ADD C FOR CONTEXT: WHAT CAN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS FROM THE HUMANITIES CONTRIBUTE TO RESEARCH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION?

Dror Abend-David[1,2], James Kusch[3]

[1]University of Florida, [2]Kaunas University of Applied Sciences, [3]Blessed Memory

Abstract. What are some of the challenges and opportunities faced by language instructors who are trained in Literature, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Philosophy, Translation Studies and other fields in the Humanities? For one thing, such instructors often find themselves outside the theoretical discussion that surrounds their profession. In many cases, language departments rely upon instructors who are trained in disciplines in the humanities to teach FL and SLA courses. We look at previous research in FSLA, as well as CLT and TBLT, to discuss motivation and contextualisation as key factors that determine L2 achievement and attainment. At the heart of the argument is our attempt to teach not only grammar and vocabulary (although we do not, for one minute, pretend that they are unimportant) but also to engage students' thinking and imagination in relation to language learning. Students enrol in language classes for a number of reasons, and almost all enrol with the ability to think and imagine. The context that we offer in this article is shaped by hermeneutics, phenomenology, literature, media and translation studies. We refer to texts in Literature, Media, and various academic fields both in this article and in class, calling on readers and students to use their imaginations and curiosity to learn more about language and culture. In addition, we supplement the five C's of the ACTFL - Communication, Culture, Connection, Comparison and Community - with a sixth C for context: the context of global language development through communications, economics, cultural exchange and geographical displacement, exile and immigration.

Keywords: foreign/second language acquisition (fsla), interpretation, humanities, motivation, imagination, native tongue, culture, globalization, pedagogy, translation.

Introduction

Many, if not a majority of foreign language instructors, are untrained in Foreign or Second Language Acquisition. They are often trained in Literature, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Philosophy, Translation Studies and other fields in the humanities. Additionally, some come from communications, sociology or other fields that are considered Social Sciences. As a result, they often find themselves outside of the theoretical discussion that surrounds their profession. Many are unaware that such a theoretical field exists. If they have, they could perhaps make little out of a scholarship that is most often empirical, quantitative and grounded in Social Studies. One can argue that the number of language instructors who are not experts in FSLA points towards an administrative failure and that more FSLA experts should be hired instead of non-experts. This article attempts to answer a question that is by no means either obvious or rhetorical to most FSLA scholars: What can language instructors from the Humanities contribute to research in foreign language acquisition?

One way to see beneath the masks of methodology and subject area specialisation is to look at how scholars converse. In fields as diverse as anthropology, history, medicine, and biology, scholars have recently begun to communicate. They

recognisehow mathematical inquiry connects to the social and literary inquiry and the political facets that determine disciplinary method and boundaries (Nelson, Megill & McCloskey, 1987). In this piece, we highlight, among other issues, a disciplinary context of language instruction and the necessary cultural, political and communicative perspective that successful language instruction must include. Among other things, acknowledging such context will affect students' motivation to learn and excel in acquiring a foreign language.

Why does one study a foreign language (other than because it's an academic requirement)? What is the purpose of language study? What increases the excitement and investment of language students? And what can turn them off? The question of motivation in language study has been the subject of numerous studies in FSLA. Studies such as "Towards a Full Model of Second Language Learning: An Empirical Investigation" (Gardner et al., 1997) and the more recent, "Contextual Dynamics in Foreign Language Learning Motivation" (Kozaki and Ross, 2011), underscore the significance of motivation in language study. Kozaki and Ross go on to define external factors such as global politics, economic development and social and political perceptions of identity as important factors in creating students' motivation (1329-1330). They go on to analyse certain forms of motivations and even make practical suggestions in

terms of class composition (1349). But the discussion of cultural/political context remains in the "background of the study" (1329), and there is little talk of how the language classroom might respond to the social or political motivation that placed the students in the class to begin with. Another important document is the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* that was published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in 1999. This document provides an encouraging recognition of the need for certain social and cultural aspects in the classroom, which is expressed through "the five C's" of Foreign Language acquisition: Communication, Culture, Connection, Comparison and Community.

But since ACTFL has already recognised the significance of global communication and cultural exchange in contemporary language acquisition, would Humanity instructors have anything to add to what is already a very culturally and globally minded agenda? Experts in the areas such as Literature, Media, Translation and Philosophy can offer "a sixth C" that would expand the discussion on each of the previous five. This sixth C is for Context. Such context can include the current humanitarian crisis in Syria; an economic crisis in Spain and Greece; the migration of refugees from North Africa and the Caribbean; the decline of indigenous languages in Africa, and other crises that affect the motivation and investments of students who study Arabic, Greek, Spanish, Yoruba, or any other language.

This article follows "the five C's" of Foreign Language Acquisition, contextualising each one of them within current global, political and cultural communications and rendering foreign language instruction relevant to the needs of contemporary students. In this context, language acquisition (other than instruction – entailing what students actually acquire) is not only considered as a desirable skill but also as an important tool for identity formation and self-discovery. Another claim is that while most FSLA research focuses on the language classroom and the relationship between the instructors and their students – language instruction cannot be observed independently from an administrative reality that often impedes foreign language acquisition. Combined, these two claims re-evaluate the task of the language instructor and contextualise language instruction within a changing cultural, economic, migratory and linguistic reality in today's university classrooms.

We explore at least two objectives in this study: A view of L2 instruction that goes beyond the fragmentation of knowledge and contextualisation of twenty-first-century language instruction. In many respects, L2 instruction and learning are driven by a need to prepare students for performance tests, resulting in a deficiency of instruction at an interpretive level. And, as coursework is situated in a world that is saturated with instant communication via the internet, various websites and social media, the university classroom can offer a forum for a well informed and often provocative, volatile and engaging discussion. In addition, learning from technological sources, including cinema and popular music, can be described, contested and shaped as a useful means for learning a second language. This article suggests ways of thinking about the questions, methods, and knowledge that an L2 curriculum might offer.

Previous Studies and Research

Broadly speaking, it has long been argued that subject area specialists are most suited to teach academic subjects. For example, Shulman argues that pedagogical content knowledge is a form of practical knowledge that is used by teachers to guide their actions in highly contextualised classroom settings. This form of practical knowledge entails, among others: (a) knowledge of how to structure and represent academic content for direct teaching to students; (b) knowledge of the common conceptions, misconceptions, and difficulties that students encounter when learning particular content; and (c) knowledge of the specific teaching strategies that can be used to address students' learning needs in particular classroom circumstances. In the view of Shulman (and others), pedagogical content knowledge builds on other forms of professional knowledge and is, therefore, a critical — and perhaps even the paramount — constitutive element in the knowledge base of teaching (Shulman, 1986, Rowan, 2003).

L2 research that is relevant to our article mainly comes from discussions of CLT (communicative language teaching) and TBLT (task-based language teaching). Laura Gurzynski-Weiss investigates how and whether feedback in a language-learning classroom is related to types of linguistic items in listening and speaking exercises to university graduate students (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2015). In her study, Gurzynski-Weiss had participants retell different items from a story via *ichat* technology with a native or near-native listener while thinking aloud. In this regard, we can understand that involvement in the listening task and possibly hearing a native speaker's reaction produces a learning moment. Sandra Savignon sees learners in the CLT classroom as active participants in negotiating meaning (Savignon, 2007). Savignon states that CLT is a multi-perspectival approach that builds on several disciplines, including linguistics,

psychology, philosophy, sociology, and education. It focuses on carrying out and implementing methodologies that are capable of enhancing the learner's functional language ability through active involvement in an authentic communicative environment (Savignon, 2007).

There is also a variety of approaches to language instruction and making meaning that we can derive from the social sciences and humanities, including fields such as semiotics, hermeneutics, conversational and discourse analysis and textual approaches to written language. In sociology and psychology, social constructivism stimulates some to use tools and perspectives from the humanities to examine and teach L2, resulting in what Geertz calls "blurred genres" (Geertz, 1983). Some particularly good examples are those of previous research in language and translation studies in the humanities and second foreign language research (Bellos, 2011). Combining the two fields helps bridge the gap between the definitions of "native" and "non-native" speakers and challenge the assumption that only native speakers in complete possession of their mother tongue are in a position to judge other speakers. The origin of language is not an idle notion for those in humanities but one that gives insight into the deep connection between humanities and foreign language work. In other words, the history, political context and social environment of a language (also in its relation with other languages through translation) have a direct influence on the language classroom.

Moreover, since Language study became institutionalised in universities, teachers of foreign languages have become 'experts' who distinguish mistakes that language learners make in light of characteristics of native speech. Accordingly, educational institutions facilitate standardisation of the language curriculum and the use of standardised examinations to determine the success of teaching and learning. Accordingly, language education is often considered an a-theoretical, skill-based instruction, as instructors devote their efforts to preparing students for performance examinations. Some current research on the testing of English language learning recognises that the need for desirable examination results steers not only the content that is taught but also directly shapes how instructors teach (Bekleyen, 2010; Kvale, 1990). First, Nilüfer Bekleyen tells about the effect of standardised examinations on language learning and teaching insofar as the language curriculum needs to be directly testable. She finds that in the Turkish language curriculum, there is an emphasis on teaching vocabulary and grammar skills that can be easily converted to short-answer exam questions at the expense of learning other language elements.

Steinar Kvale writes about schools in Norway, arguing that standardised exams imply that knowledge consists of isolated facts and logical rules for combining facts (Kvale, 1990:131-132). Our questions here are: What elements of language should be taught in university foreign language courses? And what role is there for instructors who are trained in the humanities in teaching such elements?

Specifically, in the second language teaching literature, there are studies related to communicative language teaching (CLT) and communicative interaction and needs analysis, referred to as task-based language teaching (TBLT). CLT researchers advocate that language instruction goes beyond simply teaching students to communicate in the target language. Rather, it encourages learners to develop communication skills as they understand them (Absalom, 2014). TBLT researchers promote communication as it relates to social interaction. The methods that TBLT promote stress the relation between language learning and pedagogy. Rod Ellis (2003) addresses a need to combine linguistic knowledge, representation and knowledge production to successfully teach a foreign language (Gonzalez-Loret, 2007). He concludes that tasks are a better indicator of learning than specific skills (Ellis, 2003). TBLT pedagogy relies mostly upon speaking and listening tasks where the instructor would teach students to distinguish between focused and unfocused tasks. A particularly valuable potential available through a merging of TBLT with technology is its potential to minimise students' fear of failure, losing face, or being embarrassed by attempts at using a foreign language (Gonzalez-Loet, 2007). Particularly important research in this respect is that of Marina Terfouraki, who investigates how politeness affects students' learning in Greek and Turkish classrooms in Cyprus. Terkourafi explores the variables of power/status in the classroom and other interaction, solidarity in advice-giving and the use of approbatory expressions, the differential use of language by males and females, the use of interruptions in television talk, and, finally, the way in which compliments affect classroom interactions and communication (Terkourafi, 2001).

At the heart of our research and related to existing findings in the CLT and TLBT research are problems of sorting communication and personal experience, particularly where instructional methods employ face-to-face conversation, debate, or oral presentation.

The argument, or "language – what is it good for…?!"

Language is foremost a device designed for accomplishing communicative ends. Languages, dialects, and "registers" differ not just in form but also in what we call "meaning potential." Our argument is the more subtle neo-Whorfian one. While one can say anything in any language, what speakers, in fact, habitually do say varies considerably, not only from language to language but from dialect to dialect and from register to register. Since language users simultaneously encode multiple meanings, a given discourse segment must be analysed in terms of distinct functional modes. Students can also be taught to recognise and employ interpretive methods and understandings of language. In our recommendations, we suggest ways to interpret language and appreciate language as a tentative characteristic of understanding. While multi-functionality in this sense is characteristic of adult language, as children acquire language (pre-18 months), the various functions are performed one at a time, each being mapped onto a specific utterance type. Michael Halliday's studies of language acquisition from this perspective show how the student first compartmentalises concrete functions, and later groups these together into more abstract "meta-functions" (the ideational, interpersonal, and textual), which can be mapped simultaneously onto a given stretch of discourse (Halliday, 1981). Such language acquisition studies will undoubtedly provide a significant clue to the complex formal-functional linkage found in adult language. To this extent, language training is almost a form of re-education or at least a complex social and psychological process that necessitates a great deal more than the (ultimately essential) elements of grammar and vocabulary.

To this end, we contextualise some of what takes place in the language classroom in terms of methodology, inter-and-outer-classroom relationship, social and political contexts, and the administrative reality of language instruction. As mentioned before, we do so by exploring ACTFL's "five C's" of Foreign Language Acquisition, Communication, Culture, Connection, Comparison and Community, adding a significant sixth C for context.

Communication

Since the time of Shakespeare, students have sought to inject their points of view into the process of communication or miscommunication:

Lord Polonius: What do you read, my lord?
Hamlet: Words, words, words.
Lord Polonius: What is the matter, my lord?
Hamlet: Between whom?
Lord Polonius: I mean, the matter that you read, my lord
(*Hamlet* Act II, scene ii)

Hamlet, like many university students, recognises a separation between meaning and the words that communicate meaning. He is teasing Polonius here with the idea that words exist independently of their meanings or interpretations. Ferdinand de Saussure (2002) speaks about the process of rendering signs meaningful. A sign is arbitrary and devoid of meaning until it is used in a functional process of communication. ACTFL defines communication as the ability to "engage in conversation, provide and obtain information." This is certainly an important task. But is ciphering and deciphering in this manner necessarily meaningful? In "What is a 'Relevant' Translation?" (2001, 178-9), Jacques Derrida argues that the relevance of a text or a language to the readers' needs is an essential condition for successful intercultural communication. In other words, the success of either a translation or a language class has to do with motivation – the needs and expectations of the reader/student – and the extent to which it can be responded to adequately. How "relevant" or meaningful is a language study where one classmate turns to the other and asks for a non-existent cup of coffee or when the imaginary bus arrives? How can one create the communication that is the result, as de Saussure suggest, of a system of differences – in this case, between different locations, cultures and environments?

There are more challenges to communication in the language classroom than what is usually taken into account. More often than not, the class is made up of an instructor and students of different cultural backgrounds that need to be negotiated. This in itself can be a key to meaningful communication. The cultural experience in the class can be further enhanced with texts, songs, dances and video clips that tell students more about culture and enhance their experience. But working against this is a politically correct atmosphere that prohibits certain discussions ("no politics") and an even stronger notion that "there is no time". Language sections must "cover" a certain amount of material for a shared exam, and instruction must be either slowed down or accelerated to keep up with the other sections. This is not to say that Gardner's theory of multiple-intelligence (1983; 1993) is not appreciated – so long as everyone does exactly the same thing...

Moreover, students themselves are wary of "creative" tasks that are difficult to quantify and grade. And Pre-med students who are afraid that "Hungarian will ruin their chances to get into medical school" seem to have neither the time nor the inclination to sing in that language. Language teachers, therefore, must not only be experts in intercultural communication but also in institutional and bureaucratic culture – when only a careful negotiation of the latter will enable them to address the former.

Most importantly, the reason that the cultural discussion, along with comics and samples of ethnic food, is pulled away to surface only "if we have extra time" is that they are considered by both students and the administration secondary to "the language". A sum of vocabulary, grammatical rules and idioms that compose a complete and tangible object. This is by no means to say that the latter are unimportant (or even less important than cultural activities). However, Derrida writes that "I only have one language; it is not mine" (1998, 67). By this, he means both that language is undefined and inexhaustible. It is always partial, remembered and practised where it is useful. As a topic of study, as Hamlet suggests, it amounts to nothing more than "Words, words, words…" unless it is made meaningful and relevant to other fields of study through the scientifically ambiguous and administratively unquantifiable discussion of culture.

Culture

One way to shift the conversation in the class away from grades and requirements and replace a bureaucratic culture with a cultural discussion is to borrow Douglas Robinson's ideas of the cultural shift in *The Translator's Turn* (1991). In a nutshell, the idea that translation is not the sum of lexical replacements but rather a complicated cultural expression can be easily applied to the language classroom. This would allow the language instructor to turn from a focus on grammar and diction to the cultural choices that are made when speaking a particular language. In fact, the language class is already a "translation workshop" in which a constant "consecutive translation" necessitates a great deal of cultural knowledge and sensitivity.

One significant facet of rendering language relevant to students goes directly back to issues of translation and "equivalency." Equivalency, among many others, is discussed by Eugene Nida (1964, 4 and elsewhere). It, of course, contains a number of complications that are the subject of another discussion. One possible definition of "equivalency" is as follows: "The term equivalency connotes verbatim translation or learning that eventually must

be implemented within a system of replacement, a "this for that," which uses the same principle as a 'word per word' translation."Students might be surprised or even upset when asked to provide "the polite form" in Hebrew, which they have not learned. But since Hebrew does not have "a polite form" (or rather it is simply formed by adding the word "please" to the imperative), students are required to use their knowledge and their imagination and translate with an ear to what would normally be said in the target language. Theoretically, this example naturally connects to Terkourafi's linguistic and sociological study of politeness in different languages. And, from a pedagogical perspective, translating in this manner requires students to provide various possible answers rather than to memorise one "correct" answer. Finally, from a cultural perspective, "translating for meaning" complicates students' view of the language that they are studying and provides them with a good sense of the ways in which the cultures of their native and newly acquired language are different from each other. Such a practice, of course, requires a great deal of reflection. It requires students to recognise and reflect on the differences between "*şerefe* [honour]" and "*lekhaim* [to life];" "*you're welcome*," and "*de nada*;" and, as Derrida points out (2001, 174), between "*excuse me*" and "*pardonne moi*" (As the latter carries a distinctly Christian connotation). Moreover, what does it mean that Hebrew has no "polite form" while Turkish has an elaborate one? And, in English, why is a dog an "it" but a ship a "she"?

Certain language classes do provide some cultural guidance, either through giving students native names or experimenting with ethnic food and music. But do language classes enable students to discuss the economic crisis in Spain or the reasons for the rise of extreme right-wing organisations in French society? Can they help students to examine stereotypes about Italian, Arab or Japanese society? How many classes provide tools for a serious (and politically challenging) linguistic and cultural discussion?

Moreover, such a discussion – which is highly complex and politically volatile – cannot be justified if it detracts from the "real purpose" of passing an exam and satisfying a requirement. Perhaps surprisingly, students are seldom grateful for this cultural approach, not only because it complicates what otherwise seems like a mechanical task, but because it puts them face to face with what is a complicated and intimidating psychological process: To engage and make a language (at least partially) one's own, one has to develop a dual personality – or at least a dual persona – sounding, behaving and sometimes thinking in a completely new manner. Those of us

who are engaged in studying a new language can testify to the extent to which such study influenced their world view and personal identity – and the extent to which this can be a disturbing and sometimes painful process. To many students, this might seem an unexpected and perhaps inappropriate requirement. Few students expect a language class to entail a cultural study (they are only there to learn "the language"), and fewer still expect (since sometimes they have not chosen to enrol in the class) to be asked to define their relationship to the host culture and to make a personal connection.

Connection

ACTFL refers to connection as the ability to "reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language." In an academic setting, a student's connection to the language can be demonstrated through application: An application of language acquisition (rather than "instruction," as in this point what matter are the skills that the student has acquired) to further study in a number of topics, and the ability to apply unique cultural perspectives that are gained through language acquisition to further research. But before making academic connections, one has to make a personal connection to the language and its culture. The context for such a connection might sometimes be particularly complex and heartfelt.

Tom Colls reported in a BBC broadcast of *Today* (October 19, 2010) an estimation that some 7000 languages are being spoken around the world. But that number is expected to shrink rapidly in the coming decades. In *Living our Language* (2001), Anton Treuer presents a collection of Ojibwe tales and oral histories that demonstrate the peril that Ojibwe people face. Their language is in decline, and their cultural and historical identity is fading as a result. The decline of a culture, therefore, is often related to the failure of young people to acquire their mother tongue and their loss of their ancestral culture. Therefore, while we usually imagine foreign language learning as a voyage away from one's culture and towards a foreign society, it might very well be – even in an academic setting – an exploration of one's own roots and personal history. To others, refugees, political dissidents, and those who wish to leave their native society for various reasons, the foreign language represents an ideal society that they wish to join.

Whether one moves towards a new culture or returns to an abandoned tradition, language study is always a study in self-identity, contextualising one's native tongue and culture and enabling both practical and intellectual feats while maintaining one's political and psychological equilibrium. In other words, learning a language is not only acquiring a skill but also a tool for self-discovery and identity formation. Even when a language represents a work skill and economic opportunity (as Kozaki and Ross suggest), it still serves to define the students' relationship to their native language and the culture of which they chose to be a part.

In reality, however, students are often reluctant to create this type of connection. On a course syllabus, students might be surprised to be informed, not only that they are required to present and submit a personal project at the end of the semester, but that this project should define their personal connection to the language: the aspects of the target language that are of greatest interest to them, and ways in which they might apply the language to future studies. This is particularly true because students might not have opted to take the class in the first place or did not choose to fulfil a "foreign language requirement". But regardless of such administrative context, this is an essential part of language acquisition (even if it is not always prescribed as an essential part of language instruction). In fact, while language instructors hope to see students' faces light up with enthusiasm at the prospect of engaging actively with the culture and history of a language, students often seem apprehensive and resistant. Sometimes, under the weight of various "fun" and "creative" cultural assignments, students actually break down and ask to "simply" be given some grammatical exercises.

The reason that students are less than enthusiastic is not only that they fear a new system of evaluation but that defining their connection to the language truly asks them for something that they might not know how to do. The instructor might invite the student to his/her office to discuss a personal project and ask a series of questions: "What do you study?" "What are your interests?" "Why do you study this language?" And finally, "how can this language be applied to your interests?" Language instructors might know from experience that the answers to these questions can be more than disappointing… Implied in these questions is the need to apply one field of study to the next and consider the social, political, cultural and grammatical boundaries that different linguistic communities create. To students – who often take language courses during the first year to "get rid" of a language requirement before studying "real" subjects – this might be the first time that they are asked to perform a complicated intellectual comparison.

Comparison

Some might feel that at the end of the day, if the student can ask for the time in German, their work is done. The philosophical aspect behind the German form ("How late is it?") that metaphorically turns the German speaker into Alice's tardy white rabbit seems inconsequential. But if it is inconsequential, why would the student remember the memorised answer for more than a few minutes after the exam (or enrol in a language class beyond an administrative requirement)? And what would the student be able to bring from his/her language class into other (hopefully relevant) academic courses or other language classes? What would German mean to the student beyond a language with really long words; or Hebrew beyond a language that has to be written "backwards?"

When we acquire a new language, we learn our native language better, and we may be better able to socialise politically. Being or becoming bilingual enables the speaker to move among communities and join a plurality of independent and unmerged voices. As Bakhtin argues, those who might be called monolingual might also be thought of as "mono-logical" (1993, 13). But while the motivation to acquire a new language might seem obvious to those of us who wish to study and develop intellectually, it is not. Michael Cronin coins the phrase *neo-Babelianism*, a superficial grasp of world languages that entails a token recognition of other languages, but in fact, forces one to conduct all "serious business" in English (2003, 58). Much like the characters in Alan Johnson's 1983 remake of the film *To Be or Not to Be* (perhaps better known for the participation of Mel Brooks in the leading role), who sigh with relief when the announcer informs them that the rest of the film will be conducted in English… students, administrators and even some faculty members expect that beyond the brief moment of a two-semester requirement of language acquisition, the rest of the student's research, study, and academic careers will be conducted in their native language.

How can language instructors make students aware of the complexity and depth of foreign languages and cultures beyond their reach? "That" – to return to Hamlet, a quintessential *enfant terrible* of language acquisition – "is the question."

To raise students' awareness of cultural differences, various linguistic registers and options, one must conduct an honest discussion in class about various aspects of the language. But to what extent can such a discussion take place in the language classroom, which is rarely grasped as a place for intellectual thought and debate? Moreover, the principle of "immersion teaching," which calls for conducting the class entirely in the language of instruction, tramples the opportunity to conduct a complex conversation, or at least defers it to "after the exam," and "if we have extra time." And, without a comparative discussion of costumes, histories, literature, economics and social hierarchies, students miss out on what would draw them into the class in the first place and on what is essential for engaging (and maintaining) the student's interest in the language: the various manners in which language is the expression of a national, geographical, cultural and scholarly community.

Community

Community, a context in which students would use a second language beyond a classroom setting, and which would add a permanent intellectual dimension to their lives, is the alpha and the omega of language studies: It is the reason that students are in the language classroom to begin with, and the ultimate goal of language instruction.

As mentioned above, the reasons for joining a language class can range from the urge to save an endangered language to acquiring a *lingua franca* that serves as the gateway for various professional and cultural opportunities. In either case, a community of speakers is implied. In a course on Yiddish language and culture, students may join the class to salvage the culture of European Jews – but also to collaborate with scholars, musicians, actors, and activists who create in this language. Even for languages that are studied solely for research purposes (Latin; Assyrian), a community of scholars is implied. Such a community can be close-knit or virtual, but the reason for language study, its beginning and end, must stretch (as it does above) from communication to the community.

This is particularly true because the community of students in language acquisition courses in the 21st century is an incessant hotspot of movement and energy, often resulting from mass migrations and revolutions in communications and technology. This often means that the methods for language instruction change along with social and cultural conditions and that the demands on the instructor increase accordingly: The class should be a source for information about events both on campus and within the local community that speaks the target language, as well as references to summer and overseas language programs and opportunities for further research.

In principle, language classes have a good basis for creating a community. Because they meet more often than other classes, and because they call for more personal interaction and activity than large lecture classes, language classes have the potential

for creating a strong personal attachment both on the part of students and of the instructor. In reality, however, there are two major problems:

First, because language study has been separated on many campuses from related departments, students have little interaction with the language instructors throughout their studies. In fact, they often see the instructor, and the language class, as a temporary obstacle that prevents them from "real" academic studies.

Second, the low academic status of many language instructors undercuts their authority while preventing them from developing various initiatives and being proactive. If not for anything else, a low academic rank usually means that language instructors are overworked and unable to invest in extracurricular activities that might turn the class into an active community. When they are able to do so, students might still not regard them as ideal mentors and sources of inspiration.

Despite this, language instructors usually make a great deal of effort to create a community in the class, initiating various activities and creating ties to a local language community when possible. And while students and instructors face a number of challenges in trying to form and become a part of a community, they often succeed in overcoming them. Students do join international language programs, volunteer in language fairs, and participate in local ethnic celebrations – sometimes continuing to further research and professional activity in the target language. It's only that so much more could be done in a different academic environment and within a more rigorous scholarly context.

Context

Language instruction is a complicated and sophisticated practice, involving a serious and sometimes provocative discussion of Literature and Media (Allen, 1987; Cukor, 1964; Johnson, 1983; Levinson, 1987; Shakespeare), Linguistics (de Saussure, 2002; Derrida, 1998; Bakhtin, 1993), Sociology (Treuer, 2001), Translation (Derrida, 2001; Nida, 1964; Robinson 1991, Cronin 2003), Pedagogy (Shulman, 1986, Rowan, 2003), CLT (Absalom, 2014, Savignon, 2007), TBLT (Ellis, 2003, Gonzalez-Loret, 2007), ESL (Bekleyen, 2010 Kvale, 1990), FSLA (Gardner et al., 1997; Gurzynski-Weiss, 2015, Kozaki and Ross, 2011, Terkourafi, 2001), Disciplinary Studies (Geertz, 1983, Nelson, Megill & McCloskey, 1987)–to name only a few. It is contextualised by traditions, knowledge, culture, politics and contemporary events. And, as many literary scholars, translation experts, linguists, sociologists, and other experts are already teaching language classes – shouldn't language acquisition be at the forefront of interdisciplinary and multicultural research?

However, while few dispute this assertion, fewer still treat language instruction in this manner. In fact, in the context of contemporary culture, the popular image of language acquisition is quite different: In a scathing review of a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* in Stuttgart in 1981, critic Peter Iden (May 23, 1981, 56) writes that the acting was so bad that the actors sounded like language instructors:

> *...als seien die Schauspieler alle merkwürdig kostümierte Lehrer der Berlitz-School und zum Zwecke der Spracherziehung zu uns gekummen. Regie und Darstellung finden nicht statt.*

> *…as if the actors were curiously disguised teachers of the Berlitz-School who came to improve our language skills. There was no direction or presentation to speak of.*

The language instructor is therefore imagined as having "no direction" and serving as an epitome of senseless and abstract recitation. More familiar popular icons serve to ground this image further: In the film *Radio Days* (Allen, 1987), actress Sally White (Mia Farrow) tries to lose her Bronx accent as she repeats in a very stilted form of English the phrase "Hark, I hear the cannons roar!" And, in *My Fair Lady* (Cukor, 1964), Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn) dances with joy after she pronounces correctly the insignificant observation that "the rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain." In both films, respectively, pronunciation alone won Sally White a successful acting career and Eliza Doolittle recognition as a princess. Is it a wonder then that many institutions treat language acquisition as a skill rather than an academic study?

Certain world events and political complications result in some new voices over the past decade. Government agencies encourage and fund some language training, and university presidents speak of "internationalisation" through exchange and overseas programs (which, in addition, universities find rather lucrative). But can we truly imagine a model of a language class that is more than a repeated announcement that "the rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain"? In the film *Good Morning Vietnam* (Levinson, 1987), radio announcer Adrian Cronauer (Robin Williams) teaches an English class where he introduces a radical change in the curriculum: "You can't come up to someone on the street in New York and say: 'I would like to buy some milk and some butter.' You need to say

something like: 'Hey, Man! Give me some skin.' He then proceeds to teach spoken language, rife with cultural explanations and humorous demonstrations, and a good portion of profanities and sexual content. To what extent can this be done in an actual classroom?

Language acquisition is contextualised both by academic needs and global developments that underscore the cultural, economic and political need to master new languages. New theories in literature, linguistics, translation and political science underscore the interpersonal and psychological facets of communication across languages. And web pages, apps, minisodes and paratexts in new media demand language experts who would be able to transcend Croning's *neo-Babelianism*, and say a great deal more than "'I would like to buy some milk and some butter…".

Conclusions

Wouldn't it have been wonderful if language classes were supplemented by experts who could tell students about the cultures of the societies that speak the languages they learn? The histories of the nations that use it? And current affairs and political developments that are both reflected in the language, and which often affect the reasons that the language is being studied? Many language classes are taught by such experts in Literature, Music, Art, Film, Philosophy, History and Linguistics, and Communications and Sociology (which are considered Social Sciences). But this contribution, which could both contextualise and help students define their relationship to the language, is less than universally appreciated. Under the yoke of administrative demands and a misconception of what language study might entail, instructors hasten to teach the subjunctive without reflecting that it is sometimes contextualised by our deepest wishes and desires. Ours is that the language instructor from the Humanities be allowed to supplement language instruction and an additional C for Context.

What does allowing language instructors to supplement classes with context entail?

1. Discuss with students their reasons for studying a particular language and encourage cultural study and discussion.
2. Go beyond equivalences, and encourage a comparative study of language systems and the cultural, economic, and political reasons for the linguistic difference. In doing so, teach "real" spoken and contemporary language rather than "dead" grammatical structures
3. Create a language community in the classroom by participating in local events related to a language community; invite native speakers into the class and discuss and possibly respond to the issues related to a national language.
4. Encourage students to use their imagination and translation methods to develop a new mode of thought and consciousness as they participate in a new speech community.
5. Provide language instructors with resources and authority to implement the above changes in the classroom.
6. Provide instructors with resources to continue researching in their own academic fields for them to be able to contribute even further to their language classes.
7. Grant language instructors academic freedom to teach according to their own methods, rather than a top-down administrative requirement.

Most importantly, language instructors that are trained in fields other than FSLA should be regarded as an assent rather than a liability.

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PRIDĖKIME KONTEKSTĄ: KUO HUMANITARAI DĖSTYTOJAI GALI PRISIDĖTI PRIE TYRIMŲ UŽSIENIO KALBŲ MOKYMOSI SRITYJE?

Santrauka

Straipsnyje aptariama, su kokiais iššūkiais ir galimybėmis susiduria kalbų dėstytojai, turintys literatūros, kultūros, kino, filosofijos, vertimo ir kitų humanitarinių mokslų sričių išsilavinimą. Pirma, tokie dėstytojai dažnai atsiduria už teorinių diskusijų, susijusių su jų profesija, ribų. Daugeliu atvejų kalbų katedros, vykdančios pirmosios ir antrosios kalbos studijų programas, pasikliauja dėstytojais, kurie studijavo humanitarinius mokslus. Apžvelgus ankstesnius tyrimus, aptariama motyvacija ir kontekstualumas, pagrindiniai veiksniai, lemiantys antrosios kalbos pasiekimus. Argumentų pagrindas - pastangos ne tik mokyti gramatikos ir žodyno, bet ir lavinti mokinių mąstymą bei vaizduotę, kurie neatsiejami nuo kalbos mokymosi. Mokiniai kalbų mokosi dėl įvairių priežasčių ir beveik visi geba mąstyti ir įsivaizduoti. Šiame straipsnyje aptariamą kontekstą formuoja hermeneutikos, fenomenologijos, literatūros, medijų ir vertimo studijos. Remiantis literatūros, medijų ir įvairių akademinių sričių tekstais, skaitytojai ir studentai skatinami pasitelkti vaizduotę ir smalsumą, kad sužinotų daugiau apie kalbą ir kultūrą. Straipsnio autoriai pagrindžia, kodėl penkios Amerikos užsienio kalbų mokymo tarybos išskirtos sritys - bendravimas, kultūra, sąryšis, palyginamumas ir bendruomeniškumas – turėtų būti papildytos šeštąja sritimi, apimančia kontekstą, t. y. pasaulinės kalbos raidos kontekstą apimantį ryšius, ekonomiką, kultūrinius mainus ir geografinį judumą.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: užsienio / antrosios kalbos mokymasis, vertimas žodžiu, humanitariniai mokslai, motyvacija, vaizduotė, gimtoji kalba, kultūra, globalizacija, pedagogika, vertimas raštu.

Information about the authors

PhD Dror Abend-David. Assistant Professor, University of Florida. Author's research field: Education, Translation, and Literature.

PhD James Kusch. Of Blessed Memory