One Vision—
Multiple Perspectives

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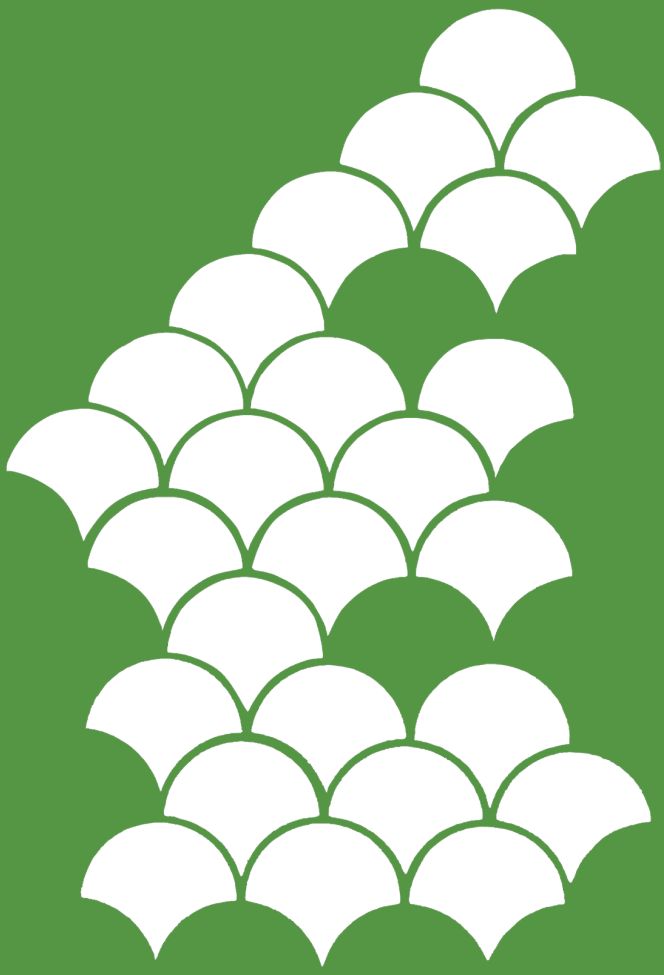

2021 Report of the
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

One Vision—
Multiple Perspectives

Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Report 2021

Pamela M. Wesely, Editor
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All submissions are read and evaluated by the Editor and at least two other members of the Editorial Board. When all of the reviewers' ratings are received, the Editor makes all final publishing decisions.

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Preface

One Vision—Multiple Perspectives

The 2021 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages forged a fresh perspective for our organization with a virtual setting. Held March 11-13, 2021, the conference offered flexible scheduling for educators balancing a multitude of unique teaching situations in the midst of the Covid 19 Pandemic. The theme, "One Vision—Multiple Perspectives," encompassed a surprisingly deeper layer of significance during this year's conference. As educators, we bring many unique strengths, experiences and insights to our art of teaching on a daily basis. Like no other, this year invited us to reconsider our practices and hold true to the elements that build proficiency. Many departments, faced with tough curricular choices and operating in many unconventional instructional settings, successfully maintained a vision for proficiency. We have met students where they are, wherever that may be! We moved them forward with compassion for their unique perspectives and expertly guided the way for language use for a lifetime. In a year when it would have been easy to step back, our presenters, conference board, exhibitors and attendees stepped up to showcase cutting edge professional learning.

At the 2021 conference, attendees chose from 25 workshops and more than 180 sessions focused on diversity, activities and strategies, curriculum development, assessment, culture, research, advocacy, and one of the most prevalent themes of the year, technology. This year attendees benefitted from robust professional learning with two "Best of" sessions allowed per state, thus offering sessions from Minneapolis in 2020 an opportunity to participate, as well as new sessions for 2021. The CSCTFL tradition of offering the CEW workshop continued virtually with featured presenter Leslie Grahn.

The 2021 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages welcomed an opening and closing keynote address for the first time in conference history. The opening keynote, held on a Thursday evening this year, was eloquently provided by Dr. Krishauna Hines-Gaither of Guilford College in North Carolina. Most notably, the FLANC Past President and Teacher of the Year in Higher Education, Dr. Hines-Gaither also served as the past chair of ACTFL's Special Interest Group for African American Students. Dr. Hines-Gaither invited us to examine critical theory as a new frontier in our curricular design process. She also offered a strong mandate to form our own "radical collaboration." She shared data on the low number of world language educators represented in the African-American community. If we follow her suggestion to "pause," listen and learn, we might create an environment that welcomes multiple perspectives of our students who exist in marginalized spaces.

The closing keynote was presented by Mr. Scott Crockett. As an engineer in the automotive industry, Mr. Crockett was able to convey many examples of how language helped him understand perspectives of others in the business world. He offered us a glimpse of concrete examples of how proficiency-based language learning can assist. He advised us to spend time wisely on contexts that would serve our students, especially lauding the codependent nature of cultural and linguistic capacity. Just as our opening speaker emphasizing embracing the "pause;" Mr. Crockett validated the need to interpret the "silence," pushing ourselves

into uncomfortable spaces to better understand others. He also reinforced the lifelong nature of language learning and represented a positive model for language in the workplace with roots in a high-quality education in the Midwest.

The Central States Conference Report 2021, *One Vision—Multiple Perspectives,* calls on educators to use inclusive practices with colleagues and students alike. In meeting others where they are at, educators acknowledge unique strengths and qualities thus presenting a more formidable force in growing language programs at every level. Let our unifying vision of proficiency be the focal point that guides our students to success beyond our classrooms. Thank you to the authors for their work and supporting language learning for all students.

Melissa Dalton
2021 Program Chair

One Vision—Multiple Perspectives

Pamela M. Wesely
University of Iowa

Our world in the past year has had an incredible upheaval —classrooms across the Midwest in the Central States Region look radically different now, in early March 2021, compared with early March 2020. Urban, suburban, or rural—we have all been profoundly affected in our professional and personal lives. Our community of language educators has suffered losses, changed plans, and missed opportunities. We have also found ways to be resilient in the classroom, steadfast for our students, and innovative in finding new ways to teach in the new normal.

One Vision—Multiple Perspectives is the theme of the 2021 CSCTFL Conference. In this volume, eight authors present six pieces that offer a common vision of seeking excellence in language education. Different perspectives are provided regarding every idea of excellence, sometimes reaffirming, sometimes exploring, sometimes challenging, sometimes testing new ideas to add to that vision. I am very happy to be presenting this volume to you, in my first year as editor. I would like to recognize the authors who put their time and effort into these pieces, crafting unique perspectives to share. I also want to recognize their participants and the scholars who have inspired them. I want to send my warmest thanks to the reviewers of these manuscripts, whose diligence and attention to detail can be seen on every page. Finally, thank you to Bob Terry, Anne Nerenz, and Jason Jolley for their help and direction in the preparation of this volume.

We start the volume with an article by Aleidine Moeller: *The Interplay of Emotion, Cognition, and Learning in the Language Classroom*. In this work, Moeller asks us to contemplate how we can connect emotion with cognition for our learners, and how we can ultimately increase the amount of engagement in all language classrooms. Her article blends personal observations, pedagogical suggestions, and commentary from scholars in language education, psychology, and related fields. Moeller's words remind us that teaching language can and should be a joyous, humorous, and happy enterprise.

Caleb Zilmer's article, *Proficiency and a Dual Knowledge System: Implications for Instruction* offers an in-depth look at the experience of one learner, Manish, through the lens of his development of implicit and explicit knowledge of Spanish. Zilmer looks at detailed data gathered across an oral task, a written task, and a grammar test, to conclude that Manish struggled to replicate grammar rules and forms when engaged in spontaneous, unrehearsed oral communication. In an echo of Moeller's recommendations, this article suggests that a judicious balance of different forms of instruction in the classroom can best benefit the development of learner proficiencies.

In *High-Leverage Teaching Practices: Designing Tasks for Interaction*, Anne Hlas provides us with vital insights into how best to design tasks to encourage student

interaction in the classroom. Using the AIM (Analyze, Infer, Make a Decision) Framework, she provides thorough examples of three dynamic, engaging tasks that encourage learners to interact and challenge themselves in the classroom. Her work adds importantly to the literature on high leverage teaching practices (HTLPs), making a credible case about the importance of tasks focused on interpersonal communication based in learner cooperation and collaboration.

Anuradha Gopalakrishnan's article, *Context at the Core of Multilingual Instructional Design*, is a qualitative research study situated in a multilingual language teaching center in India. The notion of context is key in this study. The author shows that contextual actors and features adapted to changes in instructional activities in the German classroom, and multidirectional relationships were revealed. As in Hlas' work, Gopalakrishnan provides a perspective on the interactions that are at the heart of skilled, responsive language teaching - in this case, instructive interactions among teachers as well as those among students.

The article by Pete Swanson and Jean LeLoup zeroes in on a careful critique and consideration of the edTPA: *The 4 Rs of edTPA: Rationale, Roadblocks, Remediation, and Recommendations.* This piece gives not just a clear overview of the edTPA and its foundations, but also in how it has been carried out in practice, now that we are several years into its wide implementation across the United States. With a critical eye on issues that have prevented teacher candidate success, Swanson and LeLoup ultimately offer hope and ideas for the future in light of the severe teacher shortage in world languages.

The final article in the volume, *German Language Teachers' Perceptions of Efficacy and Their Oral Proficiency*, authored by Bartell Berg and Teri Colson, explores the relationship between German teachers' self-efficacy, their years of experience, and their oral language proficiency. Through a descriptive quantitative study of German teachers in the United States, Berg and Colson trace some ideas about what makes a teacher confident and interested in staying in the profession. Their findings, like the Swanson and LeLoup study, also have important implications for the severe teacher shortage in world languages.

Thank you for reading this volume—I hope that you enjoy reading this work as much as I have enjoyed working with these excellent authors!

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The Interplay of Emotion, Cognition, and Learning in the Language Classroom

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Challenge Statement

Emotions are inextricably linked to our actions, behaviors, and dispositions. To promote deeper learning, emotion and cognition must be in sync to maximize learning. How can we connect our learners' emotions in ways that fully capitalize on the interplay with cognition and engages them in the language learning process?

Abstract

This article seeks to broaden the discourse on world language teaching to take a more holistic view of learning and teaching that supports and promotes the integration of feeling and thinking. A summary of the research on the role of emotions in learning is documented and classroom examples are provided that demonstrate ways to integrate emotional learning designed to optimize language learning. When positive emotions are activated, learners allocate more cognitive effort to the learning tasks and display a greater sense of efficacy. By creating a positive, caring classroom climate filled with meaningful and challenging learning tasks, learners can experience a sense of joy of learning.

> Learning is dynamic, social, and context dependent because emotions are, and emotions form a critical piece of how, what, when, and why people think, remember, and learn.
>
> –Mary Helen Immordino-Yang - *Emotions, Learning and the Brain*

How can we connect our learners' emotions to world language and culture learning in a way that fully capitalizes on the interplay with cognition and engages them in the intellectual work of their classes? Which strategies can maximize emotions for our students in order to enhance their language learning? What are ways that language teachers can understand and leverage emotions more productively in the classroom?

In an era of high stakes testing, the role of connection, belonging, and caring may seem like a low priority, but recent research in the fields of neuroscience, psychology, and education has revealed the critical impact of emotions in learning. Emotions influence our actions, our behavior, and how we learn. Feeling emotionally connected to one's peers, teacher, and content is especially crucial in a world language classroom where learners often report feeling overwhelmed and anxious. How do we connect learners in ways that promote social belonging, curiosity, and inquiry in the language classroom? Such characteristics are above all emotional skills that promote social interactions that connect learners with content and material in ways that motivate and engage them. These emotional skills positively impact learners' disposition toward learning and, as demonstrated in the research, ultimately result in greater learning. This article explores ways teachers can harness emotion to cognitively and pedagogically promote learner engagement and enhance language and cultural proficiency.

Pedagogical Significance of Emotions

Research has revealed that the single most important strategy that teachers can use to help learners succeed in our classrooms is to care about them as learners and as human beings: "to be effective, teachers must connect with and care for children with warmth, respect, and trust" (Bergin & Bergin, 2009, p. 150). Researchers call such an approach *pedagogical caring*, as its effects are both greater emotional engagement and higher academic achievement. Hawk and Lyons (2008) define pedagogical caring as:

> …a repertoire of skills and dispositions that enhance the pedagogical relationship, a portfolio of pedagogical activities that offer guided participation and practice, and scaffolding approaches to help our students become more competent in the content and skills of the course, more self-directed in their learning, more cultivating of the value of relationships, and more capable in modeling an ethic of care to others (p. 324).

Such strategies ensure greater emotional attachment to the education context and higher academic achievement.

Noddings (2013) reminds us that a teacher works with a student "directly but not equally" (p. 186) as supported in Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development where the role of the mentor is to guide the mentees to reach their potential (1980). The relationship between the mentor and mentee is both cognitive and emotional as both depend on one another to successfully navigate the end goal. Emotion and cognition depend on one another in complex ways.

Fuller (2006) found that when our emotions are stimulated, they play a pivotal role in directing cognitive attention and resources to the content we are studying. Immordino-Yang (2016), a leading expert in emotions and learning, states, "Emotions act as a kind of 'rudder' for cognition, one that drives the direction of our thinking and also alters our cognitive processes in ways that are sometimes productive and sometimes just the opposite" (2016, p. 33).

Engagement with our emotions is fundamental for optimizing learning in the classroom (Eyler, 2018). Thinking and feeling need one another. Scoffham and Barnes (2011) note that, "within the full register of emotions experienced by humans, happiness is a positive force which enriches our sense of meaning, enhances our capabilities and enlarges the scope of our thinking" (p. 547). How can we promote this feeling of happiness in our language classroom that maximizes learning and engagement?

Building a World Language Happiness Climate

Displaying our own joy and enthusiasm creates an atmosphere and affective tone that cultivates learning. Where is the emotional hook in the material that connects the learners' lives and their emotional responses to the learning? Setting the stage and creating a welcoming learning environment is crucial. For example, as students walk into language class, they are greeted by the teacher and welcomed into the classroom with an upbeat song playing in the target language as the video is streaming on the screen. On the whiteboard the words What, Who, When, Where, also in the target language, are listed next to the screen. The students know that whoever can name the band, when they were popular, the genre of music, and what the song is about, will get speaking points. Of course, the earlier they arrive in the classroom, the more time they will have to look up the answers on the Google site of the target culture. Skimming and scanning for information to extract the necessary answers creates a positive competitive learning environment that builds enthusiasm among class members. They are cognitively engaged and ready to share their results. The stage and tone have been set through the emotional appeal of the music, and the learning connected to the task/material builds on the positive, emotionally upbeat environment that has been created.

As the bell rings, the teacher asks volunteers to come to the front and fill in their responses to the who, what, when, and where questions while students at their desks prepare to add on to that list. This activity allows for an opportunity to explore a variety of perspectives, all of which allow the teacher to better understand the learners' background knowledge and affords the learners the opportunity to see the diversity of possible responses—underscoring that there may not be one clear answer. To promote voice and choice in the classroom, the teacher can administer a quick Poll Everywhere to determine how well the students like the song and if this particular musical genre should be used again in future language lessons. An open-ended question requesting suggestions for musical genres or specific songs can additionally create a feeling of partnership in the learning process.

Barker (2017) notes that when we "remove people's emotional connection to their work and treat them merely as machines that produce effort, it's soul killing"

(2017, p. 87). The emergence and expansion of the testing culture has had a negative washback effect on classroom instruction, often resulting in teaching to the test. When the sole purpose of learning becomes a grade or test score, something that feels impersonal or external to self, it appears meaningless to learners. Learners then experience a lack of motivation for excelling and putting their full energy and time into the learning process. Noddings (2003), whose research expertise lies in caring and education, reminds us that education is fundamentally about students, not only passing on of information. Putting students at the center of learning leads to "intrinsic interest or trust and admiration for the teacher" which causes greater investment in learning on the part of the learner (2003, p. 185).

In the language classroom, too often the focus is still on teaching grammar and vocabulary, learning about language rather than what one can actually do with language. The learning tasks must be purposeful and meaningful to the learner to ensure a connection to the content and to maintain motivation (Dörnyei, 2001). Teachers can foster personal connections by providing clear short- and long-term performance-based learning goals that allow learners to see their language progress and reflect on how well they are able to perform the learning task, leading to self-regulation (Moeller et al., 2012; Ziegler & Moeller, 2012). In addition, by providing learners the opportunity to choose how they want to demonstrate successful performance of a learning objective, motivation is increased that can lead to higher achievement.

Purposeful Learning and Accomplishment

Scholars in the field prioritize the ability to set goals and the development of self-discipline to attend to these goals as keys to finding joy in learning. When learners experience small successes, there is motivation to continue investing effort resulting in successful achievement of desired ends (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Dörnyei, 1994; 2001). Personalized learning goals allow for voice and choice on the part of the learner and provide the much-needed purpose in a learning task. Moeller et al. (2012) found that when students had the ability to set their own goals, their achievement in Spanish skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening improved significantly.

The NCSSFL/ACTFL Can-Do Statements (2017) provide the performance goals in learner-friendly terms aimed at ensuring and assessing proficiency gains over time. These Can-Do Statements can be personalized by the students to enhance motivation in completing learning tasks. For example, a teacher may require that learners demonstrate how they can introduce themselves in a variety of social contexts using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication. The teacher is intentional about providing the tools and strategies to meet standards (Can-Do Statements) and to build conceptual scaffolding in students so they can use this to build knowledge to accomplish these learning goals themselves. The learners have the option to choose a formal or informal introduction and determine how they will demonstrate achievement of this task.

For example, perhaps a student would like to introduce himself to the exchange student from Spain, someone he has wanted to know for some time

(purpose, meaningful, authentic). As he creates an action plan to carry out an introduction, the steps required to successfully navigate an introduction become clear. The student has to determine how to greet her. A handshake? A wave? Is there a physical gesture that accompanies the opening greeting? What is the appropriate non-verbal gesture? Does he greet her formally, or informally? What vocabulary and phrases will he need to know as well as the appropriate grammar structures? What topics will be appropriate to address? Is it appropriate to ask her out for coffee? The complexity of the task required in carrying out such an introduction poses challenges, but because the task has purpose and meaning to the learner, the effort will be put forth. How will the student indicate he successfully navigated an introduction? Perhaps he can ask the exchange student to sign a note indicating the introduction occurred, or have the exchange student record a quick voice mail or text message on his cell phone in Spanish indicating he was successful in his task. Students feel empowered when the task at hand is purposeful and meaningful to their authentic lived life and when they have a voice in what and how they learn and how they demonstrate their learning. The challenges of the task are met with motivation as the goal is meaningful to the learner. The feeling of success experienced by the learner is empowering and is a source of true joy at having accomplished this task. Personal emotional attachment, social engagement, and investment by an individual provide the all-important meaningfulness of the task. When we are emotionally engaged and exerting effort, we can truly experience the joy in our work (Barker, 2017, p. 90).

Teacher-Student Connection

Evidence suggests that strong teacher-student relationships predict greater knowledge, higher test scores, and greater academic motivation. In a study of sixth to eighth graders who believed that their teacher cared about them, the learners were more motivated to try hard and pay attention in class, and they earned higher grades (Wentzel, 1997). Among school-age children, the effect size of teacher–student relationships is larger than most educational innovations or curriculum changes (Cornelius-White, 2007).

Cozolino (2013) found that "supportive, encouraging, and caring relationships stimulate students' neural circuitry to learn, priming their brains for neuroplastic processes. (p. 17)." Positive teacher-student relationships are especially crucial for low achievers. Hamre and Pianta (2001) conducted a longitudinal study that indicated that relationship problems with kindergarten teachers predicted maladjustment in later years in schooling and was strongest for boys, African-Americans, children with poor verbal ability and children with initial behavior problems. At-risk children who developed positive relationships with teachers were less likely to develop later behavior problems at school.

Cavanagh (2016) identifies three key elements that define emotion: "feelings, physiology, and expression." These elements work together to form an affective, emotion-laden experience. When we are happy, our eyes sparkle, we produce a smile, and our body posture communicates joy. Together these components form an emotion. Neuroscience has shown that when we are happy, we release

dopamine into the blood stream that causes elation which we now know enhances cognition and learning (Wanzer et al., 2010).

As an elective content area, in order to ensure growth and sustainability of the world language program, teachers must find ways to recruit and retain students. One of the most effective teaching tools is showing our own enthusiasm for our subject matter. Displaying our own joy creates an atmosphere of happiness that cultivates learning. Teachers can promote affective responses to learning by making emotional connections to the course material and content. If students feel little or no connection to the knowledge they learn in school, the academic content will seem emotionally meaningless to them (Immordino-Yang, 2016). By creating interactive, collaborative learning tasks that appeal to the learners, teachers can spark emotional reactions that engage learners cognitively in the content.

For example, the teacher might place a poster of an art work in each corner of the classroom, each representing a different period of art. Students select the one that they are drawn to (limiting five-six per painting) and as a group are asked to create a list of vocabulary that describes the painting. Building on the vocabulary list, each group is asked to construct five sentences describing the painting. These descriptions are recorded on strips of paper and placed in a container. Once all groups have completed their sentences, students in pairs draw three descriptions from the container and must negotiate and decide to which painting the description belongs. They present their results to the class and a discussion is led by the teacher to further explore details and gather additional ideas from their peers. The strips of paper are placed on the painting when the class comes to consensus in matching the descriptors with the appropriate painting. Once all pairs have participated, the class is divided into four groups and are asked to prepare a presentation on the painting of their choosing. The teacher provides a rubric indicating elements that must be included in the presentation (e.g. description of painting, genre, painter). The teacher offers optional presentational formats such as a digital poster, podcast, video, narrative via online collaborative document, or one of their own choosing. Expressing preferences, supporting opinions, and describing products are all important language functions that are practiced within the context of a topic of their own liking. To connect and extend the learning to the community, equipped with language and knowledge, the students might be asked to identify and describe their favorite painting in the local art museum, create a digital poster that describes the painting and its importance in the art collection. Such a learning task can also be used with music, books or movie genres. By demonstrating the relevance of the content to their own lives, a positive climate is created in which students can experience a kind of joy in learning. Such collaborative activities organized in socially connected environments (pair work, small group, large groups) evoke emotional responses that play a particularly important role by enhancing memory (Cavanagh, 2016).

Creating a Learning Climate of Belonging

Much scholarly research has focused on the social dynamics underpinning achievement by examining the impact of a student's sense of social belonging.

Researchers have found that social connectedness predicts positive outcomes in academic achievement (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1980 Jennings & Greenberg, 2009, Dörnyei, 1994). Building a culture of belonging means all students feel comfortable and welcomed. Humans are social creatures who seek to bond with others (Gamble et al., 2014; Schultz & Dunbar, 2010) and strive for social belonging—it promotes motivation. This phenomenon is nowhere more evident than in the social media that has taken the world by storm. Sharing stories, feelings, events, sadness, and joy in the public sphere has become a near obsession. How do we harness this to have the same impact in the language classroom?

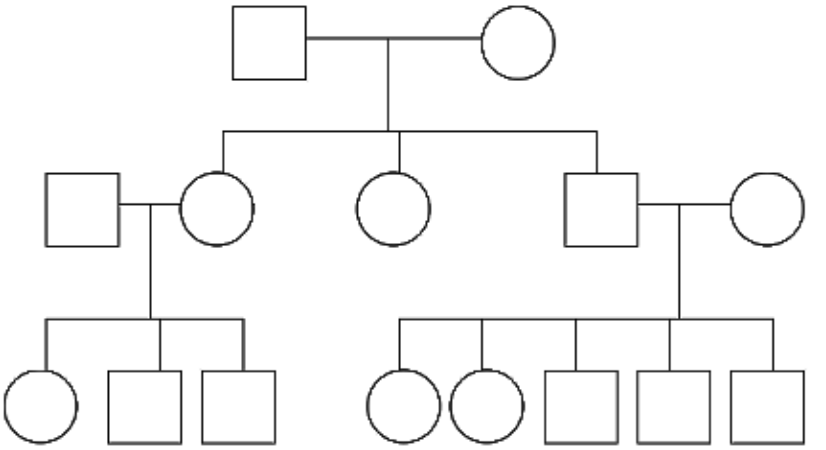
Achor (2011) posits that relationships are key to happiness and that social connection is the greatest predictor of happiness. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) suggest that instructors promote "prosocial and cooperative behaviors through establishing warm and supportive relationships and communities" (p. 506). The teaching-learning relationship is rooted in social bonding. Social connections provide a sense of belonging that is crucial for emotional well-being. Learners thrive when they can communicate with each other through activities that harness emotion for pedagogical gain. When students get to know each other and to trust their peers, a climate is fostered that is conducive to learning and productive social interactions. When students feel they belong, retention, progression and graduation rates improve.

The language classroom offers innumerable opportunities for interpersonal, collaborative work in a variety of groupings that include pair work, small group, or large group learning tasks. Language learning requires a variety of modes of communication that include interpersonal, interpretive and presentational skills. Returning to the opening song activity noted above, the music sets the emotional tone and immediately engages the learners cognitively in the content through the who, what, when, and where learning activity. An additional task may have learners work in pairs to identify a title for the song they heard. Such a collaborative activity promotes creativity allowing those learners who are Word Smart and Music Smart (Gardner, 2011) to shine. The teacher can choose to distribute the lyrics of the song divided into stanzas to small groups of students who are asked to identify which emotion the stanza evokes and to highlight the words that support their decision. The combination of music, collaborative work, and the engaging learning task spark curiosity in a low affective learning climate that maximizes cognitive engagement. Such activities are aimed to pique curiosity, promote sociality/collaborative learning, introduce learning through meaningful, authentic materials, that provide the much-needed joy in learning. Research has confirmed that these learning approaches and strategies evoke positive emotional responses that have demonstrated higher achievement.

Genuine happiness involves engagement in meaningful activity, connection to other people, a sense of purpose, having a voice and choice, and the ability to experience and feel joy (Brighouse, 2005; Noddings, 2003; Seligman, 2012). How do we rekindle that joy of learning where the journey is the focus and not the grade, where the rewards become insignificant and the work itself provides its own powerful incentive?

One of the most important sources of happiness is immersion in a meaningful and complex activity, such as learning a language within the context of a classroom. When learners find meaning in the work, the level of involvement is significantly increased. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) uses the term *flow* to describe the total exertion and immersion in a task—a state in which one becomes unaware of time, becomes totally immersed and involved in the activity at hand. Brown's (1997) research revealed that when learners have control over what and how they are learning, they are more interested and the learning is more deeply seated, what Bruner (1960) calls *agency*. Erikson (1993) underscores the importance of being included and feeling a sense of belonging, but notes that we must also feel that what we do matters, a goal worth struggling for. This correlates with Duckworth's (2016) focus on what she dubs *grit*, that is, purpose, effort, and engagement underscoring that effort matters more than ability.

Figure 1. Graphic for Family Problem-Solving Task



Problem-solving tasks have been shown to increase social connections, deeper learning, and higher achievement (Dominowski & Bourne Jr., 1994). The following problem-solving task requires learners to work together to successfully create a family tree. In groups of four, students are provided a graphic of a family tree. The circles indicate female family members and the squares are males. Each of the four students in each group are given two or three sentences that describe, in the target language, the relationship of an individual in the family tree (for example: *Oliver has one brother and one sister).* Students may only communicate their descriptors orally, and they are not allowed to simply share the written texts. One of the group members serves as the recorder who fills in the information as the activity progresses. This activity requires critical and strategic thinking and positive collaboration. The group works their way through the descriptions to determine the relationships of the various family members and records these on the family tree. The task is quite complex, requires constant interaction with group

members, and offers just the right amount of challenge that requires persistence to complete the task. Muddling through to solve the puzzle builds social connections among the learners as each contributes to a common goal. The savvy students quickly catch on that beginning with the grandparents will provide a good foundation and reduce the number of possible options. This problem-solving task meets all the criteria for emotional well-being and cognitive engagement that increases motivation and learning: positive interdependence, promotion of interaction, individual and group accountability, development of teamwork skills, and group processing. Figure 1 and Table 1 provide the graphic and descriptors for this problem-solving task.

Table 1 contains the descriptors, one set for each member in the group, that are used in this task. For lower level classes, these can be written in the target language. For more advanced language learners, using English increases the challenge.

Table 1. Prompts for Family Problem-Solving Task

Andrea is Matthew and Stephanie's aunt. Susanne's grandmother is Alexandra.
Peter's grandfather is Fritz. Paul is Ralph's uncle and Peter's father. Fritz is Paul's father.
Oliver has one brother and one sister. His sister is Nicole. Nicole's cousin is Peter.
Paul has two sisters. One (Andrea) is not Nicole's mother. Claudia is Oliver's aunt. Steven's aunt is Sabine and his uncle is Martin.

As students struggle to solve the problem, they have to rely on their peers and must negotiate through trial and error. The social, emotional and cognitive engagement in such an activity is off the charts, there is laughter, positive reinforcement of one another, and bonding as all work together to successfully complete the puzzle. Bandura (1977) and Vygotsky (1980) underscore that teaching and learning is primarily a social interaction. Learning takes place in a social space, the classroom. We are learning with and from one another. Our social nature drives our learning most especially when we discover new knowledge and seek to communicate this with others. The interplay of learning and teaching in the classroom drives learner motivation and sparks curiosity when learners are fully engaged in the learning process. When learning becomes its own reward, learners experience a sense of joy and happiness that transforms work to pleasure.

The connection between our nature as social beings and the emotions that give our interactions meaning has significant impact on student learning, as emotions are very much connected to our cognitive processes. Vygotsky (1980) notes our ability to learn individually is quite limited. Eventually we need other

people to reach our full potential as learners. The social element of education is not optional but necessary if students are to succeed. Creating a healthy learning climate where students want to learn, where they become intrinsically motivated, and where their learning becomes intrinsically rewarding requires that teachers understand the conditions that can make this happen. As Csikszentmihalyi (1997) recommends:

> [Teachers must be] sensitive to students' goals and desires, and they are thus able to articulate the pedagogical goals as meaningful challenges. They empower students to take control of their learning; they provide clear feedback to the students' efforts without threatening their egos and without making them self-conscious. They help students concentrate and get immersed in the symbolic world of the subject matter.

It is important, as seen in the example above, that learning tasks involve interaction with others as this develops the cognitive abilities through collaboration with peers. Working collaboratively promotes a sense of belonging and promotes social development.

Humor, Play, and Storytelling

Humor is a universal phenomenon that evokes amusement and an emotional response such as laughter or smiles (Chen & Martin, 2007). However, while humor is universal, it is also culturally specific. Martin & Ford (2018) note "there are important different cultural influences on the way humor is used and the situations that are considered appropriate for laughter" (p. 30). For example, Westerners regard humor as something positive and as a natural source of amusement (Apte, 1985). Easterners, specifically in China, do not necessarily regard humor as a desirable trait as they stress seriousness and see humor as potentially diminishing their social status (Redowicz & Yue, 2002; Yue & Hui, 2011, 2015). It is important to understand how humor is viewed and the types and sorts of humor used in the culture and language under study. Humor can take many forms such as physical, self-deprecating, word-play, parody, satire, and topical. Language teachers can introduce culturally authentic videos that serve as examples of humor reflective of the culture under study and have learners compare the use of humor to their own culture. Such an intercultural activity can serve to expand learners' perspectives on what is regarded as funny and entertaining, as well as when and in which social contexts humor is appropriate. By examining such cultural practices learners can understand the underlying values of a culture through the lens of humor.

At the classroom level, humor is used to enhance classroom joy, to develop a sense of community, but is most effective when it is content related. Humor and amusement have considerable physiological benefits some of which are tied to cognition (Berk, 1996). Humor is a means to reduce anxiety, learn more effectively, and help learners to perform their best (Berk, 1996). A significant body of research explains why we remember things that make us laugh. Humor is critical in thought, communication and social interaction (Goel & Dolan, 2001). Studies in neuroscience reveal that humor systematically activates the brain's dopamine

reward system (Goel & Dolan, 2001) while studies in cognitive science show that dopamine is important for both goal-oriented motivation and long-term memory (Wise, 2004). Educational research confirms that humor, when effectively used as an intervention, improves retention in students of all ages (Banas et al., 2011).

In order to fully understand a joke, or humorous cartoon, we have to use more of our cognitive resources. Simply put, we have to put forth more effort and attention to discourse features to get the joke. Cavanagh (2016) notes:

> In the presence of humor, students detect and then have to resolve the incongruity between the original expectations and the humorous twist. This process of making one interpretation and then having to revise it, results in a deeper level of mental processing than being exposed to the correct interpretation from the beginning. One is required to relate the information to more than one set of concepts and ideas, to reflect and elaborate on both the meaning of the initial interpretation and the revised interpretation (2016, p. 75).

Humor can be integrated in the language classroom by introducing humorous images related to course content, or it can serve as a context for a lesson. Students can be asked to provide a caption for a novel visual in the target language that captures the humor in the image. These images, or humorous captioned images (memes), evoke laughter and amusement and bring out the creativity in students while promoting a positive, enjoyable learning environment. Connecting images and the target language, or binding, promotes deeper learning and higher retention and reduces anxiety in the classroom. Telling a joke in the target language in the form of a story as an opening activity garners learners' attention, evokes laughter, and serves as a great source of interpretive communication. Learners particularly remember outrageous stories that have a humorous element. Humor builds community through shared laughter and connects us as we join in collective fun and enjoyment. Lewis et al. (1990) suggest that the "positive emotions expressed during learning (e.g. interest, surprise, joy) are likely to reflect active cognitive engagement with the contingency, 'mastery,' and a sense of efficacy" (p. 748).

Games are an immense source of social and cognitive engagement. Games are engaging, fun and learners are more likely to invest time in play and games because they are intrinsically motivated out of genuine interest and excitement. Games engage us with challenges and as Csikszentmihalyi (1997) notes, they are designed to produce flow, when, learners literally are learning without realizing it. Csikszentmihalyi's (1997) research revealed that flow is most efficiently reached by a combination of self-chosen goals, personally optimized obstacles, and continuous feedback that make up the essential structure of gameplay. Language games that create a positive competitiveness among a group of learners builds knowledge and social connections in the context of a lesson.

An example of a game that demonstrates Csikszentmihalyi's criteria for flow is an activity titled *Numbered Heads Together*. Students are divided into groups of four, each individual in each group is given a number, either 1, 2, 3, or 4. This task is particularly useful as a review of learning that has occurred during a unit,

or lesson. The teacher poses a question or problem, based on a topic related to the curriculum. All members in the group discuss the question for one minute, each one contributing an idea, answer or solution. The group then has to agree on which idea, answer or solution will be their group answer. The teacher calls out a number randomly 1-4. Students with that number respond for their group, no consultation with peers allowed, and record their response on a whiteboard. Once the teacher signals, the students raise the whiteboards containing the responses. All correct answers are recorded and the team with the most positive responses is rewarded. This activity is team building, promotes peer learning, provides immediate feedback, and requires deeper processing of the information to enhance memory. Such an activity combines emotion and cognition that improves learning in a low affective learning environment through an interactive communicative task that builds social connections.

Storytelling is another particularly effective strategy in language classrooms. It serves as a vital source of language input, follows a structured narrative or story logic, entertains through role play, and makes use of language, images, and sounds. Stories can incorporate physical gestures and animated voices, and they can be acted out to entertain. Authentic stories from the target culture can relate moral values and cultural perspectives that evoke positive emotional responses. Willingham (2009) suggests stories "are treated differently in memory than other types of material (p. 67)." As Cozolino (2013) states, "[stories] connect us to one another, help to shape our identities, and serve to keep our brains integrated and regulated. The human brain co-evolved with storytelling, narrative structure, and the tale of the heroic journey as told in cultures throughout the world" (2013, p. 17).

When teachers use narrative structure, they enhance learner memory, and learners can follow the action more easily, especially when accompanied by images. Using the target language only, together with gestures, tone, enthusiasm and the aid of images, the teacher can involve learners in a mini language immersion experience that allows learners to experience how well they can comprehend and follow the story line without having to understand every word. For example, when teaching prepositions, the teacher can make use of story through images. The teacher starts by preparing and presenting a series of images that tell a story. As the teacher narrates each new episode in the story, an image is projected on the screen to aid comprehension.

In one story, the teacher, in the role of storyteller, begins by projecting the image of a mouse in a hole in the wall who is clearly hungry. The mouse is tempted to follow the smell of cheese on the dining room table, but fears the cat that lives in the house. The mouse decides to risk it, jumps on the chair, onto the sofa, onto the lamp, then the table. Suddenly the cat appears, the mouse runs back into the hole. Close call. The mouse is still hungry . . . waits until the cat falls asleep under the sofa. The mouse quietly sneaks into the living room, into the dining room, jumps on the chair, then the sofa, the lamp, and then the table. Enjoying the first bite of his bounty, the cat appears, snatches him up, and where is the mouse? In the cat. The end. The unexpected ending draws an emotional response from the

listeners. As follow-up activities, the teacher asks the learners in pairs to create an alternative ending. To assess comprehension, the teacher distributes an envelope containing the images as well as the texts. Students first place the images in order, then match the text to the images. In addition, using only the images, partner A re-tells the story to partner B, followed by partner B re-telling the story to partner A.

Such story telling activities promote research-based strategies that include making use of images that expand short term memory, repetition that moves learners from language input to comprehension, gestures and tone that clarify meaning, and enthusiasm that evokes joy and emotional engagement.

Conclusion

Positive emotions such as happiness, joy and humor have been empirically shown to be beneficial for student learning, but too often they are not part of the conversation about teaching and learning. In an era of standardized testing, common assessments, standardization of curriculum, and success as defined by grades and high stakes tests, the lack of connection of the learning materials to the lived lives of our students have had negative impacts. It is worth reiterating Barker's (2017) precaution: "remove people's emotional connection to their work and treat them merely as machines that produce effort, it's soul killing" (p. 87).

As language teachers it is our responsibility to think intentionally about productive ways to help our students make emotional connections with the language, culture, material, and content of our language classes. If we can demonstrate the relevance of language and cultural learning for their lived lives, their futures, their own sense of purpose, then we are likely to create a positive atmosphere in which students can experience the joy in learning.

Seeking ways to facilitate successful intersections of affective responses and learning in our classrooms will ensure learners are more attuned to the work in our classroom and more inclusive in the connections they make. By creating a pedagogically caring learning climate where learners are actively and creatively engaged through social and collaborative learning tasks, we can spark the joy and create the flow that transform our classrooms into inclusive, caring, learning communities that provide the all-important sense of belonging.

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2

Proficiency and a Dual Knowledge System: Implications for Instruction

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Challenge statement

Teaching for proficiency has gained significant support in recent years. Often absent in the conversation, however, is how implicit and explicit knowledge of language may both contribute to students' language use. It is therefore critical that language educators know what implicit and explicit knowledge of language are, and that they are able to instruct for both in concert.

Abstract

This paper reports on a pilot study of one learner's use of Spanish present tense indicative verbal inflectional morphology (present tense verb conjugations). An implicit/explicit knowledge of language framework was adopted for the study, such that learners have both subconscious and conscious knowledge of language that they are able to use variably across different tasks (Ellis et al., 2009). The study drew on previous research that has demonstrated that variations in learners' linguistic performance across tasks and modalities (e.g., speaking and writing) are related to differences in implicit and explicit knowledge of language. With this literature background, the study was guided by the following research question: Are there differences in accuracy on different tasks in one learner's use of present tense indicative verbal inflectional morphology? Data consisted of two oral narratives, two written narratives, and a metalinguistic knowledge test, and were analyzed for accuracy using error analysis (Tarone & Swierzbin, 2009). Similar to other studies' findings, findings

for the current study were that the participant's accuracy rate was higher on written and metalinguistic measures than on oral measures, suggesting that there were differences between implicit and explicit knowledge of language for the learner. Based on these findings and previous literature, implications for instruction are discussed.

After ten years of second language (L2) teaching (Spanish and ESL) at the secondary level, I continuously encountered what seemed to me to be a refusal--or at best an inability--of my students to use many of the language structures they had been studying when they engaged in spontaneous oral production in the target language. Despite hours upon hours of practice with grammar, I was consistently disappointed to find that my students often could not use the practiced grammar forms correctly, and in some cases they could produce very little language at all. Hubert (2011) documented much the same behavior, stating, "learners are not employing most of the elements of grammar that take up so much class time and effort in their oral interviews and written compositions" (2011, p. 236).

I began to discuss what I was seeing with colleagues, and it became apparent that many were experiencing very similar phenomena, and also felt a similar sense of futility. As we explored these issues, we gradually began to change our practices in order to take a more communicative approach (see Zilmer, 2013 for a description). However, students' grammatical accuracy in spontaneous oral communication continued to be substantially different from the fairly high degree of accuracy that they exhibited in their writing and on grammar tests. Most of my students, though able to quote conjugation rules and the like, were simultaneously unable to use this knowledge when it came to natural conversation. Ultimately, these questions motivated me to enter a PhD program in second language acquisition (SLA). During my first year of the program, I was exposed to research on implicit and explicit knowledge of language. This research seemed like it might explain the phenomenon I had been noticing in my teaching, that students' performance seemed to be more accurate in some modalities (writing, grammar tests) than in others (spontaneous oral production). This study was conducted in order to investigate whether there were differences in accuracy related to modality and how such differences might relate to implicit and explicit knowledge of language.

Review of the Literature

As I began to investigate what could possibly be at the root of this vexation, in fairly short order I learned that it is one that has troubled SLA research for quite some time, as well. Within the research community, the problem is known as the interface of explicit knowledge of language and implicit knowledge of language (Ellis, 2005). Research on implicit and explicit knowledge of language, and what if any interface there might be between them, has enjoyed substantial attention in the literature. The foci of these studies vary from what kinds of instructional experiences may lead to either type of knowledge (e.g., Godfroid, 2016; Rogers et al., 2016), to theoretical issues related to the interface between them (Han

& Finneran, 2014; Suzuki & DeKeyser, 2017) to implications for curriculum, instruction, and assessment (e.g., Ellis et al., 2009).

The Nature of the Dual Knowledge System

Bialystok's (1978) theoretical model of second language learning offers an early conceptualization of implicit and explicit knowledge of language. In it, she states:

> Explicit Linguistic Knowledge contains all the conscious facts the learner has about the language and the criterion for admission to this category is the ability to articulate those facts. These may include some grammar rules, some vocabulary items, pronunciation rules, and so on. Implicit Linguistic Knowledge is the intuitive information upon which the language learner operates in order to produce responses (comprehension or production) in the target language. Whatever information is automatic and is used spontaneously in language tasks is represented in Implicit Linguistic Knowledge (1978, p. 72).

Bialystok goes on to define implicit knowledge as what learners might describe as "feeling" right, but they may not be able to articulate why (1978, p. 72).

More recent research has refined and added nuance to the definitions of implicit and explicit knowledge of language. Suzuki and Dekeyser (2017) state, "both implicit knowledge and automatized explicit knowledge involve rapid access to linguistic knowledge, but they are still distinguished by the awareness criterion, that is, attention to linguistic forms" (Suzuki & Dekeyser, 2017, p. 748). In agreement with Bialystok, these authors note that awareness refers to whether a learner can explain why an utterance is grammatical or appropriate or not, even though they may not necessarily use metalinguistic terminology. So, while implicit knowledge of language may not include such conscious or articulable rules, explicit knowledge of language does. Importantly, Suzuki and Dekeyser (2017) add that both implicit and explicit knowledge of language may be available for automatic use. That is, implicit knowledge of language is available spontaneously, and highly automatized explicit knowledge also may be available for rapid access by language users. However, explicit knowledge, unlike implicit knowledge, may be on a spectrum of automaticity from *less* to *more* automatized.

There is some empirical evidence for these distinctions between implicit and explicit knowledge of language. For instance, in a study on the acquisition of Spanish grammatical gender (Alarcón, 2014), it was found that advanced L2 learners process grammatical gender for animate nouns (e.g., ***el*** *niñ***o**, ***la*** *niñ***a**; "the boy," "the girl"]) as rapidly and accurately as native speakers (NS) do. For non-animate nouns, however, there were differences between learners and NS. There are two types of non-animate nouns, overtly marked for gender (e.g., ***el*** *libr***o,** "the book") and non-overtly marked for gender (e.g., ***el*** *puente*), where the noun does not indicate the grammatical gender and only the article (*el* or *la*) carries this information. NS processed non-animate overtly marked nouns as rapidly as animate nouns, but they processed non-animate non-overtly marked nouns more

slowly. Learners, however, processed both kinds of non-animate nouns more slowly than animate nouns, but were more accurate with overtly marked than non-overtly marked non-animate nouns. The author states that these findings suggest that learners may acquire grammatical gender for animate nouns in implicit knowledge of language, and for non-animate nouns in explicit knowledge of language. These findings additionally give some indication of how both implicit and explicit knowledge of language may both contribute to learners' language performance.

Proficiency and the Dual Knowledge System

In SLA research, the notion of proficiency generally seems to be associated with learners' implicit knowledge of language. For instance, Ellis (2009a) states, "there would appear to be age constraints on the ability of learners to fully learn an L2 implicitly given that very few learners achieve native speaker proficiency" (p. 14). It seems, though, that many language educators and SLA researchers alike agree that "the most highly prized goal of language learning is spontaneous, unreflecting language use" (Zhang, 2015, p. 458), and that this sort of seemingly effortless L2 use relies primarily on implicit knowledge of language. Zhang (2015) refers to this ability as *communicative competence*, which is also referenced in research on communicative language teaching methods. As Savignon (2017) states, "communicative competence [is] the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, [which is] distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge" (2017, p. 3). While these conceptualizations of communicative competence may or may not also include sociolinguistic variation such as the sort that Dell Hymes (1966) articulated, what all of these notions do have in common—and the conceptualization adopted for this study—is that the ability of learners to use language meaningfully, at whatever level, appears to be distinct from their ability to recite grammar rules like verb conjugations isolated from meaning.

Many entities concerned with the measurement and development of proficiency appear to be similarly concerned with how well an individual is able to use the target language (TL) meaningfully. For example, the American Council on the Teaching for Foreign Languages (ACTFL) defines proficiency as "the ability to use the language in real world situations in a spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native speakers of the language" (Cowles et al., 2012, p. 4). Importantly, the ability to use language meaningfully includes all modalities, as ACTFL's assessments as well as the *World-readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015) include the interpersonal mode (spontaneous, un-rehearsed speaking and listening), the interpretive mode (reading and listening), and the presentational mode (writing and rehearsed speaking). Similarly, students seeking the Seal of Biliteracy must demonstrate proficiency at a certain level in all four modalities (Davin & Heineke, 2017) in order to receive the Seal. A number of authors have remarked that during meaningful language performance, though, it is likely that learners draw on both implicit and explicit knowledge of language (Bowles, 2011;

Ellis, 2009b; Zhang, 2015), and also that implicit knowledge of language may be more in evidence in some modalities and explicit knowledge of language may be more in evidence in other modalities.

It is also worth noting here that ACTFL makes a distinction between proficiency and performance. ACTFL defines performance as "the ability to use language that has been learned and practiced in an instructional setting" (Cowles et al., 2012, p. 4). This definition seems to be somewhat unique to ACTFL, however, as "meaningful performance" generally seems to "refer to a situation where an 'adult' attempts to express meanings, which he may already have, in a language which he is in the process of learning" (Selinker, 1972, p. 210). That is, a learner's ability to use language meaningfully may or may not be related to practice in instructional settings. The current discussion is similarly concerned only with learners' ability to use language meaningfully, without making any assumptions of how that ability was acquired (in an instructional setting or otherwise).

Measures of Proficiency and the Dual Knowledge System

A few studies have investigated how implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge may be implicated in measures of global proficiency. These studies (e.g., Elder & Ellis, 2009; Ellis, 2005; Gutiérrez, 2012) have used validated measures of implicit and explicit knowledge of language, and correlated learners' performance on those measures with their performance on global proficiency tests. The measures for implicit knowledge they have used include timed grammaticality judgment tests (TGJTs) and oral narratives, and the measures for explicit knowledge of language have included un-timed grammaticality judgment tests (GJTs) and metalinguistic knowledge tests (MKTs). In general, learners perform with greater accuracy on measures of explicit knowledge of language, and with less accuracy on measures of implicit knowledge of language (Bowles, 2011).

A pair of studies reported by Elder and Ellis (2009) found that some measures of global proficiency are more likely to tap explicit knowledge of language only, some measures are more likely to tap implicit knowledge of language only, and others a combination of the two. The studies specifically looked at the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Secondary Level English Proficiency test (SLEP), and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and correlated these tests with various of the measures of implicit and explicit knowledge of language just discussed. The studies found that the TOEFL favors explicit knowledge of language in general, which the authors postulate may be because the test is oriented toward "advanced academic language proficiency… and not conducive to eliciting unanalyzed automated language knowledge" (Elder & Ellis, 2009, p. 178). The other two tests (SLEP and IELTS) were found to more evenly tap both implicit and explicit knowledge of language, but that productive measures (speaking, writing) were more related to implicit knowledge of language, and receptive measures (reading, listening) were more related to explicit knowledge of language.

Another study (Gutiérrez, 2012) investigating the relationship between implicit and explicit knowledge of language and a measure of global proficiency

(*Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera* [DELE]) reported similar findings, but with some differences. The study investigated the performance of learners of Spanish at both lower and higher proficiency levels and incorporated several linguistic structures such as determiner-noun agreement (e.g., ***el*** *problema* vs. ****la*** *problema*), subject-verb agreement in the indicative (e.g., ***yo*** *escrib****o*** vs. ****yo*** *escrib****e***), and a number of other structures. For the lower proficiency learners, neither implicit nor explicit knowledge of language correlated with the oral portion of the test, but explicit knowledge of language did correlate with the written portion of the test. In contrast, both implicit and explicit knowledge of language correlated with performance on both the oral and written portions of the test for advanced learners. The author notes that this difference in effect between higher and lower proficiency learners may have been due to the fact that the proficiency test for the lower proficiency students was much more geared toward explicit knowledge of language, as their instruction was primarily focused on grammar study, whereas the test for the advanced learners was much more balanced.

In combination, these studies' findings seem to bear out that "L2 performance usually involves a combination of implicit and explicit knowledge" (Zhang, 2015, p. 458). While some aspects of these tests may be more likely to favor use of explicit knowledge of language, and other aspects more likely to favor use of implicit knowledge of language, it also may be that learners draw on both implicit and explicit knowledge of language for some meaningful language performance tasks.

The Current Study

Based on this background, the purpose of this study was to explore the implicit and explicit knowledge of one learner of Spanish. To accomplish this goal, the following served as a guiding research question (RQ) for the study: Are there differences in accuracy on different tasks in one learner's use of present tense indicative verbal inflectional morphology (present tense verb conjugations)?

Method

Based on the research evidence just discussed, that different tasks appear to tap either implicit or explicit knowledge of language, three different kinds of language samples were collected from the participant for the study: two oral narratives, two written narratives, and a metalinguistic (grammar) knowledge test. The learner's use of present tense indicative verbal inflectional morphology (present tense indicative conjugations) with Spanish verbs across these tasks was the linguistic form of focus for the study. These tasks are discussed in more detail in the next sections.

The Learner

I was Manish's (pseudonym) Spanish teacher during his third year of study in high school Spanish. At the time this study was completed, he was in his fourth year of studying Spanish. I was no longer Manish's teacher at the time of the study, as I had resigned from my teaching position to begin the PhD program. Consent was obtained from the learner and his parents through the institutional review board (IRB) protocols of the university at which I was working on my PhD.

Manish's family is from India and he has a degree of proficiency in four languages: Marathi, Hindi, English, and Spanish. His proficiency in English was essentially that of a native speaker, and Manish said his proficiency in Marathi {r

Analysis

Analysis for the present study focused on subject-verb agreement in Manish's use of present tense indicative verbal inflectional morphology. Analysis consisted of counting the number of errors Manish produced in each task with these forms and comparing the rates of accuracy across tasks. For instance, in Example 1 below an error (**bolded**) in subject-verb agreement is identified in one of Manish's written narrative tasks.

Example 1. *Subject-verb agreement error analysis in a written narrative*

	Original*	Translation
1	Un persona levanta en la cama, y los	A person gets up in the bed, and the
2	tiempos hay differente. Es tarde. El olvida	times there are different. It's/he's late.
3	un cosa, no sé que es, y busca para eso. El	He forgets a thing, I don't know what it
4	es tarde, y el autobús salir, ~~cuand~~ pero la	is, and searches for that. He is late, and
5	muchacho no monta. El ve una mujer, y	the bus to leave, ~~whe~~ but the young man
6	habla con ella. **Él necissito** una	does not ride. He sees a woman, and
7	conduce. La	talks with her. **He need <<[1st-Sing]
8	mujer dice "sí." La mujer mueve nieve	inflection**>> a drives. The woman says
9	para ver en la ventana.	"yes". The woman moves snow to see in
		the window

**The original written narrative was handwritten; it has been typed for legibility, but retains all linguistic features as written by the learner; translations attempt to preserve all learner language features*

In Example 1, there is one error in line 6: *él necissito.* This example exhibits a lack of agreement between the personal subject pronoun *él* and the present tense indicative morphological inflection *-o* on the verb *necesitar.* In this case, the [3rd-Sing] *él* in standard Spanish would require the [3rd-Sing] inflection *-a* (*necesita*). The learner, however, used the [1st-Sing] inflection on the verb, which does not agree with the [3rd-Sing] personal pronoun. This instance was thus counted as an error. Not counted as an error in this same instance was the issue with spelling. In standard Spanish, the verb *necesitar* is written with only one "s," but the learner's use of "ss" was not counted as an error, as it was not the linguistic form of interest for the study. Also not included in the error count for this study were features such as the use of *los tiempos hay differente* in lines 1 and 2 in the example above. This appears to be an issue of word choice, as in standard Spanish the copula *ser* ("to be") in the [3rd-Plu] inflection would be appropriate. The learner however used *hay.* The verb *haber* used as existential "there is/are" has only one conjugation (*hay*) in standard Spanish. This instance was also not counted as an error in subject-verb agreement. The only errors that were included in the error analysis were those pertaining to subject verb agreement. Thus, issues with grammatical gender (e.g, *un persona* in line 1), reflexivity (e.g., lack of *se* in the utterance *un*

persona [se] levanta in line 1), or any other linguistic feature that deviated from a standard Spanish norm other than subject-verb agreement were not considered for this study.

Similar error analyses were conducted for each task: both written narratives, both oral narratives, and a metalinguistic knowledge task. The metalinguistic knowledge task specifically required the learner to supply the correct verbal inflectional ending for personal subject pronouns. Once all of the errors were identified in each task, they were tallied and compared for accuracy rates across tasks. As discussed above, any differences in accuracy across tasks would suggest there are differences in implicit and explicit knowledge of language.

Findings

Manish's explicit knowledge of morphological marking of verbs appears that it was much more accurate than his implicit knowledge of morphological marking of verbs. Manish exhibited a much higher degree of accuracy with present tense verbal inflectional morphological marking in writing than he did in speaking. These findings support the prediction that spontaneous oral production makes use of more implicit knowledge of language and that written communication draws on more explicit knowledge of language. That is, for Manish, it can be said that he both knows accurate verb forms and does not know them, simultaneously, but in different contexts. These findings are similar to those of some of the studies discussed in the literature review (e.g., Elder & Ellis, 2009; Ellis, 2005). Table 1 shows the relative accuracy and inaccuracy in percentages of Manish's productions across measures, and Figure 1 represents the variation across measures visually. As writing is assumed to exhibit more explicit knowledge of language and speaking more implicit knowledge of language, in general Manish's explicit knowledge of language appears to be much more accurate than his implicit knowledge of language.

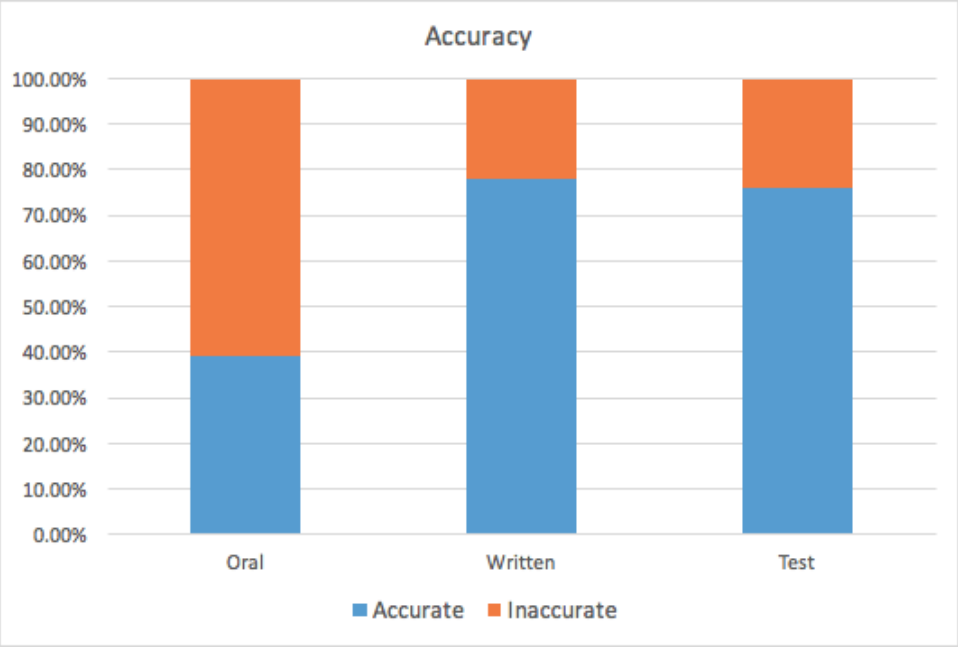
Table 1. *Manish's Overall Rates of Accuracy Across Task*

Accuracy	Oral narratives	Written narratives	Grammar test
Accurate	39%	78%	76%
Inaccurate	61%	22%	24%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Somewhat unexpectedly, Manish's accuracy for the written narratives and for the grammar test were very similar, which suggests that both of these tasks measured explicit knowledge of language. It was expected that the grammar test would be more accurate than the written narrative, but this was not the case. Notably, however, the much higher accuracy on measures of explicit knowledge of language than on measures of implicit knowledge of language is in line with what

I and my colleagues had felt like we were seeing: that the same learner appears to both know and to not know the exact same elements of language, in different modalities.

Figure 1. *Manish's Overall Rates of Accuracy Across Tasks*



Importantly, Manish used the same verbs with varying accuracy across modalities. In total, there were eight verbs that he used inaccurately in one context—usually oral production—and accurately in a different context (see Table 2, next page). For every verb used in at least two different measures, there was at least one inaccurate use of inflectional morphology with the verb in implicit knowledge of language and at least one accurate use of inflectional morphology with the verb in explicit knowledge of language. While some verbs were used both accurately and inaccurately in oral production (*hablar*, especially), the overall trend was that Manish knew and was able to use inflectional marking accurately when he was consciously able to focus on language use in explicit knowledge of language, but when he was more focused on meaning—and thus using more implicit knowledge of language—he was much more inaccurate.

In some instances, Manish used the same verb in the same linguistic context with different accuracy on different tasks. For example, in his oral narrative, Manish said *la persona levantar de la cama*, "The person <to get up> from the bed." In his written narrative, however, he wrote *Un persona levanta de la cama,* "A person gets up from the bed." Despite the missing *se* for a reflexive verb in the written narrative example, he inflected the verb *levantar* accurately in the

Table 2. *Manish's Variable Accuracy with Inflectional Morphology with Specific Verbs Across Tasks*

	Oral narratives		Written narratives		Grammar test	
Verbs	**Accurate**	**Inaccurate**	**Accurate**	**Inaccurate**	**Accurate**	**Inaccurate**
Salir (to leave)		3		2	1	3
Caminar (to walk)		1			2	
Hablar (to speak)	3	2	2		2	
Levantar (to lay down)		1	1		2	
Estar (to be)		1			2	
Bloquear (to block)		1			2	
Agarrar (to grasp/ grab)		1	1		2	
Poner (to put/place)		1	1		1	3
Aprender (to learn)	2	1	1		2	
Totals	**5**	**12**	**6**	**2**	**16**	**6**

context for [3rd-Sing], but in the oral narrative he used the same verb inaccurately in its uninflected, infinitive form. Within the same meaningful statement, but in two different modalities, Manish had different knowledge of how to use the verb *levantar.* This was also true for the verb *agarrar*, used in exactly the same linguistic context, but differently across modalities: in writing, Manish used it accurately for the context, but in oral speech inaccurately. While the other verbs were not all used with varying accuracy within the exact same linguistic context, what is evident is a general trend of higher accuracy in writing and metalinguistic knowledge (explicit knowledge of language) and lower accuracy with the same verbs in spontaneous oral production (implicit knowledge of language), for this one learner.

Discussion

Taken together, the language samples of this one learner demonstrate what I and my colleagues felt like we had anecdotally been seeing: our students were able to replicate the grammar rules and forms they had been explicitly taught when they were decontextualized from meaning, but when asked to engage in spontaneous, unrehearsed oral communication, they were unable to use these same forms. This behavior mirrors Hubert's (2011) statement that, despite extensive time spent studying grammar rules in the classroom, many learners are unable to use these forms for meaningful communication. These findings also seem to support the dual knowledge system theoretical stance.

Implications for Instruction

These findings suggest that language educators should consider that both implicit and explicit knowledge of language seem to contribute to learners' overall ability to use the language, as other studies have also documented (e.g., Elder & Ellis, 2009; Gutiérrez, 2012). At various times, a learner may be drawing on more implicit knowledge of language, and at other times a learner may be drawing on more explicit knowledge of language. It therefore seems important, as Ellis (2014) points out, to teach for *both* implicit and explicit knowledge of language. That is, learners should be given extensive opportunities to engage in meaningful interaction using communicative language teaching methods (e.g., Ellis, 2014; Savignon, 2017; Zilmer, 2013), as well as form-focused instruction. That is, at appropriate moments in a generally communicative-focused classroom, explicit focus on a particular linguistic form that is essential to the communicative context may be helpful in promoting overall proficiency development.

Of particular importance to consider is learners' performance on assessments. The assessments that we give our students and what we expect them to be able to do on any given assessment should take into consideration whether a given task is more likely to produce evidence of implicit or explicit knowledge of language. It is possible--likely even--that a student will exhibit substantially different capabilities on a written assessment such as a picture description, a spontaneous oral assessment such as a class discussion or an interview, and in a prepared presentational (oral) assessment. Expectations for performance should thus vary along with the kinds of assessments we are giving, commensurate with the modality being elicited and the knowledge system (implicit or explicit) that is likely being used by the learner. Related, language educators should not expect learners to be able to use language effectively for communication if their learning experiences have consisted largely or entirely of de-contextualized grammar study.

Similar consideration should be given to the role of instruction in preparing students for formal global proficiency tests, as well as for standards-based foreign language teaching practices. For instance, to obtain the Seal of Biliteracy, students are generally required to demonstrate proficiency in all four modalities (speaking, listening, reading, writing) through formal global proficiency tests (Davin & Heineke, 2017). Similarly, the ACTFL *World-Readiness Standards* (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015) includes provisions for the development of all four domains. As either implicit or explicit knowledge of language may be more in evidence in different domains, it thus seems important to provide students with opportunities to develop linguistic ability in both linguistic knowledge systems, with the primary focus being on the development of implicit knowledge of language (Ellis, 2014). In sum, ample practice in all modalities and instruction focusing on both meaning and form, using a variety of different instructional techniques, is likely the most helpful for whole proficiency growth.

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3

High-Leverage Teaching Practices: Designing Tasks for Interaction

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Challenge Statement

Meaningful interaction is essential for promoting second language learning. How do tasks promote interaction in the language classroom? What are considerations for task design? Why would designing tasks for interaction be considered a high-leverage teaching practice?

Abstract

In response to calls for more practice-based education, a potential high-leverage teaching practice is proposed, *Designing Tasks for Interaction*. This teaching practice matters for student learning and when skillfully enacted leads to interaction in the classroom. The definition, relevance, and design of tasks are presented with clear examples and a guiding framework that involves the acronym AIM. AIM stands for Analyze, Infer, and Make Decisions. In addition, task difficulty considerations are discussed, such as input versus output-oriented tasks, lower versus higher order thinking, and factors that lead to communicative stress. The article concludes with a checklist as a means by which language teachers can create and reflect upon the use of designing tasks for interaction in their classrooms.

Situating teacher education within teaching practices reflects a growing awareness of the need for teachers to practice teaching (Sleep, 2009). In this regard, the term *high leverage teaching practices* (HLTP) has been coined to identify practices that are central to furthering student understanding and to promoting significant gains in student learning (Ball et al., 2009; Grossman &

McDonald, 2008). To be enacted skillfully, HLTP need to be deconstructed to become learnable and teachable.

The field of world language education has begun to identify those parts of teaching that are considered to be high leverage. While no definitive list currently exists, some of the suggested HLTP have included: building connections to other content areas (Zhai, 2019), leading a classroom discussion (Kearney, 2015), and providing oral feedback (Glisan & Donato, 2017; Hlas & Hlas, 2012), among others (Glisan & Donato, 2017; Troyan et al., 2013). That being said, the work of connecting these practices to gains in student learning and continuing to refine and test HLTP is still needed (Zhai, 2019). Although numerous challenges remain, an examination of HLTP brings with it a renewed focus on student-centered practices, which is promising.

One HLTP that merits consideration within the language classroom is *Designing Tasks for Interaction*. It is a useful teaching practice that has the potential to promote students' communicative competence. Glisan & Donato (2017) noted the importance of designing interpersonal tasks as a sub-practice within one of their six suggested core practices. In addition, recent work in genre-based approaches has supported the development of interpersonal communication through spoken genre as a core practice (Herazo, 2012, 2014, 2021; Troyan & Wisnor, 2021). Further, interpersonal tasks have the potential to provide input, output, and interaction to students with meaningful language use (Swain, 1995). The HLTP *Designing Tasks for Interaction* reflects many of the characteristics of an ideal HLTP: it is essential to language teaching, it can be taught to beginners, it has the potential to affect student learning, and it is unlikely to be learned only through experience (TEI Curriculum, 2008, p. 4).

Review of the Literature

To begin to unpack this HLTP, a closer look at the role of interaction for second language production and development is needed. Interaction "accounts for learning through input (exposure to language), production of language (output), and feedback that comes as a result of interaction" (Gass et al., 2013, p 348). Norris et al. (1998) noted:

> …the best way to learn and teach a language is through social interactions…[which] allow students to work toward a clear goal, share information and opinions, negotiate meaning, get the interlocutor's help in comprehending input, and receive feedback on their language production. In the process, learners not only use their interlanguage, but also modify it, which in turn promotes acquisition. (p. 31)

Within tasks, specific features of interaction are likely to facilitate student learning such as corrective feedback and opportunity for negotiation of meaning (Long, 1996).

Acquisition is facilitated when communication breaks down, learners must negotiate meaning, and their attention is drawn to form-meaning relationships (Mackey, 2012; Pica, 1994). The use of confirmation checks ("Do you mean this?"),

comprehension checks ("Are you following me?"), and clarification requests ("What?") are inherently embedded within tasks. In fact, Skehan (1996, 2018) has noted that there is a natural and unavoidable use of these types of communication strategies within tasks as learners engage with meaning. In terms of being considered high-leverage, Gass & Mackey (2015) posited that within second language acquisition research "there is a robust connection between interaction and learning" (p. 181). For these reasons, *Designing Tasks for Interaction* is a credible potential HLTP, and task-based teaching merits further discussion.

Task-Based Language Teaching

Approaches to instruction that focus on meaning like task-based language teaching draw on the fundamental principles of communicative language teaching. Communicative language teaching is an approach to language teaching "based on the theory that the primary function of language use is communication" (Brandl, 2008, p. 5). That is, communicative language teaching has a focus on communication related to the real world where learners use language that is meaningful to them (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Halliday (1973) outlined seven different functions of language to describe the nature of communication. The communicative purposes of tasks draw on the following five of the seven functions:

a. Personal function: To express feelings, opinions, and reactions.
b. Heuristic function: To acquire knowledge, learn, discover, seek and provide information
c. Interactional: To interact, play, and get along with others.
d. Representational: To make statements, convey information and knowledge
e. Imaginative: To create poems, stories, fairy tales to share with others.

Interaction with peers can incorporate many of these purposive functions simultaneously, although VanPatten has noted that "[p]air work is not necessarily communicative" (2017, p. 79) and argued that the terms *activities* and *tasks* must be distinguished. An *activity* is "any type of language practice that involves the comprehension or production of oral or written language, often with a focus on vocabulary or grammar (Leeser & White, 2016, p. 6)." A *task*, on the other hand, "is meaningful *and* has a communicative purpose" (Leeser & White, 2016, p. 7). According to Skehan (1998) a task includes four criteria: meaning is primary; there is a goal which needs to be worked towards; the activity is outcome-evaluated; and there is a real-world relationship (p. 268).

For example, if students were asked to ask and answer questions about their weekly routine with questions such as "What time do you have lunch? or What class do you have in your morning?", students would be completing an *activity* to practice verbs like *to have*. To make this example more *task*-like, students could be asked to ask and answer similar questions but to attain a communicative objective such as "Decide who is busier during the week" or "Find a common free time to meet during the week." The primary goal for any task is the communication of meaning (Skehan, 2018). In this task, students use language to express meaning for the purposes of task completion. Instead of doing an activity with the goal to

focus on form, tasks allow learners to interact while still having opportunities to naturally pay attention to form in more engaging contexts.

Similarly, genre-based approaches focus on learners' meaning making, and tasks can be developed through a lens of genre. That is, tasks may be purposefully designed as genre-based where the linguistic choices can be anticipated and relate to the specific social context of use (Herazo, 2012, 2021). For example, Troyan & Wisnor (2021) deconstructed the task of purchasing a museum ticket at a service counter where the genre is identified as an exchange that is a short, positive, and formal conversation between a student and an employee. This exchange most likely consists of a greeting, request, question, response, payment, and receipt of the ticket. The analysis of the genre prepares students to engage in spontaneous interaction through a guided process. In general, genre-based approaches are a way to assist students in developing awareness of language use and to support their ability for meaning making during tasks.

The use of tasks as the basic building block in daily lessons and units is called task-based instruction. There are strong and weak versions of task-based instruction. The former argues that tasks should form the unit of teaching, and the latter argues that tasks are important to teaching but embedded in a complex pedagogical context where focus on form may also take precedence (Skehan, 2018). Form-focused instruction can be implicit or explicit, and form may be taught as a pre-task or post-task, as determined by the instructor. The nature of tasks can structure the way that students think about language by drawing attention to forms which are naturally embedded in the tasks. It should be noted that if the task is too complex or cognitively demanding, students may drift away from meaning to attend to form or accuracy (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). On the other hand, Swain (1985) has noted that tasks should not be too easy so that learners do not engage with the task requirements, become too bored, or stretch their language use. Thus, tasks do not automatically result in student engagement, as there are various factors that can be carefully planned and anticipated to design communicative tasks to support interaction in the language classroom.

Task Design

Designing tasks that ask learners to become language users and thinkers requires various decisions related to the design of the task itself. Task difficulty, for example, can be deconstructed into three factors: the language required to complete it (vocabulary variety, input or output-oriented), cognitive complexity (type of thinking, familiarity of the task, prior knowledge), and communicative stress (time pressure, number of participants) (Skehan,1998; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Within these factors, there is an array of simple to more complex tasks that can be designed, and tasks may be configured to focus on interpersonal, interpretive, or presentational communicative modes. Additionally, it can be helpful to think of designing tasks with low floors and high ceilings. The low floor provides an access point for all students to enter, and the high ceiling provides opportunity to lead to more linguistic and cognitive complexity as needed. For example, provided with a copy of a birthday invitation from the target culture, students could be asked to decide if the party is formal or informal, what gift they plan to bring, what they plan to wear, or infer if their classmate likes birthday

parties or surprises in general. In each scenario, there are various ways to provide appropriate scaffolding and to connect to student interests and prior knowledge.

To help move toward more task-based learning in the classroom, it is helpful to classify tasks into various types based on communicative function. For example, Foster & Skehan (1996) proposed a functional distinction of tasks for a) personal; b) narrative; and c) decision-making tasks. Others like Pica et al. (1993) proposed an interactional distinction for tasks such as a) jigsaw; b) information-gap; c) problem-solving; d) decision-making; and e) opinion exchanges. Further, Prabhu (1987) grouped tasks into three categories: information-gap activities (transfer of information), reasoning-gap information, (discovering new information) and opinion-gap activities (expression of a personal preference). Each of these task classifications involve cooperation and collaboration of students.

The AIM Framework

Based on the above categorizations, the AIM Framework identifies three main types of tasks that can be easily designed and integrated into the classroom. These three task types are informed by prior distinctions of tasks noted above and based on the communicative functions of language (Halliday, 1973). The acronym AIM represents the following three planning prompts: 1) **A**nalyze: What problems can students solve? 2) **I**nfer: What can students learn and then conclude? And 3) **M**ake a decision: What choice can students make? (See Table 1). To guide the design of each task, planning prompts are provided. These three tasks types will be further explained with detailed examples of each.

Table 1. *Three Task Types based on the Acronym AIM*

	Planning prompt	**Example**
Analyze: What problem can students solve?	Let's analyze __so that we can figure out ___.	Let's analyze these definitions and clues so that we can figure out a seven little words puzzle.
Infer: What can students learn and then conclude?	Tell me about ___ and I'll tell you (infer)___.	Tell me about how you snack and I'll tell you (infer) if you are a salty or sweet tooth.
Make a Decision: What choice can students make?	Give me ___and I'll decide _____.	Give me various paintings and I'll decide which to hang up in the classroom.

Analyze: What Problem can Students Solve?

The ability to analyze is a prerequisite for higher order thinking and 21st century skills (Battelle for Kids, 2019). The *Analyze* planning prompt connects to learner's ability to use reasoning and deduction to solve problems. This task type provides students with a problem as the basis for exploring and learning new

content. The planning prompt is "Let's analyze ___ so together we can figure out ___." For example, "Let's analyze the relationships between family members so together we can figure out this family tree" or "Let's analyze the directions to these locations so together we can figure out the map of this hometown."

In language education, the use of problem solving is found routinely in the use of word puzzles (e.g., crossword puzzles), real-world problems (e.g., finding your way around a new place), or communication concerns (e.g., negotiation of meaning), among others. One example of how puzzles can get students analyzing and creating meaning is a seven little word puzzle.

Example #1: Seven-little words puzzle. Let's analyze these definitions and clues so that together we can figure out a seven little words puzzle. The purpose of the seven little words puzzle, modeled after a website and app called Seven Little Words (Blue Ox Family Games, 2020), is to discover seven key words using definitions, number of letters, and word chunks. The seven key words are usually associated with a common theme like food or celebrations and organized in thematic sets. Research on second language vocabulary suggests that vocabulary learned in thematic sets, or words belonging to a specific schema, may be better retained than vocabulary organized by semantic sets (e.g., same parts of speech) (Gholami & Khezrlou, 2014; Tinkham, 1997). That is, instead of learning a set of only body parts (e.g. eyes, mouth, ears), it may be more effective for second language students to study the words in unrelated sets, grouped by a theme (e.g. nose, healthy, sneeze).

Figure 1 (next page) has an example of a thematic seven-little words puzzle, based on health, that includes seven words that must be solved by examining the clues provided. There are three layers of clues embedded into the puzzle. First, definitions are provided for each of the seven target words such as "With this body part I can look and see." Second, the number of total letters is provided for each of the seven words (e.g., 4 letters). Third, students are presented with a pieceword bank which consists of the actual answers broken into word chunks, providing another layer of hints (e.g., ey/es). The answers may be separated into chunks based on syllables, prefixes, suffixes, or simply randomly. If students are only able to solve five of the seven words using the definitions, they can rely on the pieceword bank and use the process of elimination to figure out the remaining target words. Students work in pairs or small groups to solve the puzzle and learn the value of collaboration as they work more efficiently as a team. This task could also be designed as a partnered activity or an information gap activity, where one student could have the definitions and the other student could have the total number of letters and pieceword bank.

There are various considerations that factor into the task difficulty and designing low floor, high ceiling puzzles. For example, the number of people working together, the unique information that each learner has, and the time to complete the task can contribute toward communicative pressure and thus task difficulty (Skehan, 1998). In addition, the language required to solve the puzzle can also be considered. The definitions provided to learners could include more cognates, paraphrasing, visuals, and/or more complex language structures.

Figure 1. Example of a Seven-Little Words Puzzle

Theme: Thinking and feeling healthy

Can Do Statement: I can request and provide clues to solve a puzzle.

Directions: In the pieceword bank below, the answers to the following definitions are broken down into word chunks. Solve each definition based on the number of letters in the answer and use clues in the pieceword bank. The first one is done for you as an example.

Pieceword Answer Bank: Cross out the word chunks as the definitions are solved below.

yo	athe	~~sne~~	ey	~~eze~~
sm	lthy	hea	ile	es
han	bre	ds	ga	c

1. When I do this, someone usually says *Gesundheit*. sneeze 6 letters
2. A mouth turned up in a pleasant way. _____5 letters
3. My lungs inhale and exhale. _____7 letters
4. With this body part I can look and see. _____4 letters
5. I feel fit and eat well. _____7 letters
6. This body part helps me give high fives. _____5 letters
7. This is a practice that uses relaxation, the body, and the mind. _____4 letters

Finally, the cognitive complexity of the definitions, whether lower-order thinking to higher-order thinking, factors into difficulty as well. For example, the puzzle could be configured to include all three sets of clues or could provide only one or two sets of clues (e.g., removing the pieceword bank). These considerations allow the task to be configured for any level based on how it is designed.

Infer: What can Students Learn and then Conclude?

The next task design prompt is *Infer*. Using inference strategies can help boost student curiosity and let them practice developing hypotheses (Silver, Dewing, & Perini, 2012). In addition, the *Infer* tasks allow students to learn something about each other by exchanging information. The planning prompt for this task is "Tell me about __ and I'll tell you (infer)___." For example, "Tell me about your bedroom closet and I'll tell you (infer) if you are a social butterfly or a homebody." A description of the items and general organization of a closet could also lead to inferences about whether someone is Type A or B personality, if they are nostalgic or forward-looking, idealist or realist, or minimalist or extravagant.

Another example of the *Infer* planning prompt could be "Tell me how you are dealing with staying at home during the pandemic and I'll tell you (infer) your coping mechanisms." In an online synchronous class, a scavenger hunt could be one way to

gather information for inference making. Students could be asked to find and bring back to the webcam a) something they have on their desk b) something close by that they are eating or drinking c) something that makes them smile. Based on these objects, the class can infer if students are coping with the pandemic with humor, comfort food, escapism, connection to nature or a combination of these coping mechanisms.

In anticipating learners at varying levels of ability, VanPatten (2017), drawing on the work of Ellis (2011), distinguishes between input-oriented and output-oriented tasks. In input-oriented tasks, learners may sequence images, read and respond to survey items, or circle locations on a map as they focus on the language in front of them. In output-oriented tasks, learners are more engaged in both interpreting and producing language to complete the tasks where they may be asked to write novel sentences to interview a classmate about study habits or build a Chinese dragon boat with a team with limited supplies and time. An example of how to design an inference task to be input-oriented or output-oriented follows with the theme of eating habits.

Example #2: Tell me how you snack and I'll tell you (infer) if you have a salty or sweet tooth. In Van Patten's (2017) task flow, both the input- and output-oriented versions of the design start by asking students to think individually. In the first section of the input-oriented version (see Figure 2), students read the statement and check if it applies to them (e.g. "I love chocolate"). In the first section of the output-oriented version, students create a list of foods that they like to snack (see Figure 2). In the second section, students ask and answer questions. In the input-oriented version students ask the guiding questions listed (e.g., "Do you love chocolate?"). In the output-oriented version, they plan a series of questions to ask their partner based on snack preferences. After the conversations, section three asks both partners to make an inference, based on a scale from 1-5, as to whether their partner has more sweet or salty cravings. Students are then asked to justify the score with examples from their conversation. If time allows, the class average could be calculated and if possible compared to other statistics or research data on snacking trends.

Figure 2. *Input-oriented Example of an Infer Task*

Theme: Eating Habits

Can Do Statement: I can exchange information about how my partner snacks identifying if they are a sweet or salty tooth.

Directions- Part 1. Individually, answer the following questions about your snacking habits. Be sure to check the box if you agree with the statement.

For example: ☑ *I love to munch on nuts like peanuts and cashews.*

☐ 1. I like to add salt to my popcorn.
☐ 2. Fruit is one of my favorite snacks.
☐ 3. I love chocolate.
☐ 4. I crave pizza.
☐ 5. I like to eat crunchy chips.
☐ 6. I typically eat desserts.

Part II. Then, ask a classmate the same questions, and be sure to ask for more information.

For example: Student 1: Do you like to munch on nuts like peanuts and cashews?
Student 2: Yes, I like to munch on nuts like peanuts and cashews.

1. Do you like to add salt to your popcorn?
2. Is fruit one of your favorite snacks?
3. Do you love chocolate?
4. Do you crave pizza?
5. Do you like to eat crunchy chips?
6. Do you typically eat desserts?

Part III. Finally, together decide what the answers tell about that person. Based on your conversation, does your partner have salty or sweet cravings? Be ready to explain your decision.

1	2	3	4	5
Sweet Cravings				Salty Cravings

Task flow source: VanPatten (2017)

As can be seen in the examples, the input-oriented version capitalizes on yes/no questions in the first section, however, other question types could be utilized. For example, students could circle either/or options with a list of snacks such as "popcorn or chocolate" and then in the second section ask and answer with a partner "Do you prefer popcorn or chocolate?" Alternatively, students could respond to a Likert item like, "How often do I eat salty snacks? - Always, Frequently, Sometime, Never," then ask and answer questions like, "How often do you eat salty snacks?". The types of questions used contribute to designing low floor, high ceiling partnered surveys as they can move from limited production questions to more complex question sequences asking students to respond with one word or with more. In addition, based on the content of the inferences being made, the cognitive complexity also factors into task difficulty. A survey based on snacking habits may involve different types of thinking than a survey based on moral values.

Make a Decision: What Choice can Students make?

Making decisions is one of the key components of critical thinking. Central to this *Make a Decision* task is a good question that engages students to analyze details, connections, or consequences. There are various guides to help plan a worthwhile question such as Evaluate Question types from the Cognitive Rigor Question Sequence (Francis, 2016). This sequence aligns with Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order thinking. Within the evaluate category, students ask questions related to "What do you feel?", "What do you think?", "What is your opinion?" as they make judgements based on information and criteria. The planning prompt for this task is "Give me ___and I'll decide _____."

The use of authentic materials lends itself naturally to this task type and the content can contribute to the cognitive complexity of the task. For example, "Give me a list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites and I'll decide which new site to propose in my state based on UNESCO criteria" or "Give me recipes and I'll decide what kitchen equipment I'll need to make it." When students are presented with information and need to make their decision, an *evaluation matrix* is a heuristic that can be used to help guide the discussion (Hlas, 2019). To help them refine their analysis, an evaluation matrix can be utilized to systematically assess different choices. Students can use this tool to help them consider various options, find an appropriate solution, or build consensus. Again, students need to evaluate a good question such as "Which artifact best represents the year 2021 for our virtual time capsule?", "Which MP3 music sample would be best to play before class?", or "Which piece of artwork should be hung up in the classroom?" The following example outlines how to scaffold the latter question to guide students as they make decisions about art.

Example #3: Give me various paintings and I'll decide which to hang up in the classroom. The following example (Figure 3) presents various pieces of scenic art from public domain images from the Library of Congress. These landscapes date back to pre-1915 Japan and represent various locations of the country. The evaluation matrix helps students to make decisions about the images by asking them to respond to specific questions such as "Is the painting beautiful?" Students are first asked to work individually to rate the paintings on a scale from 1-5. Then, in a small group, they tabulate and discuss their conclusions with the goal to reach a decision on which painting will be printed and hang up in the classroom.

The evaluation matrix works well to analyze paintings from the same artist, to evaluate parodies of the same piece (Dali's *The persistence of memory*), or to assess various artist's take an the same piece of famous artwork (Velasquez, Picasso, and Dali's renditions of *Las Meninas*). In addition, this task could be input-oriented or output-oriented as students can be asked to respond with a number to rate the beauty of a painting (e.g., scale 1-5), with Likert scale wording (e.g, strongly agree, agree, slightly agree) or with evidence from the paintings forming novel sentences. In addition, the questions to evaluate the art could be provided or be written by the students themselves.

Setting up Tasks for Success

Designing tasks that are appropriately scaffolded for students can guide students to exchange information, to solve problems, and to make decisions using the AIM acronym. Prabhu (1987) notes that a task "requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process" (p. 17). In order to plan these language rich opportunities for students, a *fidelity checklist* can help guide task design (see Table 2). The fidelity checklist is a heuristic meant to assist teachers in thinking through the various components of design for their teaching context. In addition, it can be used as a reflection tool to observe and evaluate the use of tasks in the classroom. The checklist considers the following: the communicative objective, task features, and task difficulty.

Figure 3. Evaluation Matrix Example for a Make a Decision Task

Theme: How art makes us feel

Can Do Statement: I can express opinions about different pieces of artwork.
Directions: Using a scale from 1-5 (with one being does not and five being does fit the criterion), evaluate the following three paintings. Then, total the values in the right-hand column.

	Is the painting beautiful?	Is the painting creative?	Does the painting make you feel happy?	Does the painting make you wonder?	Total
Okazaki (n.d.) 					
Totsuka (n.d.) 					
Kanagawa oki nami ura (n.d.) 					

Table 2. *Task Fidelity Checklist*

Task Components
Communicative objective ☐ *I can* statement visible to students
Task features ☐ Meaning is primary ☐ Real-world relationship ☐ Communicative purpose with AIM (Analyze, Infer, Make a Decision)
Task difficulty considerations (Low floor, high ceiling) ☐ Analysis of language required to complete the task (Input-oriented—Output-oriented) ☐Cognitive complexity (type of thinking required) ☐ Communicative stress (time, number of participants)

Providing an input-rich classroom where learners receive frequent occasions to interact are necessary conditions for using language as the vehicle for instruction. Tasks, specifically input-oriented tasks, can be integrated thematically into appropriate lessons. Over time, with more task familiarity, tasks designed with low floors can lead to higher, and more complex, ceilings. It should also be noted that tasks do not necessarily need to drive the curriculum, they can be integrated when thematically and appropriately relevant (VanPatten, 2017). Regardless of the route to tasks, they contain an inherent pedagogical value for learning and serve as an essential tool within any teaching repertoire.

Conclusion

In general, high-leverage teaching practices give our field much to consider in terms of practices we deem most powerful to advance student language learning. Focusing on how to design tasks for interaction provides a practice-based foundation and concrete instructional moves to set a robust path forward. As such, this HLTP tackles one of our field's grand challenges, "to improve the functional proficiency of all students at a level that allows them to interact for personal and professional pursuits" (Hlas, 2018, p. 49). Tasks provide learners with much needed opportunity for input, output, interaction, and negotiation of meaning. Ultimately, through well-designed tasks, learners become committed to engaging in the task as speakers and listeners. In sum, this learner centered HLTP has much potential to promote gains in student learning in the classroom and support research informed instruction.

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4

Context at the Core of Multilingual Instructional Design

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Challenge Statement

Multilingual instruction varies greatly depending on the learning context. How can contextual affordances be leveraged in designing multilingual instruction? What benefits and insights might such instruction offer? This chapter presents an example from a practitioner-teacher collaborative project conducted in a German as foreign language center in India.

Abstract

Contextual features greatly influence the implementation of multilingual pedagogies. A context's affordances and limitations play a central role in determining if, how, and to what extent learners' linguistic repertoires are leveraged in instruction. Yet, very few studies on multilingual pedagogies clearly describe how contextual features were considered in their design. In this chapter, I present findings from a practitioner-researcher collaborative project at a German as foreign language center in India where context was at the core of developing a multilingual instructional sequence. A research team of local teachers, administrators, and myself was formed with the goal of designing an instructional sequence that leveraged learners' known languages and implementing it iteratively in a beginner level classroom. Data presented here are from the weekly discussions by the research team, learners' journals,

and classroom observations. The qualitative analysis of the data focused on what contextual features were discussed and what new understandings of the interconnectedness between these features emerged. Findings show that features such as learners' plurilingualism, their emergent multilingual awareness, and teachers' preference for maximizing target language input were all considered in the discussions. Each one of these features initially seemed to have a simple, direct influence on language learning. However, subsequent implementations uncovered multidirectional connections between these features and other individual, sociolinguistic and cultural factors, which collectively shaped learning and instruction in this context. Repeated attention to contextual features in language instruction can yield deep insights into and rich understandings of the learner and the learning process.

As the field of foreign language education is increasingly acknowledging the presence of multiple languages both in the classroom and in a learner's mind, researchers and practitioners are paying heavy attention to pedagogical approaches that leverage these languages. Multilingual pedagogies that draw on the many languages known to a learner take various forms. Of the many factors that explain this variety, context seems to be at the forefront. Contextual factors such as status of target language (TL), language hierarchies inside and outside the classroom, instructional time, age of learners, learner motivation, and so on play a central role in determining if, how, and to what extent the instruction draws on learners' linguistic repertoires. Researchers and practitioners from various fields of language education such as foreign language instruction (Kelly, 2015; Turnbull, 2018), immersion education (Ballinger et al., 2017; Tedick & Fortune, 2019), English for Academic Purposes (Galante, 2020), and minority language education (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017) have all highlighted the importance of context while utilizing learners' known languages and prior language knowledge in TL instruction. Furthermore, there is consensus among advocates of language pedagogies that originate from different epistemological stances such as translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014), translingualism (Canagarajah & Gao, 2019), multilingual pedagogies (for example, Jessner et al., 2016) and crosslinguistic pedagogies (Lyster et al., 2013) on the centrality of context in leveraging learners' known languages. This chapter reports on a project that developed and implemented a multilingual instructional sequence with contextual factors at the core of its design.

Multilingualism and Multilingual Pedagogies

When I started teaching German as a Foreign Language in India over a decade ago, I noticed that almost all my students were multilinguals with different levels of proficiencies in their known languages. Learners were at times aware of certain linguistic concepts in their own languages and could even explain them to their peers. Despite a lingering feeling that learners' prior language knowledge and multilingual practices could be leveraged to aid their learning, I never acted on this instinct. Years later, in my PhD program, as I plunged myself into reading about holistic theories of multilingualism such as Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST), a whole

new understanding of multilingualism and multilingual language learning emerged. CDST explains that languages exist in a multilingual's mind in an interconnected state, which causes them to interact with and influence one another (de Bot et al., 2007). It posits that language development and language use are nonlinear, adaptive and dynamic, and are capable of change depending on the perceived communicative needs of the multilingual (Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008). When a new language is learned, it is not a mere addition to the individual's linguistic repertoire, but it inherently reconfigures the entire language base of the person. In other words, with every new language learned, an individual's understanding of how linguistic rules work, what language learning strategies are effective for oneself, and what similarities and differences exist between languages could develop. Jessner et al. (2016) describe this as multilingual awareness – a combination of metalinguistic awareness and crosslinguistic awareness. Metalinguistic awareness is the ability to isolate language form from function and view language rules in the abstract. Crosslinguistic awareness is the ability to identify similarities and differences across languages. Multilingual learners inherently possess multilingual awareness, and this awareness could aid in learning an additional language.

Multilingual pedagogies are instructional approaches that capitalize on this characteristic of a multilingual learner. They aim at leveraging a learner's multilingual awareness, their prior language knowledge and language learning experiences. However, multilingual awareness might be latent in a learner's mind, and can serve as a tool in learning the TL only if activated during instruction. Learners have to made aware of their existing linguistic knowledge and taught how to utilize this knowledge in learning the TL through instructional activities. CDST advocates an instructional approach that focuses on teaching iteratively to build on learners' adaptive capabilities and language resources (Larsen-Freeman, 2018; 2019). Learners' unique experiences when engaging in every iteration takes them beyond language reproduction and helps them adapt to new contexts.

CDST also considers the definition of context carefully. Traditionally, context has been described as a set of independent variables or features in the external environment that exert a unidirectional influence on the learning process. CDST broadens this definition by pointing out that several actors and elements constitute a context, and that their relationships are multidirectional and symbiotic. Ushioda (2015) for example explains how "learners shape and are shaped by context" (p. 48) through their linguistic interactions, their textual references, memories or practices. Thus, a bidirectional relationship between a context and the learner would include "learner-external contextual processes" such as TL input, instruction, peer interactions, and "learner-internal contextual processes" (p. 53) such as motivation, aptitude or agency. Similarly, teachers, as "persons-in-context" (Ushioda, 2015, p. 48), also influence and are influenced by several contextual elements such as learners, instructional practices, classroom policies and learning environment (Tudor, 2003). CDST thus conceptualizes contextual factors to be both internal and external, and to be in a co-adapting, dynamically evolving, symbiotic relationship. Instructional approaches adopted by teachers in a given

context, in this case multilingual pedagogies in particular, are then influenced by other factors within the same context (Gopalakrishnan, 2020).

Contextual Factors in Multilingual Pedagogies: Review of the Literature

Recent scholarly works have asserted the importance of considering contextual factors while leveraging learners' known languages. Among the many contextual factors, status of the TL in the learning context has received great attention. Referring to minority language learning in the Basque country, Cenoz and Gorter (2017) have explained that Spanish, the dominant language of the context has to be included in instruction with great care. In designing sustainable translanguaging pedagogies, they aimed at including learners' entire linguistic repertoires, which included Spanish, but also at ensuring that the minority language, Basque was not undervalued. Similar concerns about balance between dominant and minority languages have been expressed by immersion education scholars such as Tedick and Fortune (2019) and Ballinger et al. (2017). The latter researchers, for example, argued that allowing majority language use in minority language instruction might "replicate, rather than resolve, an existing societal language imbalance" (2017, p. 46). Research from the field of bilingual education has also highlighted the importance of context. In bilingual schools in the United States, for example, the dominance of the English language and the presence of other minority languages have paved the way to the emergence of translanguaging pedagogies, so that "the enormous linguistic variation of bilingual speakers (…) and the fluidity of [their] linguistic practices" (García, 2014, p. 100) are not ignored.

Overlap in teachers' and learners' linguistic repertoires in a given context has often been mentioned as a factor that determines whether all languages in a learner's repertoire are leveraged or not. In linguistically superdiverse contexts, learners at times are the sole representors of a certain language (Brunen & Kelly, 2016; Galante, 2020; Gopalakrishnan, 2020). When no one else in the classroom shares a language in a learner's repertoire, learners are not motivated to use this language. Several studies have also found that when teachers do not speak the languages that their learners know, it is difficult to draw on these in TL instruction (de Angelis, 2011; Galante, 2020).

Instructional time available to teachers and how much of known language use can be allowed during this time is another factor that varies depending on the context. In foreign language instruction, Kelly (2015) explained that a strong motivation for not allowing other languages is to "maximiz[e] students' exposure to the target language over a limited number of teaching hours" (p. 72). This argument was exemplified in a study (Gopalakrishnan, 2020) that I conducted with German as foreign language teachers in India. Teachers aimed at providing maximum TL input to learners, as this was the only opportunity learners had to be exposed to German in the Indian context. Galante (2020) also found that the English for Academic Purpose teachers in her Canadian context were concerned about the amount of time translanguaging pedagogies took during instruction, and what pedagogical purposes these served. On the other hand, Haukås (2016) found that some of her participants capitalized on their learners' linguistic knowledge

"(…) all the time. In every lesson" (p. 9). Egaña et al. (2015) found differing implementational practices among Frisian and Basque teachers when it came to leveraging learners' plurilingualism. Frisian teachers leveraged learners' languages more frequently than teachers in the Basque country. Hall and Cook (2012) have advocated for a language pedagogy in which the use of learners' known languages "compensates for the limited time and exposure to new language" (p. 282). The varying findings from these studies show that instructional time, combined with other individual and contextual features plays an important role in determining whether or not learners' plurilingualism is leveraged in TL instruction.

The arguments and evidence in support of the vital role of context in multilingual pedagogies are indeed vast. However, studies on multilingual pedagogies often do not describe how and what contextual features were drawn on in designing their instruction. Studies such as Brunen and Kelly (2016), Galante (2018) and González-Davies (2017) present in detail exemplary instructional activities that draw on learners' known languages and prior language knowledge. However, these studies do not specify what contextual considerations went into designing the multilingual instructional activities. In the current chapter, I describe a practitioner-researcher initiative that placed contextual factors at the core of designing a multilingual instructional sequence and how its iterative implementation brought forth new understandings of the connections between these factors. In particular, I elaborate on (i) what contextual-specific features were considered, and (ii) how our understanding of the interconnectedness between these (and other contextual) factors evolved.

Methodology

The Context

For several years I worked as a language teacher at a German language school in an urban city in Southern India. The German Language Institute (all names are pseudonyms) is an international language and cultural center that aims at promoting the German language and culture throughout the world. The center offers German as foreign language courses primarily to adult learners in a variety of formats. Learners enroll themselves in these courses to improve their employment opportunities, to secure entrance into German universities, or to join their spouses residing in Germany or other German-speaking countries. Many of the teachers are Indians with advanced levels of proficiency in the German language. All teachers are multilinguals. My association with the German Language Institute (GLI) began over decades ago first as a student, then as a teacher trainee, and finally a full-time teacher. During this long stint, I had developed personal and professional relationships with several employees. Even after leaving GLI and beginning my doctoral program, I often engaged in pedagogical discussions with my ex-colleagues there. Out of these conversations an idea to empirically design an instructional sequence that leveraged the known languages of Indian learners grew organically. What resulted was a larger, year-long, design-based research (McKenney & Reeves, 2013) project that focused on implementing multilingual pedagogies at the GLI.

The Research Team

As a first step in the design-based study, a research team comprised of interested teachers who volunteered, the head of department, and I, came together to design the multilingual instruction. An overview of the research team with relevant details is provided in Table 1. The first member of the team was Mr. Naveen, the head of department. Mr. Naveen oversaw all logistical and administrative decisions involved in the execution of the project. This included a wide array of tasks ranging from securing approval from higher management for the project to managing schedules, organizing meeting spaces and arranging for recording equipment. Mr. Balaji, the second member of the team is a senior language teacher with many years of experience as a teacher educator, textbook author, and community outreach person. Mr. Balaji is multilingual with Tamil as his L1 and English as his L2. He is also proficient in French. The third member of the team was Ms. Tara. She specializes in teaching beginner level students and in preparing learners for international examinations. Her L1 is Malayalam, and she is proficient in other Indian languages such as Tamil and Hindi. In addition, she also speaks English, Telugu and Kannada.

Table 1. *Information about Research Team Members*

Team Member	Role	Years of Teaching and/or Research Experience	Languages known	Specialization
Mr. Naveen	Administrator	Teaching – over 20 years; Administration and Management – 12 years	Marathi (L1), Hindi, English, Tamil, German	Administration, management, teaching across all proficiency levels
Mr. Balaji	Teacher	Teaching – over 20 years; Research – over 8 years	Tamil (L1), English, German, French	Teacher education, content development, teaching across all proficiency levels, learner assessment
Ms. Tara	Collaborating Teacher	Teaching – 12 years	Malayalam (L1), Tamil, English, Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, German	Teaching at beginner levels, exam preparation
Anuradha Gopalakrishnan	Researcher	Teaching – 13 years; Research – 5 years	Tamil (L1), English, Telugu, German, French	Teaching across all levels, teacher education, language education research

Finally, I was the last member of the research team. As a student-researcher, I brought relevant theoretical and empirical work done in the field of multilingual pedagogies to the team. While teachers at the GLI had organically developed some multilingual teaching strategies, they were not aware of how students' multilingualism had been leveraged in foreign language instruction in other parts of the world. I presented such studies and projects, and the team discussed how these can be adapted to the Indian context. In addition, the task of collecting and analyzing data was my responsibility. Additionally, I coordinated and led the weekly research team meetings, reminding members of our agenda, and followed through with our research schedule.

My long-standing relationship with each one of the team members certainly had an impact on the research project. Mr. Naveen and Mr. Balaji were senior teachers at the GLI and have been my teachers and mentors at different times. Ms. Tara, on the other hand, was my junior during my stint at GLI. But by the time the project was conducted, she had gathered extensive experience in German language teaching. These close associations with the team members helped in establishing a cordial atmosphere during our meetings right from the beginning. Disagreements and differences in our conversations were addressed in a friendly manner, often making me feel as an insider. Our conversations did not end during the team meetings, but often continued over coffee and lunch breaks where the teachers shared their thoughts without inhibitions. However, my brief break from the GLI and my return in a different role as a novice researcher also positioned me as an outsider. I often found myself having to navigate these insider-outsider positions, while also ensuring that my relationships with the team members were not jeopardized. Journaling and writing reflective memos were the best ways in which I traversed these difficult moments.

Multilingual Instructional Sequence

The multilingual instructional sequence developed by the team was implemented in a beginner level adult course that went on for 16 weeks (160 hours in total). The class met twice a week for five hours each day. Ms. Tara volunteered to act as the collaborating teacher which meant, that the sequence was implemented in a course that she taught. The research team initially studied several multilingual instructional models developed by researchers and practitioners all over the world. Upon studying these, the team first identified certain core components for multilingual instruction in the research context. These components were then refined to form the instructional sequence in the first iteration (Figure 1). The sequence was implemented three times in the course at weeks four, eight and twelve (Table 2). The teachers in the team preferred that grammatical features be taught in every iteration, as grammatical functions lend themselves to be easily compared across languages. The grammatical features were chosen jointly by the team based on the progression of the course.

Figure 1. *Design Changes from First Iteration to Third Iteration*

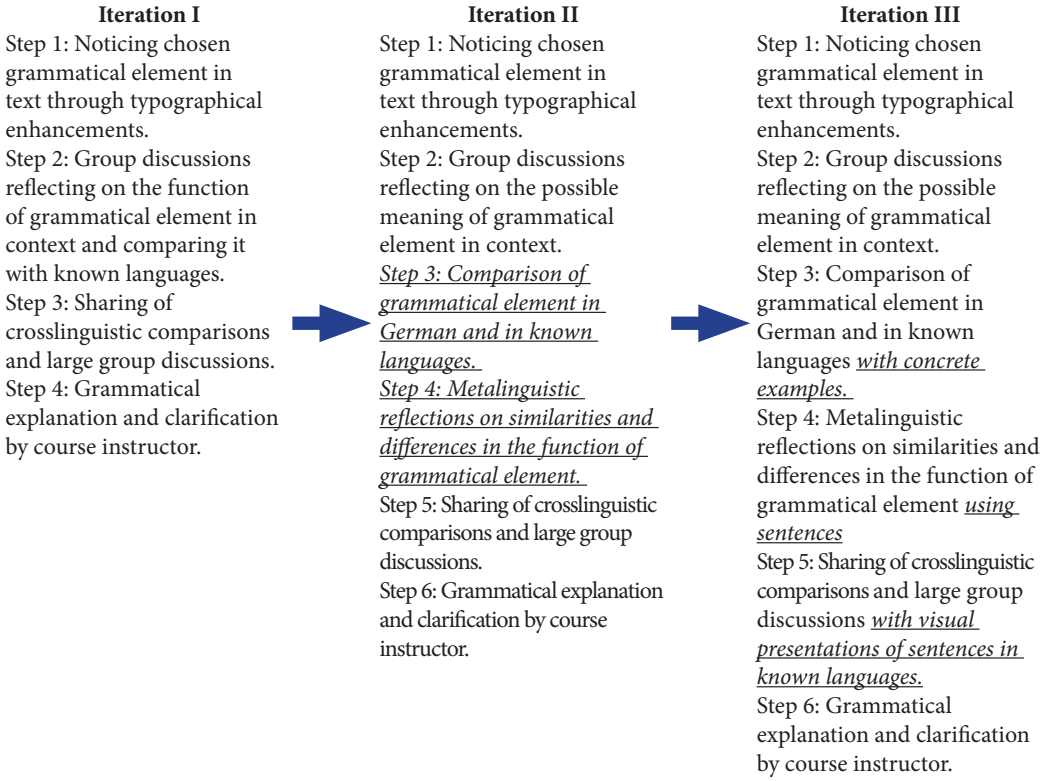

Table 2. *Iterative Implementation of Multilingual Instructional Sequence*

Iteration	Week	Target grammatical feature
1	4	Indefinite articles and their difference from definite articles
2	8	Possessive articles
3	12	Accusative pronouns

After every iteration the sequence was assessed using feedback from three different sources—classrooms observations by Ms. Tara and myself, the performance of learners, and learners' perspectives. Feedback from each of these sources informed the subsequent design of the sequence. Figure 1 shows the changes made after every iteration. The specific changes at every iteration have been presented as italicized and underlined text. It should be mentioned that in this article I focus only on how contextual considerations figured into our weekly discussions, supported by our classroom observations and learners' journals. In the larger study, changes to the instructional design were made based on feedback from the three sources.

Data Collection

The design and implementation phase (McKenney & Reeves, 2013) of the project was conducted from January to May 2019. During this period, the research team met once every week. The meetings began before the implementation phase and went on until the end of the course. A key task at our weekly meetings was to assess the instructional sequence after every iteration. As mentioned earlier classroom observations, learner data, teachers' perspectives, and learners' perspectives were all triangulated to assess the sequence and redesign it. Findings presented in this article are drawn primarily from the weekly meetings. Data from our classroom observations and learners' journals are included to provide context to teachers' statements.

As the researcher, I was present in the classroom for most part of the course. I mostly observed the class quietly, taking field notes. At times, I did take on the role of an additional teacher, responding to students' questions. The weekly meetings were audio recorded. Given that the team members and I shared at least three languages in our own linguistic repertoires – Tamil, English and German – we freely switched between them in our conversation. Learners' perspectives were collected in a weekly written reflection journal. The beginner-level class consisted of 25 students (19 male and 6 female). All students came with no prior knowledge of German. The students' linguistic repertoires were complex and overlapped to a great extent. Most students in the class were multilingual, and only three were bilingual. They were not informed that their perspectives on the instructional sequence were being gathered. They were asked to reflect on specific moments during instruction when they believed they were successful, overwhelmed, confused, or productive. Journal entries were gathered from learners from Week 3 – Week 14 of the course, yielding a total of 238 journal entries. All entries, without exception, were written in English.

Data Analysis

The field notes, the recorded weekly meetings, and the learners' journal entries were all analyzed qualitatively. I began the analysis with the audiotaped weekly recordings which added up to a total of 13 hours and 47 minutes. I initially identified sections in which the discussion revolved around considerations of context-specific factors. I then transcribed these sections multilingually using the software MAXQDA (Version 20.1.0). These sections were open coded to first identify what context-related factor was being discussed, and then how this factor informed the (re)design of the instructional sequence. The field notes from classroom observations were first converted into reports which were shared with the research team on a weekly basis. In these reports and the additional memos that I wrote throughout the implementation phase sections related to any contextual factors were first identified. I then open coded these to understand what contextual factors were mentioned, described or discussed. Learners' journal entries were analyzed differently. Since learners were not told that the journals were to get feedback on the instructional sequence, the entries were on a wide array of topics.

Among these, learners mentioned the instructional sequence twenty-two times. Within these entries eight related to contextual factors, which were also analyzed through open coding.

Each data source was coded separately to identify what contextual feature was being discussed and how they related to the instructional design process. Then, the codes were matched against one another to yield a new set of codes across all three sources. I performed a second round of deductive analysis using these codes, from which the themes in the discussion section emerged. Once the data were analyzed I shared the list of themes, the codes and the corresponding excerpts from our discussions with the research team. The team members approved most of the themes and refined a few. This member-checking step further solidified the analysis, yielding robust findings. My multilingual background helped me transcribe the data with ease and was beneficial in analyzing them. The teachers seemed to switch languages intentionally at times to express a thought or idea in a certain language well. Since I knew these languages too, I was able to fully understand what they expressed even when they used different languages within the same sentence. Another factor that aided my analysis was the similar cultural backgrounds I shared with the team members and learners. As I will discuss in the following section, the culture of the learning context was one of the key considerations in the design process. The similarities in the cultural backgrounds of the teachers, the learners and myself helped me understand the data well.

Note on Multilingual Transcripts

It should be noted that the multilingual nature of the conversations is highlighted here through typographical differences. Sections in English follow the same typographical features as the rest of the text. Sections in Tamil are presented in bold and those in German are presented in capital letters. Translations for all multilingual conversations are presented below.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis showed that four contextual features were mainly considered in designing the multilingual instructional sequence. These were the plurilingual repertoires of the learner, the learners' emerging, but latent multilingual awareness, the learners' culturally habituated role of being a passive learner, and the teachers' preference on the choice of language for interaction. These features were revisited several times in our discussions, because at every iteration we observed that they interacted with other internal and external contextual processes.

Leveraging the Linguistic Variety

The linguistic plurality of the classroom was the first and most important contextual feature that the teachers wanted to leverage. Even in our early discussions in developing the instructional sequence, the team unanimously agreed that it was essential to allow learners to draw on all the languages they knew in order to understand the grammatical feature. Crosslinguistic comparisons should not be restricted merely to the L1, English or any other common language

in the classroom. Ms. Tara explained why this approach is particularly applicable to Indian learners.

Excerpt 1

01 And if you ask me what language I am thinking னு கேட்டா it's very difficult for me
02 to answer because I can think in English, I can think in Malayalam, I can
03 think Tamil. The thought- we are so adaptable that way. Students உம் அப்படித்தான்.
04 They think in many languages. அப்போ if we tell them to think of only one language it'll
05 be like restricting them.

Translation

01 And if you ask me what language I am thinking in it's very difficult for me
02 to answer because I can think in English, I can think in Malayalam, I can
03 think Tamil. The thought- we are so adaptable that way. Students are also like that.
04 They think in many languages. Then if we tell them to think of only one language, it'll be
05 like restricting them.

(Meeting: March 5, 2019)

Ms. Tara explained that the plurilingualism of Indian learners is not merely a verbal skill, but also an internal cognitive function. Therefore, if learners were asked to choose only one of their known languages in crosslinguistic discussions about TL grammar, this might go against their habituated practice of thinking in many languages. Multilingual learning theories such as CDST state that "language systems within the multilingual system are conceptualized as interdependent (rather than as autonomous) because they interact, influence, (…) and are in turn influenced by other systems" (Jessner et al., 2016, p. 159). Languages overlap in an individual's mind, thus enabling one to think in many languages, and demanding that the learners isolate these languages in their crosslinguistic comparisons would be unnatural to multilingual users. It would also not allow a learner to leverage all the languages and linguistic knowledge in their repertoire. Therefore, it was decided that in the instructional sequence learners will be allowed to choose all the language(s) they knew in understanding the German grammatical element.

Before the first iteration the teachers also predicted that learners might favor English more than their L1s or other known languages in their crosslinguistic discussions. In other words, they might draw on their English knowledge to understand the German grammatical features and not other known languages. When asked why, Mr. Balaji offered the following explanations.

Excerpt 2

01 Mr. Balaji: அவங்க mostly English தான் choose பண்ணுவாங்க.

02 Anu: ஏன் அப்டி சொல்ரீங்க?

03 Mr. Balaji: ஏனா they did not learn their mothers tongues or other Indian languages

04 consciously இல்ல?அந்த formal instruction, they got that only in English. Plus இங்க

05 we always see that. ஒரு formal learning setup னா they always choose English speak

06 in English.

Translation

01 Mr. Balaji: They will most probably choose English.

02 Anu: Why do you say so?

03 Mr. Balaji: Because they did not learn their mothers' tongues or other Indian languages

04 consciously right? That formal instruction, they got that only in English. Plus, here

05 we always see that when it is a formal learning setup, they always choose English speak

06 in English.

(Meeting: March 5, 2019)

Mr. Balaji explained that learners were taught the rules of the English language formally in their school education. But they would have developed knowledge in their L1 or other Indian languages informally, without conscious attention to their rules. He believed that this conscious learning of the English language and knowing its rules explicitly would make students tap into their English knowledge. In lines 05 and 06 Mr. Balaji speculated a second reason for why learners might leverage their English knowledge first. In India, English is the medium of instruction in most post-secondary educational institutions and is associated with learning and education (Vaish, 2008; Vijayalakshmi & Babu, 2014). Therefore, it was natural for adult learners to think of English first while learning in a formal classroom setup.

Mr. Balaji's prediction was confirmed in our observations from the very first iteration. Many learner groups drew on their English knowledge in understanding the function of German definite and indefinite articles. Learners' preference for the English language was also seen early on in their journal entries. Even though learners were explicitly told that they could write their reflections in any language they preferred, all entries by the learners, without exception, were in English.

Mr. Balaji's statements in Excerpt 2 and learners turning to English in the first iteration echo a larger sentiment that is associated with the language in India. As the language at the top of the linguistic hierarchy, English reigns over all Indian regional and tribal languages in being associated with learning, education and even intellect (Annamalai, 2001; Mohanty, 2018). This sociolinguistic privilege of the English language was reflected in the small group discussions of the learners and their language choice in writing their journal entries.

However, English was the first choice for crosslinguistic comparisons only in the first iteration. In the second and third iterations, learners chose a variety of languages in their group discussions. We observed that they often began by drawing on English to understand the German grammatical features. Once they realized that this did not provide sufficient clarity in understanding the German grammar, learners intuitively drew on other languages in the group. Learners' weekly journals corroborated our observations and showed what benefits learners saw in using many languages for crosslinguistic comparisons. Learners mentioned that drawing on their local languages helped them understand the grammatical feature well both after the second iteration (n = 5) and third iteration (n = 7). Some learners, like the one mentioned below, specifically attributed the good understanding to the many languages discussed at their table: "Doing the exercise for pronouns with translating each sentence to English, Tamil, and Hindi I was able to understand the rules. It was quite confusing first. But ok now" (S, 4/28). The learner here specifically mentioned the three Indian languages used by her group members to understand personal pronouns in the accusative case – English, Tamil and Hindi. She explained that it was initially confusing, but now, she understood the function of the pronouns well.

Over the weeks, learners' plurilingualism went from being the mandatory contextual feature that was being leveraged, to a learner characteristic that reflected a sociolinguistic practice in the Indian context, and finally to an agentive practice that facilitated TL understanding. Learners' first language choice for their crosslinguistic discussions was English, a practice that can be attributed to the privilege the language enjoys in India (Mohanty, 2018). However, continuously allowing them to choose from their entire linguistic repertoire led them to draw on specific languages that helped them achieve their learning goal. This shift from English-only to whatever-language-works happened organically, agentically and collaboratively. As Galante (2020) explains, "individual repertoire allows for an agentive power that affords limitless possibilities of using the linguistic and cultural resources available" (p. 4). The decision to allow learners to leverage their entire linguistic repertoire provided them with the agentive power to break free from the linguistic hierarchical practices prevalent outside the classroom and to make their own choices in learning the TL.

Activating the Latent Multilingual Awareness

In the team meetings teachers pointed out that the assets learners brought into the classroom were not just the multiple languages, but also the multilingual

awareness that comes with knowing many languages. The following excerpt illustrates this.

Excerpt 3

01 Mr. Balaji: The concepts are similar in all languages. But the manifestation is different.

02 அததான் அவங்க புரிஞ்சுக்கணும் இல்ல. அது overt ஆ எப்டி இருக்கும் அது மட்டும்

03 தான் – The hidden layer is the same in all languages in the world. And some students

04 already know it. Because அப்டி தான் அவங்க மத்த Indian languages அ

05 படிச்சிருப்பாங்க. நம்ப ஊர்ல நெரயா informal ஆ languages படிக்கும்போது தமிழ்ல

06 இப்டி தெலுகுல இப்டி னு compare பண்ணி தான intuitive ஆ படிப்போம். So இந்த

07 understanding அ வெச்சு அவங்கள எப்டி SOLLZUSTAND கு எடுத்துட்டு

08 போகணும்னு பாக்கணும்.

Translation

01 Mr. Balaji: The concepts are similar in all languages. But the manifestation is different.

02 This is what they should understand. How it is overtly, only that-

03 The hidden layer is the same in all languages in the world. And some students

04 already know it. Because that's how they would have learned another Indian language.

05 In our country when learning languages informally, we compare them intuitively as

06 this is how it is in Tamil; this is how it is in Telugu. So, we

07 need to think of how we can take them to the target state

08 using this understanding.

(Meeting: February 28, 2019)

In the first few sentences, Mr. Balaji alluded to the universality of languages. He explained that languages share many similar concepts, but their overt manifestations are different. In his experience, Mr. Balaji had observed that Indian learners enter the language classroom with emerging understanding of this concept because they would have learned other Indian languages informally.

The L1 serves as the base language system, to which learners intuitively compare the new language. Through crosslinguistic comparisons learners develop skills in the new language, but also, at times, "awareness (tacit and explicit) of the interaction between the languages" (Jessner, 2008, p. 279). The team agreed that the instructional sequence should therefore aim at leveraging this multilingual awareness to guide them through the understanding of the similarities across languages.

Our observations of every implementation revealed that learners' multilingual awareness developed over the weeks. During the first iteration crosslinguistic discussions were brief and learners were uncertain about the comparing process. But in the second and third iterations learners demonstrated greater confidence in the comparing process, and in turn, their discussions contained richer explanations of the grammatical features in different languages. These explanations often contained epiphanies about learners' first languages, which led to prolonged discussions within groups while comparing the function of the grammatical features in different languages. The following journal entry after the third iteration confirmed this: "Learning PERSONALPRONOMEN (personal pronouns) using Tamil was awesome. When S explained his rules in Telugu it was an interesting conversation. I think I had forgotten my Tamil grammar. Had a good chance to learn it again" (V, 4/28). The journal entry here showed that V's first language is Tamil and that she had drawn on Tamil grammar to understand personal pronouns. Another student, S, had explained the same grammatical function in another language, Telugu. She finally admitted that this discussion had helped her refresh her Tamil grammar knowledge. We also observed that learners at times took the discussions a step further and explained the grammatical feature to a peer who did not know a certain Indian language. For example, if a peer at the table did not know Tamil, then learners who knew Tamil would explain to them how the grammatical feature was used in Tamil. In the above journal entry, it is clear that V does not Telugu, but her peer S explained the Telugu grammar rules to her.

In our early discussions, learners' multilingual awareness was established as yet another asset that learners from the Indian context possessed. The team however guessed that this awareness might be latent in many learners, and that learners would "need training (…) so that they can fully activate their multilingual repertoire and make use of their knowledge" (Jessner et al., 2016, p. 158). Repeated engagement in crosslinguistic comparisons and discussions with peers facilitated the activation and emergence of multilingual awareness. CDST defines multilingual awareness to be an emergent property in language learners (Allgäuer-Hackl & Jessner, 2019). We observed that as their multilingual awareness increased, learners engaged in in-depth discussions about how the target grammatical feature functioned in every known language and in German. Over the weeks, they also admitted to developing a better understanding of the grammatical element in their own mother tongues.

Learner and Teacher Roles

In India, the teacher is traditionally revered as the knowledge provider and the subject matter expert. Indian learners bring this sentiment with them into

the language classroom too. While designing the instructional sequence the team was skeptical about the learners' willingness to explain grammar rules in their known languages. Such explanations are expected to come from the expert – the teacher. In the first iteration we observed that even though learners explained the functions of articles in their known languages well, they still looked to Ms. Tara to verify the explanations they offered. This showed that Ms. Tara was considered the authority on all linguistic knowledge, even knowledge relating to languages other than German.

However, during the second and third iterative implementations, we noticed a shift in learners' confidence during the crosslinguistic discussions. While the linguistic repertoires of all learners and Ms. Tara overlapped to a great extent, there were some languages that only one learner in the classroom knew. In such instances the learner had to step forward to explain the grammatical function in that language. Ka, for example, was the only learner who knew Marathi in the class. In the second iteration we observed her explaining to her peers how and when possessive articles are used in Marathi. Similarly, in the third iteration, two other students, Ni and C who were the only ones to know Japanese and Urdu stepped forward to explain accusative pronouns in these languages respectively. While Ka in the second iteration and Ni in the third iteration brought up Marathi and Japanese only in small group discussions, C explained Urdu grammar in the large group discussion. C's act of explaining grammar rules in a language that only he knew to all his peers indicates great confidence. C wrote about this experience in his weekly journal: "Felt nice explaining Urdu rules in class. I could able to teach the whole class something today". (C, 4/20). C described his positive emotions in being able to act as the teacher and explain grammar rules in a different language to his teacher and his peers. During these instances when Ni, C and Ka compared German with languages that even Ms. Tara did not know, she stepped down from her position as the instructor and allowed them to act as knowledge experts. In those moments the student and Ms. Tara briefly exchanged their roles as teacher and learner. Such role-swapping between the teacher and the learner provided the learner with agency in leveraging their linguistic assets.

Larsen-Freeman (2019) argues that learner agency can be enhanced in a language classroom by establishing optimal conditions for learning. Agency from a CDST perspective "is something one achieves *by means of* an environment, not simply *in* an environment" (2019, p. 66, emphasis original). In the current project, an environment conducive to said achievement of agency was created through the design of the sequence. This agency allowed learners to shed their habituated role as passive learners and to take on the role of the knowledge expert. In talking about teaching practices that can optimize conditions for fostering learner agency, Larsen-Freeman (2019) recommends "teaching iteratively (…) and teaching students to adapt their language resources to changing situations" (p. 71). In the current project, learners did not volunteer to offer such linguistic explanations in the first iteration. It was only in the second and third iterations that learners agentically volunteered to explain the linguistic rules in a language that only they knew in the classroom. Furthermore, other studies have found that when learners

are the sole representatives of a language in the classroom, they hesitated to use this language (Brunen & Kelly, 2016; Galante, 2020). The current study found contrasting learner behavior, where students volunteered to use and explain these isolated languages. I argue that the iterative nature of the instructional sequence and its iterative implementation boosted learners' confidence, encouraging them to act on their agency and step out of their traditional roles as learners and take on the role of a teacher.

"Let's keep it simple": Language of Interaction

Teachers in the research team were particular that small and large group crosslinguistic discussions should be held in learners' L1 or in a language that they are comfortable in. They did not want to enforce the use of German during this step in the instructional sequence. In a previous study (Gopalakrishnan, 2020) conducted with several teachers in the same context on the integration of multilingual pedagogies in their instruction, I found that many hesitated to include other languages during their limited instruction time. Learners were exposed to the TL only in the classroom and allowing the use of other languages would reduce their exposure time to German. For this reason, the question of whether learners should be encouraged to perform crosslinguistic discussions in German was first raised before the second iteration. However, the teachers believed that this might be a challenge for learners.

Excerpt 4

01 Mr. Balaji: SIE FÜHLEN SICH ÜBERFORDERT. அப்ரம் அந்த framework குள்ளே

02 தான் அவங்களால operate பண்ண முடியும். அந்த பயத்துல என்ன பேசணுமோ

03 பேசமாட்டாங்க.

Translation

01 Mr. Balaji: They will be overburdened. Then they will be able to operate only within that

02 framework. In that fear they will not speak what we want them to

03 speak.

(Meeting: February 2, 2019)

The question of introducing German in the instructional sequence was brought up again before the third iteration. Excerpt 5 showed how Mr. Balaji responded to it.

Excerpt 5

01 இல்ல இப்போ Germanல SPRACHMITTEL குடுத்து பேசவெச்சோம்னா we wont get

02 what we want. அவங்க focus will be more on using the SPRACHMITTEL rather than

03 discussing or revealing what they know. All their conversation will revolve around how

04 to use the language. Essence போயிடும். நமக்கு என்ன வேணுமோ அது

05 கெடைக்காது. இப்போ metalinguistic thinking ஏ புதுசு. அப்போ language உம் புதுசா

06 இருந்துச்சுனா DOPPELBELASTUNG ஆயிடும். இந்த level ல teacher என்ன

07 குடுக்கராங்களோ அதே use பண்ணணும்னு நெனப்பாங்க. அதனால அதுவேண்டாம்.

08 Let's keep it simple!

Translation

01 No, if we give them some German phrases and ask them to discuss we won't get what

02 we want. Their focus will be more on using the phrases rather than discussing or

03 revealing what they know. All their conversation will revolve around how to

04 use the language. The essence will be gone. We will not get what

05 we want. Right now just metalinguistic thinking is new. If language is also new

06 it will be a dual burden for them. At this level they think they should use

07 whatever the teacher gives them. So let's not do this.

08 Let's keep it simple!

(Meeting: March 22, 2019)

I brought up the question of having students perform crosslinguistic discussions in German once before the second iteration and again before the third iteration. Mr. Balaji turned it down both times saying it would overburden them. The team had observed that metalinguistic discussions were challenging to learners in the first place. If learners were asked to use German in this step, their focus might have been divided between TL use and metalinguistic thinking. In addition, their limited language proficiency might have curtailed the free expression of their metalinguistic thinking. Mr. Balaji here echoed the arguments of Swain and Lapkin (2013) that "students should be permitted to use their L1 for the purpose of working through complex ideas" (p. 113). Drawing from Vygotskyian principles,

Swain and Lapkin (2013) argue that learners mediate complex cognitive functions through the L1, and this helps them "co-construct knowledge during a Zone of Proximal Development" (p. 119). However, when I shared the findings from the previous study (Gopalakrishnan, 2020) that teachers at the GLI were hesitant to allow other languages during their limited instructional time, the teachers in the research team admitted that they too believed it was important to insist on as much TL use as possible, even during the multilingual sequence. Therefore, we reached a consensus on establishing principles around L1 use in TL instruction (Levine, 2011; Macaro, 2009; Swain & Lapkin, 2013). It was decided that only during the small and large group crosslinguistic discussions learners will be permitted to interact in languages other than German. Thus, teachers found a midpoint between their preference to adhere exclusively to the TL and allowing learners engage well in crosslinguistic discussions. In doing so, they established clear classroom principles on the "optimal" (Macaro, 2009) use of learners' known languages.

Conclusion

In this article, I have illustrated how the design process of a multilingual instructional sequence yielded a rich understanding of the multidirectional connections between various contextual features. As the research team introduced one change into the classroom ecosystem – the instructional activities – other contextual actors or features adapted to this change. The multilingual sequence drew on certain "internal contextual processes" (Ushioda, 2015, p. 53) such as learners' multilingual repertoires and their multilingual awareness, and on teachers' perspectives on optimal TL use during instruction. We observed other learner-internal contextual processes adapt to this new instructional activity. Learners' agency seemed to respond to the iterative implementation of the instructional sequence, supporting the argument that agency "can be achieved and changed through iteration and co-adaptation" (Larsen-Freeman, 2019, p. 61). Learners' understanding of their own L1s improved, and their multilingual awareness developed as an emergent property (Allgäuer-Hackl & Jessner, 2019) over the weeks. Both teachers and learners moved out of their sedimented cultural roles of information provider and information receiver respectively and exchanged their roles for brief moments. Furthermore, links between internal and external contextual factors also surfaced during this project. Learners' proclivity for using English mirrored the language hierarchy in the larger Indian context (Mohanty, 2018). Given the status of the TL, German in India, teachers reassessed their perspectives on how, when and why learners would be allowed to use their L1s and other known languages during instruction.

It should be noted that the teachers were able to perceive the interrelatedness of the factors in their context only by repeatedly paying attention to them. In our initial discussions the teachers merely decided that the four features mentioned in the previous section would have to be heeded in designing the sequence. But the iterative nature of the multilingual instructional sequence drew teachers' attention to these features frequently, enabling them to notice the nexus formed by these

features and others, in the midst of which learning happened. Our discussions after each iteration were in turn fueled by new observations teachers had made. The insights that we gained were thus a result of the cycle of implementation, retrospection and discussion.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of centralizing contextual affordances and characteristics in making pedagogical decisions surrounding the use of learners' known languages (Fortune & Tedick, 2019). The recurrent attention to contextual features and the iterative nature of multilingual instructional sequence encouraged learners and teachers to execute their agency, and move beyond habituated roles, sedimented practices and firmly held beliefs. With context at the core its conceptualization, design and execution, the study shows that contextual features are in constant interaction with one another.

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5

The 4 Rs of edTPA: Rationale, Roadblocks, Remediation, and Recommendations

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Challenge Statement

Teacher effectiveness is fundamental to current educational policies; however, the widely used program completion assessment edTPA is highly problematic. State determined pass scores remain high yet national data show a continual decline in beginning teacher performance on edTPA. Questions about its validity/reliability during a world language teacher shortage remains. Is it time to reconsider its use?

Abstract

In use in 954 educator preparation programs in 41 states and the District of Columbia (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, 2021), edTPA seeks to measure beginning teacher effectiveness. While used by many states to inform teacher licensure or certification decisions, this high-stakes assessment is highly problematic. In this article, the authors provide an overview of the World Language edTPA and Communicative Language Teaching approaches, on which the World Language edTPA is based, before specifically noting its shortcomings as an effective instrument to measure novice teacher prowess. Citing longitudinal national data, the authors call attention to the

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity's dilemma of producing a valid and reliable assessment and promoting the corporatization of education for profit while so many teacher candidates are found to be disadvantaged by having to submit edTPA portfolios. Additionally, the authors advance several empirically grounded solutions to help teacher candidates score better when submitting their portfolio for external review—another highly controversial aspect of edTPA. Teacher accountability measures are important, but factors often excluded from discussion such as cost and local expertise must become central to the process.

For decades in the United States (US), ideological, political, and social perspectives have influenced teacher education reform (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2015). Following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon B. Johnson worked diligently to make Kennedy's vision of US education come to fruition. In 1965, the US Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA; United States, 1965) as part of Johnson's War on Poverty campaign (McLaughlin, 1975). This groundbreaking legislation placed emphasis on equal access to education, setting high standards for academic performance, placing demands of accountability on school districts, and reducing the achievement gap. The legislation called for re-examination and reauthorization every five years as deemed appropriate.

At the turn of the century, ESEA was reauthorized and subsequently retitled as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB; U.S. Department of Education, 2002) by the George W. Bush administration. This mandate (Swanson, 2012) stipulated arduous testing and accountability requirements of K-12 student learning and included world languages (WLs) as part of the core curriculum. From a philosophical standpoint, NCLB had merit as it called for a highly effective teacher in every classroom. However, researchers and policy analysts criticized NCLB because it narrowed the K-12 curriculum and prioritized reading, mathematics, and science instruction over non-tested content areas, such as WLs (Rosenbusch, 2005; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2004; Swanson, 2008). Additionally, there was a requirement that public school teachers had to be *highly qualified*. That is, educators had to meet the following criteria: 1) possess a bachelor's degree, 2) obtain full certification or licensure in the state in which he or she was going to teach, and 3) have strong content knowledge of the subject(s) to be taught (U. S. Department of Education, 2004).

Following the Bush administration, the Obama Administration reauthorized the legislation, calling for even more scrutiny of schools and teachers. *Race to the Top* now mandated states to measure beginning and veteran teacher effectiveness in order to receive full federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). In order to be able to apply for federal funding, states started to pass legislation that focused on pre-service teacher preparation and certification standards while underscoring teacher performance and effectiveness at the state level (e.g., Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2014; Illinois State Board of Education, 2012). As part of the funding model, states that accepted federal funds "agreed to implement

accountability measures that frequently begin with teacher candidates seeking licensure or certification" (Swanson & Hildebrandt, 2018, p. 11). In many states, pre-service teacher candidates had to show "the results of classroom processes, such as impact on student learning" (Goe, Bell, & Little, 2008, p. 4), often through teacher performance assessments. In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the law again as per the original legislation's mandate. Known now as the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, the legislation sought to maintain the rigor of its predecessors while leaving the majority of the details regarding teacher preparation, qualifications, and certification procedures to the states (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

During this time, The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) designed and pilot tested a new national beginning teacher performance portfolio assessment aligned with the federal legislation: the edTPA, or Education Teacher Performance Assessment. While immediately noted as problematic in the field of WL teaching and learning (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, 2016; Russell & Davidson Devall, 2016; Troyan & Kaplan, 2015), especially in the area of assessment of learning, the use of edTPA began to grow throughout the US. In this article, the authors begin by providing a *Rationale* for edTPA in the area of WLs and frame the discussion in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches. Afterward, the researchers present the *Roadblocks* of the WL edTPA in terms of disadvantaged groups, the transparency of external reviewers, its cost, and the timeframe to complete and submit a dossier for evaluation. Finally, the authors outline several best practices as *Remediation and Recommendations* that have been found empirically to improve teacher candidates' scores on this high-stakes assessment.

World Language edTPA: Rationale

History

Framed on the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (SCALE, n.d.), edTPA is a nationally-available "performance-based, subject-specific assessment and support system used by teacher preparation programs throughout the United States to emphasize, measure and support the skills and knowledge that all teachers need from Day 1 in the classroom" (SCALE, 2020, p. 1). At present, edTPA is available in 27 different content areas in 951 Educator Preparation Programs in 41 states and the District of Columbia in order to inform initial teacher licensure and certification decisions (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education [AACTE], 2020). Working collaboratively with AACTE and its administrative partner, Pearson, edTPA portfolios are developed during a teacher candidate's final field placement (a.k.a. student teaching) and evaluated by external reviewers. As detailed in the *edTPA World Language Assessment Handbook* (SCALE, 2019a), edTPA can be conceptualized as a cycle of effective teaching from planning (intended teaching) to instruction (enacted teaching) to assessment (impact of teaching on student learning). Each of the 27 content areas varies with respect to these three emphases. For example, external reviewers use 18 5-point Likert-scale rubrics to evaluate elementary education teacher candidates while external reviewers use 13 5-point Likert-scale rubrics to measure

WL teacher effectiveness. It is important to note that edTPA eliminated the use of local expertise (i.e. teacher-educators) in favor of external reviewers.

Each edTPA portfolio contains three tasks for pre-service teacher candidates: (1) Planning for Instruction and Assessment, (2) Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning, and (3) Assessing Student Learning. A complete portfolio includes a Context for Learning statement, lesson plans for a learning segment of 3-5 hours of connected instruction, instructional materials, assessments, commentaries to explain and reflect on for each of the three tasks, learner work samples and reflections, and no more than 15 minutes of video in specified tasks (SCALE, 2019a). There are strict font, margin, page length, and video format (e.g., mp4) requirements that teacher candidates must obey. Additionally, teacher candidates must obtain parental permission in order to film the learners in the classroom during instruction/assessment, which was highly problematic when schools were meeting in person (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). Starting in 2020, with the Covid-19 pandemic and the plethora of modes of instruction in effect (e.g., in-person, online, hybrid classes), securing parental permission has been shown to be even more difficult (Journell, 2020).

The WL edTPA seeks to measure beginning teacher candidate effectiveness by using 13 5-point Likert-scale rubrics across the three aforementioned tasks: four rubrics for Task 1, five rubrics for Task 2, and four rubrics for Task 3. The 5-point scale describes teacher candidates' knowledge and skills ranging from individuals who are not ready to teach to individuals who are very well qualified and ready to teach (SCALE, 2019a). The portfolio's total score ranges from 13 to 65 points. As edTPA is an assessment of beginning teachers' abilities, scores are not typically expected to score in the advanced range of the rubrics (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016).

Federal educational policies have often served as a guiding framework by which the states develop their own K-16 teacher education policies with respect to scoring and teacher certification (Hildebrandt et al., 2013). Consequently, states determine the levels to which teacher candidates must perform on edTPA and most teacher assessments (e.g. Oral Proficiency Interview, Praxis). For example, in Georgia, the WL edTPA pass score was at 29 from September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2017. From September 1, 2017 forward, the passing score was 32 for certification to teach WLs. In other states, passing scores are currently higher: 34 in Washington State and 35 in Illinois, 35 in Tennessee, but rising to 36 in 2021 (Pearson Education, 2020).

While there was an expectation that teacher candidates' scores would continue to increase as states mandated the WL edTPA for licensure or certification decisions, the opposite actually occurred. National WL edTPA data from 2014 through 2018 (SCALE, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019b) revealed that the number of teacher candidates who took the WL edTPA increased from 416 to 747; however, over that same period the total mean scores set a trend of decreasing scores year after year. As shown in Table 1, WL teacher candidates' total mean scores on the WL edTPA decreased 2.76 points from 40.00 in 2014 to 37.24 in 2015, and to 35.94 in 2016, with the means for all tasks decreasing. The following two years, 2017 and

2018, the means remained exactly the same, which may indicate an inaccuracy of reporting. Nevertheless, the standard deviations for each year decreased along with the means, indicating that the scores became more homogeneous over the years.

Table 1. *Means and standard deviations for total WL edTPA scores for both national and program data.*

	M	***SD***
2014 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 416)	40.00	7.73
2015 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 572)	37.24	7.39
2016 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 655)	35.94	6.47
2017 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 747)	35.62	5.70
2018 National WL edTPA Total Score (*N* = 747)	35.62	5.70

Such overall declines are unfortunate, but one of the rubrics, Rubric 8 (Subject-Specific Pedagogy) has been particularly problematic. The aforementioned data from SCALE show that this rubric, part of the Instruction task, decreased from 2.4 to 1.9 from 2014 to 2016. For years, Rubric 8 has been controversial (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016; Ruiz-Funes, 2018) as mean scores have continually declined each year (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2019). Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, SCALE has not published recent national data regarding the number of teacher candidates who had a WL edTPA portfolio scored and their mean scores for 2019 or 2020.

Communicative Language Teaching

SCALE (2019a) states that the WL edTPA is "consistent with the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2014) and the ACTFL/CAEP Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers" (p. 1). Specifically, the focus of the learning segment is intended to develop students' communicative proficiency in the target language (TL) in meaningful cultural context(s), which promotes the five goal areas of the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). These goal areas were founded on the tenets of communicative language teaching approaches.

In recent decades, there has been a distinct paradigm shift in the teaching of WLs. The field has moved definitively away from teaching *about* the language toward an approach that advocates *use of* the language by learners at all levels. No longer is teaching the four skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking) as individual units in the TL sufficient. Indeed, WL instruction and assessment are now conceptualized in CLT approaches that place the emphasis on language function rather than form (Nunan, 1991). Learners want to be able to *use* the language rather than merely learn *about* the language. They need and want to

engage in activities that involve significant TL communication and real-life interaction (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). CLT focuses on advancing learner proficiency in all TL skill areas concomitantly, rather than merely learning about the language, one skill at a time.

The current prevalence of the CLT approach has definite and immediate ramifications for WL teacher education. In 2002, professional standards for US WL teachers were published by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), working in conjunction with the National Council for Accreditation in Teacher Education (NCATE) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in the design of guidelines for FL teacher preparation (ACTFL, 2002). These guidelines are in harmony with the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015)—developed by ACTFL and a host of other WL organizations in the United States—and also the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (ACTFL, 2012). They are also in agreement with ACTFL's (2010) position statement on TL use in the classroom, which calls for 90% or more TL use by both teachers and learners in the classroom. In the case of proficiency-oriented instruction, these guidelines emphasize using the L2 to the *maximum* extent. The InTASC (2002) standards are explicit in their attempt to promote extensive teacher use of the L2. Principle 1 (Content Knowledge), for example, asserts that "They [the candidates] can effectively conduct classes in the target language at all levels of instruction" (p. 8). Principle 4 (Instructional Strategies) openly presents the ability to effectively maximize messages in the L2. These standards also address the need to establish positive learning environments through the L2. InTASC Principle 5 stresses that "language teachers understand that an environment in which communicative interactions occur in the target language is essential for effective language learning" (p. 24). Principle 6 (Communication) asserts that this commitment to use the L2 extends well beyond the immediate classroom environment. Finally, InTASC Principle 9 (Reflective Practice) underscores research on teacher discourse as a vital tool for professional development: "They reflect on various aspects of their teaching, such as target language use during instruction" (INTASC, 2002, p. 38).

Teacher preparation programs now regularly encourage candidates to develop lessons and units that put into practice CLT principles. Indeed, contemporary language methods classes need to embrace the paradigm of CLT as it recognizes students' need for significant levels of meaningful TL communication; CLT must be included as pedagogical content knowledge in these programs (Larson-Freeman & Tedick, 2016). Thus, these methods courses need a more intensive focus on how to plan lessons that will increase a learner's communicative proficiency in the TL. In addition, language educators of WL pre-service teachers must focus on developing the language skills of these future instructors, through courses taught in the TL (Garcia et al., 2019). The language teaching profession now advocates using the TL for purposes that are as real-life and authentic to the learner as possible. Designing lessons with tasks that have students actively use the TL to engage in communicative situations with real people is of the utmost importance. Such a focus is a call to maximize the development of communicative proficiency

and expand TL use to 90% or more in the classroom (Hlas, 2016; Shrum & Glisan, 2016; Swanson & Hildebrandt, 2017). It is important to note that the WL edTPA is grounded in the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (2015), which clearly supports CLT and teaching for proficiency in the TL.

The Unintentionally Disadvantaged: Roadblocks

Given the intense emphasis on TL use in the classroom and, concomitantly, the TL proficiency of WL educators, it would follow that recruitment of teacher candidates with high levels of TL proficiency would be extremely important. Thus, native speakers (NSs) and even heritage speakers of the TL would appear to have a distinct advantage over many if not most of their fellow pre-service teachers in that they already have a high level of language proficiency (not to equate with pedagogical knowledge) they can readily employ in the classroom (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). The extreme demand on the skills of a classroom teacher every minute of every lesson becomes even more complicated for non-native speakers (NNSs) of the language because they need to include their proficiency level as yet another tool to be used in their lessons. Hence, heritage and NSs should rise to the top of the pool of teacher candidates preparing to enter the profession because these individuals have exceptional TL proficiency, deep cultural experiences, and now solid pedagogical knowledge from having completed a teacher preparation program. Nevertheless, it is precisely this pool of candidates that seems to be disadvantaged by the requirement of passing the edTPA in order to obtain teacher certification in many states (Jourdain, 2018; Okraski & Kissau, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018).

Several researchers have questioned whether the edTPA battery of evaluations is indeed an accurate assessment of the knowledge and skills of WL pre-service teachers in general and, in particular, of those candidates who are either NNSs of English or heritage / NSs of the TL in which they are seeking certification. There seems to be a disparity between the results on the edTPA and other measures of teacher readiness and preparedness, and this disparity is most apparent with NNSs of English (Coloma, 2015; Cox et al., 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018; Russell & Davidson Devall, 2016). Teacher candidates who are NNSs of English, NSs or heritage speakers of the TL in question for certification are either not passing the edTPA cut score or, worse, are not even submitting a portfolio because they have become daunted by the entire process (Jourdain, 2018). This is a clear case of disenfranchisement of a group of teacher candidates who could readily remediate the shortage in WL educators presently faced across the nation (Cross, 2016; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Jourdain, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018). One possible solution to this issue is to allow teacher candidates to answer the prompts either in English or the TL.

The problems with edTPA are numerous and do not just affect the NSs / heritage speaker pool of candidates. Overall, researchers have found that in general, there is simply too little attention paid to assisting pre-service teachers in preparing to undertake the edTPA assessments. Because this is such a high stakes assessment, it is incumbent upon teacher preparation programs to include sufficient concentration

on edTPA practices during pre-student teaching coursework. Candidates who are familiar with what edTPA requires will naturally be able to perform at a higher level than those for whom the assessments are completely new territory (Okraski & Kissau, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018). Indeed, some studies have indicated that teacher candidates felt they were spending too much time trying to fit their teaching into the edTPA mold rather than being able to produce original and engaging lessons for their students (Jourdain, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018). Candidates found edTPA too prescriptive, forcing them to develop lessons that fly in the face of the dynamic nature of the learning process in the WL classroom (Coloma, 2015; Russell & Davidson, 2018). In other words, they were spending a considerable amount of time structuring lessons that would hopefully meet the edTPA stipulations but were not coming from what they knew to be sound second language acquisition pedagogy and solid WL teaching practices. Nor did they have the time to spend in conversation and reflection with WL colleagues, from whom they could have benefited greatly. Still others ran into conflict with their cooperating teachers over TL use in the classroom, despite ACTFL's 90% mandate (Russell & Davidson, 2018).

Also, raters of the edTPA portfolios only see a fraction of the teacher candidate's abilities in the classroom, yet they hold the key to important decisions affecting the candidates' lives. However, the rater qualifications are rather vague and not at all clearly defined, particularly regarding raters for WL portfolios. As noted by Hildebrandt and Swanson (2016), it remains unclear how potential reviewers are evaluated and selected. They reported:

> [Two external reviewers] both noted that they were not required or asked to present a demonstration of their planning, instructional, or assessment abilities. They were not asked about their planning for instruction regimen, their ability to teach in the target language 90% of the time at all levels, or their knowledge of assessment in general or integrated performance assessments in particular (2016, p. 175).

A rater who is under or poorly qualified could cause an inaccurate evaluation of the candidate being rated. In the end, for some of these candidates it was not worth the effort and they simply did not complete the process (Jourdain, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018).

Such issues have clearly led many to doubt if edTPA is a valid and reliable instrument to measure beginning teacher effectiveness. While it is difficult not to advocate in favor of high standards for new teachers, "it's by no means clear that the edTPA encourages better teaching or merely rewards teachers who are good at the demands made by Pearson" (Ravitch, 2020, p. 1). Critics question the cost ($300), time involved, its reliability and the corporatization of education by Pearson (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016; Jacobson, 2020). To that end, Gitomer et al. (2019) examined SCALE's administrative reports and concluded there is not enough evidence to determine whether edTPA scores are reliable and recommend a moratorium on its use. Others, like Kate Walsh, president of the National Council on Teacher Quality, concur (Jacobson, 2020). Such reports

and research have clearly led states to re-examine using edTPA for licensure and certification. The state of Georgia decided in 2020 to no longer require novice educators to pass edTPA, noting that it is a barrier to entry (Will, 2020). Lawmakers in Illinois introduced House Bill 4059 with the intention of removing edTPA as a teacher certification requirement (Illinois General Assembly, 2020). Legislators in Connecticut introduced House Bill 5376 for the same purpose (Connecticut General Assembly, 2020). At present, the legislation in both states is in committee. Research on states' action indicates that in addition to common criticisms surrounding edTPA (e.g., cost, validity), the teacher shortage appears to be impacting legislative action (National Public Radio, 2019). At present, teacher preparation program enrollment across the country has declined dramatically. For example, in Oklahoma, teacher preparation programs witnessed an 80% drop in enrollment since 2010. It is just "one of nine states where enrollment has nose-dived by more than half" (Camera, 2019, p. 1). Since the 1950s, there has been a shortage of world language teachers in the US (Swanson, 2008, 2012; Swanson & Mason, 2018) and such high-stakes testing seems to exacerbate the situation. However, there are certain strategies that teacher candidates can employ that will help improve their WL edTPA scores.

Improving WL edTPA Scores: Remediation and Recommendations

Using Performance-Based Assessments like the Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)

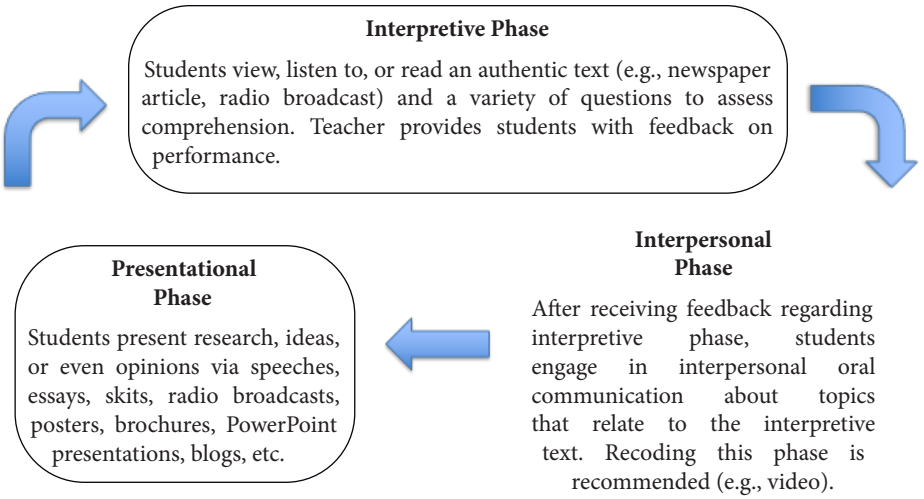
The popularity of CLT in the classroom has brought the very basic idea of communication to the forefront of WL pedagogical goals. The *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* focuses on the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015). In other words, language learners are asked to participate in TL communication using one or more of these modes as a matter of course. Concurrent with the emphasis on the implementation of communicative language activities in the classroom, current best practices in language teaching for proficiency in the TL stress the development and demonstration of the learner's TL proficiency through performance-based assessments.

Performance-based assessments are designed to replicate the tasks and challenges language learners will face when using the TL in real world scenarios. Through such assessments, students may work either individually or collaboratively and use their collection of skills and knowledge to create a response to a prompt (e.g., complex questions or situations) or a product that can have more than one correct response (Liskin-Gasparro, 1996; Wiggins, 1998). The Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) is an excellent example of such a performance-based assessment. The IPA serves as an evaluation of student ability in the TL that employs a cluster assessment featuring several activities (Adair-Hauck et al., 2006). The IPA was inspired by social constructivist theories of learning and conceived as a standards-based practical way to assess the success of L2 learners on performance-based tasks developed to measure the outcomes espoused by the

World-Readiness Standards (The Standards Collaborative Board, 2015; see also Adair-Hauck et al., 2013; Kissau & Adams, 2016; Zapata, 2016).

The IPA is a multi-task assessment developed following a single thematic context. The assessment includes a series of assignments that emulate the three modes of communication and one or more other standards (e.g., cultures). The IPA is not a *one and done* paper and pencil assessment. Rather, the various tasks involved in the IPA may be carried out over several class periods (Cox et al., 2018). For example, language learners first complete an interpretive mode task (e.g., reading or watching a video). Afterwards, they employ the information from an interpersonal mode task (e.g., conversation) before they summarize their learning with a presentational mode task. In other words, language learners listen to, view, and/or read authentic texts in the TL, interact with fellow learners in the TL in written and oral form, and then present orally and/or in written form to each other or an expanded audience. Feedback along the way on each portion of the IPA can help students set new learning goals. In addition, formulating these tasks, providing step-by-step feedback to learners, and then evaluating each task can guide teachers toward more proficiency-oriented instruction (Cox et al., 2018; Kissau & Adams, 2016; Martel & Bailey, 2016).

Figure 1. Integrated Performance Assessment (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016)



The IPA is a well-established model of performance-based assessment of student language proficiency. However, its adoption does represent a significant philosophical and pedagogical shift in instruction for language departments. Hence, it is incumbent upon pre-service teacher educators to incorporate knowledge, implementation of, and evaluation of IPA materials, purposes, tasks, rubrics, and their appraisal in the FL methods course (Kaplan, 2016; Okraski & Kissau, 2018). Furthermore, it has been shown that teacher candidates who implement an IPA as part of their WL edTPA portfolio score higher than those

who choose to document traditional measures of learner assessment (Swanson & Goulette, 2018).

Mentoring Pre-service Candidates

Another potential way to improve edTPA scores is through intensive mentoring of pre-service candidates throughout their WL educational coursework. This mentoring needs to encompass various areas of WL instruction such as how to implement CLT, how to stay in the TL in order to reach 90% or more, how to foster TL proficiency in learners, how to create performance-based assessments, and so forth (García et al., 2019; LeLoup et al., 2013). For example, teacher candidates need to know what the components of the edTPA assessments entail, and they need to practice these elements over time, not just during their student teaching when they must produce the final product (Coloma, 2015; Jourdain, 2018; Okraski & Kissau, 2018; Russell & Davidson, 2018).

Finally, WL teacher candidates need expert guidance when preparing their edTPA videos. Many pre-service and even in-service WL teachers have never video-recorded themselves teaching in the classroom. Such videos can be quite illuminating in terms of pinpointing areas of success as well as areas targeted for improvement. Studies have shown that WL teachers typically and significantly overestimate their TL usage in the classroom. Video recordings of lessons can erase all doubt as to TL use (LeLoup et al, 2013). In addition, this is one case where the adage, "practice makes perfect," is on the mark. Candidates who practice making good quality videos that demonstrate their teaching skills and abilities will surely do better vis-à-vis this edTPA assessment than those who have not paid sufficient attention to this portion of the evaluation. Research shows that WL edTPA scores improve when teacher candidates take the time to develop high quality videos that can be opened on a variety of computers (Goulette & Swanson, 2017; Swanson & LeLoup, 2020).

Conclusion

Teacher education reform is meant to be a positive process with constructive outcomes and results. This positive process certainly can be achieved with the proper implementation and evaluation. With every change of presidential administration, subsequent reauthorizations of the ESEA continue to focus on beginning teacher accountability. However, recent state decisions regarding edTPA in general imply that legislators are considering not using edTPA for teacher licensure and certification purposes (Illinois General Assembly, 2020; Will, 2020). Nevertheless, while still in place in so many states, teacher educators and their students must continue to work within the framework set forth by such reform. Additionally, those who design and actively market high-stakes assessments must work closely with local educational stakeholders (e.g., teacher educators) in order to create and advance valid, reliable, and less costly assessments given that it costs aspiring educators almost $1000 in testing to become certified (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014).

In the meantime, the WL edTPA has issues that need to be addressed. The researchers call for more investigation from a qualitative perspective in order

to begin to understand more about the individual teacher candidate's plight. In addition, it would be insightful to study lawmakers' perspectives regarding edTPA. In the meantime, the aforementioned recommendations would certainly help ameliorate some of immediate problems for teacher candidates. The authors call for SCALE to listen to and work proactively with researchers in the field in order to improve the assessment. By creating a more meaningful assessment, skillful and capable pre-service WL teachers will transition to being proficient and experienced in-service WL educators, employing best pedagogical practices in second language acquisition, and developing language learners' communicative proficiency in the target language—the central goal of the WL edTPA.

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6

German Language Teachers' Perceptions of Efficacy and Their Oral Proficiency

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Challenge Statement

A teacher's sense of efficacy is a powerful determinant of many important outcomes for teachers and their students. While scholars have uncovered many of the benefits of teachers having a strong sense of efficacy in teaching languages, there is much to be learned about the specific characteristics and experiences that contribute to these teacher beliefs. More specifically, studies that explore the relationship between oral proficiency and teachers' sense of efficacy for world language teachers are lacking.

Abstract

A growing body of research has addressed teacher self-efficacy, which is defined as one's beliefs in their ability to successfully manage the duties, responsibilities, and challenges related to their teaching (Barni et al., 2019; Shoulders & Krei, 2015; Swanson, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). While research has demonstrated that teacher self-efficacy is an important factor in student outcomes in world language learning (Swanson, 2014), studies regarding the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and the oral proficiency of teachers are lacking. This explanatory correlational study examined the perceived self-efficacy of Indiana high school teachers of German ($n = 25$) as measured by the Second/Foreign Language Teacher Efficacy Scale (Swanson, 2012) and German language oral proficiency as measured by

the Oral Proficiency Interview-computer (OPIc) test. Findings show a significant relationship between a teacher's efficacy and their oral proficiency. No significant correlation was found between oral proficiency and a teachers' years of teaching experience. However, further examination revealed a teachers' sense of efficacy generally increased with years of experience. These findings based on perceived efficacy in German language teachers in Indiana could help relevant stakeholders including school districts and educator preparation programs determine areas where further support and differentiated professional development are needed. Areas for future research are included.

Scholars have framed teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's beliefs in his or her own ability to bring about student engagement and positive learning outcomes (Barni et al., 2019; Shoulders & Krei, 2015; Swanson, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Efficacious teachers successfully manage the duties, responsibilities, and challenges related to their teaching, and this belief in one's own self-efficacy plays an important factor in student outcomes (Barni et al., 2019; Shoulders & Krei, 2015; Swanson, 2008). In general, world language teachers who have a strong sense of efficacy have been associated with providing the experiences needed for positive student outcomes such as interaction focused on higher-order thinking skills and concept development, frequent and high-quality corrective feedback, and language interaction that fosters exchange of ideas, concepts, and perspectives (Lee et al., 2013; Pianta et al., 2012; Rubie-Davies et al., 2012).

While the requirements for educator preparation programs and teacher licensure vary from state to state, this study focuses on one particular state, Indiana, as the context for the larger discussion of proficiency, teacher self-efficacy, and world language teacher preparation. Under Indiana's agreement with the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP) agreement for Educator Preparation Programs, national Specialized Professional Association (SPA) recognition is required by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) (IDOE, 2020a). While not all states require CAEP accreditation, thirty-three states and the District of Columbia currently have agreements with CAEP (CAEP, 2020). For states with CAEP agreements, SPA recognition is generally required for educator preparation programs, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is the national SPA for world languages. As a condition for national recognition by ACTFL, educator preparation programs must require a rating of Advanced-Low on an official Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) for teacher candidates in western languages and Intermediate-High for non-western languages (ACTFL, 2015). This threshold is accepted by many language professionals as a minimum proficiency level for beginning teachers (Glisan et al., 2013), and it developed out of a desire for greater professionalization in the field (Glisan, 2013). While the process that led to the establishment of this minimum threshold was transparent and involved discussions with stakeholders at many levels (Glisan, 2013), specific research involving the oral proficiency of teacher candidates and beginning teachers did not guide these discussions. The process relied on logical extrapolations regarding the relationship between teacher efficacy and oral proficiency.

Indeed, there is a dearth of research that specifically explores the relationship between oral proficiency and teacher efficacy.

Because good teaching is widely considered fundamental to enhancing learning opportunities and promoting student success, identifying characteristics that contribute to teacher efficacy, and thus to highly effective teaching, is especially important. While previous research by Swanson (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014) has explored factors that contribute world language teacher beliefs in self- efficacy and more specifically in Spanish teaching, no studies of teacher self-efficacy have focused specifically on German world language teachers working at the high school level. What is more, the previous studies related to world language teacher self-efficacy have not directly examined the relationship between teacher oral proficiency in the target language and self-efficacy. Thus, little is known about the characteristics and behavior of highly efficacious German teachers in these settings. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived self-efficacy of Indiana high school teachers of German as measured by the Second/Foreign Language Teacher Efficacy Scale (S/FLTES) (Swanson, 2012) and its relationship with oral proficiency of those teachers as measured by the Oral Proficiency Interview-computer (OPIc) test (Language Testing International, n.d.).

Review of Literature

World Language Teacher Shortage

As Swanson and Mason (2018) documented, the global shortage of world language teachers has been an issue for decades. In the United States, a number of factors have contributed to this shortage: teacher's sense of efficacy, vocational personality pattern, retirement, attrition, student enrollment, legislation, and perceptions of the profession (Swanson, 2008, 2010, 2012). This shortage of qualified teachers remains "one of the biggest obstacles to improved language learning is a national shortage of qualified teachers," as noted in a report by the Commission on Language Learning (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2017, p. ix). Detailing the shortage, the Commission on Language Learning observed that 44 states and the District of Columbia reported a shortage of qualified K–12 language and/or bilingual teachers for the 2016–2017 school year (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2017). Indeed, the need for more qualified teachers is especially acute in languages, as more states report a teacher shortage in this area than in any other (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2017).

For this study, the researchers focused particularly on German teachers in the state of Indiana. From 2015-2020, Indiana has seen a total of 46 original licensures in German, with 10 licensures occurring in the 2019-2020 year (IDOE, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020b). The researchers noted a recent survey of Indiana schools has provided evidence that world language remains the fourth highest area of shortage over the past five years, with 30% of participating schools reporting an unfilled need in this area (McDaniel, 2020).

Teaching Efficacy

One of the particular factors driving the teacher shortage, namely attrition, has been tied to teachers' sense of efficacy (Swanson, 2008). Indeed, the construction

of self-efficacy is of vital importance for world language teachers and is a prominent area for academic research, especially in fields from psychology and education.

Self-efficacy is defined as a cognitive mechanism that controls behavior and is a part of Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977). Research conducted by Brownell and Pajares (1999) and Buell et al. (1999) defined teacher self-efficacy as teachers' belief that they can positively affect student outcomes. This belief is part of Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, which proposed four factors that influence self-efficacy beliefs: (1) performance accomplishments, (2) vicarious experience, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) emotional arousal. Performance accomplishments is based on one's mastery experiences, therefore, repeated success elevate confidence and failures lowers confidence (Bandura, 1977). Master experience is not the only source of self-efficacy as vicarious experience plays a role. Vicarious experience is "seeing others perform threatening activities without adverse consequences can generate expectations in observers that they too will improve if they intensify and persist in their efforts" (Bandura, 1977, p. 197). Verbal persuasion is used often as it is easy to use and almost always available. According to Bandura (1977):

> …people are led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past. Efficacy expectations induced in this manner are also likely to be weaker than those arising from one's own accomplishments because they do not provide an authentic experiential base for them (1977, p. 198).

Emotional arousal stems from a source of stress and anxiety to a situation and how they react to those experiences. Bandura (1977) claimed that "fear reactions generate further fear of impending stressful situations through anticipatory self-arousal. By conjuring up fear-provoking thoughts about their ineptitude, individuals can rouse themselves to elevated levels of anxiety that far exceed the fear experienced during the actual threatening situation" (1977, p. 199). One's sense of efficacy develops and grows as the individual teacher develops in self-assurance (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), knowing he or she has become proficient at the competencies necessary to achieve desired outcomes (Goddard et al., 2000; Pedota, 2015; Pruski et al., 2013). Furthermore, Brownell and Pajares (1999) found that the general feelings and outlooks of teachers, as well as actions, play a vital role in tackling student achievement. Jordan and Di Eugenio (1997) claimed that student perceptions of teacher expectations, beliefs, and attitudes had a dramatic effect on how students respond in a learning environment.

Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy have been shown to experience high job satisfaction, lower levels of stress, and strong classroom behavior management skills (Caprara et al., 2006). Barni et al. (2019) noted that highly efficacious teachers have been shown to have a deep-seated understanding and value of their teaching and show compassion to students. World language teachers reported similar experiences related to a higher sense of efficacy, as well as specific interactive experiences like peer coaching (Goker, 2006),

feedback from colleagues and students (Phan & Locke, 2015), and practical teaching experience (Mills & Allen, 2008). These interactive experiences reflected Bandura's factor of verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977).

World Language Teacher Efficacy

Much of the self-efficacy work done so far in the field of world language teaching and learning has been conceptual in nature, and some important empirical studies have been conducted. Mills and Allen (2008) studied French language teaching assistants in the higher education context and their pedagogical practices. The authors suggested the need for prolonged opportunities for continued training, professional development, networking, and peer collaboration beyond the preservice teacher education training to decrease teacher anxiety and increase teachers' beliefs about self-efficacy (Mills & Allen, 2008). Swanson (2008) investigated how language teachers' sense of efficacy was related to teachers' vocational personality patterns; he showed that interest profiles of Social (S), Artistic (A), and Enterprising (E) on Holland's Self-Directed Search personality inventory identifies individuals whose interests align with world language teaching. Swanson further showed a strong correlation between this interest profile and perceptions of efficacy in teaching. In addition, Willard (2011) found that novice world language teachers did not have adequate access to professional development, nor did they have access to educational resources to successfully teach world language. Combining the observations of Willard's (2011) study with the results of the study by Mills and Allen (2008) as well as those of Swanson (2012), novice teachers require sustained professional development that is language-specific in order to build great efficacy in teaching world languages.

Swanson (2010, 2012) further reported on the relationship between self-perceptions of world language teacher efficacy, teacher attrition, and teacher beliefs for student achievement and learning. Using the FLTES and the TSES, he surveyed world language teachers in Georgia (Swanson, 2010). While participants showed a high level of efficacy for Content Knowledge, they showed a lower sense of efficacy for Student Engagement. In addition, many of these teachers held bachelor's degrees in education but had not received further teacher training or further graduate work at a more advanced level in the target language (Swanson, 2010). Swanson's later study (2012) developed a third factor, Cultural Instruction, on the S/FLTES and found that world language teachers scored lowest on this factor. His results suggested the need for frequent, meaningful opportunities of professional development after teachers' preservice teacher training (Swanson, 2012). Swanson (2014) studied high school language teachers whose students had completed the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese's National Spanish Examination (n.d.). Data analysis revealed that teachers whose students scored high on the exam tended to show higher self-efficacy for world language teaching than Spanish teachers whose students did not perform well on the exam.

Earlier studies by Mills and Allen (2008) and Willard (2011) both point to the need for novice teachers to receive sustained professional development that

is language-specific in order to build greater efficacy in teaching world languages, Swanson's studies (2008, 2010, and 2012) all tied work on increasing teacher efficacy to efforts to increase world language teacher recruitment and attrition. In finding that world language teachers rated themselves lowest on their perceptions of their own efficacy on the factor of Cultural Instruction, Swanson broadened the understanding of efficacy as related to the self-perceptions of world language teachers. Swanson's study of high school Spanish teachers demonstrated the connection between efficacy and positive student learning outcomes (2014). Taken together, these studies have greatly increased our understanding of teacher efficacy as related to world language teaching; the current study described in this article aims to add to this research by connecting efficacy to oral language proficiency. Given that licensure requirements in many states are directly tied to oral proficiency, it is important to examine the connection between this aspect of overall language proficiency and the efficacy of world language teachers.

Years of Experience and Teacher Efficacy

A growing body of research has explored the connection between years of experience for in-service teachers and their perceptions of their efficacy. While research has generally found a positive correlation between years of experience and teachers' perception of their efficacy (Fives & Buehl, 2009; Karimvand, 2011; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Penrose et al., 2007), the relationship may not necessarily be linear. Fives and Buehl's (2009) study on the measurement of teachers' sense of efficacy showed that teachers with ten or more years of experience reported significantly higher levels of efficacy than preservice teachers. However, as Klassen and Chiu (2010) noted, early- to mid-career teachers exhibit progressive increases in perceptions of self-efficacy while those at later stages reported less efficacy. This phenomenon may partially account for the striking decrease in teacher retention that Konanc (1996) observed. In contrast, Swanson (2012) observed that veteran teachers reported significantly higher ratings than novice teachers on each area of self-efficacy. More research is needed on the relationship between years of experience and teacher efficacy. Specifically, differentiated data regarding veteran teachers may offer insights about the needs of veteran teachers versus novice teachers.

High-Stakes Assessment in the Era of a Language Teacher Shortage

Since the connection between lower ratings of self-efficacy and world language teacher attrition (Swanson, 2012), it is incumbent upon the profession to find ways to support world language teachers, and novice language teachers in specific, in developing stronger self-efficacy. As part of an effort to increase professionalization in the field and in response to research in second language acquisition that supported the need for extensive use of the target language in the language classroom, ACTFL introduced a mandate for all educator preparation programs applying for national recognition. For new world language teachers, ACTFL required a threshold of Advanced-Low proficiency for most world languages and Intermediate-High for others (Glisan, 2013). Despite the support

of ACTFL, its related organizations, and many educator preparation programs, other teacher preparation professionals cautioned that requiring the Advanced-Low threshold could have unintended consequences. Burke (2013) argued that high stakes assessment and specific score requirements on the ACTFL OPI (Language Testing International, n.d.a) or the ACTFL Written Proficiency (WPT) (Language Testing International, n.d.b). discourages potential teacher candidates. Furthermore, as Burke argued, the Advanced-Low requirement represents a top-down mandate aimed at orienting language teaching towards a communicative approach. The mandate itself would do little to effect the desired progression towards communicative methods and target language use, but it may cause us to lose "talented and valuable future world language teachers, who are pedagogically creative and promote communicative proficiency in their lessons" (Burke, 2013, p. 534).

In response, Glisan (2013), a former ACTFL president, took issue with the Burke's characterization of the process and argued instead that the requirements were the result of "bottom-up consensus building" (p. 542). Among other arguments, Glisan (2013) maintained that the Advanced-Low threshold protects public investment in language education through the adoption of nationally recognized standards for teacher candidates. As Tedick (2013) noted, her teacher preparation program had already implemented the Advanced-Low standard for two decades. Tedick argued that high proficiency and pedagogy standards are necessary in order to ensure the development of more effective language teaching professionals. Notably, Tedick (2013) expressed clear agreement with Burke on the notion that language proficiency alone does not guarantee effective language teaching, but she rejected the notion that ineffective grammar- and translation-based pedagogy is an inevitable result of teachers reverting to "teach the way they were taught" (Tedick, 2013, p. 537). Nevertheless, Garcia et al.'s 2019 study of cooperating teachers supported Burke's assertions. Garcia et al.'s (2019) survey reported concerns of cooperating teachers that teacher candidates' language proficiency does not necessarily lead to strategies and practices to implement target language use in world language classrooms.

Other scholars have argued that the Advanced-Low proficiency threshold has presented a seemingly intractable challenge for university language departments who prepare non-native speaking teacher candidates through coursework and outside experiences like study abroad (Byrnes & Maxim, 2004). In their introduction to a volume focused on advanced world language learning, Byrnes and Maxim (2004) observed that the goal of graduating students with advanced language proficiency has remained elusive, despite considerable efforts made towards that end. Likewise, Sullivan (2011) and Chambless (2012) both observed that language courses and study abroad alone did not suffice to build oral proficiency skills needed for students to attain the Advanced-Low level.

The need for more world language teachers is unavoidable, and the concurrent need for increased professionalization and support for new and continuing teachers is clear. How can we address this teacher shortage while improving the quality of language teaching at the same time? As Swanson (2010, 2012) showed,

efficacy is tied to the teacher attrition. This relationship suggests that one way to solve the problems in teacher recruitment and attrition is to address teacher efficacy. However, studies on world language teacher efficacy thus far leave open the question regarding the efficacy of current teachers and their own proficiency levels. They also leave open whether or not the Advanced-Low proficiency threshold presents a discouraging barrier that needlessly keeps talented teachers out of the field, or does the threshold instead communicate the proficiency needs of professional language teachers? By examining the oral proficiency of current in-service language teachers, this study complements earlier work on the connection between efficacy and teacher recruitment and attrition (Swanson, 2012, 2014). Thereby, this study sheds light on the suggested connection between oral proficiency and teacher efficacy. In doing so, it assists educator preparation programs and professionals in the field in understanding the relationship between oral proficiency, more specifically oral proficiency at the Advanced level and beyond, and teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy. By exploring the efficacy of in-service German teachers and the connection to teacher experience, the current study also offers a differentiated view of teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy at different stages in their teaching careers.

The Present Study

This study is an attempt to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and oral proficiency for German language teachers in secondary schools. The following research questions guided this study:

(1) What is the level of efficacy of German language teachers?
(2) What is the nature of the relationship between German language teachers' overall sense of efficacy and oral proficiency as measured by the OPIc?
(3) What is the nature of the relationship between oral proficiency as measured by the OPIc and efficacy in: (a) Teacher as a Facilitator, (b) Content Knowledge, and (c) Cultural Instruction for German Language Teachers?
(4) What is the nature of the relationship between German language teachers' oral proficiency and their years of teaching experience?
(5) What is the nature of the relationship between German language teachers' year of experience efficacy in Teacher as a Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction?

Methods

The researchers used an explanatory correlational research design to determine the relationship between efficacy and oral proficiency as measured on the OPIc for German language teachers. An explanatory correlational design attempts to explain how variables are associated with each other (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The research was designed to examine the perceived self-efficacy of Indiana high school teachers of German as measured by the S/FLTES and German language oral proficiency of those teachers as measured by the OPIc.

Participants

To determine participants for this study, the researchers identified current German language teachers in the state of Indiana using data from the Indiana American Association of Teacher of German and a current teacher list from Valparaiso University. A total of 147 participants were identified as current German language teachers in Indiana. The researcher selected a purposive convenience sample of Indiana German language teachers ($n = 25$) for this study based on state-specific accreditation requirements for Educator Preparation Programs. While the sample size may be considered relatively small, the total population of German language teachers in the state of Indiana during the research study was 147 (Valparaiso University, 2020). Given the total population of German language teachers available to participate and the actual participants of the research study, the sample size represents 17% of the total of German language teachers in Indiana. Because the research focused only on current German language teachers with a total of only 25 participants, we restricted eligibility to the first 25 current German language teachers to complete both the online survey and the OPIc due to funding limits.

Instruments

Second/Foreign Language Teacher Efficacy Scale

The researcher collected data using a pre-existing survey and a national standardized exam. The survey instrument selected for the research study was the Second/Foreign Language Teacher Efficacy Scale (S/FLTES) (Swanson, 2012). The S/FLTES is based on a 100-point scale to measure the confidence level of foreign language teachers. The Likert scale ranges from 0 (Cannot do at all) to 100 (Highly certain can do). The S/FLTES consists of 14 Likert-type items with three factors: Teacher as Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction. Teacher as Facilitator can be defined as a teachers' confidence in helping students learn (Swanson, 2012). Content Knowledge can be defined as a teachers' confidence in their ability speak, read, write, and listen in the target language (Swanson, 2012). Cultural Instruction can be defined as a teachers' ability to demonstrate to students an understanding of practices, perspectives, and products of the target language culture (Swanson, 2012). Swanson (2012) reported that the S/FLTES is reliable (α=.86) with strong reliability coefficients for the three dimensions of the scale: Teacher as Facilitator (α = .90), Content Knowledge (α = .93), and Cultural Instruction (α = .94). A demographic questionnaire was also used to determine specific demographics about the participants. Participants were asked questions to determine gender, highest degree obtained, years of experience, and first language.

Oral Proficiency Interview (computer)

The OPIc, which is proctored via Language Testing International's remote proctoring service, is an internet-delivered test of one's ability to speak a language. Like the traditional Oral Proficiency Interview, the OPIc provides valid

and reliable proficiency testing on a large scale (Language Testing International, n.d.). The OPIc generally takes 20-40 minutes of virtual conversation with predetermined questions that are used to identify a specific proficiency level in a given language. The computer-delivered assessment emulates the live OPI, but delivery of questions is through a carefully designed computer program and via a virtual avatar. The results of the OPIc are a rating on the ACTFL Proficiency table as Novice- Low, Novice-Mid, Novice-High; Intermediate-Low, Intermediate-Mid, Intermediate-High; Advanced-Low, Advanced-Mid, Advanced-High; or Superior.

Procedures

The research process began in August 2018 when participants were asked to complete an online survey to gather information about their perceived sense of efficacy in teaching German and to take the OPIc exam. After a participant agreed to participate in the research study, the researchers gave them pseudonym that they then used on the survey and the OPIc exam. The online survey was sent to participants prior to completing the OPIc using Qualtrics to their email address listed on the school's website. Once a participant had completed the online survey, participants were registered to take the OPIc exam by the researcher. requested that participants register and complete the OPIc exam within 14 days after completing the survey. The score report had identifiable information, including the participants full name. In order to protect confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, the researchers used a third party to receive and match pseudonym names with OPIc scores before sending the data to the researchers. The data collection process concluded in February 2020. Compensation of a $10 Amazon gift card was provided to participants that completed both the survey and the OPIc exam.

Analysis

The researchers completed two steps to investigate the five research questions. First, only participants that completed both the S/FLTES survey and took the OPIc test were used in this analysis. Participants that completed only the survey were removed from the database. Swanson (2012) identified three factors of language teachers' sense of efficacy: Teacher as a Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction. The identified factors' constructs were then used to determine the means for each participant in this study.

Secondly, the researchers wanted to determine if the S/FLTES scale was reliable for this study. Similar results were found to Swanson's reliability measures when the researchers tested the reliability of the S/FLTES for this study using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability of the instrument found for this study for the three factors using Cronbach's alpha were Teacher as facilitator ($\alpha = .72$), Content Knowledge ($\alpha = .92$), and Cultural Instruction ($\alpha = .95$). The reliability was found with an overall α coefficient of .91 compared to Swanson's (2012) α coefficient of .86. Research suggests that instruments with coefficients greater than .70 are satisfactory for research purposes (Salkind, 2012), indicating that the coefficients of the S/FLTES are acceptable.

Research Question 1: Level of Efficacy of German Teachers

Using SPSS 24.0 software, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Central tendency tests were deployed to determine the mean and standard deviations for each question on the S/FLTES survey.

Research Question 2: Relationship between Efficacy and Oral Proficiency

Using SPSS 24.0 software, a bivariate correlational analysis using a Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the data. When conducting the correlations, the variables used were the overall mean score of efficacy and oral proficiency rating. The overall efficacy mean was found by adding each item on the survey and dividing by the total number of questions. This score was found for each participant which represented the overall efficacy means. The oral proficiency ratings were assigned to each participant based on their OPIc rating (1-10). One being assigned the lowest possible rating, Novice-Low and 10 as assigned as Superior.

Research Question 3: Relationship between Oral Proficiency and Efficacy Factors

Using SPSS 24.0 software, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Using the central tendency test of means, a mean score was found for each factor of the S/FLTES. The mean score for each of the three factors was found by adding each survey item question and dividing by the total number of questions. This was completed for each of the three factors represented on the survey, Teacher as Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction. The oral proficiency ratings were assigned to each participant based on their OPIc rating (1-10). One being assigned the lowest possible rating, Novice-Low and 10 as assigned as Superior. Then looking at each survey factor, the data were sorted based on the OPIc rating. The means and standard deviations were reported based on each survey scale and sorted by the participants OPIc rating.

Research Question 4: Relationship between Oral Proficiency and Experience

Using SPSS 24.0 software, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. A two-way contingency table was used to evaluate if a statistical relationship existed between oral proficiency and years of teaching experience. The oral proficiency ratings were assigned to each participant based on their OPIc rating (1-10). One being assigned the lowest possible rating, Novice-Low and 10 as assigned as Superior. The years of teaching experience were grouped into categories of 0-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15-19 years, and 20 years or more and assigned a rating (1-5). Then, a chi-square test was performed. No follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted since the test was not significant.

Research Question 5: Relationship between Experience and Efficacy Factors

Using SPSS 24.0 software, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Using the central tendency test of means, a mean score was found for each factor of the S/FLTES. The mean score for each of the three factors was found by adding each survey item question and dividing by the total number of questions. This was completed for each of the three factors represented on the survey, Teacher as

Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction. The years of teaching experience were grouped into categories of 0-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15-19 years, and 20 years or more and assigned a rating (1-5). Then looking at each survey factor, the data were sorted based on the years of teaching experience. The means and standard deviations were reported based on each survey scale and sorted by the participants years of experience in teaching.

Findings

Participants in the study self-reported their educational experience as 20% with bachelor's degree (n = 5), 60% with a master's degree (n = 15), 16% with a master's plus 30 hours (n = 4) and 4% with a doctoral degree (n = 1). Additionally, 88% of the participants identified English as their first language (n = 22), 8% identified German as their first language (n = 2), and 4% identified both English and German as their first language (n = 1). The participants were predominantly female (n = 20) in-service German language teachers in the state of Indiana.

Research Question 1: Level of Efficacy of German Teachers

With respect to the first research question to determine the level of efficacy of German language teachers, the researchers calculated means and standard deviations for the items on the S/FLTES as shown in Table 1 (next page).

Examination of Table 1 shows that the participants rated their level of efficacy higher in their ability to teach first year languages and their ability to write a letter to a pen pal in the target language. However, the participants were less efficacious in their ability help their students learn languages at the highest levels they teach, demonstrating how people from different countries and cultures perceive the world around them, and the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied. Overall, when comparing the means, participants were less efficacious in their ability to demonstrate cultural instruction as compared to teacher as a facilitator and content knowledge.

Research Question 2: Relationship between Efficacy and Oral Proficiency

Turning to the second research question, the researchers determined a Pearson Correlation Coefficient to examine if there was a relationship between German language teachers' overall sense of efficacy and their oral proficiency ratings. Correlation coefficients were computed between oral proficiency and efficacy. Using the Bonferroni approach to control for type I error across the 2 correlations, a p value of less than .025 (.05/2 = .025) was required for significance. The analysis indicated that a significant correlation, $r(23) = .53$, $p < .01$. In other words, the participant German language teachers that reported a stronger sense of efficacy in their teaching tended to have higher ratings on the OPIc.

Research Question 3: Relationship between Oral Proficiency and Efficacy Factors

Looking at the third research question about a relationship between OPIc rating and the participants sense of efficacy in the three factors of the *S/FLTES*, the researchers compared the means between the three factors and oral proficiency as

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of the S/FLTES Questions

S/FLTES Questions of Efficacy	Mean	SD
Teacher as Facilitator		
How confident are you that you can help your students learn at the first year of the language you teach?	94.00	5.77
How confident are you that you can help your students learn languages at the highest levels you teach?	78.80	17.63
How confident are you in your own knowledge that you can accomplish the following?		
(a) lower your students' anxiety about learning the language you teach?	83.20	13.45
(b) motivate your students to acquire the language you teach?	80.00	12.25
(c) foster your students' interest about learning the language you teach?	83.60	10.75
(d) increase student achievement in your language classes?	80.80	13.52
Content Knowledge		
How confident are you in your own knowledge that you can accomplish the following?		
(a) have a conversation with a native speaker in the target language?	85.60	20.63
(b) read and understand a newspaper printed in the target language?	86.00	15.28
(c) write a personal letter to a pen pal in the target language?	89.20	15.52
(d) fully understand a movie that only uses the target language?	82.80	18.38
Cultural Instruction		
How confident are you that you can demonstrate to your students an understanding of:		
(a) the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied?	78.80	15.09
(b) the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied?	78.40	15.19
(c) how people from different countries and cultures act and communicate?	80.40	13.38
(d) how people from different countries and cultures perceive the world around them?	78.00	15.55

measured by the OPIc. As shown in Table 2, the means and the standard deviations for the three factors are represented based on the participants oral proficiency rating. With higher oral proficiency ratings, the ratings for Teacher as Facilitator factor also increased generally. This is specifically true when one examines the Content Knowledge factor. There is a dramatic increase in efficacy from the OPIc rating Advanced-Mid to Superior. Similarly, the factor of cultural instruction was rated higher for participants with a rating of Advanced-High and Superior when compared to the efficacy of the other ratings.

Table 2. *Means and Standard Deviations for the Factors of Efficacy based on the Oral Proficiency Interview Ratings*

S/FLTES factors of Efficacy	OPI ratings	n	M	SD
Teacher as a Facilitator	Intermediate-High	3	81.67	7.64
	Advanced-Low	8	81.25	6.03
	Advanced-Mid	9	85.74	9.69
	Advanced-High	3	86.67	9.28
	Superior	2	79.17	1.18
Content Knowledge	Intermediate-High	3	66.67	16.27
	Advanced-Low	8	77.82	14.67
	Advanced-Mid	9	91.94	11.16
	Advanced-High	3	99.17	1.44
	Superior	2	100.00	0.00
Cultural Instruction	Intermediate-High	3	72.50	19.84
	Advanced-Low	8	71.56	12.39
	Advanced-Mid	9	80.00	12.05
	Advanced-High	3	93.30	5.77
	Superior	2	91.25	5.30

Research Question 4: Relationship between Oral Proficiency and Experience

With respect to the fourth research question regarding the proportions of German language teachers with OPIc ratings of Intermediate-High, Advanced-Low, Advanced-Mid, Advanced-High, and Superior dependent upon their years of teaching experience, the researchers conducted a two-way contingency table analysis in order to evaluate whether the participants' OPIc ratings were dependent upon their years of teaching experience. The results indicated no significant relationship, Pearson $\chi^2(16, N = 25) = 24.87$, $p = .07$, Cramér's $V = .50$, which

indicated that a German language teacher's oral proficiency rating was not related to the years of teaching experience.

Research Question 5: Relationship between Experience and Efficacy Factors

Turning to the final research question, describing the relationship between German language teachers' year of experience and three efficacy factors (Teacher as a Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction), Table 3 indicates the means and the standard deviations for the each of the three S/FLTES factors for the years of teaching experience. Overall, the more years of teaching experience, the stronger their sense of efficacy except for content knowledge for 10-14 years of teaching.

Table 3. *Means and Standard Deviations on Constructs of Efficacy for the Years of Teaching Experience*

Constructs of Efficacy	Years of Teaching Experience	*n*	*Mean*	*SD*
Teacher as a Facilitator	0-4 years	2	76.67	4.71
	5-9 years	7	85.24	8.99
	10-14 years	6	86.11	7.35
	15-19 years	2	91.67	4.71
	20 years or more	8	79.38	5.77
Content Knowledge	0-4 years	2	53.75	5.30
	5-9 years	7	91.43	9.77
	10-14 years	6	78.75	15.06
	15-19 years	2	91.25	12.37
	20 years or more	8	93.13	11.78
Cultural Instruction	0-4 years	2	56.25	8.84
	5-9 years	7	74.29	10.87
	10-14 years	6	82.08	15.84
	15-19 years	2	90.00	14.14
	20 years or more	8	83.44	10.17

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between participants' perceived self-efficacy of teaching German as measured by the S/FLTES and German language oral proficiency as measured by OPIc . With respect to the first research question regarding the level of efficacy of German language teachers, the results indicated that participants reported a higher sense of efficacy in the questions about Teacher as a Facilitator and Content Knowledge when compared to the questions for Cultural Instruction, corroborating Swanson's (2010, 2012) findings that language teachers report a stronger sense of efficacy in the areas of

Content Knowledge and Teacher as Facilitator. One of the factors that influences efficacy is in general is mastery experiences (Bandura, 1977), and more specifically interactive experiences (Phan & Locke, 2015). It is important to note that language teachers need experience with the culture in which they are teaching. Such a finding mirrors Burke's (2013) call for "particularly *experiential* professional development, which occurs on-site, seems like a good place to start" (p. 534; emphasis theirs). This finding also ties back to Swanson (2012), who reported higher ratings of self-efficacy in the four language areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening versus Teacher as Facilitator and Cultural Instruction factors.

With respect to the second research question regarding the relationship between the participants' overall sense of efficacy and their oral proficiency as measured by the OPIc, results showed a significant relationship. This finding supports the notion that teachers' proficiency in the target language is correlated with higher ratings of their sense of efficacy, and the finding indicates that teachers with higher proficiency levels feel that they are more efficacious in teaching German. Thus far, no other studies have examined in-service teachers' own oral proficiency in relationship to their sense of efficacy.

Turning to the third research question about the relationship between oral proficiency and teacher efficacy factors, the data show that participants who scored higher on the OPIc reported stronger sense of efficacy on the Content Knowledge and Cultural Instruction factors, A review of Table 2 also shows that those participants who self-reported a weaker sense of efficacy had a lower proficiency rating on the OPIc. Such a novel finding not only adds to the literature base and suggests that second language proficiency and confidence in their linguistic and cultural abilities are related. The notion that teachers must hit Advanced-Low in which to be certified and that it is crucial that educator preparation programs focus on building second language proficiency and set benchmarks to reach Advanced-Low by the time pre-service teachers are ready for their final field placement. Given that Cultural Instruction appears to be a factor in higher proficiency levels, encouraging pre-service teachers to participate in study abroad opportunities is essential to preparing strong teacher candidates who will remain in the profession, which is supported in the literature (Swanson, 2012, 2014).

In our fourth question, we examined a possible relationship between oral proficiency and years of teaching experience. The results of the study show that there is no significant relationship. While teachers may gain confidence in relating the subject matter and may hone their pedagogical approaches throughout their careers (Phan & Locke, 2015), classroom experience does not appear to have a relationship with oral proficiency. While years of teaching experience may not factor into a higher proficiency rating, other factors such as the engagement with discourse-rich and culturally rich sources in the target language as well as considerable time using the language outside of the classroom may prove more to be more important. This finding was also indicated in Sullivan's (2011) study of teacher candidate preparation for the oral proficiency interview. What is more, the results of the current study suggest that the use of an oral proficiency interview as a threshold for teacher candidates is a legitimate assessment that is required prior

to entering the profession. If oral proficiency is not affected by years of experience, and if we desire teachers who exhibit advanced proficiency levels, then setting this as a requirement for entrance into the field is supported by this finding.

In our final research question, we explored whether the years of teaching experience relate to the participants' sense of efficacy as seen in the three factors of the S/FLTES. It is important to note the distinction between a standardized assessment such as the OPI and a self-report such as the S/FLTES; the S/FLTES supplies data on teacher perceptions of their own performance, while the OPI is an external standardized assessment. Our findings indicated a higher sense of efficacy in the factors of Teacher as a Facilitator, Content Knowledge, and Cultural Instruction as teachers gain experience. With the exception of the group with 10-14 years of experience, teachers' efficacy on the Content Knowledge scale increased with experience. This could be explained by Konanc's (1996) finding that language teachers left the field at different times in the careers. This commonly held notion that efficacy increases with experience is nonetheless not supported by the results of the standardized oral proficiency interview (see question four), meaning that oral proficiency does not increase with years of experience. Taken together, this finding indicates that a teacher's years of experience relates differently to their self-reported efficacy in Content Knowledge and their oral proficiency. Perhaps classroom use alone does not provide the opportunities for engagement with the discourse-rich and culturally rich language that Sullivan (2011) determined was a factor in increasing teacher candidates' OPI scores. Alternatively, teachers may lack sufficient time or opportunities to use the language outside of the classroom due to the professional demands of teaching, isolation from other speakers of the language, or other factors.

This last finding further strengthens the call that Burke (2013) made for experiential professional development. While Burke advocated for teachers and teacher candidates to experience pedagogical methods and practices that focus on target language use and communicative language teaching, this study adds to that the need for opportunities to use the language outside of the classroom and engage with discourse-rich and culturally rich language associated with higher oral proficiency.

Limitations

The results from this study are not generalizable to the population of all secondary Indiana German language teachers. Results can only be summarized for the sample participants included within this study. The small number of participants in this study only represent a small number of the population of German language teachers who teach in Indiana. Participants self-reported their responses on the survey that was used to gather German language teachers' perceptions of their efficacy. Therefore, the researchers cannot accurately determine the accuracy of the data. Additionally, the participants reported that the OPIc presented technical difficulties for some. The OPIc only addresses one language modality, interpersonal communication, but there are other modalities that could affect one's overall language proficiency that are not accounted for in this study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Our research makes assumptions about the factors that contribute to teacher efficacy, but teacher efficacy may also have other causes. Until we develop a better understanding of the many factors that contribute to teacher efficacy, our knowledge about the influences on German high school language teachers' perceptions of their efficacy will be limited. While this study provides some insight into German language teacher efficacy and their oral proficiency, there is much more to be learned about how to prepare teacher candidates and provide quality professional development for current teachers. More studies are needed to examine the proficiency of in-service teachers and the connections to efficacy and high outcomes. How can we provide opportunities for professional development for teachers whose lack of oral proficiency can create a barrier to target language use and effective pedagogical methods? Further qualitative research data are needed to support the findings from this quantitative research study. Additionally, further research is needed to understand ways in which the profession can successfully address the shortage of world language teachers while increasing professionalization and efficacy of world language teachers at the same time. Further research could explore the question: Does teacher effectiveness as measured by state required teacher evaluations correlate to a teachers' sense of efficacy?

Conclusion

Swanson (2008, 2010, 2012) clearly tied teachers' self-efficacy to attrition from the profession, which has been one of the factors contributing to the world language teacher shortage. The findings of this study have implications for improving teacher retention and recruitment in a time when the need for more qualified language teachers is critical. By examining the oral proficiency of current in-service language teachers, this study complements earlier research on the connection between efficacy and teacher recruitment and attrition (Swanson, 2012, 2014) and elucidates a suggested connection between oral proficiency and teacher efficacy. We have shown that there is a strong correlation between teacher efficacy as measured on the S/FLTES and oral proficiency as measured on the OPIc. By examining the efficacy of in-service German teachers who are at different stages in their teaching careers, the current study also offers a differentiated view of teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy. Taken together with earlier studies that demonstrate that experiential professional development has leads to increases proficiency (Sullivan, 2011), this study suggests that relevant stakeholders from schools, post-secondary institutions, and government may begin to address the world language teacher shortage by addressing oral proficiency. In doing so, these stakeholders will build teachers' confidence and address teacher attrition by taking steps to support the development of world language teachers' self-efficacy.

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