Voices and Practices in Applied Linguistics

Diversifying a Discipline

Edited by
Clare Wright
Lou Harvey
James Simpson

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Dedication

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Professor Ron Carter,
Chair, British Association for Applied Linguistics, 2003–2006

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CHAPTER I

Introduction – Diversity in Applied Linguistics: Opportunities, Challenges and Questions

James Simpson, University of Leeds
Lou Harvey, University of Leeds
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This volume provides wide-ranging insights into the current state of applied linguistics. We focus on the existence of and need for diversity in this growing discipline, celebrating half a century since the first annual meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics in 1967. Chapters are drawn and developed from the 50th anniversary conference held at the University of Leeds in the summer of 2017 and hosted by the Centre for Language Education Research. Included within these pages are the texts from the three plenary lectures (Widdowson; Woll; Daoud); discussions from the two invited colloquia (Fitzpatrick et al.; Bradley and Harvey); and nine chapters selected through peer review, representing the very best of the 250+ papers presented at the Leeds conference. Together, this work offers a panoramic view of research in – and commentary upon – applied linguistics five decades or more since the field was established.

To mediate relevantly

Such an anniversary invites reflection, stock-taking and speculation on what is to come. The warrant for examining the field of applied linguistics is strong, professing – as it does – to connect knowledge about language to decision-making in the real world. Both 'knowledge about language' and 'the real world' are in flux. New practices and understandings of communication are throwing into question the centrality (if not the importance) of language in contemporary life. And the environments within which communication takes place – global and local, physical and social – are experiencing rapid change as never before. The work collected here affords us a space to ask about the principles and purposes of applied linguistics and to consider its direction of travel.

The most widely cited definition of applied linguistics is from Chris Brumfit: 'the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue' (1995: 27). The motivation for applied linguistics therefore lies not with an interest in autonomous or idealised language: applied linguistics is concerned with contexts. Moreover, the interest in 'real-world problems' suggests that this concern goes beyond mere descriptions of language in use. 'Investigation' suggests that a *praxis* orientation is central, explicitly or implicitly, in much work in applied linguistics, and this is evident in the chapters in this volume. That is to say, reflection (or, as Paolo Freire (1970) would have it, the development of a critical consciousness) and action combine in much applied linguistics study. Reflection alone is clearly not enough. 'One is tempted to wonder,' says Martin Bygate (2005: 570), 'what is so special about studying language within real-world problems if the only purpose is to use it as a stimulus for academic reflection.' A praxis orientation to the field points to the centrality not only of reflection (upon how language is implicated in real-world decision-making) but also action (mediation with practice to inform such decision-making). This aligns well with what applied linguists – certainly the authors of chapters in this volume – seek to do.

A praxis orientation is evident in the areas of applied linguistics which informed its origins. These lie in the mid-20th-century effort to give an academic underpinning to the study of language teaching and learning, a focus reflected in the aims of BAAL at its instigation. For many still today, applied linguistics is most closely associated with the problems and puzzles surrounding language pedagogy, learning and acquisition, which remains the most active area of applied linguistic enquiry. But – following Brumfit's definition – it can hardly be the only one. Practically everything in life poses a problem in which language is central: 'It is hard to think of any "real-world" problems,' comments Greg Myers (2005: 527), 'that do not have a crucial component of language use,' for language is a central issue in most human endeavour. So the role of applied linguists is to make the insights from a broad range of areas of language study relevant to decision-making across an equally broad spread of domains of practice. This volume alone gives a sense of the scope of the field. We touch on sign language and deaf studies, English language curriculum development, primary

language teacher education, the study of science in higher education, corpus linguistics and academic discourse. Beyond language education – and demonstrating a very healthy range – topics stretch from communicative practices in theatre-making to effective medical interaction to debates around standard language use and multilingualism. Geographically we visit – among other places – suburban London, West Yorkshire and Manchester, and also South Africa, Sri Lanka and Malawi.

If the principle of applied linguistics, and perhaps its defining feature, is praxis, then the purpose is to mediate theory and practice and, moreover, to mediate relevantly. Anticipating arguments aired in Chapter 2, the challenges faced by applied linguists in this respect relate to how to engage with new audiences in new ways, how to relate to policymakers, how to influence debate, and how to ensure that our understandings gain purchase in the public sphere. Organisations such as BAAL can and should support this purpose. Yet, with its disparate theoretical foundations and its multiplicity of concerns, does applied linguistics even have the potential to speak with a common voice?

Coherence and fragmentation

The theme of the 2017 annual meeting – *Diversity in Applied Linguistics: Opportunities, Challenges and Questions* – was chosen partly because the organisers wished to echo a previous conference theme, *Unity and Diversity in Language Use* (at the University of Reading in 2001). The aim of that conference, and of the ensuing edited collection, was to promote and provoke critical reflection on tensions within the discipline between stability and change, consensus and controversy, similarity and variation (Spelman Miller & Thompson 2002). Since then, supposed unity has come into question still further, with some commentators bemoaning the lack of coherence, and in fact the fragmentation, of our field. In 2015 Guy Cook, a former BAAL chair and also former editor of *Applied Linguistics*, wrote in that journal of 'Birds out of Dinosaurs: The Death and Life of Applied Linguistics.' In self-confessed grouchy temper, he questioned whether in fact applied linguistics exists any longer, beyond the name of an association or a convenient title for an academic course or journal. The abstract of his paper read, in its entirety, 'This article reflects on the fragmentation and conceptual incoherence of contemporary applied linguistics' (2015: 425).

Drawing upon the evidence within chapters in this volume, we would argue for a more positive stance. The introduction to the *Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (Simpson 2011) suggests that, 'though this is an applied field and an interdisciplinary one, it is not fragmented. The distinctive identity of contemporary applied linguistics can be characterized both in conceptual terms and in terms of its scope and coverage' (2011: 1). The claim was made there that unity lies in the common focus on 'real-world problems.' We would retain this claim. Nonetheless, we admit to the challenge presented by the reach

of a discipline which notices ever more problems to engage with, and problems themselves which become ever more complex and wide-ranging.

We resist examining tea leaves or casting runes. In a world of change, predicting the future of a field that is located at the nexus of psychological, cognitive, communicative, educational, social, cultural and political life is unwise to say the least. Change itself is certain, however, and applied linguistics will travel alongside such change. Human cognition will become further distributed and extended as mobile and online technology merges into the background of existence. In sociopolitical life, and despite the best efforts of those who would strengthen borders and build walls, human mobility will continue to be the dominant paradigm. Communication itself, in social, education and work life, will continue to experience the seismic dislocation of written language from its position of primacy. The job of applied linguists will continue to be to describe, to understand and to shape these and many other future world directions.

Some applied linguists, when in reflective mood, establish their thoughts on a foundation of words from the poets. In his chapter in this volume, Henry Widdowson invokes T.S. Eliot ('Do not let me hear of the wisdom of old men'). In his 2015 paper, Cook cites Pushkin's Eugene Onegin: 'What shameful cunning to be cheerful / With someone who is halfway dead, / To prop up pillows by his head, / To bring him medicine, looking tearful, / To sigh—while inwardly you think: / When will the devil let him sink.' We might respond by quoting Forster in *Howards End*: 'Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height.' Only connect – the connections are there to be made, and are being made: half a century since the first BAAL annual meeting, the papers in this volume demonstrate quite clearly that field is thriving, not standing on the sidelines but engaging with a fluid, mutable, ever-changing and ever-fascinating world.

Overview of chapters

So to this volume, which is arranged in three sections.

Section A – Applied Linguistics: Looking Back, Looking Forward comprises chapters deriving from – in turn – an invited colloquium, two plenary lectures and a paper presentation from key figures in applied linguistics, taking a discursive, and sometimes personal, take on how they have seen the field develop. The book opens with a composite piece, co-written by six former chairs of BAAL, drawing upon an invited colloquium – a round-table discussion – at the 2017 conference. The chapter begins with a framing introduction by Tess Fitzpatrick, and then four former chairs of BAAL (Greg Myers, Ros Mitchell, Mike Baynham and Susan Hunston) in turn present their perspectives on how the field has 'engaged with' policy and practice. In characteristic form, Guy Cook, the discussant at the round-table event, protests at the lack of responsiveness of academics, making the point that we need to engage not only with each other but with the outside world too.

In the second chapter, Henry Widdowson presents his plenary lecture, in which he develops themes from his earlier work on disciplinarity in applied linguistics, that is, what applied linguistics is and should be. By invoking disciplinarity, Widdowson supposes of course that one thing applied linguistics should not be is a discipline, a field or branch of knowledge, and de facto coherent. His insightful reflections drawn from a lifetime of shaping the field delve carefully into the sometimes thorny issue of how applied linguistics has engaged with the discipline of linguistics and provide clear insights into the ways in which this engagement can continue usefully to inform the practical issues of language use and education which are among the key concerns of applied linguistics.

Next comes a contribution from the second plenary speaker, Bencie Woll, diversifying the field of applied linguistics to consider the position of sign language and Deaf Studies. Bencie's work as a pioneer of deaf language studies has been invaluable in forefronting the importance of applying linguistic paradigms to deaf language studies, and her chapter addresses the current state of deaf language studies, including handling sociopolitical challenges, bilingual contexts and technological opportunities.

In the final chapter in the section, the battleground between positivist and interpretivist paradigms is revisited afresh by Jean-Marc Dewaele, whose entertaining, and at times provocative, chapter considers conceptual disagreement within the field, as it relates to SLA research. Dewaele cautions against throwing the baby out with the quantitative bathwater, arguing that quantitative research has value for the discovery of general trends and for pedagogical development. He makes a claim for the necessity of ontological, epistemological and methodological diversity in the field and calls for more mixed-method studies which can capture the complex interactions of variables among both individuals and groups.

Section B – Applied Linguistics and 'Real-World' Problems begins with a discussion of themes from the second invited colloquium of the conference, on *Creative Inquiry in Applied Linguistics*. Bradley, Harvey and colleagues posed the questions: What do we understand by creative inquiry? What are its affordances for applied linguistics research? The colloquium was an early move in the establishment of a new research network under the auspices of AILA, the International Association of Applied Linguistics, and the chapter describes several projects from a range of contexts to examine some of the different ways in which applied linguists have worked with the creative arts. It points to a growing interest in the transdisciplinary study of language and arts practice, which Bradley and Harvey suggest is indicative of a creative 'turn' in applied linguistics.

The arts theme is maintained by Kelli Zezulka, reporting her linguistic ethnographic study of language use in theatre lighting design. Understandings gained here about the collaborative talk around arts practice highlight the complex relationships between the different creative practitioners involved in theatre lighting design and the intangible material of light. Zezulka's chapter explores how language operates within the complex power dynamics and hierarchies

arising in creative and technical settings and shows how the study of communication in these settings can enable a deeper understanding of creative practice and materiality.

Shivonne M. Gates and Christian Ilbury bring a sociolinguistic perspective to ongoing debates on standard language ideologies, discussing data from the talk of young people in London in relation to an educational agenda which sees the use of vernacular language as hindering preparation for the workplace. Drawing on data from two ethnographic studies in east London, they examine the relationship between dialect diversity, standard language ideology and education and articulate the ways in which speakers of non-standard varieties are constrained and challenged through the institutionalisation of standard language ideologies and the internalisation of their effects.

Rachel Chimbwete-Phiri and Malcolm N. MacDonald take us to Malawi and their study of communication in HIV/AIDS medical interactions. They examine how health professionals use strategies which reproduce existing power asymmetries through a regulatory discourse which closes down potential space for the women's own experience and knowledge. Chimbwete-Phiri and MacDonald call for health professionals to attend to the discoursal features of their talk in order to develop health education pedagogies in which women are empowered to engage with their own individual and collective knowledge and which ultimately support more effective HIV/AIDS treatment.

Finally in the section, Dilini Chamali Walisundara interrogates assumptions about language dominance in language policy and practice in heavily multilingual Sri Lanka and how these relate to the discursive construction of culture. The chapter presents research which explored Sri Lankan teachers' awareness of the different minority language groups in the country and their perceptions of linguistic diversity in their classrooms. Walisundara's findings highlight the tensions between teachers' awareness of diversity and its importance and their obligation to teach a national curriculum rooted in English and Sinhalese, articulating implications for the dis/empowerment of speakers of diverse languages.

In *Section C – Applied Linguistics and Language Education*, we return to language education, the original referent of the field of applied linguistics, but with expanded contextual and methodological lenses taking in multilingual pedagogy, corpus linguistics, modern language teacher training and academic literacies. In the first chapter, based on his 2017 Pit Corder Lecture, Mohamed Daoud takes us to post-revolution Tunisia and Arabic/French-speaking north Africa. Here English language has been taught for decades and yet, though in high demand and valued in all domains, competence remains low. He calls for applied linguists to examine their assumptions about language education and policy and for English teachers particularly to be flexible in their views and practices, playing as they do a key role in managing the tension between developing learner autonomy and working towards curriculum success and sustainability.

Primary teacher education in the UK is the context for Huw Bell and Stephanie Ainsworth, who examine teachers' responses to a grammar training programme designed to enable them to meet new syllabus requirements. Their insights into teachers' developing attitudes, beliefs and knowledge about grammar teaching show how training can enhance teachers' confidence and better equip them for teaching grammar in increasingly diverse ways. Bell and Ainsworth point to the importance of bringing applied linguistics research back into L1-based classrooms, supporting teachers to better balance structured input and spontaneous discussion, both for pedagogy and for the success of grammar instruction training.

Margaret Probyn's chapter examines classroom linguistic ecologies in linguistically diverse South Africa. Using data from a case study of township and rural schools, Probyn investigates the language used to learn science in a context where teachers' and students' home language is isiXhosa but teaching and assessment take place in English. Her findings on the complex relationship between classroom language and opportunities for science learning have implications for both student and teacher education and for addressing diverse multilingual learners' underperformance in science.

In their study of corpus resources as a tool for improving English collocational competence among Vietnamese university students, Dung Cao and Alice Deignan assessed the benefits of the Oxford Collocation Dictionary of English for their learners' writing through awareness of real-time collocation usage. They found considerable variation in the extent to which the OCDE was perceived to be helpful, concluding that corpus resources have a role to play as a supportive tool in raising learners' awareness of and confidence in using collocations and thus have implications for future learning across diverse educational contexts.

The book closes with a chapter by Rosmawati (the 2017 Christopher Brumfit Award winner for best PhD thesis), which reports on a study of learners of academic English in Australia. The study built a corpus of academic essays to track participants' development of complex syntax in their writing over the course of a year, drawing on complex dynamic systems theory to examine distinctiveness and diversity both within and across participants' profiles. Rosmawati's findings have clear implications both for understanding of English learners' academic writing and for the design and development of diverse academic English teaching materials, while highlighting the importance for applied linguistics of seeking to diversify such insights for classroom research beyond current dominantly English-speaking contexts.

Looking forward: The next 50 years of applied linguistics

We have asked whether applied linguistics has the potential to speak with a common voice and have taken the position that the connections are there to

be made, even in our world of fluidity, mobility and rapid change. Yet we are aware that a common voice comprises multiple voices and that inevitably, in a bounded volume such as this, some voices will (still) be absent. The volume comprises contributions from the 50th BAAL conference, and insofar as this conference is accessible only to those with the material means to attend, and the cultural capital and communicative repertoires to present their knowledge-making in standard, acceptable ways, the gaps and absences in the volume speak alongside chapters themselves in articulating a view of the field. We are conscious that the global South, and Southern theories, are under-represented in comparison with the global North and conscious too of the ontological role of volumes such as this in reinforcing this inequality. We are also conscious that the volume is published in English, despite the plurilingual nature of the field, and in this sense it reinforces the English-monolingual ideology in global academia. There are some widely adopted language teaching methodologies which are not addressed (e.g., CLIL, SIOP) and little engagement with the future of modern languages education beyond English, for example the current state of foreign language teaching in Anglophone contexts. Nor does the volume engage with the major political events shaping the context of its production – most obviously Brexit, ongoing debates around national borders and mobility and the rise of anti-immigration sentiment and exclusionary right-wing ideologies.

These are major questions and concerns for the field to continue to engage with moving forward. And yet, in showcasing the diversity of the field while recognising that that diversity is necessarily limited, we do not want to fetishise diversity for its own sake: as long as an academic product – a conference, a research project, an edited volume – is bounded, as it must necessarily be, it can always be more diverse. Perhaps the ultimate challenge for applied linguistics as a discipline lies not in expanding its diversity but rather in finding ways to negotiate the tension between, on the one hand, the necessity to acknowledge diversity and, on the other, the recognition of its potential to reinforce difference and otherness in reifying and essentialising ways. We look forward to being part of applied linguistics' engagement with these concerns over the coming years as we collectively forge the future of the discipline.

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Applied Linguistics: Looking Back, Looking Forward

CHAPTER 2

The Engagement of BAAL – and Applied Linguistics – with Policy and Practice

Tess Fitzpatrick, Swansea University
Mike Baynham, University of Leeds
Guy Cook, King's College London
Susan Hunston, University of Birmingham
Ros Mitchell, University of Southampton
Greg Myers, Lancaster University

Applied Linguistics: The Evolution of a Discipline
Tess Fitzpatrick, Swansea University

Admission into the British Association for Applied Linguistics was subject to close scrutiny in the decade or so following the founding of the Association. Prospective members completed a questionnaire with information about their academic qualifications, teaching and research activities, membership of other associations, and details of two referees who would vouch for their suitability as members of BAAL. The referees then completed their sections of the form and forwarded it to the BAAL committee members, three of whom were tasked with scoring the application. If the scores did not reach a certain threshold, the

application was referred to the whole committee. If approved, membership was confirmed on receipt of the (post-decimal) £1.05 entry fee and £1.25 annual subscription.

The original version of the application form, used until 1969, had an additional question: 'State why you wish to join the Association, what benefit you expect to obtain from it and what contribution you will be able to make'. There was broad consensus that the expected benefit was to exchange ideas, experience and knowledge, and to foster collegiality in a world where many were working in isolation. Eagerness to meet colleagues in allied professions and fields was a common theme, as was 'encouraging dialogue', especially between teachers and linguists. BAAL was cited by one applicant as 'the only professional association which brings together those concerned with the application of linguistics to language'.

Statements about 'the contribution you will be able to make' follow this theme of sharing expertise and ideas, and are modestly expressed. The *actual* contribution to applied linguistics of many of these early members is evident, 50 years later, on bookshelves across the world; many of them went on to produce texts that are core to our discipline. And applied linguistics is now a discipline in its own right, recognised in establishment documents such as QAA benchmark statements and REF criteria statements, and in degree programmes around the world, but when its formation was announced in the Newsboard section of the *ELT Journal* in May 1968, it was defined by its connections with other, established, disciplines:

> The aims of the Association … are defined as being 'to promote the study of problems of language acquisition, teaching and use, and to foster inter-disciplinary collaboration in this study'. Its field of interest can therefore be taken to include relevant aspects of linguistics, psychology and sociology.
>
> (Newsboard 1968: 280–281)

To what extent did the early members of BAAL fit this intended focus? Interests declared by those who joined in the first two years include: the relationship between linguistics and the teaching of modern languages; the 'application of linguistics to … the teaching of English as a native language'; linguistic stylistics; application of linguistics to the study of speech pathology; teaching English, including to immigrant communities in the UK; and new teaching methods, with use of language laboratories and audiovisual techniques particularly prevalent. In many cases this can be seen as 'linguistics applied' (see Cook's commentary later in this chapter), but the kernel of identifying features of 'applied linguistics' is there too, as early members categorise themselves as having both academic and professional interests. Typically they had recently completed postgraduate study, but had already accrued professional experience in roles including modern languages teacher/examiner, British Council

education officer, education adviser to overseas government, RAF linguist, Royal Navy education advisor, coursebook writer, speech therapy trainer, television and radio (BBC) language course scriptwriter/broadcaster, English language teacher overseas and for immigrant communities in UK, language laboratory installer and teacher trainer. These people had first-hand experience of the 'problems of language acquisition, teaching and use' and embodied the bridge between theory and practice (in other words, between the 'theoretical and empirical investigation' and the 'real-world problems' of the much-cited 1995 Brumfit definition).

Careers spanning professional practice and academic scholarship are still not unusual in applied linguistics; the contributors to this chapter, all former chairs of BAAL, share that profile. This is not so commonly seen elsewhere and can perhaps be seen as a distinct feature of our discipline. It is surely unusual too for a discipline to define itself, in the aim stated in that 1968 announcement, as being *inter*disciplinary. So, a focus on intersections, interfaces and interpretations, an appreciation that the most exciting insights can be found where disciplines meet, and an understanding of how to navigate the shared (or abandoned) territory between disciplinary perspectives and between research and practice are also, perhaps, distinguishing features of the applied linguist.

The 2014 Research Excellence Framework evaluation brought the notion of a research–practice interface into mainstream UK academic discourse, in the form of *engagement* and *impact* (defined as 'an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'). Only 30 of the 6,000+ case studies submitted to REF2014 refer explicitly to 'applied linguistics', although an applied linguist might see evidence of our discipline in many others too (https://impact.ref. ac.uk/casestudies/). Those 30 could be seen to offer a snapshot of the scope and reach of 21st-century applied linguistics, though: topics covered include intercultural communication, multilingual education, language and gender, 'global' skills, language policy in multicultural UK, language testing, social justice in LGBTIQ communities, health communication, ecological linguistics, forensic linguistics informing police practices and voice analysis, bilingual communities, public understanding of language variation, language teaching techniques, tools and ontological approaches, preservation of endangered languages and promoting languages in school. Would the founders of BAAL recognise their vision of 'applied linguistics' in these projects? Well, the linguistics, psychology and sociology interface is certainly detectable in the topics listed, though the study of language *use* seems slightly more prevalent than of language *acquisition* and *teaching* in this UK snapshot. There is a strong theme of social accountability and social justice. The demands of REF do not necessarily make for representative sampling of the discipline, of course: there is more reference here to language as a social phenomenon than as a mental phenomenon, though plenty of applied linguists are working on the latter.

That capacity to reach out from the academy in order to engage effectively with policy and practice is the focus of what follows in this chapter. The title of the chapter acknowledges that, while BAAL and applied linguistics are not synonymous – many people working in applied linguistics do not call themselves applied linguists, and many are not members of BAAL – their trajectories, in the UK at least, are intertwined. Here we, as former chairs of BAAL, offer four perspectives on 'the engagement of BAAL and the discipline of applied linguistics with policy and practice', followed by a commentary on those reflections, and a call to arms. In the next section of the chapter, Greg Myers identifies themes and patterns that emerge from scrutiny of the history of BAAL, and the following three sections see Rosamond Mitchell, Mike Baynham and Susan Hunston track and detail developments in three areas of connection between BAAL and policy/practice. These are language education in schools (Mitchell), adult literacy and ESOL (Baynham), and the role of applied linguistics in understanding the society we live in and the role of BAAL in shaping applied linguistics (Hunston). Guy Cook's critical commentary reflects on these and other perspectives on applied linguistics, and seeks evidence of a disciplinary unity or identity as BAAL – and applied linguistics in the UK – enters its second half-century.

Engagements with Policy and Practice in the BAAL Archive
Greg Myers, Lancaster University

When I was reading through the BAAL archives and interviewing past chairs, I was struck by how often issues that seem current now started much earlier in BAAL history. For instance, efforts to engage with the social and educational policies of the UK and with the practices of language professionals run through the whole history of BAAL. Paralleling this is an ongoing discussion of how BAAL itself should change to reflect wider social realities. What follows are some notes drawn from the *History of BAAL* that Rosamond Mitchell prepared for the 30th anniversary and I updated for the 50th anniversary (BAAL 2017).

Engaging with policy

BAAL has tried to bring linguistic knowledge to bear on public issues where language plays a role. One such policy area is the teaching of English in UK schools. BAAL contributed submissions to the Bullock Committee (1973), the Kingman Committee on the Teaching of English Language (1987), and consultations on various versions on the National Curriculum for English. Comments were produced on *English 5–16*, and on the Report of the Swann Committee on the Education of Ethnic Minorities (1985). The final reports produced by all these bodies have also been extensively debated at Annual Meetings and

Seminars, and in the columns of the *Newsletter*. In 1988–91, Michael Stubbs was a member of the Cox Committee, which produced the first National Curriculum proposals for English. Ronald Carter was director of the Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) Project, the national in-service teacher training project intended to improve teachers' language knowledge and language pedagogy skills (1989–92). When the materials produced by LINC were suppressed by government ministers on grounds of their overly sociolinguistic orientation, BAAL participated in the public protests.

Since 2000, interventions by BAAL in public policy have often concerned wider issues of language in society, especially around diversity and migration. These interventions include:

- a defence of 'cultural diversity and language learning' in a letter to Home Secretary David Blunkett after his statement that bilingual families should speak English at home (2002);
- a criticism of unscientific use of language analysis in examining the cases of asylum seekers (2003);
- criticism of decisions that both raised the requirements for English skills by immigrants and withdrew free ESOL provision that might enable them to meet these requirements (2007);
- a criticism of the introduction by the Home Office of pre-entry language tests for spouses hoping to join their families in the UK (2008);
- a criticism, again addressed to the Home Office, of the use of English testing in immigration cases (2012);
- joining the Communication Rights Group, a consortium of linguists across Australia, North America and the UK, in recommending guidelines for communicating rights to non-native speakers of English in Australia, England and Wales, and the USA (2016);
- a statement to key policymakers, with six other learned societies, on linguistic issues in Brexit (2017).

As this list shows, BAAL usually makes a statement when there is broad academic consensus about the linguistic issues, even if the wider political issues may be highly controversial.

Alongside these formal institutional statements, BAAL has tried to engage with the constant stream of public discussion about language issues, in the press, broadcasting and social media. Sometimes this media discussion brings welcome publicity to work on education, sociolinguistics, forensic linguistics or corpus linguistics. But media reports can also be ill-informed, misrepresenting academic research or drawing on no research at all. The problem for BAAL interventions, as an organisation, is that by the time an inquiry from the press has been routed to the correct person, or a press release has been drafted and checked, the news cycle has moved on. For instance, in 2013, a headteacher in Middlesbrough asked parents not to let their children use at home a list of

lexical items that she declared to be 'dialect'. Twitter and BAALmail erupted with criticisms, but by the time a statement was possible, it was too late to be used by the press.

One indication of the engagement of BAAL with wider social and policy issues is the list of plenary speakers included in the history. The speakers often seem chosen by the local organising committee to suggest that an area that may not be covered in many papers at the conference at the moment, is worth more attention. So, for instance, the very first set of what we would now call plenary speakers, in 1978, included Eric Evans from the National Language Unit of Wales, talking about the preservation of Welsh, and Verity Saifullah Khan from the ESRC Research Unit on Ethnic Relations, talking about minority languages. Later examples of policy-relevant plenaries include Colin Williams (1990), William McLeod (2010) and Kathryn Woolard (2013) on language policy issues, Deborah Cameron (1992) on language and gender, Norman Fairclough (1994 and 2008) analysing government policy documents, Rick Iedema (2011 and 2015) on language in the workplace, Ingrid Piller (2016) on multilingualism in a legal context, Barbara Seidlhofer (2001) and Anna Mauranen (2012) on English as an international language, and Bencie Woll (2000 and 2017) on British Sign Language. Of course, many other plenaries had implications for education and language policy, but these give some idea of the range.

Engaging with professional practice

The main forum through which BAAL has intervened in the practices of teachers is CLIE, the Committee on Language in Education. CLIE emerged from a joint LAGB-BAAL seminar on the teaching of languages in schools at North Worcestershire College of Higher Education in 1978. Over the years, it has had projects on the preparation of teachers, on knowledge about language in teaching, and on getting an A level exam in linguistics. It has also responded to government consultations on such issues as the National Curriculum, primary education, and the training of teachers.

BAAL has been more cautious about intervening directly in the teaching of English as a foreign or additional language. For instance, there has been discussion over 30 years about setting academic standards for TESOL courses, but the task was taken up by other organisations, such as the British Association of TESOL Qualifying Institutions (BATQI, 1991–2010), the British Institute for English Language Teaching (BIELT, 1999–2002) and the Association for Promotion of Quality in TESOL Education (QuiTE, 2001–12), often with BAAL members involved.

One area of practice that involves BAAL is the recruitment of teachers. BAAL has set criteria for the content of advertisements appearing on BAALmail, including both UK law (no discrimination on the basis of gender or age) and

also its own policies. In 2011, the EC decided it would not accept advertisements requiring applicants for posts to be 'native speakers'. Of course, BAAL refusing an advertisement does not change discriminatory hiring practices, but it does lead to discussions around identities and ideologies.

BAAL organisation

Scholars who study diversity in society have often raised issues about the diversity of BAAL, in its membership, attendance at meetings, and composition of the Executive Committee. I wonder if you can guess the date of this message from a BAAL chair:

> I think, too, that we should be more conscious than we have been about the composition of our membership. In a profession with a higher proportion of women than most, our work has still led to a succession of male chairpersons (though I should add that the relative numbers of officers and committee members compare favourably with most organisations). Further, it is increasingly true that applied linguistic work is being carried out by members of minority language-speaking communities; BAAL must ensure that its membership reflects this fact if it is to speak for the many social and political aspects of language that require current comment. Similarly, with language and ethnicity now a major concern of many members, we need more black members. At the same time, of course, it would be much easier to recruit in these groups if there were more people appointed to university and college posts with such backgrounds.

This is Chris Brumfit, writing in *BAAL News* in 1985. It is interesting that the newsletter carried a criticism of all-male panels (at AILA) as early as 1983 (the letter was from Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas). A formal equal opportunities statement was adopted in 1995, leading to an EC audit of its own practices as a follow-up. And these issues were raised again in discussion of the all-male plenary list in 2014.

On the issue of gender equality, BAAL has made some progress: half the chairs since 1997 have been women. But Brumfit raises two other issues that are still challenges now, expanding the involvement of UK speakers of minority languages and of members of ethnic minority groups. It could be said that we do have a wider range now, because of the broader international attendance. But the diversity of UK participants, in some dimensions, is limited now as it was limited then by the unrepresentative composition of academic departments. (Interestingly, the Executive Committee is usually more diverse than most large departments.) So, if we want to make BAAL broadly representative of British society, we have to address a much wider systemic issue.

BAAL, Applied Linguistics, and Language(s) in School
Rosamond Mitchell, University of Southampton

The success of applied linguistics as an international academic discipline is in large part due to the rise of English as a global language. However, it is clear that applied linguists have never limited their interests to international English. From its foundation in 1967, BAAL set out to inform language education of all kinds, with insights from the language sciences (Mitchell 1997). This contribution reviews the historical impact of applied linguists on language education in British schools, and makes brief proposals for sustaining and developing this impact in future.

The records of BAAL make clear its historic educational ambitions to promote:

- the understanding of linguistics and a principled approach to developing knowledge about language;
- understanding of the central educational role of language and 'language across the curriculum';
- links between the teaching of English and of other languages;
- positive attitudes towards multilingualism and the use of multilingual approaches in education incorporating community/heritage languages;
- effective pedagogy for languages and for literacy.

Regarding the curriculum and pedagogy of English, where established tradition favoured a literature-led approach, applied linguists have consistently aimed to promote linguistic perspectives through participation in diverse projects and review groups, promoted firstly by the Schools Council, and later by the Department for Education and Science: major examples are the curriculum materials project 'Language in Use' (Doughty et al. 1971); the Kingman and Cox committees, whose reports made proposals for promoting systematic language study in the new National Curriculum for schools (DES 1988, 1989); and the Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) project intended to contribute to teachers' professional development with respect to English language (Carter 1990, 1996). They provided input and critical commentary on the evolving National Curriculum for English (CLIE 1993, 2011), the National Literacy Strategy (Bourne et al. 1999) and the introduction of synthetic phonics (Ellis & Moss 2014). A significant success was the introduction of English language at A level (Goddard 2016); however, applied linguists generally failed to make headway against an increasing policy focus on Standard English taught as a discrete subject. For example, the sociolinguistic focus of the LINC proposals and its acknowledgement of language variation was ultimately rejected by ministers, so the project was scrapped and its findings excluded from the teacher education curriculum.

Regarding foreign languages, applied linguistics perspectives were promoted by the government-funded Centre for Information on Language Teaching

and Research (CILT) until 2011, when the main centre in England was closed (Hawkins 1997). From the late 1970s, successive CILT directors set out to promote an integrated view of language across the curriculum through the National Congress on Language in Education (NCLE), bringing together professionals concerned with English, with foreign languages and with community languages (Perren 1979; Davidson 1981; Moys 1984; Trim 1997). During the 1980s, this initiative became irrelevant following policy commitment to a National Curriculum which was competency-based in inspiration and grounded in discrete curriculum subjects, including 'English' and 'modern foreign languages'; the main legacy of NCLE was the international 'language awareness' movement (Hawkins 1984; Donmall 1985; Daborn 2016).

Concerning MFL, the National Curriculum of the 1990s promoted a 'languages for all' philosophy, with the expectation that all secondary school students would study a foreign language to GCSE level. However, by the early 2000s this proposal was not seen as viable, and language study became optional from age 14. In compensation, the government adopted a National Languages Strategy, which was meant to enhance the voluntary study of languages, and which also seriously promoted languages in the primary school (DfES 2002); here, CILT played an especially active role throughout the 2000s.

Meanwhile, John Trim (CILT director from 1978 to 1987) promoted European initiatives in competency-based foreign language education, ultimately resulting in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR: Council of Europe 2001). However, UK reluctance to engage with European educational initiatives meant that the CEFR was never endorsed as a framework for home FL instruction. Instead, a locally produced 'languages ladder', developed as part of the National Languages Strategy, provided the basis for a professionally developed, independent set of language assessments in a range of languages ('asset languages': Jones 2007). It was hoped that this assessment scheme would motivate and provide certification for learners undertaking study of languages below GCSE level, for example in primary schools. However, with the ending of the NLS in 2011, asset languages was also no longer supported.

Applied linguists with interests in foreign language education have had some policy traction during the evolution of the National Curriculum for MFL, especially through the work of CILT. However, since the closure of CILT and abandonment of the National Languages Strategy, though individuals and groups continue to offer research-based commentary on policy and practice (CLIE 2017; Marsden 2016; Mitchell 2011, 2013; Mitchell & Myles forthcoming), current challenges to applied linguistic perspectives on schooling remain strong. An assessment-driven curriculum retains clear subject boundaries (Marsden 2016), and the most recent recasting of the National Curriculum reflects ministerial preference for traditional practices in both English and MFL (Wyse & Torgerson 2017). There is a mismatch between current curricula and teaching practice and an increasingly multilingual school population. Teacher education

has very limited subject-specific content (Teaching Schools Council 2016), and practising language professionals have limited opportunities for subject-specific CPD and are disengaged from research (Marsden & Kasprowicz 2017). Resources are squeezed across the system, further discouraging innovation. Under these conditions, though study of a foreign language was made a compulsory element in the National Curriculum for English primary schools in 2014, schools are clearly struggling to resource and implement languages provision with any consistency (Tinsley & Board 2017), and delivery of both English and MFL remains cramped by assessment backwash throughout the system.

Against this backdrop, applied linguists continue to proffer advice and commentary, responding to government consultations etc. More importantly, they continue to incubate alternative perspectives on language education, through special interest groups, seminars and workshops (many BAAL-sponsored), and through courses, blogs and provision of resources (e.g., Giovanelli & Clayton 2016). University centres engage with local and national school and teacher networks to promote e.g. multilingual pedagogic practices and multiliteracy (see for example the MOSAIC group at the University of Birmingham or the Centre for Language, Culture and Learning at Goldsmiths); effective research-led grammar pedagogy (for example at University College London: see https://grammarianism.wordpress.com/courses/); or effective primary languages practice (for example through the Research in Primary Languages network: see www.ripl.uk/network/). Overall it has to be concluded that this kind of local, bottom-up activity is essential to keep in being a range of research-informed perspectives on language, and support varied professional practice, and that this is the best kind of 'impact' that applied linguists can currently offer independently to support educational resilience into an especially uncertain future. To impact national education policy more proactively and systematically, it seems likely that larger alliances will be needed in which applied linguists combine with academic communities in other fields (social science, computer science/engineering, education) and offer a unified 'expert' voice on a larger scale.

BAAL, Applied Linguistics, and Adult Language Education: ESOL, Literacy, Multilingualism and Diversity
Mike Baynham, University of Leeds

My perspective here is from a concern throughout my career with the language education of adults, most specifically ESOL and literacy, in the context however of multilingualism and diversity. I am going to start by recalling the year 1985 when there was I think a decisive opening out of the scope of applied linguistics to include all aspects of what Chris Candlin called language in social life. Any aspect of the social world it seems can attract the attention of applied linguists. Prior to this, applied linguistics had sometimes seemed simply the theoretical wing of the EFL business. It was a year for example in which a whole new

approach to the study of literacy began to emerge, which was to engage me, following the publication of two seminal works: Shirley Brice Heath's 1983 *Ways with Words* and Brian Street's 1984 *Literacy in Theory and Practice*. There was a move to develop a research basis for adult literacy building on this work which took the gaze of the researcher away from the classroom to investigate literacy in the social world, which became known as the new literacy studies. Street was an inspirational figure here, and there was important work done in Lancaster by David Barton, Mary Hamilton (e.g., Barton & Hamilton 1998) and by others, in the UK and elsewhere, myself included. So this is an example of an outgrowth of applied linguistic research to engage with a new problematic.

So where was adult ESOL (or, as it was then known, adult ESL) in this? The 1970s and 1980s was a period of considerable development in the UK, but the emphasis was more on curriculum and methodology. A representative publication was Nicholls and Hoadley Maidment's *Current Issue in Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults* (1993). It was also the period of the founding of the NATECLA journal *Language Issues*. It is curious to wonder why there was not a parallel development of a research agenda to that in adult literacy. Perhaps this was because there was a readily available body of research on second language learning and teaching to be drawn on, which made the need for a specifically adult ESOL research agenda less pressing. There were of course important exceptions to this, such as the collaboration between John Gumperz and the Industrial Language Training Unit in Southall, which led among other things to the video *CrossTalk*. Another research project of the period, the ESF Ecology of Adult Language Acquisition (EALA) project (Perdue 1993) also fitted the bill, in researching the naturalistic or informal language learning of adult migrants, but this did not perhaps have the same impact on the field as the Gumperz ILT collaboration did. The picture was very different in Australia, where, for example, Michael Clyne had already published his seminal Zum PidginDeutsch der Gastarbeiter (Clyne 1968), which focused attention on so-called naturalistic SLA, and the Adult Migrant Education Programme had a well-funded research and development arm, NCELTR, based at Macquarie University and directed by Chris Candlin. Also significant in the Australian context was Joe Lo Bianco's Australian Language Policy (Lo Bianco 1987), subsequently the Australian Language and Literacy Policy, which looked at language policy and practice through a multilingual lens.

It was not until the 2000s in the UK that a similar move led to the funding of research to support the National Curriculum in Adult Literacy, Numeracy (and ESOL), leading to the establishment of the National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) and a suite of research projects which went some way to establishing a research agenda for adult ESOL. Arguably these initiatives did not have the reach achieved in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, since multilingualism was not included in the policy mix; indeed, as the decade wore on the UK mood shifted to an emphasis on securing borders, integration and citizenship. This entailed a move away from the focus on multiculturalism and

diversity towards national borders and citizenship, strongly in evidence to the present as we see the role for Brexit extremists of securing national borders trumping (and I use the verb advisedly) considerations of the economy and the preservation of the social fabric in the UK. I think it is fair to say that King's College London and Leeds have taken a leading role in the development of this research agenda both through funded research projects and a cohort of practitioner PhDs researching ESOL-related topics. I am thinking here of the research and activist leadership shown by James Simpson at Leeds and Melanie Cooke at King's (e.g., Cooke & Simpson 2008). In my own career I have worked across adult literacy and adult ESOL. My work in Australia in the 1990s focused primarily on literacy, but when I returned to the UK in 2000 as professor of TESOL, my attention naturally turned to the relatively undeveloped research area of adult ESOL. I was lucky to be able to play a role in the ESOL research activities of the NRDC, often in partnership with Celia Roberts at King's in a series of projects such as the ESOL Effective Practice Project (Roberts & Baynham 2006). We wanted to locate adult ESOL research in a broader context, that of the trajectories of migration, in contexts of language learning and use in multilingual and diverse contexts. Our ongoing research in Leeds led to the opportunity to work on the Translation & Translanguaging project, led by Angela Creese at Birmingham, productively bringing together long-standing interests in researching multilingualism with a critical perspective on some of the important issues in migration and settlement.

Adult ESOL, like so many other areas, is a field hollowed out by a decade and more of under-funding and austerity, yet there are promising signs of research activity as described above and activism such as the Save ESOL campaign, which sprang out, as a response to government cuts to the sector, from networking online on the Adult ESOL Research List, hosted by James Simpson. Another small but promising green shoot was the ESRC *Queering ESOL* seminar series [queeringesol.wordpress.com], jointly convened by John Gray, Melanie Cooke and myself, again a product of online networking on the Adult ESOL Research List and the activism of such as Laila al Metoui, who convened the first adult ESOL LGBTQ event with funding from the British Council. If, as seems increasingly possible in these troubled times, we start to see a decisive move away from the era of austerity towards social reconstruction and growth, there are research-informed ideas and energy that can be put to work to support the reimagining of adult ESOL in a post-austerity UK.

BAAL, Social Research and the Identity of Applied Linguistics
Susan Hunston, University of Birmingham

Below I address two questions: what is the contribution of applied linguistics to social research, and what is the identity of applied linguistics as an area of academic study?

Applied linguistics and social research

A major strand of research in applied linguistics is what might be described as the study of language (discourse) in a social context. Over-simplifying somewhat, such research may have the aim of describing how entities, including people, are construed by language, or of describing how actions or effects are achieved through language. Examples would include the construal of academic identity (Hyland 2012), or the exercise of power in courtrooms (Wodak 2009), the construction of roles in workplaces (Koester 2011), or the effectiveness of kinds of classroom interaction (Chaudron 1988). All this research draws on a shared understanding of language as formative of institutions, cultural assumptions, knowledge and opinions. That shared understanding might be considered essential to applied linguistics. There is, however, a diversity of approaches realised in multiple research methods. These include in-depth qualitative and explanatory studies associated with ethnography, conversation analysis or genre studies, and larger-scale quantitative studies associated with corpus linguistics. Recent developments can be summarised in terms of the following:

1. There has been an increase in the number of projects making use of large-scale data and what might be described as basic corpus investigation techniques. (At the same time, corpus linguistics itself has become a great deal more quantitative in its approach and probably further removed from application.)
2. There has been an increase in the number of projects making use of multimodal data, setting language use alongside other semiotic systems. Studies of newspaper articles typically include an analysis of accompanying visuals (Bednarek & Caple 2012). Studies of spoken interaction are likely to include an analysis of gesture (Adolphs & Carter 2013).
3. There is an emphasis on the constitutive, as opposed to representative, role of language, and a re-evaluation of the relationship between the individual and society. Examples would include the performativity view of gender and sexualities (Cameron 1996), or the reconceptualisation of phenomena formerly accounted for by 'code-switching' as 'translanguaging' (Li 2017). Along with this might be said to be a move towards disruptive categories and a challenge to theoretical assumptions.
4. At the same time there is a widening of range of contexts to which applied linguistics is applied, with an emphasis on problem-solving and practicality, particularly in fields such as health care (Brookes et al. 2018).

Innovation in these areas of applied linguistics lies both in the generation of descriptions of novel data and in the development and testing of models accounting for language use. What is particularly apparent is the uncovering of patterns that might be said to be hidden in plain sight – aspects of language use that are unremarked and normalised but whose use has significant social

effects. Questioning patterns in doctor–patient interactions is one example, and the phenomenon of collocation another.

The identity of applied linguistics

We might look at the question of the identity of applied linguistics from 'internal' and 'external' perspectives. Internally, the diversity of research under the broad heading of applied linguistics is recognised and welcomed, as is apparent from the range of (currently 13) BAAL SIGs, which themselves represent only part of the diversity in focus. I believe the ethical stance of BAAL is important in maintaining this unity within diversity. Institutionally, applied linguists find themselves in many different kinds of hybrid academic unit. Inevitably, we tend to define ourselves in contrast to our colleagues, that is, what we are not as much as what we are. Broadly speaking, applied linguists might see themselves as different from (if not in opposition to) general linguistics (if they are located in a linguistics department), literary/cultural studies (if they find themselves in an English or modern languages department), and quantitative survey approaches (if they are situated in an education department). There are reflections of this on REF panels, where BAAL has always been concerned to ensure adequate representation on the Education panel, the Modern Languages & Linguistics panel and the English Language & Literature panel. Applied Linguistics does seem to be unusual in the number of panels that an individual could be returned to, based not on genuine difference but simply on the vagaries of university organisation. There is a similar concern that the ESRC grant approval panel that considers linguistics applications should include at least one applied linguist. In all these discussions there is an emphasis on the distinctiveness of applied linguistics and a demand that it not be subsumed under the heading of linguistics.

   Is this insistence on the distinctiveness of applied linguistics appropriate? Given that both linguistics and applied linguistics incorporate a large number of subfields, insisting on a strict division between the two is probably not defensible. On the other hand, given that variety, stressing the importance of a breadth of view from gatekeepers is important to both disciplines, and if referring to them as two disciplines helps that aim then so much the better.

Commentary
Guy Cook, King's College London

   Time that is intolerant
   Of the brave and innocent,
   And indifferent in a week
   To a beautiful physique,

> Worships language and forgives
> Everyone by whom it lives;
> Pardons cowardice, conceit,
> Lays its honours at their feet…
>
> (Lines from *In Memory of W.B. Yeats*, later repudiated by their author, W.H. Auden)

This present multi-authored colloquium-engendered chapter marks 50 years since the foundation of BAAL. Applied linguistics, and particularly *British* applied linguistics, is very fond of such anniversaries, using them as an opportunity for reminiscences – some rather sesquipedalian.

For BAAL members these introspections have a certain interest, both personal and intellectual. Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? Why are we here? These are important questions in any enterprise. But we need to be careful too. Our memories are of little interest to people *outside* applied linguistics, although it is for them that we ought to answer these ontological questions. Autodiegetic reminiscences, moreover, tend to be self-congratulatory, when what we need is self-criticism: there is much to regret as well as celebrate in the history of BAAL. By analysing what has gone wrong we may escape creeping stagnation.

Fifty years ago the new subdiscipline of applied linguistics was a straightforward affair. Its main job was to hand down insights from linguistics to language teachers, especially teachers of EFL – a pedagogy then innocently untroubled by our current worries about linguistic imperialism, native speakerism and so forth.

Rightly and inevitably applied linguistics moved away from this remit. Two particular developments in the 1980s and 1990s led the way. Henry Widdowson (1980) inspiringly suggested that rather than merely funnelling linguistics into pedagogy the discipline should mediate between the two, adding to both, becoming *applied linguistics* not just *linguistics applied*. Then his colleague Christopher Brumfit presciently suggested an expansion beyond language teaching to embrace all 'real-world problems' in which language is a central issue (Brumfit 1995). These two complementary ideas provided for their time a coherent and principled underpinning for the theory and practice of applied linguistics.

The other voices in this joint article document this expanded scope of applied linguistics promoted by Brumfit. Ros Mitchell tells us of its engagement, from relatively early on, with the teaching of English and modern languages in British schools, Greg Myers of its 'efforts to engage with the social and educational policies of the UK and with the practices of language professionals', Mike Baynham of its role in TESOL and debates around migration and multiculturalism. Susan Hunston gives further examples of diverse applied linguistic work on 'academic identity … power in courtrooms … roles in workplaces [and] classroom interaction'. She sees these disparate areas as united by their interest in 'language (discourse) in a social context' and also by their relentless focus on data. To all these one could add many more: forensic linguistics, lexicography,

speech therapy, translation studies and so on. And on. It is a growing list. But it is in danger of being only a list if it has no theoretical base.

Many of us flounder when asked to define applied linguistics, retreating into vague generalities about language in society, or sidestepping the problem by cataloguing the size of current databases and the power of the software used to analyse them. Yet these generalities can disguise an absence of underpinning conceptualisation. Moreover, the current ascendancy of data-based study can be detrimental to the theory and introspection which the best empirical study always needs as a companion, and which characterised applied linguistics in the 1980s and 1990s. Eulogies of advances in data analysis are often accompanied by insistence that language is only external and social, and denial that it is also cognitive and internal: a tool for thought not just communication (Berwick & Chomsky 2017: 55–74), thus cutting us off from a substantial part of contemporary linguistics. This severance is as damaging to us as the converse insistence that language is only cognitive has been to theoretical linguistics. Language and discourse are not synonyms as Hunston seems to suggest.

Yes, applied linguistics has diversified and expanded since 1967. This brings dangers as well as benefits, however. The expansion has also entailed dilution and evaporation. In the name of interdisciplinarity, we are involved and often absorbed by all sorts of other disciplines, many much older than ours (lexicography, translation). Many of those involved in this interdisciplinary study have in reality left applied linguistics for other disciplines. And many who are nominally applied linguists make no attempt, being busy elsewhere, to engage with BAAL or other disciplinary fora, including the major journals.

As the other contributions make clear, the history of BAAL in Britain has often been marked by a failure to influence issues about language in society, especially in education. It is easy to blame the depressing succession of reactionary ministers of education in Britain over the last 50 years, and they have indeed been very much at fault. Yet the fault is ours too. Greg Myers mentions a case in point. Writing of BAAL's reaction to the attempt by a Middlesbrough primary head to ban the use of dialect in her school, he notes the lengthy debate which ensued among BAAL members on Twitter and BAALmail, and how 'by the time a statement was possible, it was too late to be used by the press'. We have been too busy engaging with ourselves to have the influence which an applied discipline ought to have.

So there is a lot to be done if applied linguistics is to survive and thrive for another 50 years. I do not know how to achieve this; it is something for younger members, not so tangled up in memories as we five. But a way needs to be found – to engage not just with ourselves and those who agree with us but also with those who disagree, commentators on language from outside the academy: politicians, pundits, journalists. For this we need a coherent definition of what applied linguistics is: a theory as well as a practice, ideas as well as data. This is a difficult task but one we need to tackle, so that 50 years from now we might be able to say that we have agreed and engaged not only with each other, but with the outside world as well.

Maybe we should take a lesson from W.H. Auden and not feel obliged to hang on to past 'achievements'. Think more about the future instead.

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CHAPTER 3

Disciplinarity and Disparity in Applied Linguistics

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I am greatly honoured to be invited to address you on this occasion, to represent the sadly dwindling number of BAAL veterans who were there at the founding of this association. And it is good to know that the traditional respect for the aged is itself not entirely a thing of the past. This respect does not, of course, necessarily extend to what opinions they express. 'Do not let me hear of the wisdom of old men,' and I do not claim that wisdom is what you are going to get. What you will get is my own view of applied linguistics as I see it from the perspective of the past. This is not the first time I have held forth about what applied linguistics is, or should be, all about and so this talk is in part a kind of collage, the variation on a theme whereby I take up, and take further, issues I have raised elsewhere (Widdowson 1980, 2000, 2005). So you may not hear anything in the way of wisdom in what I have to say, but I hope it just might stimulate some critical thinking about the activity that 50 years ago this association was founded to promote.

How applied linguistics is to be defined has always been a matter of contention, but there is general agreement that it has two distinguishing features. One is that its purpose is to engage with problems to do with language that are

experienced in the real world. The other is that the means to achieving this purpose are essentially disciplinary in that they derive from specific academic fields of enquiry. Over recent years, it has been insisted that a defining feature of AL is not, as its name might misleadingly suggest, that it is only concerned with the discipline of linguistics but that other disciplines too must necessarily be involved in its engagement with problems in the real world. So the distinctive feature of AL, it is claimed, is its *inter*disciplinarity:

> It is perhaps uncontroversial to claim that applied linguistics, in becoming more interdisciplinary, is better prepared for the principled handling of a range of distinct types of real world issues, and more critically aware of its methodologies.
>
> (Bygate & Kramsch 2000: 2)

The assumption here is that the more wide-ranging your disciplinarity, the better prepared you are to handle real-world issues.

When BAAL was first founded, these issues were predominantly to do with the pedagogy of second or foreign language teaching. Since then, of course, the range of issues thought to be amenable to applied linguistic handling has extended considerably. In the blurb on the cover of the *Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (Simpson 2011), Lantolf tells us that

> … the field has come a long way since its early focus on the teaching and learning of languages beyond the first.

This seems to suggest that the early focus was a feature of the fledgling stage of applied linguistics, before it took wing into interdisciplinarity and so, by definition, extended its preparedness to handle a wider range of problems – this at the same time, of course, has the desirable consequence of enhancing its institutional status as an academic field of enquiry.

At the risk of seeming to be out of date, however, my focus will indeed be on how the discipline of linguistics has informed the applied linguistics of language teaching and how far this substantiates the belief, assumed to be self-evident, that there is a unilateral dependency relationship between disciplinarity and the handling of real-world issues. The field has indeed come a long way since its earlier years, and what I want to do is to go back and trace the path it has followed, the milestones and the landmarks along the way, the bifurcations, the roads taken – and not taken – in the developments in language teaching that have claimed an applied linguistic endorsement.

Back then to the past. Back beyond the momentous event of the founding of BAAL 50 years ago to 1957 and another event, even more momentous in its effect – the publication, as everybody knows, of a slim volume called *Syntactic Structures* by a then unknown young linguist, Noam Chomsky. What is perhaps not such common knowledge is that 1957 was also the year of publication of

another work. This was a less slim volume entitled *Papers in Linguistics* and written by a much older and then well-known scholar, J.R. Firth. Although these two books appeared at the same time, that is just about the only thing they have in common for though both are concerned with defining the discipline of linguistics, they do so in radically different, indeed disparate, ways. And, as I shall argue, this disparity has been carried over into subsequent developments in applied linguistics.

Chomsky's definition of linguistics is, as he himself recognises, the traditional one proposed some 40 years earlier by de Saussure, namely the study of the formal properties of language abstracted from the actuality of their use, what he later called 'I-linguistics.' His book is devoted to the formulation of a clearly focused and coherent theoretical argument in its support. For Firth, on the other hand, linguistics is essentially all about developing a theory of how language is put to contextual use. It is the study of 'linguistic events in the social process,' to quote from his paper *Personality and Language in Society* (Firth 1957: 181), and as such is directly opposed to the 'structural formalism' of Saussure, which he says reduced language to 'a system of signs placed in categories' (Firth 1957: 180).

Firth's own formulation of such a theory in his 1957 publication is, in stark contrast with Chomsky, unsystematic and unclear. As Palmer remarks:

> Given that the theory supposedly represented in Papers in Linguistics is so elusive of description, and apparently so susceptible to variable interpretation, even by those most closely acquainted with it, it is not to be wondered at that it succumbed to the invading force of a new theory, so explicitly propounded by Chomsky in Syntactic Structures.
>
> (Palmer 1968: 8–9)

A notable success of this invading force, of particular significance for BAAL, was the capture in 1964 of the neo-Firthian stronghold of Edinburgh. In that year was founded a new chair in general linguistics. Michael Halliday, a pupil of Firth, had already been a lecturer and then reader in general linguistics for several years and had been developing his own extension of Firth's ideas in what was later to become his Systemic Functional Grammar. It seems to have been generally assumed that his appointment to the chair was a more or less foregone conclusion. Instead, the person appointed was John Lyons, a scholar whose linguistics was in accord with the 'new theory' and of the very 'structural formalist' kind that Firth, and Halliday, were opposed to. In his contribution to a volume of papers dedicated to the memory of Firth, who had died in 1960, Lyons makes the rather less than complimentary comment that

> … there are those who would deny that Firth ever developed anything systematic enough to be described as a theory.
>
> (Lyons 1966: 607)

So one can say that this professorial appointment gave institutional recognition of a doctrinal disciplinary shift from context focused linguistics, the study of language in use, to code focused linguistics, the study of formal linguistic properties. In this respect, 1964 was, like 1957, another milestone date in the annals of the discipline of linguistics.

But 1964 was also a notable date in the annals of *applied* linguistics. For in this year not only was Pit Corder, the first chair of BAAL, appointed head of the newly named Department of Applied Linguistics in Edinburgh, but it was also the year of publication of Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens's *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, the culmination of the activities that Halliday and his colleagues had carried out over the preceding five years in the previously named School of Applied Linguistics, itself founded in 1957. The description of 'the linguistic sciences' in this 1964 book, however, showed no sign of any invasive influence of the 'new theory' initiated by *Syntactic Structures*. There is no mention of it in the index.

The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching was a highly influential book and was taken at the time as being a kind of applied linguistic manifesto. Its very title explicitly relates the two supposedly distinctive features of applied linguistics and indicates the direction of their dependency. Its title is *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching* and not *Language Teaching and the Linguistic Sciences.* This is how the relationship is described:

> He (the language teacher) [*sic*] is not teaching linguistics. But he is teaching something which is the object of study of linguistics, and is described by linguistic methods. It is obviously desirable that the underlying description should be as good as possible, and this means that it should be based on sound linguistic principles.
>
> (Halliday et al. 1964: 66)

The obvious question that arises here is how to determine which linguistic principles are sound and when a description is good? As we have seen, Chomsky and Firth have diametrically opposing ideas about what 'the object of study of linguistics' should be. For one it is the formal features of the linguistic code, for the other how language is put to contextual use. Although both may go under the same name, what we have here are two different objects of study with different linguistic principles and methods – in short, two disparate disciplines. So which one should language teaching be based on? The answer obviously depends on your disciplinary allegiance. And so it came about that applied linguistics also developed in two disparate ways over the years.

These two lines of development are particularly evident in two highly influential publications, both of which appeared coincidentally in 1972. One was Larry Selinker's paper 'Interlanguage' (Selinker 1972), which can be said to have set in motion, or at least to have given momentum to, the subsequent surge of studies into second language acquisition. SLA took its bearings from formalist

linguistics and sought to identify how the processes whereby knowledge of the encoded features of a particular second language was acquired. The assumption was that once research had revealed what these processes were, it would provide well-founded criteria for the design of second language teaching.

The second publication of this year was David Wilkins's *Linguistic and Situational Content of the Common Core in a Unit/Credit System* (Wilkins 1972). This was a Council of Europe pamphlet which was concerned not with the acquisition process but with language learning objectives and how syllabus content might be specified to meet them. Its conclusions were that the emphasis had to be shifted from linguistic form to communicative function, essentially on the grounds that what learners needed to learn was what native speakers actually did with their language in natural contexts of use. Here then the relevant linguistics was that which Firth had defined as the study of 'linguistic events in the social process.' So it would seem that his ideas had not succumbed to the new formalist theory after all as far as applied linguistics was concerned.

Nor indeed as far as disciplinary linguistics was concerned. Two years earlier, William Labov had reasserted a Firthian definition of the discipline in the very title of his *The Study of Language in Its Social Context* (Labov 1970) and in 1972, in his *Sociolinguistic Patterns*, we find a statement which echoes Firth's objection to 'structural formalism':

> it is difficult to avoid the common-sense conclusion that the object of linguistics must ultimately be the instrument of communication used by the speech community; and if we are not talking about that language, there is something trivial in our proceeding.
>
> (Labov 1972: 187)

Also in 1972, Dell Hymes's article on communicative competence, though written earlier, became widely known and cited as a contribution to Pride and Holmes (1972). Just as Firth had set himself up in opposition to de Saussure, so Labov and Hymes had set themselves up in opposition to Chomsky. But now context linguistics had come out of the cold and had been institutionally reinstated as an alternative orthodoxy. Furthermore, what was so elusive and vague in Firth's theory had become more coherently formulated. Firth described the scope of his linguistics as having to do with

> the language of agreement, encouragement, endorsement, of disagreement and condemnation. As language is a way of dealing with people and things, a way of behaving and of making others behave, we could add many types of function – wishing, blessing, cursing, boasting, the language of challenge and appeal, or with intent to cold-shoulder, to belittle, to annoy or hurt, even to a declaration of enmity. The use of words to inhibit hostile action, or to delay or modify it, or conceal one's intention are very interesting and important 'meanings'. Not must we

forget the language of social flattery and love-making, of praise and blame, of propaganda and persuasion.

(Firth 1957: 31)

Subsequent developments in sociolinguistics and the philosophy of language provided this impressionistic list of functions with the systematic treatment that, as Lyons implies, Firth himself failed to provide. They are reformulated, for example, in Hymes's analysis of the speech event and in Searle's specification of conditions for the performance of speech acts. 'How to do things with words,' as Austin (1962) famously put it – how language functions in communicative use – had become a central consideration, and a context orientation to language study had been given the prominence that Firth had argued for.

What the Council of Europe proposals, and the subsequent development of communicative language teaching were based on, was the restoration of a Firthian functional perspective on the study of language. Extracts from the writings of Hymes and Halliday are cited as the theoretical background in Brumfit and Johnson's book *Communicative Language Teaching*, published in 1979. Meanwhile, study along the other line of applied linguistics, SLA, following the entirely different theoretical principles of Chomskyan code linguistics, was proceeding apace and getting institutionally established as a disciplinary field of enquiry in its own right.

If applied linguistics is disciplinary, the question obviously arises: which of the two disciplines exemplify the 'sound linguistic principles' which language teachers should follow? As we have seen, the two have historically been at loggerheads. How then can applied linguistics reconcile the disparity between them, bring them cooperatively together in the realisation of what is said to be the other defining feature of applied linguistics: the dealing with real-world problems? In the case of second or foreign language teaching, how can the language subject be so designed that the language is both representative of its communicative use, and at the same time selectively organised so as to correspond or at least be consistent with the natural process of acquisition as revealed by SLA research? It seems obvious that there is a disparity here that needs to be resolved if there is to be any engagement with the real-world pedagogic issues that language teachers are confronted with. And this disparity becomes even more glaring with the proposal that what should be presented to learners should be the 'real' or 'authentic' language that is attested as having been actually produced by its native speakers. Looking back over 50 years, I cannot myself see where the question of how these disparate disciplinary orientations can be reconciled has been seriously addressed – or indeed recognised as worth asking. Instead, they have simply gone their separate ways.

What then does this retrospective view reveal about the role of disciplinarity? What, I think, we need to be clear about is that disciplines of their very nature deal in abstractions, categorising underlying commonalities by disregarding particularities. This necessarily puts them at a remove from experienced reality:

they can only provide insights by restricting the view. The two disciplinary versions of linguistics are abstractions which offer restricted views of different kinds. What they do is to identify general dimensions of language knowledge and behaviour by disregarding the variables of individual experience. Their validity indeed depends on the elimination of such variables, for the more a discipline seeks to account for actual experience, the less explanatory does it become. The main charge that context linguists level at code linguistics is that its abstractions are remote from how language is actually experienced. But they cannot themselves escape from abstraction or some degree of remoteness from user experience. Firth's objection to Saussure was that he defined language in terms of abstract systems, whereas 'actual people do not talk such a language. However systematically you talk, you do not talk systematics' (Firth 1957: 180). But no linguistics can account for what actual people do. Similarly, Chomsky's formalist linguistics has been attacked on the grounds that it is based on the fictional existence of ideal speaker-listeners and homogenous speech communities. But context linguists also make such a simplifying assumption, for example in their abstraction of common features of linguistic usage in particular communities to identify varieties, or indeed in the specification of speech act conditions and their canonical realisations, which presuppose that these represent the common socio-pragmatic knowledge of a community of language users. Context linguists know full well, of course, that in actual fact such categorical abstractions cannot capture the variable indeterminacy that is a natural and necessary feature of all language use. They are a disciplinary expediency. As Peter Trudgill points out, the dividing up of language use into varieties is

> most often linguistically arbitrary, although we do of course find it convenient normally to make such divisions and use names for dialects that we happen to want to talk about for a particular purpose as if they were discrete varieties.
>
> (Trudgill 1999: 122)

But it is not only that such abstract categorisation is convenient. The sociolinguistic study of language cannot exist without it.

So it is that the purpose of linguistics as a discipline, of whatever kind, is to devise conceptual constructs to explain collective communal knowledge and behaviour. In such disciplinary enquiry, individuals only exist as members of categories of different kinds: of a certain social class or ethnic group, as subjects in an experiment, as language learners, as native speakers and so on. The data of actual individual experience are selectively sampled as examples, used to provide evidence of abstract collective categories. Of course, one can argue about the relative relevance and significance of different ways of categorising and the degrees of abstraction they are based on – that one way is essentially trivial, another more valid because it approximates more closely to the reality of language as actually experienced by its users. But it remains an approximation:

the users are still collectively typified as members of a community. They have to be for the description to lay any claim to be of any significance.

Abstraction, then, is a defining feature of disciplinarity and one can argue about the relative validity of different ways of abstracting in code and context linguistics. But applied linguistics is concerned not with what is valid but with what is useful. Validity has no necessary relevance to utility and utility no necessary reference to validity. Ideas that are theoretically valid may be of little if any practical use. Conversely, ideas that are invalid can be extremely useful, as witness, for example, racial or religious stereotyping or the disregard or denial of global warming. Utility in the shape of sociopolitical or economic expediency is always likely to trump – and I use the word advisedly – the validity of disciplinary findings.

But, as I indicated earlier, it is generally claimed as self-evident that disciplinarity is of its very nature useful, and not only useful but essential as the enabling means whereby problems are resolved, and the more disciplinarity the better. How far is that claim actually borne out in the two developments of pedagogic applied linguistics referred to earlier?

One central disciplinary abstraction that finds its way into the practical pedagogic domain is the concept of competence. This, conceived as what native speakers in a particular community know of their language, is taken over from linguistics and with it the simplifying assumptions that there is a well-defined category of native speakers whose languages and communities are stable and self-enclosed entities. In SLA it is this competence that learners are said to acquire, and their success in doing so is measured by how far they approximate to it along an interlanguage scale. Thus learners are categorised in terms of relative success in acquiring the undefined competence of the fictional category of native speakers – ideal speaker-listeners indeed in homogenous speech communities who know their language perfectly.

Even when the concept is extended from linguistic to communicative competence, the disciplinary abstraction still holds sway. Hymes's familiar formulation is routinely cited as giving the necessary disciplinary authority for the pedagogic practice of communicative language teaching. For Hymes the extent to which one is communicatively competent is how far, given a sample of language, one can judge it to be relatively possible, that is to say in conformity with encoding rules, feasible in the sense of being processable, appropriate to context and attested as having been actually performed. This judgement can, of course, only be made in reference to an established norm, as Hymes makes quite clear:

> There is an important sense in which a normal member of a community has knowledge with respect to all these aspects of the communicative systems available to him. He will interpret or assess the conduct of others and himself in ways that reflect a knowledge of each …

(Hymes 1972: 282)

So the definition of communicative competence is based on the construct of the distinct community whose normal, that is to say ideal, members have a perfect knowledge of the encoded features of its language and the conventions of its use – for obviously not otherwise would they be able to make judgements as to how far a sample of the language conforms to the communal norm.

And this disciplinary construct of competence, linguistic or communicative, gets carried over into the pedagogic domain. So it is assumed that teaching learners how to communicate in another language is a matter of getting them to replicate the ways normal members of native speaker communities do it. Thus what is possible is defined as what is correct, or accurate, by reference to the ideal encodings represented by the standard language and what is contextually appropriate defined by reference to the conventions of ideal native speaker use. And, over recent years, what is deemed to be appropriate has been conflated with what is actually performed and the language presented to learners should only be what is attested as authentic native speaker usage.

The claim is usually made that it is precisely the focus on communicative function rather than on linguistic form that is so radically innovative about the approach to language teaching ushered in by the Council of Europe in 1972, and which has become the pedagogic orthodoxy ever since. But in fact there is still a focus on form in the Council of Europe specifications and generally in the way the course content of communicative language teaching is usually designed. The difference is that linguistic forms are now paired up with communicative functions as interdependent correlates. Thus learners are taught that, if they want to perform particular communicative acts, there are certain linguistic forms that can be reliably used as suited to the purpose, and that communicating appropriately depends on producing the forms correctly. In short, if you want to be fluent, you have to be accurate. This of course disregards the fact that appropriateness is determined by variable contextual factors and so communicative function is not inscribed in particular encoded forms. To suppose otherwise is to confuse the semantics of the language code with the pragmatics of its use and to misrepresent the very nature of communication. Communicative language teaching defined along these lines is not concerned with the how language actually functions in communication but only with the normative stereotypical form communication would take in a particular community of idealised native speakers.

The projection of this disciplinary abstraction into the practical pedagogic domain persists in the more recent Council of Europe promulgation of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This, like the Threshold Level some 50 years earlier, is based on the same concept of competence, but this time provides specifications for measuring how far learners have got in acquiring it. Interestingly, here the two lines of development in applied linguistics that are referred to earlier would seem to conceptually converge, in that both are concerned with identifying stages of approximation to native speaker competence. CEFR can be seen as the functional equivalent of the formalist concept of interlanguage.

What informs both is the assumption that you cannot really be competent unless you conform to norms of how native speakers use the language, and the closer you approximate to these norms the more competent you will be. And, if there is no such conformity, then your linguistic conduct will be interpreted and assessed as inaccurate, inappropriate and evidence that you are an incompetent user of the language.

Competence, whether linguistic or communicative, is then an abstract construct defined in reference to the similar abstract representations of languages and communities as distinct entities. Such abstractions have their validity in the discipline of linguistics, where they are not only, as Trudgill points out, convenient, but are methodologically necessary and sufficient. But how convenient are they for applied linguistics, primarily concerned as it is with usefulness?

The key question here is useful for whom? Whose problems are we seeking to address? The kind of theoretical abstractions that disciplines devise can be very useful in dealing with institutional problems of a sociopolitical kind where it is very convenient to typify individuals and put them into different social or ethnic or religious categories. This makes them easier to manage and control. And of course, if you can claim disciplinary authority for your categorisation, so much the better. In the case of foreign or second language teaching, the construct of native speaker competence solves the problem of what is to be taught, and what therefore is to be tested. This is very convenient for course designers, policymakers and publishers because it gives them something definite to prescribe for teachers to teach, well documented by standard works of reference. It is, of course, especially convenient in the case of English in that sustains the highly profitable ELT industry, the peddling of ELT goods and services which it is assumed that native speakers are uniquely qualified to provide. So this disciplinary construct solves a lot of problems and in this respect one might say that it bears out the applied linguistic claim that disciplinarity provides the means for handling real-world issues. But again we need to ask whose problems and whose reality we are talking about. The competence construct solves the problem of what should be taught. But what of learners? How does it relate to the problems that learners encounter?

In this orthodox conception of the foreign or second language subject, learning is taken to involve conformity. What is learned is given credit only to the extent that it corresponds with what has been taught. If it does not correspond it does not count as learning but is on the contrary seen as a failure to learn. Language assessment is based not on what has been learned but on what has been taught. But, one might reasonably ask, why is it that, in spite of the teachers' best efforts, and all the various methods and approaches that have been proposed over the years, learners still persistently fail to conform? What's their problem? What is *their* problem? It clearly has not been solved, or indeed even addressed, in the competence-based developments in applied linguistics that I have been discussing.

The main problem for learners, I suggest, is essentially pedagogically imposed because their learning is actually impeded by the very teaching that is meant to promote it. The language they are confronted with is an abstract construct dissociated from their own experience and this dissociation is emphasised by the customary practice of monolingual teaching. This has the alienating effect of making the foreign language even more foreign. Attempts by learners to reduce its foreignness by relating it to their own language are seen as interference in the approved process of competence acquisition. These so-called errors may be tolerated as interim failures, but ultimately these learning non-conformities need to be corrected if the objective of teaching is to be achieved.

But in producing these non-conformities, widely supposed to be the defective characteristics of learner language, learners are actually doing what all language users do – engaging in code-switching or translanguaging, drawing on and adapting whatever linguistic resources are available to them to get their meaning across. So, as users of their own language, learners quite naturally seek to link the foreign language with the one they are familiar with, by appropriating it as an additional resource in the essentially multilingual process of extending their communicative repertoire. In this way they familiarise the foreign language and make it a reality for themselves. Meanwhile the teacher is striving, in vain, to get them to replicate the ideality of native speaker users, thereby denying this natural learning and using process by getting learners to conform to an artificial construct and so acquire a separate monolingual competence to add to the one they have already got. In enforcing them to conform to how native speakers supposedly communicate so as to replicate their competence the teacher in effect inhibits learners from learning how to use the language as a communicative resource and so develop their general lingual capability. So what we get is glaring disparity between natural multilingual learning and the enforced imposition of monolingual teaching which effectively reduces learners to teachees. No wonder they have a problem.

If applied linguistics is to engage with learners' problems, rather than define them from a teaching point of view by reference to a disciplinary linguistic construct, as having to do with failure to conform to a prescribed competence, we need to consider how a foreign or other or second language looks from the learners' point of view.

And to do this, we have to be wary of convenient categorisation. The research findings of SLA are based on the abstraction of a category of second language learners, so making the simplifying assumption that all learners learn in essentially the same way and that second languages are all alike in being second. But the fact is that, if we consider the real world, we do not and cannot actually know how languages are learned, because all languages and learners are ultimately different and we cannot account for all the variables. A second language is foreign but the nature of its foreignness crucially depends not only on how it relates to a familiar first language but also on how the second language itself

is perceived. I am not only referring to language distance, the extent to which the code of the two languages are alike, but, more significantly, to how a learner sees the role and status of this second language in relation to their own, what added communicative value it has to offer or how prestigious is the achievement in acquiring it. It is obvious, for example, that German is not foreign for speakers of Polish or Russian in the same way as it is for Dutch or English speakers. Russian is not foreign in the same way as English is in Ukraine, or Turkish is in Greece. So attitudes to the otherness of the foreign language will depend on various factors which have to do, in Bourdieu's terms, with what economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital it is associated with. The symbolic significance of Arabic, for example, makes its foreignness very different for Indonesians than say for Chinese.

In the case of English the dominant factor is likely to be its economic value; the question then arises as to how far this can be dissociated from its cultural and social capital as a native language and from its symbolic capital as the language of neo-colonial oppression and so serve as a relatively neutral means of communication. In other cases, the foreign language may be closely identified with the culture of its primary community of speakers, and this might lend the language a symbolic prestige or, on the contrary, give rise to prejudice against it. Just as individuals variably accommodate to each other so learners variably accommodate to the second language: converging where they can identify with it, diverging where they cannot. And it is this accommodation process that results in the multilingualism of their learning.

So how learners conceive of the foreignness of the L2 has an obvious effect on their motivation. But it also regulates what features of the language they are disposed to acquire. If they seek to appropriate the second language by reference to their own experience of language, as I have argued they do, they will be naturally inclined to focus attention on what is communicatively salient. But many of the formal features they are required to learn have little if any communicative value. They are conventions of ideal native speaker usage which, like received pronunciation, are deemed to represent the norms of what is socially correct linguistic comportment. They are essentially matters of etiquette. Since learners obviously have little or any idea what these norms are, for them, correctness has no obvious purpose, especially if they encounter users of the language who can get by very effectively without it – users they interact with on social media, for example, or celebrities they admire and wish to emulate. These users are likely to be much more real and therefore more influential as role models than an ideal model of correctness which is remote from their experience. It is not surprising that teachers have such a hard time trying to impose it upon them.

How learners process another language, and what aspects of it they process, depend on their conception of its foreignness, which necessarily means that the process will be locally variable and context dependent. This of course is counter to the kind of teacher-imposed competence-based concept of language teaching that I have been discussing, and which has the authoritative endorsement

of the Council of Europe. Its devising of the CEFR categorises all languages as alike in being foreign and all learners as having the same objective: the acquisition of native speaker competence, represented as well-defined and undifferentiated whatever the language and whatever contexts and purposes learners might need to use it for. Here, for example, is the descriptor for spoken interaction at B2 level:

> I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.

Degrees of communicative effectiveness, fluency and spontaneity are here defined uniquely in reference to interactions which native speakers enact in contexts that can be specified as familiar to them. Although the CEFR claims to represent a 'profoundly modified' conception of the aims of foreign language education, its categories of assessment are in line with the traditional objective of foreign language teaching as the acquisition of bilingualism which as Herdina and Jessner observe

> has been based on the view of the bilingual as the sum of two monolinguals in one person with two separate language competences. Consequently bilingual proficiency has generally been measured against monolingual proficiency.
>
> (Herdina & Jessner 2002: 6)

And language competences and proficiencies are defined in reference to abstract native speaker norms. The ideal speaker/listener who knows its language perfectly is still with us.

Because the term 'native speaker' carries undesirable connotations, it has been proposed that it should be replaced by the more politically correct term 'expert user' (e.g. Rampton 1990). But the use of this terminological variant does not alter the learning objective in the CEFR specifications, which remains the acquisition of an ideal competence. There is no recognition that expertise is not an absolute but relative quality, not a matter of how closely learners might approximate to an ideal competence along an assessment scale but how far they can use the resources of the language effectively as appropriate to their communicative purposes. In this sense, learners may be expert users even if their assessed performance falls well short of proficiency as measured by the approved grades. Indeed this would apply to many real, as distinct from ideal, native speakers. The assessment scale in effect sets an objective for acquisition in a foreign language which learners are unlikely to achieve on their own. So the highly convenient usefulness of this particular categorical conception of foreign language for so-called stake holders like policymakers, educational

administrators and publishers of tests and teaching materials is at the cost of mispresenting the processes of natural language use and learning.

Of course, as I said earlier, we cannot know how individuals experience language as users and learners, and to attempt to describe it in all its variable detail would simply be to accumulate an endless archive of raw data: a collection of samples with no way of determining what they are examples of. We need to make more general inferences by abstracting from the actual at some level. The question is at what level. There has to be some disciplinarity or otherwise applied linguistics has nothing whatever to contribute to the handling of real-world issues.

So I am not arguing against disciplinarity but against the assumption of its primacy as a defining feature of applied linguistics. For this can lead, and has led, to the unilateral imposition of preconceived abstractions which rather than enabling the engagement with problematic issues on the contrary impede it. This is what I referred to many years ago as linguistics applied (Widdowson 1980). But in applied linguistics, I would argue, we need to reverse this dependency relationship and analyse the problem first. Just as I have suggested that learning should determine what is taught rather than the reverse, so I would suggest that the problem should determine what disciplinary constructs and findings are of use. In this way disciplinarity is brought in on site, its role regulated by its practical value. For example, as I have already indicated, dealing with the issue of how learners conceive of the foreignness of the other language might well involve disciplinary insights, not only from linguistics but from social psychology and political history. Similarly, the design of classroom activities might well benefit from the sociology of group dynamics. My argument is not that disciplinarity is in principle irrelevant, but that its relevance has to be demonstrated in practice and on site and not simply taken on trust.

What I am arguing for is applied linguistics as informed local practice based on a critical appraisal of where disciplinary intervention is called for. But I should make it clear that this is not critical applied linguistics in the Pennycook sense, which he views

> as a form of anti-disciplinary knowledge, as a way of thinking and doing that is always questioning, always seeking new schemas of politization.
>
> (Pennycook 2001: 173)

The problem I have with this view is that redefining applied linguistics as a new form of knowledge is not to deny its disciplinarity but to confirm it as its primary feature. For what counts as disciplinary knowledge is not fixed but has always been subject to various ways of thinking and doing and questioning, coming up with schemas of different kinds. So Pennycook is in fact proposing not an anti-disciplinary but alternative and politicised *pro*-disciplinary way of conceiving of applied linguistics. Potentially significant though such a reconceptualisation might be, the question remains as to how it can be usefully

implemented for the solving of actual problems in the practical domain. You can go on thinking, questioning and seeking on a disciplinary level without ever engaging with problematic issues that real people actually experience.

Indeed that is what applied linguistics has tended to do, and it has become institutionally established not as an effective means for addressing real-world issues but as a field of academic enquiry, not essentially different from any other, with its own university departments, its own associations and, of course, its own peer-reviewed learned journals. The peers who do the reviewing are typically themselves academics who will evaluate the learnedness of contributions by reference to disciplinary criteria. These contributions subsequently acquire relative significance by reference to what other academics have written and assigned an impact value by bibliometrical quantification, and the journal is ranked on the academic league table accordingly. What impact the contributions have on the extra-mural world outside academia is not measured, and indeed does not seem to be considered of any relevance. It may be claimed that they nevertheless show that applied linguistics is in a state of preparedness for the principled handling of a range of distinct types of 'real-world issues,' but, in the absence of evidence, one just has to take this on trust. On the face of it, what we seem to have is a disparity between what is promised in principle and what is actually delivered in practice.

Let me stress again that I am not arguing against disciplinarity, but that it can only be a defining feature of applied linguistics if it can be brought to bear on issues in the real world, its abstractions being actualised on site as and when required. So we first need to consider the nature of the problem to be handled as a crucial precondition on deciding what kind of disciplinary intervention is appropriate and relevant to the local context of situation.

And here we return to J.R. Firth. For the notion of 'context of situation' was central to his proposal for a linguistics of language use. This is how he describes it:

> My view was, and still is, that 'context of situation' is best used as a suitable schematic construct to apply to language events, and that it is a group of related categories at a different level from grammatical categories but rather of the same abstract nature. A context of situation for linguistic work brings into relation the following categories:
> A. The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.
> B. The verbal action of the participants.
>   i.   The non-verbal action of the participants.
>   ii. The relevant objects.
> C. The effect of the verbal action.
> (Firth 1957: 182)

As noted earlier, Firth never managed to develop this schematic construct into a systematic and coherent theory, and so it was found wanting in validity from a disciplinary linguistics perspective. But, from the perspective of applied

linguistics, it provides an excellent framework for the analysis of the problems that it claims to deal with. Firth took the concept over from Malinowski, who used it to give an ethnographic account of the particular language behaviour of the Trobriand Islanders, and it was Firth's attempted systematisation of this descriptive schema into a general theory of meaning that proved so elusive. But we can, so to speak, relocalise Firth's schema in Malinowski fashion by using it describe the local contexts in which language-related problems are situated.

Relevance is the key concept. Contextual relevance can only be relative, locally identified and not determined in advance. So in the case of second language pedagogy that I have been considering, what, we might ask, in a particular context of situation, is the relevant way of conceiving of the object language and the objective of learning, what kind of verbal and non-verbal action is it relevant for the classroom participants to engage in, and what effect does it have? But the Firthian schema is, I would argue, not only applicable to the applied linguistics of foreign or second language teaching but provides the analytic framework for the principled handling of a range of distinct types of 'real-world' issues. What is relevant, for example, about the sociocultural or political preconceptions and misconceptions of participants in contexts of situation like negotiations aimed at conflict resolution, or like the interrogation of refugees? What is relevant about *their* verbal and non-verbal actions and their effects – effects that may well quite literally be matters of life and death. I would argue that it is only after analysing the situated 'real-world' issues, and identifying what is locally relevant, does it make sense to decide what kind of disciplinary intervention is relevant for handling them.

Back then to Firth and to 1957. It is true, of course, that we have come a long way since then – through 38 volumes of the journal *Applied Linguistics* and 50 years of BAAL – a history of very considerable intellectual achievement – a cause for celebration on this occasion which I would not want to question. But history is always a matter of variable, ultimately subjective interpretation, and the historical account I have given here is of course no exception. And, being myself a participant in this history, my account is bound to be particularly partial. But my enumerating of an old theme may perhaps have some validity – or usefulness – in provoking a critical consideration of the nature of the activity that this association was founded to promote 50 years ago.

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Applied Linguistics from the Perspective of Sign Language and Deaf Studies

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Introduction

This chapter begins with an introduction to the linguistic study of sign languages, including a review of the status of sign languages within their surrounding majority spoken language communities and a brief description of current research priorities in the applied linguistics of sign language. These include sign language teaching and learning, language and politics, sign language within the bilingual context, and technological and social change. It will conclude with a summary as to the role of applied linguistics in identifying and solving problems in relation to sign languages (both linguistic and policy-oriented).

Sign languages are not related to or derived from spoken languages; they use the visual-spatial modality; they have their own lexicons and grammars. There are many different sign languages in the world. Unrelated sign languages are mutually unintelligible. Around 200 are listed in Ethnologue. It is certain that there are more sign languages: the current number reflects the relatively recent interest in sign languages.

Contrary to common belief, sign languages are natural languages, which develop within a community of deaf individuals. They are not universal, they

are not invented by hearing people to aid in the education of deaf children, they are not pantomime, and they are not a manual representation of the spoken or written language. The failure to recognise that sign languages are languages is quite striking. Among the many maps of the languages of Europe that are available on the internet, none includes sign languages, although the distribution of sign languages does not follow the boundaries associated with spoken languages. For example, Irish Sign Language is not a sign language associated with the Gaelic-speaking population of Ireland but is instead the language used by the Catholic population of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, while British Sign Language is used by Protestants in the North. The two languages are not historically related, with Irish Sign Language being a descendant of French Sign Language.

How deaf communities and sign languages arise

Deaf communities have their origins in the small number of families with multigenerational deafness and also where deaf people have the opportunity to come in contact with each other. Although the most common context for this is the establishment of schools for deaf children, there are historical records of other settings in which sign languages may have their beginnings. Examples can be found in the British context. One is in a book by Richard Carew, *The History of Cornwall*, published in 1602, in which an account is given of a deaf man, Edward Bone, communicating with a deaf friend:

> Edward Bone, of Ladock in this county, was servant to Mr. Courtney therein. He was deaf from his cradle, and consequently dumb (Nature cannot give out where it hath not received); yet could learn, and express to his master, any news that was stirring in the country; There was one Kempe, not living far off, defected accordingly, on whose meetings there were such embracements, such strange, often, and earnest tokenings, and such hearty laughters, and other passionate gestures, that their want of a tongue seemed rather an hindrance to others conceiving them, than to their conceiving one another.
>
> (Carew 1602)

Another appears in the dedication of the book *Philocophus*, by John Bulwer, published in 1648. The book is dedicated to a deaf baronet and his deaf brother:

> What though you cannot express your minds in those verball contrivances of man's invention; yet you want not speeche; who have your whole body for a tongue.
>
> (Bulwer 1648)

Samuel Pepys describes a conversation between a deaf boy and George Downing (after whom Downing Street in London is named) in which the unintelligibility of signing to someone who does not know the language is commented on, as well as the possibility of a hearing person learning it.

> By and by comes news that the fire has slackened; so then we were a little cheered up again, and to supper, and pretty merry. But, above all, there comes in the dumb boy that I knew in Oliver's time, who is mightily acquainted here, and with Downing; and he made strange signs of the fire, and how the King was abroad, and many things they understood, but I could not, which I wondering at, and discoursing with Downing about it, 'Why,' says he, 'it is only a little use, and you will understand him, and make him understand you with as much ease as may be.'
>
> (Pepys, entry for 9 November 1666)

Deafness is statistically uncommon, with about one in 1,000 children born deaf in developed countries. In European countries, the establishment of education for deaf children in the 18th century provided a context in which deaf children from hearing families could begin to be exposed to a sign language from an early age, and in which, because of their use as a language of instruction, sign languages began to be informally codified and transmitted from generation to generation, despite the absence of a written form, and deaf communities began to develop.

Sign language and education

Use of sign languages in education varies greatly around the world and even within countries. Since the beginning of education for deaf children some schools have used a form of sign language for instruction and some have used spoken language, relying on residual hearing, lip-reading and speaking (part of the philosophy of 'oralism'). The extensive dialect differences within many sign languages are generally school-based in origin. The regional variation in BSL can be attributed to the over 40 schools that were independently established and administered in the 19th century. Significantly, Irish SL has very little regional variation because there were only two main deaf schools in Ireland, both in Dublin. American Sign Language also has surprisingly little regional variation, given the size of the country and its deaf population, possibly because of the centralising effects of Gallaudet University and the original Hartford Asylum, where all training of teachers of the deaf took place initially.

Whether communication was primarily manual or oral, until the 1980s deaf children were usually educated in deaf schools with other deaf children and they usually learned sign language even though attitudes to signing in schools were often negative. Since the 1980s sign languages have been more accepted in

schools, but simultaneously there has been a strong move towards mainstreaming deaf children. This has produced improvements in educational achievement but has reduced the opportunity for deaf children to join a natural signing community at an early age. Despite remarkable advances in technology, such as cochlear implants, many deaf children do not achieve age-appropriate levels of either BSL or written or spoken English.

Education in many countries has also had a profound effect on national sign languages because deaf educators took on methods of teaching and methods of communication used in other countries (see Table 1 below). LSF (French Sign Language) has had the greatest impact; its influence can be seen clearly in Irish SL (Burns 1998), ASL (Lane 1984) and Russian Sign Language (Mathur & Rathman 1998) and in some dialects of BSL influenced by Irish SL. Other sign languages have also had this sort of influential role. For example, Portuguese signers use the Swedish Sign Language manual alphabet, because a Swedish educator helped to found a deaf school in Portugal. Irish SL, originally heavily influenced by LSF, has also had its own considerable impact on sign languages around the world. Irish nuns and Christian brothers have taught in Catholic schools for deaf children in countries including India, South Africa and Australia, and the influence of ISL is noticeable in the sign languages in these countries (Aarons & Akach 1998).

Woodward (1996) has described how Modern Thai SL has been greatly influenced by American signs through the education system, although the original sign languages in Thailand have no influence from ASL. The sign languages in Vietnam all show strong influences from LSF, which was introduced into the first school for deaf children in Vietnam in 1886. Schermer (2004) noted that the Groningen dialect of SLN was influenced by LSF after a Dutch visit to the Paris deaf school in 1784.

ASL, itself originally influenced by LSF, has an increasing impact on sign languages around the world. Gallaudet University attracts foreign deaf students, who take ASL back to their own countries. The USA has been especially

Table 1: Sign language families.

British Sign Language (BSL) family	Langue des signes française (LSF) family	Deutsche Gebärdensprache (DGS) family	Svenska teckenspråk (STS) family
British	French	German	Swedish
Australian	Russian	Austrian	Finnish
New Zealand	American	Hungarian	
Maltese	Irish	Danish	
Maritime (Canada)		Icelandic	

generous in providing teacher training in many Third World countries. Andrew Foster, a deaf African-American, led a movement for the establishment of schools in African countries where ASL was introduced as the language of tuition (Lane, Hoffmeister & Bahan 1996).

Most research has been on the sign languages of North America and Europe, and small numbers of relatively well educated deaf people are spread across nations but socialise within local and national deaf communities and share a common national sign language. There are also small, isolated, often rural, communities around the world where higher rates of genetic deafness create 'deaf villages' which develop their own sign languages. These include Grand Cayman Island (Washabaugh 1981), the Urubu-Kaapor of Brazil (Ferreira-Brito 1985), the Yucatan Maya (Johnson 1994), the Enga of New Guinea (Kendon 1980), the people of Desa Kolok on the island of Bali (Branson et al. 1996) and the Al-Sayyid Bedouin in Israel (Kisch, 2007, 2008). (Also see Kusters (2009) for a comprehensive review of research on 'shared sign languages.')

In the community in Bali called Desa Kolok by Branson and colleagues, 2% of the 2000 village residents are deaf, and marriage between hearing and deaf villagers is the norm. Deaf members of the community have equal status in decision-making at local community level, although few are reported to participate. Those who do, use family members to interpret, since not all village members are fluent in sign language. In earlier times, village deaf children received no formal education, although there has been a school for hearing children for over 50 years. Recent moves to offer specialist deaf education has resulted in the placing of deaf children in a school located outside the village, and this has begun to alter the linguistic and social dynamics of the community.

Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language is used in a Bedouin tribe of around 3,000 people with approximately 5% deaf. Deaf children have in the past had better access to education than hearing children, since they attended a deaf school where Hebrew was taught. The deaf children therefore developed a degree of literacy in the majority language, which is a key to employability, and they are fully economically integrated. While all hearing members of the community have some knowledge of the tribe's sign language, only hearing people in families with a high percentage of deaf members are fully fluent.

Attitudes to sign language

There is a long history of negative attitudes to sign languages in many countries. These attitudes are very much like attitudes to other low social status minority languages:

> I had a lot of punishments for signing in classrooms and at playground.
> … Then one morning at assembly I was caught again, then ordered to
> stand in front. The headmistress announced that I looked like a monkey

> … [w]aving my hands everywhere. She [said] she will put me in a cage
> in the zoo so the people will laugh at a stupid boy in the cage.
>
> (Kyle & Woll 1985)

Educators have often compared sign languages unfavourably to European languages, suggesting that the learning of a sign language might interfere with the learning of a spoken language and noting that sign languages frequently 'lack' certain features seen in European spoken languages, such as tense, gender or determiners. This is also of course true of many spoken languages. In the following section some features of sign languages will be briefly introduced.

Some linguistic features of sign languages

Early modern research on sign languages emphasised the underlying structural similarities of spoken and sign languages, but more recent research has moved towards the recognition that there are systematic typological differences, arising mainly from the interaction of language form with modality. Phonological and morphological structures in sign languages and spoken languages differ, because sign languages have greater correspondence between form and meaning (iconicity or visual motivation) than spoken languages do. Sign languages also exploit space for grammatical purposes, creating syntactic structures exhibiting extensive simultaneity, while spoken languages prefer linearity and affixation processes. Other differences arise from the properties of the articulators (sign languages use two primary articulators – the hands – as well as non-manual articulators, including the torso, head and face, eyes and mouth) and the differing properties of the visual and auditory perceptual systems.

Of course, both spoken and signed languages articulate lexical items sequentially. Spoken languages can give some linguistic information simultaneously, (as in, for example, tone languages), and prosody adds further grammatical and affective information to the lexemes uttered. Essentially, though, humans have only one vocal apparatus so spoken languages must use sequential structures. Indeed, linear syntax may be seen as a solution adopted by spoken languages to deal with the availability of only one articulatory system. The availability of two hands (and head and face) enables sign languages to use simultaneously articulated structures (see Vermeerbergen, Leeson & Crasborn 2007). Two hands can be used to represent the relative locations of two referents in space and their spatial and temporal relationships. In representing, for example, a person reaching for a book while holding a pen, English conjoins clauses using 'while' or 'as' to indicate two events happening simultaneously. In sign languages, 'holding a pen' can be signed with one hand, while 'reaching for the book' can be signed with the other. English uses prepositions such as 'next to' or 'behind'

to represent relative locations, whereas sign languages can simply place the two signs in the relative locations of the two referents.

In the light of these differences, linguistic theory needs to take greater account of modality (Meier, Cormier & Quinto-Pozos 2003). Research on sign languages has also encouraged a recognition of the interrelationship of language and gesture, for example the presence of slots in discourse structure where signers can switch to gesturing, such as when they want to show the roles of characters in a story. Cognitive models are increasingly used to account for the visual motivation behind the structure and form of sign languages, irrespective of the level of language analysis (Taub 2001).

Although the social histories of sign languages differ from each other in many respects, there appears to be greater typological similarity among sign languages than among spoken languages. Their relative youth (Kegl, Senghas & Coppola 1999) and their possible Creole status (Fischer 1978) may account for some of this, but visual motivation as an organising factor in the lexicon and syntax is also likely to be significant. The basic similarities in structure of sign languages are sufficient for us to treat them together in a brief review here. Examples are for the most part drawn from BSL.

Educators have often compared sign languages unfavourably to spoken (European) languages, noting that sign languages frequently 'lack' certain features seen in European spoken languages, such as tense, gender, or determiners. In fact, sign languages share many features with other language groups, especially other head-marking languages, such as Navajo, Mayan and Abkhaz, rather than dependent-marking languages, such as many in the Romance, Germanic and Sino-Tibetan families (Slobin 2005). For example, sign languages share features with the languages of Micronesia (Nichols 1992), including adjectives operating as intransitive verbs, distinctions between inclusive and exclusive pronouns and lack of a copula. Verbs in languages of this type (both signed and spoken) often use classifiers (based on shape or animacy, for example), show direct object incorporation, have rich inflection including aspect and show little opposition of active and passive voice.

The visual modality and iconicity

While signed and spoken languages share many grammatical features, the visual-spatial modality provides structural possibilities unavailable to spoken languages.

Spoken languages can incorporate auditory features of referents into the language (as in onomatopoeia), but there are relatively few opportunities for this since humans perceive the world largely visually. In contrast, signs often represent the visual form of a referent (for example BSL TREE (Figure 1a), how it moves or where it is located. It should be noted that not all signs are visually motivated (for example, BSL SISTER (Figure 1b)).

Figure 1a: TREE; Figure 1b: SISTER (Copyright BSL SignBank, University College London. Reproduced with permission of Prof. Bencie Woll).

Whether or not a sign is visually motivated, all signs exhibit a conventionalised relationship between the form and the referent. A sign can be visually motivated but the particular image selection of the referent for the linguistic encoding is arbitrary. For example, the BSL sign TEA reflects the action of drinking from a teacup, while the American sign reflects the act of dipping a teabag in a cup.

Signed languages can convey spatial relations directly. The linguistic conventions used in such spatial mapping specify the position of objects in a highly geometric and non-arbitrary fashion by situating certain sign forms (e.g., classifiers) in space such that they maintain the topographic relations of the world-space being described (Emmorey, Corina & Bellugi 1995). Within these structures, the handshapes in verbs of motion and location in topographic sentences represent object features or classes (how objects are handled, their size and shape, or their function). These are usually termed 'classifiers' (Supalla 1986; Engberg-Pedersen 1993).

Phonology

Phonology is traditionally defined as a sublexical level of structure consisting of contrastive patterns of meaningless sounds. Can there be a 'phonology' of a soundless language?

Since Stokoe's pioneering work on ASL (1960), linguists have analysed signs as consisting of combinations of handshape configuration, a location where the sign is articulated, and movement – either a path through signing space or an internal movement of the joints in the hand. Each is understood to be a part of the phonology, because changing one of these parameters can create a minimal pair. Thus, in BSL, AFTERNOON and ORDER differ only in handshape, AFTERNOON and NAME differ only in location (Figures 2a & 2b) and AFTERNOON and TWO-HUNDRED only in movement. There have been considerable modifications to Stokoe's framework since 1960, but this model

has remained the basic description of sign language phonology. There is also neurobiological evidence from fMRI studies of sign language processing, that sign language phonology is processed in the same brain regions as spoken language phonology (MacSweeney et al. 2008).
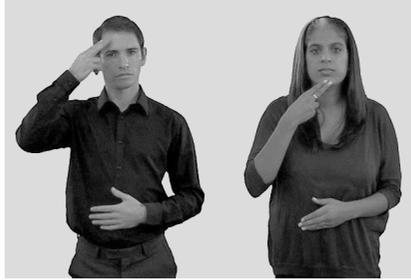
Figure 2a: NAME; Figure 2b: AFTERNOON (Copyright BSL SignBank, University College London. Reproduced with permission of Prof. Bencie Woll).

What is required for both spoken language and sign language, therefore, is a modified, modality-neutral definition of phonology: a level of grammar involving rules for combining a finite number of meaningless features into a very large number of pronounceable utterances (Brentari 2011).

Morphology

Sign language morphology tends to manifest itself in simultaneous combinations of meaningful handshapes, locations and movements. In derivational morphology, for example, handshape can change to reflect numbers – for example n-WEEKS, n-O'CLOCK and n-YEARS-OLD are articulated with conventionalised location and movement, while the handshape indicates the number. Signs referring to objects and actions may also differ only in movement, so the verbs LOCK, READ-A-NEWSPAPER and EAT are made with a single, large movement, compared to the derivationally related nouns KEY, NEWSPAPER and FOOD, which have short, repeated movements.

   Verbs in SL can be morphologically complex, with three types of verbs (plain, agreeing and spatial) defined by their morphology, their semantics and the type of space they inhabit. Plain verbs often represent agent or experiencer activity; agreeing verbs usually represent transfer between agent and object; and spatial verbs represent static or dynamic location. The three types have different movement characteristics: plain verbs are often body anchored; agreeing verbs often move in the horizontal plane; spatial verbs often move in all three planes. Sign languages differ in their assignment of verbs to these classes: The BSL verb WANT is a plain verb, while ASL WANT is an agreeing verb.

Figures 3, 4 and 5 below provide examples of each of these verb types. It can also be seen that the syntax of BSL differs systematically from English syntax, with the verb in sentence-final position.

FILM   INDEX   FRIEND   LIKE-NOT

Figure 3: Plain verb. *My friend didn't like that film* (Stills from unpublished video. Reproduced with permission of Prof. Bencie Woll).


YESTERDAY   INDEX-3pl$_j$ INDEX-1sg   INTERPRET-3pl-obj$_j$

Figure 4: Agreeing verb. *Yesterday I interpreted for all of them* (Stills from unpublished video. Reproduced with permission of Prof. Bencie Woll).

The verb INTERPRET 'agrees' with the location assigned to the object 'all of them' (INDEX-3pl$_j$)

TABLE   BOOK PEN   LONG-THIN-OBJ-cl   FLAT-OBJ-cl

Figure 5: Spatial verb. *The pen is to the right of the book on the table* (Stills from unpublished video. Reproduced with permission of Prof. Bencie Woll).

The lexical signs BOOK and PEN are replaced in the verb (LOCATED-ON) by the classifiers for FLAT-OBJECT and LONG-THIN-OBJECT, respectively, while their location is indicated by the matching of their height in space with the height of the sign TABLE.

Inflectional morphology is also shown by changes in movement and location. Thus, degree is shown through size, speed, onset speed and length of hold in a movement, with, for example, LUCKY having a smaller, smoother movement than VERY-LUCKY. The movement changes conveying temporal aspect

are frequently visually motivated, so that repeated actions or events are shown through repetition of the sign; duration of an event is paralleled by duration of the sign (signs for shorter events being articulated for less time than signs for longer events); and when an event is interrupted suddenly, the movement of the sign is interrupted.

Syntax

As discussed above, sign languages exploit the possibilities afforded by multiple articulators. Simultaneous syntactic structures include, for example, producing the head of a noun phrase on the non-dominant hand and the modifier on dominant hand; argument maintenance on the non-dominant hand; and duplication of a verb on two hands for reciprocal action (e.g., LOOK (one-handed) versus LOOK-AT-EACH-OTHER (two-handed)).

Differences between BSL sign order and English word order were noted in the early 19th century in a gloss of the Lord's Prayer in BSL:

> Father our, heaven in, name thy hallowed. Kingdom thy come – will thy done – earth on – heaven in – same. Bread give us daily – trespasses our forgive us – they trespass against us, forgive – same. Temptation lead not – but evil deliver from. Kingdom – power – glory thine forever.
>
> (Hippisley Tuckfield 1839)

Visual prosody

Facial actions, including movements of the brows, eyes, mouth and head, are used in sign languages to mark prosodic contrasts. For example, wh-questions ('Who's the man in the blue shirt?') and yes/no questions ('Was there a researchers' meeting yesterday?' versus 'There was a researchers' meeting yesterday'), conditionals ('If I go to the doctor's tomorrow, the meeting will be cancelled' versus 'I am going to the doctor's tomorrow, so the meeting is cancelled') and topicalisation ('As for my book, it will be published this year'). These facial actions are temporally coordinated with specific parts of the sentence

Bilingualism in signing communities

In common with most minority languages in close contact with a majority language, sign languages are often influenced by majority languages. It is rare to find signers in Europe and North America who are not bilingual in their sign language and the majority language. For some signers, this means using signing

and a written form of the spoken language. Other signers may also use the spoken language and lip-read.

Until recently, studies of bilingualism considered only individuals and communities in which two spoken languages are used. With the development of research on sign languages, it has become clear that bilingualism can be bimodal as well as unimodal. Unimodal bilingualism occurs when either two spoken or two sign languages are used (e.g., Irish Sign Language and British Sign Language); bimodal bilingualism occurs when the two languages exist in different modalities: one signed and one spoken/written. Recognition of bimodal bilingualism has led to a re-evaluation of models of bilingualism.

Sign languages are able to accommodate spoken languages visually in various ways. One widespread method is the use of fingerspelling by means of manual alphabets. Manual alphabets use distinct hand configurations to represent each letter of a written alphabet, enabling the signer to recreate the spelling of any written word using that alphabet. Different sign languages use fingerspelling to different extents. Figures 6 and 7 below illustrate the British manual alphabet and its use contrasted to signing.

Many European sign languages and ASL have signs with handshapes derived from manual letters. For example, in ASL the signs GROUP, TEAM, FAMILY

British Sign Language Alphabet
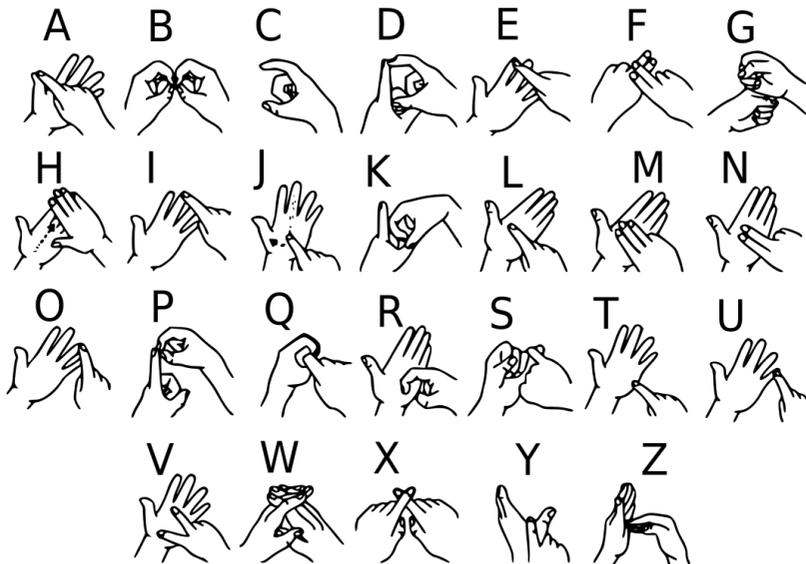
Figure 6: British two-handed manual alphabet (Public domain).
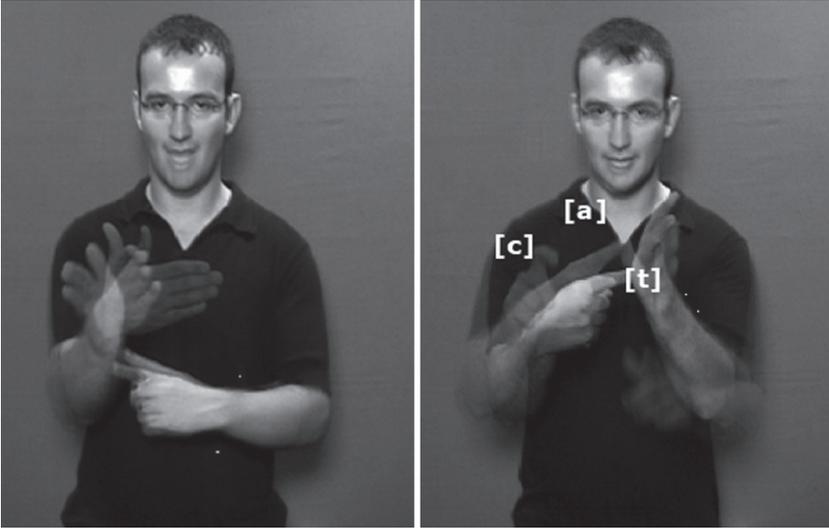
Figure 7: Contrast between sign FLAG, with single handshape, location and movement; and fingerspelled c-a-t-, with three different handshapes and configurations representing English orthography (From: Atkinson et al. (in prep): Hand dominance and language: Insights from a British sign language user following left-hemisphere stroke. Reprinted by permission of authors).

and ASSOCIATION have handshapes borrowed from the letters -g-, -t-, -f- and -a-, respectively, but the movement and location of the signs are otherwise identical. In Irish Sign Language, the signs HAPPY, HEARING and HOUR all have the same -h- handshape, although the movements and locations of the signs differ. Fingerspelling may be used to represent words for which the sign language does not have a well-established sign, or where a sign has only local use. Then fingerspelling can act as a form of lingua franca for signers from all regions. This is common, for example, in the use of place names. In some cases fingerspellings become adapted to the phonology of the sign languages and are used as established loanwords. Battison (1978) described in detail the phonological changes that fingerspellings in ASL undergo to become loanwords in ASL. These changes include reduction of the number of letters to an ideal number of two and assimilation of handshape and movement between the letters. Similar processes occur in BSL (Sutton-Spence, Woll & Allsop 1990). BSL also makes use of single manual letter signs as established loanword signs. For example, the manual component of the signs MOTHER, MONDAY, TUESDAY, TOILET, AUTOMATIC and ALCOHOLIC in many BSL dialects consists of the fingerspelled first letter of each English word (that is, -m-m- is used for 'mother' and 'Monday' and -a-a- for 'automatic' and 'alcoholic').

These single manual letter signs can have several potential homonyms. Context serves to distinguish between the manual homonyms, but in many sign languages, especially where the signers know the spoken language of the wider community, the mouth action derived from the spoken word equivalent is also articulated, both for fingerspelling-derived signs and for other signs. Thus the sign MOTHER using -m-m- is accompanied by mouthing of the English word 'mother', and BATTERY and UNCLE are distinguished by their respective mouthings. Mouthings are commonly used in European sign languages, and to a lesser extent in ASL, not only to distinguish between homonyms but more generally (Boyes-Braem & Sutton-Spence 2001). The use of these spoken language mouthings together with signs is an example of code-mixing specific to cross-modal bilingualism, since only sign languages allow the articulation of forms from two languages simultaneously, and is known as code-blending.

Borrowing from sign languages

Although sign languages borrow most extensively from the spoken languages of the wider hearing community, they also borrow from other sign languages. BSL and Irish Sign Language borrow from each other, owing to cultural and geographical closeness. Signers of ISL have considerable access to BSL, both through television broadcasts of British television programmes for deaf viewers that can be received in Ireland and through the ease of movement for social and employment purposes between Ireland and England. Borrowing may also occur on a larger scale through educational practice. Richer countries, such as the USA, Finland, Denmark and Britain, with teacher training facilities and Deaf Studies departments at university level, may train people from poorer countries with less well developed education and Deaf Studies facilities of their own. When they return to their own countries, graduates take with them influences from European and American sign languages (see, e.g., Schmaling 2003). As with all languages in contact, there is influence on sign languages from surrounding spoken languages, either through natural processes of borrowing (see below) or the use in schools of artificial communication systems such as 'Signed English' or 'Signed Dutch'.

Language change and technology

Social and technological changes are having a substantial effect on BSL and other sign languages. It must remembered that there was no BSL on television until after 1980. Now several hours of sign language are broadcast daily (mostly in the form of sign language interpretation of mainstream programming); there

is an ever increasing number of signed videos on the internet; and remote face-to-face interaction via Skype and Facetime is now common. As documentation of sign language increases, previously substantial regional variation in BSL is reducing rapidly.

Sign language dictionaries are usually created to collect and preserve the lexicon of the language or to allow others to learn the language. Most SL 'dictionaries' are more accurately 'bilingual word lists' using a written language and illustrations of signs. Signs are rarely defined using the sign language and are more often defined through the written language. Some specialist bilingual dictionaries offer translations of words and signs used in specific trades or scholarly areas (for example, see www.artsigns.ac.uk).

Dictionaries of minority languages often aim to document the endangered language, be a reference dictionary for less fluent speakers, be a teaching tool, standardise the language, and 'celebrate' the language. They often provide 'a clear and powerful symbolic function of recognition and empowerment on the language' (Lucas 2002) but can also threaten the language if the making of the dictionary is not carefully controlled (Armstrong 2003), especially if the language description is perceived prescriptively. Signs that are in dictionaries are more likely to be accorded high status, be considered 'standard' and be in more widespread use than those that are omitted. Dictionaries have relatively little direct impact on native signers, because they rarely use them, but second language learners of sign languages who use these dictionaries often become educators or interpreters and may ultimately have considerable power within the sign language community.

Recent advances in technology have allowed construction of signed corpora (cp. BSL Corpus Project https://bslcorpusproject.org/). Signed corpora are still small, but corpus-based dictionaries are also now available (cp. BSL SignBank http://bslsignbank.ucl.ac.uk/). Corpora allow researchers to identify sign frequencies so that teaching materials can be better designed and are also of great importance in developing automated translations.

Learning sign language as an L1

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss research on sign language acquisition as an L1. There is general agreement that sign language acquisition parallels that of spoken language when young children (deaf or hearing) are exposed to sign language by deaf parents. However, most deaf children's exposure to language is very different from that of hearing children learning a spoken language. The typical experience for deaf children is late exposure to a first language, even in the context of cochlear implantation (Mayberry & Squires 2006). Herman and Roy (2006) found that many deaf children do not achieve age-appropriate levels of BSL, and the majority of deaf children also do not achieve age-appropriate levels of spoken/written language.

Learning sign language as an L2

There have been substantial changes in the attitudes of the general public to sign language since the 1980s, particularly in the representation of sign languages in the media. This has been accompanied by an enormous increase in the number of hearing people learning sign language (there are significantly more hearing people with some knowledge of BSL than the number of members of the deaf community). There is current interest in offering sign languages as modern languages within the general school population. France announced in July 2009 that it would introduce LSF into the Baccalaureate system; in England, a pilot GCSE course ran in 2015, and the Department for Education has agreed to offer a BSL GCSE. Universities in the UK and other countries recognise sign languages as meeting their modern language requirements. In the USA, ASL is the second most popular modern language studied by undergraduates after Spanish.

The increased interest in learning sign language has implications for teacher training and language resources, as training for sign language teachers is often very limited or non-existent.

Sign language interpreting

In the past the 'go-between' for hearing and deaf people was traditionally a hearing member of a deaf person's family or a 'missioner' – a church or voluntary worker with the deaf. As connections between deaf communities and the church weakened, this task was taken on by social workers for the deaf (Brennan & Brown 1997). (The BSL sign SOCIAL-WORKER is derived from the old sign MINISTER). Professional BSL/English interpreting began in the early 1980s. Interpreters now undergo formal linguistic and interpreting training. Unfortunately, the shortage of interpreters is a serious problem, since they enable access to communication with the hearing world. Laws requiring sign language provision in public settings (such as on television or for health and legal settings) do not take into account the shortage of qualified, experienced interpreters. There is also a shortage of deaf interpreters, who often work as 'relay' interpreters in situations where a deaf person (for example, in court) may not understand the signing of a hearing interpreter, who in turn may not understand the deaf person. In such situations a deaf relay interpreter may be called upon to act as an interface between the interpreter and the deaf client (Brennan & Brown 1997). Increasingly, deaf interpreters also work in the media, providing sign language translations of pre-recorded programmes or pre-prepared live programmes.

A frequently proposed solution to the chronic shortage of interpreters is automated BSL-to-English translation and the use of computer-generated signing avatars. Such systems are still in early stages of development and – despite

press reports – need much further work, including linguistic research, and access to sign language corpora

Conclusions

Where will the field go next? A review and re-examination of the educational experiences and achievements of deaf children is overdue, as is research to underpin policy developments in relation to education, legal rights to interpreting, accessibility requirements for broadcasters and employment rights. New training programmes for the teaching of BSL in schools and universities and for deaf classroom assistants, sign language therapy assistants and interpreters (both deaf and hearing) are needed.

The history of sign languages, like that of many minority languages, cannot be separated from a study of their relationship with the majority language communities which surround them. At the beginning of the 21st century, there are contrasting futures: pressures, such as the decrease in opportunities for deaf children to use sign language with their peers as a result of the shift to mainstream education and the possible decrease in the deaf population as a result of medical intervention and advances in genetics; while, at the same time, there is increased interest and demand from the hearing community for courses in sign language, increased use of sign language in public contexts and increased pride of the deaf community in their distinctive language and culture. It is to be hoped and expected that sign languages will continue to be living languages. Applied linguistics has a great deal to contribute.

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The Vital Need for Ontological, Epistemological and Methodological Diversity in Applied Linguistics

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Introduction

Applied linguistics has been a battleground for researchers with different theoretical bases, ontological positions, epistemological priorities and methodological preferences. In the present contribution I will focus on the criticism that was levelled at quantitative research into individual differences (IDs) in applied linguistics, and more specifically the affective SLA research developed by Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) by poststructuralist researchers and by researchers inspired by dynamic system theory (DST). Despite the very distinct theoretical backgrounds of poststructuralist and DST researchers, the criticisms were actually quite similar in nature and reflected unhappiness with the dominant ontological, epistemological and methodological choices in the field. Indeed, early research in applied linguistics was dominated by an etic perspective, relying mainly on quantitative data and statistical analysis, while at the start of the 21st century a much larger proportion of researchers started embracing the emic perspective, relying on qualitative data in order to hear

participants' voices (Pike 1954; Firth & Wagner 2007). Some central figures in the field, like Dörnyei, reflect this shift in their own work. In his *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics* (2007) Dörnyei – well known for his quantitative leanings – stated:

> although I genuinely appreciate qualitatively oriented colleagues' skills in teasing meaningful patterns out of masses of rather fluid and messy data, my attraction to well-structured systems, clear-cut boundaries, standardized procedures, and statistical analyses make me more naturally a quantitative researcher.
>
> (Dörnyei 2007: 174)

A mere five years later, Dörnyei rejected statistical analysis of groups: 'aggregated scores from a sample are often meaningless when one tries to understand the intricate dynamics of a complex system' (Dörnyei 2012: 4).

I propose to discuss the criticisms and offer a defence of quantitative 'affective' research, including the use of group averages, in order to avoid it being kicked aside in mainstream applied linguistic research. Quantitative affective research in SLA, and in applied linguistics in general, offers a fertile ground for crucial interdisciplinary collaboration between applied linguists, psychologists and education specialists from different backgrounds. Such collaborations need to continue, and to grow further, not just because they can lead to much needed methodological and epistemological diversity (Prior 2019) and triangulation of elusive phenomena and hence to theoretical innovation but also because the pedagogical implications of this research can serve the foreign language teaching community, and by extension foreign language learners in general.

I will start with defining some basic concepts before delving into the objections from poststructuralist researchers. The focus will be on Pavlenko's (2002, 2013) insightful criticisms of quantitative affective SLA. After that, I will look into DST-based researchers' more recent disengagement from the quantitative affective SLA. The guiding questions are as follows: should quantitative affective SLA researchers simply give up and cancel their SPSS licences? Is there a way to continue in the quantitative tradition with a stronger awareness of its limitations? What would be the consequences of abandoning quantitative methods to study affective SLA?

Some epistemological issues

The opposition between 'emic' and 'etic' was introduced by cultural anthropologist Pike (1954) in his pursuit of tools that could describe all human social behaviour. Pike's main argument was that interpretive (etic) frameworks by outsiders differ from culturally specific (emic) frameworks used by insiders of a culture for interpreting and assigning meaning to their experiences. Etic/

quantitative approaches are rooted in the positivistic paradigm, where research-ers are assumed to be impartial in their investigations of cause–effect relation-ships between the variables in a world of real objects (Farhady 2013: 1). Emic analyses, on the other hand, are based on participants' un/conscious perspec-tives and interpretations of behaviour, events and situations in their own words (Pike 1954). In other words, participants' voices are heard. This emic/qualita-tive approach is 'comparatively heterogeneous in its aims and methodologies,' covering case study research, conversation analysis and (critical) ethnography (Markee 2013: 1). There is also much more variation in ontological and episte-mological assumptions of researchers using an emic/qualitative approach (p. 3).

One example of emic research is the narrative approach, which consid-ers human beings as creators and interpreters of meaning (Pavlenko 2008; Pomerantz 2013). Narratives are seen as a shared sense-making process where researchers 'seek an emic or insider's account of the cognitive, social, and emo-tional dimensions of SLA, one that is not necessarily open to etic or outside observation' (Pomerantz 2013: 1). The push for emic perspectives did not imply a complete rejection of etic approaches but rather an epistemological rebal-ancing of the field. Pavlenko (2008), for example, pleaded for triangulation, warning researchers that 'participants' stories are interpretations, and not rep-resentations, of reality, and are best used in conjunction with other means of data collection' (2008: 324).

Traditional affective research in SLA was very much steeped in the etic/quantitative perspective: opinions and attitudes of participants were collected through research instruments designed and formulated by the researchers. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) explained that pioneers like Gardner were statisti-cians, which explained the relatively narrow quantitative approach (2015: 91). Schrauf (2016) argues that it is wrong to label the quantitative approach as exclusively etic. Data collection through surveys and semi-structured inter-views 'are both thoroughly discursive, interactional events in which meaning is collaboratively produced by both respondent and interviewer' (2016: xi). Both qualitative and quantitative data undergo extensive transformation prior to analysis. Schrauf explains that qualitative data require technically precise and fine-grained transcription. In quantitative surveys, 'data is ultimately trans-formed into participants' belief statements (items) with linguistic "stances" (response options) reported on a standard spreadsheet. I argue that linguistic stance is at the heart of survey response' (2016: xi). Schrauf's argument is a valid one, in the sense that the urge to distinguish etic/quantitative from emic/qualitative approaches might create an artificial view of incommensurability of findings generated by quantitative methods on the one hand and qualitative research methods on the other. Similar views have been expressed by Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), who have argued that quantitative and qualitative approaches are not mutually exclusive as both entail some degree of categorisa-tion and quantification of data. It is thus crucial to avoid gross simplifications. Similarly, Dörnyei argued:

although there is no shortage of convincing intellectual arguments to justify paradigm incompatibility, most researchers have actually stopped short of claiming the inevitability of this conflict and, particularly in the last decade, scholars have started to look for some sort of an interface between the two research traditions.

(Dörnyei 2007: 29)

The poststructuralist challenge

Pavlenko (2013), in an essay on the affective turn in second language acquisition (SLA), celebrates the recent interest in emotion in SLA: 'In the past decade … we have witnessed an affective turn, which has dramatically transformed and expanded the scope of research on the role of affect in SLA' (2013: 5). She starts a section with the provocative title *Affective Factors and Why They Don't Work*. Pointing to three major SLA textbooks, she notes that their authors consider studies focused on the link between SLA and language affect, loosely defined as feelings or emotional reactions about the language, its users and its culture and lumped together with other individual differences (IDs), such as 'anxiety, motivation, personality characteristics and willingness to communicate' (2013: 6), with the aim of establishing 'whether there is a causal relationship between "affective actors" and L2 acquisition' and whether 'affective variables can explain individual variation in SLA and can be predictors of success' (2013: 7). Pavlenko feels that the textbook authors failed to highlight the 'atheoretical and reductionist nature of the paradigm,' the fact that 'the study of affect has moved beyond "affective" factors' (ibid.), that no attention was paid to other emotions but anxiety and 'the search for linear cause-and-effect relationship between affective factors and achievement in the absence of any psycholinguistic theory of how such influence may take place' (ibid.). The search for predictors of FL achievement is doomed to failure, according to Pavlenko, because 'anxiety, attitudes and motivation are dynamic and social phenomena and the relationship and the relationship between these phenomena and levels of achievement is reciprocal rather than unidirectional' (2013: 8). Moreover, affective factors cannot be treated separately from the linguistic and social contexts (ibid.). She illustrates her theoretical points with her own polyglot history, which started with Polish at the age of eight in Kiev with a tutor called Pani Zhanna. The memories are linked to books, to libraries, which are a 'magical world' containing hidden treasures, including books of Polish poets:

It was not love for a speaker of the language (those were far and few in between in Soviet Kiev), nor a desire for an alternative identity in Polish (where would I perform such an identity and for whom?). It was

pure and unadulterated love for the music of a foreign language, which I never experienced again.

(Pavlenko 2013: 5)

In her conclusion, Pavlenko argues that 'to understand L2 learners' crossings and transitions between different affective worlds, the emerging field of L2 learning and affect will require a genuine dialogue and collaboration between scholars from different disciplines' (2013: 24).

Pavlenko's criticism of the lumping together of affective variables and the other IDs by textbook authors is directed at the authors rather than the researchers who investigated IDs. However, the claim that the paradigm itself is atheoretical and reductionist has a grain of truth in it. I have compared the investigation into the causes for IDs in SLA to the search for the Holy Grail in which researchers resemble 'Arthur's knights, stumbling through the night, guided by a stubborn belief that something must be there, glimpsing tantalizing flashes of light from a distance, only to discover that their discoveries looked rather pale in the daylight' (Dewaele 2009a: 625). The disappointing findings are linked to the interdisciplinary nature of this research area: it requires considerable theoretical knowledge and methodological skill in personality psychology and social psychology, as well as various subfields of applied linguistics, educational psychology, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, to carry out a study that is theoretically and methodologically consistent. It is inevitable that researchers stick to the paradigm that they know best, which implies a theoretical and methodological reduction in scope. The variety of theories on IDs in different paradigms means that interdisciplinary researchers struggle with an overload of potentially incompatible theories rather than an absence of them (Dewaele 2012).

Pavlenko's complaint that there is an absence of solid psycholinguistic theory in research on affective factors is a valid one. This is a gap that is only just attracting researchers' attention (cp. Saito, Dewaele & Hanzawa 2017) and requires further research. Her observation that too much attention was given to anxiety was correct and this has been rectified in the last five years with a more holistic take on positive as well as negative learner emotions (Dewaele & MacIntyre 2014; MacIntyre, Gregersen & Mercer 2016; see Dewaele 2018a for a recent overview).

Pavlenko's conclusion hits the nail on the head: to understand the complexity, richness and the dynamic nature of L2 learners' affective and linguistic crossings and transitions, we need dialogue between researchers with different ontological, epistemological and methodological backgrounds to make progress in this highly interdisciplinary area of research.

Pavlenko and Lantolf (2001) and Pavlenko (2002) had already listed their objections to purely etic, cognitive and sociopsychological approaches in SLA. Pavlenko and Lantolf (2001) argued that SLA is more than the acquisition of

grammar, lexicon and phonology, seeing instead SLA as a struggle for participation in which learners 'have intentions, agency, affect, and above all histories, and are frequently though not always, known as people' (2001: 155). Existing quantitative sociopsychological studies that considered affect failed to impress Pavlenko. According to Pavlenko (2002), firstly, they suffered from a monolingual and monocultural bias and an outdated view about individuals moving neatly from one group to another (2002: 279). Gardner's concept of integrative motivation is therefore inherently biased, she claims, because it 'posits the necessity to abandon one's first language and culture in order to learn the L2 and acculturate to the target language group' (2002: 280). She argues in favour of a more dynamic view with simultaneous membership in different ethnic, social and cultural groups. She defends Bourdieu's view of language as symbolic capital, rejecting a 'reductionist, static and homogeneous view of culture' (2002: 280). Her second point addresses the lack of explanatory validity of quantitative sociopsychological research because constructs such as 'identity,' 'in-group membership' or 'accommodation' are themselves in need of explanation (2002: 280). Her third objection is linked to the 'causal, unidirectional and stable nature attributed to such constructs as motivation, attitudes, or social distance' (2002: 280). She points out that motivation and social contexts are continuously reshaped which may lead to ebbs and flows in learners' motivation. Her fourth point concerns her perception of an artificial separation in sociopsychological approaches between social factors and the individual or psychological factors. Factors such as age, gender or ethnicity are also socially and culturally constituted which means that the understanding and implications of age, gender or ethnicity are highly variable. In other words, the 'understanding and implications of being Jewish or Arab, young or old, female or male are not the same across communities and cultures' (2002: 281). Pavlenko's fifth target for criticism is the validity of questionnaires as a research instruments because it is not clear 'what exactly was measured by the multiple questionnaires that attempted to quantify language attitudes, motivation, acculturation or language proficiency, in particular, when the latter was reduced to self-evaluation' (2002: 281).

Her sixth point concerns the Anglo-centrism of the sociopsychological paradigm, which had not prevented researchers from assuming that their findings would apply to any location. Finally, Pavlenko criticises sociopsychological researchers' view of 'the idealised and decontextualised nature attributed to language learning, which is presented as an individual endeavour, prompted by motivation and positive attitudes, and hindered by negative attitudes and perceptions' (2002: 281). Poststructuralists, on the other hand, consider complex situations in which L2 users move between different contexts or create rich, hybrid identities and where language attitudes and language learning beliefs are recast as ideologies, 'illuminating the socially constructed nature of beliefs previously seen as individual' (2002: 296). Norton Peirce (1995), for example, recasts 'motivation' as investment which is shaped by social contexts,

including power relations of gender, race and class, which affect investments, learning trajectories and, ultimately, outcomes. Rejecting questionnaires and quasi-experimental designs, poststructuralists prefer ethnographic approaches to examine the dynamic nature of both the learner language itself and the social contexts of its learning and use (2002: 297).

In the same poststructuralist vein, Kramsch (2006) rejects

> pragmatic notions like 'motivation' … 'affect' and 'appraisal' … economic notions like 'investment' … or critical/political concepts like 'engagement' (2006: 209), focusing instead on 'desire' in language learning, defined as 'the never ending striving for self-fulfilment and the sense of plenitude that can be found in the act of acquiring a semiotic system and making it our own.'
>
> (Kramsch 2006: 211)

Kramsch argues that to understand desire, researchers need to delve into language memoirs and learners' testimonies, or elicit metaphors for learning particular languages (ibid.).

In Dewaele (2009b), I considered postmodernists' objections and defended the quantitative sociopsychological approach. My main argument was that Dörnyei showed an increasing awareness of the benefits of theoretical, epistemological and methodological diversity in attitude and motivation research (Dörnyei 2005, 2007). I also defended the usefulness of questionnaires pointing out that data obtained in this way have been shown to be valuable and can come closest to catching elusive phenomena, while admitting that everything depends on the claims based on the analyses of this type of data. Dörnyei (2005, 2007) pointed out that the quantitative approach in attitude and motivation research was 'systematic, rigorous, focused, and tightly controlled, involving precise measurement and producing reliable and replicable data' (Dörnyei 2007: 34). However, Dörnyei admitted that quantitative research has limitations, namely its limited general exploratory capacity. He identified qualitative research as an avenue to explore uncharted areas and trying to understand the bigger picture: 'I have also experienced again and again how much richer data we can obtain in a well-conducted and analysed qualitative study than even in a large-scale questionnaire survey' (2007: 47). Indeed, qualitative methods are ideal to broaden the repertoire of possible interpretations and can allow researchers to get a glimpse of dynamic phenomena (Dörnyei 2007). Dörnyei (2007) and MacIntyre (2007) were aware of the downside of qualitative methodologies, namely the small sample size, the idiosyncratic focus, the difficulties of biases in reporting memories, the complexity or narrowness of theories and the labour-intensiveness of dealing with qualitative data. Both authors defended multi-method approaches in SLA, arguing that to study affective changes we need 'a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches' (MacIntyre 2007: 573). This resonates with Ushioda (2001), who defended the

inclusion of a qualitative perspective in motivation research to complement its long-standing quantitative tradition.

The basis of the poststructuralist claim that etic-oriented, quantitative sociopsychological researchers consider learners as mere bunches of variables stripped of intentionality and individuality (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001) is slowly dissolving. MacIntyre (2007) focused on the concept of volition, i.e., free will, thus acknowledging that L2 learners are not predictable puppets on strings, whose actions are determined by their linguistic, social or psychological past, present and imagined future. One could argue that modern 'positivists' might not be as fanatical about quantification as some poststructuralists portray them, and that consensus is growing about the need for and value of interdisciplinary approaches with a solid theoretical basis. Similarly, postmodernists have a nuanced view on the use of quantification. Kramsch (2014), in her overview of the multidisciplinary field of applied language studies, urges applied linguists to adopt insights gained in psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, educational linguistics and linguistic anthropology. In other words, disciplines with a great variety of epistemological and methodological preferences.

The so-called 'hardcore positivists' created a sensation in applied linguistics around 2010 by siding with the postmodernists on some crucial epistemological and methodological points.

The dynamic system theory attack on quantitative affective research

The change came after Larsen-Freeman (1997) introduced chaos/complexity science in applied linguistics. She argued that interlanguages could be seen as complex, dynamic, non-linear systems. Crucially, she stated that 'progress in understanding SLA will not be made simply by identifying more and more variables that are thought to influence language learners' (1997: 156). She added that measurement of variables might in fact be useless in a dynamic system: 'If SLA is indeed a complex nonlinear process, we will never be able to identify, let alone measure, all of the factors accurately. And even if we could, we would still be unable to predict the outcome of their combination' (1997: 157).

These arguments won over a number of researchers at the heart of the positivist and 'modernist' paradigm and exerted a profound influence on the field. The first signs of a change of heart came in 2009 when Dörnyei claimed that dynamic system theory (DST) approaches often privilege a qualitative approach: 'SLA does not lend itself easily to quantitative investigations, because the number of confounding variables is extensive and some of them cannot be measured at the level of precision that is required' (Dörnyei 2009: 242). This view was not exactly new since the pioneers had admitted as much 17 years earlier: 'There are probably as many factors that might account for individual differences in achievement in a L2 as there are individuals. However, they may

be grouped into one of the two classifications of cognitive or affective variables' (Gardner and MacIntyre 1992: 212). The authors thus agreed that every individual learner is unique but that learners still have common characteristics which allowed quantitative analysis at group level. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015: 102) describe the DST turn in motivation research as a liberation from 'a single governing orthodoxy' (read 'Gardner') following the earlier blow against Gardner's social psychological research, which was largely superseded by Dörnyei's self-related research.

Dörnyei (2009) expressed doubts about the study of IDs because of their fuzziness and the assumption of stability, leading him to reject the 'ID myth'. Dörnyei (2012), influenced by DST, abandoned his previous tolerant view of both quantitative and qualitative research by stating: 'the central tendency observed in a group may not be true of any particular person in the participant sample. … group averages … iron out idiosyncratic details that are at the heart of understanding development in dynamic systems' (2012: 4). The rejection of group averages is couched is positive terms, namely 'an auspicious wave of methodological experimentation and innovation in the field' (Dörnyei and Ryan 2015: 102). This new view culminated in the book *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* (2015), edited by Dörnyei, MacIntyre and Henry. In its foreword, John Schumann, the respected veteran SLA researcher, made the following astonishing claim: 'The experimental method itself may be a manifestation of our tendency to isolate a single cause, *to see averages as the truth* [emphasis added], and to dismiss variation as noise. Complicating the matter, is the fact that the search for a single causal variable often works and has often been very informative; we have learned a lot from this way of thinking. … DST challenges this approach to understanding complex phenomena' (2015: xviii). Schumann adds that 'the book challenges several assumptions about "scientific" research in SLA' (2015: xv). One such assumption is that

> truth is found in the study of inter-individual variability among large numbers of subjects. Another is that causal effects are either singular or few in number and that they operate linearly. An additional assumption is that categories and their labels refer to clearly identifiable entities in the world. The adoption of DST allows, indeed, compels us to eschew notions of single causes, linear causality, immutable categories, and highly specified endpoints.
>
> (Schumann 2015: xv)

I am not dismissing some of the key points of DST, such as the observation that 'the manifold issues and factors affecting SLA are interrelated' (Dörnyei, Macintyre & Henry 2015: 1), that change in SLA is non-linear and that it is good to look at the whole system (a holistic view). I am only worried that the statement that that it is necessary to find 'alternatives to conventional quantitative research methodologies which, by and large, relied on statistical procedures

to examine linear rather than dynamic relationships' (ibid.: 2) might be interpreted as an overall rejection of quantitative research methodologies. Looking for alternatives to existing methods is excellent, but it does not mean that quantitative research methodologies suddenly lose their usefulness or validity. Also, the fact that the process of SLA is linked to multiple linguistic, situational, psychological, political, sociological and educational factors does not mean that we should abandon the search for cause–effect relationships in SLA. These relationships can only be detected through quantitative analysis. Most ID researchers agree that any dependent variable is linked to many independent variables. The fact that it is statistically impossible to include all potential variables in a single research design should not become an argument to give up statistical analysis. It is my strong belief that judicious statistical analyses on sufficiently large data sets allow researchers to spot patterns in the data and that group averages remain meaningful.

I would counter the argument that statistical analysis erases the unique characteristics of individual learners by arguing that mixed-methods approaches allow the identification of general patterns at group level, which can be complemented by the analysis of individual cases (Creswell 2015; Schrauf 2016). If the quantitative analysis precedes the qualitative analysis, researchers can even pick participants depending on their position on some dimension of interest. Adopting mixed-methods approaches allows researchers to combine the best of both worlds: 'the combination of approaches capitalizes on the strengths and overcomes the weaknesses of either approach separately' (Schrauf 2016: 7). This was also the opinion of Dörnyei (2007: 30): 'it is my personal belief that mixing methods has great potential in most research contexts.'

Addressing the reader, Creswell (2015) explains: 'collecting and analyzing both quantitative … and qualitative data … adds value to a study and enables you to understand your problem and questions better than simply reporting survey results and interview results separately' (Creswell 2015: x). He does point out that mixed-methods require rigorous methodology for both the quantitative and qualitative components and a strong rationale for combining the both approaches (Creswell 2015: 4).

The quantitative part of a mixed-methods study ensures 'hypothesis-driven research with attention to independent and dependent variables; designs that include quasi-experiments and correlational studies; attention to closed-ended data collection instruments; and descriptive and inferential statistical analyses' (Schrauf 2016: 3). The phenomenon of non-linearity in SLA (such as U-shaped behaviour in interlanguage) is also well known and cannot be used as an argument to reject quantification.

The qualitative part in a mixed-methods design allows researchers to explore potential causes for some of the patterns that emerged in the quantitative analyses. By focusing on the experiences of participants, they can gain a better understanding of 'their perceptions, opinions, evaluations, emotional framings, expectations, and agenda relative to the topic of the study' (Schrauf 2016: 3).

Schrauf (2016) points out that these qualitative data, just like the quantitative data, need to go through a process of analysis. The textual data need to be coded, which will be influenced by the researcher's methodological orientation, their disciplinary commitment, the participants themselves and the research topic itself (Schrauf 2016: 5). Qualitative research implies a practical trade-off between the sample size and the potential generalizability of the findings given how much effort is needed in collecting face-to-face data, transcribing the data and coding it. Researchers have to ask themselves whether they have captured the lived experience of their participants, and whether these findings can be generalised to a larger group (Schrauf 2016: 7).

The next point made by Schumann (in Dörnyei, Macintyre & Henry 2015) was the criticism of the belief of traditional quantitative SLA researchers in 'simple' cause–effect relationships. Most quantitative researchers are aware that there is no such thing, and that correlation does not imply causation. In other words, anyone with a minimal knowledge in statistics knows that a positive correlation between two variables does not allow the researcher to determine the direction of the relationship, or the possibility that some other variable might be lurking in the background that might be responsible for the relationship. Causal pathways in SLA can and should be assumed to be multidirectional, such as the relationship between L2 proficiency and psychological and social factors, where L2 proficiency is both a cause and an effect (Schrauf 2013).

The next statement that I would like to discuss is Schumann's position on categories, namely the 'assumption that categories and their labels refer to clearly identifiable entities in the world' (Schumann 2015: xv). The scope of this statement far exceeds the remit of the present contribution. Suffice it to say that categories imply a certain level of abstraction, that the borders can be fuzzy and that individuals can straddle or move between different categories. In other words, the existence of categories does not exclude complexity nor hybridity, nor the creation of new blended categories. Nobody would object to the fact that categories can expand or contract, that people can move from one category to another or have one foot in different categories; it can relate to culinary preferences, religion, sports, sexual orientation, gender or culture, to name but a few. Unhappiness with categories does not imply that categorisation should be rejected all together. In Dewaele (2018b), I criticised the use of certain common categories in applied linguistic research, including that of 'native speakers' versus 'non-native speakers.' I have suggested that a more holistic and neutral categorisation is needed that recognises individuals as learners and legitimate users of many languages (cp. Cook 2002) and does not use terms that imply superiority or inferiority. In other words, the dichotomy between first language (L1) users versus foreign language (LX) users makes more sense to me, since it does not imply any level of proficiency and since multilinguals are by definition multicompetent users (Cook 2016) of both L1(s) *and* of LX(s).

The following point to address in the DST perspective is the status and the value of statistics. Dörnyei, Macintyre and Henry (2015) are realistic enough to

agree that traditional quantitative methods cannot simply be discarded: 'Correlations, analyses of variance, interviews, classroom observation schemes and other methods will continue to have their place in the literature for the foreseeable future' (2015: 424). But they suggest that these methods are by nature focused on states rather than processes, which is the focus of DST research: 'Alongside these methods, filling in some of the blanks left by the focus on product, will be studies of dynamic processes. Each strand will inform the other' (2015: 424).

The suggestion that researchers ignored dynamic processes in SLA before the arrival of DST is plainly wrong. Dörnyei himself is the best example. He came up with the beautiful metaphor of tides to describe variation in motivation (Dörnyei 2001: 16): 'to account for the "daily ebb and flow" of motivation, we need to develop a motivation construct that has a prominent temporal dimension.' It is thus surprising that Dörnyei, MacIntyre and Henry (2015) claim that traditionally variation was treated as noise (2015: 424) and argue that not only will the DST perspective prioritise individual accounts over groups; it 'values variation as strongly as states' (ibid.). It is pretty obvious that variation had caught their attention since the start of their academic careers and that the tradition of looking at variation both in applied linguistic research went back to Labov's variational sociolinguistics in the 1960s, including those who looked at the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in SLA (Dewaele 2002; Howard, Mougeon & Dewaele 2012). In other words, the claim that researchers have only just started to value the dynamic nature of SLA is exaggerated.

To sum up, both poststructuralists and DST researchers, despite their different theoretical and epistemological origins, have developed very similar criticisms towards quantitative research into IDs research in the sociopsychological tradition (see Table 2).

Defending mixed-methods approaches in applied linguistic research

In defence of the quantitative approach in applied linguistic research and in SLA research in particular, I would argue that an exclusive focus on the microscopic individual level might hinder generalizability of findings outside the narrow field of enquiry. Van Geert, one of the leading figures in DST research, claims that 'individual case studies may not reveal much about the population of language learners, but they do have a direct bearing on theory' (van Geert 2011: 276). I would not deny that the study of individual cases can enlighten the theory, but there is a danger that the choice of specific cases might be influenced by researchers' (un)conscious bias, focusing narrowly on cases that can confirm the theory and excluding the ones that might disconfirm it. Dörnyei (2007) was very much aware of this danger and proposed to counter it with method and data triangulation:

Table 2: Summary of the poststructuralist and DST positions in motivation research.

Poststructuralist perspective	DST perspective
Homogeneity is an illusion	Homogeneity is an illusion
No clear causality	No clear causality
No linear development	No linear development
(Social) context is crucial	Infinitely rich complex system
Separation of independent variables is artificial	Separation of independent variables is artificial
Traditional statistical methods are reductionist	Traditional statistical methods are reductionist
In favour of longitudinal ethnographic approach with rich and dense data of individual cases	In favour of longitudinal (qualitative) approach, over different timescales, case studies have appropriate level of granularity (dense data)
Against generalisation	Against generalisation

> Triangulation has been traditionally seen as one of the most efficient ways of reducing the chance of systematic bias in a qualitative study because if we come to the same conclusion about a phenomenon using a different data collection/analysis methods or a different participant sample, the convergence offers strong validity evidence.
>
> (Dörnyei 2007: 61).

On the point of triangulation, Dörnyei was in perfect agreement with Pavlenko (2008).

The debate on benefits of the microscopic, individual-level approach versus that of a group-level approach could be translated into a metaphor of trees and forests. I would argue that an exclusive focus on individual trees might harm a more holistic understanding of the forest. An individual tree might be exceptionally strong and tall or be stunted and suffer from some disease. Only by considering the whole forest can researchers determine the causes, depending on the type of tree, the location in the forest, the distance from a water source, the amount of light and the presence of specific types of beetles or fungi. To address the problem, a combination of tree-level and forest-level analyses are needed. An exclusive focus on either level is unlikely to lead to a deep understanding of the complexity of the system and, by implication, do the forest any good. This last point is important because the foresters' crucial responsibility is preserving and caring for the whole forest. If we now substitute trees by learners, forests by

cohorts of learners and foresters by applied linguists, it becomes obvious that researchers have a responsibility that extends far beyond theoretical concerns they share with like-minded colleagues. Rather than retreating in their comfy, well-insulated tree huts, observing the growth of the bark of the tree with one eye tightly shut and then, after writing up their observations, claim that since the dynamic process of growth is so complex it is impossible to draw any general conclusion, applied linguists should be doing exactly that. They need to look for ways to understand SLA phenomena not just at an individual level but also at group level, testing methods to awaken learners' engagement, to heighten their enjoyment, to manage their anxiety and to stimulate their desire to acquire new skills, new knowledge and new identities in the L2. Through triangulation and mixed-methods designs, applied linguists can hope to gain a better understanding of the complex dynamic interlanguage and belief systems of their learners. These insights need to lead to some form of generalisation and recommendation that can inform authors of foreign language curricula and foreign language teacher trainers. My point is that applied linguists have a duty towards foreign language teachers around the world. Claiming that every learner is so unique that no generalisation is possible means effectively turning one's back on both learners and teachers and washing one's hands of the messy classroom reality.

Friendly epistemological and ontological debates are healthy in applied linguistics. The former focuses on types of evidence used to make claims, the latter on the question whether reality is multiple or singular (Creswell 2015). I have been arguing in favour of Creswell's view that 'reality is found in a theory that helps to explain behaviour among a large number of people' rather than the opposing view 'that reality is better determined by different individual perspectives than one general explanation' (Creswell 2015: 16).

The argument about quantitative methods being 'reductionist' might be partly true but it is insufficient to therefore categorically reject the use of quantitative methods. Indeed, no research design can include all independent variables that might potentially be linked to the dependent variables. Out of a potentially infinite number of variables, the researcher needs to select a finite number based on previous research in various disciplines, on conversations with learners and teachers and on the researchers' own intuitions. In experimental research, it is a matter of finding out whether the manipulation has had an effect on learners' performance, emotions, knowledge or attitudes. In more exploratory research, the aim is to establish networks of relationships between variables, and seeing how these may shift synchronically or diachronically. Large numbers of variables can be reduced. As Dörnyei (2007: 206) pointed out, 'Every initial quantitative dataset has many more variables than necessary.' Reducing the data involves both data manipulation and analysis and allows the researcher to 'create fewer but broader variables that carry almost as much information as the original variables' (ibid.). Data reduction involves a certain loss of information but it allows the researcher to carry out solid statistical

analyses, complementary or parallel to qualitative analyses, and thus carry out vital triangulation.

Conclusion

I argue that quantitative and qualitative approaches are akin to the left and right eyes of researchers. Both approaches are perfectly legitimate and can function on their own. The growing popularity of poststructuralist and DST-inspired views is swinging the pendulum in the direction of qualitative approaches in applied linguistics. I express the hope here that the pendulum will not go too far. A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches offers researchers the unsurpassed advantage of binocular vision, allowing them to perceive three-dimensional images of phenomena. For the field to progress researchers need to see more dimensions through different methods and epistemologies (Prior 2019). This view is expressed poetically by Pavlenko (2002): 'poststructuralist approaches will bloom best when surrounded by other flowers in the garden of theory and practice, giving rise to present and future debates and controversies' (Pavlenko 2002: 299) and it is shared by DST researchers, but their push for more emic, qualitative research may unwittingly push quantitative approaches in an underdog position. Finally, applied linguists have a major responsibility towards foreign language teachers and learners, which means their work should contain implications for the garden of theory and practice.

Acknowledgement

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Applied Linguistics and 'Real-World Problems'

CHAPTER 6

Creative Inquiry in Applied Linguistics: Language, Communication and the Arts

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Introduction

In this chapter we consider what creative inquiry in applied linguistics is, how creative inquiry has been used in applied linguistics research and how it might extend our understandings of communication and language in relation to 'real-world problems' (Brumfit 1995: 27). We present a diverse body of applied linguistics research from a range of contexts which works *with*, *into* and *through* the arts in multiple ways. By considering these projects, broad-ranging in scope, in place and in questions, and grounded in different forms of arts practice, we ask what the relationship is between communication and creative arts and, importantly, what the affordances of this relationship might be for the field of applied linguistics. This chapter therefore offers an introductory discussion of work engaging with creative inquiry and sets out some theoretical considerations for this emerging body of research and practice.

What is creative inquiry?

As we will exemplify, the arts, broadly configured, have become an increasing focus of attention for applied linguists, with a rich diversity of approaches and models of working. We have found it useful thus far to describe this work following Patricia Leavy's definition of creative inquiry, as 'any social research or human inquiry that adapts the tenets of the creative arts as a part of the methodology' (Jones & Leavy 2014: 1). While we take Leavy's use of *methodology* here in its broadest sense, there is a risk that creative inquiry is seen as focusing solely on *method* and that its theoretical affordances and implications remain unmined. However, recent work on three large UK-based research projects (2014–2018), funded under the Arts and Humanities Research Council's 'Translating Cultures' theme, has done much to both exemplify the affordances of creative inquiry in applied linguistics and to establish and develop it theoretically as well as methodologically.

The first, 'Researching Multilingually at the Borders of Language, the Body, Law and the State' (led by Alison Phipps, University of Glasgow) engaged an international and interdisciplinary team of researchers to study translation and interpretation at different borders, where people and their languages must often function (or indeed not function) within contexts of extreme pain and pressure. The project integrated creative practitioners and their practice into the project design in order to (a) translate data, concepts and findings into live performance and (b) create and deliver drama workshops to 'allow for the exposure of otherwise silent dynamics of language, power, narrative and pain relevant to participants in each context' (RM@Borders project website). The project therefore blurred the boundaries between what is traditionally considered academic and what is considered art, and between linguistic, non-linguistic and expressive or 'artistic' forms of communication.

The second of these projects, 'Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities' (TLANG) project (led by Angela Creese, formerly University of Birmingham, now University of Stirling), explored concepts of dynamic multilingualism in superdiverse urban settings. Grounded in linguistic ethnography, the research carried out across four cities (Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds and London) developed a strong shift towards the visual and the embodied (Blackledge & Creese 2017; Zhu, Wei & Lyons 2017). This built on ongoing theoretical notions of translanguaging, as a concept describing dynamic multilingual and multimodal practice in everyday contexts. TLANG incorporated creative practice in multiple ways. The research extended to include a Leverhulme Artist in Residence project for co-investigator Zhu Hua (Birkbeck College, University of London) with visual artist and choreographer Ella McCartney. Creative practitioners, including choreographer and dancer Rosie Kay (Rosie Kay Dance), Mohammed Ali (Soul City Arts) and composer Jonathan Dove collaborated

with project researchers in a series of Creative Arts Labs through which they engaged with multilingual project data (the Creative Arts Labs process is captured as a project film www.tlang.org.uk). Additional arts-informed projects stemmed from TLANG research, including visual arts in contexts of migration and language learning in multilingual contexts (McKay & Bradley 2016) and poetry (Blackledge 2019). The third large project, 'Transnationalizing Modern Languages: Mobility, Identity and Translation in Modern Italian Cultures' (TML, led by Charles Burdett, University of Durham), examined forms of mobility and Italian diaspora, linking closely to the role of the arts in circulation of cultural objects. Project outputs included textual and visual material and an exhibition, 'Beyond Borders: Transnational Italy', in London and Rome. The artist products here focused on mobility and cultural transformation and were integral to the research design.

Creative strands are also embedded across the AHRC's four Open World Research Initiative programmes (2016–2020), which seek to develop transdisciplinary approaches to modern languages and the role languages play in addressing key challenges in society. In particular, the 'Creative Multilingualism' programme (led by Katrin Kohl, University of Oxford) focuses on the interplay of language and creativity and encompasses multilingual theatre pedagogy.

We include these examples because we see them as reflecting a growing recognition of the potential for these kinds of hybrid research projects, which have traditionally had more visibility across the humanities and the arts than in the (arguably more social science-oriented) field of applied linguistics. We will now look more closely at how specific research projects in applied linguistics have used creative inquiry in different ways.

How has creative inquiry been used in applied linguistics research?

Here we turn to what we see as three broad categories of work engaging with creative inquiry:

- research *with* the arts (i.e., what can working with the arts tell us about applied linguistics?);
- research *into* the arts (i.e., what can working with applied linguistics tell us about the arts?); and
- research *through* the arts (i.e., using arts-based and arts-informed methods as theory and methodology).

These categories have been useful for us in making sense of the work taking place under the aegis of creative inquiry, and insofar as this chapter presents a fairly new theoretical and methodological paradigm they are intended to be

useful in helping the reader to make sense likewise and to offer a productive heuristic for beginning to map out this area and its futures in a coherent way. However, we are aware of the ontological implications of drawing boundaries (Hekman 2010) and of the reductionist potential of imposing such artificial structures (Latour 1991). We will therefore highlight throughout our discussion how these categories inter-relate and how the examples within them often move across and beyond the boundaries we have created.

Research with the arts

The first category focuses on the exploration of arts as the objects of communication research, for example as multimodal artefacts and means of communication in specific social and political contexts (Bradley & Moore 2018; Lee 2015; Crowley 2017). Broadly, work categorised as *with* the arts investigates how artistic artefacts – of which *language* may or may not be a part – can shed light on practices and understandings of communication (see recent research which extends the scope of linguistic landscapes, for example Pennycook 2017).

Tony Crowley's paper 'Language, History and Creativity', presented at the BAAL 2017 Creative Inquiry Invited Colloquium, offered a visual essay on what he describes as a 'life-time's engagement with Ireland, particularly the cultural and political issues involved in the conflict in Northern Ireland' (Crowley 2017). Crowley's research in this area stemmed from a period working as a children's playscheme volunteer in Divis Flats and the Lower Falls in West Belfast as a student in 1979. During this time, he became interested in the ways in which language was used in social and political graffiti in Republican and Loyalist areas and began to photograph it. As he documented the murals, he started to see that these signs had multiple functions, including creating a sense of both belonging and exclusion. Crowley continued to develop his research into these landscapes, and his photographs now form a historical archive of over 22,000 works spanning nearly 40 years. His starting point is the everyday, moving beyond analysis of what people were saying towards what he describes as 'the *where* of language' (Crowley 2017, emphasis added). He found that these images, viewed collectively, perform the complex motivations for these utterances and their emplacement in (contested) public spaces in a way which extends beyond words alone.

Crowley considers his research here as a 'creative form of inquiry into language' (2017). This creativity lies not only in the methods he uses (photography and digital archiving) but also in his epistemological approach to his work. His research focuses on the arts as objects of analysis but starts from an affective, experiential curiosity (see Sagan 2017) from which questions and concepts emerged rather than being articulated a priori (see Phipps 2013) and which is grounded in a desire to open up rather than pin down knowledge (Turvey & Walton 2017).

Translation studies scholar Tong King Lee (2015) considers two art works by contemporary Chinese artist Xu Bing through the lens of translanguaging. Here translanguaging itself is seen as a catalyst or 'resource' for creativity in communicative practice (2015: 441) and, although the concept is usually applied to interaction and spoken language, focusing on the visual and the inclusion of text offers a perspective on the role of art in 'articulating a politics of (mis)recognition, (un)readability and (in)communicability' (ibid.). In text – and therefore in art, as in the cases Lee discusses – translanguaging and other features of dynamic multilingualism are enacted deliberately: 'such premeditation and non-spontaneity afford codeswitching and translanguaging practices a higher degree of deliberation and greater space for rhetorical manoeuvre' (2015: 442). Lee brings translanguaging into interaction with the 'translational,' which he considers a site of semiotic 'hybridity' (2015: 443). This site allows for and enables a movement across semiotic modes. The artworks exemplify this mobility and dynamism and shed light on the multimodal affordances of translanguaging as a concept. As Lee states, 'this view is especially pertinent to visual art, where non-verbal signification is central' (2015: 444).

Lee concludes that, in the artworks he examines, translanguaging has multiple functions. Continuity between orthographic systems (and therefore between 'two systems of cultural representation' (2015: 462)) is both built up and broken down. He sees translanguaging spaces as Homi Bhabha's 'third narrative' (1994), crossing borders, including disciplinary ones. Here Lee demonstrates the importance of attending to artworks and how linguistic concepts can be further interrogated in this way.

Multilingualism in artistic works was the subject of a special issue of the *Journal of Bilingualism* published in 2014, edited by Penelope Gardner-Chloros, which featured a range of contexts, from literature to theatre. Gardner-Chloros suggests that the arts, again broadly configured, are sites of rich multilingualism yet relatively unexplored from a linguistic perspective. Adam Jaworski's article in this issue (2014) focuses on another concept used in discussions of dynamic multilingualism, 'metrolingualism' (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010; Pennycook & Otsuji 2015). He considers that the creative use of multiple languages as applied to visual art enables a multimodal perspective on 'metrolingualism.' Theoretically, Jaworski states that this 'suggests a reframing of metrolingualism as heteroglossia' (2014: 134). For him, examining artworks in this way not only develops understandings of dynamic multilingual (in this case metrolingual) practice, but also supports a multimodal turn:

> The examples of art examined above certainly appear to support a more up-to-date metrolingual (and/or polylingual) view of language, but it may be useful to extend the range of semiotic features amenable to metrolingual usage to include a whole gamut of multimodal resources that work alongside the strictly linguistic ones.
>
> (Jaworski 2014: 151)

Conclusion: De-centring language

Work categorised as *with* the arts is therefore engaged with consideration of the relationship of language to other modes of communication, to humans, nonhumans, objects and places (see also Pennycook 2018; Frimberger, White & Ma 2017) and to affect, materiality and embodiment (Appleby & Pennycook 2017; Frimberger 2017). This rethinking of the relationships between language, affect and materiality has entailed a challenge to the primacy of logocentric representationalism, in which language is the privileged vehicle for knowing the world (MacLure 2013; Thurlow 2016). Meeting this challenge requires a decentring or 'provincializing' of language, recognising its limits and acknowledging 'a world of communicating and knowing beyond – or beside/s – words' (Thurlow 2016: 503):

> Language is deposed from its god-like centrality in the construction and regulation of worldly affairs, to become one element in a manifold of forces and intensities that are moving, connecting and diverging.
>
> (MacLure 2013: 660)

Research into the arts

This second perspective relates to the application of more traditional applied linguistics methods for researching creative and artistic practices, contexts and collaborations (e.g., Bradley 2018; Bradley & Moore 2018; Hazel, 2017; Moore et al. 2020). Research *into* the arts might consider arts educational and training contexts and the role of language within these. This reflects an approach more aligned with established research practice in applied linguistics, with creative practice as a site in which the 'real-life problems for which language is a central issue' (Brumfit 1995: 27) are tangible. Arts spaces are also spaces of learning – there is much that can be taken from applied linguistics into creative practice, and communication and language are arguably concerns for creative practitioners across artistic fields.

Spencer Hazel carried out research with Danish theatre ensembles, conceptualising this kind of collaborative yet short-term endeavour as 'transient multilingual project communities' and focusing on language and communicative practices within these project spaces (2017). The methodology he followed embedded him as 'researcher-in-residence' (p. 311), and he was interested not just in the ways in which the practitioners used language but also in processes of collaboration (2017: 310). Hazel employed methods drawing from ethnomethodology-inspired interactional analysis and what he describes as an 'emic praxeological perspective' (2017: 311) as researcher emplaced within the production spaces he was researching. His rationale for researching theatre practice relates in part to the transience of production processes and the

creative products – the theatre productions. He links this to the transient nature of community and how it only comes into being through its enactment (2017: 321). In addition to considering communities and social practices around creative processes, Hazel's findings also relate to multilingual practices in this context – a 'gradual shift away from "language standardization"' – and how it is shaped by the creative production:

> Moreover, the language(s) chosen for carrying out particular activities between members of the team evidenced a shift over time, and the language used between configurations of members also appeared to become less constrained, rather than shifting toward one designated set of linguistic resources being adopted as an official medium of interaction. Rather than multilingual usage being treated as problematic, we saw evidence of participants' orientation to exploring the communicative possibilities of the entire available range of languages and language competences.

> (Hazel 2017: 322)

In this case, investigating creative practice shed light on the creative use of language made possible through these ways of working (see also Zezulka, this volume). The potential application of these findings transcends disciplines. For example, they might inform arts education policy around access to creative subjects in schools and colleges. Likewise, there is a role for these observations of interactions in transient creative spaces in language education policy, for example in the UK educational context.

The study of communication in creative contexts can help us to articulate what it is that creative modes do, how they work and specifically how they work for the people and organisations engaging in them. Andrea Milde's research applies analytical frameworks from linguistics to the creative industries. She identifies a substantial research gap here, pointing out that 'everyday communication in arts practice is just as important and relevant to society as communication in other areas of life' (2nd BAAL Colloquium on Creative Inquiry, York St John, 2018). This gap has social implications as the arts – somewhat controversially – increasingly step in where government services are retreating, in healthcare, wellbeing, education and migrant and social support; work such as Milde's demonstrates the potential for the analysis of communication in creative contexts to contribute to the issue of evaluation of learning, engagement and impact which is a pressing concern for artists (see Rowe & Reason 2017).

In a paper presented at the Creative Inquiry colloquium, co-written with Jussi Lehtonen, Eeva-Leena Happakangas and Harith Raad Salih, Sari Pöyhönen described 'Toinen Koti', or 'Other Home', a project conducted in collaboration with the Helsinki-based Finnish National Theatre. This joint inquiry asked what integration is, how it is understood and what its relationship is with the concept of home, using linguistic ethnography and applied theatre practice. This project took place at the nexus of applied theatre and applied linguistics,

with Pöyhönen embedded within the project design as 'in-house linguistic eth-
nographer' for the production and performance of the theatre piece, which was
devised and performed by people from refugee backgrounds, all of whom had
been actively involved in the arts previously. The project built on and linked to
Pöyhönen's research into migration and language in Finland, enhancing under-
standings of what it means to be mobile and to build a new life as a refugee in
increasingly hostile times. Communication – and miscommunication – were
central themes for the piece. The play asked, 'how can we learn to know others
if we do not understand, and do not want to understand, what they say' (Simp-
son 2018). Pöyhönen explains the necessity for this kind of interdisciplinary
hybrid research and practice for her as a 'linguistic ethnographer':

> I do research to do with language, so my first point is to look at linguistic
> resources which people have to hand to negotiate with. But I wanted to
> go beyond language, to understand not just the linguistic ways of mak-
> ing meaning but the whole semiosis. And in doing so, I realised how
> restricted I am with my concern with language, how much I miss when
> I don't look at other people's resources.
>
> (Interview with James Simpson, 2018)

Toinen Koti exemplifies the inherent inter – or *trans* – disciplinarity of work
in this area, and the creative affordances this offers. Analytically, as with work
by Lee and Jaworski described above, there are clear implications for extend-
ing the analytical lens beyond language and for innovative methods (see also
Bradley & Moore 2018).

Conclusion: Trans-methodologies

Research *into* the arts allows for the tracing of voices through creative processes
(e.g., Harvey 2020). It also sheds light on how artefacts are made collabora-
tively, helping to understand (co-/trans-) authorship and audience responses.
Moreover, these hybrid practices work to broaden the analysis beyond lan-
guage, into semiotics and into *voice*, and may shed a wider pool of light onto
how knowledge is created and how collaboration, making and learning take
place across, through and beyond various boundaries (following Jones 2016).
There are therefore particular implications for understanding knowledge crea-
tion in creative and collaborative practice that go beyond what might be first
anticipated at research proposal stage.

Research through the arts

This final category – research *through* the arts – considers the use of creative
inquiry for understanding and researching communication. Here it aligns with

what Lynne Butler-Kisber describes as *arts-informed inquiry*, which adopts different forms of 'art' in order to both 'interpret and portray' (2010: 8). Arts-informed inquiry is differentiated from arts-based inquiry in that the resultant product might not be an artefact. In this sense it is a fluid and emergent way of working, one which aligns with bricolage (see Bradley & Atkinson 2020). Arts-informed methods might include drawing, painting and photography.

Gail Prasad (2018) describes the use of collage in investigating children's understandings of being plurilingual. She was motivated to establish a way of working which included children aged between 9 and 11 as co-investigators. Collage as a democratic method emerged as a productive tool for enabling both reflection on being plurilingual and communication of these reflections (2017: 6–7). Its affordances were to enhance the children's engagement with the research and her own development as a researcher. Prasad herself trained in the method for two years before undertaking her research, in this way addressing one of the ethical challenges around the role of artistic expertise which is posed by these hybrid ways of working. She states:

> Personally, as a researcher-artist, when I relax into the creative process of gathering, layering, (re)combining and juxtaposing images, I am able to make new connections and allow ideas to surface that are substantially different than when I try to make sense cognitively of multiple pieces of information in the classroom or at my desk in the office.
>
> (Prasad 2018: 7)

For Prasad, creativity and plurilingualism are intrinsically linked and she views an alignment across them: 'Collage and plurilingualism as forms of creative self-expression offer a space for risk-taking, experimentation and the growth of new ideas and perspectives' (ibid.). As method they develop participation, flatten hierarchies and act as a tool for researcher reflection.

Likewise, and also using collage among a range of arts-informed methods, a transdisciplinary project developed by Jessica Bradley with artist-researcher Louise Atkinson (Bradley et al. 2018; Bradley & Atkinson 2020) sought to build on wide-ranging and innovative research in linguistic landscapes (e.g., Barni & Bagna 2015; Blommaert 2013). In collaboration with young people and educational centres in Leeds in the north of England, Bradley and Atkinson explored how Atkinson's practice as an artist-researcher could be used as tools for young people to respond to the linguistic landscapes of their schools and communities. Workshops were delivered which enabled participants to gain an insight into methods associated with ethnographic research, including observation and interviews. The young people then carried out their own fieldwork, collecting a series of multimodal data which focused on the linguistic landscapes of the streets around the educational centres. Acknowledging that the linguistic landscape is visual and embodied, the arts-informed methods enabled the project participants to consider the role of language and multilingualism in their daily lives. Creative outputs were considered more than simply dissemination

of the young people's work, functioning additionally as the synthesis of findings and generation of ideas. The project is continuing, funded by the AHRC OWRI programme 'Cross Language Dynamics' in collaboration with Multilingual Manchester, and encompasses a series of nexus points around modern languages and applied linguistics, visual arts and photography and research and engagement.

Lou Harvey, with Brad McCormick and Katy Vanden from theatre company Cap-a-Pie (2020), used Cap-a-Pie's Dramatic Enquiry technique to gain insights into, and also enhance, the intercultural learning of UK university students. They developed a fictional scenario which raised themes and questions around communication and mis/understanding, which participants explored through a series of facilitated creative activities: they were assigned fictional identities, which they inhabited throughout the enquiry, and then engaged in creative activities, such as making body sculptures and tableaux (where participants have to physically and silently manipulate the body of another to perform a concept, e.g., communication), writing poems and generating philosophical questions. The Dramatic Enquiry stood in contrast to much intercultural research in Higher Education, which often uses students' stories as a *representation* of their identities; instead, the fictional story was used as a basis for *performing* identities so that the participants' *knowing* was bound up with their *being*, with their embodied performance of something, and their learning took place through this entanglement. To quote the feminist new materialist philosopher Karen Barad: 'We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are *of* the world' (Barad 2007: 185). Epistemology and ontology are not separate but bound up together.

Harvey, McCormick and Vanden also undertook a project to develop Harvey's applied linguistics research for performance, in which they aimed to communicate to a public audience how it feels to not understand what is going on around you, especially in a context where you expect to understand (see Harvey et al. 2020). Through a performance with two actors, they deliberately put the audience in a position where they did not understand what was happening, by confusing them or by asking them to participate in particular ways. This evoked in the audience a strong affective response of discomfort and uncertainty, a response which they theorised as stemming from a shared human desire to make meaning, to communicate and understand and be understood (ibid.). The audience shared the affective, embodied discomfort of misunderstanding and being misunderstood, in a place where they expected to understand, a process which Harvey theorised as a pedagogy of solidarity (ibid.). Again, their *knowing* was bound up with their embodied experience, their *being*. And this is where the learning took place: it led the audience to reflect on their own behaviour, their effect on others and their own responsibilities in communication.

Zhuomin Huang's doctoral research used a variety of creative visual arts-based methods to ask questions about intercultural personhood in Manchester,

UK. Huang's focus is on methodology and how creative inquiry develops different understandings of intercultural personhood than methods more traditionally associated with educational research. Using multiple arts-informed methods including 'free style painting' and 'art-gallery walking', she developed a methodology for her research entitled 'Multislicing Semiotic Analysis', which she describes as a 'systematic approach for directly engaging with the meanings of her visual and verbal dataset' (Huang 2018). Huang's work is underpinned by Alfonso Montuori's conceptualisation of creative inquiry as 'self-reflection' on the knowledge-making process (e.g., Montuori 2011).

Conclusion: Application of arts-informed approaches

For the projects described above, creative inquiry here can be seen in one sense as dissemination and as communication with participants across different stages of research. But it also becomes something entirely new through collaboration and openness to bringing in new ways of approaching research. Within the broader heading of creative inquiry, arts-informed approaches are particularly used for investigating learning, community and belonging (see also Bradley et al. 2018; Harvey & Vanden 2017; Huang 2017; McKay & Bradley 2016; Pöyhönen et al. 2017). Research *through* the arts is transdisciplinary and aligns with practice-as-research methods, drawing from across disciplines.

Conclusion

In writing this chapter we have sought to address the question of how creative inquiry can extend our understandings of communication and language in relation to 'real-world' problems. We have set out some initial thoughts on creative inquiry in applied linguistics – what it is and what it might be. But we are conscious that applied linguistics is a broad and inherently disciplinary field and any number of approaches might be considered creative in ethos, simply by a slight shift away from established methods. Therefore, to define creative inquiry under an applied linguistics 'umbrella' is a complex task and one undertaken with a certain degree of trepidation.

Here we have used examples from a range of contexts, including papers presented at the colloquium on Creative Inquiry at the 2017 BAAL Annual Meeting (Crowley 2017; Harvey and Vanden 2017; Huang 2017; Pöyhönen et al. 2017), which all linked, in focus and in scope, to the annual meeting's main theme of *diversity*: diversity *in* and diversity *of* applied linguistics. We posit that extending our theoretical and methodological lenses towards the arts has the potential to diversify our field in numerous ways. Moreover, as a dialogue between fields, between researchers and practitioners, working in this way can extend our lenses beyond those traditionally associated with applied linguistics.

Here we consider this as bridging theory and methodology, going on to set out how creative inquiry serves to complexify knowledge and challenge borders.

Complexifying knowledge, challenging borders

The concept of 'disciplinarity', as discussed by Henry Widdowson in his chapter in this volume, is central to our discussion. As applied linguists we seek to understand how language works and issues relating to language use and language learning. Arguably, applied linguistics is not bound firmly to a discipline, following Halliday's definition of 'transdisciplinarity':

> I say 'transdisciplinary' rather than 'inter-' or 'multidisciplinary' because the latter terms seem to me to imply that one still retains the disciplines as the locus of intellectual activity, while building bridges between them, or assembling them into a collection; whereas the real alternative is to supercede them, creating new forms of activity which are thematic rather than disciplinary in their orientation.
>
> (Halliday 2001: 176, in Hult, 2010: 13)

We demonstrate that the projects described above resonate in some way with notions of crossing, subverting and complexifying traditionally-understood boundaries – between languages, nations, identity groups, disciplines, practices. Such boundary-crossing is also evident in current reflections on the nature and role of language itself: the influences of posthumanist thought (Braidotti 2013) and post-qualitative research approaches (Lather & St Pierre 2013) are leading to a reconsideration of the relationship of language to humans, nonhumans, objects and places (Pennycook 2018; Frimberger, White & Ma 2017) and to affect, materiality and embodiment (Appleby & Pennycook 2017; Frimberger 2017). This rethinking of the relationship between language, affect and materiality entails a move away from logocentric representationalism, as argued above, and towards a performative orientation to knowledge, where methodology and theory, epistemology and ontology are entangled (Toohey 2018), and *how* we know is fundamental to *what* we know (Bayley 2016: 44). A performative orientation to knowledge requires a decentring of the privileged position of language, or what Thurlow (2016) calls 'provincializing' language, to reposition it in relation to other agents and materialities. We therefore consider the potential of creative inquiry to enable such a decentring of language (Harvey & Vanden 2017; Harvey & Bradley 2017), opening up different ways of knowing which do not privilege what is (verbally) expressed (Thurlow 2016) and enabling the articulation of what was previously unarticulated, unknown, unheard and undervalued. This has implications not only for the methods we employ to construct new knowledge but also for our understanding of communication and education and our work as applied linguists: our work does not take place

in what Bayley calls a 'rehearsal space that remains locked behind the doors of an ivory tower' (2016: 44), but what we do makes the world. These examples therefore not only showcase the diversity of work *in* applied linguistics, but also contribute to the diversification *of* applied linguistics by offering possibilities for diversifying our understandings of language itself.

Towards a creative turn in applied linguistics?

In addition to the research described in this chapter, attention to the arts and creativity currently manifests itself in diverse ways and across multiple areas in applied linguistics – there is much work that we have been unable to cite within the scope of this short piece. A plethora of activity and potential for activity has emerged, seemingly connected in what we might consider a *creative turn* in applied linguistics. But this wide-ranging and sometimes peripheral activity also risks appearing incoherent for anyone who might peer in from outside. It also potentially unsettles our understandings of 'research.' The projects we have described here showcase multiple ways in which applied linguistics might engage with creative practitioners and vice versa. Although we understand it as 'research,' some of this work was enabled through projects institutionally conceptualised as impact (see Lawson & Sayers 2016) and engagement (Facer & Pahl 2017). Crucially, such work has created a space for this kind of hybrid activity, building on the developing body of research in this area, and commitment to finding ways for this kind of border-crossing work is necessary for transdisciplinary inquiry to emerge. But labelling collaborative inquiry with creative practitioners as impact, although often unlocking useful funding streams, potentially limits its affordances and marginalises it as peripheral, even instrumental. Moreover, in some cases, funding ringfenced for impact and engagement is not available for empirical inquiry, meaning that a project which starts as impact and develops into collaborative research might not be considered 'research,' therefore restricting its application and dissemination.

A significant question for applied linguists developing research in this area and for us, as chapter authors and co-conveners of an AILA Research Network in Creative Inquiry and Applied Linguistics, is therefore how these threads might be woven together and how a body of work, diverse in output and broad in scope, might be underpinned by a shared ethos. What might that shared ethos be? How do we communicate what we are doing? And, crucially, how might research and practice in this area be relevant for our peers? This is a conversation we intend to continue, but for now we offer our own conclusion that the relevance of creative inquiry is in its fundamental *generativity*. It offers an approach to research and education which can encompass people's complex communicative, affective, experiential and political realities. In its challenge of accepted boundaries it opens up without also closing down – it enables *and/ and* instead of *either/or*. It disrupts any kind of fixed or binary orientation and

enables us not only to imagine, but also to collectively make, 'a world distinct from what we already are' (Weinstein & Colebrook 2017: 4; Toohey 2018). It can lead to greater opportunities for people who have different access to dominant languages, or indeed any language; for understanding people's affective and embodied ways of understanding and knowing and for understanding how communication is and can be used creatively for learning and for justice.

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CHAPTER 7

Standard Language Ideology and the Non-Standard Adolescent Speaker

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Introduction

Standard language ideology is pervasive (Cameron 1995), such that linguistic variation is overtly stigmatised. This is a global phenomenon: across the world it is common for some languages, varieties or dialects to be considered more prestigious than others. Perhaps these issues are not more discussed than in relation to the language spoken by young people. 'Youth speak' is regularly mocked in popular culture, misrepresented by the media and subject to intense scrutiny in education (e.g. BBC comedy *Little Britain*; Johns 2011; Dixon 2013). In this chapter we examine the ways in which standard language ideology constrains and affects adolescent speakers of British English varieties that are considered 'non-standard.' Specifically, we focus on discourses of standard language ideology present in the narratives of adolescents in London in two contexts: one institutional (a secondary school) and one social (a youth group). Building on work that has shown how standard language ideologies are ingrained in the education process and institutionalised in curricula (e.g., Trudgill & Cheshire

1989), we illuminate how these ideologies transcend educational contexts and impact the lives of adolescents beyond the classroom. Although the data are from a specific UK context, the findings of this chapter are relevant to any situation in which adolescent language and identity are of interest.

We first discuss the background literature on standard language and youth styles, before introducing the sociolinguistic context of the two research projects. We then explore four themes present in the discourse: constraints and effects of standard language ideology, non-standard language as a 'cultural threat,' metalinguistic evaluations and the neo-liberal agenda. Through these four themes, we shed light on a broader discourse where negative evaluations of linguistic diversity are integrally linked to a neo-liberal educational agenda, in which using vernacular language is framed as a hindrance in preparing the individual for the workplace (Flubacher & del Percio 2017). Throughout this chapter we use the terms *non-standard* and *standard* language. We acknowledge that these are contentious terms and do not ourselves ideologically align with this dichotomy but find the terms necessary to effectively interrogate the ideological positions we are problematising in this analysis (see Lippi-Green 2012: 61–62).

Youth language and standard language ideology

The language of adolescents is often considered problematic, with young people finding themselves marginalised or reprimanded for not speaking 'Standard English' (SE). In fact, standard language ideology is so pervasive (Cameron 1995), it is frequently claimed that youth styles are deficient (see the notion of 'Ghetto Grammar' in Johns 2011). In media, reports decry the language used by young people. Youth styles are often characterised as inauthentic, such as is implied by the term 'Jafaican' (Bindel 2013) – a blend of 'Jamaican' and 'fake' – used to describe London adolescent speech. Others suggest that it has 'become a separatist form of communication' (Evening Standard 2010). To justify these claims, commentators have framed this narrative as a cause for concern, with young people's 'poor' linguistic skills limiting their opportunities beyond adolescence (Johns 2011). In popular culture, youth styles are routinely mocked, with television characters such as *Little Britain*'s Vicky Pollard and *The Catherine Tate Show*'s Lauren Cooper embodying crude personifications of the teenage 'chav' (Snell 2006), with their non-standard, 'inarticulate' linguistic skills central to the creation of humour.

These popular ideologies have implications for the educational experience of (some) adolescents. In recent years, some schools have taken drastic measures to 'improve' linguistic standards by imposing rules governing the use of language. In 2013, so-called 'slang' terms including 'innit,' 'bare' and sentence structures that begin with 'basically' were banned at an academy in South London (Fishwick 2013) and, in the same year, a primary school in the West

Midlands imposed a ban on the use of the local Black Country dialect (Dixon 2013). In these contexts, schools justify such measures as a means to prepare students for life beyond adolescence. Specifically, the argument is that by out-lawing linguistic features considered non-standard students' communication will improve, thus enabling them to become productive and efficient members of the workforce – a central tenet of the neo-liberal ideology which has guided educational policy on language instruction since the 1980s (Flubacher & del Percio 2017).

But, while standard language ideology is pervasive, the notion of a spoken SE remains poorly defined and understood (see Trudgill 1999 for an overview). For instance, the marking schema of the Speaking and Listening assessment component of the English Language GCSE produced by the independent examination board AQA states that '[t]o be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinc-tion a Learner must … use Spoken Standard English' (AQA 2015: 4). Likewise, in the National Curriculum administered by the Department for Education, it is specified that pupils should be taught to 'speak confidently, audibly and effec-tively … using Standard English' (The National Curriculum 2014: 7). However, at no point in either the AQA marking criteria or the National Curriculum do the authors define what constitutes 'spoken Standard English.'

With the notion of SE enshrined in educational curricula, the distinction between SE and other varieties of English becomes a judgement of 'correctness' (Milroy 1999: 28), with the students' academic success contingent on the degree to which they demonstrate a command of SE. As Snell and Andrews (2016) have argued, this has potentially devastating social outcomes, where those who speak varieties assumed to be compatible with SE are given an advantage over their peers who speak local varieties.

Though these issues are by no means new (e.g., Labov 1972), in an increas-ingly diversifying world in which urban centres are often described as 'multicul-tural' (Cheshire et al. 2011), 'superdiverse' (Vertovec 2007), and even 'melting pots' (Tamasi & Antieau 2015: 188), understanding and celebrating linguistic variation remains a pertinent issue. Yet, while there has been a consistent and sustained body of research examining dialect diversity, standard language ide-ology, and education in the US (e.g., Charity Hudley & Mallinson 2010; Reaser et al. 2017; Lippi-Green 2012), there has been comparatively less research in the UK context (although see Cheshire & Trudgill 1989; Rampton 1995; Snell 2013; Snell & Andrews 2016 for notable exceptions). Contemporary research examining linguistic diversity in UK educational contexts has tended to focus more on the multilingual classroom or issues related to English language teaching (e.g., Harris, Leung & Rampton 2001; Creese & Blackledge 2010; Wei 2011; Pérez-Milans 2015). We take this empirical gap as a point of departure to examine how standard language ideologies constrain and affect speakers of varieties of English that are not considered SE. In particular, we focus on adolescent speakers in order to analyse the ways in which language ideologies are reinforced by educators and youth workers and, in turn, internalised by

young people in their metalinguistic narratives. We demonstrate that, if applied linguistics is to effectively understand and present the nuances of diversity in multicultural contexts, a diversification of approaches is necessary. As such, we use an interdisciplinary toolkit of methods from linguistic ethnography and variationist sociolinguistics to examine non-standard speakers' discourses in relation to the ideologies that underpin them.

The sociolinguistic context

London is a multicultural metropolis. Throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, migrants into London have had ethnically diverse origins, from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. The 21st century has seen continued in-migration from Africa, the Caribbean, South Asia and Eastern Europe. In 1948, the British Nationality Act granted citizenship to foreign nationals from within the British Commonwealth, encouraging migration to Britain at a time when labour was lacking. More recently, while the UK has been part of the EU, free movement has been encouraged from a diverse number of European states, particularly those less affluent countries in Eastern Europe.

In addition to in-migration from outside of the UK, London has also seen a large degree of movement within and between boroughs. East London was traditionally a White working-class area: although there were ethnic minority communities in east London, the White population were in the majority. For complex social and economic reasons, including the changing labour market and the increasing cost of living in inner London, the White British population began moving further east to outer boroughs.

These two patterns of migration, in-migration from foreign nationals who are more often than not people of colour and out-migration of the 'traditional' White working-classes, are an important backdrop for our discussion of language ideology and adolescent language in London for several reasons. In multicultural contexts (in London and beyond), the narrative of 'tolerance' and inclusion is common. At first, this narrative seems positive: communities should *welcome* those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and differences should be *embraced*. However, closer interrogation reveals that the inclusion narrative frames ethnic minorities and immigrants as *other*, different to the 'norm,' and something to be *tolerated* (Valluvan 2013).

This is further complicated by standard language ideology. As noted, 'non-standard' ways of speaking, particularly working-class dialects, are stigmatised (Snell 2013). Negative evaluations of vernacular language can be further exacerbated when linguistic forms or varieties are not only considered non-standard but are also associated with ethnic minority groups (e.g., Jafaican). Over the last decade or so, Multicultural London English (MLE) has emerged as the language of working-class London adolescents. Although it is described as an ethnically neutral variety, MLE undoubtedly has roots in Caribbean, Asian,

African and Arabic languages. More recent work has demonstrated that MLE can be used to index ethnic identities (Gates 2019) and varies stylistically in interaction (Ilbury forthcoming). We argue, then, that standard language ideologies have roots in social narratives about social class *and* race.

Given the sociohistorical context, the inner-city boroughs of east London are prime for intersecting cultural and social experiences. As such, the authors of this chapter conducted two ethnographic studies in two parallel but contrasting communities in the inner east London boroughs of Hackney and Newham. Both boroughs are ethnically and linguistically diverse places. At the most recent census in 2011, Hackney was 36% White British, 11% African, 8% Caribbean, 3% Indian and 3% Bangladeshi – a diverse borough, but with larger White and Black communities than other ethnic groups. Newham was also diverse but with no dominant ethnic group: 17% White British, 14% Indian, 12% Bangladeshi, 12% African, 10% Pakistani, 6% Eastern or mixed European and 5% Caribbean.[1]

Ilbury conducted a 12-month ethnography (September 2016–2017) at Lakeside Youth Group in Hackney. Lakeside was open during the evenings Monday to Friday, and during fieldwork Ilbury attended the youth group up to four times a week. Members were working-class, predominantly of Afro-Caribbean heritage, with some White British and mixed-race (Black and White British) individuals. Participants were aged 11–17, and data were collected through observation, interviews and self-recordings. Approximately 50 teenagers attended the youth group but, since attendance was not compulsory, this was variable. Audio data were collected through self-recordings from 25 adolescents – 15 boys and 10 girls. Sixteen of these participants were also interviewed.

Gates conducted a 12-month ethnography at Riverton Secondary School, located in the borough of Newham. This working-class, ethnically diverse school had a student body of approximately 850 students aged 11–16 at the time of data collection (April 2015–2016). The school day ran from 8.45am to 3.25pm Monday to Friday with five lessons, a morning break and lunch period. Gates attended lessons and went to break and lunch three to five days a week during the fieldwork period. After approximately four months of participant observation, interviews were conducted with the Year Ten cohort (aged 14–15). Twenty-seven students were interviewed – 19 girls and eight boys. They were an ethnically mixed group, representative of the demographics of the borough, with no dominant ethnic group. Self-identified ethnicities among the study participants included Bengali, Pakistani, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Vietnamese, Somalian, St Lucian, Latvian and White British.

Constraints and effects of standard language ideology

The first theme we explore concerns the way in which the young people explicitly frame their language in opposition to SE. In excerpt 1, Kieran and Natalie

(Lakeside) have just been presented a series of flashcards. The purpose of this task was to elicit metalinguistic discussions regarding lexical items such as *peng* (attractive/good), *glowed up* (became more attractive) and *bare* (lots of/very), which were recorded in the researchers' field notes prior to interviewing the individuals. Most of these words are well documented as features of London (and UK-wide) urban vernaculars (e.g., Cheshire et al. 2011; Drummond 2018). In the ensuing discussion, Kieran and Natalie discuss the flashcards presented to them, framing these words in terms of respect:

Excerpt 1

1	Kieran:	In school, I'm completely – I don't say them in school. …
2		When I'm in school, I'm more – what's the word?
3		Considerate in what words I use. … But sometimes I do
4		say those words, but I know to myself I shouldn't really.
5	Interviewer:	Why?
6	Kieran:	'Cause, like, I know when when I'm talking to adults,
7		they don't speak the way we do 'cause they're from a
		different generation, so –
8	Natalie:	They'll find it disrespectful.
9	Kieran:	Yeah, they'll find it disrespectful. They might find it
10		disrespectful to speak to them, er, in that way.

In lines 1–2 and 6–7, Kieran explicitly conceptualises the use of the words presented to him in terms of their contextual appropriateness, stating that he does not 'say them in school' (line 1) and that he does not say them when 'talking to adults (line 6). This suggests that there is a conscious awareness of the register appropriateness of using what he deems later to be 'slang' in specific contexts. As such, claims that young people are unable to code-switch (see Johns 2011) appear to be unsupported. Rather, Kieran gives a nuanced account of stylistic variation, describing that he would adapt his language to both the recipient (line 6: 'when I'm talking to adults') and the context of the interaction (line 1: 'in school'). Nevertheless, he concedes that occasionally he will use those words in what he deems contextually inappropriate settings (line 3). This is expected given that style-shifting can only occur within realistic limits (Charity Hudley & Mallinson 2011). However, when he does 'slip-up,' in lines 2–3 Kieran frames this as an internalised trope of moral obligation ('I know to myself I shouldn't'). In doing so, he relates his language to an expectation of 'correct' personal conduct (Cameron 1995; Milroy 1999) – a notion that the hegemony of a standard language ideology depends upon.

Themes of appropriateness apparent in Kieran's narrative are based on the more general claim that using non-standard language is 'disrespectful' (lines 8–10), a stance with which Natalie aligns herself (line 8). This is a prevalent

theme, including in excerpt 2 where language is, again, framed in terms of conduct. Here, Paul and David (ages 12 and 15, respectively, Lakeside) are discussing being reprimanded at school, with most of the conversation focusing on detentions. While one would expect such discussions to focus on unruly conduct and behaviour, it is language that is the primary source of contention.

Excerpt 2

1 Interviewer: What do they tell you off for though?
2 …
3 Paul: Being rude, like with them words.
4 Interviewer: With them words?
5 …
6 David: Well, you see in life, yeah? Like, you see in school, my
7   teacher will get mad ’cause she’ll be like, ‘Ah, you’re not
8   from the streets,’ you know, blah blah blah. Or, ‘Don’t bring
9   my street in h– don’t bring the streets in my, um, school’.

In line 1, Ilbury asks an open-ended question to ascertain what ‘they tell you off for.’ At this point, the individuals were not explicitly asked to discuss language. But in line 3 Paul states that he is disciplined because he uses ‘them words.’ In this context, ‘them words’ refers to the flashcards that were presented to Paul and David earlier, as in extract 1. As noted, the flashcards are words often described as ‘slang’ but the meanings that they refer to are diverse and few directly reference inappropriate behaviours. They are therefore unlikely to be considered ‘rude’ in any objective sense. Nevertheless, in Paul’s narrative, ‘being rude’ is directly attributed to using ‘them words’ (line 3). This notion of politeness was implicit in Kieran’s earlier discussion of appropriateness and respect in excerpt 1. Thus, in both excerpts, a link is drawn between non-linguistic conduct (respect) and SE – a well-established trope that educators and gatekeepers maintain as a proxy for establishing ‘good’ conduct (Cameron 1995: 108; Flubacher & del Percio 2017).

In the ensuing discussion, David attempts an explanation of why certain types of language may be deemed by teachers as ‘rude’ or ‘disrespectful.’ Specifically, he draws on his own personal experience in which a teacher reprimands him for using language deemed inappropriate for the classroom. In this situation, the teacher makes an indexical association between non-standard language and a ‘street’ identity (line 7), in which she draws directly on the narrative which fetishises youth styles as ‘ghetto grammar’ (e.g., Johns 2011). Here, the teacher has indirectly reified the ‘types’ of English that are considered appropriate for the classroom and conducive to educational attainment – of which SE is perceived to be the only type. In line 7, we see that the acceptability of his speech style is based on the teacher’s perception of youth styles as an

inauthentic performance ('you're not from the streets'), thereby diminishing the legitimacy of that variety. The real-world implications of this is seen in line 7, where David claims that when a 'non-acceptable' speech style is used and there is a 'violation' of institutional expectations, his teacher would get 'mad' (line 7), resulting in him being reprimanded.

Non-standard language as a 'cultural threat'

It seems likely, then, that perceptions of non-standard language as 'rude' result from misunderstandings on the part of the linguistic gatekeeper (e.g., teacher, youth worker). One such misinterpretation is related to non-standard language as a 'cultural threat'. Although this concept is most often used to describe perceptions of minority immigrant communities (e.g., Newman, Hartman & Taber 2012; Medeiros, Fournier & Benet-Martínez 2016), we argue that the notion of cultural threat is helpful in explaining how educators maintain standard language ideology in the classroom. Specifically, the speech styles used by the individuals in our studies are often framed as 'foreign' languages. For instance, consider excerpt 3:

Excerpt 3

1   Kieran: I didn't expect these types of words to be coming up.
2   Interviewer: Why, what kind of words did you think I was –
3   Kieran: Normal words.
4   Interviewer: W– well what are these then?
5   Kieran: They're like – colloquial language, like –
6   Interviewer: Right.
7   Kieran: it's not – it's words that are not in the English dictionary
                  …
8   Interviewer: Well what are the reasons you use it for?
9   Kieran: We use it for slang instead of actual English.

In excerpt 3, we return to a discussion of the flashcards presented to Kieran and Natalie (see excerpt 1). In this example, we see that Kieran frames the words that are presented to him as words that are not 'actual English [words]' (line 9). Prevalent throughout is the notion that the words presented to him and Natalie are not part of the English language but constitute a different system entirely. As Kieran states in line 3, he was expecting 'normal words,' (i.e., words that appear in the 'English dictionary') (line 7). 'Normal' words here appears to be a proxy for SE. Thus, his assertion that the words are used 'for slang' (line 9) fits in well with a more general issue that young people regularly describe their speech (i.e., not just lexis) as 'slang.' This is likely to be reflective of an internalised

trope that is prevalent in media and education, which over-essentialises youth styles as 'slang' (e.g., Johns 2011).

Of course, Kieran *is* using English, but these claims evoke media narratives that 'youth speak' is, itself, a distinct language (e.g., *The Evening Standard* 2010). Essentially, what we see here is a conceptualisation of non-standard language as a 'foreign language,' where the use of this style is perceived by teachers to be a 'threat' to English – themes prevalent in narratives of minority languages (see Newman, Hartman & Taber 2012).

In excerpt 4, the issue of cultural threat is compounded where Isaac is reprimanded after complaining to a teacher that another student had stepped on his 'creps' (trainers). In the ensuing discussion, although it is Isaac who made the original complaint, it is he who ends up receiving punishment – 'a six o'clock' (a detention, line 10):

Excerpt 4

1	Isaac:	I said, 'Ah, Miss, he was step- argh h- thing this boy was
2		step- stepped on my creps!'
3	Interviewer:	Yeah yeah.
4	Isaac:	Then she was like what's creps?
5	Interviewer:	Oh-hmm.
6	Isaac:	I said – I said, 'Oh, shoes.' Then she was like, 'You shouldn't
7		use them – you shouldn't use their lan– you shouldn't use
		that language.'
8		I said, 'Why? What's wrong with it?'
9	Interviewer:	Yeah.
10	Isaac:	She said, 'Give me your planner.' She gave me a six o'clock,
11		I didn't go.
12	Interviewer:	… Why, cause you think she doesn't understand it you got
13		excluded?
14	Isaac:	Yeah, cause she doesn't understand it.

In line 4, the teacher asks for clarification as to the meaning of 'creps,' to which Isaac gives an accurate definition (line 6). However, in the following lines (6–7) the teacher emphasises the incompatibility of non-standard language and the classroom framing this as a 'moral judgment' (Cameron 1995) – 'you shouldn't use that language' (line 7). In what follows, the misunderstanding and incompatibility of this style is perceived by the teacher as a threat, in which the potential for 'creps' to refer to some rude or inappropriate entity results in the teacher curtailing his behaviour by issuing him with a detention. The avoidable situation here, caused by a misinterpretation of the referent of 'creps,' is dependent on the themes discussed in previous sections: that non-standard ways of speaking are ideologically fetishised as 'street' and therefore, either

indirectly or directly, related to criminal activities (e.g., *The Evening Standard* 2010; Johns 2011). Thus, based on this erroneous ideological connection, the teacher assumes that the entity that Isaac is referring to is potentially rude or insulting (see extracts 1 and 2). In lines following, Ilbury clarifies the cause of the misinterpretation ('cause you think she doesn't understand it', line 11), with Isaac confirming that it is the teacher's misunderstanding that resulted in him being sanctioned (line 12).

Metalinguistic evaluations

Building on the analyses presented thus far, the following excerpts demonstrate explicit awareness of classed and racialised language. These types of metalinguistic evaluations reflect and construct standard language ideologies: the examples below highlight the pervasiveness of the ideology that SE is the unmarked form spoken by White British middle-class speakers. This in turn reiterates the abstract nature of SE and demonstrates processes of linguistic subordination (Lippi-Green 2012), as language that represents a marked class and/or ethnic identity is considered 'bad English'. Excerpts 5 and 6 provide explicit examples of this type of enregisterment.

Excerpt 5

1	John:	Like – You see the White girls when they're talking? They
2		have that – 'Alright!' – Like that. Yeah. Like, if posh
3		people hear that, then they're gonna be like, 'Ah, these
		people, they're lower class,' this and that. Yeah.

Excerpt 5 is an interview with John – a Black British 15-year-old male from Riverton Secondary School. In this excerpt, John and the interviewer (Gates) were discussing different ways that John's school peers spoke. In John's year group, the popular girls' peer groups were organised by ethnic group. Their peer group labels directly referenced these intentional groupings, a clear example of ethnic homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook 2001). This is just one example of the social importance of ethnicity in this community, which is important context for this extract.

In line 1, John explicitly references the ethnicity of a specific group of girls: 'the White girls.' Here, he is referring to the White Squad peer group, who are all White British. He then imitates their accent with the word 'alright' in line 2, a word choice that is not insignificant. The second vowel in 'alright' is from the PRICE lexical set (Wells 1982). In British English, the PRICE vowel has an open back onset and then a glide that moves towards a front, close offset. Recent sociophonetic research has found that this vowel has shifted dramatically in

London English over the last 30 years, to be realised with a more front, close onset that is in some instances monophthongal (Gates 2018; Kerswill, Torgersen & Fox 2008). In his imitation, John produces an exaggerated, open diphthong in 'alright', a clear reference to the fact that the White British girls in this community have a markedly different pronunciation to their peers that aligns more closely with the more traditional diphthongal realisation (this observation is supported by the quantitative analyses of acoustic data in Gates 2018). John then presents this pronunciation in opposition to being 'posh,' noting that this accent would not only be regarded as different by middle- or upper-class speakers, but it would be directly associated with lower social classes, leading to a negative value judgement of that speaker.

Excerpt 5 highlights two key points. First, it illuminates adolescents' awareness of social stigmas associated with certain vernaculars. Second, it picks up on the connection between language and groups of people. As noted by Lippi-Green (2012), language serves as a proxy through which (groups of) people are stigmatised.

Excerpt 6 is from the Lakeside data set. Here, the interviewer (Ilbury) is talking with two girls from the youth group, Charice and Daniella. Charice is Black British and has one Jamaican and one White British parent. Daniella is mixed-race, with one Turkish parent and one parent from Trinidad and Tobago. For broader context, this excerpt is from a conversation about racialised discourses and institutional racism. Ilbury asks about the word *roadman*, which Charice describes as being 'like those Turkish boys who act black', leading to the discussion in excerpt 6.

Excerpt 6

1	Interviewer:	What's 'acting Black' mean though, like how would you
2		classify someone as acting Black?
3	Charice:	Oh my gosh!
4	Daniella:	Black – hmmm, I don't really wanna sound racist.
5	Charice:	Tryna – yeah.
6	Interviewer:	No, no, no, it's not racist, it's just –
7	Daniella:	The White people talk formally. The way they talk is
8		different, don't you think? They m– mostly talk formally.

This extract is an example how *colour-blind* discourses work in tandem with standard language ideology. The theory of colour-blindness has emerged out of complex racial and sociopolitical contexts integrally linked to neo-liberalism and results in the minimisation or erasure of the experiences of people of colour (for detailed discussion, see Bonilla-Silva 2014; Omi & Winant 2014). For White adolescents in America, the interactional delicacy of talking about race is evident in *racial evasion*: attempting to avoid or circle around race as a result

of structural colour-blind discourses (Bucholtz 2011: 168). These discourses are so pervasive that they are even replicated by adolescents of colour in London. In excerpt 6, line 4, Daniella explicitly states that she does not want to 'sound racist' in a discussion of what it means to 'act black.' After some prompting, Daniella connects 'formal' speech with whiteness, reframing her characterisation of 'acting black.' This highlights how colour-blind discourses prevent adolescents of colour from articulating their own experiences, and also how race is further removed from the conversation by standard language ideology.

Neo-liberal agenda

A key component of our argument is that the neo-liberal agenda is highly influential when it comes to standard language ideology (Flubacher & del Percio 2017). By referring to the 'neo-liberal agenda,' we intend to draw attention to the fact that, in Britain, young people's life paths are primarily negotiated through education, which is all intended to have the same outcome: that they are productive adult members of society by being active participants in the labour market. Of course, there are many ways in which one can contribute to society, but neo-liberalism prioritises capitalist wealth. With this in mind, we suggest that the neo-liberal agenda plays an integral role in constructing and reproducing standard language ideologies. This argument is, in part, supported by the three areas of focus presented thus far, but the following excerpts make this theme explicit.

Excerpt 7

1	Amy:	Everyone just finds it funny, how I talk, but I don't really know why.
2	Interviewer:	So what, you just like … have a different way of speaking?
3	Amy:	Yeah, I think so because – We just – from, sort of, round
4		here and some people are not. Or they've come up with different backgrounds.
5	Interviewer:	So do you – do you like the way that you speak, or?
6	Amy:	Yeah. I guess. Like, I suppose if I was to go to interviews
7		and that I would have to be more formal. 'Cause I just say
8		like, 'ain't' and stuff like that. But I think I would need to
9		be more formal when I speak. I dunno.
10	Interviewer:	Yeah.

In excerpt 7, Amy and the interviewer (Gates) are discussing different ways of speaking, a topic of conversation that arose earlier in the interview. Amy is a White British girl who lives close to her school. She has always lived in the area,

and both of her parents are White British, born in London. This excerpt is of particular interest, as Amy not only highlights that different ways of speaking have different social evaluations attached to them and are associated with different social groups, but also that adolescents are aware of what the (perceived) ramifications of using 'improper' language might be. Amy is acutely aware of the fact her own vernacular is stigmatised, noting that her peers find her way of speaking 'funny' (line 1). However, the relationship between language and local identity is also alluded to in lines 3–4, when Amy notes that her way of speaking is because she is from 'round here.' Stating this immediately after acknowledging the social status of her vernacular highlights the tension between linguistic identity and standard language ideology. This is further demonstrated in line 7, where Amy references a specific feature of her vernacular: 'ain't,' a present tense negative form of the BE verb. In emphasising this feature, she demonstrates her awareness of this marked feature, conceptualising its use in terms of formality. It could be argued that, in this instance, formality is being used as a proxy for the abstract concept of SE. Lines 6–8 also suggest that Amy considers having an 'interview style' is an important life skill. This seems to have been born out of the neo-liberal narratives mentioned above, that position ones contribution to the labour market as a primary measure of being a productive member of society.

Excerpt 8

1   Krista: I don't think he does though, h– he's – out of all the boys,
2   he's – he's the most – um – determined, in terms of
3   education. … So – he's quite formal as well. When he speaks.

In excerpt 8, we see explicit evidence of the positive framing of standard language and its association with aspirations and achievement. As part of a discussion about different ways of speaking among her peers, Krista uses Ade as an example of someone who is aspirational. Both Krista and Ade are of immigrant backgrounds (Krista's family is Latvian, and Ade's is Nigerian) but, although both are impressionistically[2] speakers of London English, neither uses any stereotypical phonological or morphosyntactic features of MLE (as in Cheshire et al. 2011). As such, they could both be considered to speak a more 'standard' variety of the local vernacular. They are both members of (different) popular peer groups, they work hard in school and they are high achievers. In this excerpt, Krista frames Ade's aspirational nature as being related to the way that he speaks. As she puts it, he 'doesn't speak slang,' which implies that his vernacular is less marked than Amy's from excerpt 7. This supports the impressionistic assessment of Ade's speech.

Krista then goes on to describe Ade as 'quite formal… when he speaks' in lines 2–3. This is parallel to her description of him as 'determined, in terms of education.' Again, as with Amy in excerpt 7, the notion of formal speech

seems to be a proxy for SE. Positioning these descriptions in this way is indicative of the perceived relationship between using SE and orientation towards education. As with excerpt 7, this highlights the influence of neo-liberalism on language ideologies: doing well in school is a necessary stepping stone to being a productive adult in society, and in order to do these things one must speak SE.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have used empirical data to examine four themes, arguing that 'non-standard' varieties, particularly those deemed 'youth styles,' are frequently characterised as deficient. The data show that speakers internalise standard language ideologies, which we argue is driven by a wider neo-liberal campaign that views 'non-standard' language as a hindrance to the development of a productive workforce (Flubacher & del Percio 2017). And while standard language ideology is maintained in curricula and by educators, we have shown that the effects of such narratives transcend educational contexts and influence adolescents outside of the institution, having potentially damaging effects on 'non-standard' vernacular speakers. This finding is likely not unique to the British context, given the globally pervasive nature of standard language ideology. Therefore, we argue that, in a period of time where urban centres are increasingly diverse, educators in Britain and beyond must make conscious efforts to understand and integrate dialect diversity into their practice.

Endnotes

[1] It should be noted that, while the authors acknowledge that census categories are deeply problematic, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss this in detail.
[2] In variationist sociolinguistics, impressionistic analysis refers to the use of auditory impressions rather than instrumental analysis.

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CHAPTER 8

A Linguistic Ethnography of Theatre Production

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Introduction

The study of light and lighting design in live performance is a growing area of academic study and theoretical inquiry; recent work by Palmer (2013), Abulafia (2015), Moran (2017) and Graham (2018) attests to this fact. However, ethnographic studies of theatre[1] production have remained relatively scarce, with the bulk of current research – particularly in lighting and scenography more widely – forming part of what lighting designer Rick Fisher calls '"post-design rationalisation" – a reflection that comes about after the work has been staged when the role of the lighting can be analysed from a more objective standpoint' (Palmer 2013: 255). In this chapter, however, drawing on material from my doctoral research (Zezulka 2019), I will be exploring the *process* of creative collaboration in theatre lighting design through linguistic ethnography.

The materiality of light is difficult to qualify and often eludes direct description. Edensor (2015: 139) maintains that light 'transcends the cognitive and moves into the nonrepresentational, the realm of the affective and sensual', highlighting the visceral and often inexpressible impact of light in performance.

The focus here on the technical rehearsal – that is, the moment of creation for a lighting design(er) – is both indicative and symptomatic of this elusiveness. Paradoxically, light is an immaterial material; its materiality is obtained by proxy, by coming into contact with an object in space. Light's materiality is inherently bound to the spatial and temporal conditions in which it is employed. Lighting designer Neil Austin maintains that

> [t]he whole problem with lighting is that it's indescribable to other people beforehand, and … even the best of imaginations can't always foresee exactly what it's going to look like until you are in the space.
>
> (Moran 2017: 63)

Here, Austin is drawing explicit links between light as creative material and its connection to time and space. This interdependence underlies the inherent difficulties faced by lighting designers and their collaborators in describing light's material and affective qualities – and therefore its scenographic potential – prior to the creative team's arrival in the performance space. The linguistic strategies employed by creative and production teams therefore serve a dual purpose in collaboration: first, to describe light's materiality as it relates to its dramaturgical and affective potential and second, to help lighting designers use these descriptions to assert both their position in the creative team hierarchy and the position of light as an integral scenographic element.

I will begin with some brief information about the research environment before moving on to a discussion of the methods and methodology employed in this research. I will then show how I have applied these through an example from the fieldwork that demonstrates the effect of language on the often fluid and flexible hierarchical structures that occur in this very specific workplace environment. I will conclude by speculating on the impact of my research on related industries and the possibilities for future research, showing how this study contributes to the potential of and diversity in applied linguistics.

Research environment

Theatre and other live performance industries fundamentally rely on a highly interconnected network of skills and experience from often geographically disparate collaborators over a relatively short period of time. The freelance, peripatetic nature of the profession leads to a diversity of workplace settings and interactions, with lighting designers and other members of the creative team constantly negotiating the creative, interpersonal and linguistic boundaries of their collaborations and the hierarchies in which these occur.

The period of collaboration under examination here is known as the technical rehearsal, which starts with the first full-company rehearsals in the performance space and ends with the first dress rehearsal. This is often the first

and only time the entire company (cast, director, designers, stage management, technical staff etc.) is in the theatre together. As the name implies, the focus is on coordinating the technical and design elements with the actors, who by this point have spent several weeks rehearsing the piece in a rehearsal room, perhaps with mock-ups of the stage space; these can range from a two-dimensional version of the set marked out on the floor in coloured tape through to fully realised rehearsal sets, complete with functional features such as doors and windows. Actors may also have the opportunity to rehearse in their costumes, to engage with sound and video effects and to familiarise themselves with their props. It is rarely practicable, however, to integrate the performance lighting into the rehearsal process, for several reasons. Logistically, the infrastructure of many rehearsal rooms does not allow for the physical rigging and electrical set-ups required to replicate that in a performance venue. Even if this were possible, light is spatially and temporally dependent, its materiality inherently bound to not only other scenographic elements but also the architecture of the theatre space itself. As intimated above, and demonstrated by the quote from Austin, it is this interdependency between space, time, material, environment and architecture that makes light's potential difficult to articulate outside the actual performance space.

For lighting designers, the creative process of the technical rehearsal 'almost always requires compromises and responses to material constraints and it is not unusual for the most compelling aspect of a production to arise almost by accident' (McAuley 2008: 284–285). This process of trial and error makes use of two types of creativity, identified by Kotler as 'aesthetic creativity' and 'problem-solving creativity' (1967: 246–259). The former is attributed to those whose 'creative products are extensions of their own personalities and embodiments of their personal responses to the nature of the world' (Zackariasson, Walfisz & Wilson 2006: 89–90). The latter, on the other hand, 'is exemplified by scientists and businessmen [whose] creative products are solutions to problems' (Zackariasson, Walfisz & Wilson 2006: 90). The work of lighting designers spans both ends of this seemingly oppositional binary; during technical rehearsals they are constantly acting on and reacting to the theatre space, practising 'knowing-in-action' (Schön 1983: 49) and 'reflection-in-action' (Schön 1983: 54) simultaneously. These processes are engaged in tacitly, though practitioners are often aware that they exist but are unable to explicitly articulate them.

Methodology

In order to begin to articulate the effect of language on the creative process, I employed a linguistic ethnographic approach, conducting 11 periods of fieldwork, only one of which will feature here. During these periods of research I observed lighting designers, directors/choreographers and lighting programmers at work in theatres across the UK. This team works closely together during

the technical rehearsal, located at a central production desk in the auditorium. While it is the choreographer–lighting designer relationship under examination in this chapter, the lighting programmer also plays a key role and features heavily in the rest of the fieldwork (see Zezulka, forthcoming). They are primarily responsible for translating the lighting designer's instructions into syntax that is understandable by the lighting console, a bespoke piece of hardware and software that controls each individual lighting fixture. However, their job entails more than mere data input; the programmer often fulfils an associate creative function as well, both contributing to design decisions and using their expertise to manipulate the functionality of the console.

Linguistic ethnography is an emerging interdisciplinary field that, as the name suggests, gives a linguistic focus to ethnography. Rampton notes that linguistic ethnographers tend to move into the field as 'an attempt to find a way of adequately rendering quite extensive personal experience' (2007: 590); as a practising lighting designer and researcher, this research is an attempt to reconcile my 'quite extensive personal experience' of the theatre industry with what I feel to be an appreciable gap in current knowledge. As lighting designers, we 'speak through our art form' but it is difficult to convey 'how the [lighting designer] responds to the action and the emotion expressed on stage' (Jonathan 2008: 4). I am particularly interested in how this occurs during technical rehearsals, a high-pressure environment with constantly shifting power dynamics and hierarchies. In previous research (Zezulka 2011), I found that lighting designers often struggle to articulate their creative process (as opposed to their procedure) and the mechanisms through which they create a shared aesthetic vocabulary with other members of the creative and production teams. The divisions in nomenclature between cast, creative team and production team are sometimes contested (see, for example, Brennan 2011; McAuley 2012). For my purposes here, I include designers and the director/choreographer in the 'creative team' and technical staff and stage management in the 'production team'. The use of either term is not intended to imply or impose 'a hierarchy of creativity' (McAuley 2012: 45).

The distinction I have made here between 'process' and 'procedure' is important to note. The artistic *process* a lighting designer goes through is the 'why': why certain creative decisions were made and the choices that influenced these decisions. *Procedure*, on the other hand, refers to the 'how', or the tasks that facilitate the lighting design; these include researching technical specifications, creating paperwork, attending rehearsals, meeting with the director, designer and wider production team, compiling reference material (e.g., photographs, drawings or other images) etc. Focusing on procedure rather than process runs the risk of making collaboration seem much more linear and sequential than it actually is; as Slater notes, creative processes may 'appear stable and neat from a distanced perspective … but on closer inspection a story of messiness, uncertainty and flux is revealed' (2015: 72), making them difficult to articulate. The fact that many lighting design textbooks traditionally prioritise procedure over

process is indicative of the difficulty many practitioners have in articulating both their creative process and the impact that light can make to a production, dramaturgically as well as affectively. Recent published texts, however, have begun to redress this balance – in particular, Crisafulli (2013), Palmer (2013), Abulafia (2015), Moran (2017) and Graham (2018) – though none explicitly tackles the language of collaboration, its contribution to the process or its potential to affect the process. It is here that applied linguistics can be deployed, further diversifying and demonstrating the field's relevance and providing an alternative means of analysing the processes of lighting design, and collaboration more widely. As demonstrated below, this can also help to reveal the 'hidden' aspects of these complex interactions, with potentially far-reaching implications.

Linguistic ethnography is unusual in scenography and theatre production research, much of which relies primarily on reflective semi-structured interviews (Pilbrow 2010; Moran 2017, for example). Research into scenographic processes, as opposed to reflective or autoethnographic analyses of the end product (that is, the performance itself), has been taken up by only a handful of researchers, most prominently in lighting, Hunt's work focuses primarily on the lighting programmer (2013a and 2013b; Hunt & Melrose 2005) and the physical environment of the technical rehearsal (Hunt 2015). Similarly, applied linguistics research in theatre environments is relatively uncommon; Hazel (2018: 257) posits that this is because of the theatre's focus on repetition of an imagined dialogue rather than on everyday talk. However, there are several ethnographies of the rehearsal room and its associated process (Hazel 2018; Hazel forthcoming; McAuley 2012) as well as company-wide ethnographies (Atkinson 2006; McKechnie 2014; the latter also includes a detailed section on the intricate backstage processes during a performance). The present study, however, is so far the only ethnography to specifically focus on the language-in-use of theatre lighting designers at work during technical rehearsals, thus both diversifying and interlinking the fields of applied linguistics and scenography. Crucially, the data generation occurs during the creation of the design itself rather than as a reflection on that process.

Data were collected via two sets of audio recordings. One recorded the conversation 'on cans', the headset system worn by members of the creative and production team; the other recorded the conversations around the production desk. The example that follows comes from one of the latter recordings. I also took extensive field notes, which included both my overall impressions of the interactions and details of specific events. I was located near the production desk, just behind the lighting designer and programmer, out of their line of vision. Access to rehearsals was negotiated through my personal relationship with the lighting designer, who then obtained consent from the choreographer and programmer on my behalf. Given my existing relationship with the lighting designer, this importantly meant that they could vouch for my experience and expertise as an informed insider; this made forming relationships with

those I was observing easier as there was already an implicit level of trust on which to build. Transcripts of selected moments in the recordings were made, and these were coded using MaxQDA. Speakers are identified throughout by their production role rather than by name or initials. The generic 'they' is used for all speakers for the purposes of maintaining anonymity.

Through this process, I have been able to explore how lighting professionals use language not only to describe their creative process but also to navigate and potentially exploit the constantly changing social processes of the technical rehearsal. The language strategies used in these sometimes challenging environments are employed subconsciously, tacitly practised rather than explicitly understood. I am specifically interested in technical rehearsals as they are 'a period of often intense activity' (Moran 2017: 27) and 'intense creativity but also of anxiety and strain' (Hunt 2015: 1). For the lighting designer, the technical rehearsals are often very 'expos[ing] – "like standing naked on a table and asking 'what do you think?'", as lighting designer Mark Jonathan puts it' (Moran 2017: 27). As my primary interest is in the language used during the process of creative collaboration, specifically at the point of creation, I have therefore focused my attention on the technical rehearsal, what Moran calls a 'cauldron of potential' (2017: 50). These conditions contribute to a further potential obstacle for the lighting designer: technical rehearsals tend to include substantial negotiation and adjustment as creative teams learn the artistic 'language' of a production, while also refining the spoken language they use to articulate it.

Fieldwork example

The observation I draw on here took place at the end of September and beginning of October 2017. This was a new dance piece that was fairly unconventional in form, and I arrived in the middle of the second week of what was essentially an extended plotting session. These first two weeks of plotting and rehearsal took place in a theatre space that was not the final performance venue. It was much smaller in terms of stage height and width as well as audience capacity. The move to the larger performance venue (in particular, the production desk being moved from the stalls to the balcony level) had a huge impact on the visual aesthetic of the production and accounts for many of the discussions in the final week. The choreographer, lighting designer and programmer had previously worked together on many productions; in fact, the lighting designer and choreographer's professional relationship spans more than two decades. The programmer's professional position at the top of the industry, as well as their long-standing relationship with the lighting designer, afforded them a large amount of creative and problem-solving input. Despite the enduring creative relationships among this team, there was also a considerable amount of disagreement, misalignment and negotiation throughout the technical rehearsals.

In the following example, I explore the diversity of the linguistic tactics used by the creative team in 'develop[ing] the cultural artefact of the performance piece' (Hazel 2018: 257).

Much of the problem-solving that takes place during technical rehearsals relies on 'informed intuition' (Rink 2002: 39). In contrast to the period of 'post-design rationalisation' advocated by lighting designer Rick Fisher (quoted in Palmer 2013: 255), lighting designers and programmers work 'in the moment', improvising and creating in response to numerous constantly changing stimuli, what Schön describes as 'a reflective conversation with the situation' (1991: 76). In the transcript below, the lighting designer and choreographer are discussing the potential of the light and its movement in the scene; changes to the lighting are being made on stage during this section of dialogue.

Transcription key

CH	choreographer
LD	lighting designer
:::	elongated speech
=	latched speech
[	overlapping speech
[…]	section of talk missing
(.)	small pause
(0.2)	length of pause in seconds
[*gesture*]	italics in square brackets denotes a gesture or other clarifying information
this	emphasis
CAPITALS	louder speech

Excerpt 1

1 CH: what about taking the side lights out? (2.1)
2 LD: [*to the programmer*] try::: taking out the miros.[2] (9.5)
3 CH: that's not really right [is it?
4 LD: [no:::
            there is a thought (.) there will be an idea just (1.2)
5 CH: yeah i think it needs a little bit=
            =it needs [like a virus feel
6 LD: [it's definitely yeah
            it definitely needed the (0.3)
7 CH: it needs light (.) it needs air or something (1.7)
8 LD: what about the virus? (1.1)

9	CH:	it's too fiddly up top=
10	LD:	=yeah=
11	CH:	=it has to be something that's just like <u>BOOF</u> (1.1)
		that kind of like (1.6) quite full force <u>BOOF:::</u>
		[...]
12	CH:	you know if if they all went like that [*gestures with hands*] in different ways=
13	LD:	=yeah we haven't done the jerking=
14	CH:	=the jerking in different colours=
		=see what that [does
15	LD:	[you know angel wings, [programmer]? oh that was wobbly (3.0) we just want the bars to (1.6) each individually go forwards and backwards (4.7) so we've got the <u>downstage</u> points and we've <u>got</u> the upstage points (1.1) we've also got that effect we did where they were <u>streaming</u> but maybe (.) they were moving like this [*demonstrates*] individually maybe we just need to make them snaps[3]?

While there are myriad things to unpack in this short interaction, I would like to focus here on how this transcript demonstrates lighting design in creative collaboration as both a process and a product, or, in Hannah and Harsløf's words, both a 'doing and a thing done' (2008: 13), and how this is exemplified through the use of incomplete utterances, dispreference in other-repair, and positive and negative scoping. While this is just one example from the fieldwork, these features occur across multiple instances of talk in creative collaborative discourse.

In the above exchange, it is clear in the first few turns that the current lighting state (that is, what the choreographer and lighting designer are looking at on stage) is unsatisfactory, but the desired state proves elusive. The choreographer suggests a solution in turn 1 ('What about taking the side lights out?') and, after a long pause, both the choreographer and the lighting designer concede that the lighting state is still 'not really right' (turn 3); the lighting designer's agreement is prompted by the choreographer's tag question 'is it?' in turn 3. This is followed by a series of suggestions, rebuttals and responses from both speakers while they attempt to create the 'right' lighting state together. These are filled with metaphors (turn 7), similes (turns 5 and 11) and onomatopoeia (turn 11), linguistic tactics often used to describe this difficult-to-qualify artistic medium. The lighting designer's assertion in turn 4 that 'there <u>will be</u> an idea' is presented in a positive sense, 'setting the tone' for the rest of this exchange as being positive in nature. The emphasis employed in turn 4 by the lighting designer confirms this; they are both reassuring the choreographer that a suitable solution will be found and indicating that they are open to working together to mutually create and co-construct said solution.

Incomplete utterances

Incomplete utterances appear frequently, inviting simultaneous co-creation. There are two incomplete utterances in the first half of this transcript: 'there <u>is</u> a <u>thought</u> (.) there <u>will be</u> an idea just' (turn 4) and 'it's definitely yeah it definitely needed the' (turn 6), both by the lighting designer. The incomplete utterances here – particularly as the lighting designer stops abruptly without completing their thought – could suggest that the lighting designer is uncertain about how to proceed, or perhaps it is an attempt to buy some thinking time. The choreographer does not complete these utterances but instead offers suggestions, which is perhaps the lighting designer's intention. In pedagogical practice, teachers often use 'designedly incomplete utterances' (Koshik 2002) in order to elicit responses from students, starting the utterance in such a way that invites a prompted response. While this exchange clearly does not have a pedagogic purpose, the choreographer's responses to the lighting designer's utterances (particularly in turns 5 and 7) have the effect of 'forward[ing] the projected turn or its action' (Lerner 1996: 239). The choreographer has not co-opted the lighting designer's turn; rather, they are helping to coproduce it. That is, the lighting designer and choreographer are simultaneously co-constructing the desired lighting state through their dialogue. This is similar to Lerner's examples of jointly produced 'sentences-in-progress' (1991: 441), except that here the choreographer does not so much finish the lighting designer's sentences as move them in a tangential direction. For instance, in turn 6, the lighting designer uses the past tense 'needed', implying that a past solution or attempt at a solution was beneficial in some way; there was some quality belonging to a previous version of this lighting state that was desirable (perhaps the inclusion of the side lights referenced in turn 1). The choreographer uses the same verb in turn 7 but in the present tense, indicating a move towards an untried solution and redirecting the lighting designer's attention away from previous attempts. This is clearly evidenced in the lighting designer's change of focus in turn 8 away from the state as a whole and towards an individual element ('the virus') within it.

Other-repair

Creative collaborative discourse also seems to lend itself to dispreference, seen here in the use of other-repair. The preference for self-repair in everyday conversation is well documented (e.g., Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks 1977). In other-repair the speaker corrects a turn that is not theirs, and this is seen as a less likely choice than self-repair (and particularly in *other-initiated* other-repair) because a speaker should be in full control over the formulation of their turn. However, it appears that the opposite is more often true in situations of creative collaborative problem-solving. There is an example of other-initiated

other-repair in this transcript in which the recipient (in this case, the cho-reographer) both indicates a problem in the talk ('yeah i think it needs a lit-tle bit=', turn 5) and resolves the problem ('it needs like a virus feel', turn 5). Other-repair occurs throughout the full set of transcripts, to a greater or lesser extent, in cases where problem-solving is taking place. According to Pomerantz (1984), and later substantiated in a study by Svennevig (2007), there is a pref-erence in other-initiated repair for trying the least complicated solution first. Svennevig, following Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977), divides repair into three types, in order of preference: problems of hearing, problems of under-standing and problems of acceptability. Through the results of his study, he finds that problems of acceptability, which include the acceptability of the 'lin-guistic utterance' as well as its 'social action' (Svennevig 2007: 337), are often initially addressed as problems of hearing or understanding. This is the most likely course of action, as 'correcting someone else is displaying a deficiency in their contribution and thus constitutes a face-threatening act' (Svennevig 2007: 345). However, as demonstrated here, creative collaborative discourse favours the opposite. While there are instances of problems of hearing and problems of understanding throughout the full set of transcripts from this observation, problems of acceptability occur frequently as the preferred response. This may be due to a number of factors: time is limited at this stage of the process and identifying the problem straight away may be the most efficient use of time; in a long-standing creative partnership such as this one, there is less threat to the speaker's face as disagreements are understood to be creative rather than per-sonal in nature; and a genuine desire on the part of both speakers to co-create and co-facilitate a joint understanding of the design space. These face-saving strategies are also demonstrated in the use of positive and negative scoping below. It is clear here that the desire to maintain the collaborative nature of the interaction overrides the linguistic 'preferences' in both self- and other-repair that are found in everyday talk.

Positive and negative scoping

Taylor (2018) considers what she calls 'negative scoping', following architectural theorist Alexander's assertion that articulating or justifying design preferences is often easier to do through establishing what is wrong as opposed to what is right (1973: 22–23). Using negative scoping, collaborators can edit out the information or qualities that are irrelevant or undesired, narrowing down the potential possibilities. In a cyclical fashion, this rejected information feeds into the next solution that is offered, and in theory the offer is further refined with each cycle of negative scoping. To this I will add 'positive scoping', the process of offering alternative, potentially desired options, rather than negating unde-sired ones. This works in a similarly cyclical fashion and likewise allows col-laborators to clarify and hone their understanding of the 'design space' (Eckert

and Stacey 2000: 525). Both positive and negative scoping happen throughout this exchange, with the choreographer both offering suggestions and attempting to edit out undesirable characteristics.

There is an adjacency pair in turns 8 and 9, starting with the lighting designer's question 'what about the virus?', referring to a moving effect that is part of this lighting state. The lighting designer uses this common reference point of a virus – part of the shared aesthetic vocabulary that has developed over the course of this production, much like the reference to 'angel wings' in turn 15 – to help to establish the design space (i.e., what parameters the lighting is bound by). The choreographer is not keen on the existing virus effect, as evidenced clearly in turn 9. However, their response in turn 9 is not a direct rejection but rather an articulation of what is wrong with the 'virus', an example of Taylor's 'negative scoping.' Taylor also identifies the use of the word 'too' as a way to soften the effect of the rejection. However, in contrast to where it occurs here, Taylor notes that 'too' is often used as part of a question, allowing the recipient of the offer to easily reject it or offer an alternative solution without threatening the offeror's face. Here, though, it serves a similar purpose in allowing the choreographer to focus on a specific quality of the effect – its movement, which is 'too fiddly' (turn 9). Rather than dismiss the effect outright, they are able to identify a specific quality about it, allowing the lighting designer to correct or alter this later in turn 15.

There is only one outright rejection of an idea or action in this transcript: the choreographer's 'that's not really right' in turn 3. However, the tag question 'is it?' plus the intensifier 'really' serve to soften this rejection in a face-saving act on the part of the choreographer. Further, the quality 'not really right' is so vague as to be not very helpful, so it is interesting that the choreographer and the lighting designer both agree on this without any further parameters being articulated. It may, however, simply be the presence of the tag question that invites the lighting designer's agreement here.

As noted previously about the lighting designer's turn 4, the creative misalignment in turns 5 through 7 and 11 through 15 is likewise presented primarily in the positive. For instance, the choreographer says that the lighting state 'needs air or something' (turn 7) rather than 'this lighting state doesn't feel very airy' or a comparable utterance. A similar thing occurs in turn 11: by stating what the lighting state needs, the choreographer is offering a suggestion, however obscure, rather than stating what the lighting state currently lacks. This serves in both instances to preserve the interpersonal relationship of these collaborators, as consistent outright rejections from either party could be harmful.

The effect of this alternating positive and negative scoping is seen in the lighting designer's moment of inspiration in turn 13, spurred on by the choreographer's suggestion in turn 12 and followed by their assent in turn 14. The lighting designer then has the confidence to instruct the programmer in the execution of their idea (turn 15), something they had not done since turn 2. This clearly demonstrates the shifting nature of the hierarchies present during the

production period. Whereas the choreographer has been the primary offeror up to turn 12, the lighting designer then takes over from line 13 onwards. The combination of the choreographer's suggestions through positive and negative scoping and the lighting designer's knowledge of the existing design space allow the lighting designer to resume control of the creation of the lighting state from turn 13.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated the value of applying a linguistic ethnographic approach to the study of the theatre lighting design process. As shown here through linguistic analysis, lighting design (and scenography more widely) is both a 'doing and a thing done' (Hannah and Harsløf 2008: 13), an active process as well as the 'final' product presented to the audience on press night. In distinguishing between the two, Palmer usefully differentiates light from lighting, the first being a material of performance and the latter the tools and equipment used to produce an end result (2013: xiii–xiv). We have seen here how light's lack of materiality, or its dependent materiality, makes it difficult to describe. In talking about light and its material or affective qualities, creative teams regularly make use of linguistic tropes to convey often abstract ideas or concepts. But a more detailed linguistic analysis reveals the underlying structures at work in collaborative environments. Creative collaborative discourse lends itself in particular to the use of incomplete utterances, dispreference and negative scoping. These strategies serve a dual purpose within the setting of the technical rehearsal: first, to demonstrate the often 'hidden' ways in which collaborators co-construct their practice *in the moment* and, second, to assert the fundamentality of light and the lighting designer to live performance.

Using this methodology and the linguistic analysis demonstrated here can provide both applied linguists and theatre practitioners with a detailed process of exploring how collaborative mechanisms work and how these impact on both professional and interpersonal relationships. While this research specifically focuses on a very particular, esoteric workplace environment, the methodology I have employed here could be used to explore the processes employed in similar industries, particularly those that are situated at the intersection of art and technology, such as music, gaming and architecture, further diversifying the reach of applied linguistics research. This research opens up avenues for further inquiry into collaborative arts practices; further research could explore the application of applied linguistics methods in the wider field of scenography or in other scenographic processes, such as design meetings or research and development periods, or in ensemble theatre companies working with devised texts. There is additionally scope for exploring concepts such as leadership and identity in these hierarchical environments and how these are manifest in language practices.

Endnotes

1 I use the word 'theatre' throughout to encompass several genres of live per-formance: plays, dance, opera and musicals.

2 This refers to Miro Cubes, manufactured by Rosco. These are compact LED fixtures, which lined the edges of the stage in this production to provide side light.

3 This is shorthand for a 'snap blackout', a 'fade' to black that happens instantly.

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HIV/AIDS Antenatal Consultations as Regulative Discourse: The Case of Malawi

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Introduction

Applied linguistics is commonly regarded as the investigation of the ways in which language is used in everyday life and in institutional settings such as education and health, often with a view to improving professional practice. However, to date, the scope of its engagement with health communication has mostly focused on relatively well-resourced contexts in the global North, while less well-resourced contexts in the global South have remained relatively under-reported. In particular, educational and counselling sessions on HIV/AIDS in African countries have been largely ignored, especially in remote areas such as rural Malawi. Across Malawi, HIV/AIDS has for a long time been the most challenging health issue. Out of a population of about 17 million, 979,482 people are estimated to be infected with the virus (PEPFAR 2017). Although various health care interventions have been introduced to reduce new infections and manage the pandemic with antiretroviral drugs, the adult HIV prevalence is currently 10.6%. In spite of different health care interventions, public health

services relating to HIV/AIDS in Malawi are struggling with less than adequate adherence by women and infants to all the recommendations for the prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) of the virus. Reasons for low adherence include economic status, lack of independence in decision-making in matters of health and sexual practice and lack of male involvement in antenatal HIV/AIDS consultations (Haas et al. 2016; Tenthani et al. 2014; Keehn & Karfakis 2014). This chapter is taken from a larger study which explores routine group counselling sessions provided to pregnant women at antenatal clinics as part of a PMTCT programme (Chimbwete-Phiri 2019).

In presenting part of this work here, we hope to extend the scope of applied linguistics' engagement with health communication by investigating the discursive practices of health professionals and pregnant women in rural Malawi, who are engaged in HIV/AIDS group counselling sessions. However, this chapter will also diversify approaches towards applied linguistics by combining a more conventional sociolinguistic analysis of health communication with a more critical sociological theory, originally developed in the field of education (Bernstein 1990, 1996, 2000), in order to better understand the relationship between the professional discourse that takes place during HIV/AIDS counselling in Malawi and the institutional context in which it is located. In so doing, we will demonstrate how applied linguistics is able to reveal the relations between the discourse that takes place between health professionals and pregnant women and the institutional context in which it is located and how these can have implications for the improvement of communication within HIV/AIDS counselling. By analysing the discourse of the marginalised and vulnerable in HIV/AIDS discourse in rural Malawi and discussing its implications for the improvement of communication, we hope to contribute to healthcare interventions for better compliance with HIV/AIDS treatment.

Pedagogic discourse in the clinic

Pedagogic discourse is a theory developed by Basil Bernstein (1990, 1996, 2000) which describes the principles that govern agency and social relations within the field of education. Although Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse emerged from the field of education, it also has the potential to describe the production, transmission and reproduction of knowledge in other institutional contexts, including that of the clinic or health centre (MacDonald 2002). From the purview of pedagogic discourse, the health centre is viewed as a context within which medical knowledge is reproduced. This reproduction of medical knowledge is realised as medical discourse is delocated from the 'context of production' (the university and laboratory), transmitted via 'the context of recontextualisation' (medical school, public broadcasting service, publishing house) and relocated in the 'context of reproduction,' the clinic,

health centre (MacDonald 2002, after Bernstein 1996) or, in this case, the counselling session.

Bernstein's critical educational sociology enables an applied linguistics approach which describes the language and discourse within a particular institutional setting to be related to structural mechanisms of social control. A distinction is made between two types of discourse which are embedded in the transmission and acquisition of medical knowledge: 'regulative discourse' and 'instructional discourse.' In Bernstein's terms, the framing of pedagogic discourse describes the rules that govern the relations of participants across the social hierarchy (regulative discourse) and rules that govern relations between different types of knowledge (instructional discourse). This means that selection of knowledge within the classroom or clinic has the potential to influence relations between the social agents at the micro level of the discourse (Bernstein 1996; Buzzelli & Johnston 2001). Access to, and facility in, different knowledges and discourses (e.g., 'authorised' or 'local') therefore become determinants of power asymmetries that are constituted between participants in institutional talk. For its part, applied linguistics can provide a micro-analysis of conversational interaction in order to better understand the symbolic control which takes place at the macro-level of institution and society, since within the fields of both education and health are embedded regulative discourses of social order and conduct that operate beyond the classroom or clinic (Buzzelli & Johnston 2001). For example, it has been reported that as students learn reasoning skills they also internalise what it means to be 'morally compliant' citizens (Love 2000: 422). In a similar fashion, medical consultations are intertwined with pedagogical processes as medical knowledge is imparted to patients (Montgomery et al. 2006; Hult et al. 2009).

This regulative function also extends to health promotion programmes charged with imparting knowledge ostensibly to 'empower' HIV/AIDS patients. Paradoxically, these have been also described as creating subjectivities in individuals which are linked to promotion of neo-liberal ideologies of social reform of medicine (Finn & Sarangi 2010). For example, Jane Mulderrig has recently conceptualised pedagogic discourse in the UK anti-obesity campaign *Nudge* as a form of 'biopedagogy' whereby medical knowledge is recontextualised with 'normative, socially regulative, and reproductive functions' (2017: 3). Thus, regulative discourse is employed in our analysis to conceptualise not only the power relations between health professionals and the women that are constituted in the HIV/AIDS counselling sessions, but also the modalities of control that are exercised through the legitimisation and delegitimisation of distinct systems of knowledge relating to women's health and sexual practices in the home. Different types of knowledge have been shown to include local and non-specialised knowledge which is derived from people's everyday practices (MacDonald et al. 2009; van Dijk 2002), local knowledge which is outside technical and official knowledge (Higgins & Norton 2010) and experiential knowledge.

Methodology

Our data are drawn from over 20 hours of audio recordings of counselling and health educational sessions held by health professionals with various groups of pregnant women attending an antenatal clinic in a rural community hospital in Malawi. The chapter is part of a larger sociolinguistic study involving audio recordings of interaction, observations, interviews with the participants and document analysis. The transcription conventions utilised in the audio data are presented in Appendix A.

As with most of the studies in health communication reported in the previous section, analysis of our empirical data is carried out using techniques of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is typically used in applied linguistics to reveal generally how power relations are negotiated in talk (Sarangi & Roberts 1999) and the ways in which language is linked to reproduction of ideologies, power relations and medical realities (Lupton 1992). However, in this chapter our exploration of HIV counselling will elucidate the power relations in the counselling sessions more specifically by focusing on their regulative function (after Bernstein 1990, 1996, 2000). The discourse of HIV/AIDS realises a range of social practices related to everyday life, such as taking care of the self and family, relating to one's spouse and following expert advice. These practices also entail the social relations surrounding the discourse (e.g., husband and wife, mother and child, mother and health expert) (see van Leeuwen 2008). Our analysis will therefore not only extend the scope of applied linguistics contextually, by investigating how the experiences of the women clients affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic are realised in the talk of the counselling sessions, but also conceptually, by linking the micro-level details of interaction with the macro-level structures of social and institutional practices. Our empirical analysis therefore specifically addresses the following two questions:

- How is regulative discourse realised in HIV/AIDS counselling sessions in rural Malawi?
- What implications does this regulative discourse have for the clients' agency in their everyday practices?

Ethical consent for the larger study was granted by the University of Warwick and the National Committee on Research in the Social Science and Humanities (NCRSSH) in Malawi. Informed consent was also obtained from all participating health professionals and clients.

Analysis

Antenatal counselling sessions ostensibly enhance knowledge of HIV/AIDS, encourage HIV testing and enable the women to make informed decisions

about their health. On the upside, Chimbwete-Phiri (2019) and Chimbwete-Phiri & Schnurr (forthcoming) have demonstrated that health professionals use discourse strategies that facilitate negotiation of knowledge and demonstrate their aims to collaborate with the women to achieve the aims of the consultations. However, in further diversifying applied linguistics approaches to health consultations, this analysis focuses on the regulative aspects of antenatal consultations, not least because of contradictions that the different discourse strategies demonstrate. Within the constraints of this chapter, we go on to analyse three extracts which exemplify the interaction that takes place between the health professionals (counsellors) and the pregnant women to illuminate the discursive practices employed by the participants. In the following sections of analysis we particularly focus on the 'selection, sequence, pacing and criteria of the knowledge' (Bernstein 1996: 28) that take place within HIV/AIDS counselling sessions in Malawi.

Relationship between types of knowledge

The examples below demonstrate how the health professionals utilise a question-and-answer format to facilitate the reproduction of medical knowledge among the women, thereby revealing a relationship across different types of knowledge. Examples 1 and 2 below are extracts from a talk by a female health professional (HP1) talking to a group of 14 pregnant women (W represents several or all women speaking at the same time, while W1, W2, W3 etc. refer to individual women in each example). At this stage in the exchanges (examples 1 and 2) they are talking about specific ways of preventing the transmission of HIV from mother to child. The extracts are the clients' responses to HP1's question: 'The mother is diagnosed with HIV (.) how can she protect her child from contracting HIV?'

Example 1

1	HP1:	*Mayi wapezeka kuti ali ndi kachilombo ka HIV (.)*
	HP1:	The mother is diagnosed with HIV (.)
2		*angamuteteze bwanji mwana wake (.)*
		how can she protect her child (.)
3		*kuti asatenge HIV?* (6)
		from contracting HIV? (6)
4	W1:	*Apite kuchipatala akayezetse magazi*
	W1:	She should go to the hospital for a blood test
5	HP1:	*Choyambirira, apite ku chipatala akayezetse*
	HP1:	The first thing, she should go to the hospital to get tested

6		*adziwe kuti kodi ali ndi kachilombo (.) kapena alibe, eti?*
		to know whether she has the virus (.) <u>or not</u> right?
7	W:	((Some)) *Mmm*
	W:	((Some)) Mmh
8	HP1:	*Chachiwiri? (.) Ngati wapezeka nako kachilombo?*
	HP1:	The second thing? (.) if she is diagnosed with the virus?
9	W2:	*Alandire zotsatira ndi [mankhwala amene ampatse]*
	W2:	She should accept the results [and the medicine she receives]
10	W3:	*Alandire treatment*
	W3:	She should receive the treatment
11	HP1:	*Alandire treatment (.) ayambe kulandira ma ARV (.)*
	HP1:	She should get treatment (.) she should start receiving ARVs (.)
12		*Adzimwa <u>mwadongosolo,</u>*
		Taking the medicine according to the regulations,
13		*>mwamalamulo akuchipatala< eti?*
		>according to hospital regulations< right?
14	W:	Mmm
	W:	Mmh

In example 1, HP1 asks the women questions, ostensibly to engage them in the counselling talk, rather than unilaterally presenting information about the anti-retroviral regime (ARV). On the one hand, this strategy appears to really engage the women in contributing answers to the talk (see Chimbwete-Phiri 2019); however, it is the way in which the women make this contribution that is of particular interest here. As the women respond to the question about how they should avoid infecting their children with HIV, HP1 uses repetition to reinforce the women's answers. For example, when W3 responds, 'She should receive the treatment' (line 10), HP1 repeats this answer and adds 'she should start receiving ARVs (.) taking the medicine according to the regulations' (line 11). Here, her repetition and additions function to affirm the correctness of the answers given by the women, ratify them and thereby instruct the women. In this exchange, HP1 asserts a degree of certainty regarding what knowledge is legitimate and what is not. As she repeats the women's responses (lines 5–6, 11–13) she also appears to evaluate the information as correct, hence reinforcing authorised medical knowledge. This format realises the regulative function of the discourse and facilitates the shaping of the text into a form that is acceptable in line with legitimate medical knowledge.

The knowledge about the ARV regime that is being reaffirmed in example 1 is not something that originated in the women's personal experience. Rather, the participants are being required within the counselling session to recall clinical information that has been produced in one context and is recontextualised into the current setting, in the process compromising the extent of the women's agency as social actors. HP1's question opens with a neutral referent, 'pregnant

woman infected with HIV,' leading to the use of the third-person pronoun 'she' rather than a direct referent to the women, such as the use of the second-person pronoun 'you' (lines 1–3). HP1's formulation of a generic and distanced subject 'the pregnant woman' rather than directly addressing the women with 'you' demonstrates a form of passivation of the women into the role of benefactors, rather than positioning them as social actors with agency (van Leeuwen 2008). For their part, the women adopt the same linguistic form, answering with the same impersonal referent 'she', thus colluding in their own construction as passive subjects. Moreover, use of the modal auxiliary 'should' serves to reinforce the regulative power that the medical institution exercises over the women (as 'clients', through its agent (the health professional). The medical institution (the hospital) is also represented as being the body which conveys authority through statements such as 'according to hospital regulations' (line 13). The woman in question is therefore constructed as a compliant subject, the 'normal citizen,' who conducts herself according to institutional guidelines, while the hospital is constructed as a regulating 'semiotic agent' (Moore 2005: 108) which oversees compliance with the regime whereby the testing, diagnosis and treatment of HIV is carried out.

The element of 'framing' in pedagogic practice is the device that discursively constitutes the criteria for legitimate knowledge. Framing is a means whereby the knowledge which is constructed in the talk is evaluated against a certain baseline of authorised knowledge (Bernstein 1996). HP1, in example 1, demonstrates this principle as she evaluates the women's responses to her questions. As HP1 develops her talk on the basis of the women's responses, she mobilises her professional authority to legitimise what is being talked about. While the women present their answers, thereby colluding in the reproduction of medical knowledge, HP1 enacts her authority by controlling what knowledge is selected for inclusion in the talk. Although HP1 elicits information from the women, classically, the question-and-answer format constructs an asymmetry of roles enabling her to be in control (Walsh 2011). Similar to classroom discourse, the health professional initiates, and the clients respond, before she gives them feedback. This format has long been dubbed 'Initiate, Respond, Feedback' (or 'IRF': Sinclair & Coulthard 1975; Walsh 2011), but has not hitherto been identified in a context such as this. Through exercising this form of discursive control, the health professional selects what type of knowledge to discuss in this forum, acting as gatekeeper as to what forms of knowledge to incorporate into this medical interaction (Vickers et al. 2012), and directing the talk towards its institutional goals.

However, as can be seen from their responses, the women are already able to safeguard against the transmission of HIV/AIDS. They already appear to have the knowledge, but the forum seems to be where the health professional ratifies their information and appropriates the form of its articulation. This was confirmed when the women indicated elsewhere in their interviews that they already had knowledge about HIV/AIDS prior to the counselling sessions,

which they had gleaned from community meetings and gatherings, social networks, education talks at the health centre and from mass media promotions. Example 2, a continuation of the talk above, illustrates how HP1's preference for certain forms of knowledge was displayed through her selection of topic. In this extract, HP1 asks about other ways by which a pregnant woman can prevent infecting her child with HIV.

Example 2

15	W4:	*Adzikagona ndi abambo modziteteza*
		She should have protected sex with her husband
16	HP1:	*Adzikagonana ndi abambo pogwiritsa ntchito kondomu?*
	HP1:	She should use a condom when having sex with the husband?
17		*mwi:na zikhoza kutheka eti?*
		perhaps it will be possible, right?
18		*pogwiritsa ntchito kondomu, eti?*
		by using a condom, right?
19		*Komano nanga mimba ibwera– yabwera bwanji*
		But in that case, how can– has she conceived
20		*ngati akugwiritsa ntchito kondomu pamenepo, eti?* =
		if they have been using a condom? Right? =
21	W5:	=*koma mimba ndiya abambo omwewonso*
	W5:	=And the pregnancy is by the same man
22	HP1:	*Mmm*
	HP1:	Mmh
23	W5:	*nzovutanso he he he*
	W5:	That is a difficult one heh heh heh =
24	HP1:	=<u>*Chabwino*</u>, *chabwino iyoyo ya kondomu mwina tiisiye uko*
	HP1:	=<u>Okay</u>. Okay, perhaps we should put the condom issue aside
25		*tikambebe njira zina (.) Komabe ndizofunikira eti?*
		let us mention other ways (.) However it is important (.) right?

In example 2 one woman (W5) enacts her agency in the talk by giving an unelicited comment in response to the challenge that using protection for pregnant woman raises (lines 21, 23). In this case the responses by W4 'that she should have protected sex with her husband' is in light of medical recommendation that couples should use condoms when they are both diagnosed with HIV to prevent any increase in the viral load and where one is HIV-negative and the other is HIV-positive (referred to as 'discordant couples'). Two women's responses (W4 and W5) to HP1's question show an example of such a challenge, that is of a pregnant woman who is HIV-positive and is to use condoms with her husband. HP1 expresses doubts to W4's answer but does not address how this could be understood. W5 gives a rejoinder to HP1's statement

(line 21) which shows an enactment of agency by the women to actively evaluate the information by saying 'that is a difficult one' (line 23). This signals the potential for agency of the woman in the talk, to comment and even interrupt a health professional. However, in line 24 (and the following lines not shown here) HP1 explicitly dismisses the subject when she uses an emphatic 'Okay. Okay [line 25] perhaps we should put the condom issue aside.' Instead, HP1 proceeds to set out the need for married couples to know each other's HIV status (i.e., that in the case of discordant couples it is easy for the woman to contract HIV). She finishes the advice by stating 'or maybe you are sleeping with this man and sleeping with that one, it is very easy for you to contract HIV, and you transmit it to your child very easily.' In this case she does not attempt to gather more information from the women's own experience regarding W5's challenge to condom use.

   W5's intervention in this extract realises a counter-discursive position held by one of the clients, that is to present the potential contradictions inherent in relating authorised medical knowledge to experiential and local knowledge. W5, as well as the rest of her group, may potentially have insights into their experiential knowledge related to the subject, that as 'expert patients' (e.g., Sanderson & Angouri 2013) they may have insights into the challenges that using condoms may pose. Instead, W5's comment and the issue it raises is not discussed as the focus goes back to what 'should' (legitimately) be done to prevent HIV transmission. Thus, W5's contribution is made to appear awkward, as is also seen by her laughter at the end of her sentence (l. 23). While this may serve to mitigate the effects of her utterance privately, this laughter is not echoed by HP1 or anyone else in the group. Thus, by controlling what is raised in the talk, HP1 positions herself as the expert and exercises control of the discussion. This example illustrates the way in which the reproduction of the social asymmetries in this institutional context are reflected 'in what is left unsaid, interrupted, cut-off or de-emphasized' (Waitzkin 1991: 40).

   Just as in classroom discourse in which a teacher may engage the students' knowledge but as a teacher is also not only 'an authority' in the topic but also 'in authority' (after Buzzelli & Johnston 2001: 880), the health professional regulates what is raised in the talk. As demonstrated in examples 1 and 2, HP1 is in control of not only the topics – relating to the ARV regime and the transmission of HIV – but also how the participants interact at this point, and thereby remains in control of what is legitimate within this context. Eventually HP1 seems to favour didactic talk with question and answers as a strategy that checks the legitimate knowledge as that which is appropriate in this forum (i.e., reinforcing what should be done in line with the hospital regulations). Consequently, the type of knowledge in the discussion and the nature of interaction is regulated as it reverts to the official forms through emphasis on information delivery rather than discussion. In fact, there are no instances when the women presented other preferences as to what is to be discussed, which were accepted as legitimate. This creates a formal hierarchical relation between the health professional as an expert and the women as non-experts. This control may have implications for

the women's enactment of agency not only in the talk but also in practice, since a 'critical health literacy' is not encouraged in this case (Kreps 2012: 14).

Social relations of the participants

Depending on the particular health professional, some allowed more agency on the part of the women, and therefore permitted the inclusion of other types of knowledge. In this respect, the framing of pedagogic discourse as regulative can be 'visible' (i.e., explicit) or 'invisible' (i.e., implicit). Thus, the degree of explicitness of pedagogic discourse, in turn, makes the creation of 'pedagogic subjects' relatively visible or invisible (Bernstein 1990: 173; also Love 2000). Commands that create a 'local order' construct explicit regulative discourse, such as when HP1 demands a change of subject by uttering 'let's leave that aside' in example 2, were used on several occasions. This regulative discourse is the practitioners' means of normalising the practices of the medical interaction, as well as normalising the medical knowledge in question. This discourse also reinforces the institutional relationship (e.g., Waitzkin 1991) between the health professionals as experts and the women as non-experts. In the example that follows we demonstrate how the participants in the talk realise power relations institutionally and socially, thus rendering the regulative discourse explicit and 'visible.'

In the lengthy example 3 that follows, a female health professional (HP3) talks to a group of 23 women about the use of condoms for couples who are infected with HIV. Here, HP3 utilises a more collaborative discourse strategy as she asks the women a question which emanates a discussion among them: 'in our homes are we using condoms or we have stopped?' Several women (W2, W3, W4, W5) enact their agency in the talk by actively resisting what HP3 said. Although this question may not be relevant to all the women, their responses indicate that they are not in fact using condoms and narrate the difficulties by giving relatively lengthy responses: about nine lines for W2, and 17 lines for W3. Through such active counter-discourse the women negotiate the practicalities of using a condom (e.g., Stivers 2006), as well as the challenges which they face in following hospital advice. In counterpoint to the orderly IRF format of the previous extracts, several women talk at once and there is a clear involvement on the part of most of the women as they chatter indistinctly and laugh. Here, the women's talk is an example of the contradictions that the women face, their own agency to meet the requirements of the clinic as the regulative institution and the partner who does not comply with 'what the hospital requires of both of you' (l.13).

Example 3

| 1 | W2: | *Azibambowa, monga mmene mwanenera kale eti?* |
| | W2: | these men, as you have already said right? |

2		°*Alibe* experience *yobwera kudzayezetsa*
		They do not have the experience of coming here to get tested
3		*kuti amve uphungu wabwino°*
		and to receive proper counselling°
4		*Ndizotheka iwe mzimayi*
		It is possible that you the woman
5		*ukutenga zozitetezera zija eti?*
		are getting the protective tools right?
6		*Nde pali azimuna ena amatha kungovara (.) mongokuyerekeza*
		But there are some men who (.) pretend to put it on
7		*iweyo ukamakhala udziwona kuti anzanga atani? (.)*
		so that you should think that my partner has what? (.)
8		*avala eti? (.)*
		has put it on, right? (.)
9		*komano nthawi zina pogwira ntchito paja angathe*
		But during the work he may
10		<u>*kuyigwetsera*</u> *mwina pansi paja (.)*
		<u>drop it</u> on the floor (.)
11		*iwe opanda kudziwa kuti chachitika nchani*
		without you being aware of what has happened

((lines omitted as HP3 asks the women what happens when they have sex and asks questions that challenge the women. Laughter and chattering))

12	W3:	*IYAYI iweyo utha kumuumiriza kuti apange zimenezozo*
	W3:	NO, but you can force him to use it …
13		*komano kuti iye akwaniritse kuti iweyo yachipatala igwire ntchito*
		But for him to do what the hospital requires of both of you…
14		*oro azimayi ambiri kunoko amabwera okha amene*
		even most women come here alone
		((omitted some lines as more women join in with laughter))
15	W3:	*nde ameneyo umutengere chishango (.)*
	W3:	so even if you collect condoms for such a man
16		*achivala* <u>*molongosoka*</u>?
		can he wear it <u>properly</u>?
17	HP3:	*Inu mmati bwa? Ee inu*
	HP3:	What are you saying? Yes, you.
18	W6:	*chishangocho amatha kuchiboora panthawi yomwe akuvala…*
	W6:	They puncture the *condom* as they put it on…

((Some lines omitted where HP3 asks the women at what point the man wears the condom and some of the women say the man wears it while they watch and talk about the cunning nature of the men))

| 19 | HP3: | *Chabwino, chabwino zikatero (.) eti?* |
| | HP3: | Okay, okay in that case (.) right? |

20		*Zikatero tingoti zikulakwika kuti tikulephera kuwauza*
		It is just unfortunate that we fail to tell him
21		*koma sizimayenera zikhale choncho eti?*
		but that is not how things are meant to be right?
22		*Chifukwa ikafika nthawi yovala kondomu ija*
		Because, when it comes to the time of wearing the condom
23		*imafunika kuvala akatota, eti?*
		is supposed to be worn when one is erect, right?
24	W:	*Eee*
	W:	Yes

In example 3 the women outline the 'regulations' they fail to meet, namely the need for husbands to accompany wives to the antenatal clinic (line 14), having an HIV test together (line 2) and (proper) use of condoms (lines 4ff.). In this, the husband is a co-actor within the social structure in which the woman operates (van Leeuwen 2008), yet he affects the woman's agency to act. Here, the women utilise their experiential knowledge as a resource to negotiate the medical knowledge with the heath professional. The women seem to accept the authority of the medical discourse but indicate that there is a tension between practices learned in the clinic and the everyday realities of HIV/AIDS, in particular their sexual practices in the home due to their position in the traditional patriarchal society. Consequently, example 3 demonstrates the relationship between medical knowledge and experiential or local knowledge in this context. In this, HP3 showed a different approach to the other six health professionals featured in the larger study, both in her formatting of questions which actually led to discussions and by opening with a less visible framing of the regulative discourse as there was a lengthy discussion to which the women actually contributed meaningfully.

However, as is also shown later in example 3 and elsewhere in our data, more visible forms of regulative discourse are adopted by HP3. In fact, this health professional also periodically uses strategies that actually reinforce the regulative discourse which characterises the counselling talk, namely when she directs the women to speak 'one at a time' (not shown here); when she selects who should speak by ignoring W3's rhetorical question (line 15); while she appoints another woman to speak, 'what are you saying, yes, you?' (line 17); and bringing that part of the discussion to a close by interrupting W4 (line 19) in order to present her advice on the matter (lines 23ff). By regulating the social order in the talk, who speaks and at what time, the participants are positioned as 'pedagogic subjects.' Within the medical encounter, counter-divisions of 'class' are also created where class acts as a determinant of power which is manifested through the displays of the health professional's knowledgeability against the 'less knowledgeable' clients (Montgomery et al. 2006). Consequently, HP3's strategies reinforce the power differentials between the health professionals

and the women. In turn, these have the potential to perpetuate the constitutive power inequalities in the home, as the women's agency to freely speak up is not acknowledged.

Towards the end of the discussions in example 3, HP3's talk reverts to a didactic format in which she delivers advice and further information on effective use of a condom (lines 23ff) (i.e., checking the expiry date and ensuring it is properly worn). Delivering information and advising are some of the activities which have also been illustrated in other studies of HIV/AIDS counselling discourse (Silverman 1997). But, based on what the women raise in the example, such information and advice may not be what the women need at this stage. This style of talk reinforces the power differentials between them, and by interrupting the women's concerns with advice she relegates the women to a passive listening position while she adopts the position of knowledgeable expert exerting power over the less powerful (e.g., Montgomery et al. 2006). Rather, what is needed is a redress of the challenges that the women express. Thus, the women's agency as they explore other relevant forms of knowledge (local and experiential) is controlled as the health professionals – HP1 (examples 1 and 2) and HP3 (example 3) – seem to prioritise the unproblematic reproduction of authorised medical knowledge.

Implications and conclusions

The examples that we have been able to analyse in detail within the scope of this chapter, therefore, reveal two elements in the enactment of regulative discourse in HIV/AIDS counselling talk in rural Malawi, which are more widely supported elsewhere (Chimbwete-Phiri 2019; Chimbwete-Phiri & Schnurr forthcoming): a tension between authorised medical knowledge and local knowledge about HIV/AIDS and how such a disparity between knowledge types constitutes unequal power relations between the health professionals and the women in this health care context. Through the counselling sessions, the health professionals act as agents of 'symbolic control' (Sarangi & Roberts 1999: 8); they are involved in relaying the control of higher 'official discourses' while neglecting the local ones of the women. This is similar to what Mulderrig (2017) uncovered in the 'biopedagogic' discourse of obesity: those who have expert knowledge bring a seeming rationality to those who lack it, giving them the information to be rational, while occluding the social relations and the context with which it is associated.

Nevertheless, these counselling sessions remain an important forum for education and empowerment. The interaction of health practitioners and patients in Malawi has demonstrated that there is a potential for discussion and inclusion of local and experiential knowledge if the health professionals attend to some of the linguistic and discoursal features of their talk as presented in our analysis. As has been argued elsewhere, it is not information about prevention

and treatment of HIV/AIDS that people lack in Malawi and southern Africa more generally, but lack of compliance with that knowledge (Chasi & de Wet 2006; Penn et al. 2011). Moreover, others have argued that health education is not the only necessary step to curb health problems and provide access to treatment (Montgomery et al. 2006). The health professionals in the examples aim to empower their women clients, but at the same time they use strategies that reproduce existing inequalities by not giving the women the chance to explore the issues. Consequently, subjectivities are constructed through the regulative nature of the counselling discourse as the health professionals seem to focus on ensuring that the women are compliant, rather than engaging in a discussion of why the women fail to be compliant.

The health professionals, in the examples in our analysis, emphasise giving the women the information by checking what should be done. This is similar to what others have dubbed 'responsibilisation' in neo-liberal health provision (e.g. Barry et al. 1996), which has been criticised as reducing the patients to 'subjects' without considering the material aspects of their lives. Within this medical pedagogy the role of the women needs to be upheld by giving them space to assert themselves because the counselling sessions are a forum where theory meets practice (after Freire 1970). Furthermore, the interaction has to enhance the agency of the women to engage with their own local and experiential knowledge in the interaction as they express ways of dealing with the challenges they face. The link between action and personal experience are vital in this 'responsibilisation' discourse (Colvin et al. 2010).

However, our analysis has also revealed that the subject positions of participants, and the power relations between them and the health professionals in this context, vary depending on the different health professionals holding the counselling sessions. From what is seen in the interactional data, more interactive sessions are possible and more experiential knowledge can be shared if the health professionals realise the significance of certain linguistic and discoursal strategies that they employ. While the micro level of the interaction can be addressed by focusing on improving their style (i.e., by devising ways of holding more discussions and evaluating the sessions with the health professionals) (e.g., Silverman 1997), the macro-level structural relations realised in the talk are more complicated and less amenable to immediate intervention. These macro-level relations entail not only, in the context of this study, deep-seated patriarchal relations which exist within the family, but also in all societies an asymmetrical structural distribution which determines who has the power to access transformative forms of knowledge, or the 'unthinkable' (Bernstein 2000: 43). To counter these asymmetrical relations, a transformative medical pedagogy should aim at shaping the entire person's thinking and enabling them to think of their own situation through a process of 'conscientisation' (Freire 1970). This is a move towards a 'critical pedagogy' (Freire 1970) of health education, through which the women are given the floor to work it out for themselves in order to change their lives. To achieve this, we propose

granting the women more space and time for discussions to allow a gradual conscientisation where critical consciousness is raised in order for women to become empowered practically. If they do not have the power to 'own' the knowledge in the counselling sessions, their capacity to go home, engage their sexual partners and talk through with them on sexual practices, condom use, and disclosing HIV status, as recommended in the sessions, will remain hard to achieve.

In conclusion, applied linguistics studies such as this have the potential to explore in detail the strengths and weaknesses of life-saving health information such as for HIV/AIDS counselling sessions, even in 'diverse' contexts such as rural Malawi, and enhance the lives of HIV-positive citizens in tangible ways. It is not just engaging the clients in the counselling talk that is vital, but through the 'application' of a contextualised analysis of language and discourse, we can detail the strengths and weaknesses of the talk, creating an evidence base which will inform transformative forms of engagement that can be realised in the clients' everyday practices.

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Appendix A: Transcription key

(.)	a regular pause or gap of less than a second.
(n)	number in parenthesis indicates a pause in speakers' talk of more than a second.
::	stretched or prolonged sounds, the length of the row of colons represents the prolongation of the sound.
(( ))	descriptions and comments by author.
?	indicates a rising intonation

.	indicates a stopping intonation
,	indicates flat or continuing intonation
'phrase'	indicates speaker's quoted talk
[	Indicates beginning of overlapping talk
[	indicates end of overlapping talk
>fast<	indicates talk that is noticeably faster than the surrounding talk
<slow>	indicates talk that is slower than the surrounding talk.
-	indicates words that are cut-off or unfinished
<u>word</u>	indicates emphasis by the speaker
…	ellipses indicate omission of talk in the segment
W	represents several or all women speaking at the same time, while W1, W2, W3 etc. refer to individual women in each example

Rethinking Policy and Pedagogy:
A Study of Linguistic Diversity and
Practice in Sri Lanka

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Our country is made of numerous linguistic, ethnic and religious communities. We have to get the best out of all, blend and march forward as a nation and reach the world communities

(First Prime Minister of Independent Sri Lanka, addressing the nation on the 10th of February 1948)[1]

Introduction

The existence of diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic communities has been publicly acknowledged in most political fora in Sri Lanka since independence from British colonial rule in 1948 and continues to be a common topic of discussion and debate even today. Most of the rhetoric reflects a political commitment

towards fostering a culture of acceptance/inclusion at the higher level of policy/planning. In addition, post-independence Sri Lanka has in many instances introduced language policies which have led to strained ethno-linguistic relationships among specific ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, the most well known being the 1956 *Swabsha*[2] policy, which led to a divide among the majority Sinhala ethno-linguistic group and other minority ethno-linguistic groups. Subsequent attempts at constitutional reforms in 1977 and amendments to the constitution in 1987 ensured constitutional compliance with the acceptance of Tamil, a minority language, as an official language in Sri Lanka, while establishing English as a link language. In the process and the aftermath of the 30-year conflict, in 2009 policies and decisions that address greater integration among certain ethnicities, religious groups and linguistics communities in conflict have been initiated. This chapter investigates how these policies are clearly manifested in education contexts, particularly at the grass-roots levels – through classrooms and teachers – in order to better understand the impact of government commitment to fostering and enhancing linguistic diversity. This chapter stems from an ongoing study into investigating teacher attitudes and how to foster awareness of linguistic diversity in Sri Lankan classroom contexts.

A recent publication titled *People of Sri Lanka: 'Sri Lankan'- Our Identity 'Diversity'- Our Strength* by the Ministry of National Integration, Reconciliation and Official Languages, states that Sri Lanka comprises 19 communities. They are Sinhala, Sri Lanka Tamil, the Muslims (Moors), the Tamil community of recent Indian origin, the Colombo Chettis, Sri Lankan Malayalam, Sri Lankan Malay, the Dutch Burgher, the Portuguese Burgher, the Chinese, the Memons, the Coastal Vedda, Sri Lankan Baratha, Sri Lankan Kaffir (the Portuguese Creole-speaking community of African origin), the Dawoodi Bohra, the Vedda, the Sindhi, Sri Lankan Gypsy[3] and Sri Lankan Parsis. Some of these communities speak their own distinct languages aside from the major languages: Sinhala, Tamil and English. These include Sri Lankan Malayalam and Sri Lankan Malay; the Portuguese Burghers speak Portuguese Creole; the Dawoodi Bohra speak a dialect of Gujarat; the Vedda or the *Adivasi* speak Vedda language; and the Sri Lankan Gypsies speak a derivation of Teligu.

However, at the national level of representation, particularly in the national census, only nine of these communities (See Table 3) are included despite national-level commitment to the recognition of these communities, their language, religion, social customs and practices.

The contradiction between the census and other governmental policy practices raises many significant questions. The most significant of these is that, while there is a commitment for the representation of these communities at policy level, these minority linguistic and ethnic groups are then absorbed within the larger populations. They are statistically represented only within the larger communities, thereby denying them of any representation at the census level. Finally, the representation of linguistic diversity at school level is another indication of this mismatch between policy and practice (See Table 4).

Table 3: Distribution of different ethnicities in Sri Lanka.

Ethnicity	Population	Percentage
Sinhala	15,250,081	74.9
Sri Lankan Tamil	2,269,266	11.2
Indian Tamil	839,504	4.1
Sri Lankan Moor	1,892 638	9.3
Burgher*	38,293	0.2
Malay	44,130	0.2
Sri Lankan Chetti**	5,595	0.0
Baratha**	1,717	0.0
Others***	18,215	0.1

Data source: Department of Census Report – 2012
* This includes Dutch, Portuguese and individuals of other European descent.
** Has been included in the census since 2001.
*** This includes the oldest indigenous group and other ethnic, linguistic communities. The *Adivasi* was a part of the census until 1963 and have since been included in the Other group despite their status as the oldest indigenous community in the country.

Table 4: Language use in schools.

S/N	Medium of instruction	No of schools	%
1	Sinhala only	6,338	62.3
2	Tamil only	2,989	29.4
3	Sinhala & Tamil	66	0.64
4	Sinhala & English	554	5.45
5	Tamil & English	168	1.65
6	Sinhala, Tamil & English	47	0. 46
Total		**10, 162**	**100**

Data source: Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka 2016.

According to Table 4, most (91.7%) of the schools available are monolingual schools, with less availability of bilingual and trilingual schools.

Linguistic diversity: Trends and practices

The decline of the colonial powers in the mid-twentieth century and the emergence of new independent states in the world clearly laid greater emphasis on

formulating language policy and planning processes in relation to postcolonial settings, but, as argued by Chimbutane (2015), it was not until the mid-1960s that the movement clearly demarcated itself as a field of research, thereby showing a clear connection between this field of study and decolonisation and multilingualism movements (Chimbutane 2015). Furthermore, against the backdrop of some of the strong colonial ideas that developed well into Westernised sociolinguistics which promoted the view that homogeneity represented modernisation and westernisation while linguistic diversity was an obstacle for national development (Ricento 2000: 198) meant that postcolonial countries had an uphill task of freeing themselves from the debilitating form of Western intellectual imperialism in order to build on the ground realities of postcolonial states, particularly in relation to the ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity that prevailed in these postcolonial countries. Under these circumstances, many postcolonial states like Sri Lanka resorted to the promotion of languages of wider communication (LWC) (Chimbutane 2015) under the influence of Western models of nation formation which promoted monolingual homogenous models. In many instances, LWCs represented the language of the majority ethnic, religious or linguistic group or a globally hegemonic former colonial language like English. The far-reaching ramification of this situation was clearly the 'production and reproduction of social stratification and to increase inequalities in the post-colonial contexts' (Chimbutane 2015: 168) coupled with the use of various labels in reference to varieties of language spoken by minority groups (Gorter and Cenoz 2015):

> Minority language' does refer to a specific category of languages, for which sometimes also terms such as 'lesser used', 'heritage', 'stateless', 'indigenous', 'dominated', 'threatened', 'endangered', or 'ethnic' languages are used. Minority languages distinguished from or in opposition to the category 'majority language'; languages that are also referred to as 'dominant', 'national', 'official' or 'state' languages.
>
> (Gorter and Cenoz 2015: 185)

These definitions clearly push these languages into two opposing polarities where one set of definitions represents the mainstream and other more peripheral positions. Mohanty et al. (2009: 284) calls such circumstances 'vicious circle of language disadvantage' and argues that these languages are 'considered inadequate, impoverished and under-developed and, hence unfit for education and scientific use' (Mohanty et al. 2009: 284). In addition, the political and ideological dimension of this issue is that it 'led to the division of languages into different and discrete languages, to a belief that there is a privileged link between people and a territory and to language functioning as autonomous entities in exclusionary relationships with each other' (Hélot 2015: 215). Therefore it is important to identify the factors that influence the position of these languages in their realms of sociopolitical significance. According to Gorter

and Cenoz (2015), 'language use in the family, protection by the government, provisions in the media, development of a written standard, attitudes towards the language and related identities, levels of activism and … education, that is schooling *in* and *through* the minority language' (p. 187) are such significant influences. As identified, education, particularly schools, become dominant spaces in determining and preservation, language shift and linguistic dominance. Investigating the diverse realities facing educators in multilingual postcolonial classrooms in Sri Lanka thus offers an important opportunity in trying to disentangle some of the complexities identified above.

Data collection and analysis

The data for this study were collected mostly via questionnaires and informal interviews with teachers and teacher trainers. Others mostly represented the nine provinces of the country. I had a total sample of 82 participants, representing 74 teachers and teacher trainers in English and eight teachers in Sinhala. The questionnaire and interviews attempted to ascertain general information about their awareness of the existence of the different linguistic communities and their general response to the inclusion of such languages in the classroom. For the interviews, I mostly used pseudonyms to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. I report on the major themes emerging in the interview responses, borne out further where relevant by questionnaire data.

Teacher/trainer responses

Hegemony of dominant languages

The primary acceptance of this theme arose most clearly from my informal discussions with the members of the teaching community in the number of field visits that I engaged in. For them, either a regional or national language (including English) was seen as highly preferable for educational success, reflecting the known problem of dominant languages hegemonising minority languages.

For example, in a school in a village for Sri Lankan Teligu[4] speakers, many teachers took a negative view on the use of Teligu, since their perception was that the Teligu-speaking students did not 'perform well' in school. Here is a translated extract.

> We speak Tamil and we teach these students in the Tamil medium but they speak a different language; the language they speak at home and as a result we find it very difficult to teach them in Tamil because we have to teach them Tamil first so that they can understand what we are

teaching them. This is a problem, so now we discourage them from speaking in Teligu in class. They can speak Teligu outside, when they play but inside the classroom they have to speak Tamil.

(Teacher in Teligu-speaking region)

The effect of such linguistic marginalisation can be both cause and effect of social marginalisation and, as a result, the use of these minority languages is found mostly among older members of the communities. In Sri Lanka, there is an established social stigma that surrounds the Sri Lankan Teligu communities, who are sometimes called the 'gypsies or *Ahikuntaka* or the snake charmers.' This one-time Romani community is no longer nomadic since they have been given housing by the government and local and foreign NGOs. Furthermore, in order to fight the social stigma many of them have converted to Christianity and therefore do not carry any of their original traditional names any more. Their journey towards acceptance in society has resulted in members of these communities embracing a new religion and the transition to using the regional majority language, Tamil, since it is identified as the language of education, opportunity and acceptance. This way Tamil takes precedence over Teligu given the status it holds in the region as well as the country (i.e., the official language status). This will result in the 'speakers of the minority language "shift[ing]" over time to speaking the majority language' (May 2015: 132). At present, as far as we can establish, some of the younger members of the community prefer to use Tamil over Teligu, risking the situation that the language 'may be remembered by a residual group of language speakers, but it is no longer spoken as a wider language of communication' (May 2015: 132) among the group members. Another similarly marginalised group are the Portuguese Creole-speaking African Community (commonly known as the 'Kaffirs') in Sri Lanka, which is currently at a stage of 'language decline' (May 2015: 132), where only the older members of the community are now believed to speak the language.

Gorter and Cenoz (2015: 192) argue that 'multilingualism is generally seen as an asset when it concerns English as a second or third language (for other "big" languages such as French, German or Spanish), but not when it concerns smaller state languages [*sic*] or regional minority languages.' Many of the respondents who happen to be teachers or teacher trainers echoed similar views.

In Sri Lanka even first languages are not given appropriate recognition in the society. Though they were officially recognized in the eyes of the general public. English is the only language recognized or rather venerated. In other words, there is a social value attached to English unnecessarily making it a class distinguisher.

(Repondent from Wayamba Province)

Another commented that 'English can act as a link language for all, otherwise it will be a mess if we incorporate all these languages into mainstream education.' This clearly demonstrates a common discussion on what Ramanathan (2015) explains as the challenges posed by the social and economic positioning of English in opposition to home languages and its impact in creating inequalities in society. The key argument of many of the participants in my study was that, while the presence of a globally powerful language means greater access, sometimes this could lead to other languages being sidelined. The important fact here is that, according to one participant, even the official Sri Lankan languages like Sinhala and Tamil seem to be relegated to lower positions of power, placing English as superior, thereby positioning official languages in a hierarchy of symbolic power (Bourdieu 1991).

Recognition in society

The predicament of many marginal languages in Sri Lanka is reflected in some of the opinions voiced by participants in this study. Many acknowledged a commonly held notion that, given the number of speakers, these languages would receive less recognition. One participant noted that 'these people who speak other languages [referring to the minority languages referred to in the study] are very small in number and they can speak their languages in their homes, since these languages are not required to be learnt for business or interaction.' Further, there were some who claimed that these 'other so-called languages are not encouraged by the state or other institutions.' The views here are in support of an argument where top-down policies are necessary and effective for the sustaining of linguistic diversity in educational settings but tending to assume the view that linguistic diversity is conceptualised on a quantitative basis of number of speakers. This runs contrary to Hélot's (2015) argument on social position, in which positioning minority linguistic communities within the larger discourse of society leads to what Cooke and Simpson (2015) identify as '*Othering* – or the creation of in-groups and out-groups' (p. 122), where attempts are not made to form a common discourse. Such discourses in postcolonial societies may be representative of notions of nation building and by extension national unity; if so, then use of minority languages may even be seen by some as a threat to the emerging national project. Some of the participants echoed similar views. A participant from the Western Province said that 'these minority languages are not used in common contexts, therefore these languages have no place in society.' However, some of the participants seemed convinced that both quantitative lack of speakers and qualitative social positions of exclusion were connected, making this a problem of the minority communities; they claimed that the problem is rather with 'them' and not with 'us,' as three participants explained:

> A considerable amount of the population speaks Sinhala, Tamil and English. Even the media use these three languages and exposure to other languages is therefore minimal.
>
> (Participant from the Western Province)

> Especially the Sri Lankan African Languages are used to get money. This may help them to stand on their own feet but it doesn't help them to preserve their language.
>
> (Participant from the Western Province)

> Because those language are spoken by very limited amount of people and those people do not mix with people who speak national languages in Sri Lanka and because they are reluctant to connect with speakers from major languages, their languages will not get proper recognition.
>
> (Participant from the Northern Province)

While many felt that the 'problem' was with the minority language groups, there were others who felt that greater responsibility lay with society in general and other stakeholders. Such views echo the argument that 'language death seldom occurs in communities of wealth and privilege, but rather to the dispossessed and disempowered' (Crawford 1994, cited in May 2015: 133). Some participants from the North Central Province were of the view that 'these languages are not given much attention' and that 'they are not useful in our daily lives,' while another stated 'most of them are not recognized in society and most of them are from lower social strata' and as a result 'these languages are not given much attention.' Further, since 'they can get things done using the dominant languages like Sinhala or Tamil,' these languages can survive alongside by having 'recognition in their own societies.'

Nevertheless, there were also others who felt that these linguistic communities 'add to the linguistic diversity of the country' and 'would contribute to a better communication among the different social groups.' Significant responses for inclusion of linguistic diversity came from the participants from the Eastern Province (a province where some of the minority linguistic communities are located) and also from the Wayamba Province. Two participants from Wayamba Province stated that 'languages depict the culture of any society, so they are a picture of Sri Lanka, its culture and historical aspect.' The participants from the Eastern Province argued that 'most of the people don't know about these different kinds of languages' and as a result 'people look down upon these groups and treat them as if they are inferior to us.' In addition, 'they are not given any opportunity to use their language in public' and 'they are considered as aliens when they speak their language.' Given these responses from the teachers and teacher trainers around the country, it seems that policy-level commitment to linguistic diversity remain inadequate in implementation. For these

participants, at least, they seemed unaware of the notion that 'language and linguistic diversity should be included in the mainstream curriculum alongside Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) and learners speaking a minority language should see their linguistic competence in their first language acknowledged and valued in the school system' (Hélot 2015: 218).

Language rights

Given the evidence of marginalisation found in my data, I also wished to investigate the awareness of language rights among the participants. Chimbutane (2015) notes two key trends in relation to multilingual policies and practices in the world: one which looks to promote local and regional languages and the other being the rapidly growing status of English as a global language, as a potential threat to such multilingual promotion. The findings in my data were categorised as general opinions in relation to language rights, expression of interest in legislative initiatives, opinions relating to lack of language rights and the needs to establish such rights. For instance, one participant explained that 'it's a basic human right for people to be able to learn in their mother tongue, which is more comfortable for them,' while another argued, 'although Sri Lanka is a multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural country, all the languages that are being used in Sri Lanka are not given adequate recognition,' thereby emphasising on the importance of ensuring the right to use and preserve these languages. A few participants spoke of the need for legislative action. For instance, one participant explained, 'in Sri Lanka, people speak Sinhala and Tamil languages, and there are villages where languages like Sri Lankan Teligu are spoken but since they are not "visible," they are not accepted by the Sri Lankan constitution.' Therefore, many argued that 'it's the right of these linguistic communities to have the opportunity to speak their own language since we all have a right to speak our mother tongue freely.'

However, despite this awareness, many seemed to have reservations about the practical implications of a broader inclusive policy of linguistic diversity. Some argued that a 'common language will unite people,' while 'different languages tend to be divisive as we had experienced' (referring to the 30-year conflict in Sri Lanka). Many agreed that 'more languages create many pockets of divisions.' There also seemed to be a general scepticism towards policies and implementation, as articulated by one participant:

> As a country, we still have difficulty in recognizing and implementing the existing language policy nationally. The official language act is just a written document which is not fully implemented. Furthermore, co-existence is only a word as long as one community wants to rule the other.

These languages are not major languages. These languages do not have recognition all over the country. Besides, we have English as a link language. Veddha and Portuguese Creole are used in different parts of the country. So these languages are only minor languages unlike Sinhala or English.

The general consensus supports the earlier findings that monolingualism or languages of greater quantitative representation had more value and recognition in society as opposed to other quantitatively less visible languages. Further, difference was perceived as a threat to national unity and nation building, while some saw it as a wider representation of diversity. In conclusion, the participants demonstrated a divisive position in the issue of language rights, with some in support of wider representation of diversity and others preferring a more collective uniformed representation with minimal space for diversity.

Classroom situations

It has been argued that 'pedagogies that build on the linguistic, cultural and sociocognitive resources children bring to school are basic to a quality education that serves local needs as well as the need for a critically conscious and skilled nation and global citizenry' (McCarty & Nicholas 2015: 151). Therefore schools and classrooms become a centre for any discussion on linguistic diversity. The responses of many of the participants in relation to classroom situations varied. Some took the typical 'indoctrinated' view that these languages 'have no utility value' (Bear Nicholas 2009). For instance, some argued that, 'as there are no teachers who speak other languages, therefore we don't need to address them,' while others considered it to be an unnecessary allocation of resources and money – 'it's expensive to hire teachers to teach these languages' (participants in the Eastern Province), and 'allocating more resources to teach these languages will be useless' (Eastern Province). Contrastingly, there were some who felt that 'languages always help you to go to the world with different skills and knowledge and it's always good to have variety in life to explore more in the world'; this type of attitude would be useful since 'through the exploration of how different languages function, students can be brought to understand the relativity of differences at the linguistic and cultural level and that bi or plurilingual speakers are the very ones who build bridges between people of different cultures' (Hélot 2015: 216). In this context, some participants argued that 'if these languages are introduced into the curriculum, there would be a possibility to preserve them' and cautioned that 'there should be proper organisation if it is to succeed' (Uva Province), indicating an inclination towards the view that 'linguistic diversity has to do with developing new relationships to language and languages, new understandings of how language is used in society, an awareness of the rights of minority speakers to be educated in their

home languages and a recognition that many languages in the world today are endangered' (Hélot 2015: 215).

This range of views highlights how far schools may become contested spaces of linguistic opportunity or adversity and/or spaces of acceptance or rejection, particularly in relationships among students who represent majority and minority languages:

> A language becomes a different issue when seen from the perspective of the speaker of a socially dominant language or for a speaker of a minority language. For the majority language speaker, it is taken for granted that the language of the home and the language of the school are the same… for a minority language speaker, however, there is frequently a mismatch between the language of the home and the school.
>
> (Gorter and Cenoz 2015: 184)

A similar view was expressed by one of the participants, who felt that providing the opportunity for the students to use their home languages in class would be a reflection of greater empowerment and inclusion since 'there are students whose mother tongue may be Malay, if they are given the opportunity to use it in class, it would make them feel free in their classroom work' (Uva Province). As Hélot (2015) explains, 'one obvious way of opening our classrooms to linguistic diversity would be to include all the languages spoken by pupils at home in the pedagogical activities implemented in schools and to allow bilingual *or multilingual* [my inclusion] students to use their various languages to learn in class (Hélot 2015: 216).

The predominant role of teacher discourse and its implications in relation to policy implications have been explained (Gombos 2001; Heller 1994) as critical in multilingual settings; they argue that 'teacher discourse may let the student know that the minority language has less value, e.g., for economic advancement, or is less well developed linguistically, or cannot be used for all social domains' (Gombos 2001; Heller 1994). In this sense, it is important to train teachers to be aware of the importance of linguistic diversity in classroom contexts, as identified by a participant who explained that 'in training, there is no need to focus on linguistic diversity but for classroom teaching it is essential. So the teachers should be instructed to cater to this need.'

Conclusion

The current study examined the extent to which multilingual and inclusive practices in relation to linguistic diversity can be found in Sri Lanka mainstream classrooms. The study was mainly aimed at investigating the views and opinions of school teachers/trainers on linguistic diversity in Sri Lanka, particularly in relation to 'low-status' (Chimbutane 2015) or 'low-density'

languages as identified by the current Minister for National Coexistence, Dialogue and Official Languages in Sri Lanka. It was hoped that using data taken from 'bottom-up initiatives' (Chimbutane 2015: 167) would help us comprehend the complexity of implementing policies of linguistic diversity in Sri Lanka. The findings revealed an awareness of these different linguistic groups in society; however, the classrooms were still observed as monolingual spaces and diversity seemed adequate in its symbolic representations at government level through forms of promotional literature or cultural events. Furthermore, many demonstrated a certain level of scepticism in the implementation of policies relating to linguistic diversity owing to popular notions and constructs of national identities that foster a unified identity as opposed to a combination of diverse groups and representations which many argue to promote a divisive status. Clearly there is a long way to go before Sri Lanka can achieve the kind of diversity in teacher thinking that it aims to in its language policies.

Endnotes

1 Taken from the Message of the Hon. Minister of National Coexistence, Dialogue and Official Languages, published in *People of Sri Lanka*.
2 Sinhala Only Bill: Sinhala is the language of the majority in Sri Lanka and in 1956, amid great pressure from the nationalists, the government was forced to recognise Sinhala as the national language, causing serious civil unrest among the majority Sinhala and minority communities in the country.
3 This term is not used any more since it is considered insulting to this community.
4 The Teligu speakers are sometimes referred to as Tulu speaks in Pathmanathan and Endagama (2017) *Peoples of Sri Lanka*. However, Hettiarachchi (1965) in *Sinhala Vishwakoshaya* (*Sinhala Encyclopedia*) states that they are in fact speakers of Teligu or a derivation of Teligu speakers in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, Tulu has been identified as a Kannada language.

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SECTION C

Applied Linguistics and Language Education

Language Teaching in Turbulent Times: Curriculum-Savvy Teachers for Curriculum Success and Sustainability

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Introduction

Nobody doubts the ever-growing need for English as a global language and for improving ELT research and practice. A suitable level of competence in English is ever more valued in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and particularly in Arabic/French-speaking North Africa, including Tunisia in the post-2011 revolution era, in a turbulent environment marked by socio-economic problems, high youth unemployment, migration, terrorism and armed conflict. Yet, overall competence in English has remained low in spite of decades of language instruction. This situation requires us as applied linguists, yet again, to revisit our assumptions about language, language teaching and learning, curriculum design and language-in-education policy and planning.

Given the current global status of English, further enhanced by information and communication technologies (ICTs), English language teachers, more than any other curriculum stakeholders, find themselves charged with

the responsibility of adapting their views and practices to meet the challenges of this brave new world. This chapter calls for attending to the central role of English language teachers in curriculum implementation in order to promote learner autonomy while striving to humanise the teaching learning process and to ensure curriculum success and sustainability.

If we want empowered, autonomous learners, we need empowered, autonomous teachers. These teachers need to be curriculum-savvy. They cannot perform with any degree of success without apprehending their position in the whole curriculum and understanding the constraints that shape their roles and determine their actions. If they just teach the textbook assigned to a particular level, their work remains superficial. They would simply be marking time, covering the material mechanically, with less than the desired impact on the learners' developing competence.

Teachers would gain much from being curriculum-savvy. They would have a sense of what they can and cannot do, realistically. They would know how to seek help, in terms of pedagogical and material support. They would at least be able to defend themselves in front of supervisors, learners, parents and the wider community since they – rather than the textbook writer, teacher supervisor, school principal or higher-level decision maker – are usually the only party to face criticism in the event of failure. Curriculum success is often relative, as far more curricula actually fail rather than succeed (Rodgers 1989). This is because success depends on a number of variables involving different stakeholder roles and the political, socio-economic and educational environment where English is taught.

In the MENA region, the demand for English is very strong, notably in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, where education is bilingual, in Arabic and French, and where foreign language proficiency, particularly in English, is an asset for higher academic and vocational achievement and better employment (British Council 2013; Daoud 2000, 2011). The current environment, especially in the wake of the 2011 political upheaval, is characterised by high turbulence, which affects language programme success.

In the first section of this chapter, I will cover different areas of turbulence with specific reference to Tunisia, where the problems are severe, often misunderstood and hardly addressed at all and the solutions complex and hard to reach or implement. In the second section, I will propose a teacher-oriented curriculum framework for teacher empowerment to help maintain the complexity and humanity of the teaching/learning process. I will conclude with some recommendations to promote curriculum success and sustainability.

Areas of turbulence

Socio-economic and communication concerns

The motto of the revolution in Tunisia in December 2010–January 2011, which initiated the Arab Spring, was *Jobs, Freedom and Dignity*. The fact that jobs

came first reflected the high rate of unemployment, particularly among university graduates (nearly 40%, compared with the then national average of 18%). The thinking was, and still is, that without a decent job one could not be free or lead a dignified life. Unemployment is, of course, a complex problem and the country is still struggling to deal with it, but proficiency in English is recognised by employers, policymakers and the unemployed themselves as an important factor to secure an advantage in finding a job (Daoud 1996; Champagne 2007; Erling 2015).

The importance of English has been further enhanced by the use of ICTs, not only in social media but, more importantly, in the business sector as well as in the democratic transition process supported by various foreign governments and international organisations. The last eight years have seen greater demand for English (British Council 2015) and a significant need for translation and interpreting services from/into English in practically all areas.

Another aspect of these concerns revolves around the changing communication needs brought about by ICT use in this digital age, which require us to rethink basic notions such as language, communication, and language learning and teaching. Learners communicate differently now. They have free access to information, which allows them to be autonomous – working independently from the teacher – in terms of the type and amount of information they need, the way they find it and the skills and strategies they employ to use it. If teachers do not adapt their teaching to the learners' emerging communication styles, they may very well be ignored and certainly be less effective (cp. Boss & Krauss 2007; Motteram 2013; Nunan 1989a; Nunan 1989b; Tomlinson & Wittaker 2013).

Educational concerns

The educational environment is highly turbulent, as there are problems at the level of policy and planning, watered-down programmes, poor assessment and evaluation, falling literacy rates and changing learner characteristics. Several studies focusing on Tunisia have consistently noted these problems in terms of general ELT and ESP programme design and implementation, and in terms of the prevailing mindset behind policymaking, planning and, consequently, funding. As far as ELT is concerned, practitioners have always had to do with ad hoc, ill-informed language-in-education policy and planning decisions (Daoud 1996, 2007, 2011; Salhi 2000). Several general English and ESP programmes have failed for a variety of reasons, including poor coordination, insufficient or discontinued funding, suspended reform initiatives and, most of all, ignorance and inertia, whereby progress is blocked or even reversed (Daoud 2000; Labassi 2010). Two particular examples, one about ELT in primary school and the other about ESP in higher education, would help illustrate this inertia and, thus, reveal the mindset prevailing among decision makers, who do not seem to consider language teaching a profession requiring advanced knowledge and high qualifications, such as accounting, engineering or medicine.

In the 1960s and 1970s when there was a shortage of local teachers, foreigners were often hired simply because they were native speakers of English, but with scores of Tunisians graduating in English over the last 50 years, a university degree and then an additional secondary school teaching certificate (CAPES) became requirements for teaching EFL or ESP. Yet, recent reforms to introduce English in the sixth form of primary school, on a one-hour per week basis, have led to letting some primary school teachers without a degree or any proven competence in English teach the language in addition to the other subjects they had. These teachers were preferred to English degree holders, who were actually unemployed, because of 'unforeseen' administrative and logistical constraints that would have required any full-time English teacher to teach in several different schools at once. As documented by Boukadi (2013), the primary school teachers were selected based on their expressed interest and dormant competence in English as well as their presumed pedagogical expertise, which they were expected to transfer to their ELT practice. They were supposed to receive 400 hours of English instruction prior to starting teaching but only had 80. To make matters worse, the primary school teacher's union managed to stop counselling visits by secondary school English inspectors, arguing that they were encroaching on the primary school inspectors' territory. Most recently, the Ministry of Education has announced that ELT would start in the fourth form in September 2019, taught by teachers with the same profile.

The second example about ESP illustrates a regression that has been underway since the late 1990s, when English became a compulsory subject in all academic disciplines as well as vocational training. English degree and CAPES holders have been appointed to teach the language in all specialty areas, but with no training in ESP course design, teaching and evaluation. There were initiatives, mainly funded by USAID and the British Council, to support ESP practice, but they were not sustainable, for reasons that are expounded in Daoud (2000) and Labassi (2010). Now there are well over 1,000 ESP teachers in the university and vocational training systems, but they are practically left to their own devices.

Programme goals and objectives, typically framed as a statement of an ideal in a syllabus, are weakened as they are translated into textbooks, lesson plans, classroom activities and tests. As the process goes downstream, and in the absence of systematic, professional coordination, that ideal is gradually lost since the syllabus designers, textbook writers, teacher trainers and teachers-cum-test designers fail to develop a shared understanding of language, language learning and programme objectives (Daoud 2000, 2011).

New textbooks come and go every four or five years while learner-assessment procedures remain unchanged. This has led to establishing two parallel curricula: the official one, above board, costly and largely ineffective, and an unofficial one (private tutoring), which fosters test-wiseness and very little learning. Thus, new textbooks, no matter how innovative they may be, make very little

difference in improving proficiency levels, as demonstrated by reading proficiency tests (PISA 2018).

Learner assessment, itself, is problematic because it is not reliable. It fails to adequately test what is taught and how it is taught. Tests at all levels tend to copy the format of the Baccalaureate exam (a national final high school exam that allows access to university), which reflects a predominantly structural, rather than communicative, view of language (Al-Benna 2002; Athimni 2018; Canale 1983). Programme evaluation, which should be informed by assessment outcomes, is still very much a foreign notion and, if done at all, is limited to a desk-based textbook review (Daoud 1999, 2000).

Another area of turbulence is literacy, with rates falling not only in English but also in Arabic, the national language, and French, the dominant school language (PISA 2018). Private employers often complain about the poor level of job applicant competence in all three languages (Erling 2015).

Last but not least, there is learner-related turbulence, which has to do with changing learner characteristics, with noticeable differences between student cohorts that are just two or three years apart. Communication has changed drastically thanks to ICT use, but this has made learners even more independent from the teacher. SLA research has already shown that it is difficult for teachers to ensure learning is actually happening because it is largely an internal, and often incidental and variable, process (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991). This poses the challenge of motivating students and the even bigger challenge of maintaining the level of motivation achieved and raising it even higher in any given lesson or a whole course within and beyond the classroom. Both learners and teachers generally recognise that there is a disconnect between language practice in the classroom and real-world language use outside in terms of content, interactional skills and strategies, as well as communication and learning modes (Chebbi 2019; Hermessi 2017).

All of the above concerns are real issues that teachers face on a daily basis, and one would hope that they are well prepared to do so. The question, then, arises as to how they can be prepared, whether they can do so by themselves and what the different stakeholders in the language curriculum can do to help them cope with the immediate demands of teaching. In the following section, I propose a teacher-oriented framework for curriculum development and implementation to take into account the complexity of the teaching/learning process and to promote humanising ELT.

A teacher-oriented curriculum framework for humanising ELT

Essentially, there are two approaches to curriculum development and implementation: top-down and bottom-up. Both have direct implications for teachers and determine, to a large degree, how empowered they may or may not

be while doing their day-to-day work. The two approaches seem dichotomous, involving sets of definite roles for different stakeholders with little overlap or cooperation in the top-down approach, on the one hand, and, on the other, a range of possibilities for participation, interaction and co-construction in the bottom-up approach (cp. Johnson 1989; Nation and Macalister 2010). However, for teachers who find themselves with a predetermined textbook and learner-assessment system, it is advisable to understand their programme environment and try to adapt in order to be more effective and achieve some degree of job satisfaction.

Top-down vs. bottom-up curriculum development and implementation

Before embarking on the presentation of the framework, note that the higher-order labels used in Figures 8 and 9 below are borrowed from Johnson (1989), along with the idea that curriculum development is a process involving deci-sion-making by all the stakeholders at all levels. Whatever the case, the teach-ers are the ones who actually implement the curriculum in the classroom. In a top-down curriculum, as schematically illustrated in Figure 8, teachers are con-fined to the inner circle (*classroom implementation*, or CI). They are tasked with teaching particular materials – usually a set textbook – and testing their stu-dents' achievement according to a pre-established system. They would perform these tasks without any contact with other programme stakeholders, except for an occasional encounter with their inspector-cum-trainer. English inspectors in Tunisia actually also serve as teacher trainers, syllabus and textbook writers, and test designers, as will be seen next.

Novice teachers undergo two years of in-service training under the coaching/supervision of their district inspector. In the first year, they attend a series of 'model lessons' taught by experienced teachers in the presence of the inspector/trainer, then discuss them and keep a training portfolio, which the inspector eventually evaluates. Meanwhile, the inspector observes them twice in their own classrooms. In the second year, the inspector visits them twice more to evaluate their teaching and supervises their completion of a trainee research report (an action research project), after which he confirms them in their posi-tion (Saidi 2012). Once tenured, teachers may go on teaching for years without a visit from their district inspector, or participation in a training workshop or professional conference. There is no requirement for teachers of the same level in the same school to coordinate lesson planning, teaching and progress tests. There is, however, one requirement for them to co-design the final quarterly exam. Then, they individually calculate their students' cumulative averages for the quarter and the whole year and turn them in.

Thus, teachers may remain within the confines of the inner circle (CI), teach-ing and testing the level(s) they choose or are assigned with little sense of the broader philosophy of the programme and its goals and objectives, and little
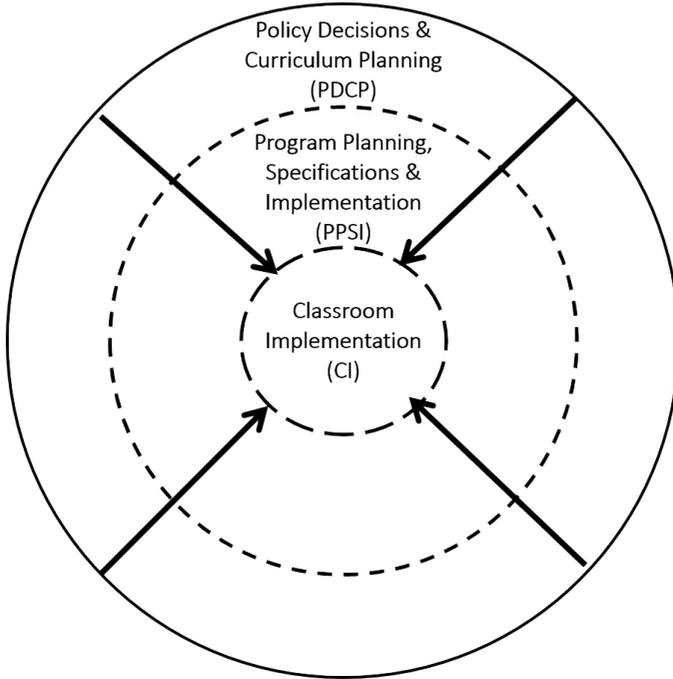
Figure 8: Top-down curriculum design and implementation (Copyright Mohamed Daoud, CC BY-NC 4.0).

incentive to innovate, coordinate with colleagues or reach out to the outer circles (*program planning, specifications and implementation*, PPSI, and *policy decisions and curriculum planning*, PDCP). All the teachers are required to have a copy of the official syllabus, but there is no evidence that they refer to it or fully apprehend it. There is a teacher's manual to go with each textbook, but it is used more as an answer key than a tool to promote teacher flexibility in practice. In fact, teachers tend to keep the same level(s) year after year, further depriving themselves of the opportunity to experience the programme sequence, prior to and beyond the level they teach, let alone the broader dimensions of PPSI and PDCP.

In this top-down structure, PDCP involves policy decisions, which are obviously made at the highest (presidential/ministerial) level on the basis of perceived political, economic and educational priorities, usually with some input from academic or pseudo-professional government counsellors. The next stage, PPSI, includes work at the level of syllabus design and textbook writing and usually involves an academic ELT specialist and a group of secondary school inspectors. These inspectors typically end up sharing the writing of the textbooks and teacher guides by level in teams comprising two or three teachers

that they personally select for the task. Then, these materials go to an academic (who may be an English literature or culture studies, rather than an ELT specialist) for validation based on a desk-based review. Finally, the textbooks reach the classroom, where teachers proceed with CI, as explained above.

A reasonable alternative to this top-down approach, which is inherently constraining to the teacher, would be a bottom-up approach, as shown in Figure 9. This approach may be envisaged as a situation where teachers are managing their job with all its complexity while always trying to reach out beyond the classroom, to the broader dimensions of the curriculum. They would do so in order to (a) make sense of the whole curriculum, (b) position themselves as adequately as possible to be more effective and (c) identify stakeholders that make them more empowered and less vulnerable. The alternative, then, is a teacher-oriented framework for curriculum development and implementation, where CI, PPSI and PDCP interconnect to allow teachers to develop a personal sense of ownership of the curriculum as a deliberative process, be more enterprising and autonomous and potentially defend themselves when faced with criticism or failure.
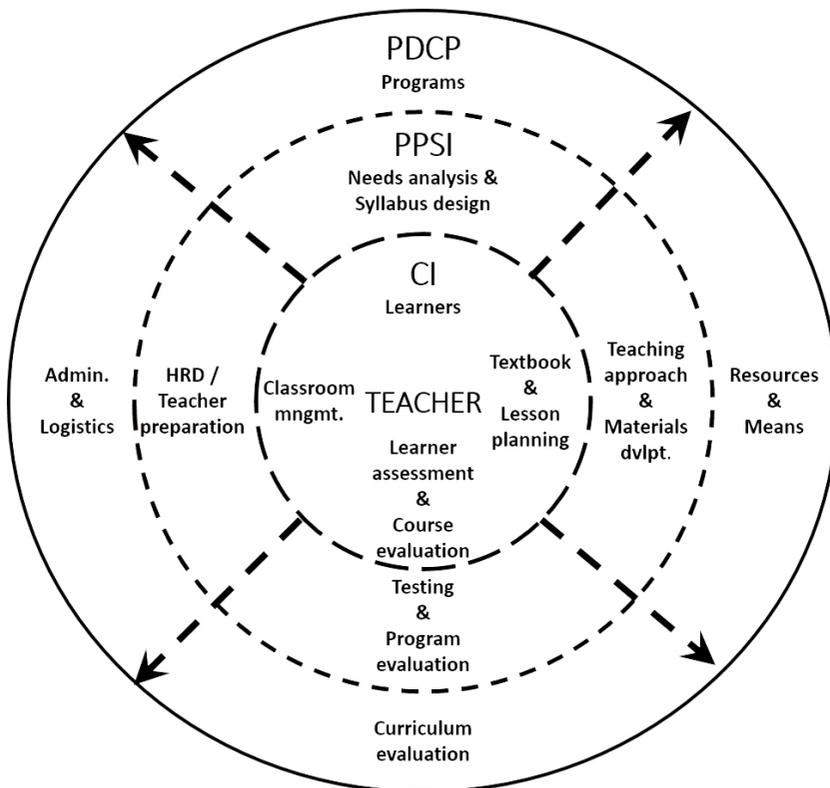
Figure 9: A teacher-oriented framework for curriculum development and implementation (Copyright Mohamed Daoud, CC BY-NC 4.0).

Let us consider the teachers' roles and possible behaviour in more detail within this bottom-up framework, bearing in mind that it does not constitute another swing of the pendulum from learner-centredness, which has been in vogue since the 1980s with the rise of communicative language teaching, back to teacher-centredness, as was the case in traditional, teacher-fronted classrooms. It is rather an attempt to make the point that only an empowered, autonomous, curriculum-savvy teacher can implement a true learner-centred curriculum (cp. Benson 2013; Johnson 1989; Lamb & Reinders 2008).

At the CI level, teachers obviously deal with learners as the key stakeholders in the curriculum. To promote learning, they use materials/a textbook and rely on lesson planning. Teaching the textbook without careful lesson planning, as is often the case in a top-down curriculum, as described above, is not beneficial to the learners, even when a teacher's guide is available. Judicious lesson planning not only ensures coverage of the lesson/course objectives as specified in the syllabus but also serves two additional purposes: (a) it guarantees that learner assessment adheres to the same objectives, and (b) it helps to amass data for course evaluation. Finally, teachers can achieve CI through effective classroom management, including good time distribution, task sequencing, organising student interaction and dealing with contingencies.

It could be argued that asking teachers to do more than the above is unreasonable, or too ambitious, for classes run as such would surely promote learning and enhance programme success. However, it takes a special kind of teacher to achieve this much and, more importantly, sustain this effort. It takes a teacher who strives to reach beyond CI to the PPSI level. To properly serve learners, teachers need to understand their needs as translated into the syllabus. To properly use the textbook and plan their lessons, they need to understand the teaching approach proposed in the syllabus and how the teaching materials were designed. There are teachers, textbook authors and even inspectors-cum-trainers who are still struggling with notions such as a communicative task, reading strategy development or process writing, let alone teaching them properly.

Likewise, for teachers to properly assess learners and evaluate their own teaching, they need to go beyond CI in order to understand how to design reliable tests that stem from the course objectives and appreciate the value of course evaluation and how much it contributes to programme evaluation at the PPSI level. It should be noted that testing is probably the weakest link in our system, as very few teachers graduate with any testing knowledge to begin with. As stated earlier, testing is plagued by adhering to a set format of the Baccalaureate exam, while programme evaluation is hardly done. Since the system is deficient at this level, conscientious teachers would have to take it upon themselves to develop the awareness and expertise required to do their job and never miss an opportunity to encourage programme evaluation as a means to improve programme implementation.

As regards classroom management and overall CI performance, teachers need to understand how human resource development (HRD) and teacher preparation are provided at the PPSI level and seek opportunities for further

self-development. Rather than waiting for training to come their way, they should strive to participate in training activities organised by inspectors for novice teachers and by teacher associations. They can also read about ELT research and practice from the wealth of resources available online.

It is much easier nowadays for teachers, in Tunisia and elsewhere in the MENA region, to extend their interest to the PPSI level of the curriculum given a number of positive developments, including the emergence of professional associations, academic degree programmes and presentation and publication fora. Indeed, several national and regional teacher associations, some of which are affiliated with international associations such as IATEFL and TESOL (e.g., TESOL Arabia in the Gulf, MATE in Morocco, Tunisia TESOL and Africa TESOL) are active. Many universities have established MA and/or PhD programmes in applied linguistics or teacher education, thus producing qualified practitioners who are not only teaching but also conducting valuable empirical research in localised contexts. Such research is being shared in local and regional conferences, along with the best practices stemming from classroom applications, and disseminated more broadly in mainstream academic journals, and more commonly in online publications. Last but not least, there is a multitude of dedicated websites, social media channels/pages and smartphone applications which facilitate access to information and encourage creativity, innovation and discussion. These developments have created a new dynamic that is promoting emulation, a wider exchange of ideas and experiences and a keener sense of empowerment.

Teachers may benefit even more by opening up to the broader level of PDCP in the framework proposed in order to understand the nature of the language programme to which they are contributing significantly in the classroom. For instance, teachers would find it helpful to understand the policy decisions to teach English for so many hours a week at particular levels and across disciplines. They would better gauge their learners' needs in the socio-economic context of the curriculum and, eventually, participate in developing an advocacy agenda for teachers' associations and unions to call for the allocation of adequate human and material resources to provide better materials and teacher training as well as consequential evaluation and, thus, ensure curriculum success and sustainability. The post-revolution environment in Tunisia, which has culminated in setting legal provisions for open access to information, good governance and accountability, should promote teacher engagement in the curriculum at the PDCP level on an individual or institutional level.

Potential obstacles to promoting the bottom-up curriculum

The most obvious obstacles include policy considerations and common misconceptions about ELT. Experience around the world has shown that governments are not forthcoming with adequate resources for language teaching. The

prospects for funding ELT in the MENA region, particularly in the poorer countries, are not so bright, given the belief still held by decision makers that the British and the Americans would strive to promote their language and, therefore, provide aid to do so (Daoud 2000). Policymakers do not seem fully cognisant of the importance of English as an international language, which the *inner-circle* countries, to use Kachru's terminology (Kachru 2006), consider a valuable commodity. Public opinion in Tunisia, which is in the *expanding* circle, has clearly shifted in favour of learning English and even developing some ownership (Widdowson 2003) of it; however, policymakers seem unable or unwilling to sideline French, which was adopted after independence as an adjuvant language for the sake of economic development and cultural modernisation (Daoud 2011).

The private sector is not helping as much as it should to promote English either. Private companies, which complain about the low proficiency level of job applicants, are doing very little in this regard (Erling 2015). Local and foreign private institutions teaching English, including universities, seem more interested in increasing their profit margin than contributing in any tangible way to ELT development, in terms of research, policy and planning, programme design or practice. Except for a few institutions that employ mostly permanent staff, the majority hire part-time teachers from the public sector who also bring the official syllabi and tests.

The other obstacle to implementing the bottom-up approach involves misconceptions commonly held by textbook authors, inspectors and teachers about language, language learning, programme/course objectives, learner-centredness and language teaching. In spite of professing the communicative approach, these stakeholders mostly fall short of teaching language as/for communication. Teaching and testing are still driven by a structural view of language, with a greater focus on correctness as opposed to appropriateness and fluency, as well as a behaviourist/cognitive view of language learning, giving little attention to affect, motivation and authentic language use in realistic situations. This situation is further undermined by private tutoring, which promotes learning word lists through translation and grammar through sentence analysis and practice. As for skill development, oral/written text comprehension mostly involves answering copy-and-paste question types, with little focus on critical thinking and synthesising, while speaking and composition are product, rather than process-based (Ellili Cherif 2002; Saidi 2012; Seddik 2017).

This reflects additional misconceptions about programme/course objectives, learner-centredness and language teaching. Lessons generally involve more testing than actual teaching, where teachers and learners focus on finding correct answers, as opposed to taking the time to explore options to communicate successfully and promote learner awareness, critical thinking, autonomy, cooperation and creativity. Teachers often complain about the lack of time to cover the whole textbook, which indicates a greater concern about the quantity, rather quality, of teaching, and about large class sizes, which reveals a misunderstanding

of individualised instruction and how to engage learners in meaningful tasks through individual, pair or group work.

The scope of language teaching and learning

To overcome these obstacles and correct these misconceptions, it is important for teachers to apprehend the full scope of language teaching and learning (see Figure 10, below). Teaching English with a predominantly structural view of language limits the scope to practising grammar and vocabulary at the superficial level (illustrated by the inner circle). Even when the matrix is a text (oral, written, multimodal or multimedia, as shown in the second circle), the
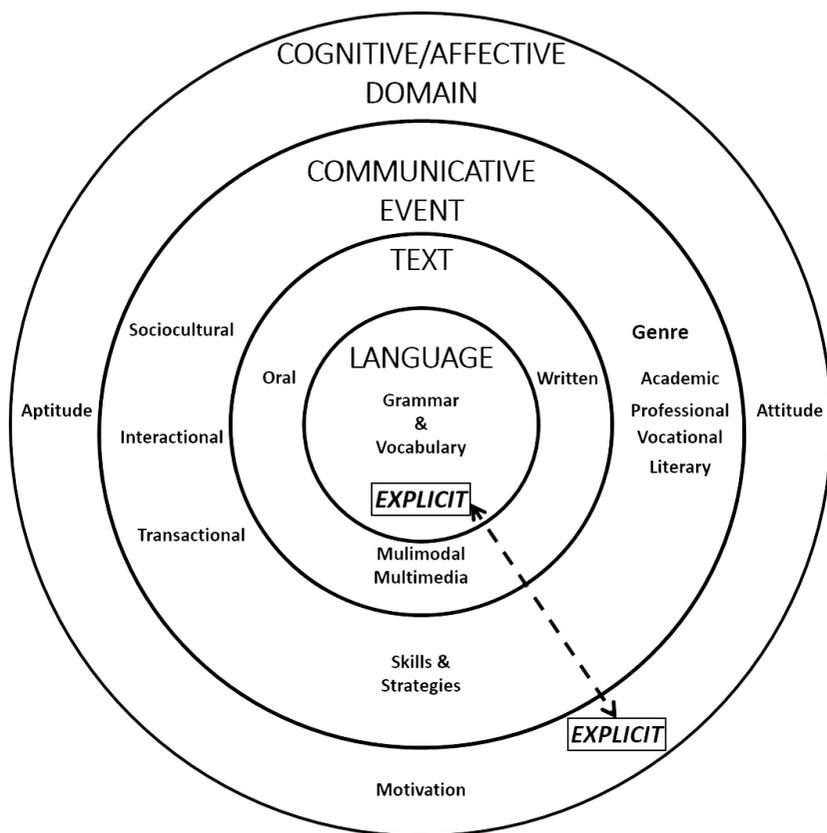
Figure 10: The scope of English language teaching and learning (Copyright Mohamed Daoud, CC BY-NC 4.0).

comprehension questions seldom lead to realistic interaction. The class may engage in skill and sub-skill practice, such as skimming for the main idea and guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words, but the *text* is used mainly *as a linguistic object* (TALO), rather than *a vehicle for information* (TAVI), and, eventually, a model for writing, rather than *a springboard for production* (TASP) (Johns & Davies 1983).

However, when the text is treated as a communicative event, it becomes an instance of authentic interaction, which allows for simulating a real-life situation. It, thus, requires recreating a sociocultural context and illustrates an interactional or a transactional discourse genre (academic, professional, vocational or literary) and lets learners engage in it in terms of specific roles and a particular purpose in a given context. Only then would they deploy the relevant skills and sub-skills and the appropriate strategies to read or listen and interact, as required by the situation at hand. But, for communication to be truly authentic, learners would have to engage in the text at an even higher level, in the cognitive/affective domain, which involves their aptitude, attitude and motivation.

The challenge for teachers would be to keep in mind the full scope of language teaching and learning. Note that the structural aspects of language are the most explicit (or tangible), since they are laid out in the textbook and more readily instantiated in the mind, while the cognitive/affective aspects of communication are the most implicit (or hidden) and are, thus, harder to instantiate. The success of the teaching/learning process would depend on reaching more often for the implicit aspects and then balancing both, through a regular process of focusing and defocusing, as determined by the complexity of the course and the learners' progress.

Humanising ELT

This approach can be very helpful to teachers because it integrates all aspects of authentic communication (Nunan 2004; Widdowson 1979). It is true that when we teach language we tend to do it in bits and pieces (forms, meanings, skills, genres etc.), but to approximate real communication we should strive to provide learners with opportunities to experience language as whole persons, at the cognitive, affective and sociocultural/interactional levels. In other words, we should help them to engage in learning as complex human beings, with their minds, hearts and relationships.

It is possible to humanise teaching at the levels of course and lesson planning, discussing lesson objectives in class, managing classroom tasks and, of course, assessing learners. This can be done through realistic, meaningful activities that simulate real-life situations in social or work contexts. The measure of success in this endeavour would be the learners' cognitive, affective and interactional engagement in the activities.

Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter has sought to consolidate the role of English teachers to promote ELT in the MENA region, with a specific focus on Tunisia, at a time when the demand for this language keeps growing in a socio-economic environment characterised by high turbulence in the wake of the Arab Spring. It proposed a teacher-oriented, bottom-up approach to curriculum development and implementation in order to empower teachers so that they can, in turn, empower the learners and, thus, promote curriculum success and sustainability.

In light of the above arguments, it is important for all curriculum stakeholders to view language teaching as a true profession and to nurture the humanity of both teachers and learners as complex, evolving human beings in order to prepare the learners for effective communication in the real world. It is also important to keep in mind that teachers do not teach (for language teaching is not about knowledge transfer); instead, they provide contexts for learners to *learn* and *learn how to learn*, thus promoting learner autonomy and creativity.

As key stakeholders in curriculum implementation in the classroom, language teachers are, by and large, left to their own devices. As they are called upon to be effective and innovative, they should to be careful not to be overburdened or disillusioned. To do so, they need to do the following:

- Keep in mind the big picture of the curriculum as well as the scope of language teaching and learning, as illustrated in Figures 9 and 10, above.
- Stay on their toes as professionals at the individual level, through self-development.
- Organise themselves professionally to exchange ideas and best practices and to develop advocacy agendas through teachers' associations.
- See themselves as agents of change in order to ensure curriculum renewal and sustainability.
- Actively seek the support of the educational system, in terms of access to resources as well as having a voice in curriculum policy and planning.

Finally, it is incumbent upon applied linguists, perhaps more than any other curriculum stakeholder, to support the teachers, for who else can support them better than applied linguists? We need to

- Actually do applied linguistics, by working closely with teachers to help them meet the complex challenges of classroom implementation. We have the knowledge and expertise to offer adequate support and, unlike inspectors, we do not have the administrative authority which teachers may find threatening.
- Adapt our thinking and methods to address the teachers' professional concerns. Different teaching situations, teacher profiles and attitudes as well as changing learner needs will require us to develop pragmatic disciplinarity

(cp. Widdowson, this volume); that is, we need to be pragmatic (to solve real-world, language-related problems) while adhering to disciplinary rigour in terms of concepts and research methods.

- Influence curriculum policy and planning through direct involvement and academic pressure, as well as better lobbying/marketing skills in order to reach policymakers and the public at large.

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CHAPTER 12

Hard to Know or Hard to Say? Developing Explicit Grammar Knowledge Among Primary Student Teachers

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Introduction

In this chapter we provide a critical and conceptual analysis of the challenges of teaching and learning first language grammatical knowledge in initial teacher education in England, based on an exploratory project aimed at helping trainee teachers with little formal linguistic education gain adequate knowledge of grammatical terminology. Beyond the Anglophone world, this may not seem problematic: 'most countries in Europe … see grammar instruction as an important part of their school curriculum; and the same is true of previous European colonies such as Brazil' (Hudson 2016: 289). However, between around 1960 and 2000 learning about formal grammar was largely absent from schools in England and in much of the English-speaking world (Hudson & Walmsley 2005), so many British teachers lack knowledge about grammar (KAG). Recent changes to the English primary curriculum mean teachers do now need some declarative knowledge of grammar terminology. In this chapter

we describe our attempts to help our student teachers learn grammatical terminology, using an innovative pedagogy based on investigative learning, conceptual understanding and dialogic investigation, focused around carefully designed exemplars. Subsequent sections contribute to wider debates about the inadequacies of current accounts of what grammatical knowledge is and how it may be assessed in educational contexts, the limitations of terminology-driven teaching methods and the potential for applied linguistics to further inform the development of knowledge about grammar in schools.

Background

The English National Curriculum (DfE 2013a) includes a substantial list of metalinguistic terms that children aged five to 11 must learn, including many grammar terms. These terms are unattached to any particular theoretical perspective such as Systemic Functional linguistics (cp. Derewianka 2012) and might fairly be described as 'traditional' – most of them would be recognisable from 19th-century textbooks. For many of our primary teacher trainees, however, they represent a source of considerable difficulty. Children's knowledge of grammar terms is examined in mandatory tests in the final year of primary schools in England, and the results form part of assessment of school performance; there is therefore a considerable amount at stake for children, teachers and schools.

A small body of research examines KAG among pre-service teachers. The findings from the UK vary somewhat but most are problematic: Chandler, Robinson and Noyes found 'partial gaps [in knowledge]' (1988: 161); Myhill (2000) reported significant misunderstandings and conceptual confusion; Cajkler and Hislam described 'misconceptions … due to over-dependence on simple absolute definitions and a failure to appreciate functional shift' (2002: 175); Sangster, Anderson and O'Hara found levels of knowledge lower than levels of confidence (2013: 310). Work elsewhere echoes these findings: Harper and Rennie found Australian trainee teachers' KAG 'was fragmented and lacked depth' (2008: 22), and Jeurissen's 2012 report from New Zealand concurred. Williamson and Hardman concluded that 'a substantial amount of work' (1995: 123) was needed, and there is little to suggest that this has changed.

Our project is a small-scale attempt to directly inform initial teacher training using applied linguistic knowledge: specifically, we wanted to help our student teachers by supplementing their programme with a series of voluntary classes about grammar. In this chapter we report our experience of delivering these classes, and of using self-authored tests to assess participants' grammar knowledge before and after each course. Because the three occurrences were so different, we are unable to present precisely comparable quantitative data about learning and therefore cannot directly say which method is more effective. Instead we use elements of quantitative and qualitative data collected over two years to broadly interpret student teachers' experience of the courses and our

experience of teaching them, to interrogate the critical and conceptual issues and better understand the challenge inherent in learning about grammar and to outline a possible pedagogy designed to support investigative learning.

We draw on our interpretations to develop a series of claims about the types of teaching and learning that we think can have a powerful impact on student teachers' understanding of grammar; the scope of terminological knowledge that teachers need; the broader relationship between analytic confidence and terminological knowledge; inadequacies of current accounts of what grammatical knowledge is; and the difficulties of assessing it. We finish by speculating on potential ways that applied linguistics might further inform the development of KAG in schools.

Overview of the three courses

In autumn 2016, spring 2017 and autumn 2017 we delivered three versions of a grammar course to different groups of student teachers (henceforth Cohorts 1, 2 and 3); these were roughly similar in size, with each cohort having 80–100 students. The three versions were broadly similar in certain respects. All participants were enrolled on the three-year BA Primary Education. Attendance at the classes was optional, and classes were delivered during a single term in an irregularly spaced pattern as timetable and school placement commitments allowed. The classes focused on key grammar terms from the National Curriculum (DfE 2013a) together with a small number which need not be taught to children but which we thought useful, and we placed a high priority on ensuring that all cohorts would become aware of the relationship between form and function in grammatical analysis. Each cohort was tested before and after the courses, and we also assessed participants' confidence in their knowledge. Most of the terminology taught remained consistent across cohorts (Table 5):

Table 5: terminology taught to all cohorts.

1. Active verb form	11. Main clause*	21. Present tense
2. Adjective	12. Modal verb	22. Pronoun
3. Adverb	13. Noun	23. Relative clause
4. Adverbial	14. Noun phrase	24. Relative pronoun
5. Auxiliary verb (primary)*	15. Object	25. Subject
6. Clause	16. Passive verb form	26. Subjunctive*
7. Complement	17. Past tense	27. Subordinate clause
8. Conjunction	18. Possessive	28. Subordinating
9. Coordinating	pronoun	conjunction
conjunction	19. Preposition	29. Verb
10. Determiner	20. Preposition phrase*	30. Verb phrase*

* terms not included in the list of terminology for pupils in the NC.

All students in each year group completed a test of grammar knowledge; students who attended the voluntary classes were a small proportion of those tested (between 10 and 50 participants). To obtain further insight into perceptions of the lessons, the test and the purposes and value of teaching grammar, small group interviews were held at the end of each course.

Overall, then, there were substantial similarities between the three iterations. There were also differences. Some of these were down to factors such as timetabling over which we had little control; this led to variation in the total length of the course, with the number of two-hour classes available varying between five and eight. In addition, Cohorts 1 and 3 were second-year students, and Cohort 2 were final years.

The ordering of items taught also varied. For Cohorts 1 and 2, content was arranged in a broadly analytic pattern from small to large: we taught word classes first, as we thought most students would have met them before, then phrases, clause elements and so on. For Cohort 3 we reversed this, starting with higher-ranked, more powerfully explanatory concepts.

We also made significant changes for Cohort 3 in both the test used and our approach to delivering the sessions. We discuss our test design in detail elsewhere (Bell & Ainsworth, under review); however, we use the lessons learned from testing to inform some of the discussion here. We start by outlining our original teaching model, and then explain the changes to how and why it evolved.

Teaching grammar: An evolution

Classes in Cohorts 1 and 2 were designed largely around a traditional transmission model of teaching and were led mostly by the first author. Each session typically focused on 4–6 items of grammatical terminology and started with teacher input followed by practice activities, discussion and questions. These classes were broadly linear and progressive: each class built on the previous one and assumed that participants' knowledge grew incrementally.

Cohort 1 lesson extract

The lesson extract described here was the start of a session on phrases, based on input followed by practice activities. It depended for its success on students having mastered material from earlier lessons.

The session started with the whole group focused on a simple sentence with the subject underlined. Students were invited to add words to the subject in any way they wanted and in this way gradually expand the noun phrase:

The dog barked. → The old dog barked. → The old dog in the yard barked.

The teacher then introduced the term *noun phrase* and explained certain principles associated with it: that a noun phrase frequently occurs in subject or object position; that it can be one word or many; that the obligatory element is a noun as the head; that pre- or post-modifiers can be present, such as determiners, adjectives and preposition phrases. The teacher also introduced the basic pronoun substitution test for a noun phrase. Students then used a variety of practice activities to support and expand their learning.

This teacher-led, transmissive approach allowed us to best fit the material to the time available in a coherent and logical order. The preliminary test results indicated that many students were familiar with major word classes, so we started with those to build on what was at least partially known, moving on later to less familiar terms.

However, our approach led to a number of problems. Introducing the terminology at the start of the activity meant many students had to start with something they did not understand rather than something they did. A terminology-first approach may sometimes be useful or even essential, but we found starting with the term entailed a multiplying effect, often forcing us to explain the new term using more new terms: the result confused and sometimes overwhelmed students.

The approach also seemed to suggest that the terminology itself was the important thing, rather than any use to which it might be put. It appeared dry and difficult: one student reported that although she usually enjoyed 'learning stuff for the sake of knowing … grammar feels so academic that it's not a fun thing to learn. [I]t's quite difficult, it's not as interesting.'

Finally, there was a cost in terms of student affect: many students remained engaged until the end, but many found the material hard to master and retain. One Cohort 1 student noted that 'When we did the past tense, the perfect verbs … that was a bad period. I was just like, what is going on?!' Several students appeared stressed by the learning load and the pace of the classes. We also found the classes difficult to manage and exhausting to deliver: with more than five to 10 students in the room, it became very hard to answer questions in a way which satisfied the questioner without distracting or confusing others.

Cohort 2 followed Cohort 1 closely, so we were unable to make substantial changes to content, but we did try to reduce the amount of teacher talk in favour of discussion between student participants. Overall, though, after Cohort 2 our impression remained that the transmission teaching model was ineffective.

In the six months between Cohorts 2 and 3, we analysed participants' reflections on their learning and considered alternative approaches. Our aims were to increase interest and engagement, and allow deeper, more beneficial learning. We thought one way to achieve this might be to allow students to use their procedural knowledge of English (Ryle 1949) to explore grammar. Procedural knowledge can be described as the ability to *do* something and can be contrasted with declarative knowledge, which is the ability to consciously

reflect on our ability; an example might be the ability to balance and walk upright, which most people can do while quite unable to explain *how* they do it. We decided to avoid introducing any terminology until concepts had been thoroughly explored using the procedural knowledge that students brought to the class.

Rather than follow the transmissive teaching model used for Cohorts 1 and 2, therefore, the learning in autumn 2017 was designed to be inductive, exploratory and investigative. We placed particular emphasis on creating a need for terminology by first allowing students to develop conceptual understanding by dialogic investigation and analysis, and by not introducing any terms until this was well under way. Terminology was then used to anchor and formalise the hypotheses that students had created through shared, discursive analysis of the materials. The extract below illustrates this.

Cohort 3 lesson extract

This activity allowed students to develop conceptual understanding of concepts associated with *noun phrase*. It occurred at the start of the class, before any other input, and was presented as an exploratory puzzle rather than an exercise in knowledge of linguistic terminology.

Activity A *Compare the pairs of sentences below. How does it work?*	
1. This well-matured goat's cheese is delicious.	[IT] is delicious.
2. Mr Jones and Mrs Mackay were good friends.	[THEY] were good friends.
3. I have eaten the chicken pie.	I have eaten [IT].
4. This year more than 300 villagers have left.	This year [THEY] have left.
5. Most of these fish are captured while young.	[THEY] are captured while young.

Students worked in self-selected small groups to discuss the relationship between pairs of sentences, and within reason they were allowed as much time as they needed. The question – 'how does it work?' – was deliberately vague so that student explorations were not constrained by our instructions, yet interestingly we were never asked 'how does *what* work?' The activity purposefully avoids grammatical terminology. The task at first appeared to be relatively simple but typically took longer than anticipated. There was no clear end point, no absolutely right or wrong answer and no obvious method: students determined these for themselves.

This dialogic, discursive stage between students was followed by further discussion and questions both between students and with the teacher, but still no terminology was introduced. This initial activity was followed by a series of activities in a similar vein, such as this:

Activity B *Underline all the words in the sentence on the left which could be replaced with the single word on the right. How do you know how to do this?*	
The bloodiest war in European history lasted for four years.	IT
You've got the wrong end of the rope.	IT
I'm not sure the youngest students in Y5 will cope well with this.	THEY
I'd like a tall skinny cappuccino as well.	ONE

Some terminology was by necessity introduced slowly as the lesson progressed. The precise terms depended on the lesson aims and the students' progress on the day, but in the lesson from which these example activities are drawn the terms would have included *phrase*, *noun phrase*, *preposition phrase* and *head*. Two hours spent worrying away at four or five terms may seem like slow progress, but much of the learning was conceptual rather than terminological. At the end of the full session, which comprised some 10–12 activities, students had at least partially uncovered for themselves the broad structural and functional parameters of noun phrase and preposition phrase, a key substitution test for noun phrases, and the nested relationship between preposition and noun phrases.

Two critical elements common to Cohort 3 activities was their almost total dependence on the students' procedural knowledge – their knowledge of how English works – and the generic appeal of a language puzzle. Our impression of the resulting learner activity was that, while it generated a similar number of questions overall, they were of a different type. In Cohorts 1 and 2, questions tended to refer back to terminology (e.g., 'what's the difference between defining and non-defining clauses again?'). Questions in Cohort 3, on the other hand, were rarely about terminology as such but were about the ways in which students were starting to view patterns as they formed hypotheses of their own: the later introduction of the terminology therefore answered a need rather than creating one.

Examples of this kind of alert, engaged thinking can be seen in student talk during activity B above. Students questioned each other ('Is it "you've got it"? Oh no, it's "you've got the wrong end of it"' [Q2]), demanded a rationale from their partners ('How do you know it [the answer] isn't "the youngest students"?' [Q3]) and used evidence to check their own hypotheses ('"I'd like a one" – doesn't make sense!' [Q4]).

We found that, as the lesson progressed, the sense of apprehension about lacking knowledge was slowly replaced by a sense of confidence and achievement. Cohort 3 students appeared to enjoy doing the activities – that is, discovering things about language structure – far more than earlier cohorts, as our field notes after the first session show:

> We were concerned prior to the session that the students might not respond well to the activities – they might think why are we doing this – we

know this already, but they were engaged and intrigued. You got the sense that the activities were making them think about things in a different way. Engagement levels were high throughout the activities. Seemed lower during transmissive [lessons] – some students were fidgety even though it was clear and relatively short.

In the sections that follow, we explore in more detail our hypotheses about how this change came about.

Investigative learning leads to greater engagement

Cohort 3 students reported being 'constantly engaged' during the activities, and they mostly attributed this to the investigative nature of the learning. The inquiry-based activities encouraged students to construct their own hypotheses about the language structures in front of them rather than passively absorbing taught knowledge. Because no student attended the grammar course twice, there is no direct evidence that any student preferred one delivery mode over another; however, many Cohort 3 students had experienced more traditional forms of learning through books and online materials during their placements and were therefore able to compare our approach with that found elsewhere. Their reflections on this experience provide interesting insights about the limitations of passively absorbing grammar knowledge, such as listening to a lecture or reading a grammar text. One Cohort 3 student noted that, when revising the sessions by looking over his notes, he was 'trying to relate back to the tasks … rather than that description [of a term] written in a sentence.' He suggested that without the investigative problem focus of the sessions he would have found it hard to absorb or retain the concepts because he would have 'no activity … or experience to relate it to.' The idea that inquiry-based learning is more effective than transmissive approaches where pupils are passive receptacles of knowledge is of course not new (e.g., Bruner 1961; see Freeman et al. 2014 for a review); however, the issue of exactly how and when this problem-based learning should take place and the potential to integrate this with more formally taught input remains a matter of debate (Dobber, Zwart, Tanis & van Oers 2017; Lazonder & Harmsen 2016).

Terminology last is better than terminology first

We have already mentioned the importance of the deliberate omission of grammar terminology from Cohort 3 activities until conceptual groundwork was laid: we introduced terminology only after the activity had been completed and students had been provided with the opportunity to discuss and make conjectures about the language structures in front of them. Doing this seemed to

enhance rather than limit their learning. As noted, some Cohort 1 and 2 students reported finding grammar terminology to be off-putting and a barrier to learning. In contrast, when Cohort 3 students were provided with the opportunities to experiment with the language before being asked to apply formal linguistic labels to it, they were engaged and inquisitive. One noted that 'we learnt how to identify something without knowing what it was [and] we really liked that.' A second explicitly referred to the desire to solve the mystery: 'I think the mystery's there, so you want to know what it is.'

It seemed to us that the central weakness of starting with terminology and building towards conceptual knowledge was that it failed to build on students' procedural knowledge of language. At least one Cohort 3 student appeared to confirm this: 'we kind of already know what verbs are. [B]ecause we did the activity first, and it wasn't actually entitled "verbs" until afterwards, we were starting to piece the gaps together.'

Errors are valuable in hypothesis formation

A further aspect of Cohort 3 pedagogy which seemed to have a significant impact on students' experiences of learning grammar was the value of errors in hypothesis formation. When attempting investigative tasks, students generated numerous erroneous hypotheses, which they explored through discussion before rejecting them in favour of more refined propositions. It also gave them opportunities to consolidate their existing knowledge of other grammatical concepts as they grappled with their conjectures. One student summarised it thus: 'When you make a mistake, you remember it. You can see a pattern sometimes, and we'd be like "oh, it's a complement" or whatever it is and then you get that last one and you're like "mmm, that's just totally thrown us."'

The idea of errorful learning appears to have been little explored within the broader education literature. An early paper by Glaser (1966) identifies errorful learning as one of two defining characteristics of discovery learning, the second being induction. While discovery learning invokes induction by providing examples of a more general case and allowing the learner to infer the governing rule for themselves, errorful learning is invoked through the adoption of a teaching sequence with minimal structure, which 'of necessity, allows the student to pursue blind alleys and find negative instances' (Glaser 1966: 5), leading to the inevitable presence of frequent error.

In other words, discovery learning involves learners finding out rules for themselves with minimum external guidance. The unstructured, open-ended nature of the learning inevitably involves a process of trial and error before the learner happens upon (if indeed they ever do) the rule. The activities which we found to be especially successful in our sessions were both errorful and inductive: students were asked to generate a rule which would describe each of the examples provided with no initial guidance from the tutor. The examples were

chosen to be representative of at least some of the diversity within a particular grammatical category (e.g., complements with varying form: adjective, noun phrase) to support learners in developing a full understanding of the concept at hand, rather than developing an incomplete understanding based on prototypical exemplars (e.g., subordinate clauses that are clearly marked by a subordinating conjunction). This diversity of exemplars also added to the probability of learners generating incorrect hypotheses, as each subtype of exemplar provided a potential red herring in terms of classification.

Assessing what student teachers know

We have delayed discussing our approach to assessing what our students know about grammar primarily because this chapter is largely about teaching and because we deal with testing in detail in a separate paper (Bell & Ainsworth, under review). But an overview of our test and the results obtained are also useful here.

We designed and refined our test over the three cohorts. In each case, the test only examined knowledge of the terms covered in the classes (Table 5), and the test was delivered twice – at the start to serve as a diagnostic guide and to inform the content of the classes and after the classes had finished. All versions of the test were essentially based on recognising contextualised examples of given terms, as in this example:

In the sentence below, underline one example of terms 1–3.
I might prefer the other one, but yours is quite nice too.

1. possessive pronoun
2. modal verb
3. coordinating conjunction

We do not have space to discuss the detail of our test design, and although it was clearly flawed in many respects we believe it to be at least no worse (if not significantly better) than those used elsewhere (e.g., Bloor 1986; Harper & Rennie 2008; Sangster et al. 2013). Whatever its faults, we assume that the results reveal *something* about student knowledge, and pre-course test results appeared to confirm that there was a knowledge problem. For example, in the pre-course test, 67% of Cohort 2 students correctly identified *noun*, but only 29% could identify *verb*; *adverbial* was correctly identified by 19%, *noun phrase* by 9%, *passive* by 4% and *object* by 2%. By any standards, these figures suggest serious weaknesses in students' knowledge of grammar terms, with a lot of variation between both students and terms. Similar results were also found for Cohorts 1 and 3.

Cohort 2 students' mean score pre-course was 52% (SD 13); the post-course mean was 55% (SD 20); this difference is not significant (t(95)=0.91, p=.36). We were surprised to find that attenders did not improve their knowledge more

than non-attenders: attenders (n=28) mean percentage difference from test 1 to test 2 = 5.41 (SD=22.32), non-attenders (n=68) mean percentage difference from test 1 to test 2 = 1.03 (SD=25.55) – a difference that was not significant (t(94)=0.79, p=.43).

The test scores did not agree with our own perceptions about the progress and confidence of students who attended classes: we observed growing confidence using terminology, and we noted that students' questions became more relevant and more tightly focused. In particular, it was noticeable that the test results did not agree with the perceptions of those students who attended: attending students from all cohorts reported in focus groups that they felt their understanding had improved.

Conclusion

We frame this section as a series of exploratory questions, since neither the data generated from the courses and tests nor our reflections on our experience of teaching allow us to provide conclusive answers. We feel that the questions and our exploratory discussion are relevant not only to those who educate student teachers but in some cases also to those who teach children.

What types of teaching and learning have the most powerful impact on student teachers' understanding?

There seemed little doubt to us that the quality of learning among Cohort 3 students, and their affective responses, were markedly better than that of Cohorts 1 and 2. The fundamental difference is the exploratory, discursive, discovery learning which used what students already knew (their procedural knowledge) to access, support and frame what they did not (the terminology). A Cohort 1 student commented that 'at school we were just taught the top layer [of understanding], that's why we're struggling now.' This type of learning positions the teacher as expert guide and the students as expert users and demonstrates to students that the expertise required to learn the terminology is fundamentally already theirs.

This point raises a more complex issue, which is the broader relationship between analytic confidence and terminological knowledge. It was noticeable that the quality of students' engagement with the problem of understanding grammar was higher in Cohort 3. It seemed to us that, as in mathematics education (Pratt & Berry 2007; Brousseau 2002), the ability to consider alternative interpretations of the same data, to apply intuitive and learned skills to novel problems and to use all the evidence available (with or without terminology) are more effective than the limited learning opportunities provided by more traditional approaches.

Which terms do teachers need to know?

The National Curriculum requires teachers to teach some 25 terms (Bell 2014: 7), but this number is an inadequate guide to the learning required. Grammar terms are a 'network of technical concepts that help to define each other' (DfE 2013b: 1): for example, it is difficult to understand *preposition* without understanding something about *noun*. Some useful terms are missing: for example, *complement* is not taught to children, but it is quite difficult to discuss clause structure without it. It seems reasonable to expect teachers to know more than the children they teach, but time pressure in teacher education programmes make it difficult to provide a full grammatical education. We propose instead that student teachers should focus on developing depth. The weakness of coverage without depth was expressed neatly by a student: 'if you've just learnt the definition of [a term] you've literally got one way of telling [pupils] what it means.' The implication for us is that deep knowledge, acquired via discovery and discussion, can equip teachers with analytic skills that will enable them to make up for a lack of breadth.

We tried to teach around 30 terms, but experience suggests that fewer terms, thoroughly explored in the manner described above, might be a better starting point for teaching and for learning more, providing a stronger basis for understanding how grammar works and how it can be described. In future iterations of the course we intend to focus on the following:

- Subject, verb, object, complement, adverbial;
- Noun phrase, verb phrase, preposition phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase;
- Main clause, subordinate clause, conjunction, relative pronoun, sentence.

What is grammatical knowledge, and (how) should it be assessed?

At one level our test was adequate to its main purpose of identifying what students already knew about grammar. However, its reliability and validity must be called into question: either students learned virtually nothing during the classes (something neither we nor the students themselves would agree with) or the test was unable to tap into the kinds of insights students were developing. We presume that it would be possible technically to develop a test which did explore in detail exactly what takers knew, with sufficient subtlety to pick up incremental changes in knowledge, but we do not think it would be easy or even worthwhile.

It seems to us that, in our context, the requirements of any test should match the aims of the classes. If the aims of the learning are to memorise identification rules for or definitions of, for example, *preposition*, then it will be relatively straightforward to design a test to establish whether the taker has indeed

memorised the rules. As we have seen, however, the aims of our classes (when they ultimately came into view over repeated iterations) were rather different. We have come to believe that the real aim of this type of grammatical 'instruction' should be to use existing procedural expertise to develop confidence in examining language in situ, to develop and test hypotheses about potential answers to questions which at a higher level may never be resolved. In other words, having declarative knowledge of grammar is not a simple matter of memorising definitions but instead an infinitely complex issue involving identification and analysis of problems inside a moving world of usage.

In this light, *testing* grammar is virtually the same as learning about it. Every analysis is a test. Using definition-based or exemplar-based tests of the 'underline an example of X' variety simply reinforces the idea that the right answer, the destination, is more important than the journey; we do not believe this to be true. We struggled to create a grammar test that fulfils the intended task, but we can resolve this difficulty by acknowledging that the journey is greater than the destination and that in grammar one can be right in a bad way and wrong in a good one. If students are asked, for example, to identify a preposition in the following sentence, only the underlined answer is correct:

I wanted to get my next car <u>from</u> a proper garage.

It is clearly possible to get the right answer using simple knowledge of the fact that 'from is a preposition' and *still know nothing about prepositions in general*. This may well be what happens when children learn grammar terminology in schools; from our experience, it certainly tended to be what happened among some students in Cohort 1, where the transmission model encouraged a 'surface' approach to learning (Marton & Säljö 1976).

The difficulties of assessing grammatical knowledge reflect a deeper underlying problem with our definition of what grammatical knowledge is – or, more precisely, what type of grammatical knowledge we expect teachers to have. It must be more than procedural knowledge – must, in other words, be declarative – but in what does this consist? We do not have space to fully consider this here, but the National Curriculum effectively conflates declarative grammatical knowledge with terminological knowledge. It seems to us that teaching about grammar is unlikely to move much beyond 'knowing terms' without a more detailed exploration of this issue.

One last point may be relevant. There is some overlap between the type of grammar teaching we have described here and that traditionally undertaken in classes for those learning English as a second language. For example, our transmission model of teaching resembles that used in a traditional approach to teaching L2 grammar, such as grammar translation, and our revised pedagogy has similarities to task-based learning. But the surface similarities hide a deeper difference. For adult learners of an L2, one of the main aims of second language instruction is in fact to develop precisely that procedural knowledge

which our student teachers already have. For many L2 learners the hardest part of the journey is converting declarative knowledge (e.g., about the uses of various verb forms) into procedural knowledge (the ability to use the correct verb form quickly and accurately), whereas for our teachers the difficulty is effectively the reverse – moving beyond the unreflecting natural skill to a conscious analytic understanding.

How can applied linguistics contribute to teacher education in grammar?

Applied linguistic research has had a considerable impact on education policy, even if professional bodies (in the UK at least) sometimes feel like 'commentators without significant policy influence' (Mitchell & Myers 2017: 17). With regards to one small area – the development of knowledge about grammar in student teachers – most teacher training providers undoubtedly do valuable work to develop student teachers' content and pedagogic knowledge of grammar (e.g., Dombey & Briggs 2011). However, it is difficult to see how such work can have much impact at a policy level without at least a consistent and principled approach to working out what student teachers need to know and to developing a range of appropriate pedagogies for teaching them. Ways to share and build on such local work through professional bodies such as BAAL and the recently formed Linguistics and Knowledge about Language in Education Special Interest Group are helpful here, although we believe there is a strong case for still closer cooperation on a local scale between applied linguists and those with expertise in pedagogy, curriculum and teacher education. It is hard to affect policy without concerted action, especially in a landscape of teacher education which is 'more fragmented and diverse than ever before' (McNamara, Murray & Phillips 2017: 5), and particularly in the era of 'what works' (EEF 2018). We would suggest that our questions above cannot be answered without cooperation and that until they are we are unlikely to see radical improvements in the way KAG is taught in primary schools.

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Constructing Science Knowledge in Linguistically Diverse South African Classrooms: Opportunities and Challenges for Learning

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Introduction

South Africa is by definition a diverse country, reflecting its colonial past and history of migrations. However, under apartheid that diversity was the foundation of political domination based on the strict enforcement of social, economic, linguistic and spatial separation according to race. Accordingly, there are tensions between the celebration of diversity and the goals of national unity, equality and social justice in post-apartheid South Africa. This is reflected in the motto on the new national coat of arms:*!ke e: /xarre //ke*, which literally means 'Diverse people unite' in /Xam, a minority Khoisan language. These tensions also play out in linguistically diverse classrooms and in part shape the challenges and opportunities for teaching and learning. These issues are

explored in this chapter, in line with the theme of diversity and applied linguistics in this volume.

The first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994 marked the end of apartheid and the dawn of a new social, political and economic order. This included the constitutional recognition of nine African languages as official languages (isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho, Xitsonga, Siswati, Tshivenda, isiNdebele) in addition to the former colonial languages of English and Afrikaans (Republic of South Africa 1996). In addition, significant policy initiatives were introduced to transform the education system, based on the principles of access, equity and redress. However, 24 years on, inequalities in the education system have proved hard to shift and the South African education system remains fractured along lines of class, poverty and language, producing a 'bimodal' distribution of academic achievement (Fleisch 2008): a minority of middle-class learners at well-resourced schools that were formerly reserved for 'white' and Indian children perform at levels comparable to their peers internationally, while the majority of working-class and poor learners in under-resourced township[1] and rural schools mostly perform at levels equivalent to several grades lower.

The disadvantages of poor socio-economic background and for learners in township and rural schools are compounded by the fact that from the fourth grade on they switch from learning through the medium of their home language to learning through the medium English, irrespective of their English language proficiency. While the language medium has been identified as a contributing factor to the poor performance of South African learners in international assessments of science such as TIMMS (Reddy et al 2015), in such large-scale quantitative studies it is difficult to disentangle language from other co-occurring factors that constrain learners' opportunity to learn. The research described in this chapter therefore set out to closely examine closely the languaging practice of teachers and learners in a small-scale multiple case study of eight township and rural schools where the home language of the teachers and learners was an African language, isiXhosa, and the official language of teaching, learning and assessment was English.

The research questions that guided the research were what opportunities to learn science are the learners in a sample of South African rural and township schools afforded and what is the role of classroom language in constructing or constraining such opportunities to learn?

Linguistic ecologies of classrooms

Classroom language practices in multilingual settings are nested within and shaped by particular language ecologies (Creese & Martin 2008) including language policies, perceptions and practices, which in turn have their roots in history, political contestation, social practices and economic realities. South Africa is no different in this respect.

The geographic distribution of languages in the country reflects the apartheid past when race and language were criteria for social, economic, political and spatial segregation. Although there is significant linguistic diversity in urban centres, rural and township communities are often relatively homogenous linguistically, and children may grow up hearing only a local African language, with little exposure to English outside the classroom (Heugh 2002). The recognition of African languages as official languages in the new constitution was intended to enhance their status and expand their domains of use in public life. However, the force of coloniality (Christie & McKinney 2017) and the global hegemony of English have meant that English has continued to dominate the political economy, despite being the home language of less than 10% of the population. In the context of widespread poverty and unemployment[2] the perception is that 'English puts bread on the table' (Probyn et al. 2002) and so English remains the language of aspiration for upward mobility and escape from the poverty trap.

In line with the Constitution, the Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) (Department of Education RSA 1997) aimed to develop societal and individual multilingualism in order to further the goals of building of a non-racial nation and achieving redress for previously marginalised African languages. In terms of the LiEP, learners are required to study two official languages, one of which should be the medium of instruction or language of learning and teaching (LoLT). In addition, the choice of LoLT should follow the principle of 'additive bilingualism' by maintaining the learners' home language/s, while 'providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language/s' (Department of Education RSA 1997: 2). However, the state has abdicated decision-making on school language policies to school governing bodies made up of parents and teachers (and, in secondary schools, learners), reflecting a lack of political will on the part of government to give practical effect to policy intentions. In addition, the arguments and research evidence in support of home language LoLT (UNESCO 1953; Bambgose 1991; Thomas & Collier 2002) have not been widely disseminated, so the instrumental need to acquire English, plus the widespread common-sense perception that English proficiency is best achieved through time on task, has led to school governing bodies deciding in favour of an early switch to English LoLT (Plüddemann 2015). The result is that, by Grade 4, the official language of learning and teaching is English for the majority of learners.

National demographics mean that learners in historically disadvantaged township and rural schools have little interaction with English speakers, and research has shown that there are few written resources in these communities and homes to support literacy or English learning outside the classroom (Howie et al. 2017). Consequently the majority of learners do not achieve the necessary levels of English proficiency to access the curriculum, making learning akin to 'swimming up a waterfall' (Macdonald 1990). This results in the apparent paradox that the language so desired for upward mobility in fact poses a devastating barrier to learning and educational achievement.

In classrooms teachers are faced with the challenges of teaching through the medium of a language that learners do not fully comprehend, a challenge for which they are not prepared in teacher training (Probyn 2001). As a result there is frequently a gap between language policy and classroom practices, with many teachers resorting to alternating between English and the learners' home language/s for a range of cognitive, classroom management and affective purposes (Ferguson 2003). Although such strategies are advocated in the research literature (Ferguson 2003), there are mixed and shifting messages on the matter from South African education authorities and this creates uncertainly and tension for teachers (Setati et al. 2002; Probyn 2009). The result is that, contrary to the educational goals of equity and access, language in education policies and practices have resulted in differentiated access to the curriculum, entrenching historic patterns of disadvantage.

This is the context for the study reported here. The debates and research on the language/s of learning and teaching in South Africa have tended to overshadow studies of the nature of the classroom discourse and how teachers and learners engage in constructing knowledge though classroom talk – an aspect that has received considerable attention in contexts that are generally more linguistically homogenous. In order to examine the role of language in constructing or constraining opportunities to learn, it seems necessary to go beyond a consideration of the language/s of learning and teaching and to consider too the nature of the classroom discourse and the interplay of both aspects of classroom language. This study therefore draws together these two different perspectives from the literature on language and learning: classroom discourse and of multilingual classroom practices in relation to the teaching and learning of science.

Theoretical framework

The framing concept for this study was that of 'opportunity to learn' (OTL), which holds that 'students can only be accountable for their academic performance to the extent that the community, broadly defined, has offered them the tools to master the content expected of them' (McDonnell 1995: 312).

For the purpose of this study, opportunity to learn science was conceptualised in terms of the science content of lessons (the *what*) and the language used to construct that science knowledge (the *how*). According to Donovan and Bransford (2005), a key aspect of learning science content with understanding is that of conceptual coherence: facts should be linked to generalised conceptual frameworks; and conceptual frameworks themselves should be supported by rich factual detail.

In line with this, Wellington and Osborne (2001: 83) have emphasised the importance of discussion in science lessons, in order to '[link] evidence and empirical data to ideas and theories'; Scott, Mortimer and Ametller (2011) have

pointed to the importance of learning how 'scientific concepts themselves fit together in an interlinking system' as an aspect of 'pedagogical link-making' (p. 8). It is through the classroom discourse that such pedagogical link-making must needs happen, and so the literature on classroom discourse was an important frame for the research.

The analysis of classroom discourse drew on Barnes's (1976, 1992) distinction between 'exploratory talk' by learners where the focus is on sorting out their own ideas and 'presentational talk' when they offer a 'final draft' for display and evaluation. In addition the analysis identified discourse interaction patterns, drawing on Gibbons's 2006 study, in particular the notion of 'dialogic talk': whole-class talk that extends the pervasive Initiation–Response–Evaluation (IRE) patterns of interaction to build on learners' responses in what Wells (1999) has described as 'contingent responsiveness' on the part of the teacher. In this way the teacher guides learners in linking ideas into coherent lines of thinking (Alexander 2000) and the co-construction of knowledge (Mercer 1995).

Mortimer and Scott (2003) have pointed out that, in science lessons, practical work does not speak for itself, but it is in the interactive talk during and following practical activities that the learning of the science concepts takes place (p. 1), and that, while it is important for learners to have the opportunity to discuss their own ideas, they 'will not stumble upon, or discover, the key concepts … of science for themselves' – they need an 'authoritative introduction to the scientific point of view' (p. 106). So 'there will always be a tension between dialogic and authoritative discourse and a key part of the teacher's role is to strike an effective balance between [the two]' (pp. 106–107). Thus classroom discourse is the means though which the vertical knowledge structure of science may be constructed by teachers and learners.

Classroom discourse may also serve to bridge the gap between the learners' home language and school language in general and the language of school science in particular. Research by Gibbons (2006) has shown how good teachers may orchestrate a 'bridging discourse' during teacher-guided reporting back by students in order to support learners as they move across the oral to written mode continuum: shifting from face-to-face, context-embedded talk around practical activities that utilises everyday knowledge and language – what Bernstein (1999) has referred to as *horizontal discourse* – to using more abstract, context-reduced, generalised, scientific knowledge and language – Bernstein's *vertical discourse*.

In linguistically diverse contexts such as South Africa, there is frequently an additional layer of bridging discourse as many teachers utilise the learners' home language as a bridge to understanding the lesson content in English (Setati et al. 2002; Probyn 2009). Cummins (2008) has long proposed the interdependence of languages and the transfer of literacy and cognitive proficiency across languages through explicitly 'teaching for transfer.' In line with this has been an acknowledgement of 'the fluid ways in which languages are used' in

multilingual contexts, including 'translanguaging' (Garcia 2009). This reflects a heteroglossic orientation to language in the classroom and a flexible, systematic use of classroom language resources to mediate learning. The research study reported in this chapter is a further contribution to the understanding of the 'emergent educational concept' of translanguaging (Lewis, Jones & Baker 2012: 667) and what it might mean in classroom practice in postcolonial contexts such as such South Africa.

Thus this study draws on research and theories relating to science education, classroom discourse and pedagogical translanguaging in order to analyse the data and arrive at conclusions as to what classrooms languaging practices construct or constrain the opportunity to learn science in typically poor township and rural classrooms in South Africa.

Research design

In order to investigate language and the opportunity to learn science, a multiple case study was undertaken in Grade 8 science classes in eight township and rural schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The Eastern Cape is one of the most under-developed and poorest of the nine provinces, with only 26% of the population employed according to the 2011 census (Statistics South Africa 2014). isiXhosa is the home language of 78% of the population and, in the two rural districts in the study, isiXhosa was the home language of 92% and 87% of the population; in the urban district where the township schools were located, isiXhosa was the home language of 77% of the population.

School contexts

The eight schools in the study exemplified the contexts that have given rise to the 'bimodal' patterns of academic achievement in South African schools generally and in science in particular.

Five of the schools were located in rural villages, consisting of scattered mud and thatched huts and occasional cement-block houses. Most residents subsisted on small herds of cattle or goats and vegetable gardens, and the main sources of income were fairly meagre social grants. According to the teachers, many children lived with grandparents as their parents were working in the cities, and there were an increasing number of child-headed households. Three of the schools were located in a sprawling peri-urban township, with a mix of small, closely packed formal housing and informal shacks. More learners lived with their parents but here too there was widespread unemployment and poverty.

The rural school buildings were old and dilapidated, with pit latrines, and two schools had only mud and dung floors. Two of the five rural schools had

no water supplies and so the teachers had to bring water to school in bottles to conduct science experiments. Only one of the rural schools had electricity, and the supply was unreliable. The three peri-urban township schools had bigger and more substantial school buildings, with electricity, reliable municipal water supplies and flush toilets.

Textbook supplies varied: one rural school had enough textbooks for each learner but in the other schools learners had to share textbooks or only old textbooks pre-dating the new curriculum were available. None of the schools had any science laboratories or equipment for practical work, beyond what teachers could improvise themselves.

Thus the opportunity to learn science in these schools was constrained by socio-economic and domestic factors and historic disadvantage in the material conditions in the schools – factors that combined to restrict learners' opportunities to learn science.

In addition, the common home language of learners and teachers was isiXhosa, with learners receiving very little exposure to English outside the classroom. Teachers considered that learners' proficiency in English was generally poor and that English constituted an obstacle to learning.

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected from five consecutive Grade 8 science lessons that were observed and video-taped for each of the eight classes. The lesson transcripts were analysed using sociocultural discourse analysis (Mercer 2004) to trace the development of science knowledge within and across lessons, and the language that was used to construct that knowledge. The analysis took into account the classroom discourse patterns as well as the languaging practices of teachers and learners.

The unit of analysis for mapping the development of science content through language was the series of five lessons per teacher. The public talk in the lesson transcripts was coded and analysed for 'opportunity to learn' science as outlined below. 'Public talk' was defined as talk by teachers or learners where the intended audience was the whole class or during group work where the teacher's talk to a group could be heard by the whole class.

In order to map the lesson structure and to provide a framework for the analysis of the development of content through language, each lesson was divided into lesson 'episodes.' These are defined by Gibbons (2006: 95, following Lemke 1990: 50) as 'a unit of discourse with a unifying topic and purpose' – roughly equating to a teaching activity. The lesson episodes provided the structural framework for the process of data analysis. The facts presented per episode were identified and provided the basis for analysis of the lesson content. The classroom discourse was analysed in terms of the balance of teacher–learners talk per episode; the discourse interaction patterns for each episode; evidence

of bridging discourses (i.e., instances of teachers providing support to learners in bridging the gap between everyday knowledge and science knowledge); everyday language and science language; practical and theoretical knowledge and spoken and written language.

The bilingual languaging practices of teachers and learners were coded for the use of English and isiXhosa in terms of word counts for each language; the functions of the teachers' and learners' use of isiXhosa (following Ferguson 2003): for constructing and transmitting science knowledge; for classroom management; and for sustaining interpersonal relations.

The bilingual languaging practices of teachers and learners, along with the classroom discourse patterns, were mapped onto the lesson episodes and science content of lessons.

Findings

The research study set out to investigate the role of language in constructing or constraining the opportunity to learn science in linguistically diverse classrooms in a sample of township and rural schools. In the reporting of the data, teachers have been assigned the pseudonyms A–H.

It appeared from the analysis of the data that the opportunity to learn science was markedly greater in the practice of one teacher (Teacher B). What distinguished his practice from that of the other seven teachers were the greater levels of coherence of the science content in his lessons and therefore greater opportunities to learn science with understanding; the evidence in his lessons of dialogic learning discourse to achieve the coherence of science content; and his greater use of the learners' home language in a systematic bridging discourse that could be described as pedagogical translanguaging.

Pedagogical translanguaging for learning

The analysis of the teachers' and learners' languaging practices took account of the relative frequency of use of their common home language, isiXhosa, and the official language of learning and teaching, English. The broad functions of teachers' use of the learners' home language, where this occurred, were categorised. This analysis provided the basis for a consideration of the pedagogical value of such practices and whether or not they constructed or constrained the opportunity to learn science in the observed lessons.

The results are shown in Figures 11 and 12 below. Teachers' and learners' language use have been separated to make the patterns of learner talk clearer, as the levels of learners' language use was so much less than that of the teachers – note that the values along the y-axis for the teachers in Figure 11 are about 10 times those for the learners in Figure 12.
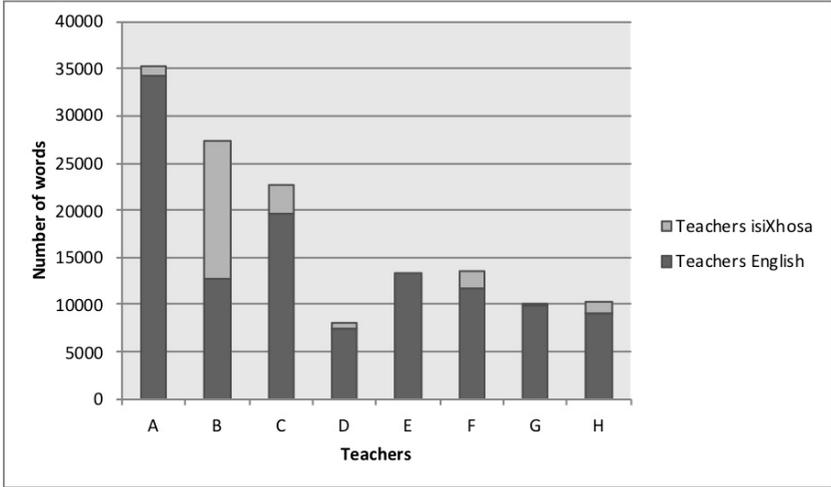
Figure 11: Teachers' use of isiXhosa and English by word count (Copyright Margaret Probyn, CC BY-NC 4.0).
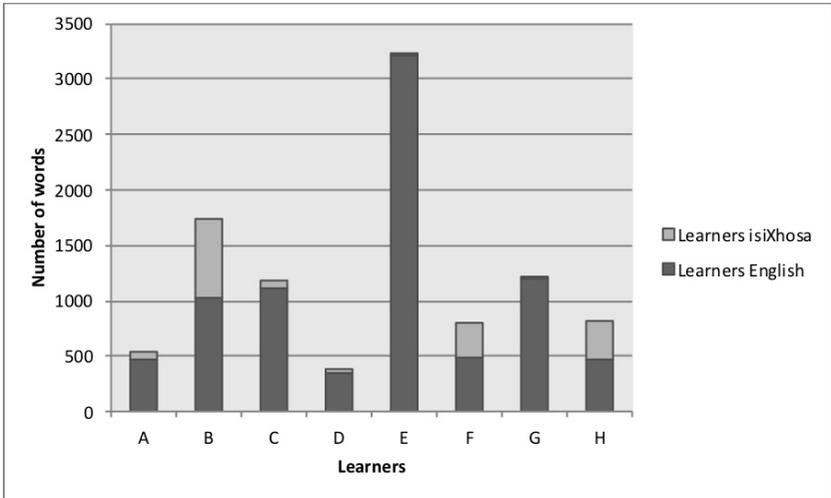
Figure 12: Learners' use of isiXhosa and English by word count (Copyright Margaret Probyn, CC BY-NC 4.0).

As the chart in Figure 11 shows, there was a wide range in terms of the teachers' use of English and isiXhosa: Teacher B used more isiXhosa than English (53% isiXhosa and 47% English), whereas the other teachers used far more English than isiXhosa, ranging from 87% English (Teachers C and F) to 100% English (Teachers E and G).

Similarly there was a wide range of learners' language use (see Figure 12): learners in Classes B, F and H used almost the same balance of languages: 42%, 39% and 43% isiXhosa, respectively, while learners in Classes A used 13% isiXhosa, learners in Class D 11% and learners in Class C 6%; learners in Classes E and G used no isiXhosa.

Word counts alone do not indicate what effect the bilingual languaging practices of teachers might have on the learners' opportunities to learn science and so one needs to have a closer look at the ways in which different teachers and learners utilised the linguistic resources available to them. What follows therefore is an analysis of the functions of the teachers' and learners' use of isiXhosa, following the categories below, as suggested by Ferguson (2003), and a consideration of whether these languaging practices appeared to support learners' opportunities to learn science.

- *Constructing and transmitting knowledge:* this would include science content knowledge as well as reference to learners' own experiences in support of understanding the science content.
- *Classroom management:* this would include regulative discourse – instructions intended to organise learning, and discipline in the form of rebukes.
- *Interpersonal relations:* 'to humanise the affective climate of the classroom' (Ferguson 2003: 39). This would include banter not related to the lesson content and encouragement such as *Heke!* ('Good!').

What is clear from the chart in Figure 13 is that Teacher B made far more use of isiXhosa to communicate the science content of lessons (32% of classroom talk) than did the other seven teachers (between 0% and 10%).
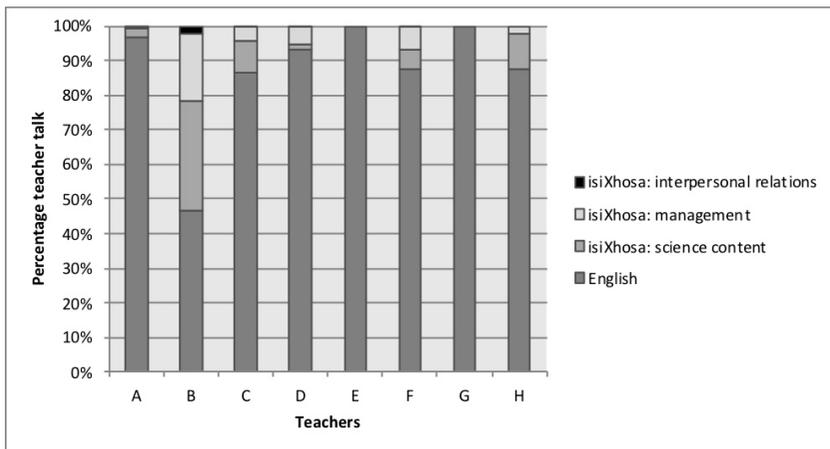
Figure 13: Functions of teachers' isiXhosa talk in relation to total classroom talk (Copyright Margaret Probyn, CC BY-NC 4.0).

So, despite the fact that all the teachers had said in the interviews that they would use isiXhosa to explain science content if necessary, there was relatively little evidence of this overall in the observed lessons of seven out of the eight teachers. Reactivity might well have contributed to the relatively low levels of isiXhosa use by these teachers, but this also indicates that seven of the eight teachers did not consider the learners' home language a legitimate resource to improve learners' opportunity to learn science.

Pedagogical value of classroom language alternations

Literature on classroom code-switching is based mainly in postcolonial settings, where the medium of instruction is a former colonial language, which is not the home language of the learners. It appears such strategies are largely unplanned and very often unconscious and are mostly reactive – in response to the teacher's perception that learners had not understood part of the lesson content being delivered in English.

Constructivist ideas on language and learning in general suggest that face-to-face exploratory talk (Barnes 1976, 1992) in groups would usually precede more context-reduced 'presentational talk.' Gibbons (2006) has described the teacher's role in mediating and scaffolding this process of moving from exploratory to presentational talk in whole-class discussion, which is then a preparation for writing and thus scaffolding a move across the mode continuum.

Science lessons are typically structured in terms of a review of existing knowledge on a topic, introduction of new ideas – often though practical activities – discussion and making sense of the practical work in terms of linking it to science theory and then writing and consolidation of the new ideas in some form, and so in science lessons the teacher's scaffolding of this process of moving from exploratory to presentational talk would occur in the whole-class discussion following practical work in groups (Gibbons 2006).

In a multilingual context, it would seem logical to develop learners' knowledge in their home language and then transfer this understanding to the second/additional language (L2) – what Cummins (2008) has described as 'teaching for transfer.' Setati et al. (2002) referred to teachers and learners moving from 'informal, exploratory talk in the learners' main language(s) to discourse-specific talk and writing in English' (p. 72) and proposed that teachers might take various routes to complete this 'journey'.

This would suggest using the learners' home language for exploratory talk – both in group discussions by learners or teacher-led exploratory talk when making sense of practical work and developing new understandings and then transferring this understanding to the additional language, first orally (see Clegg & Afitska 2011) and later in writing.

This would amount to a strategic and systematic use of two languages – what could be described as translanguaging – rather than a more reactive code-switching from the LoLT in response to signs of incomprehension on the part

of learners – by which time critical gaps and misconceptions about the science content might well have developed.

What the research data indicated is that only one teacher (B) appeared to use isiXhosa to 'work on understanding' (Barnes 1976, 1992) in a systematic way. The other teachers who made use of isiXhosa to communicate science content for between 3% and 10% of classroom talk generally did so in the form of fairly brief code-switching from the LoLT. These teachers also said that they would switch to isiXhosa in response to cues from the learners that they had not understood:

> Teacher C: When I look at them I can see that some of them don't understand. … I can see if they are uncomfortable, from their faces and I can see … mmm … they don't understand so I must repeat this in their mother tongue.

It seems likely that these forms of language alternation would have helped learners to understand more of the lesson content than if the teachers had not codeswitched or translated at all. But the fact that these teachers appeared to wait for a cue from learners that they did not understand before switching to isiXhosa meant that learners might well have been left with misconceptions and gaps in their understanding of the science content that the relatively brief and unsystematic code-switching would be unlikely to fully resolve.

Teacher B, on the other hand, used far more isiXhosa for communicating science content (32% of words spoken) than the other teachers, and he seemed to work with both languages in a more balanced and structured way – more in line with the notion of 'translanguaging' and the productive use of languages as suggested by Garcia (2009), Blackledge and Creese (2010), Canagarajah (2011) and Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012). When interviewed, Teacher B said that if he were teaching a new concept he would first do so in isiXhosa and then in English. A closer examination of the shifts in language use over the course of one lesson supported this.

In the lesson the teacher was establishing the principle that in a mixture, the properties of the component substances do not change. The lesson followed the following 12 stages:

1. Review: the teacher led a whole-class question and answer to review the key ideas from the previous lesson.
2. Group practical activity 1: setting up practical activity. Groups were given two teaspoons each of sulphur and iron filings and had to fill in a table identifying the colour and magnetism of each substance, then fill in the results in a table.
3. Group practical activity 1: conducting activity.
4. Reporting back findings from practical activity 1.
5. Group practical activity 2: setting up practical activity. Groups had to mix the sulphur and iron filings and observe the colour and magnetism of the mixture, then fill in the results in a table.

6. Reporting back findings from practical activity 2.
7. Group discussion: setting up: learners to discuss a definition for mixtures.
8. Groups discuss a definition for mixtures.
9. Report back on discussion.
10. Lesson conclusion.
11. Whole-class discussion on why a magnet should be wrapped in paper (so that iron filings could be easily removed).
12. Conclusion.

As Figure 14 shows, the exploratory talk during the three group activities, with the teacher mediating (group practical 1 mediating; group practical 2 mediating; group discussion mediating) was mainly in isiXhosa: 73%, 64% and 95% isiXhosa, respectively, by Teacher B; and 59%, 92% and 80% isiXhosa respectively by the learners. However, during the review and reporting back activities – presentational talk – both teacher and learners used more English than isiXhosa: 66% English by the teacher and 100% English by the learners during the review and, during the reporting back activities, 66%, 60% and 61% English by the teacher, and 67%, 81% and 100% English by the learners. So Teacher B
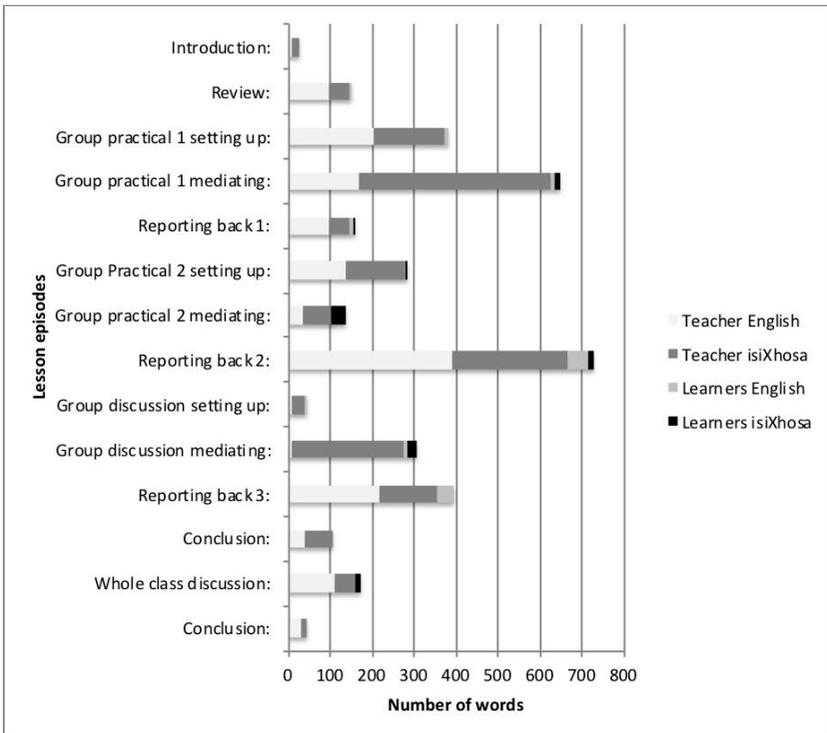
Figure 14: Translanguaging across a lesson (Copyright Margaret Probyn, CC BY-NC 4.0).

tended to use more isiXhosa than English when working on meaning and then supported learners in transferring that understanding to English – what Cummins (2008) would describe as 'teaching for transfer.'

The following excerpts from the lesson transcript illustrate Teacher B's translanguaging across exploratory and presentational talk. The first excerpt was taken from the group discussion activity on defining a mixture and the next excerpt was taken from the reporting back that followed the group discussion. These illustrate the shift from exploratory talk in isiXhosa (100% isiXhosa for both teacher and learners) to presentational talk mainly in English (78% English for the teacher and 100% English for the learners).

(Note that the isiXhosa is shown in italics and the English translation in square brackets immediately after.)

Excerpt 1 – Exploratory talk

	Teacher B	**Learner/s**
1.	*Imixture yintoni kanti?* [Then what is a mixture?]	
2.		Learner: *uMxube* [mixture]
3.	*Nina into eniyenzileyo ngoku nitshintshe eligama eli nalisa esiXhoseni. Anichzi ukuba yintoni kanye kanye le.Yabo? Yintoni umxube?* [what you have done is to change the word into isiXhosa, you do not explain what this really, really is. You see? What is a mixture?] *Njengalapha, yabona* [just like here, you see]? (pointing to mixture) *Yabona ukuba kuyacaca ukuba kwenzeka ntoni* [can you see it is clear what is happening here]? (Indistinct) *kwenzeke ntoni* [what happened]?	
4.		Learner: *Kudibene into ezmbini* [two things have mixed]
5.	*Kudibene into ezimbini* [two things have mixed]. *Kwenzeka ntoni kwiproperties zezozinto* [what happened to their respective properties]?	
6.		Learners: *Azatshintsha// Zatshintsha* [Changed// No change)

	Teacher B	Learner/s
7.	*Zathini? Lungisani ke lonto.* [What happened? Go ahead and fix that then] (refers to answer)	

Excerpt 2 – Presentational talk

	Teacher B	Learners
1.	Mixture. You should look at *i-properties zezazinto, ne?* [properties of those things, okay?] When you have those two substances … *masimamele sonke.* [let's all listen] *Xa si ne zazinto* [when we have those things]. When you have those two substances, i-iron: iron filings *nesulphur, ne* [and sulphur, okay?]	
2.		Yes
3.	Then we put them together… what happens to i-properties, mhmm? Do i-properties change or remain the same?	
4.		Remain the same
5.	They what?	
6.		Remain the same
7.	*Heke* [Good]! They remain the same, heh?	
8.		Yes
9.	So, that's how we should ehh… define *imixture yethu* [our mixture.] i-mixture is a substance where you have mixed or you have combined two substances, *ne* [okay]?	
10.		Yes
11.	And the properties of those two substances remained what?	
12.	The same	//the same

*Excerpt 3 – Language practices that support
the opportunity to learn science*

The factors that formed the basis for the analysis – science content and language – in practice interact and are intertwined in the process of teaching

and learning; but they have been teased apart from one another for the purpose of the analysis.

The following excerpt from the data is included to illustrate how the different aspects of language work together in the practice of one teacher to support the opportunity to learn science with understanding. This excerpt demonstrates the coherence of the science content in the lesson, with facts linked to a key concept, 'properties' of substances; how this coherence was achieved through dialogic interaction patterns in the discourse; and how the teacher utilised the learners' home language, isiXhosa, to systematically establish understanding of the concept in their home language and then transfer that understanding to English, in a process that could be termed pedagogical translanguaging.

Learners had conducted an experiment when they observed the colour and magnetism of two substances, iron filings and sulphur powder: Teacher B elicited that iron filings were silver-grey in colour and magnetic; sulphur powder was yellow in colour and non-magnetic. He concluded that these were the properties of the two substances. He then asked the class for a definition of the term 'properties.' The generalised concept of 'properties' was central to the section of work on the separation of mixtures as the key principle was that the method for separating a mixture was dependent on the difference in the properties of the substances in a mixture.

	Teacher B	Learner/s
1.	*Heke* [good]. Now we say these are the properties, now, *ndifuna* [I want a] definition *okanye* [or] what is the meaning of this word, what is the meaning of this word, properties? Properties, properties, so we used these two things, *ne* [okay]? *I*-colour *phaya* [there] and we used *i*-magnetism. And we say these are the properties of what? Of iron. *Iyavakala* [is it clear]?	
2.		Learners: Yes
3.	And we used *i*-colour *phaya kwisulphur* [in sulphur], yellow colour; and it is not magnetic. *I*-sulphur and we say these are the properties of what? Of sulphur. So, what can we say is the meaning of that word … properties? Mhmm? *Usebenzise ingqondo*, [use your brains]. Properties? Things that we use to what? *Yitsho* (nominates learner, Nomsa), *uthethele phezulu* [tell us Nomsa and speak up]	

	Teacher B	**Learner/s**
4.		Nomsa: *Uxolo tishara, ndicingi'ntobana ithetha ngempawu zesulphur neze iron.* [sorry teacher I think it relates to the characteristics of sulphur and iron]
5.	*Izphawu zentoni* [characterictics of what]? *Zesulphur ne iron, ne* [Of sulphur and iron, okay]?	
6.		Nomsa: Yes
7.	*Izangesilungu ke ngoku yiyo leyo.* [Say it in English, that is it.] Mhmm?	
8.		Nomsa: (does not answer)
9.	*Impawu zizinto esizisebenzisa ukwenza ntoni*? [What do we use characteristics for?] *Ukuthini* [to do what]? *Sizibenzisa xa kutheni* [we use them when]? Mhmm?	
10.		Learner W: *Ukwahlula* [to distinguish]
11.	*Ukwahlula, sizisebenzisa ukwahlula,* [to distinguish, we use them to distinguish]. *Ngesilungu sizaw'thi sizisebenzisa ukthini? Kaloku sizaw'bhala ngesingesi.* [in English what would we say we use it for? Remember you will be tested in English]	
12.		Learner X: Difference
13.	*Ku*? [What]	
14.		Learner X: It's a difference
15.	It's a difference?	
16.		Learner X: Yes
17.	(points to another learner) *Khaw'tsho ke ubuzaw'thini wena* [tell us what were you going to say]?	

	Teacher B	Learner/s
18.		Learner Y: To divide
19.	*Omnye ubuzaw'thini?* [Another one, what are you going to say?] Mmh?	
20.		Learner Z: Identify
21.	*Ubona le* [you see there] … to identify, to identify, *iyavakala?* [is it clear?]	
22.		Learners: Yees
23.	*Heke* [good]! *Uzaw'tsho ke nge silungu* [that is what you'll say in English]. You can say we use *i*-properties to differentiate, *ukwahlulahlula, ne* [differentiate, okay]?	
24.		Learners: Yees
25.	T: *Heke* [good] to differentiate, *phakathi kwezinto ezimbini* [between these two things] between the two things. Now, the properties you can say, now these are the things, which we use to identify something, *iyavakala?* [is it clear?]	

Teacher B then proceeded to get the learners to look up the meaning of 'properties' in the glossary at the back of their textbook. A learner read out the definition: 'Properties: feature of something that can be used to identify.' Teacher B then went on to give an analogy for 'properties', likening them to familial features that could be used to identify family members:

	Teacher B	Learner/s
26.	like ehh … like ehh … children of the same family, *ne*? Like *phaya ekhaya* [at home] we have a … we have a pointed nose, *mhlawumbi* [for example]. *Uba uyabona ukuba impumlo itsolo uzawyazi ukuba longowakulo Thando* [if you notice that the nose is pointed then you will know that this one is related to Thando] Now, *thina* [we] we have ehh … we have ehh … at home we have a chin. *Uya bona uba isilevu sam ubasinjani* [do you see how my chin is shaped]?	
27.		Learners: *Sitsolo* [it is pointed]

	Teacher B	**Learner/s**
28.	*Sitsolo* [it is pointed] Now all my brothers are like this. So, you can say that is a feature … feature that we use. *Iyavakala* [is it clear]?	
29.		Learners: Yes
30.	Feature that we use to identify (indistinct) *lento* [something].	

Coherence in this excerpt is demonstrated in turns 1–25 as Teacher B scaffolded learners through the process of reporting on systematic observations of a practical activity (the colours and magnetism of sulphur and iron) to a generalisation about the properties of substances – thus constructing a vertical knowledge structure.

The coherence of the content in this excerpt was sustained though the teacher-led dialogic discourse, which was characterised by the contingent responsiveness of the teacher: the responses of learners provided the starting point for the next questioning triad as Teacher B linked ideas into a logical train of thought and engaged learners in co-constructing science knowledge.

Teacher B demonstrated what can be described as pedagogical translanguaging as he systematically elicited key ideas in the learners' home language, isiXhosa: 'izphawu' (characteristics); 'ukwahlula' (to distinguish) and then elicited the precise translation of these concepts into English: learners offered 'difference,' 'divide' and then the precise meaning of 'identify.' In this way Teacher B was teaching for transfer (Cummins 2008) of concepts across languages and was 'using languages in an integrated and coherent way to organise and mediate mental processes in learning' (Baker 2011: 288) as is characteristic of translanguaging.

In addition Teacher B engaged learners in *bridging discourses* (Gibbons 2006), by making a link between the scientific concept of 'properties' and an analogy of physical likenesses that distinguish families. He also made learners look up the definition of the term 'properties' in the textbook glossary and a dictionary, so supporting learning across the mode continuum.

Conclusions

The fine-grained analysis of the classroom language practices for teaching science in the multilingual context of South Africa showed how, in the practice of one teacher, the nuanced interplay of discourse interaction patterns and translanguaging practices contributed to the development of coherent science content knowledge. The data shown here can thus exemplify how, in often very deprived settings, a skilful combination of languaging and content helps

to bridge the gaps between everyday ideas and language and scientific ideas and language; between exploratory talk, presentational talk and writing; and between the learners' home language and English; and so construct opportunities to learn science.

The findings indicate the potential for teacher development – both in the practices that appear to support opportunity to learn science and in the points of breakdown that indicate points of leverage for change. Educational failure for the majority of learners is a central question in South Africa today – a matter of human rights. The ideals of access, equity and social justice that have been central to education policymaking are a work in progress.

Research in applied linguistics that is directed towards problem-solving in the linguistically diverse and complex context of South Africa has wider application in other postcolonial and southern contexts where the tensions between linguistic diversity and linguistically differentiated access to learning continue to limit opportunities to learn.

Endnotes

1 Under apartheid, 'townships' were set up as dormitory suburbs for African people on the peripheries of towns and cities.
2 Recent findings published by Statistics South Africa (2017) showed that 55% of South Africans were living in poverty – below R992 (£59) per person per month; unemployment rates were 27%.

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Using an Online Collocation Dictionary to Support Learners' L2 Writing

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Introduction

Collocation is the phenomenon by which certain words tend to co-occur with others; for example, *complain* tends to be modified by *bitterly* rather than *fiercely* or *strongly* and has been observed through corpus descriptions of language. Collocations may be problematic for any language learner, for instance somebody learning a specialised genre of their L1, but are particularly challenging in L2 (Bahns 1991; Lewis & Conzett 2000; Nesselhauf 2003). Collocations have been found to be troublesome to learners from a number of different language backgrounds, e.g. German (Bahns & Eldaw 1993), Thai (Phoocharoensil 2012), Japanese (Koya 2003) and Taiwanese (Huang 2001), as well as at different language levels (Laufer & Waldman 2011; Nesselhauf 2003). 'The difficulties for language learners are not to understand what *weak tea* is but to actively produce *weak tea* and not *feeble tea* or *light tea*' (Herbst 2010: 226). Laufer and Waldman (2011) point out that learners' productive knowledge of collocations is typically

much worse than their reception. Equipping advanced learners with a strategy to improve collocational competence by themselves is probably more useful than teaching collocations, as students are preparing to study independently at this stage. This study thus aims to contribute to applied linguistics through using knowledge from text studies for the real-world purpose of supporting language learners. It supplements existing studies by working with student participants from a new linguistic and geographical context, thus continuing the diversification of applied linguistics research beyond the traditional contexts of study.

The pedagogical value of the dictionary as a source of information for language learning has long been emphasised by lexicographers (Hornby et al. 1974; Sinclair 1987; Wright 1998). General dictionaries, as Bogaards (2003) points out, however, are mainly used for receptive rather than productive purposes. When using them productively, learners mostly seek help with information on spelling; collocation searches in dictionaries are much less common (Bogaards 2003; Harvey & Yuill 1997).

Collocation dictionaries are a specialised type of dictionary aimed at serving learners' encoding purposes and are addressed at learners at upper-intermediate to advanced level and translators (Bogaards 2003; Nuccorini 2003). With the widespread availability of the internet, accessing resources such as the Online Oxford Collocation Dictionary of English (OOCDE) is straightforward. According to Nuccorini (2003: 378), the OOCDE is more pedagogically oriented than other collocation dictionaries such as the *BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations*, *Selected English Collocations* and *English Adverbial Collocations*. Although numerous studies investigating the use of general dictionaries and their support to learners' collocation use in writing have been carried out (Benson 1989; Jacobs 1989; Laufer 2010), relatively little attention has been paid to the effects of specialised dictionary use on learners' collocational accuracy. This study examined the effects of using the OOCDE on collocation use of advanced language learners. The research focused on lexical collocations of the following grammatical patterns: Verb–Noun, Noun–Verb, Adjective–Noun, Noun–Noun, Noun–of–Noun, Adverb–Verb, Adjective–Adverb.

Identifying collocation

Collocation is understood slightly differently depending on if it is viewed as a statistical or phraseological phenomenon. Most discussions of collocation involve the distinction between collocation and the ideas of *free combination* and *idiom* (Benson 1989; Cowie 1981; Howarth 1998). We used both approaches. Firstly, we see collocation as the statistically frequent co-occurrence of words, identified in this study using Log Dice (Rychlý 2008). We chose this measure because

it provides learner-friendly collocation candidates (Gablasova et al. 2016) and is described as 'a lexicographer-friendly association score' (Rychlý 2008: 6). For this study, we took a Log Dice score of 4 or higher as significant.

Secondly, to differentiate collocations from idioms, we used the criterion of transparency, a phraseological criterion. This is taken to mean that the meaning of the combination as a whole is clear from the meanings of individual words regardless of whether or not the base of the combination carries the literal meaning (Philip 2011). For example, in the case of *take steps* in the sentence *Where reasonably practicable, the authority must take steps to reunite the child and his family*, *steps* here has a figurative sense but the combination as a whole is transparent, meaning to take a measure or action in order to deal with or achieve a particular thing. Its Log Dice score is 9.0, above the threshold, and therefore on the basis of these two criteria it was considered a collocation in this study.

Difficulties of dictionary use for production

Learners consult dictionaries for many purposes, such as meaning, spelling and part of speech, aside from looking for collocations (Nesselhauf 2005). Atkins and Varantola (1997) found that checking collocation only accounted for one tenth of all dictionary uses. Lew (2004) on Polish learners' dictionary use found that the 24.4% of learners did not look up collocations to do a translation task, and 43.8% confirmed they hardly ever did.

The relatively few studies of the use of dictionaries for collocation look-ups suggest that learners did not gain much (Dziemianko 2014; Laufer 2010). Laufer (2010) claims that learners encountered difficulties with using general dictionaries. The participants in her study reported that they could not find 20% of collocations needed for a translation task. The ineffective use of general dictionaries for collocation look-up is because either they do not contain many collocations, even those that frequently occur (Hottsrnonn 1991: 231), or learners cannot find collocations that they want since they occur in examples (Laufer 2010).

Differences between general and collocation dictionaries

Collocation dictionaries differ from other bilingual and monolingual dictionaries in that the presentation is explicitly all around collocations of both lexical and grammatical types (Lea 2007). Atkins and Rundell (2008: 363) have studied style guides and instructions on how to handle multiword expressions (MWEs), of which collocations are an important group, and have identified a number of ways in which they are tackled.

1. Enter the MWEs under the first or only lexical (not grammatical) word (i.e., *to pull someone's leg* in the *pull* entry).
2. Enter it under the least frequent lexical word, the one expected to have the shortest dictionary entry (i.e., *to open the floodgates* at *floodgates*).
3. Enter it under the first or only noun in the phrase (i.e., *big deal* in the *deal* entry).
4. Enter it under the first or only verb in the phrase (i.e., *to twist and turn* in the *twist* entry).
5. Enter it as a headword in its own right (i.e., individual main entries for *big deal*, *pull someone's leg*).

According to Hottsrnonn (1991), lexical collocation which consist of a base and a collocate should be presented at the entries of the base. Nouns in verb + noun (e.g., *pursue studies*), noun + verb (e.g., *storm rage*), adjective + noun collocations (e.g., *heavy smoker*) and verbs and adjectives in those combinations are considered bases and collocates, respectively (Benson 1989; Hausmann 1989). In adverb + verb (e.g., *severely criticise*) and adverb + adjective (e.g., *deeply disappointed*), the verb and adjective are respectively the bases and adverbs are the collocates in both cases. Neither Hausmann (1989) nor Benson (1989) writes about noun + of + noun (e.g., *piece of advice*) or noun + noun collocations (e.g., *mountain bike*) explicitly. In standard clause analysis, the second noun is the base. However, the OOCDE treats the first noun as the base in noun + noun collocations, which, as we will show, causes problems.

Hottsrnonn (1991) argues that, when writing, to express an idea learners will think first of the base and thereafter look for collocates, which are supposed to be provided in collocation dictionaries to complete phrasal meanings. In general dictionaries many collocations are presented at the entry of collocates, but not at bases, and attempts to find collocations beginning with collocates are too difficult, if not hopeless, a task (Hottsrnonn 1991). Benson (1989) investigated how collocations should be entered in collocation dictionaries and provides examples to argue that learners might have to struggle to generate texts for that reason. The entry for the verb *draw* in Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) presents collocations such as *draw attention*, *draw a crowd*, *draw a gun*, but they cannot be found at the entry of the noun base; collocations like *set the table*, *set a watch* can only be found at the entry of *set* but not of their collocating nouns in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (OALDCE) (Benson 1989: 7). The collocation *to meet someone's demands* cannot be found at the noun entry *demands* in Collins Dictionary of the English Language (CDOEL) (Hottsrnonn 1991: 231).

In the OOCDE base words are defined minimally, while collocates and whole collocations are not defined at all. The aim of this is to help learners focus on the reference work (Coffey 2010). Besides, as Coffey (2010) also points out, meanings of collocates are supposed to be either known earlier or inferable from their semantic set or demonstrative instances. However, it is true that learners are not always able to infer meanings of collocates from examples. An

example to illustrate this is the use of the adjective *sleek* in '*sleek design*', though '*elegant/stylish design*' is very likely to be inferable (Coffey 2010: 331). Understanding of the features as well as the possible strengths and weaknesses of the collocation dictionary guided us, teachers, on how to instruct learners to use the dictionary to best facilitate their learning.

Our research question was:

Does the use of the OOCDE aid learners to improve collocation use in L2 writing?

Method

Participants and instruments

The participants were 29 second-year English major students at a university in Ho Chi Minh City. Their English was upper-intermediate to advanced level. Two writing tasks were developed to test learners' productive knowledge of collocations. Recording sheets adapted from those by Atkins and Varantola (1997) were used to record step by step what learners did when they approached the dictionary for help. The use of recording sheets was twofold: (1) to provide a detailed description of how learners consulted the OOCDE and (2) to help trace back all collocation searches with information on which and how many collocations they looked up, and whether or not the use of those collocations was correct.

Procedures and data analysis

Data were collected in two phases. In Phase 1, the first set of 350-word essays on an assigned topic was collected. The essays were used as the baseline to examine if there were changes in collocation use. After this data collection phase, participants were introduced to the Oxford Online Collocation Dictionary of English and were given instructions on its use. They were also assigned activities to get familiar with the dictionary over a period of nine weeks. In Phase 2, the second set of essays written with the use of the OOCDE was collected. In this phase, we observed the students' use of the dictionary. We asked them to approach the OOCDE as naturally as possible. The participants worked in pairs, one using the OOCDE, the other recording every check-up on the recording sheet. The participants filling in the recording sheet only needed to complete information in column 2 (what headwords were looked up) and column 7 (whether the dictionary users used the dictionaries in combination with other dictionaries); the rest of information was completed by the participants doing the writing after they had finished their writing.

We analysed the students' written texts, focusing particularly on the acceptability of the collocations that the students produced at each phase of data

collection and developments between the two phases. The procedures of identifying and analysing collocations were as follows:

1. Extract lexical combinations of the seven grammatical patterns being considered (see above).
2. Assess the conventionality of the above combinations by using the British National Corpus.
   a. If the combinations met the frequency threshold of 5, they were considered to be conventional and would be processed as in step three, below.
   b. If the combinations did not meet the frequency threshold, native speaker informants were asked to make judgements on their acceptability:
      • If judged to be acceptable, the combinations would be considered further in the next step.
      • If judged to be unacceptable or questionable, they would be treated as marked collocations.
3. Distinguish strong collocations from casual combinations and idioms:
      • Distinguish strong collocations from idioms by using the transparency criterion.
      • Look for Log Dice score of the combinations from the BNC to identify strong collocations using a threshold of 4.

We then categorised marked collocations into three types: (1) marked collocations due to wrong choice of collocating words, which were subdivided into wrong choice at the collocates, at the bases and errors at the combination as a whole (e.g., *shorten the gap*, *suffer stuffs*, and *staying time* respectively), (2) marked collocations not due to wrong choice of collocating words (e.g., *take advantage **on** students*), and (3) collocations with inappropriate meaning in a particular context (e.g., *students studying abroad *have some drawbacks*).

We investigated not just the appropriateness but the variety of collocation use. This involved an exploration and comparison of collocation use in the students' written texts without and with dictionary support. We begin by reporting the overall picture of collocations that students produced using OOCDE and move on to specific problems.

Results

The appropriateness of collocation use

Findings from the analysis of the two sets of essays regardless of whether or not collocations were consulted from the dictionary show that learners' collocation use in general did not improve. Counter to our expectations, the total amount of marked collocations in the second set of essays did not decrease

but instead increased, with 17 marked collocations more than before the intervention. As shown in Figure 15 below, all types of marked collocations found in the first set of essays were found in the second set. Collocations of V–N patterns are still collocations with the highest amount of marked collocations (62 collocations). Adj–N collocation pattern has the second highest amount of marked collocations (31 collocations), eight collocations more than the first set of essays. Marked collocations of Adv–V and Adv–Adj types slightly reduced.

The presence of more marked collocations when writing with OOCDE support than without initially suggested that the OOCDE did not help learners improve collocation use. Data from the recording sheets showed that although Adj–N is the collocation pattern that learners looked up the most (51 out of 126 look-ups), it is the collocation pattern which has the greatest increase in marked collocations (eight collocations). However, in order to better understand whether the OOCDE helps learners in improving collocational use, we compared written texts (without and with the OOCDE support) of individual participants. In Table 6 below, we summarise the amount of marked collocations of all the written texts written without and with the OOCDE support in pairs. If we categorise essays with three or more marked collocations fewer than in the first set of essays as an improvement of collocation use, two marked collocations fewer as a slight improvement, the number of marked collocations remaining the same or just reducing by one as not improved, and the number of marked collocations increasing as worse, we have the results as in Table 6. (Some participant numbers do not appear in this table, because the participants concerned missed one of the two writing sessions.)
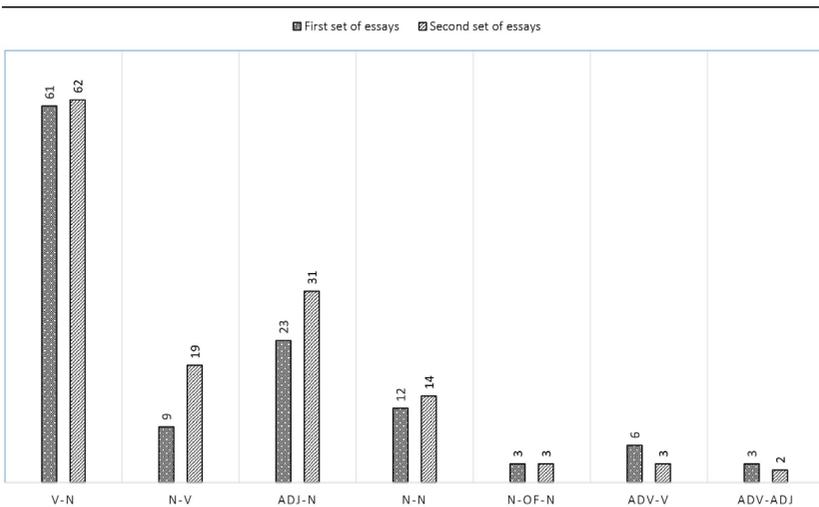
Figure 15: The number of marked collocations of the two sets of essays (Copyright Dung Cao and Alice Deignan, CC BY-NC 4.0).

Table 6: Comparison of individuals' marked collocations without and with the OOCDE support.

Written texts	Number of marked collocations (- dictionary)	Number of marked collocations (+ dictionary)	Number of look-ups	Change
T1A – T1B	3	3	7	Not improved
T4A – T4B	6	5	3	Not improved
T6A – T6B	2	0	3	Slightly improved
T7A – T7B	1	0	7	Not improved
T10A – T10B	3	2	6	Not improved
T11A – T11B	12	3	7	Improved
T12A – T12B	9	6	6	Improved
T13A – T13B	7	20	5	Worse
T14A – T14B	3	1	4	Slightly improved
T15A – T15B	4	5	5	Worse
T16A – T16B	3	3	2	Not improved
T17A – T17B	0	1	1	Worse
T19A – T19B	2	5	4	Worse
T20A – T20B	1	6	2	Worse
T21A – T21B	5	7	4	Worse
T22A – T22B	3	6	6	Worse
T23A – T23B	3	10	4	Worse
T24A – T24B	2	4	7	Worse
T25A – T25B	4	8	5	Worse
T27A – T27B	4	2	8	Slightly improved
T28A – T28B	8	6	1	Slightly improved
T31A – T31B	2	2	1	Not improved
T35A – T35B	1	4	2	Worse
T36A – T36B	7	11	7	Worse
T38A – T38B	5	3	2	Slightly improved
T40A – T40B	4	3	1	Not improved
T42A – T42B	10	6	6	Improved
T43A – T43B	1	1	6	Not improved
T44A – T44B	3	1	4	Slightly improved

It can be seen that the highest amount of marked collocations in a text was 20 (T13B), much higher than the result of the first group, 12. Only three out of 29 learners (10%) had a clear sign of collocational improvement with the number of marked collocations reducing by three or more. These students had carried out a number of dictionary look-ups except for one case, in which the student did only one look-up. Six learners (20%) improved slightly with two marked collocations fewer than in the first piece of writings. Almost a quarter of the students did not improve their collocational use. Twelve students (41%) performed worse with the amount of marked collocations increasing. There was a noticeable case (T13) with the number of marked collocations in the second writing more than double that number in the first piece of writing, 20 and seven, respectively.

Four out of 29 learners looked up collocations in the dictionary just once, and the comparison of collocation use in essays of these students brought up different results (one essay improving slightly, two not improving, and one getting worse). Results of collocation use in those essays written with seven or eight separate searches also spread evenly from improvement to getting worse. This means that the number of times consulting the dictionary seems to have no impact on the effectiveness of the production. Comparing the ratio of marked collocations over the number of collocations used in the two sets of essays in Table 7 below, we found that N–N collocation is still the collocation with the highest ratio of marked collocations over collocations used (16.9%). Adj–N collocation is the third highest (9.4%), higher than that in the first set of the written productions regardless of being the collocation pattern being searched the most – 51 out of 126 look-ups. The proportion of marked collocations over collocations of V–N patterns is still the second highest, with the number of marked collocations approximately the same with that of the first set of writings, 62 and 61, respectively.

Table 7: The ratio of marked collocations over collocation used in the first and second set of essays.

Collocation types	The first set of essays			The second set of essays		
	Total	Markedness	Percentage	Total	Markedness	Percentage
V–N	518	61	11.8%	452	62	13.7%
N–V	316	9	2.9%	313	19	6.1%
Adj–N	367	23	6.3%	330	31	9.4%
N–N	79	12	15.2%	83	14	16.9%
N–of–N	36	3	8.3%	45	3	6.7%
Adv–V	59	6	10.2%	54	3	5.6%
Adv–Adj	32	3	9.4%	41	2	4.9%

Comparing the numbers of collocations, casual combinations, and idioms used in the two sets of essays (see Figure 16 below), we found that the amount of strong collocations in the second set of essays decreased while casual combinations increased. This suggests that, even with the availability of dictionaries, learners did not use more collocations than without.

Table 8 below presents the distribution of types of marked collocations of the two sets of essays. It can be seen that similar to the first set of essays, the most
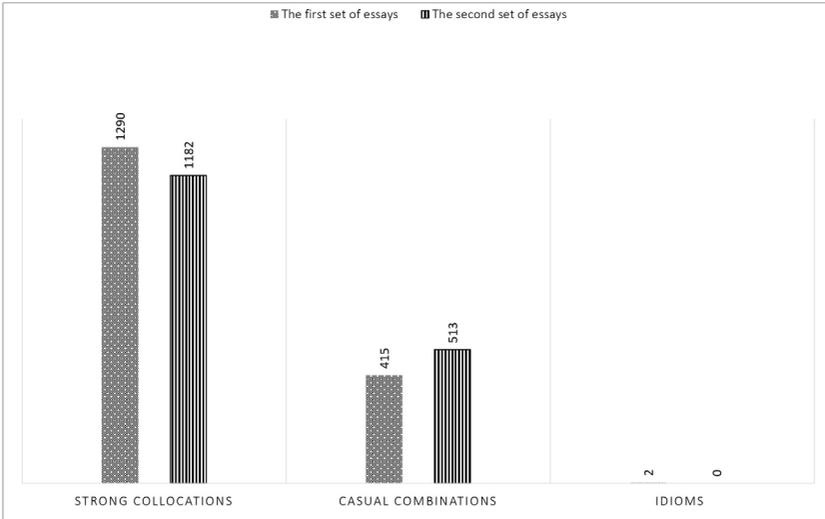
Figure 16: Distribution of combinations from the two sets of essays (Copyright Dung Cao and Alice Deignan, CC BY-NC 4.0).

Table 8: Distribution of the types of marked collocations in each collocation pattern.

Collocation patterns	Errors at collocating words		Errors not at collocating words		Inappropriate meaning	
	1st essay	2nd essay	1st essay	2nd essay	1st essay	2nd essay
V–N	24	39	22	13	15	10
N–V	9	19	0	0	0	0
Adj–N	20	28	0	0	3	3
N–N	12	14	0	0	0	0
N–of–N	3	3	0	0	0	0
Adv–V	4	3	0	0	2	0
Adv–Adj	2	2	1	0	0	0

common collocational error was wrong choice of collocating words in colloca-
tions of V–N and Adj–N pattern, and is the only type of marked collocation of
the other patterns.

Marked collocations caused by wrong choice of collocates can be found in
all collocation types: V–N collocations (e.g., *bring stress* instead of *cause stress*,
Remain relationship instead of *maintain relationship*), N–V (e.g., *stress formed*
instead of *stress arose*), Adj–N (e.g., *bad chemicals* instead of *harmful chemi-
cals*), Adv–V (all three marked collocations) (e.g., *tax greatly* instead of *tax
heavily*), and Adv–Adj (all two marked collocations) (e.g., *significantly polluted*
instead of *extremely polluted*). The use of the collocate adjectives *good* and *bad*
with very high frequency to express positiveness or negativeness again resulted
in unacceptable combinations. *Good status* and *bad chemicals* are examples.
The construction of collocations based solely on semantic meaning and syntac-
tic knowledge of the target language causes these marked collocations.

Marked collocations at the base were found in collocations of V–N (e.g.,
arrange their timeline instead of *arrange their time*), N–V (e.g., *reasons create*
instead of *factors cause*), Adj–N (e.g., *unhealthy status* instead of *unhealthy
state*), and N–N pattern (e.g., *collar workers* instead of *white-collar workers*) in
the second set of essays. The confusion of words that have similar forms (e.g.,
status and *state*) or that are associated with each other in some way (e.g., *time-
line* and *time*, *collar* and *white-collar*) led to the construction of these marked
collocations.

Marked collocations as a whole were also found in the second set of essays.
Marked collocations of this type were detected in V–N (e.g., *appoint to a
(higher) position* instead of *assigned to a (higher) position*), N–V (e.g., *(tech-
nological) advancement has outshone*; no suggestion for correction), Adj–N
(e.g., *breaking days* instead of *leisure time/days away from work*), N–N (e.g.,
soil sources; no suggestion for correction) and N–of–N (e.g., *state of emo-
tion* instead of *emotional state*). The confusion between N–N and N–of–N
construction was also observed in the second set of essays. *Living style*, *life
quality*, *stress of relationship* were used where *style of living*, *quality of life* and
relationship stress were the expected collocations, respectively.

Marked collocations not at collocating words in the second set of essays are
associated with prepositions (all 13 collocations). Learners also added (e.g.,
explain for the phenomenon instead of *explain the phenomenon*), omitted (e.g.,
dealing deadlines instead of *deal with deadlines*) or misused prepositions (e.g.,
cope under pressure instead of *cope with pressure*). Learners often had problem
with prepositions when using the verb *face* (five out of 11 times that *face* were
used). It seems that when there are two combinations relating to one word that
could be used to express a similar idea (e.g., *face something* and *be faced with
something*, *concern someone* and *someone [be] concerned about*), they tend to
blend them (e.g., *face with many difficulties*).

Markedness due to inappropriate meaning of collocations in a particular con-
text were found in the second set of essays; namely, 10 marked collocations are

of V–N collocation (e.g., *train skills* instead of *develop skills*) and three Adj–N collocation (e.g., *sufficient nutrition* instead of *well-balanced diet*). If in the first set of essays inappropriate use of the verb *take* did not occur, they were detected in the second set. Learners were confused between *take* and *have*; *take a (comfortable) chat* was used where *have a (comfortable) chat* was required instead. In another case *take* was mistakenly used while another verb is appropriate (e.g., *withstand the stress*). The most prominent errors were those that are associated with the noun *stress*. Of total 53 collocations containing *stress*, eight marked collocations were of V–N pattern and six N–V pattern. We noted that none of these combinations were checked up from the dictionary.

Results from recording sheets showed that 126 out of 144 look-ups were for collocation purposes. Almost all of the collocations looked up from the dictionary were used correctly. There are only two cases where collocations were not used appropriately in meaning. They are: *In this way, we can avoid the negative consequences and *boost the positive results.* (instead of *encourage the positive results*) and *Adults *retain a tremendous responsibility in caring for their children and teaching them* (instead of *maintain a tremendous responsibility*). This suggests that the dictionary can help learners to use collocations correctly in their writing, but only as long as they are aware of the collocations that pose problems and therefore actually use it.

Variety of collocation use

We counted and compared the number of combinations that had been repeatedly used more than two times in the first and second set of essays and found that the total number of repeatedly used collocations in the second set of essays reduced considerably (35 collocations less than the first set of essays). Looking at this dimension of individual students' essays, we found that 26 out of 29 students used fewer number of collocations repeatedly in the second essays compared to the first. However, it is noticeable that many of the repeatedly used combinations from the first set of essays (31 out of 52) are combinations used in the question title such as *students have*, *studying aboard*, and *foreign country*. It should not be taken for granted that the reduction of the amount of repeatedly used collocations was the positive impact of the OOCDE. This can only be concluded if evidence of students using the OOCDE to search for another way of expressing the same or nearly the same idea to avoid repetition could be detected. From the recording sheets, we found a few cases of the students stating that their use the OOCDE was to avoid repetition. They are: *cause stress, create stress*; *pressing problem, urgent problem*; *cause stress, create stress, lead to stress*; *avoid stress, handle stress, minimise stress*; *serious problem, big problem, common problem*. It is evident from this study that the dictionary can help students use a wide variety of collocations to avoid repetition as long as they wish to do so.

Discussion and conclusion

Our results suggest that writing with the supportive tool did not help learners improve their collocation use. The number of marked collocations in the essays written with the dictionary did not decrease but increased instead (17 more marked collocations in the second set of essays). Nearly half of the students (12 out of 29) performed worse than writing without using the dictionary. The number of collocations used in the second set of essays is much fewer than that in the first set (1,182 collocations in the first set and 1,290 in the second set). There is no clear indication of learners using a wider variety of collocations. However, most of the collocations looked up from the dictionary were used correctly, except for two cases where they were not used appropriately in meaning in the contexts. If we put aside the factor of different question titles in the first and the second essay, which might result in different results, it seems that not knowing collocations that present problems was an important factor conspiring towards higher number of marked collocations in the second essays written with the dictionary support. These could be collocations that are easily comprehensible and do not look problematic to learners in the language input (e.g., *strong coffee, follow instructions, offer help, regular service* etc.) (Laufer 2010); learners therefore did not notice when encountering them in the language input or check them from the dictionary when writing. As such, teachers need to bring these matters into learners' attention. It is evident that learners did not make use of the dictionary effectively. If they know collocations that might pose problems and approach the dictionary for help, there is a high possibility that they can use collocations looked up from the dictionary successfully.

Another possible explanation for why the dictionary did not help learners improve collocations as hypothesised is that it did not provide learners with the collocations that they needed. It is obvious that the online dictionary does not provide learners with as many collocations as its electronic version does. Neither does it provide learners with collocations that are predictable (Benson 1989). However, it is not easy for lexicographers who are from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to the learners to decide which collocations are predictable and which are not (Lea 2007). In reality, learners are still struggling with collocations that lexicographers consider 'predictable' such as *see a doctor* (Nakamoto 1992), or *improve (public) transportation*, *improve the traffic*, *improve life*, *reduce exhaust fume*, and *internal factors* as found in this study.

Where the dictionary did not seem to help learners improve collocation use, another factor could be that learners were not able to locate the collocations they needed even though the dictionary provides them. Mistyping a word in the search box could lead to this, for example. It could also be because learners coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds do not express ideas the same way as native speakers do; hence, they do not know that they could choose L2 collocates provided to express their intended meanings. *Strong tea* is an example. To express the idea *trà đắng* (*strong tea*), Vietnamese learners,

and almost certainly learners of other linguistic backgrounds, would look for a collocate which means 'being condensed or concentrated', and therefore might ignore the collocate *strong* suggested in the dictionary.

Although the overall result of collocation use with dictionary support is not encouraging, most of the collocations looked up in the dictionary were used grammatically and semantically correctly. The findings bring about a number of important implications for future practice.

The first, and probably the most important, implication for language educators is to give learners sufficient training on how to make full use of the dictionary. They need to emphasise to the learners that the dictionary provides support with collocations but the expectation of finding all of the possible collocates that can accompany the base word entry that they are searching for is not realistic. In order words, they need to make clear to the learners that the dictionary presents possible collocations; however, the list is not exhaustive. Collocates of the same or nearly the same meaning being presented together is important distinctive feature of this dictionary, and therefore should be introduced to the learner. However, they should also be encouraged to consult other dictionaries for meanings of collocates that they do not know before using it. This is because the research detected several cases where one collocation was chosen in place of another which was more appropriate in meaning.

The study found that more marked collocations occurred in essays written with dictionary support than in those written without. However, almost all of those marked collocations were produced without the dictionary being consulted. A lack of awareness of the concept of collocation is less likely to be a cause for this awkwardness since the concept was carefully introduced at the beginning of the course. What seems to be important here is that learners need to be made more aware of their possible collocational mistakes. It might be helpful if language teachers focus the learners' attention more on collocations that have no direct translation from learners' L1. Errors associated with blending combinations containing the same word to express similar meanings, such as *face something* and *to be faced with something*, need to be brought to greater attention since there is a high possibility that similar combinations, such as *comprise something/be comprised of something*, could pose a problem. Also, greater attention should be paid to collocations of N–N pattern since the ratio of the number of marked collocations over the collocations of this pattern used is 12/79 (15.2%), higher than the ratio of the V–N collocations (11.8%). Learners should also be made aware that overgeneralising the rule of forming N–N or N–of–N collocations based on combining two nouns could result in awkward combinations.

The study found that students used the OOCDE in combination with a thesaurus to find synonyms of collocates suggested from the OOCDE as for some headwords it does not provide many collocates. This seems to be a risky strategy and might result in marked collocations. One example relevant to this is *suffer from stress*. To avoid repeated use of this combination a student used **endure*

the stress after searching for synonyms of *suffer*. Hence, using the OOCDE in combination with a thesaurus in such a way is not recommended, or learners need to be advised to be vigilant with using synonyms of collocates from a thesaurus.

The presentation of collocations in the dictionary at the base entry, based on the argument that learners will think first of a base and then look for a collocate to complete the phrasal meaning (Hottsrnonn 1991), is fundamentally appropriate. To Vietnamese learners, at least in this study, nevertheless, the presentation of N–N collocations in the dictionary seems to be the odd one out. The first noun of the combination is the noun base and to search for a collocation of this pattern learners have to start with the first noun whereas Vietnamese learners tend to think first of the second noun. When searching for N–N collocations such as *bus stop*, *mountain bike* or *education policy* starting with the second nouns, dictionary users will not find them at the N–N collocation but at the Adj–N section (e.g., *bus stop*, *mountain bike*) or not find them at all (e.g., *education policy*). Presenting *bus* and *mountain* as adjectives that can accompany the according nouns is undoubtedly an error. It is therefore suggested that dictionary compilers might need to re-examine their presentation of collocations of this pattern in the dictionary.

Findings from the recording sheets show that learners were satisfied with more than three quarters (76.4%) of the results found in the dictionary. Comparing this with empirical results of the study, we can conclude that the dictionary has psychologically positive impacts on the learners rather than practical impact on their collocation use. What the dictionary brought about is a feeling of confidence and security that they have a supportive tool to rest on and that their collocations are native-like rather than any actual improvement of their collocation use. The dictionary is not beneficial or harmful on its own; the key lies in how learners use it. The findings show that it is to some extent a helpful resource for collocation consultations, especially for advanced learners, who are expected to actively expand their store of vocabulary on their own rather than wait to be taught. It is, therefore, worth introducing to language learners. Our study took the study of collocation to a new context, producing findings that usefully supplement and extend existing work in applied linguistics on collocation.

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Syntactic Complexity in Second Language Academic Writing in English: Diversity on Display

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Introduction

Despite its broad scope in the present day, the field of applied linguistics has been argued to have stemmed from foreign language teaching practice. This perhaps explains why research on foreign/second language learning (also acquisition/development) has continued to lie at the core of applied linguistic research (de Bot 2017). One of the main foci in studies on second language acquisition is the development of writing skills. Unanimously considered the most difficult skill to acquire (even in the first language (L1) context), writing has always been a challenge for many (Biber & Gray 2016). Academic writing in a second language (L2) is yet another layer of challenge and has therefore attracted much attention in applied linguistic studies. Research on L2 academic writing, especially in English as a second language, has thus flourished – and will most likely continue to – along with the increasing trend of international education as well as the growing dominance of English as the world's lingua

franca and the language of scientific dissemination (Ingvarsdóttir & Arnb-jörnsdóttir 2013; Manchón 2015).

For the past four or five decades, research in L2 writing has explored the multi-faceted dimensions of L2 writing performance and development from multiple perspectives and across different contexts (Manchón 2012; Polio & Park 2016). Many studies looked at how L2 writing and/or writers developed across different levels of proficiency and took much interest in examining the development of linguistic complexity in L2 writing (see Ortega 2003; Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim 1998 for a synthesis). Among them, research on syntactic complexity and its development has always been one of the more prominent research lines. There is a wealth of research that investigated syntactic complexity as either a dependent variable, which is subject to the changes in proficiency levels, or as an important measure to gauge L2 performance.

However, as development is a process of change that is engrained in time, it is essential to include the aspect of time in the research design if the aim is to understand development. This view particularly aligns with the tenets of complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (de Bot 2017; Larsen-Freeman 1997). This theory views the language learning process as a dynamic system and development as a dynamic change across time. CSDT endorses that development is highly idiosyncratic and characterised by both intra- and inter-individual variability (Verspoor et al. 2017), and hence highlighting idiosyncrasy, diversity and individual differences in both the language learners and their language development. It casts doubt on generalised uniformity in language development and supports the idea that diversity and variability are necessary features for development. Such a perspective makes CDST a suitable framework to investigate L2 writing performance and development and hence it is adopted in this chapter as the main framework to analyse the development of syntactic complexity and its diversity in L2 academic writing.

Syntactic complexity

Complexity, perhaps more appropriately termed as linguistic complexity, is one of the constructs in the complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF) triad and possibly the most researched one. Although it has been defined and operationalised in a number of ways in the context of applied linguistic and writing research, the most commonly used definitions usually include the following points: elaborateness of language and evidence of variety in syntactic patterns (Ellis 2003; Foster & Skehan 1996). However, complexity encompasses a concept broader than just these two points. Norris and Ortega (2009) pointed out that complexity is a multidimensional construct that comprises many different levels and sub-constructs, each nested in another, making itself a highly

complex construct. Many researchers contend that complexity, along with the other two constructs in the CAF triad, can effectively capture the pivotal aspects of L2 performance and, as such, this triad has long been used as measurements of L2 performance/proficiency (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder 2012).

According to the taxonomic model of L2 complexity proposed by Bulté and Housen (2012), linguistic complexity can be investigated from different granularity levels, including the syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological levels. Of these four levels, syntactic complexity is the most prevalent research area and has featured prominently in many studies on L2 writing. Syntactic complexity refers to the extent of elaborateness at the sentential, clausal and phrasal levels. It is operationalised in a great many ways to measure the different items in the diverse linguistic features that make up the structure of the language at these levels. However, these measures generally fall into one of two broad categories: frequency-based measures and length-based measures. Frequency-based measures include frequency counts of a certain linguistic unit (e.g., number of words (W), number of prepositional phrases (PrepP), number of dependent clauses (DepC) etc.) and ratios (e.g., dependent clause ratio (DepC/C), T-unit[1] complexity ratio (T/S) etc.), whereas length-based measures calculate the average length of a certain linguistic unit (e.g., mean length sentences (MLS), mean length T-unit (MLT), mean length clauses (MLC) etc.).

As a result, there is a large pool of syntactic complexity measures currently being employed in L2 writing studies. Some of these measures highly overlap with others, are quite confusing or are simply not informative enough owing to the misalignment with the characteristics of the spoken language instead of the written one (Kyle & Crossley 2018; Lu 2011; Norris & Ortega 2009). For example, MLT, the most commonly used measure (see Ortega 2003) for overall syntactic elaborateness in L2 writing studies, has recently been considered flawed for being not able to offer information about the type(s) of syntactic elaboration included (Kyle & Crossley 2018). Merely knowing that the average length of a T-unit increases or decreases in a learner's writing does not offer sufficient insights into the type of elaboration that causes the changes as either or both the phrasal and clausal elaborations may motivate them. A closely related, and to some extent similar, measure – MLC – has also been undergoing the same criticism owing to its opaqueness and is being questioned for its primary focus on, and hence close alignment with, clausal complexity in assessing L2 writing.

This becomes an issue when such measures are employed to gauge syntactic complexity in academic writing as the features of syntactic complexity in academic writing are different from those of the spoken language and the other genres of writing due to the dense lexical packing and heavy nominalisation in academic prose (Biber & Gray 2016). This results in much concise language in academic writing with more elaboration at the phrasal level than at the clausal/

sentential levels; hence measures of syntactic complexity that primarily and disproportionally focus on clausal elaboration are doubted for their suitability to measure syntactic complexity in academic writing.

Phrasal complexity in academic writing

Biber, Gray and Poonpon (2011) argued that assessing syntactic complexity in the written language using the same measures to gauge syntactic complexity in the spoken language is not ideal, if not inappropriate at all. This is due to the different characteristics in these two modes and the types of syntactic elaboration being dominant in each. While clausal elaboration is common in the spoken language, it is phrasal complexity that is the feature of the written language, especially in the academic register. Particularly in English, the language of academic writing is highly compact in its structure and meaning is usually conveyed through compressed phrasal devices, leading to higher phrasal complexity (Biber and Gray 2016).

Biber, Gray and Staples (2016) therefore recommended using phrasal complexity measures in complement with clausal complexity measures when assessing syntactic complexity in academic writing. This is in line with Norris and Ortega (2009), who noted the progression from coordination to subordination to phrasal-level complexification along with the increase in proficiency levels. Therefore, Norris and Ortega (2009) suggested employing a combination of measures in order to simultaneously gauge all three dimensions of syntactic complexity (i.e., coordination, subordination and phrasal-level complexification) through a more organic approach to L2 writing development.

As L2 learners progress towards the advanced proficiency level, they tend to employ more phrasal grammatical devices, especially those functioning as phrasal modifiers for head nouns, in their academic writing. As such, Verspoor, Lowie and van Dijk (2008) suggested employing a measure that is sensitive to the lengthening of complex nominal constructions when measuring syntactic complexity in academic writing at the advanced level. They proposed a finite verb-token ratio (FVTR), which is operationalised as the total number of words divided by the number of finite verbs (W/FV). This measure better reflects the internal complexity of a sentence, as it is sensitive to longer noun phrases and non-finite constructions.

Aligning with these recommendations, this chapter explores the development of syntactic complexity in L2 academic writing at the advanced level by measuring the sentential, clausal and phrasal elaboration with a special focus on complex nominalisation – one of the most representative traits of academic prose (Biber, Gray & Poonpon 2011; Ortega 2015). Through analysing the academic essays written by four advanced learners of English over one academic year, this chapter explores the diversity and individual differences in the developmental patterns of syntactic complexity in L2 academic writing and detects if there was any statistically significant development in the data sets.

Complex dynamic systems theory (CDST)

Underpinned by complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (de Bot 2017; Larsen-Freeman 1997; Larsen-Freeman 2007; Lowie 2017; Verspoor 2017), this study regards language acquisition and development as a dynamic process and advocates that variability is an inherent property of such a process (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman 2011; van Dijk, Verspoor & Lowie 2011; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk 2008). Consequently, language development in each individual learner may not take similar paths and may manifest in different patterns, resulting in great diversity in the learners' output. This theory has proven fruitful in accounting for many complex phenomena and is increasingly getting wider acceptance in the language research areas (de Bot 2015, Hiver & Al-Hoorie 2016). This study is therefore conceived within the tenets of this theory and the findings are interpreted from the perspective of this theory.

Researchers within the CDST framework have offered a variety of statistical methods to explore non-linear data such as language developmental data. Among these, the discontinuity test is particularly suitable for detection of a developmental transition – a data point in the data set which may mark a gap (discontinuity in the statistic parlance) within that data set, and hence may indicate a possibility for a statistically significant development in the learners' data. This test was introduced by van Dijk and van Geert (2007), who explained in great detail the procedural steps for this analysis. The main feature of this test is its comparison with computer-generated continuous models (linear or otherwise) to see if such a data set can be generated by any continuous model. The idea is that if a continuous model can reproduce the data set, then it is very likely that there is no discontinuity within the data series. In other words, there is no developmental transition in that data series. This test is particularly suitable for time-series data that are process-oriented (such as language developmental data) and is a technique to detect development through variability analysis that considers both linear and non-linear models simultaneously.

The first step in this procedure is to look for the discontinuity indicators in the data. A visual inspection of the graphical representation of the data usually reveals a rather conspicuous peak (and/or valley) which might potentially mark a discontinuity in the data. Van Dijk and van Geert (2007) proposed three criteria to test whether such a potential point is indeed a discontinuity indicator: the *peak criterion*, the *sub-pattern criterion* and the *membership criterion*. The first criterion examines if a peak/valley can also be generated by the continuous models. The second criterion assesses if a particular data point (usually the visible peaks and/or valleys) divides the whole set into two *sub-patterns*, hence marking discontinuity in the series. Lastly, the third criterion tests if all the data points in a data set belong to a single data set. If a data point has the membership value of 1, it belongs to the same data set with the other points. If it does not, it may suggest the existence of another data set and hence may signify discontinuity in the data set (See van Dijk & van Geert 2007 on how to calculate the membership values).

In reviewing the statistical significance of these data points, they are compared against the data simulated by four models (*linear*, *quadratic*, *Loess* and *moving average*). The *p*-values, which estimate the likelihood of that sample being drawn from the population generated by the simulated models, are reported after being compared to 10,000 Monte Carlo simulations (refer to van Geert, Steenbeek & Kunnen 2012 for details on how to run the simulations) to determine if the null hypothesis can or cannot be rejected (Norris 2015). When a *p*-value is statistically significant (being less than 0.05), then it is scarcely possible that the result is due to random chance. In other words, the detected discontinuity is statistically valid. This procedure was adopted in this study.

The study

This study aims to explore the development of syntactic complexity in L2 writing and the diverse elaboration strategies the learners employed in making their writing more complex in order to align with the conventions of academic writing in English. It explores the non-linear trend in L2 writing development from the perspectives of CDST and examines if a developmental transition took place during the observed course of development.

Research design and participants

This study was designed as multiple case studies of a longitudinal nature. The participants were four international students who were studying in a one-year coursework postgraduate education programme in the TESOL major in Australia. English was not the first language for all the participants (see Table 9 for further details). The data were collected during this one-year period.

The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (The University of Sydney) (Ref: GD/ADS) and informed consent to participate in this study was obtained by all four participants mentioned in Table 9.

Table 9: Participants' description.

No.	Participants (pseudonym)	Gender, age	L1 background	IELTS score
1	Arun	Male, 30	Thai	7.0
2	Machiko	Female, 32	Japanese	6.5
3	Jaeri	Female, 28	Korean	6.5
4	Yingying	Female, 26	Chinese	6.5

Data collection and coding

The data were the academic essays[2] written by these four postgraduate students (corpus size 220,000 words, comprising 20 measurement points per participant), which were collected during the period of one academic year. A 10% sample was then manually coded with a set of measures (see Table 10) judiciously selected to gauge syntactic complexity at three different levels (i.e., at the overall/sentential level, the clausal level and the phrasal level). Such a combination aligns with the recommendation to employ phrasal complexity measures

Table 10: Syntactic complexity measures.

Type	Level	Measure	Abbreviation	Formula
Ratio	Overall	Finite verb-token ratio	FVTR	Number of words/number of finite verbs
	Clausal level	Mean length sentence	MLS	Number of words/number of sentences
	Phrasal level	Mean length clause[3]	MLC	Number of words/number of clauses
Frequency count	Complex nominal structures (CNS)	Pre-modified CNS	CNS – Pre	Number of CNS with a head noun being modified by a word/group of words preceding it
		Post-modified CNS	CNS – Post	Number of CNS with a head noun being modified by a word/group of words following it
		Pre- & post-modified CNS	CNS – Pre- & Post-	Number of CNS with a head noun being concurrently modified by a word/group of words preceding it and following it
		CNS modified by a nominal clause	CNS – NomC	Number of CNS with a head noun being modified by a nominal clause
		CNS modified by a relative clause	CNS – RelC	Number of CNS with a head noun being modified by a relative clause
		CNS modified by a non-finite clause	CNS – NFC	Number of CNS with a head noun being modified by a non-finite clause

to complement clausal complexity measures (Biber, Gray & Staples 2016; De Clercq & Housen 2017; Kyle & Crossley 2018). In addition, frequency count measures were employed in this study to reveal the distribution of different types of complex nominal structures in the data and to highlight the diversity of strategies (as listed in Table 10) the learners used in making their writing more complex.

Data exploration and analysis

The data were first plotted in developmental graphs to visualise the dynamism along the trajectories. Some examples from the participants' essay excerpts are shown below to illustrate the phenomena captured in the graphs. The data were then submitted to a discontinuity test to examine if developmental transitions occurred, and the *p*-values are reported to establish whether the null hypothesis can be rejected or not – or in other words, whether a significant transition is detected in the data set or not. Lastly, the proportions of each type of complex nominals in the data were presented in tables and discussed through examples from the participants' essay excerpts.

Results

The data show that the development of syntactic complexity in second language learners' written production was non-linear and that the developmental path of each learner was indeed idiosyncratic as no two participants in this study showed a similar developmental path. As can be seen in Figure 17, the line graphs plotting the development of overall syntactic complexity (as measured by the finite verb-token ratio) in the essays written by the four participants over one academic year exhibit a high degree of fluctuation with the peaks and valleys along the trajectories.

The fluctuation evidenced in this data set mostly fell within the value of 10 to 20. There were, however, some sharp peaks and deep valleys beyond this range. For example, in Arun's data, there was one deep valley (essay no. 6) below the value of 10 and one sharp peak (essay no. 8) above the value of 20. The following two sentences, extracted from Arun's essays no. 6 and no. 8, respectively, provide an illustrative example of how the overall syntactic complexity differed in the two essays.

Examples:

[1] This text **will be applied** in the classroom where learners **are** at intermediate level, age around 18 years old.
(Excerpt from Arun's essay no. 6; finite verbs in bold; errors not corrected)
(Word count: 19; finite verb count: 2; W/FV = 9.5)
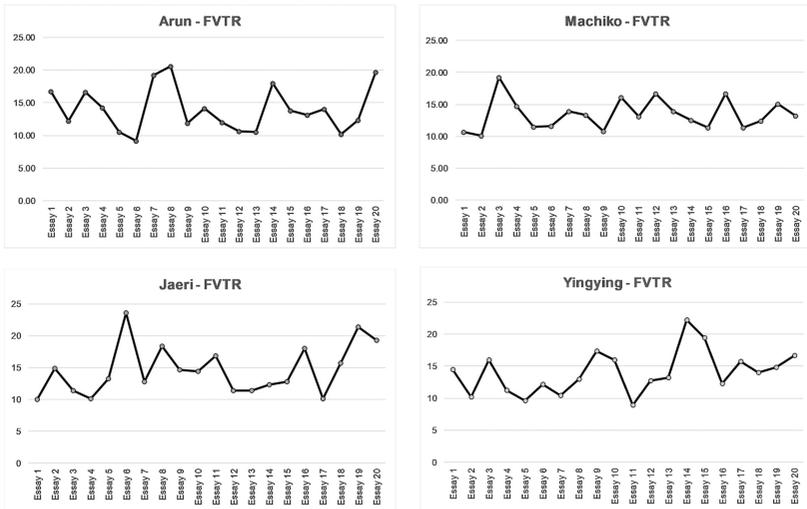
Figure 17: Overall syntactic complexity index (Copyright Rosmawati, CC BY-NC 4.0).

[2] Some of the studies **focused** on the written production of EFL students' narratives both in Thai and English and recently with the production of narratives by advanced bilingual students who **live** in the States.
(Excerpt from Arun's essay no. 8; finite verbs in bold; errors not corrected)
(Word count: 34; finite verb count: 2; W/FV = 17)

The overall syntactic complexity index of the second sentence is nearly twice that of the first sentence. This indicates a high degree of variability among data points, which is visually represented by the peaks and valleys in the graphs in Figure 17. These ebbs and flows not only confirm the main tenets of the DST framework regarding the dynamics of language development but are also in line with the results from many studies on the development of complexity in L2 writing, for example Spoelman and Verspoor (2010), de Bot et al. (2012), Polat and Kim (2014) and Yang and Sun (2015), who reported a high degree of fluctuation and non-linearity in their data.

To examine whether the sharp peaks and deep valleys evidenced in each participant's writing constituted a developmental transition, the data points were submitted to a discontinuity test which compared them against a 3×4 matrix, consisting of three test criteria and four models to detect evidence of discontinuity in the data (see the previous section for details). The first step was to test the data against the peak criterion test and the results are presented in Table 11.

As can be seen in Table 11 the *p*-values for Arun's and Yingying's data are above 0.05 and therefore not statistically significant. However, there are some

Table 11: *p*-values for tests against the peak criterion.

Participants	Peak criterion	*p*-values when compared to each model			
		Linear	Quadratic	Loess	Moving average
Arun	Absolute peak	0.28	0.26	0.26	0.76
	Relative peak	0.29	0.22	0.36	0.65
Machiko	Absolute peak	0.03*	0.02*	0.02*	0.24
	Relative peak	0.03*	0.007*	0.02*	0.14
Jaeri	Absolute peak	0.038*	0.055	0.104	0.103
	Relative peak	0.024*	0.04*	0.185	0.137
Yingying	Absolute peak	0.11	0.06	0.45	0.68
	Relative peak	0.18	0.09	0.16	0.51

* statistically significant (p = < 0.05).

Table 12: *p*-values for tests against the sub-pattern criterion.

Sub-pattern criterion	Arun	Machiko	Jaeri	Yingying
p-value	0.44	0.0982	0.05*	0.89

statistically significant *p*-values in Machiko's and Jabri's data, which may indicate a possible discontinuity in their data. Nevertheless, when tested against the second criterion (i.e., the sub-pattern criterion), statistical significance was only reached in Jaeri's data (see Table 12). This suggests a possibility that there were two distinct patterns in the data, marked by a discontinuous point in-between.

Lastly, these data sets were tested against the membership criterion and the results indicate that the membership value of all the data points was one. In other words, the data of each participant showed characteristics of one continuous data set and no evidence of discontinuity was detected under this criterion. Hence, the null hypothesis for this criterion could not be rejected.

Table 13 summarises the results of testing the constructs against the three test criteria; it shows whether or not the criteria were satisfied and, consequently, whether or not the high value did mark a developmental transition. As can be seen in Table 13, none of the data sets satisfied more than half of the test criteria in this study, and therefore it is concluded that none of the participants' writing showed a significant developmental transition during the observation period of one academic year.

Despite having no significant developmental transitions detected in the observation period, all the participants' data displayed idiosyncrasy and a high diversity in the strategies they used to make their writing complex and more

Table 13: A summary of the discontinuity detection analysis.

Participants	Membership criterion	Peak criterion	Sub-pattern criterion	Developmental transition
Arun	No	No	No	No
Machiko	No	Yes	No	No
Jaeri	No	No[4]	Yes	No
Yingying	No	No	No	No

Table 14: Clausal and phrasal complexity indices in the four participants' essays.

	Arun		Machiko		Jaeri		Yingying	
	MLS	MLC	MLS	MLC	MLS	MLC	MLS	MLC
Essay 1	41.60	9.90	16.77	7.79	22.00	6.67	27.00	8.64
Essay 2	28.57	9.52	20.80	5.94	28.57	9.09	20.50	7.59
Essay 3	29.14	7.03	34.50	6.68	29.86	8.36	22.56	9.23
Essay 4	23.89	11.32	20.50	7.32	29.43	8.24	20.10	7.18
Essay 5	23.78	6.90	18.36	6.97	25.38	8.46	17.75	7.89
Essay 6	25.13	5.91	24.00	6.97	41.20	9.36	16.77	8.72
Essay 7	29.14	9.27	18.08	6.78	35.33	10.10	21.50	7.96
Essay 8	34.50	14.79	20.40	6.80	34.67	13.00	17.33	8.00
Essay 9	36.17	8.04	27.00	6.75	27.00	9.00	27.38	11.53
Essay 10	34.33	7.92	26.00	7.70	36.50	9.95	18.00	10.80
Essay 11	31.29	8.76	16.69	7.48	30.43	8.88	20.50	7.88
Essay 12	33.83	6.77	22.33	8.04	30.43	7.10	16.38	7.34
Essay 13	40.60	5.80	21.30	7.34	68.67	6.65	20.70	8.63
Essay 14	35.17	7.81	20.00	8.46	35.67	8.56	23.33	7.24
Essay 15	33.83	6.34	18.73	6.87	40.60	10.15	23.67	9.68
Essay 16	33.67	7.48	20.50	6.03	29.14	7.85	20.09	7.89
Essay 17	27.00	10.29	23.11	8.00	40.40	7.21	30.00	11.05
Essay 18	21.90	7.06	18.36	8.78	66.33	8.29	20.60	8.96
Essay 19	23.78	7.13	21.90	7.82	41.20	8.96	20.09	9.61
Essay 20	26.75	9.30	18.36	7.77	40.60	7.81	24.67	8.88

aligning with the characteristics of academic writing in English. The features of clausal elaboration and phrasal elaboration were both evidenced in their data set and are explored in this study through the following measures.

Table 14 shows that the average length of the sentences (MLS) and the average length of clauses (MLC) in each participant's writing differed greatly. The data suggest that Arun's sentences were longer than the other participants' and that both Machiko's and Yingying's sentences were relatively shorter. A further investigation into the raw data revealed the potential causes for such an outward manifestation. As can be seen in example no. 3, Yingying's sentences were shorter because they were mainly simple sentences. Machiko, on the other hand, combined her sentences through clausal elaboration. Example no. 4 shows that she used as many as three dependent clauses to make her sentence elaborate and complex. This, however, was not the strategy that Arun preferred in his writing. Example no. 5 shows that Arun's main strategy for elaboration was through phrasal complexification.

Examples:

[3] However, there are at least two main limitations among the relevant previous studies. One limitation is about the participants. Most participants in relevant studies were all in beginner-level.
(Excerpt from Yingying's essay no. 18; errors not corrected)
(Sentence counts: 3; word count: 29; dependent clause count: 0, all simple sentences)

[4] ([1]Although Masa mentioned) ([2]that he didn't read anything outside the classroom except homework), [he liked reading Japanese novels] ([3]when he was in Japan).
(Excerpt from Machiko's essay no. 2; open brackets and numbers added; errors not corrected)
(Sentence count: 1; word count: 23; dependent clause count: 3)

[5] In the past, the major focus of the studies in Thai and English narratives has moved to the production of L2 writing, not on the narrative texts themselves.
(Excerpt from Arun's essay no. 8; errors not corrected)
(Sentence count: 1; word count: 28; dependent clause count: 0)

A further comparison of the phrasal complexity index (MLC) in Arun's and Machiko's data reveals a striking difference between these two participants. Machiko's phrasal complexity index was much lower than Arun's. It seems to suggest that she felt comfortable using clausal elaboration in her writing, as can be seen in the following example.

Example:

[6] ([1]While most researchers and educators agree with the effectiveness ([2]to read aloud in classroom)), there are few discussions about the processes ([3]that teachers use ([4]to implement the read-aloud)) and it is still less clear ([5]how

teachers conduct read-aloud in classroom effectively) and (⁶what the essential components are) (⁷to be successful in read-aloud teaching).
(Excerpt from Machiko's essay no. 3; open brackets and numbers added; errors not corrected)
(Sentence count: 1; dependent clause count: 7)

A closer inspection into the data set revealed that Machiko did use the complex nominalisation strategy frequently, and so did the other participants. As can be seen in Table 15, all the participants in this study used complex nominalisation strategy in their writing to a differing degree. In many cases, the number of occurrences of these structures in Machiko's essays was even a little higher than in Arun's. This is probably due to the combination with clausal modification strategy she used to form complex noun structures. This strategy seemed to feature in all her essays and constituted a relatively large proportion of the modifications used in essay no. 3, where the highest syntactic complexity was evident. Example no 7 illustrates the concurrent use of subordination and complex nominal structures in Machiko's writing. Jaeri, on the other hand, employed coordination strategies to form complex nominals in her writing, as can be seen in example no. 8.

Examples:

[7] It is expected [that <u>an exploration of the variables affecting the effectiveness of reading aloud</u> will support <u>Japanese EFL teachers</u> with <u>designing lessons</u> [in order to develop <u>students' reading literacy of English as a foreign language</u>]].
(Excerpt from Machiko's essay no. 10; underlines and brackets added; errors not corrected)

[8] It was <u>the policy of the South Korean Education managers</u>, [that [if you had <u>a BA in virtually anything</u>, <u>and</u>₁ you were <u>a native English person [who spoke fluent English]]</u>, then that was good enough]; at first <u>being American **or** Canadian</u> was also a prerequisite, <u>but</u>₂ in time, things changed over <u>the last decade</u> **or** so <u>and</u>₃ now <u>anyone of an English first language background</u>, is acceptable.
(Excerpt from Jaeri's essay no. 18; bold, underlines and numbers added; errors not corrected)
(Clausal coordination: 3; phrasal coordination: 2)

An exploration into the types of modification all the participants used to form complex noun structures revealed that the main strategy they used was pre-modification. However, the proportion of use differed greatly between participants as well as between essays by the same participants, as can be seen in Table 15. Such a finding is expected since variability, both intra- and inter-individual, is one of the characteristics of a dynamic system (de Bot 2008; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor 2005; Larsen-Freeman 2007; van Dijk, Verspoor & Lowie 2011; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk 2008) and it confirms the idiosyncrasy and diversity in each language learner's developmental path.

Table 15: Complex nominal structures in the four participants' essays.

	Arun						Machiko					
	Pre-	Post-	Pre- & Post-	Nom C	Rel C	NFC	Pre-	Post-	Pre- & Post-	Nom C	Rel C	NFC
Essay 1	19	8	3	5	2	0	17	7	6	7	1	1
Essay 2	16	12	0	2	3	2	16	1	4	11	1	1
Essay 3	14	4	5	1	2	1	9	11	5	14	2	1
Essay 4	19	12	5	2	2	0	25	9	0	9	3	0
Essay 5	14	13	0	5	3	3	24	9	2	11	0	1
Essay 6	11	1	1	8	7	2	19	3	6	13	3	1
Essay 7	17	4	7	5	0	1	14	10	5	10	1	3
Essay 8	32	5	4	3	2	1	12	8	4	13	0	1
Essay 9	14	6	1	6	1	2	16	6	3	11	4	1
Essay 10	18	8	3	8	3	1	18	13	6	6	3	3
Essay 11	24	6	2	4	6	1	18	8	4	6	1	6
Essay 12	15	2	1	5	4	0	20	7	2	8	0	1
Essay 13	9	1	3	8	4	4	25	5	3	13	0	1
Essay 14	15	5	1	5	3	5	26	8	2	11	1	1
Essay 15	7	5	1	7	2	5	19	5	1	6	3	2
Essay 16	21	2	4	7	2	0	12	4	3	7	0	3
Essay 17	16	8	3	3	3	1	16	4	6	4	6	1
Essay 18	21	7	2	6	5	1	11	7	4	5	5	1
Essay 19	19	2	4	9	2	0	19	9	4	10	1	1
Essay 20	18	6	2	6	2	1	24	6	5	4	2	1

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm some major propositions in the L2 writing research field and lend support to the hypothesis that academic writing at the advanced level shows characteristics of concise/compact language with more elaboration at the phrasal level and less dependence on clausal elaboration (Norris & Ortega 2009). Arun's writing, for example, showed a high proportion of complex nominal structures, which is the main trait of academic language. This was also reflected in the other participants' writing. All the participants in this study employed a variety of complexification strategies to make their writing more complex and more academic-like.

Table 15: Continued.

	Jaeri						Yingying					
	Pre-	Post-	Pre- & Post-	Nom C	Rel C	NFC	Pre-	Post-	Pre- & Post-	Nom C	Rel C	NFC
Essay 1	33	1	4	4	3	1	9	12	5	4	0	0
Essay 2	21	5	5	1	2	1	12	11	0	5	3	3
Essay 3	16	4	9	3	5	1	23	5	3	4	1	3
Essay 4	23	1	4	9	0	1	18	7	3	7	3	1
Essay 5	22	4	2	2	1	1	16	5	2	6	2	1
Essay 6	23	4	2	2	0	4	17	3	3	1	4	0
Essay 7	20	1	4	0	2	3	27	6	3	3	1	1
Essay 8	15	5	3	0	3	1	22	7	2	3	1	1
Essay 9	16	3	4	2	2	3	18	11	10	3	3	1
Essay 10	21	6	1	2	3	2	14	5	2	2	2	0
Essay 11	28	2	3	3	2	1	9	6	6	5	3	0
Essay 12	15	3	3	7	2	3	23	5	2	3	1	3
Essay 13	7	4	1	4	1	1	22	3	6	7	0	0
Essay 14	17	7	1	1	5	1	14	4	3	5	0	6
Essay 15	22	1	2	5	3	1	22	6	2	4	1	3
Essay 16	29	2	3	7	2	0	16	6	7	5	2	2
Essay 17	26	10	0	1	5	5	23	5	12	5	3	1
Essay 18	25	3	3	1	2	2	28	3	6	4	2	1
Essay 19	19	4	6	4	3	4	23	5	9	3	4	1
Essay 20	23	2	2	5	2	4	22	11	3	5	0	2

However, the characteristics of their usage were different. While Arun produced many dependent clauses in his writing, those clauses were not particularly long. Very frequently, he used a complex nominalisation strategy in combination with coordination at the (noun) phrasal level to make his writing more complex. The most common way he used to produce complex nominal structures was pre-modification. He also used much post-modification and clausal modification to make the complex nominal structures longer. Machiko, however, tended to use non-finite clauses and coordination of these clauses to lengthen her sentences. When compared to the other participants' writing, her writing was made up of a higher proportion of complex sentences due to her frequent uses of clausal subordination strategy. Jaeri, on the other hand,

increased her syntactic complexity most frequently by producing longer complex nominal structures and joining them via coordination before finite verbs. Yingying, the last participant in this study, produced more non-finite clauses to increase the length and complexity of her writing. However, Yingying's writing was characterised by a high proportion of simple sentences, which she sometimes combined into compound sentences through phrasal coordination in her essays.

The differences, nevertheless, existed not only between participants but also within participants. Machiko, for example, sometimes preferred to use the subordination strategy to make her sentences more complex; at other times she tended to use coordination strategies more. At different times, she used a different combination of the complexification strategies, resulting in intra-individual differences. These differences, along with inter-individual differences, result in considerable diversity in L2 academic writing.

Conclusion

The manifestation of syntactic complexity in each participant's writing had their own distinctive patterns and hence displayed high diversity although they might, to some extent, share some similarities, largely due to the rather exclusive characteristics of academic writing. However, despite these shared features, each participant maintained their individual styles in their writing and none of them converged perfectly with each other.

Although no significant developmental transitions were detected within the current data set in this study, this does not mean that the learners' writing was not developing. From a dynamic systems perspective, such a phenomenon is not discounted as non-development. In fact, the learners were growing within a relatively stable state (van Geert 2009). Once they reached a threshold point (i.e., a critical level to be reached before a massive reconstruction and self-organisation can occur), their interlanguage system will move out of its current state and commence the next stage of development (van Geert 2011; Witherington 2007). The observation period of one academic year may be too short a period for such significant development to take place, especially given that all the participants in this study were already at the advanced end of proficiency level. As such, a future attempt with a longer observation period (and perhaps complemented with qualitative inquiries) is recommended.

Endnotes

[1] Minimal Terminable Unit. A T-unit includes an independent clause and all the dependent clauses attached to it.

[2] These essays were the assignments submitted by the participants to their unit coordinators as part of the requirements for the units of study they

were enrolled in. With their consent, these essays were collected by the researcher and serve as the data in this project.

[3] Yoon (2017) demonstrated through a factor analysis that MLT loaded strongly on one factor along with other clausal-level syntactic measures while MLC, with phrasal-level measures, loaded strongly on another factor. His study provided empirical evidence that these two length-based measures gauge syntactic complexity at different granularity (i.e., at the clausal and the phrasal levels, respectively).

[4] In this study, a criterion was considered met if the p-values were statistically significant for more than 50% of the models tested. As such, Jaeri's data did not meet the peak criterion as only three (out of the eight) p-values were statistically significant under this criterion.

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