Shortages of qualified, trained teachers of critical languages became more acute than ever before. Legislative proposals to address the deficit in language and international expertise began appearing in Congress.

Not surprisingly, “the need to understand other cultures and languages” was identified by Daniel Yankelovich as one of five imperative needs to which higher education must respond in the next ten years if it is to remain relevant. “Our whole culture,” Yankelovich says, “must become less ethnocentric, less patronizing, less ignorant of others, less Manichaean in judging other cultures, and more at home with the

rest of the world. Higher education can do a lot to meet that important challenge.” In May 2005 Senator Daniel Akaka made a similar point: “Americans need to be open to the world; we need to be able to see the world through the eyes of others if we are going to understand how to resolve the complex problems we face.” In the current geopolitical moment, these statements are no longer clichés. The MLA is prepared to lead the way in the reorganization of language and cultural education around these objectives.

In the context of globalization and in the post–9/11 environment, then, the usefulness of studying languages other than English is no longer contested. The goals and means of language study, however, continue to be hotly debated. Divergent views concerning language and its many functions are reflected in differing approaches to the study of language. At one end, language is considered
to be principally instrumental, a skill to use for communicating thought and information. At the opposite end, language is understood as an essential element of a human being’s thought processes, perceptions, and self-expressions; and as such it is considered to be at the core of translingual and transcultural competence. While we use language to communicate our needs to others, language simultaneously reveals us to others and to ourselves. Language is a complex multifunctional phenomenon that links an individual to other individuals, to communities, and to national cultures.

Institutional missions and teaching approaches typically reflect either the instrumentalist or the constitutive view of language. Freestanding language schools and some campus language-resource centers often embrace an instrumentalist focus to support the needs of the students they serve, whereas university and college foreign language departments tend to emphasize the constitutive aspect of language and its relation to cultural and literary traditions, cognitive structures, and historical knowledge. Culture is represented not only in events, texts, buildings, artworks, cuisines, and many other artifacts but also in language itself. Expressions such as “the pursuit of happiness,” “liberté, égalité, fraternité,” and “la Raza” connote cultural dimensions that extend well beyond their immediate translation. As recent world events have demonstrated, deep cultural knowledge and linguistic competence are equally necessary if one wishes to understand people and their communities.

Transforming Academic Programs

National defense and security agendas, which often arise during times of crisis, tend to focus the goals of language study narrowly. The standard configuration of university foreign language curricula, in which a two- or three-year language sequence feeds into a set of core courses primarily focused on canonical literature, also represents a narrow model. This configuration defines both the curriculum and the governance structure of language departments and creates a division between the language curriculum and the literature curriculum and between tenure-track literature professors and language instructors in non-tenure-track positions. At doctorate-granting institutions, cooperation or even exchange between the two groups is usually minimal or nonexistent. Foreign language instructors often work entirely outside departmental power structures and have little or no say in the educational mission of their department, even in areas where they have particular expertise. Al-
though we focus here on conditions that prevail in foreign language and literature programs, we also note that the two-tiered system exists elsewhere in the humanities—in English programs, for example, where composition and literary studies are frequently dissociated in parallel structural ways.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the frustration this rigid and hierarchical model evokes among language specialists who work under its conditions. Their antagonism is not toward the study of literature—far from it—but toward the organization of literary study in a way that monopolizes the upper-division curriculum, devalues the early years of language learning, and impedes the development of a unified language-and-content curriculum across the four-year college or university sequence. This two-track model endows one set of language professionals not only with autonomy in designing their curricula but also with the power to set the goals that the other set of professionals must pursue. In this model, humanists do research while language specialists provide technical support and basic training. The more autonomous group—the literature faculty—may find it difficult to see the advantages of sharing some of its decision-making power over the curriculum as a whole. We hope to convince this group that it is in our common interest to devise new models.

The two-tiered configuration has outlived its usefulness and needs to evolve. The critical moment in which language departments find themselves is therefore also an opportunity. Many factors in the world today make advanced study of languages and cultures appealing to students and vital to society. Replacing the two-tiered language-literature structure with a broader and more coherent curriculum in which language, culture, and literature are taught as a continuous whole, supported by alliances with other departments and expressed through interdisciplinary courses, will reinvigorate language departments as valuable academic units central to the humanities and to the missions of institutions of higher learning. In our view, foreign language departments, if they are to be meaningful players in higher education—or, indeed, if they are to thrive as autonomous units—must transform their programs and structure. This idea builds directly on a transformation that has already taken place in the profession. In their individual scholarly pursuits and in their pedagogical practices, foreign language faculty members have been working in creative ways to cross disciplinary boundaries, incorporate the study of all kinds of material in addition to the strictly literary, and promote wide cultural understanding through research and teaching. It is time for all language programs in all institutions to reflect this transformation.
The Goal: Translingual and Transcultural Competence

The language major should be structured to produce a specific outcome: educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence. Advanced language training often seeks to replicate the competence of an educated native speaker, a goal that postadolescent learners rarely reach. The idea of translingual and transcultural competence, in contrast, places value on the ability to operate between languages. Students are educated to function as informed and capable interlocutors with educated native speakers in the target language. They are also trained to reflect on the world and themselves through the lens of another language and culture. They learn to comprehend speakers of the target language as members of foreign societies and to grasp themselves as Americans—that is, as members of a society that is foreign to others. They also learn to relate to fellow members of their own society who speak languages other than English.

This kind of foreign language education systematically teaches differences in meaning, mentality, and worldview as expressed in American English and in the target language. Literature, film, and other media are used to challenge students’ imaginations and to help them consider alternative ways of seeing, feeling, and understanding things. In the course of acquiring functional language abilities, students are taught critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception. They acquire a basic knowledge of the history, geography, culture, and literature of the society or societies whose language they are learning; the ability to understand and interpret its radio, television, and print media; and the capacity to do research in the language using parameters specific to the target culture.

An Integrative Approach with Multiple Paths to the Major

The kind of curricular reform we suggest will situate language study in cultural, historical, geographic, and cross-cultural frames within the context of humanistic learning. We expect that more students will continue language study if courses incorporate cultural inquiry at all levels and if advanced courses address more subject areas. This means faculty members will have the opportunity to bring into the classroom the full breadth of their knowledge of the society about
which they teach, including that society’s languages and language variants, literatures, and cultures. Many colleges and universities have made a successful transition toward this broad understanding of language study, and we urge others to follow.

One possible model defines transcultural understanding as the ability to comprehend and analyze the cultural narratives that appear in every kind of expressive form—from essays, fiction, poetry, drama, journalism, humor, advertising, political rhetoric, and legal documents to performance, visual forms, and music. According to this model, which we present only as an example, to read a cultural narrative a student should:

• € Achieve enough proficiency in the language to converse with educated native speakers on a level that allows both linguistic exchanges and metalinguistic exchanges (that is, discussion about the language itself).

• € Have a solid command as well as an analytic knowledge of specific metaphors and key terms that inform culture.

• € Understand how a particular background reality is reestablished on a daily basis through cultural subsystems such as:

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- the mass media
- literary and artistic works as projection and investigation of a nation’s self-understanding
- the social and historical narratives in literary texts, artistic works, the legal system, the political system, the educational system, the economic system, and the social welfare system
- local instances of major scientific and scholarly paradigms
- sports or other leisure activities, the cultural metaphors these have created, and their
relation to the national imagination
○ stereotypes, of both self and others, as they are developed and negotiated through texts
○ symbols or sites of memory in the broadest sense, including buildings, historical figures,

popular heroes, monuments, currency, culture-specific products, literary and artistic
canons, landscapes, fashion, and cuisine
○ major competing traditions such as views of the nation that are secularist or fundamentalist or religious
○ local historiography

Language departments will need to undertake a similar mapping of content to produce unified, four-year curricula that situate language study in cultural, historical, geographic, and cross-cultural frames; that systematically incorporate transcultural content and translingual reflection at every level; and that organize the major around explicit, principled educational goals and expected outcomes. A curriculum should consist of a series of complementary or linked courses that holistically incorporate content and cross-cultural reflection at every level.

Only 6.1% of college graduates whose first major is foreign languages go on to attain a doctoral degree (Natl. Science Foundation); for those students and for others who enjoy literary studies, one path to the major should be through literature. But to attract students from other fields and students with interests beyond literary studies, particularly students returning from a semester or a year abroad, departments should institute courses that address a broad range of curricular needs. Most students studying abroad do not major in departments of languages and literatures, but they can be drawn to courses where they continue to develop their language skills and enrich their cultural knowledge. Interdisciplinary collaborative courses could fulfill both the needs of the students and the goals of the institution’s program. Interdisciplinary courses are typically taught in English, but a credit-bearing discussion module taught in the target language can be added with the support of programs such as foreign languages across the curriculum. More important, faculty members participating in team-taught courses could be encouraged to lead these discussion sessions as part of their teaching load. This approach should appeal to administrators who wish to promote interdisciplinary courses, particularly those taught by several faculty members. Focused, for instance, on a period, an issue, or a literary genre, these courses would present an in-depth study of cross-cultural influences. Examples include courses on the Crusades in the Middle Ages; the Silk Road; literature
and opera; the sonnet across four national literatures; turn-of-the-century Vienna, Paris, and

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London; literature and science; and interconnections between Germany and the United States. In addition to attracting majors from other disciplines, such interdisciplinary team-taught courses would encourage learning communities, forge alliances among departments, and counter the isolation and marginalization that language and literature departments often experience on American campuses. To those who may think it unrealistic to expect collaboration involving language and literature teaching, we would point out that strategies in place at many institutions, like team teaching and linked courses, prove that such collaboration works.

Collaboration and Governance: Transforming the Two-Tiered System

The new courses and programs we recommend should not be developed exclusively by tenure-track scholars trained primarily in literature. The work of revamping and unifying the language department curriculum can only be carried out through a sustained collaboration among all members of the teaching corps, including tenure-line faculty members and those with contingent and long-term appointments in all related fields, such as linguistics, literature, and language pedagogy. Faculty members trained in fields such as media, area studies, performance studies, film, religion, and art history are increasingly part of foreign language department hiring patterns. This trend, along with joint appointments between language departments and related departments and programs, supports the kind of change proposed here.

The presence of linguists and second language acquisition specialists on language department faculties is also an essential part of this vision. Linguists enrich the foreign language major through their ability to offer courses in second language acquisition, applied linguistics, dialectology, sociolinguistics, history of the language, and discourse analysis. In addition to learning the history and underlying structure of a particular language, students should be offered the opportunity to take general courses in such areas as language and cognition,
language and power, bilingualism, language and identity, language and gender, language and myth, language and artificial intelligence, and language and the imagination. These courses appeal broadly to students who major in languages as well as to those who do not.

Research indicates that in doctoral-granting departments, the teaching of first-year language courses breaks down as follows: full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members teach 7.4% of first-year courses, full-time non-tenure-track faculty members teach 19.6%, part-time instructors teach 15.7%, and graduate student teaching assistants teach 57.4%. (Other undergraduate courses are taught by a much higher percentage of tenure-line faculty members in doctorate-granting departments [40.3%].) In BA-granting departments, the breakdown is as follows: full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members teach 41.8% of first-year courses, full-time non-tenure-track faculty members teach 21.1%, part-time instructors teach 34.7%, and graduate student teaching assistants teach 2.4% (Laurence 216, table 3b). It is clear that a redesigned curriculum is a key step in creating an integrated departmental administrative structure in which all members contribute to defining and carrying out a shared educational mission. While language faculty members are expected to use methodologies that develop students’ competencies in reading, writing, and oral expression as preparation for upper-level courses, it is crucial that tenure-line faculty members have a hand in teaching language courses and in shaping and overseeing the content and teaching approaches used throughout the curriculum, from the first year forward. This vision requires departments, in both tenure-track and non-tenure-track searches, to look for instructors who are able to develop and teach broad-based courses aimed at producing the translingual and transcultural competencies described above.

This transformation of curriculum and departmental governance is by far the most important recommendation made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. In many colleges and universities, language departments have been experimenting with change for some time, and their experience can benefit us all. Unless this kind and degree of change happens over the next ten years, college and university departments of foreign languages will not be in a position to provide leadership in advanced language education. Lack of change will most likely carry serious consequences for both higher education and language learning. Language learning might migrate to training facilities, where instrumental
learning will eclipse the deep intellectual and cultural learning that takes place on college campuses.

The changes we foresee in the undergraduate curriculum call for changes in the way graduate studies are structured as well. To meet the needs of undergraduate language programs (which is where the majority of PhD candidates will find employment), graduate studies should provide substantive training in language teaching and in the use of new technologies in addition to cultivating extensive disciplinary knowledge and strong analytic and writing skills. The goals we endorse may be difficult to achieve in some quarters, but they promise to reinvigorate our discipline and our institutions and to reassert the relevance and centrality of language faculty members in shaping the academy.

**Strengthening the Demand for Language Competence within the University**

The lack of foreign language competence is as much a fact within academic disciplines as in the society at large. According to a recent MLA survey, only half of the 118 existing PhD programs in English require reading knowledge of two additional languages (Steward 211, table 1). At the graduate level, language requirements are notoriously underenforced across the humanities and the social sciences. Citation indexes reveal a steady decrease in the use of non-English sources in research across the humanities and social sciences, a deficiency that impoverishes intellectual debate. Four-year language majors often graduate with disappointingly low levels of linguistic ability. Opportunities to study abroad and to do course work in the target language are eroding in favor of short-term study in which courses are in English. In addition, the need to work prevents many students from studying abroad at all.

We recommend that institutions take the following steps:

- Encourage departments to set clear standards of achievement for undergraduate majors in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension and to develop the programming necessary to meet these standards.

  - Establish language requirements (or levels of competence) for undergraduate students majoring in
fields such as international studies, history, anthropology, music, art history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and linguistics, as well as for students preparing for careers in law, medicine, and engineering.

- Encourage departments to enforce language requirements in doctoral programs and to provide courses that enable students both to acquire genuinely usable linguistic skills and to apply those skills in research.

- Work with colleagues in the social sciences and in policy-oriented departments to strengthen language requirements in the design of their majors and graduate programs and encourage these colleagues to recognize the limits monolingualism imposes on research.

- Enhance and reward graduate student training in languages and in language teaching. Teach graduate students to use technology in language instruction and learning. Ensure that doctoral programs include funding for research abroad and language work.

- Encourage foundations to insist on language expertise when projects require it and to fund language acquisition when it is needed for research purposes; that is, make it possible to build language learning into a grant application.

- Promote faculty learning of new languages and increased competence in languages already in use. Encourage administrations to fund tutors or subsidize summers abroad for faculty members whose research projects call for language expertise. Encourage the National Endowment for the Humanities and other granting organizations to make fellowships available for this purpose.

**Continuing Priorities**
The time is right for this transforming approach to language and culture study in higher education. Classroom study and study abroad should be promoted as interdependent necessities: the classroom is an ideal place for structured learning that first sets the stage and later reinforces and builds on learning absorbed in study abroad. Yet the language deficiency
that is prevalent in the United States cannot be solved at the college level alone. While learning another language is possible at any age, learning languages other than English must be included in the earliest years of the K–12 system if the United States is to have a citizenry capable of communicating with educated native speakers in their language. To these ends, we continue to advocate the following priorities for language departments and programs:

♦ Promote alliances between K–12 educators and college and university faculty members to strengthen language learning at all levels and to foster collaboration.
♦ Develop programs for gifted learners, especially in the precollegiate years. Push for enriched, intensified programs for those learners on college campuses.
♦ Broaden the range of languages taught. In particular, add locally spoken languages to the curriculum. Seek out heritage learners and design a curriculum that meets their needs. Encourage heritage speakers to learn additional languages.

• ♦ € Adopt and promote best practices for heritage-language teaching such as those developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics.

• ♦ € Develop programs in translation and interpretation. There is a great unmet demand for educated translators and interpreters, and translation is an ideal context for developing translingual and transcultural abilities as an organizing principle of the language curriculum.

• ♦ € Develop intensive courses and, whenever possible, language-intensive or immersion semesters during which students take multiple courses in the major simultaneously.
• € Insist on study abroad whenever possible and require courses in the target language. Push administrators to develop financial aid support for study abroad. Provide appropriate courses for students returning from abroad.

• € Increase the number of guest speakers on campus who lecture in languages other than English.

• € Make sure campus media centers feature television programs and newspapers in languages other than English. Feature (subtitled) foreign language films for broad campus audiences.

• € Through a language center or other structure, develop a forum for the exchange of ideas and expertise among language instructors from all departments. Such structures prove invaluable in boosting the morale of teachers and improving the quality of professional and intellectual life.

**Going Forward**

Following its long tradition of support for foreign language teaching, the MLA is committed to ensuring that the recommendations in this report are widely disseminated and have every opportunity to succeed in practice. The association is in a unique position to provide research and analysis for the field, to bring together department chairs to discuss ideas for curricular transformation, to create a bank of resources for the profession, and to make profound connections among language-teaching professionals at all levels as well as among local, state, and federal entities that have a role in shaping how language programs are structured and funded. The MLA Executive Council will formulate plans to assist those who are willing to put our recommendations into practice in devising new structures for foreign language departments. As we go forward, the MLA will continue to work with other scholarly and professional associations to articulate common interests and to strengthen our collective mission of paving the way toward a multilingual future for students in the higher education system in the United States.
Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages

Michael Geisler, Dean of Language Schools and Schools Abroad, Middlebury College
Claire Kramsch, Professor of German and Foreign Language Acquisition, University of California, Berkeley
Scott McGinnis, Academic Advisor and Associate Professor, Defense Language Institute, Washington

Office
Peter Patrikis, Executive Director, Winston Churchill Foundation
Mary Louise Pratt (Chair), Silver Professor, New York University
Karin Ryding, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Arabic and Linguistics, Georgetown University
Haun Saussy, Bird White Housum Professor of Comparative Literature, Yale University

Background Information on Languages in the MLA

The MLA constitution defines the association’s purpose as follows: “to promote study, criticism, and research in the more and less commonly taught modern languages and their literatures and to further the common interests of teachers of these subjects.” The MLA’s activities for the most part have focused on the major and minor European languages and their literatures, although recent initiatives have increased engagement with the languages of Asia and the Middle East. Approximately two-thirds of MLA members work in English-language-based studies; this proportion has remained steady for some years. With regard to institutional membership in the Association of Departments of English (ADE) and the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL), language departments slightly outnumber English departments. In 2006 the ADFL had 892 member departments, while the ADE had 747 such members. Departments of foreign languages, especially those that house a single language, tend to have fewer faculty members than departments of English. Of the 85 MLA divisions in 2006, 20 are identified specifically with English and 28 with languages other than English; 37 are unmarked as to language. Of the 48 discussion groups, 8 are specific to English and 22 are specific to languages other than English; 18 are unmarked as to language. Twelve languages and 8 language groups are represented in the discussion groups. Among the 107 allied
organizations of the MLA, 50 are specific to English, 30 are identified with languages other than English, and 27 are not marked as to language. In the employment arena, about half the positions advertised in the MLA Job Information List are in language departments, and about half of these are in Spanish.

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Works Cited


Appendix 2. World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL AREAS</th>
<th>STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Communication:</strong> Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interpretive Communication:</strong> Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Presentational Communication:</strong> Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultures</strong></td>
<td><strong>Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives:</strong> Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives:</strong> Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Making Connections:</strong> Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives:</strong> Learners access and evaluate information and diverse perspectives that are available through the language and its cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparisons</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language Comparisons:</strong> Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cultural Comparisons:</strong> Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>School and Global Communities:</strong> Learners use the language both within and beyond the classroom to interact and collaborate in their community and the globalized world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Lifelong Learning:</strong> Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.</td>
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</table>
Appendix 3. National Standards for Foreign Language Learning

**Standards for Foreign Language Learning**

**Communication**

Communicate in Languages Other Than English

*Standard 1.1:* Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

*Standard 1.2:* Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

*Standard 1.3:* Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

**Cultures**

Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

*Standard 2.1:* Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

*Standard 2.2:* Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

**Connections**

Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

*Standard 3.1:* Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

*Standard 3.2:* Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

**Comparisons**

Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

*Standard 4.1:* Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

*Standard 4.2:* Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

**Communities**

Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

*Standard 5.1:* Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

*Standard 5.2:* Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Appendix 4. Literacy-based Spanish Unit: *Where the Real and the Fantastic Meet, Stories of Julio Cortázar*

Literacy-based Spanish Unit (4 weeks)
*Where the Real and the Fantastic Meet, Stories of Julio Cortázar*

**Level**
2nd year university level Spanish
8 session unit

**Unit Goals**

1. Learners will develop reading strategies for various genres & purposes
2. Learners will acquire vocabulary and forms to facilitate informational, analytical, and interpretive discussion and writing
3. Learners will practice listening and speaking skills in meaningful exploration of content, analysis, interpretation, and problem solving activities
4. Learners will acquire knowledge of history, customs, folklore, and ecological issues relevant to texts to be studied
5. Learners will acquire biographical information on Julio Cortázar and develop appreciation of his unique literary stylistics
6. Learners will practice framing and interpreting stories to explicate cogent readings of texts
7. Learners will produce a creative project demonstrating deep understanding of an aspect of this unit. Students are free to express themselves in various modalities. Projects will be posted in a class Wiki.
8. Learners will demonstrate knowledge in a written unit exam by answering questions and by independently interpreting a Cortázar short story
**Objectives**

Students will demonstrate mastery of this unit by

- discussing history and ecological issues related to the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán and present day Xochimilco, demonstrating proficiency with target vocabulary and forms

- writing a cogent 2-3 page informational essay explaining the history and present day problems of Tenochtitlán and Xochimilco while demonstrating proficiency with target vocabulary and forms

- analyzing and discussing scientific readings and videos on the axolotl in conjunction with legend and cultural practices while demonstrating proficiency with target vocabulary and forms

- explicating an insightful 2 page interpretation of the short story *Axolotl*, supporting claims with relevant background information and textual evidence, and demonstrating command of essay discourse features

- analyzing Cortázar short stories and evaluating diverse interpretations in response groups and other written activities

- analyzing historical and social issues pertaining to the Nicaraguan revolution and the history of the island of Solentiname in class discussion and extrapolating thematic relevance to Cortázar short story in interpretive activities

- showing comprehension and recall of content in a written exam

- demonstrating genre-specific writing skills of interpretation in the independent analysis of a Cortázar short story in the second part of the written exam
Where the Real and the Fantastic Meet, 
Stories of Julio Cortázar

Lesson Focus
Interpretation

Works To Be Studied
• Axolotl
• Carta a una señorita en París
• Apocalipsis de Solentiname
• La casa tomada

SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION

Preparation for the Unit

This unit will be prefaced by a three week exploration of Argentinian culture where learners will

• analyze culture as presented in the Argentinian sitcom, Lalola.
• learn history and compare to musical interpretation in Evita.
• interpret the film, Un Cuento Chino

This preparatory unit will provide background on Cortázar’s homeland and history, and set up themes we will be discussing later.

DAY 1: Las Maravillas de Tenochtitlán

Before class  -- Students will research the historical city of Tenochtitlán

1. Read: Excerpt from Second Letter from Cortés to Emperor Carlos V, “Cortés describes Tenochtitlán” (English)

2. Read excerpt from Bernal Díaz, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain (English)
3. Read BBC article: “500 años del encuentro entre Cortés y Moctezuma: así era la gran Tenochtitlán, "la Venecia del Nuevo Mundo" que deslumbró al conquistador español cuando llegó a México


4. Answer reading comprehension questions.

In class — We will discuss the wonders of Tenochtitlán in group activities as we view bits of a youtube video on Tenochtitlán

1. Quiz on readings
2. View short clips with group activities to facilitate comprehension

Las 8 MARAVILLAS de Tenochtitlán que dejaron con la Boca Abierta a los Españoles - YouTube

3. Cloze Exercise Review of Vocabulary and Content (Group Activity)

DAY 2: Xochimilco, an Aquatic Paradise Pushed to the Edge of Extinction

Before class: Research ecological problems in Xochimilco, Mexico

• Read “An Aquatic Paradise in Mexico, Pushed to the Edge of Extinction” (NYTimes) English & Spanish. Take online quiz.

In Class: We will analyze ecological issues presented in the reading & examine language used in this kind of writing

1. Interactive review of reading
2. Group activity to analyze article:
   • Vocabulary in context exercise
   • Rank and classify problems facing Xochimilco
   • Brainstorm solutions
3. Close reading of passages from article

Week 1 Culminating Activity

- News or magazine article: “Tenochtitlán: el pasado y el presente”
DAY 3: Learn about the axolotl

Before class:
1. Read about the axolotl (excerpts from websites) & take online quiz

In class: We will explore the role of the axolotl in Mexican culture with videos and group activities.

1. A biological wonder
2. Aztec legend
3. Traditional Food
4. Endangered species

DAY 4: Cortázar & Axolotl

Before class:
1. Read Cortázar biography & do online quiz
2. Do opening passage Axolotl hypothesis exercise

In class:
• Interactive review of readings
• Think aloud response to story passages (Axolotl)
• Group write answers to interpretive questions (Come up with multiple interpretations of story considering different frames)

Week 2 Culminating Assignment:
• Interpretation of story, Axolotl (2 pages)

DAY 5: Cortázar’s stylistics in Carta a una señorita en Paris

Before class: You only need to complete your 2 page interpretation of Cortázar’s Axolótl
In class: We will analyze another Cortázar story, *Carta a una señorita en París*.

1. **Beginning of film clip & Discussion (Predict plot/generate vocabulary)**

![Image](image1)

*(Cartas a una señorita en París, Jorge Navarrete)*

2. **Beginning of story using film for context -- Summarize plot & character as a group on butcher paper. Speculate on themes.**

![Image](image2)

*(Los Conejitos ó Carta a una Señorita en París, Andrés H. Denegri)*

3. **Read silently final section & write short interpretation**

4. **Watch endings of films -- Think, Pair, Share**

5. **Compare, contrast, and evaluate interpretations in groups.**

6. **Listening Exercise “Análisis literario de Carta a una señorita en París”, Zigarren und Wasser.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTxTvTCmqm8&t=482s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTxTvTCmqm8&t=482s)
DAY 6: Solentiname

Before class: Research Solentiname, Nicaragua & Julio Cortázar

1. Read “Julio Cortázar teaches a class on his own short story/ Berkeley”
   https://lithub.com/julio-cortazar-teaches-a-class-on-his-own-short-story/
   (English)

2. Read Solentiname Reflected by Ernesto Cardenal (English & Spanish)
   https://revista.drcas.harvard.edu/solentiname-reflected/

3. Answer reading comprehension questions (Spanish)

In class: We will analyze the Cortázar story Apocalipsis de Solentiname

1. Slide show lecture: The Nicaraguan Revolution & Cortázar’s visit to Solentiname

2. Read beginning of story together/Analyze story elements & set up

3. Jigsaw close readings of other passages

4. Group activity: Interpret the story

5. Video: Los artistas de Solentiname
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYiT88Rpb_M

Weeks 3 & 4 Culminating Assignment:

Wiki Presentation DUE IN TWO WEEKS
(Various options for in depth exploration & creative presentation)

Week 3 Target vocabulary and forms:

DAY 7: Unit Review
DAY 8: Unit Exam

Part 1: Q&A from content + short essays
Part 2: La casa tomada -- Analysis & Interpretation
References


Appendix 5. Visual Literacy Unit: How to Analyze Modern Spanish Art

Visual Literacy Unit

How to Analyze Modern Spanish Art

Introduction

Spanish Language
Intermediate Level
Theme: Compare and contrast the works of Picasso, Dalí, and Miró

Objectives:

• Students understand cultural and historical context of Spanish modern art

• Students can identify styles of major artists

• Students can explain differences between styles and philosophies of artists

• Students can articulate their feelings and ideas about art

• Students can analyze a work of and defend or condemn its merits

Goal: Students gain understanding and appreciation for Spanish modern art and can discuss particular works of art in the target language.
**Unit Organization:**

This unit is designed for a 1 hour and 50 minute class. Students are expected to prepare for the lesson by completing 3 online exercises to develop foundational vocabulary, acquire necessary historical background, and to begin thinking about philosophical issues. The class, itself, is divided into four sections of twenty minutes each:

1. Review of Spanish Art History
2. Picasso & Cubism
3. Dalí & Surrealism
4. Miró & Abstraction

**Tasks:**

1. **Collaborative Groups:** View a series of paintings and guess which artist painted it. Then classify the style and interpret the painting. (Use AO Chart for scaffolding)

2. **Collaborative Groups:** Dissect the disparate symbols in Picasso’s Guernica and interpret the meaning of each. Then determine the overall artistic goal of the artist. Finally, describe your personal response to the paintings.

3. **Pair Activity:** Students will be given paintings by Dalí and Picasso and asked to imagine the different manner the other artist would have composed a painting on the same subject and recreate it. (Butcher paper & markers for scribbling ideas)

4. **Collaborative Groups:** Students debate the merits (or lack of) in paintings by Miró. Then they will classify each painting as great art or trash.

**Contextualization:**

Each task will be prefaced by an introductory activity that provides necessary background, introduces vocabulary, and models the task in short listening videos that present the language tasks in sequential difficulty. As well, students will
have the opportunity to experience some paintings through virtual reality, 3d video, and animation.

**Sequence & Cohesion:**

All tasks focus on how to analyze Spanish modern art, and are sequenced in an ascending order of difficulty in content, as well as language and cognitive complexity. While each task focuses on a different artist and style, the activities are all component parts of the summative assessment activity being taught.

**Performance Objectives:**

• Students will remember vocabulary and historical background information.

• Students will understand a scaffolded narrative, informational video, and an authentic opinionated speech, as well as classmate and teacher instructions and observations in the target language. In addition, students will understand the artistic intent in various works of art.

• Students will use target language to carry out various procedures to accomplish tasks in art analysis.

• Students will analyze style, component parts, and artistic integrity of various works of art, utilizing the target language to express ideas and conclusions.

• Students will evaluate artistry and express opinions in the target language.

• Students will utilize academic language in target language to demonstrate proficiency in artistic analysis in a short essay.

• Students will create an original work of art or reinterpret a masterpiece in a new way, and then make a presentation to the class on their artistic intent using the target language.

• Students will engage in procedural, conceptual, and factual knowledge dimensions -- recognizing, identifying, interpreting, clarifying, paraphrasing, representing, classifying, categorizing, summarizing, abstracting, generalizing, inferring, extrapolating, comparing, contrasting, matching, explaining, constructing models, executing, implementing, differentiating, discriminating, distinguishing, focusing, selecting, finding coherence, integrating, deconstructing, coordinating, detecting, critiquing, judging, hypothesizing, planning, designing, producing, and constructing.
Language Content:

Section 1: Preparatory Lesson
- Art vocabulary and simple descriptive phrases (chart and game) & short declarative sentences responding to philosophical questions. (Discussion posting)

Section 2: Review of Spanish Art History
- Short statements of agreement or disagreement and simple reasons (Discussion)
- Use learned language to identify styles and artists, and to come to consensus with group. (Collaborative group game)

Section 3: Picasso and Cubism
- Short multiple choice “quiz” questions on cubism, collaborative problem solving question and answers, listening for targeted information, simple narrative structure with past tense, interpretation and opinion statements, learned words and phrases.

Section 4: Dalí and Surrealism
- Short multiple choice “quiz” questions on cubism, collaborative problem solving question and answers, listening for targeted information, compare and contrast sentences, learned words and phrases.

Section 5: Miró and Abstraction
- Fill in the blank authentic conversation, statements of opinion on art (learned words and phrases), statements of agreement and disagreement, and supporting with reasons, and learned phrases for interpreting art

Vocabulary, Grammar, and Culture Knowledge/Skills
Prerequisite knowledge necessary: Intermediate level proficiency including knowledge of past tense. In addition, students need basic group work and discussion competency. Preparatory homework lesson presents necessary art vocabulary and cultural background information.
Formative assessment

Teacher will circulate during group work and take notes on individual participation. Listening “quizzes” will be collected, but, as they were completed collaboratively, will be merely given satisfactory grading for completion.

Summative assessment

Assessment 1. Short Essay

Summary: The primary goal of this unit is for students to be able to use the target language to express analysis and interpretation of modern Spanish art. Students received significant input and practiced interpretive activities in class. Thus, they should be adequately prepared to develop a short essay wherein they analyze a work of art on their own. Because they are also required to post responses to two classmate essays, they again practice interpretive skills, responding in written format.

Assignment: Each student will choose a painting by a Spanish artist and decide whether it has artistic merit. A copy of that painting, along with the essay, will be posted in the class WIKI. Students are required to comment on at least 2 of their classmates’ essays. Rubrics will show students the level of writing and interpretive competency expected.

Assessment 2. Creative Project

Summary: The creative project allows students to express themselves artistically, as well as to show their understanding of the artist studied. Finally, the presentation assesses the student’s ability to verbally and spontaneously demonstrate ability to interpretation and analysis of art. This multimodal evaluation process helps students of varying learning styles be successful, is comprehensive, and fun. Most importantly, evaluation reflects classroom procedures.
Assignment: Students must create an original work of art based upon a Spanish masterpiece. Alternatively, students may reinterpret a Spanish masterpiece in the media and manner of their choice. Students will be required to make a presentation to the class explaining their artistic intent in the target language. Evaluation will be divided between the creative project and oral expression in the presentation.

Multiple Intelligences Addressed

Linguistic, intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences are utilized throughout the lesson in various discussion and group work activities. As the focus of the lesson is art, spatial intelligence plays a particularly prominent role.

Collaboration Opportunities

There are three group work activities and one pair work activity. All involve art interpretation or evaluation. In addition, the listening “quizzes” are collaborative exercises wherein students identify targeted information. Finally, students interact online in a discussion forum and classroom art Wiki.

National Standards for Foreign Language Teaching Addressed

Communication (Communicate in Languages Other Than English)

**Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

Pair & collaborative group work involves students in interpretation and evaluation of art.

**Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

Authentic videos and website require students to read and understand aural language to process lesson material.
**Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Students must evaluate art and share their own feelings about particular works of art in pairs and in small groups. In addition, students must demonstrate their knowledge of art analysis in a formal presentation of self-created art inspired by a Spanish master.

**Cultures (Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures)**

**Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Students must relate paintings to historical Spanish art. As well, students evaluate point of view of a contemporary Spanish artist in authentic video.

**Connections (Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information)**

**Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Students gain knowledge about art and develop critical thinking skills.

**Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

Students must relate paintings to historical Spanish art. As well, students evaluate point of view of a contemporary Spanish artist in authentic video.

**Authentic Materials and Cultural Products**

- Teacher created slideshows using images from Google
- Spanish Masters Slideshow for Task 1 Game
- Comparison of Picasso and Dalí slideshow
- Is it art? slideshow
- Photocopies of print of Guernica by Picasso
Visual Literacy Unit
How to Analyze Modern Spanish Art

Sequence of Instruction

TASK 1: Using Style & Period to Identify Artists & Understand their Work

Pre-task Preparation Lesson (Homework)

• Introduction to specialized vocabulary (Quizlet game)

• Overview of history of Spanish art. (Students will view online slideshow & fill in Advance Organizer Chart to use in class.) https://sobrehistoria.com/los-pintores-espanoles-mas-famosos-de-la-historia-y-sus-obras-mas-importantes/

• Critical Thinking Questions Quickwrite: After viewing short video about Spanish Language art project by Gabriel Orozco write a short response (In Spanish) to questions in online discussion forum. (2 paragraphs) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWC2abuzkQU

• Response Questions: Do you think it is important to understand the language and culture of an artist? Does it enrich your experience? Is it important to view the actual work? Is it disrespectful to remake the art in a new way?

Warm-up Activity

• Post statements from student topic discussions on whiteboard & debate ideas. (Post butcher paper list of sentence stems)
Guided Practice

• Modeling: Teacher will show a painting and model the task activity with the entire class. (Twice)

Application

• Group work: Students view a series of paintings and try to guess which artist painted each, then classify the style, and interpret the painting. (They may use the Major Figures Chart)

Extension of Instruction

• Listening exercises and later tasks utilize skills from this task.

Evaluation

• Formative assessment of group work and discussion

• Summative evaluation: Application in essay and final oral presentation

TASK 2: How to Dissect a Cubist Painting & Understand Intent of the Artist

Setting the Stage & Providing Input

Learn about Picasso, Cubism, & The History of Guernica:

• Listening Exercise #1: Students read a short multiple choice quiz on cubism and then view a 60 second video documentary on the subject. Then, in pairs, they try to guess the answers. Repeat the process in a second viewing. Discuss.
  ◦  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7cw3j2blwo

• Listening Exercise #2: Students read a short multiple choice quiz on Picasso. Advise students that they will get only one viewing of video. Then
view a 5 minute scaffolded narrative on Picasso. In pairs, guess the answers. Discuss. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnIbPRFY52A

- 3D Guernica - Experience the painting via 3D video. Discuss.

**Guided Practice**

Modeling: Teacher will post a fragment from Guernica -- the “Eyeball Light”. In pairs, students will hypothesize the meaning and evaluate its power as an image.

**Application**

**Collaborative Group Project: Dissect El Guernica**

- Identify the disparate components & interpret the meaning of each individual image

- What is the artistic goal of this painting? Discuss & come to consensus.

**Evaluation**

- Formative assessment of group work and discussion

- Summative evaluation: Application in essay and final oral presentation

**TASK 3: How to Differentiate Cubist and Surrealist Approaches**

**Setting the Stage & Providing Input**

- **Listening Exercise:** Students read a short multiple choice quiz on surrealism and then view a 60 second video documentary on the subject. Then, in pairs, they try to guess the answers. Repeat the process in a second viewing. Discuss. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAenAQhWh4E
• **Experience the Art of Dalí & See how it is being reinterpreted.** Brief responses after each video.

1. Dalí paintings (mute the music -- it's distracting) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wBcrWSNyjM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wBcrWSNyjM)
2. Dalí Video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WixEvXAKrZo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WixEvXAKrZo)
3. Virtual Reality Dalí [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiWJwyVDOkw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiWJwyVDOkw)
4. Dalí animated [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswIQ3wQFo4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswIQ3wQFo4)
5. Dalí elefantes animated [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0)

**Guided Practice**

**Modeling:** Teacher will post a comparison of how Dalí and Picasso might each draw the human body on the Smartboard & lead a discussion

**Application**

**Pair Activity:**

• Compare Dalí & Picasso View a series of Dalí & Picasso paintings and imagine how the other artist would have interpreted the subject differently. (Scribble ideas or designs butcher paper)

**Evaluation**

• Formative assessment of group work and discussion
• Summative evaluation: Application in essay, final oral presentation, and creative project which reinterprets a masterpiece.

**TASK 4: How to Evaluate Merits (Or Lack Of) in a Work of Modern Art**

**Setting the Stage & Providing Input**

• **Listening Exercise:** Students skim a gap exercise, and then view authentic video of Spanish artist, Antonio Garcia Viallarín making an argument
that Miró is a terrible painter. Teacher will play segments of video, and then allow students to work together to fill in the blanks, discussing content in the process.  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYhnxDCl62Y

Guided Practice

- **Modeling:** Teacher will post a painting by Miró and the class will evaluate it based on a list of criteria posted on the whiteboard.

Application

- **Collaborative Group Project:** Is it art, or not? Look at each picture & discuss why or why not it is art.

Evaluation

- Formative assessment of group work and discussion
- Summative evaluation: Application in essay, final oral presentation, and creative project which reinterprets a masterpiece.

Extension Activities

View Short Surrealist Films

- **Dali & Disney film, Destino**  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDujHWk-QDDo
- **Un Perro Andaluz (Un Chien Andalous) - Luis Buñuel (with Dalí)**  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7xTjeLG5SM

For Fun

- Dalí on the American game show, “What’s My Line?”  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7SSkVpM4lE

Readings

- Luis Buñuel Biography @  https://www.enotes.com/topics/luis-bunuel
References


Marti, I. (2014, September 2) *Salvador Dalí - La Tentacion de San Antonio (Animation)*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswIQ3wQFo4


SYLLABUS
The Brave New World of Technology and Language:
Multimodal Writing

Summary

In this course we will be studying the synergy of meaning making in the digital age. We will be learning about how the particular technology of transmission affects the message, and how what we mean to say is altered by the receptive situation of our audience. We will practice various modes of communication and learn underlying design principles. We will consider techniques of persuasion and how they are employed for argumentation, advertising, and propaganda. Finally, we will examine techniques of storytelling.

Level & prerequisites

This is a three unit course and work load is equivalent to a class that meets two days a week. There is no prerequisite. The course is designed to provide incoming students with strategies for understanding and creating the wide variety of texts used in contemporary university education.

Objectives

Learners will demonstrate mastery by:

- Responding intelligently to readings in weekly forum posts & blog
- Deciphering and analyzing complex text through the use of strategic reading practices and a reading blog
• Presenting a probing exploration of an aspect of modern communication in a 2-3 minute podcast
• Explaining how messaging is affected by material resources or particular context in a 4-6 page research paper using standard citation protocol.
• Identifying design principles and techniques of persuasion in propaganda or advertising in a 2-3 page media analysis essay
• Reporting on an event in an article for a newspaper or magazine audience, and describing your narrative strategy in a 2-3 paragraph explanation

**Methodology**
The class will meet twice a week. Students are expected to prepare for class by completing readings and activities listed on the syllabus schedule, and by posting responses to weekly prompts on the Blackboard Discussion Forum. (The last month of class you will post in your blog instead.)

A unit project will be due every four weeks. There is no midterm or final exam.

Audio recordings of readings are posted on Blackboard, along with slideshow lectures for review. Every attempt is made to present material in aural and written form to better facilitate vocabulary retention and comprehension of content.

Class participation is vital. You will be dropped from the roster after four absences.

**Grading**
15% Guided Reading & Writing Activities
20% Discussion Forum & Blog
15% Podcast
20% Research essay
15% Multimodal Messaging Analysis
15% Narrative
Major Assignments

Guided Reading Activities: Each reading assignment will be preceded by an “Into Activity” that explains the context of the reading, and indicates how to approach the reading. In class we will work together on “Through Activities” to develop strategies to understand complex text. After these activities you will complete a “Beyond Activity” to assess your understanding of the assigned text. It may be a quiz or short creative assignment.

Discussion Forum & Blog: Each week students will post responses in the Blackboard Discussion Forum to 2-3 prompts on topics addressed in lessons. Responses should be thoughtful, respectfully presented, carefully written, and concise. (no more than 2-3 paragraphs each)

The last month of class students will, instead, create a blog documenting their journey through the short novel, Brave New World. (You will write this blog on a google.doc and share with the instructor, being careful to assign “commenting” privileges to the instructor.)

Podcast: The audio podcast is a chance for students to present their ideas in a creative format, in careful consideration of contextual issues inherent to the medium. Students are expected to design a provocative, entertaining “show” using music and sound effects to enhance the message. This project can be done collaboratively. (2-3 minutes) The instructor will provide podcast models to students prior to the assignment.

Research Essay: Midway through the term students will research a topic related to course content and write a 4-6 page essay, using at least four reputable sources, in addition to an observation or interview. Students should be careful to logically structure information, to support arguments with evidence, and to present insights with clarity. Careful attention should be paid, as well, to grammar and punctuation in the proofreading stage, and adherence to the conventions of academic citation is expected. (MLA format)

Class time will be devoted to developing and revising the research essay. In addition, students are required to review their rough draft with a tutor in either the ESL writing
center or the Writing Center in the Student Learning Center, and to meet with the instructor in a writing conference.

**Multimodal Messaging Analysis**: In this assignment students will identify strategies of visual and/or audio design and rhetorical persuasion in an example from the world of advertising or propaganda, and consider how these elements interact in message creation. (2-3 pages) The activity will be practiced in collaborative activities as preparation for the assignment.

**Narrative**: Students will relate an event demonstrating awareness of the conscious application of narrative technique. That event can be personal, but can also be reportage. In any case, the writing should be approached as if it were to be submitted to a particular publisher. Care should be taken to consider ideological framing of the story, the perspective of the publisher, formatting conventions, audience expectations, and possible reverberations from revelation of this story. Along with the article, students are expected to attach a 2-3 paragraph explanation of their employment of narrative strategy. This activity will be modeled and practiced in collaborative group activities as preparation for the assignment. In addition, students are required to review their rough draft with a tutor in the ESL writing center and with the instructor in a writing conference.

**Required Texts**
- *Language, Literacy, and Technology* by Richard Kern
- *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley

Additional readings or other media resources will be provided to students on Blackboard.

**Tech Requirements**
Students need to be able to check Blackboard weekly to access readings. Additionally, internet links will be assigned for video viewing or audio listening from time to time.

**Course Policies**
Discussion Forum Postings or Blogs are due before class each Thursday. Check the schedule for due dates of major projects.
Contact me by email or zoom if you have an emergency. Better yet, get your work done ahead of time so you don't have to worry about due dates.

**Turning in Work**
1. Your essay and will be submitted via turnitin.com
2. Other projects will be submitted to a Blackboard link.
3. You will do your blog in google.docs. Share it with me so that I can grade it and comment throughout the semester.

**Course Responsibilities**
Do your assignments in a timely basis. Be thorough and thoughtful in reading and writing. Take notes and use the resources available to you to review material regularly. Revise your essays so that they are cogent and insightful. Be open to new ideas.

**Online Etiquette & Conduct**
Be supportive in your comments, but engage intellectually in your discussions. Be respectful of different perspectives.

**Academic Integrity**
Chico State students and their instructors are expected to adhere to guidelines set forth by the Academic Integrity Council: http://www.csuchico.edu/prs/EMs/2004/04-036.shtml
Excellence in learning can only take place in an environment based on academic integrity and honesty. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Please also contact Accessibility Resource Center (ARC, X5959). ARC will help you understand your rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide you further assistance with requesting and arranging accommodations.
Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

Creating a safe learning environment is a priority for all instructors. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility to share information on sexual misconduct with the University. To speak to someone confidentially, contact the Counseling and Wellness Center (898-6345) or Safe Place (898-3030). Information on campus reporting obligations and other Title IX related resources are available here: www.csuchico.edu/title-ix

Resources

The Writing Center: The Writing Center offers free, one-on-one writing support for Chico State students. Trained, faculty-recommended tutors provide assistance at any stage of the writing process for any class -- brainstorming, writing, revising or making sure your writing flows. The Writing Center is located in the Student Services Center, in Room 340, or online @ https://www.csuchico.edu/slc/writing-center.shtml

ESL Resource Center: The ESL Center is a free, one-on-one tutoring center dedicated to helping English language learners with all aspects of the English language. No appointments are necessary. This is a very valuable asset that could help you tremendously with English needs. The Center is located in the ARTS building, room 206A or online @ https://www.csuchico.edu/engl/resources/esl-resource.shtml

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): This site is the place for academic writing and all the up to date facts on citation. Find online @ https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Campus Support

Any student who has difficulty affording food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry. Please notify your professor if you are not comfortable in doing so. Other campus resources can be found HERE.

Meeting with Me

You are encouraged to meet with me during office hours via Zoom. As well, you may email. Please do not expect an immediate response to emails, especially on evenings and weekends. 24-48 hours is the norm. Appendix 4. Pobre Ana excerpt
Capítulo uno

Ana es una chica con problemas. Tiene muchos problemas. Tiene problemas con sus amigas y su familia. Es una chica normal pero tiene muchos problemas.

Tiene quince años. No es muy alta. Tiene el pelo largo. Tiene ojos azules y pelo castaño.

Ana vive en Hermosa Beach, California. Tiene una familia normal. Tiene papá y mamá y un hermano y una hermana. La familia vive en una casa azul. La casa no es grande. No es pequeña. Es una casa normal. Ana asiste a una escuela en California. La escuela es grande. Se llama West Torrance High School. Ana está en el año nueve de la escuela.


Appendix 8. Embedded Reading Example

Base reading:

Grandma is at the airport. She is not happy. A person smiles at her. She is happy.

Version 2:

Grandma is at the airport in Los Angeles. She is not very happy. She does not smile. A person smiles at her and says “Hello”. She is happy.

Version 3:

One day, Grandma is at the airport in Los Angeles. She is not very happy. She does not smile. A person smiles at her and says “Hello Ma’am”. She does not respond. The person is not happy. A person smiles at her and says, “Good morning, beautiful,” and Grandma smiles. She is happy.

Version 4:

One beautiful day, Grandma is at the airport in Los Angeles. She does not smile. She does not smile because she is not very happy. A person smiles at her and says “Hello old woman.” Grandma does not respond and does not smile. The person is not happy. Another person smiles at her and says, “Good morning, Ma’am.” Grandma does not respond and does not smile. She is not happy and the person is not happy. Another person smiles at her and says, “Hi beautiful,” and Grandma smiles and says “Thank you.” She is very happy.

From *Embedded Reading: Simplify, Scaffold, Succeed!* website https://embeddedreading.com/2012/08/