

Manuel Jiménez Raya and Flávia Vieira
Enhancing Autonomy in Language Education

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Enhancing Autonomy in Language Education

A Case-Based Approach to Teacher and Learner
Development

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Foreword

The deep turn: Education for autonomy at a time teachers need hope

I came to know the work of the authors of this book through a thorough exploration of the post-Little research literature: David Little had done so much for students' autonomy, but who are his heirs? It was for me a serious concern: what if the trend came to an end after Little? Actually not. I am thrilled to recognize here the major work of pedagogical thinkers I fully support as partners in the creation of what I named the Deep Turn in Education (Tochon 2014).

This book starts with an interrogation: how can we account for the gap between research results and classroom practice, as regards motivation research in particular. We sometimes seem to act to the contrary of the best interests of the learners. Norms have developed that constrain the vision of what a classroom is, what a learner should do, and how languages should be taught. Normalizing schooling practices tend to be hierarchical, and students have not much choice other than becoming subservient to the system rather than active creators of their world. Even learner-centred pedagogy is often pretext to enforcing rules and verifying appropriate behaviour. The focus is most often on control rather than freedom to learn. As long as democratic rationales stay at the level of discourse, they remain ineffective to stimulate the forms of equalitarian partnership that are required to stimulate democratic learning in the classroom. The classrooms remain stuck in misleading preconceptions and most often become locations for mini-dictatorships. In teacher education as well, we come to a contradictory situation in which applied linguists tell teachers they should listen to the learners, without the linguists listening to the teachers to whom they speak... and thus implementation strategies have long reigned when they should themselves become the focus of change.

The critical components of autonomy (self-determination, social responsibility, and critical awareness) are nice to express, but to be integrated they need to be discussed in practice, in reference to actual cases, what this book does beautifully. This book is an attempt at bringing fresh air and democratic practice into the classroom. It responds to such fundamental issues as how do we "author our collective world?" (Benson 2000) As the authors have emphasized in their works since 2007, the ideological nature of teaching must be considered and reflected upon with the teachers. It is not that researchers can observe the ideological nature of their work independently: a dialogue must be established, through various forms of training circles and video study groups for increased feedback

and improved awareness of how and why we act as teachers in certain ways whose *habitus* have formed through ideological and microcultural traditions.

Thus in the reflections that will be proposed in the various chapters of this book, there is a message of hope: change is possible, but the forces that impinge upon curriculum freedom and choice need to be examined thoroughly, and criticized. Open structures must be proposed to interrupt the status quo. If the goal is to go beyond mere wishful thinking and create actual means for empowering learners to learn their own way and become parts of curriculum decision-making, the landscape needs to change: parents need to be informed, principals need training, school boards and districts must approve the more democratic direction, and ministries must stop posing control and standardized performances as the keys to success. A pedagogy of engagement is only possible if both the learner and the teacher are allowed to be engaged, and if this engagement for social causes that can be language- and culture-related (dealing with linguistic human rights, discrimination, issues of language status and ideology, heritage learners) is not under the pressure of fearful administrations that favour practices which do not disturb anyone within a mould of conformity. For autonomy to become more than a theoretical leitmotiv, flexibility should be planned within a system of free slots, such as permitting students to have free chats on free topics, communicate about doubts and directions, reorient the course of action, as so many baby steps that build in the teacher a sense of trust: yes it is possible, and freedom can be born from the interstices of choices offered more and more often to students eager to be in charge of their learning.

Students need to breathe; schools need to open their windows. One component of the current heavy pressure in Education is the managerial accountability system installed by economists who tend to believe that schools can be handled like factories. Such conception increases measures that are counter-intuitive for any practitioner of education: they focus on decontextualized knowledge and a system of expectations in which everyone must absorb the same contents at the same pace in the same order and must target the same instructional products. The word “Education” itself loses meaning in such standardized environments. Therefore the authors posit and reiterate often in the book that autonomy is not a matter of technical expertise: it is a moral enterprise and democratic action in which trust is being built at many levels. Trust and the moral and spiritual dimensions of education then are to replace the technical and bureaucratic logic of accountability. There are still very few cases for the *lingua franca* of autonomy. The *lingua franca* might be plural. This book proposes an ethics of action with cases as illustrations of what pedagogy for autonomy might be. Yet the specificity of contexts prevails.

Autonomy must become an educational reality: who wanted schools to be the common places where students lose hope and relinquish their creative potential due to the many bureaucratic constraints that suppress motivation and legitimate the lack of involvement? Many schools design failure rather than success, as will be emphasized in Chapter 1. Students most often learn to be servile pawns rather than learning to be autonomous creators. The market-centred discourse focuses on objects rather than the subject, on competition and comparisons rather than uniqueness and cooperation in the diversity of personal abilities. Narcissism and repression prevail where sharing and caring could reign.

The conceptual frameworks that inform the reflection on autonomy may vary, as demonstrated in this book and in Zembylas and Lamb (2008), whether a Kantian, rationalist view is adopted, or a communitarian or feminist, or a post-modern view is adopted. Thus self-reflection is inevitably framed, and looking for new, open, dynamic and complex frameworks that can account for the free development of negotiated forms of autonomy appears even more crucial nowadays that surveillance is overwhelming, school assessment has been transformed into what might look like an instrument of oppression, and standard outcomes are imposed in curricula that articulate various forms of coercion limited by disciplinary boundaries, a situation which is contradictory with the idea of democratic education. Thus the topic of this book is of high importance, and it is timely. Despite its focus on professional skills, the Common European Framework for Languages may permit personalized projects and social action. It transcends communication and targets cultural understanding, civic engagement and creativity. Nonetheless we need shared acceptance that a variety of frameworks may always be required to see things otherwise and open new spaces for reflection and action. Beyond domestication lie unchartered territories, such that even the term knowledge needs to be problematized if we are to enter a caring rather than violent knowledge society. We must face the limits of the Kantian rule of Reason. The major challenge of shared autonomy lies in the way it requires us to rearticulate essentialized notions that were fixed as ancient forms of what we know, and discover that beyond words commonly used to describe and enact education are forms of betrayal because those who speak are imposing views from which they benefit in their social positioning and superior status.

Top-down global policies need to be interrupted. Information campaigns often hide lobbyists, pro-industry scientists and think-tanks manipulating public opinion in the direction of the financial interests of a few (Oreskes and Conway 2011). School reforms are currently used to disempower teachers and their instigators most often lie about their actual goals (Gorski and Zenkov 2014). The dismantlement of public education serves interests that may be detrimental to education in favour of democratic values. Therefore it should be clear that the

goal of the transformative reforms suggested in this book are not to benefit an industry – for instance globalizing new technologies or simplistic and instrumentalized approaches to hybrid and blended learning – but they rather aim at the moral enhancement. Schooling may have become a vast operation of enslaving the children’s mind to orient it toward profitability rather than critical reflection. The purpose of autonomous and critical thinkers and active citizens is certainly not identical to creating obedient consumers.

The best instruments, such as a diary, may be imposed in normalizing ways. Even students’ reflective thought has become an oppression, as the daughter of a friend said: “I must write a diary after each activity but the teacher uses it to spy on our thoughts; she requires self-criticisms and we get bad grades if we criticize the class, her teaching or the master plan!” Thus journaling once initiated as a mandatory activity becomes a controversial tool for compliance. Simply defining and imposing a grammar already is a reification of duties, a “must-do” which in its ineluctability imposes rather than promotes, and reduces potentials in the name of “someone who knows best.” What really counts, however, should be the learner’s investment of time and energy in language exchanges and the exploration of cultural texts that shape proficiency.

This comes back to the positioning of Jacotot in the *Ignorant Master* reported by Rancière (1991). That positing someone who knows and someone who does not entails creating a dependency upon the knower who then will have power over the ignorant. Placing the teacher as a Socratic equal who admits peering with students in the exploration of themes about which not much is known by either parties may alleviate the sense of “non-knowing” as a form of prejudice and stimulate discoveries for both teacher and learner. Such open curriculum based upon projects that are emerging from subjective interrogation may guide teaching methodologies to entirely new conceptions of what can be done in a classroom environment. Autonomy must create the paradigm shift. Autonomy cannot be an isolated box, it functions within a social system. The whole system requires opening, at all levels, like Russian Dolls: the learner, teacher, principal, district board, local and national curricula need to open the Pandora box of autonomy. It must become a systemic enterprise. We need to open our systems of education, not through one definitive backward design, but through a plurality of inquiry-based, evolutionary forward models. Such models require multiple freedom slots for adaptation and personalized decision-making. As Chapter 1 emphasizes, it is all about the creation of opportunities to learn.

Thus many crucial points will be raised in this book both in terms of the needs and advantages of autonomous learning and autonomous teaching. This message is crucial for quality learning and intrinsic motivation, yet how will it be understood in a context in which the professions of both teachers and teacher

educators are under an unprecedented attack and become the scapegoats of politicians? We do not currently live in an educational system that trusts its teachers. The neoliberal push towards privatization places the teacher as one of the agents of the public sector, targeted as the enemy of so-called economic freedom. This obviously is a short-sighted view, as freedom is being lost in many respects through such a neoliberal move towards a narrow definition of Education capital. The renewed struggle for civil rights gives civil servants a voice that deserves respect: they most often are disinterested actors, working close to their neighbourhoods and living day-by-day the cruel condition imposed on more and more children. This condition is imposed for the sake of sometimes absurd and paradoxical regulations which, adding to the teacher's tasks the burden of bringing evidence of efficient learning, create so much struggle that there is no more time for real and deep learning (Tochon 2011). Within this context, speaking of autonomy for teachers may sound like a nice utopia, yet a utopia we should cherish, as it is the condition for students' learning autonomy.

This book details sound research data demonstrating this relation between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy, from Little (2007) to Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira (2007), showing that the lack of autonomy is highly demotivating for humans and goes against the educative grain. Deep learning is only possible with some form of autonomy (Tochon, Karaman, and Ökten 2014). Therefore the whole concept of teacher effectiveness must be reviewed in the light of the need for autonomy.

The progressive agenda, articulated with references such as transformative education in the background, is thus clearly delineated. Yet there are aspects of its proposed enactments that inherit from school-like templates, since this is the way we learned to communicate with peers in the field of Education: rubrics of well-organized criteria, narrative profiles with specific descriptive sections, guidance as to the ways to proceed to reach autonomy as a learner or as a teacher, as a teacher educator (an aspect that is particularly innovative). While I am not persuaded that metacognition can be stimulated by an analytical grid and I see limitations in preformatted rubrics, nonetheless the rubrics might help some teachers to negotiate instructional agreements and clarify learning trajectories, with a focus on processes rather than products.

This book proposes a methodology. The very issue of methods, when we deal with complexity, needs to be questioned. As methodology derives from epistemology, and defines our way of understanding autonomy and its context as something that can be *reproduced*, it implies guidance; and the role of guidance vis-à-vis autonomy deserves attention because of its paradoxical orientation. Beyond methods and frameworks, it is the authenticity of the teacher and the teacher educator that are interrogated. What is the border between suggestion

and manipulation? Can we manipulate students in the direction of their autonomy? Can we organize autonomy for others? What is our imprint on otherness and will we respect the othernessing process, when pedagogy takes off, and students or teachers decide to differentiate themselves in an unexpected direction? Role play is a very good example of learning in action; the initializing question might be: On what themes and topics would you role play? Are the topics stimulating awareness raising processes? Thus the scaffold in an approach to autonomy relates to the type of open support provided to adapt to the aspiration of the learners, which may be organizational, procedural, cognitive, socio-affective and moral, for instance. Vis-à-vis all types of supports I would like to add a grain of salt: we need instructional organizers, but there comes a point when students need what I named “unorganizers:” suspension marks, empty slots, places for their own decisions. This brings to the fore the idea of anti-methods or counter-methodologies, dear to Feyerabend and adopted, in the field of languages, by Kumaradivelu (2003). This will be the focus of Chapter 2.

Craft, technology, science or art, teaching keeps a crucial role as pedagogy for autonomy requires skillful action and excellent training. Creating the conditions for autonomous learning is not merely a matter of letting things go. “*Lâcher-prise*” (letting go) does not suffice. Students need training to become independent curriculum planners. The way to do it may vary with populations, environments and local cultures. From incomplete conceptions of teaching limited to presenting information and evaluating its acquisition to more elaborate and adaptive instructional models, placing the learner as the curriculum builder in a deep approach to knowledge situates the extreme of respect, empowerment, democratic action and sense of justice. Teaching becomes “educating.” Obviously there is an apparent paradox and possible aporia in proposing teachers to become mediators and architects of student autonomy. Indeed there is still structure. In a sense educative action is then related to proposing various templates from which students can choose a path for personalized action. Once they know the templates they can modify them and adapt their action to various forms of reasoning, apprenticeship and sharing. This characterizes the forthcoming educational trends – witness the growing appeal for personal learning environments, blended and hybrid learning. The trend could become post-actional in the sense that action might be superseded by a moral, transdisciplinary uncovering process (Tochon 2014). Autonomous teams of learners may increase significantly their proficiency level compared to students in courses alternating the communicative approach and task-related focus on form, which represents the current mainstream (Tochon 2013). The difference is in the motivational energy released by letting students doing it their own way, whatever structure they may use to do so.

Fading, moving from a space of constraints to a space of freedom requires tact, nuances, and subtlety. It is a matter of humane sensitivity, wisdom and empathy within soft advising approaches. Autonomy implies a reframing of how we define effectiveness. It may appear at first less “effective” to use induction rather than imposing a deductive instruction, however the opposite is true: choosing complexity creates conditions close to real life action and provides a much better preparation to immersive situations than sequences of exercises. Therefore such deep approach may be said “quasi-immersive.” As well, intuitive problem solving implies creative use of prior knowledge in the building up of language apprenticeship. Uniqueness and singularity prevail. The complexity of this enterprise is emphasized in Chapter 2, rightfully so, as students, teachers, contexts, locations and time differ and bring their influential ramifications in the meanings that may frame and reframe the concept of autonomy.

Teacher reflection on student autonomy has become a buzzword in teacher education settings, as Chapter 2 mentions. Yet finding depth in reflection and reflective practice is not a given. It requires reinventing and imagining new conceptual frameworks more open to the new purpose. Moving on from obedient training to self-sufficient education entails changing drastically the positioning. It is a philosophical revolution that goes along a more humane definition of educational science. From the consuming of objects of knowledge to a sense of becoming an agent of change, volunteer teachers can be trained to set conditions for civic society and social action. Yet these words need to take their full meaning: not in the type of collective agreement witnessed among Hitler Youth with a pre-SS mood, but as responsible citizens in charge of critically reflecting on idiosyncratic paths towards the improvement of the current state of affairs, with criteria such as freedom, humane participation, volunteer engagement in topics of excellence, thriving for enacting the designed imaginary that was conceived for a project of society in which time and space are propitious for sharing but also silent, for action but also respect for the living space of others, for professionalism and critical purposefulness.

The case method helps connect theory to practice and supports real-world performance, as will be illustrated in Chapter 3. Development is then conceived in the continuity of professional life. Slices of life are storied in a way that facilitates their assimilations and translation into action. Cases address the complexity of situations and support practical and theoretical reflection. They allow teachers to communicate through experience and can be explored through various approaches: foundational and theoretical, pragmatic and practical, narrative and phenomenological, casuist through critical incidents. They nurture reflection, encourage initiative and develop innovative imaginaries through contrastive interpretations. Teachers can see examples of pedagogy for autonomy that inte-

grate practical and theoretical knowledge; navigating though the complexities of personalized cases. They place teachers as participants in their development (how could it be otherwise) and therefore are quite homonymic with the concept of critical autonomous learning at the level of the teacher. Practical wisdom is thus enhanced with an understanding of the relativity of situations. They contribute to a perspective of teacher knowledge that is episodic, anchored into events of interactions in real life.

We need to move away from the fixist definition of instructional guidance to a more multiform and dynamic approach of shape shifting templates, used by learners and teachers as they wish to, with the sincere and delicate touch of hybridity that the authors neatly propose. This is why the authors of this book encourage teachers, in Chapter 4, to write and share their own cases and vignettes of practice. The educational materials proposed in this book focus on self-directed learning: guidance is proposed in the form of templates that provide choices and an abundance of resources to the students (Lamb 2008; Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011). We reach here the limitations of the book format: maybe digital templates could allow learners and teachers to adapt the formats and contents, that should be flexible and negotiable lines of behaviour, potentially reinvested and reshaped, modified at will, and reorganized.

The issue is to expand and refine the *lingua franca* of cases (Lee Shulman) for autonomous language learning. Such *third idiom* (Ira Shor) emerges from vocational dialogues in which teachers inquire into the specifics of their action and create new wording, innovative conceptions, and a new grammar for classroom analysis. This resembles the archaeological work of Foucault on the undigging of the artifacts of practice, in which various selves are excavated with the purpose of being polished and serving as illustrations and exemplars of what best practices can be in regard to learner autonomy. Then the principles of case construction may apply and narratives of autonomy emerge in a way that is detailed without being dogmatic, and personal but sharable. If things go well, indexes of satisfaction connote experiences and genuinely lead the pathway to more successful attempts on the agenda of transformation. In a sense, such agenda is “un-schooled” – not unrooted, on the contrary, but it proceeds from what the authors title the “de-schooling of professional knowledge:” marking turning points and, at best, what I named the Deep Turn in World Language Education. Journaling one’s own cases builds trust in oneself and may help re-learning, through writing, a repertoire of teaching selves, creating an experiential memory in which practice and theory merge as praxis – the third space of reflection-in-action.

Within this whole perspective, what becomes of the role of the teacher educator? This will be the subject of the fifth chapter. Teacher educators may become

architects of autonomous professional learning. In a homologous way, the idea is to scaffold potentials to learn in self-directed ways through tailored examples and freely chosen creative work. Typonomies of tasks may look too enumerative to reach the heart of teaching for autonomy, the soul of teaching, the sacredness of that other space where mind, heart and action merge into a sense of dynamic oneness. They should be understood as potentialities, such as instructional organizers being invisibly polarized by *unorganizers* within the dialectic of learning and unlearning. Thus rather than a pedagogy of cases, it should be understood as a panoply of ways of approaching life, and the life of a language and culture in particular. Competencies cannot be reduced to molar units taught in isolation. Learning tasks make sense when integrated in social acts of expression that contribute to identity building. They give access to a world of bi-understanding, in which the hybrid Janus faces two languages and cultures, a dual perspective that instrumentations have much difficulty to represent.

It should be said in this foreword that the authors of this remarkable book have done not only constructive work but demonstrate the way of the future: creative, open, complex, and optimistic. Conceiving of autonomy as a collective interest is a strong stand that may go against the grain of the day-to-day functioning of many educational institutions. Indeed schools as well as teacher education are highly (hetero) regulated institutions, in which autonomy might be only expressed as an ideal that is rather rarely met by facts. As the authors demonstrate, and particularly in the chapter on teacher cases, autonomy is a conquest that requires personal and community involvement and engagement in a long period of time, and it is a difficult enterprise. To be sure, the contexts and conditions for it to happen are not always garnered and there is much to do to allow that imaginary to incarnate itself. However, the bread is half-baked, and almost ready to be shared, as a sign of recovery of the sacredness of teaching and deep value of Education.

September 24, 2014

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Introduction

1 Enhancing autonomy in (language) education

Any rigorous and socially worthwhile education must not only reflect the complexity of studying the world around us but must also be developed in concordance with an exciting vision of schooling. Such a vision respects the untapped capacities of human beings and the role that education can play in producing a just, inclusive, democratic, and imaginative future. (Kincheloe 2003: 111)

The improvement of school pedagogy has been a constant concern receiving special attention in educational research and developments. However, there appears to be a big gap between current educational research insights and classroom practice. To what extent can we say that educational practices have been decisive to produce “a just, inclusive, democratic, and imaginative future”? And if not, why is that so? Explanations for the gap between what education *is* and what it *should be* are various. In this book we will focus on the role of teacher education, assuming that it can either foster or hamper “an exciting vision of schooling” that enhances democratic educational change. Therefore, one of our basic concerns is: *how can teacher education become a powerful space for enhancing democratic educational change that integrates teacher and learner development?* In trying to answer this question, we advocate that teacher education pedagogies need to be transformative and empowering. This means that they must promote teacher autonomy for learner autonomy, so that school pedagogies can also become transformative and empowering.

Based on our previous work with researchers and teachers from different European countries, and also on various theoretical perspectives that highlight the ideological nature of teaching and teacher education, we consider learner and teacher autonomy as two faces of the same coin. We define autonomy as “the competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation” (Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007: 1). This definition highlights the internal nature (competence) and the critical components (self-determination, social responsibility and critical awareness) of autonomy. Although the focus of research developments has been primarily on the learner, a growing concern with the teacher’s role has led researchers to move gradually from a rather instrumental view of autonomy to a more political one, where autonomy is seen as a collective interest and a democratic ideal. This means that autonomy is understood as “the authoring of *our collective world*” rather “the authoring of *one’s own world*”

(Benson 2000: 117). Therefore, we assume that pedagogy for teacher and learner autonomy needs to be based on democratic values and should be ideally developed as a cross-disciplinary approach, although our main concern here is with language education. We further assume that there is no unique methodological path to follow and that autonomy can be developed to various degrees by learners and teachers, depending on the particular circumstances where they find themselves. Because pedagogy is socially constructed and highly dependent on context variables, we propose a *situated* approach rather than a prescriptive one. This will become particularly clear in chapters 4 and 5 when we present real cases of teacher education for autonomy.

In pedagogy for autonomy, the teacher necessarily becomes a learner of learning and teaching, within a relational process that involves dialogue and mutual trust. Professional authority is not lost. Rather, it is exercised on the basis of democratic principles, so that the teacher uses power to *empower* the students and not to *domesticate* them. Freire and Shor (1986) argue that in democratic education the differences between teachers and students are not antagonistic, as they are in authoritarian education. Teaching is still directive as teachers hold the responsibility for students' learning, but their educational practice is of a liberating nature, based on a democratic attitude towards directivity. This means that the teacher's power is socially constructed through interaction and negotiation with the students. As the authors point out, teachers work *with* the students and not *for* the students. From this perspective, they need to expand rather than narrow their role. Therefore, when we talk about "learner-centred pedagogy" we need to be careful not to assume that teachers become redundant: on the contrary, their role becomes more vital than in "teacher-centred pedagogy", and perhaps we can use other expressions that are less misleading. These include *dialogic pedagogy*, *negotiated pedagogy*, *empowering pedagogy* or, as Barnett and Coate (2005) suggest, a *pedagogy of engagement*, in which the teacher's responsibility as regards student growth is of paramount importance:

It is a pedagogy of deep and abiding respect for each student, of generosity and of space and time. It is a pedagogy in which the students are enabled to develop a strong voice, but a voice that is responsive to others and the challenges and standards inherent in the experiences opened up. It is a pedagogy that understands that ontological engagement precedes intellectual and even practical engagement. The self has to be granted the central place and to be given space in which it can flourish. (Barnett and Coate 2005: 148)

Despite the growing interest in autonomy as an educational goal, we might say that the centrality of autonomy in current educational discourses and policies has remained mostly at a theoretical level with little impact on modern language teaching practice. This is partly due to the fact that pedagogy for autonomy is

much more than a methodological trend. In requiring a deep concern with autonomy as a collective interest in the service of democratic schooling, it often represents a counter-hegemonic movement that calls into question deeply ingrained beliefs about teaching and learning and about the role of education in social transformation. Therefore, in order to appreciate what pedagogy for autonomy entails, we need to consider the historical and structural conditions that may propel or constrain educational change. These conditions may relate to prevailing social and educational values, school cultures and traditions, teacher education practices, and teachers' and learners' past experiences and commitment to education and lifelong learning. To understand and explore pedagogy for autonomy, teachers may need to uncover and challenge constraints, learn about theoretical frameworks that help them scrutinise their personal theories and practices from new angles, and discover unconventional routes to follow.

Because several forces impinge upon the way they conceptualise and shape their professional lives and the learning experiences of their students in schools, pedagogy for autonomy can thus be regarded as a re(ide)alistic practice situated between what actually *is* and what *should be*, which entails extending one's limits of freedom and exploring new territories – and what *can be* (Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007). In practical terms, this often means taking small steps towards greater autonomy, assuming that every teacher can do something, even in the most adverse circumstances. For example, imagine that modern language teachers...

... let students chat in the foreign language for five minutes in every lesson, in pairs or small groups, about any topic they like. How will this improve the students talking time in class, their interactive skills, their motivation to use the language, and their sense of belonging to a community that values their experience, interests and points of view?

... give students ten minutes every two weeks to note down questions and doubts, collect them, and provide feedback or remedial work in the weeks that follow. How will this increase the students' awareness of learning and ability to identify and solve problems, as well as the teachers' own knowledge of learning and their ability to adjust teaching to the students' needs?

... give students one minute to think about and share ideas with a partner whenever a complex question is asked to the class, before they reply. How will this increase participation levels, reflective and cooperative skills, the chance that the students come up with an interesting answer, and also their sense of accomplishment?

... ask students to reflect about the usefulness of new activities after completing them. How will this increase their awareness of task relevance and the chance that they better understand why they are learning the way they do, and how that improves their learning abilities?

This kind of strategies do not take much time in class, do not require any special preparation, and can potentially be used in any professional setting. Is this pedagogy for autonomy? We would argue that it is, because autonomy can be developed to many degrees. In fact, we should be talking about pedagogies for autonomy. Being aware that an approach is limited in scope and impact may be one step towards expanding it. More structured approaches involve more substantial changes, particularly as regards learner self-direction. Between the routines presented above and those approaches, we can have a wide range of possibilities. Let's see one example that has to do with how student resistance can be dealt with in a democratic way. Imagine...

... a group of students who have had a negative experience with compulsory literary readings at school. They think literary texts are boring and detached from their life, so they are not willing to engage with literature in class. Instead of trying to convince them of the contrary (assuming that the teacher knows best and the curriculum is not questionable), the teacher tries to understand their point of view, confronts points of view in class, asks students to look for poems or short stories that they find interesting (even if these are in their mother tongue), asks them to share them in class and discuss why they find them interesting as compared to other literary texts they were asked to read at school, helps them develop a critical view of curriculum choices, and asks them to read a prescribed literary text not in a traditional manner but with a critical eye, eliciting their response as 'readers', not as 'students'...

Promoting a critical awareness of schooling is part of pedagogy for autonomy, and a crucial strategy to foster interpersonal empowerment. This is especially true in adverse settings and it requires teachers to hold a critical view of educational systems. Pedagogy for autonomy requires teachers who are self-determined and willing to subvert traditions, teachers who are empowered and empowering educators. In other words, they must become reflective, autonomous professionals who are able to take a critical stance towards contexts and struggle for their own and their students' autonomy. They will find many obstacles in the way. Actually, despite the growing appeal for innovation in teacher education through the incorporation of practices that encourage teachers to become critical inquirers and agents of change (e.g. Zeichner and Liston 1996; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999; Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Wise and Leibbrand 2001), teachers are often expected to be technicians whose role is to follow external directives. Current accountability policies and the standards movement may reduce their role to that of implementors of a few narrowly focused outcomes (Cochran-Smith 2001), which means that critical inquiry in schools may become even more difficult, but also more necessary.

We would argue that if we dismiss or undervalue the issue of teacher autonomy in promoting learner autonomy, we may be encouraging and reinforcing...

- a culture of pedagogy for autonomy as technical expertise, detached from a view of teaching as a moral and political act;
- a culture of teacher education towards learner autonomy that builds on an image of teachers as consumers of academic knowledge, rather than creative producers of practical knowledge, decision-makers and agents of change;
- a culture of research into learner autonomy that undervalues teachers' knowledge and experience and the role of school-based, teacher-led inquiry in promoting pedagogical innovation. (Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007: 48)

Therefore, we strongly believe that efforts to promote learner autonomy must incorporate efforts to promote teacher autonomy. We assume that, even in adverse settings, teachers who are inspired by democratic values can explore alternatives that best meet their and their students' needs and aspirations. We realise, however, that teacher education for learner autonomy is still insufficient and teacher educators need to expand practices that support and encourage experimentation and inquiry into pedagogy for autonomy. Even though teachers can supervise and improve their practice on their own, either individually or within professional communities, we believe that theoretical and policy developments within the field of autonomy in language education will be greatly enhanced through a systematic investment in teacher education, both pre-service and in-service. This calls into question the role of higher education institutions in promoting educational change in collaboration with teachers. Research projects undertaken by academics and teachers with a focus on teacher development for learner autonomy do exist, but we need to address questions whose answer is still unclear in those projects. For example: Whose interest do they serve? Who controls the conditions for inquiry and innovation? Whose knowledge is validated? Whose voice is made public?... (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2008: 297). In sum, we need to understand whether efforts to enhance teacher development for learner autonomy are directed at promoting teacher empowerment, or just one more way to have teachers executing what academics think is right. Therefore, another basic concern in this book is: *how can teacher education integrate and enhance professional knowledge so as to promote teacher empowerment and (inter)personal transformation?*

In the literature on teacher education, there is an increasing consensus that professional development programmes have greater impact when they are long-term, school-based, collaborative, inquiry-oriented, focussed on professional experience and driven by democratic educational values (e.g. Crandall 2000;

Darling-Hammond 2006a, 2006b; Feiman-Nemser 2001; Hargreaves 1994; Korthagen, Loughran and Russell 2006; Schön 1987, 1991; L. Shulman 2004a; Sykes, Bird, and Kennedy 2010; Smyth 1991; Zeichner 2010a, 2010b; Wilson, Floden, and Ferrini-Mundy 2001). We argue that teacher education programmes need to focus explicitly on teacher experience or practical wisdom, rather than assuming an instrumental orientation based on the naïve assumption that teachers will apply external theories to their practice. Sustainable professional development and pedagogical innovation are not simply based on applying theory to practice, since teachers' choices are largely determined by their own past experience and depend on how they deal with the historical and structural factors that constrain or facilitate their action. Even if it were possible, however, to reach agreed understandings on the essential knowledge and skills to be involved in teacher education for learner autonomy, these understandings would not apply in all teaching situations, given the variations in schools, pupils, teachers, resources, administrative leadership, and teacher education practices. What seems to be required, then, are alternative patterns or frameworks for teacher education and professional development.

Ethical and political dimensions of teaching and learning to teach must be given attention in teacher education programmes so as to encourage reflection on the justifications and implications of practice, thus envisaging pedagogy as a space for critical reasoning on the purposes of education as regards (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation (Smyth 1987; Zeichner and Tabachnick 1991; Freire 1996; Zeichner 2010a). This will hardly be accomplished unless teacher education deals directly with teachers' knowledge, values and practice, and unless it takes into account the situational variables that influence teaching and learning in professional contexts. Academic theories do play an important role in the enhancement of our critical understanding of language education and support teachers in finding alternative routes. However, what really counts is the way teachers incorporate those theories into their personal views and how they manage to renew their practices on the basis of new understandings. Education is essentially about experience (Dewey 1963; Knowles 1978), and therefore teacher education must be *an experience about the experience of education*.

This is where a case-based approach to teacher education towards pedagogy for autonomy comes into play. Case pedagogy is based on the assumption that professional knowledge is built on prior knowledge, linked to experience, permeable, evolving, and consequential. Cases enhance narrative ways of knowing and encourage teachers to analyse pedagogical practice from various perspectives. They highlight the situated nature of experience, the interrelationship between practical and theoretical knowledge, and the moral nature of teaching (L. Shulman 1992, 1996; Harrington and Garrison 1992; Fenstermacher and

Richardson 1993; Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011). Because cases are centred on experience and practical wisdom, they are directly related to teachers' concerns, dilemmas and aspirations, and they can support their search for meaning in educational practices. As teachers construct and/or analyse cases focused on enhancing teacher and/or learner autonomy, they have the opportunity to question old practices and enhance their professional expertise in many ways. Among these we could include developing a critical view of language education, developing the ability to manage local constraints so as to open up spaces for manoeuvring, exploring ways of centring teaching on learning, and interacting with others in their professional community. In our view, these are competences needed to enhance teacher empowerment (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007).

As Shulman points out, cases can become the *lingua franca* of teacher learning communities as they allow teachers to “store, exchange and organize their experiences” (2004a: 544). Based on our practice as teacher educators and teacher education researchers, we would add that case pedagogy can also promote a scholarship of teacher education whereby teacher educators can better understand and explore their role in promoting educational change. This means that case pedagogy is seen as an opportunity for teachers and teacher educators to become collaborative inquirers into their own jobs.

This book seeks to offer a broad understanding of what a case-based approach is and how it can be used in teacher education settings for the promotion of teacher and learner autonomy in school language education and beyond. We propose an approach that puts teacher experience centre-stage, thus offering teacher educators and teachers a view of how educational experience can be explored towards greater learner and teacher autonomy. It builds on our experience as researchers and teacher educators, and the examples provided are derived from actual teaching cases which may resonate with the reader's experience. We hope that it will be especially useful for language teacher educators and teachers, although its scope is largely cross-disciplinary, which means that its potential readership is quite broad.

2 Overview of the book

Assuming that pedagogy for autonomy requires the integration of teacher and learner development and can be enhanced through a case-based approach, the book has two interrelated purposes:

1. To propose an ethical and theoretical framework for the integrated development of teachers and learners towards autonomy in language education in a school context.
2. To propose and illustrate a case-based approach to teacher education that promotes pedagogy for autonomy in language education in a school context.

Chapter 1 presents a rationale for promoting autonomy in (language) education in the school setting. It highlights various understandings of autonomy and the reasons why it should become an educational goal. It further discusses assumptions and principles underlying pedagogy for autonomy, as well as the relationship between learner and teacher autonomy. Tensions and possibilities regarding its practical implementation are also discussed.

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on teacher education with a focus on professional autonomy and a case-based approach, assuming that this may expand professional competences necessary to promote autonomy in schools by helping teachers to understand and explore teaching as a space of possibility. We argue that teacher education needs to embark teachers and teachers-to-be on a journey of (self-)discovery and (self-)reconstruction, empowering them to become self-directed professionals in the service of democratic, autonomy-oriented pedagogical practices. We advocate the development of teacher education pedagogies that focus on teachers' agendas and support their efforts to challenge and transform dominant school practices. In the remaining chapters, we present two different strategies that illustrate the use of a case-based approach in teacher development contexts.

Chapter 4 presents a case-based strategy that has been explored by one of us in the context of in-service, post-graduate teacher education, although it can be adapted to be used in pre-service programmes. It involves teachers' engagement in the critical analysis of narratives produced by other teachers so as to expand practical and theoretical knowledge about pedagogy for autonomy in language education. It further involves case construction through the collaborative design, implementation and evaluation of autonomy-oriented pedagogical experiments. Trainees identify a problem, plan and implement a classroom-based experiment, analyse it on the basis of data collection and theoretical input, write a narrative of inquiry, and integrate the narrative in a portfolio that documents its processes and outcomes. An example of case construction is discussed on the basis of a professional narrative where teachers report on a pedagogical experiment focused on oral reading in the foreign language class.

The second case-based strategy, presented in chapter 5, was developed within a European project where we both participated (EuroPAL, 2004–2007, coord. M. Jiménez Raya), whose main purpose was to develop a framework for teacher and

learner autonomy in language education. The strategy involves teacher educators in writing teaching cases based on the experience of real teachers who seek to promote learner autonomy. The cases are written as multi-modal texts that integrate materials directly extracted from the case teacher's experience, an explanatory/ informative text related to that experience and the conceptual/ research background, and reflection/ action-oriented tasks with a focus on various aspects of the case and the user's personal experience. Although these cases are not presented as narratives, they draw on the story-like nature of pedagogical experience by evolving around one teacher's story of autonomy and also by engaging other teachers in reflecting on their own professional stories. Overall, they create hybrid spaces where multiple experiences and diverse knowledge representations crisscross the terrain of professional development for teacher and learner autonomy. We present excerpts of a case which was designed by one of us with the collaboration of a schoolteacher of English as a foreign language, focusing on learning how to learn a language. These cases were originally written for in-service teachers, but an example is provided on how a hybrid approach can be used with pre-service teachers.

While the first approach to case pedagogy involves teachers in analysing and building cases with support from teacher educators, the second approach involves teacher educators in building cases from teachers' experience and producing teacher development materials to be used by other teachers. The main difference is that the former is itself a teacher education strategy whereas the latter can be seen as a curriculum development strategy for teacher education programmes. In both approaches, our premise is that case construction can be a form of autonomy-oriented pedagogical inquiry that requires and promotes the ability to take a critical stance towards education and educational contexts. As teachers develop a scholarship of teaching and teacher educators develop a scholarship of teacher education, they both nurture hope for a better education and become (inter)active producers of experience-based professional knowledge that can help them become agents of change.

Our strong belief that teacher education can enhance educational change that integrates teacher and learner development towards greater autonomy in schools is deeply rooted in our experience and in the experience of teachers we have worked with over the years. This is not to say that it is an easy path, a radical path, or a path that will be cherished by all. It is, however, a necessary path towards a more liberating educational experience.

This book puts forward an innovative proposal regarding the notion of teacher and learner autonomy as interrelated concepts and case-based pedagogy as a powerful strategy for teacher education for learner autonomy. This should

be of interest for teacher educators, teachers, researchers, and any other professional holding responsibility for modern language teacher education.

In a profoundly inspiring book about fear and boldness in education, Freire and Shor (1986) talk with one another about how education can become a liberating experience. In the last chapter, Ira Shor asks Paulo Freire the following question: “How would you start on Monday morning, in a new school or a new college? What are the first things you would do as a liberating educator?” In his answer, Paulo Freire talks about the teachers’ right and duty to question the *status quo* and foster their students’ critical awareness, and he also talks about the importance of imagining the future and anticipating history. He suggests that we need to *anticipate tomorrow in today’s dream, and act accordingly*. And if we think that today’s dream is *less* possible than we would like it to be, then it is our job to find out how we can make it *more* possible.

This book rests upon a dream, hoping that teacher educators can work with teachers and student-teachers to imagine how that dream might come true. We need to ask ourselves what we can do to challenge and change the state of affairs. We need to keep our dream alive and come up with creative solutions that make it *more possible*. In sum, we need to become travellers in the space of possibility, and Ira Shor’s question can well be a metaphor for starting to imagine that space: *How shall we start on Monday morning?*

Chapter 1

Promoting autonomy in (language) education

In this chapter we present a rationale for promoting teacher and learner autonomy in (language) education in the school setting. We start with a perspective on schooling nowadays, underlining the need to transform educational systems so as to respond to the demands of contemporary societies. Then, we focus more extensively on autonomy as goal of language education. Autonomy is framed within a democratic view of education and is conceived as both a collective interest and a personal competence that entails self-determination, social responsibility, and critical awareness. The relation between teacher and learner autonomy is discussed and practical implications of pedagogy for autonomy are presented.

1 A brief perspective on schooling

Every student is entitled to an excellent education, nonetheless not every student receives such an education (Barrett et al. 1991)¹. The difference between attending school and receiving an excellent education lies in the quality of the instruction students receive while in school.

Glasser (1992) depicts schools as being filled with a lack of involvement, a lack of quality work, and considerable failure. For many these problems are attributable to the students, however, Glasser contends, we need to look to the system that perpetuates them. In his opinion, schools are institutions characteristically designed for failure rather than success. Learners who respond in ways demanded by the teacher typically succeed, while those who find it difficult fail, the latter often resenting school, becoming disaffected from school, developing poor self-concepts and low self-esteem, and finally withdrawing from school. When students cannot see the relevance of what they are studying they easily become demotivated and disaffected (Lamb 2005). For this reason, relevance should never be assumed; it needs to be taught and learnt as teachers and students reflect on the significance of their work.

The rigid nature of schooling systems together with the need to socialise children and teenagers and prepare them for the industrial society have contributed to limiting the freedom of learners and hence the possibilities for experimenta-

¹ See also OECD (2010).

tion (Aviram 1993). Despite school reforms and apparently progressive policies, schooling hardly prepares students to become citizens who engage in lifelong learning and democratic action, which justifies the need for change:

(...) millions of children leave school all over the world each day no better able to engage in democratic action and make changes in their communities to meet their needs than when they entered. Rather than a curriculum that constructs subjectivities around failure, around 'knowing one's place', around complacent disregard of the misfortunes and experiences of others, around an apathetic acceptance that 'things can't change', around a meritocracy that disowns its underclass, the chance always exists for education to construct curricula for challenge, for change, for the development of people and not the engineering of employees. (Schostak 2000: 50)

In a radical manifesto against neoliberal, market-driven educational policies and a "pedagogy of repression", Giroux (2013) points out clearly what may be at stake:

At the core of the new reforms is a commitment to a pedagogy of stupidity and repression that is geared toward memorization, conformity, passivity, and high stakes testing. Rather than create autonomous, critical, and civically engaged students, the un-reformers kill the imagination while depoliticizing all vestiges of teaching and learning. The only language they know is the discourse of profit and the disciplinary language of command. (...)

A pedagogy of repression defines students largely by their shortcomings rather than by their strengths, and in doing so convinces them that the only people who know anything are the experts – increasingly drawn from the ranks of the elite and current business leaders who embody the new models of leadership under the current regime of neoliberalism. (...) Students are taught only to care about themselves and to view any consideration for others as a liability, if not a pathology. Ethical concerns under these circumstances are represented as hindrances to be overcome. Narcissism along with an unchecked notion of individualism is the new normal.

Under a pedagogy of repression, students are conditioned to unlearn any respect for democracy, justice, and what it might mean to connect learning to social change. They are told that they have no rights and that rights are limited only to those who have power. This is a pedagogy that kills the spirit, promotes conformity, and is more suited to an authoritarian society than a democracy.

Developments in our understanding of how humans learn have special significance in light of changes in what is expected of educational systems. Conventionally, school education has focused on the acquisition of traditional literacy skills, i.e. reading, writing, and calculating. It was not the general rule for educational systems to support learners to develop critical thinking, to express themselves clearly and persuasively, or to develop problem-solving skills. However, nowadays these key aspects of literacy are required of all citizens in order to success-

fully negotiate the intrinsic complexities of contemporary life. The skill demands for work have increased considerably, as has the need for organizations and the labour force to change in response to competitive workplace pressures. A responsible and constructive participation in the democratic process has also become progressively more complex in an increasingly globalised world in which we need to focus on global concerns.

Nowadays, particularly in Europe, there is a general consensus regarding the ultimate outcome of effective education being that students become lifelong learners. Lifelong learning, initiative, and personal creativity are acquiring increasing relevance in occupational life in a global economy. To this end, the EU has suggested the so-called 'key competences for lifelong learning'. These are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes considered to be necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. These are essential in a knowledge society and are supposed to guarantee more flexibility in the labour force, allowing it to adapt more quickly to continuous changes in an increasingly interconnected world.² The Reference Framework proposed by the European Council (EC 2006) defines eight key competences and describes the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to each of them:

1. Communication in the mother tongue, i.e., the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions both orally and in writing and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of contexts.
2. Communication in the foreign languages. This competence involves essential knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of language. Knowledge of societal conventions, and the cultural aspect and variability of languages is also important. Essential skills for communication in a foreign language entails the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, maintain and close conversations and to read, understand and produce texts appropriate to the individual's needs. Individuals should also be able to use aids appropriately, and learn languages also informally as part of lifelong learning. A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity, and an interest and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication.
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology.

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. See also Council of European Union 2009, 2010.

4. Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT).
5. Learning to learn, i.e., the ability to pursue and organise one's own learning, either individually or in groups, in accordance with one's own needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities;
6. Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence. Social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life. In turn, civic competence is supposed to equip individuals to engage in active and democratic participation.
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is the ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. The individual is aware of the context of his/her work and is able to seize opportunities that arise. It is the foundation for acquiring more specific skills and knowledge needed by those establishing or contributing to social or commercial activity.
8. Cultural expression, i.e., appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences, and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts.

These key competences are all interdependent, and the emphasis in each case is on the development of critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision taking, and constructive management of feelings. Moreover, the rapid growth of knowledge and information requires different kinds of 'knowing' based on inquiry that draws on transdisciplinary bodies of knowledge rather than on discrete disciplines as represented in the school curricula (Costa and Liebmann 1995: 23). The meaning of 'knowing' has shifted from being able to remember and repeat information to being able to locate and use it (Simon 1996). As Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (1999: 5) put it, "the goal of education is better conceived as helping students develop the intellectual tools and learning strategies needed to acquire the knowledge that allows people to think productively about history, science and technology, social phenomena, mathematics, and the arts."

Also, new developments in how people learn emphasize the importance of helping students develop personal autonomy. Thus, constructivist views of learning have emphasised that learning is an active, constructive, cumulative and goal-directed activity (Marton and Säljö 1984; Palincsar and Brown 1984; Shuell 1988; Brooks and Brooks 1993; Simons 1993; von Glaserfeld 1995; Steffe and Gale

1995; Mayer 2004). Similarly, humanistic approaches to education have extended our concept of learning by emphasising that meaningful learning has to be self-initiated (Rogers 1983). One of the basic tenets in humanistic education is that students should play a central role in directing their own education, in choosing what they will study and, to some extent, when and how they will study it. Thus, we can assert that constructivism and humanism presuppose self-regulated learning. The underlying idea is that the learner needs to be self-consciously reflective of the different aspects constituting the learning process. From these perspectives, learners need to be aware of their own growth in the learning to learn process or in the process of developing autonomy.

Everything seems to indicate that the transition from the industrial to the knowledge society calls for new skills and competencies typically associated with the notion of autonomy and lifelong learning, namely, self-awareness, critical thinking, advanced cognitive and self-regulatory competencies, tolerance of ambiguity, cooperation and dialogic communication, among others (Jiménez Raya 2008). To become lifelong learners, students must learn both content and how to learn independently.

In many countries, there has been a major shift in educational policy over the last decades. A remarkable thrust in policy reforms has been towards principles clearly related to the development of the autonomous individual/learner, both in general educational policy and, more specifically, in modern language teaching policy. The changes in education policy seem to be driven by three current, interconnected goals: education for life, education for democratic citizenship, and education for lifelong learning. These are all closely related to the process of globalisation, which is characterized by numerous concurrent events in multiple aspects of social life and is moving at a soaring speed, guided by specific economic interests, which “is creating a strong connectivity between the economy, technology, culture and politics” (Stromquist 2002: 177). Promising developments like alternative schools, new methodological proposals, open classrooms and opportunities for independent study are presently emerging, including the growing development of school-based projects and learning communities where teacher inquiry and professional learning are connected to enhance the quality of teaching and learning (see e.g. Stoll and Louis 2007; Campbell and Groundwater-Smith 2010; Jiménez Raya and Lamb 2008a).

However, these changes have been insufficient to enact a collective transformation in school pedagogies. Education nowadays appears to reflect a number of conflicting trends:

From	to
– a rule/law-seeking system	– an interpretative aspiration in inquiry
– a vision of the learner as a passive consumer of knowledge	– a conception of the learner as a critical consumer and creative producer of knowledge
– the teacher as a figure of authority	– the teacher as negotiator of curriculum
– teaching as knowledge transmission and technique	– teaching as mediation and facilitation of learning experiences
– lecture	– conversation as the mode of interaction between teacher and learners
– knowledge as a static discipline external to the knower-learner	– knowledge as a dynamic construct of the knower-learner
– a teacher-centred paradigm	– learner-centredness
– a conception of language as a structure-based mental system	– an idea of language as a functional tool used for communication and intercultural dialogue

Overall, we could take Paulo Freire's (1970, 1996) metaphors of domestication and emancipation to say that education incorporates both, even though teacher and learner empowerment appears to be a rather marginal concern when we observe the reproductive functions of schooling. In this regard, we should add that teacher education and educational research have not yet played a pivotal role in the transformation of schools. Instrumental rationalism still dominates as the preferred mode to educate teachers and do research on teaching (Kincheloe 2003, 2006).

As Smith and Vieira (2009) state, the tension between the need to find common ground on what matters in education and the complex, unique nature of teaching and teacher education is not resolved. They further suggest that perhaps it cannot and should not be resolved unless we wish to adopt a positivist stance towards educational knowledge:

The technician, positivist tradition of producing knowledge – from which contemporary top-down standards emerge – seeks to provide a timeless body of truth. This so-called 'formal knowledge' is not only unconnected to the world but separate from issues of commitment, emotion, values, and ethical action. The objectivity inscribed in formal knowledge often becomes a signifier for political passivity and elevation to an elite sociopolitical and economic location. Thus, in its lofty position, positivistic formalism refuses to analyze the relationship between knowledge production and educational practices. (Kincheloe 2003: 7–8)

Paradoxically, the notion of knowledge has become even more problematic in the so-called 'knowledge society'. What we once called knowledge has now become *information*. Overloaded with information and the existence of multiple frames of reference to interpret reality, we now need to develop what Barnett (2000: 420)

calls an epistemology for uncertainty which is based on self-questioning, questioning of reality and critical action. Traditional pedagogical approaches promoted through closed and neatly-defined content-based curricula can barely meet this need. Moreover, the task of predetermining a closed and stable list of what an educated person should know becomes an impossible task (Schank and Cleary 1995). Consequently, education and learning need to be redefined in terms of a process – the process of learning how to learn.

It is important to realize that understanding and surpassing the problems of schooling is not just a matter of preparing and expecting teachers to become agents of innovation:

(...) schools are places where conflicting interests and rationalities exist (not only pedagogical, but also political and economic), giving rise to tensions and dilemmas that are integral to schooling. Therefore, what pedagogy *is* and *can be* is not only in the hands of teachers. Policy-makers, syllabus and materials designers, school managers, teacher educators and educational researchers are also accountable for the quality of school education and responsible for improving the conditions for teaching and learning.” (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 69).

Furthermore, the problems of schooling cannot be understood without considering the historical and structural conditions that may propel or constrain educational change. These conditions may relate to various factors (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 20–22):

- Ideological/ political/sociocultural/economic/educational values
- Traditions, frameworks and guidelines in teaching and learning
- Institutional cultures and demands
- Family and/or community expectations
- Teacher education discourses and practices
- Teachers’ past experience as learners and teachers, professional theories and values, and sociocultural backgrounds
- Learners’ past experience as learners, personal theories and values, and sociocultural backgrounds
- Teachers’ and learners’ commitment to education and lifelong learning

However, educational settings are dynamic and amenable to change. Even when change appears to be small, it can produce significant outcomes in the life of teachers and learners. We thus assume that pedagogy can be a place for exploring possibilities: “Only ideals can push reality forwards, and not being able to fully accomplish them is just one more reason to keep on trying. From this perspective, dealing with complexity and uncertainty is integral to ‘re[idea]listic’ professional lifelong learning” (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 55).

2 The focus on autonomy as a goal of (language) education

Abraham Maslow (1954) maintained that human life will never be understood unless its highest aspirations are taken into consideration. Growth, self-actualization, the quest for identity and autonomy, the longing for excellence must be accepted without any reservations as a widespread and universal human tendency. The significance of autonomy and critical thinking stretches far beyond cultural criticism into fundamental issues of life, human rights and social justice (Aloni 1997: 100). In education, autonomy has long been part of a broad range of educational philosophies, which consider it as a worthwhile goal for education. Nowadays, autonomy is regarded as crucial to the development of lifelong learning in ‘the learning society’. Thinking as an autonomous, responsible, self-determined agent is essential for full citizenship in democracy and for moral decision-making in a rapidly changing world.

The concept of autonomy is central to the liberal tradition. This understands popular sovereignty as essentially the collective expression of rational choice and that the principles of the fundamental institutions of political power are merely instrumental in the expansion of aggregate citizen welfare. Kant, a key figure in the liberal tradition, defines autonomy as “the foundation of human dignity and the source of all morality” (Hill 1991: 43). Kant has exerted a pervasive, long-lasting impact on the landscape of moral discourse by placing autonomy of persons at centre stage. For Kant, every individual is in possession of a rational mind and has the ability to govern him/herself as opposed to being governed by his/her inclinations.

The Kantian rationalist tradition on autonomy became more prominent in the 1960s and 1970s. Kant also exercised a decisive influence in the work of some of the most influential education philosophers such as Robert Dearden, Richard Peters, Paul Hirst, and Charles Bailey (Bonnett and Cuyper 2003). In fact, since the publication of Dearden’s seminal paper in 1972, autonomy has become the primary goal of all educational endeavour in most western countries and the central topic of some of the most notorious publications in philosophy of education over the last 30 years (Callan 1988, 1997; White 1990; Levinson 1999; Brighouse 2000). According to this tradition, autonomy is about making rationally informed choices; thus, for autonomy to be developed as an educational aim, the students have to cultivate various forms of rationality and acquire basic knowledge. In fact, rationality has always been conceptually connected with the idea of freedom and autonomy. The human being is a rational creature and in the exercise of his/her intellectual powers s/he realises his/her own essence, that is, his/

her autonomy and authenticity. An autonomous person, from this viewpoint, is one who makes his /her own choices and subjects them to rational assessment and analysis (Cuypers 2004).

The fact that autonomy in education can be regarded as a concern about individual freedom and well-being explains why any liberal democracy would aim at the ideal of the ‘autonomous citizen’ as the main goal of education. Boud (1988), for example, considers that a major purpose of education is to develop in individuals the capacity to make their own decisions about what they think and do. From this perspective, personal autonomy is *prima facie* valuable (Morgan 1996). A focus on autonomy in education, then, is intrinsic to such important values as democracy, liberty, justice, rights, and some versions of equality (Kerr 2002). The concept of autonomy conveys the belief that all citizens, in some sense, have the right to participate in democratic life and to choose for themselves how to live their own lives.

In language education, the origin of the autonomy concept is to be found in the Council of Europe’s Modern Languages Project. Autonomy was first defined by Holec (1981) as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (p. 3). This is the most widely cited definition in the specialised literature. Holec (1981, 1985) defines autonomy as an ‘ability’ that can only be realised through the practice of self-direction in learning, that is, the ongoing exercise by the language learner of authentic control over decisions regarding the learning process. In his discussion of the qualities of the autonomous learner, Holec (1981) suggests that ‘taking charge of one’s own learning’ involves identifying learning objectives and content, selecting learning materials, monitoring learning progress, and self-assessment of learning. Even though this understanding of autonomy is hardly applicable in the school context, where teaching is usually determined by national policies and curricula, the learners’ ability to manage learning can be enhanced by increasing their abilities to think critically, make informed choices and regulate learning. However, “autonomy is more than acting on one’s own” (Boud 1988: 19). It also involves the capacity and willingness to respond creatively to our environment. Ultimately, autonomy calls for both individual and collective agency (Olssen 2005). As a matter of fact, the social nature of people drastically challenges any individualistic construction of autonomy. If we accept Dewey’s view of education as a moral craft, then the discussion of autonomy has to take into account the well-being of both the individual and the group. We need to take into account the social dimension of autonomy, which is about voice, respect for others, negotiation, co-operation, and interdependence. This view is linked to the notion of ‘relational autonomy’ (MacKenzie and Stoljar 2000), which emphasises how social roles determine the way people act. From this viewpoint, freedom of choice is always determined by contextual moral structures of the community (Jiménez

Raya 2007). Control is thus a question of collective decision-making and does not necessarily involve the absence of external pressures, influences, or mandates to act (Benson 1996; Ryan and Deci 2006).

The idea of autonomy in language education figures centrally in current European curricula (Lamb 2008; Jiménez Raya 2011a; Miliander 2011; Trebbi 2011; Vieira 2011a). In general, it has been articulated through a communicative approach, which has been the most influential trend in the last three decades and has been integrated into a broader perspective of language teaching by The Common European Framework (Council of Europe 2001), which emphasises the need to develop language teaching approaches that “strengthen independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility” (p. 4) in order to promote student autonomy, intercultural dialogue and democratic citizenship. The Common European Framework also promotes lifelong language learning by stressing the need to raise learners’ awareness of their present state of knowledge; their self-setting of attainable and worthwhile objectives, selection of materials, and self-assessment (p. 6). In addition, it reflects the paradigm shift we are discussing by referring to language teaching as language *education*, placing important demands on language teachers, language learners, and teacher educators. These changes point towards a language teaching practice that emphasizes a process orientation, learner autonomy, initiative, and experiential learning. Effecting change in modern languages classrooms, however, will not result if solutions are imposed from outside or above, rather these changes will only come from nurturing language teaching practices that are flexible and context-sensitive. Any shift from the previous product-oriented and teacher-centred methodologies involves a redefinition of the role of the teacher, who must become a pedagogical inquirer and a curriculum developer.

The centrality of the notion of autonomy in modern language teaching literature over the last thirty years has spurred discussion about the meaning and implications of the concept. It is definitely not a single behaviour that can be described easily (Little 1990). In an outstanding review and analysis of the literature and research on the notion of self-direction, Candy (1991) identified four main meanings of the word in the literature:

- a) personal autonomy, referring to a personal attribute,
- b) self-management, referring to the willingness and capacity to conduct one's own education,
- c) learner control, referring to a mode of organising instruction in formal, educational settings, and
- d) autodidaxy, that is, the individual, non-institutional pursuit of learning opportunities in the 'natural social setting'.

Meanings b) and c) are of particular importance in the school context as teachers try to find ways to enhance learners' willingness and ability to take responsibility for and control over the learning process. In this book we use the expression 'pedagogy for autonomy' to refer to *any* approach that pursues this purpose within a democratic understanding of education. According to Vieira (1997, 1998), 'pedagogy for autonomy' is the opposite of 'pedagogy of dependence'. Pedagogy of dependence builds on an understanding of the learners as passive consumers of knowledge, who then become detached from the learning process and content. Pedagogy for autonomy "tries to facilitate an approximation of the learner to the learning process and content, in order to create conditions which increase motivation to learn, interdependence relationships, discourse power, ability to learn and to manage learning, and a critical attitude towards teaching and learning" (Vieira 1997: 59).

Even though pedagogy for autonomy and pedagogy of dependence are seen as two distinct approaches at a theoretical level, "at the practical level they become necessarily intertwined", which demands "a reflective approach to teaching (...) whereby teaching becomes an exploratory sort of research, always trying for a difficult equilibrium of contradicting forces" (p. 60). This means that pedagogy for autonomy is an on-going process of renewal that entails a compromise between tradition and innovation. Most schoolteachers are not free or even willing and able to radically change their practices, but they can make those practices more autonomy-oriented if they believe that autonomy is a worthwhile educational goal and a collective interest in the service of more democratic schooling. This requires professional empowerment, that is, the ability to look critically at educational settings, identify and challenge constraints, carry out and assess action plans that subvert established traditions, and being able to understand both the potential and shortcomings of pedagogical action. This is why we assume that there is no point in arguing for learner autonomy without arguing for teacher autonomy as well, unless we see pedagogy for autonomy as just one more trendy approach with no significant implications on teachers' professional identities and agency.

The definition of autonomy we proposed in the Introduction refers to both teachers and learners. We defined it as "the competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation" (Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira's (2007: 1). The assumptions underlying this definition are sketched in Figure 1 (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 2).

This cross-disciplinary definition stresses critical aspects of teacher and learner autonomy (self-determination, social responsibility and criticality) as

well as the underlying vision of education, namely, a democratic view that places emphasis on (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation as cross-disciplinary educational goals. The development of autonomy is regarded as the “central pillar of democracy” (Aviram 1993: 420). This way, autonomy becomes a collective, ideological interest and a democratic ideal, so that teacher and learner autonomy need to be regarded as two sides of the same coin, that is, the autonomy of teachers and learners develop simultaneously as they engage in the co-construction of more democratic pedagogies. However, teacher autonomy is not the Siamese twin of learner autonomy in terms of how autonomy is developed in

<i>competence</i>	To govern oneself one must be in a position to act competently. Competence involves <i>attitudinal dispositions, knowledge, and abilities</i> to develop self-determination, social responsibility and critical awareness.
<i>to develop</i>	Autonomy is not an all or nothing concept, it is better conceived as a continuum in which different degrees of self-management can be exercised at different moments.
<i>as a self-determined</i>	Autonomy has an <i>individual dimension</i> (e.g. self-knowledge, responsible self-agency, self-regulation, self-direction)
<i>socially responsible</i>	Autonomy also has a <i>social dimension</i> (e.g., voice, respect for others, negotiation, co-operation, interdependence)
<i>and critically aware</i>	Autonomy has moral and political implications and involves the cultivation of an inquiring, independent mind.
<i>participant</i>	Autonomy involves assuming a <i>proactive</i> and <i>interactive</i> role.
<i>in (and beyond) educational environments</i>	Formal educational settings can and should allow individuals to exercise the right to develop autonomy, and thus promote lifelong learning, which may occur both within and outside of an educational institution.
<i>within a vision of education as (inter) personal empowerment and social transformation</i>	Learner and teacher development towards autonomy assumes that education is a moral and political phenomenon whose goal is to transform (rather than reproduce) the <i>status quo</i> . In this sense, autonomy is a collective interest oriented by democratic and emancipatory ideals.

Fig. 1: A definition of learner and teacher autonomy (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007)

each case, simply because teacher professionalism cannot be directly equated with student learning.

Teacher autonomy is often understood as professional freedom in curriculum implementation and self-directed professional action, and freedom from control by others (McGrath 2000). However, such freedom seldom exists in the school setting. Policy regulations often limit teachers' power to make decisions and some educationalists have documented the undermining of teacher autonomy in schools (Hargreaves 2003; Sachs 2003; Ball 2005; Pring et al. 2009). Moreover, even if such freedom existed it would not necessarily entail a concern with learner autonomy, since teachers would act according to diverse views of teaching and learning. What we propose here is a different perspective. We would contend that teacher autonomy is *not* about being free from external constraints and acting according to one's desires; it is essentially about being willing and able to challenge non-democratic traditions and developing a professional sense of agency in teaching that is *directly* connected with promoting the learners' agency in learning. This entails the ability to question reality as we believe it is and explore possibilities that make it closer to what we believe it *should be*. Naturally, freedom of thought and action play an important role here, since not being allowed to think and act freely is a significant constraint to empowerment. However, lack of freedom is also a reason to fight for our ideals and aspirations, and the way teachers look at constraints largely determines their sense of agency. Moreover, teaching is never free of paradoxes and dilemmas, therefore teaching always involves dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity. Overall, we might say that developing professional autonomy "is essentially about shortening the distance between reality and ideals, through opening up possibilities for education in schools to become more rational, just and satisfactory" (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 51).

Teacher autonomy is a rather controversial issue that has not yet received the attention it deserves in the field of language education. This lack of attention is probably a sign of the de-politicisation of the concept of autonomy, chiefly through an emphasis on its psychological and methodological aspects while neglecting ideological underpinnings and implications (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007; Vieira 2007). On the other hand, the lack of consensus regarding the definition of 'teacher autonomy' and its relation with learner autonomy has not contributed to the acceptance of a notion that is at times perceived as subversive in modern language education (Jiménez Raya 2007).

Little (1995, 2000) was among the first researchers to discuss this notion in the field of autonomy in language education, arguing that the development "of learner autonomy depends on the development of teacher autonomy" (2000: 45). He draws clear parallels with learner autonomy when he states that "genuinely

successful teachers have always been autonomous in the sense of having a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising via continuous reflection and analysis the highest degree of affective and cognitive control of the teaching process, and exploring the freedom that this confers” (Little 1995: 179). According to him, it is not reasonable to assume that teachers will foster the development of autonomy in their learners if they themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner. He further suggests that in determining the initiatives teachers take in their classrooms, they ought to be able to capitalise on their professional skills autonomously, applying to their teaching those same self-management and critical reflective processes that they make use of in their learning. Smith and Erdogan (2008) argue that we need to further scrutinise the notion and distinguish between professional action and professional development. From this perspective, teacher autonomy can be defined “at least partially in terms of the teacher’s autonomy as a learner” (Smith 2000: 90), which will help teachers understand their learners better and the problems they experience in the course of autonomization.

La Ganza (2008) advocates teacher autonomy within his understanding of the teaching-learning context as a “Dynamic Interrelational Space” (p. 65). This proposal argues that teacher and learner autonomy are meaningful only in terms of interrelational dynamics, that is, the actual exercise of autonomy is constrained by both actors’ capacity to generate and maintain an interrelational atmosphere defined in terms of influence and restraint from influence. Thus, autonomy is dependent on both the capacities of the teacher and on the capacities of the learner. The notion of teacher autonomy is discussed by focussing on four spheres of dynamic interrelationship interconnected socially and culturally, and psychologically through the teacher. The four enabling and constraining dimensions are: (a) autonomy in relation to the teacher’s internal dialectics with colleagues, mentors, and significant others; (b) autonomy in relation to school decision makers; (c) autonomy in relation to learners; and (d) autonomy in relation to those in institutions and bureaucracies of society at large. Society connects these four dimensions socially and the teacher provides the psychological connections. La Ganza’s model suggests that a teacher’s perceptions of his/her autonomy as a teacher are affected by interrelational dynamics.

The Shizouka definition of teacher autonomy describes it as “a continual process of inquiry into how teaching can best promote autonomous learning for learners. It involves understanding and making explicit the different constraints that a teacher may face, so that teachers can work collaboratively towards confronting constraints and transforming them into opportunities for change” (Barfield et al. 2001). The authors underline some basic features of the auto-

mous professional such as dialogue, critical reflective inquiry and empowerment, emphasizing the interdependent nature of teacher and learner autonomy.

The above understandings of teacher autonomy are not distant from ours except perhaps for one aspect: their democratic orientation is not clear. When we associate teacher autonomy to a democratic view of schooling, we are saying that it entails an open criticism to non-democratic conditions of teaching and learning, and to non-democratic conditions of social life in general. This implies that pedagogy is understood as a moral and political practice where particular visions of community and citizenship are constructed:

Pedagogy is simultaneously about the knowledge and practices teachers and students might engage in together and the values, social relations and visions legitimated by such knowledge and practices. Such a pedagogy listens to students, gives them a voice and role in their own learning, and recognizes that teachers not only educate students but also learn from them.

In addition, pedagogy is conceived as a moral and political practice that is always implicated in power relations because it offers particular versions and visions of civic life, community, the future, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment. Pedagogy provides a discourse for agency, values, social relations, and a sense of the future. It legitimates particular ways of knowing, being in the world, and relating to others. (Giroux 2013)

Connecting learning to social change is an ambitious goal and the transformative potential of pedagogy for autonomy is usually more circumscribed to the classroom and curriculum development, but we may expect that an explicit concern with humanistic and democratic values will make pedagogical encounters more liable to produce proactive, critical citizens.

By emphasising the value of teacher autonomy in promoting learner autonomy in schools, we may be encouraging a culture of...

- pedagogy for autonomy as a moral and political act;
- teacher education towards learner autonomy grounded on a view of teachers as creative producers of practical knowledge, decision-makers and agents of change;
- research into learner autonomy that acknowledges the value of teachers' knowledge and experience and the role of school-based, teacher-led inquiry in promoting pedagogical innovation.

3 Pedagogy for autonomy in language education: some practical implications

In this section we propose some practical implications of pedagogy for autonomy as regards principles and practices. It is important to point out, however, that there are no recipes for promoting autonomy in the classroom. Theoretical ideas and practical examples are essential for illuminating and understanding one's path, but each path is unique and framed by one's history and circumstances. Moreover, each path is always a re(ide)alistic practice to a greater or lesser extent, because there is not such thing as *the* perfect pedagogy for autonomy. As teacher educators and readers of others' experiences of autonomy, the only valid conclusion we may draw as regards the *how* of pedagogy for autonomy is that diversity is the norm. This is why we suggested in the Introduction that perhaps we should be talking about *pedagogies* for autonomy.

Based on an extensive literature review, Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira (2007: 58–66) identify nine broad pedagogical principles that can guide the development of pedagogy for autonomy:

- *Encouraging responsibility, choice, and flexible control*
Teachers need to create conditions for learners to assume responsibility for their own learning, make informed choices, and assume control over the learning process. The degree of responsibility, choice and control will depend on the learners' readiness to manage learning at the levels of planning, monitoring and evaluation, as well as on the particular circumstances where teaching takes place. This means that there is a range of options from teacher-directed approaches to learner-directed approaches.
- *Providing opportunities for learning to learn and self-regulation*
Teachers should enhance learners' metacognitive knowledge and beliefs, as well as the development of learning strategies and attitudinal dispositions needed to carry out purposeful and successful language learning. An explicit focus on learning how to learn helps learners become more effective by fostering their motivation and their learning potential, thus enabling them to develop lifelong learning skills.
- *Creating opportunities for cognitive autonomy support*
Supporting learners in critical reflection about their needs, interests and beliefs will result in greater levels of cognitive involvement, motivation, and engagement in learning. Learner ownership of learning is related to psychological investment in learning.

- *Creating opportunities for integration and explicitness*
Learning tasks should integrate the joint development of communicative and learning competences, which means that learners learn to use the language as they learn how to learn it. This entails making the rationale, aims and procedures of language pedagogy explicit to the learners, as a condition for awareness of and participation in curriculum development.
- *Developing intrinsic motivation*
The creation of an atmosphere where learners feel motivated to learn is central to promoting autonomy. Among the factors that foster intrinsic motivation we find challenge, control, responsibility, curiosity, fantasy, cooperation, and recognition. Teacher feedback can also be an important factor for effective motivational thinking when it supports learner involvement and progress.
- *Accepting and providing for learner differentiation*
Because learners differ in their interests, attitudes, knowledge base, learning and cognitive styles, learning strategies and rhythm, motivation and affective idiosyncrasies, teachers need to get to know them well so as to accommodate for and foster learning diversity. This may entail the use of different tasks/materials for different groups, providing a variety of approaches and different kinds of support to individual learners, and allowing students to pursue their own needs and interests.
- *Encouraging action-orientedness*
This principle implies an action-oriented approach to language education which involves learners in performing a wide variety of purposeful tasks whereby they develop communicative and learning competences, resort to language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activate strategies that seem appropriate, monitor and assess their learning. Learners' autonomy as language users and as language learners entails experimentation of diverse uses of language and language learning strategies.
- *Fostering conversational interaction*
One of the goals of pedagogy for autonomy is to enhance discourse power as learners engage in meaningful interactions among themselves and with the teacher. This involves transformation-oriented communication where participants negotiate the pedagogical agenda and co-construct meanings, thus building a more democratic environment where interaction becomes exploratory, conversational, and contingent on everyone's expectations, interests and concerns (Van Lier 1996). Teachers may decide to use the learners' mother tongue in situations where the exclusive use of the target language can have a disempowering effect upon the expression of personal ideas and feelings related to the language learning process.

– *Promoting reflective inquiry*

Pedagogy for autonomy entails reflective professional development and teacher-led pedagogical inquiry through experimentation. This includes the possibility of involving learners as partners of inquiry, as well as providing them with opportunities to analyse their learning experiences themselves. Reflective inquiry can be promoted in a variety of ways, for example through participant observation, reflective dialogue and records, questionnaires and interviews, self/co-assessment, portfolios and journals. Inquiry is the basis for the evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning processes.

A teacher's practical approach to pedagogy for autonomy will almost certainly involve choice among these pedagogic principles, and the weighting of each one will be influenced by the kind of problems and needs perceived in working contexts. However, learning how to learn and self-regulation appear to play a decisive role in the development of learner autonomy. When learners take a proactive role in monitoring and regulating their learning, the rate of their learning increases remarkably (Flink et al. 1992; Boggiano et al. 1993; Fontana and Fernandes 1994; Mevarech and Kramarski 1997) and so does their conceptual understanding (Benware and Deci 1984). Students in autonomy-oriented classrooms also show greater perceived academic competence, as well as greater levels of intrinsic motivation and ability to self-motivate (Deci et al. 1981; Dickinson 1995; Ushioda 1996).

With regard to ability to learn, the Common European Framework (Council of Europe 2001) proposes several possibilities:

...learners may (be expected/required to) develop their *study skills* and *heuristic skills* and their acceptance of *responsibility for their own learning*:

- a) simply as 'spin-off' from language learning and teaching, without any special planning or provision;
- b) by progressively transferring responsibility for learning from the teacher to the pupils/students and encouraging them to reflect on their learning and to share this experience with other learners;
- c) by systematically raising the learners' awareness of the learning/teaching processes in which they are participating;
- d) by engaging learners as participants in experimentation with different methodological options;
- e) by getting learners to recognise their own cognitive style and to develop their own learning strategies accordingly. (Council of Europe 2001: 149)

Learning to learn involves reflection on the nature and demands of learning tasks as well as knowledge and experimentation of learning strategies, especially meta-cognitive strategies like the ones presented in Table 1 (Ellis and Sinclair 1989), which allow students to regulate (plan, monitor and evaluate) their learning.

Developing strategic learning often requires a great deal of support from the teacher, not only through dialogue but also through specific learning tasks aimed at increasing self-regulation abilities. Typologies of learning strategies like the one presented here help teachers understand what strategic learning looks like and how it could be developed, but they need to decide what is important for their students and design tasks that relate directly to local needs and experiences, using a language that is accessible and resorting to the mother tongue if needed. Figures 2–5 below present examples of what self-regulation tasks might look like (Vieira 1998; Vieira and Moreira 1993).

The first one (Figure 2) is a task to be conducted at the beginning of the year, aimed at helping low-level English learners identify learning needs, aims and strategies. They do it individually and then join in groups to discuss the learning strategies identified and add to their lists. The teacher collects their responses and presents a checklist that integrates all contributions and represents a Learning Guide for the whole class (Figure 3).³ S/he can add strategies to the Guide if needed. The students use this checklist to monitor the strategies they try out throughout the year, and from time to time they reflect with the teacher about the strategies used. These two interrelated tasks involve several metacognitive strategies from Table 1 below: Analysing needs, Discussing, Prioritising, Expressing preferences, Negotiating, Self-assessment, and Strategy evaluation.

³ Figure 3 presents real student responses resulting from the use of this task in a class of 7th grade students of English, level 3. The students had used their native language to write the strategies, and then the teacher translated their ideas into English for the Guide. The Guide proved to be an excellent support to self-regulate the use of cognitive, metacognitive and affective strategies (Vieira 2008).

Tab. 1: Metacognitive learning strategies (Ellis and Sinclair 1989)

<i>Advance preparation</i>	Planning and preparing oneself for a language activity
<i>Analysing needs</i>	Analysing linguistic needs or wants in order to clarify long-term aims
<i>Comparing</i>	Analysing and comparing different language items from L1 or L2
<i>Directing attention</i>	Deciding in advance to attend to one or more specific language items and ignore distractors
<i>Discussing</i>	Reflecting on, sharing ideas about and experiences of language learning
<i>Expanding subject awareness</i>	Finding out about L2 and language learning
<i>Expressing beliefs</i>	Reflecting on attitudes and beliefs about language learning
<i>Expressing preferences</i>	Reflecting on preferred learning strategies
<i>General self-assessment</i>	Assessing one's general language proficiency
<i>Joining a study group or club</i>	Meeting with other learners to learn or practise collaboratively outside class
<i>Keeping a diary</i>	Writing a personal record of and reflecting on language learning daily events and experiences
<i>Negotiating</i>	Discussing and reaching agreement with other learners and teachers
<i>Prioritising</i>	Prioritising learning according to one's personal needs and/ or wants
<i>Resourcing</i>	Finding out about/maximizing the potential of available resources for learning inside/outside the classroom including the use of L2 materials
<i>Reviewing</i>	Systematic revision in order to aid long-term retention
<i>Selecting criteria</i>	Identifying appropriate criteria for self-assessment, pre- or post-performance
<i>Self-reward</i>	Rewarding oneself when a language learning activity has been accomplished successfully
<i>Setting short-term aims</i>	Selecting what to work on next and how to do it, based on self-assessment and priorities
<i>Specific self-assessment</i>	Checking one's performance for accuracy, fluency and appropriacy against self-directed criteria either during or after the activity
<i>Strategy evaluation</i>	Assessing the effectiveness and relevance of a specific learning strategy

I WANT TO IMPROVE MY ENGLISH THIS YEAR This task is about your learning NEEDS, AIMS and STRATEGIES.		
A. NEEDS – People in your class may have different needs. What about YOU? What are you good at? And not so good at? Find out your needs!		
<i>I'm good at...</i> ___ grammar ___ vocabulary ___ speaking ___ listening ___ reading ___ writing ___ pronunciation ___ intonation ___ conversation ___ working in a group ___ thinking about my learning ___ thinking about the language ___ knowing about other cultures ___ solving my problems ___ studying at home	<i>I'm not so good at...</i> ___ grammar ___ vocabulary ___ speaking ___ listening ___ reading ___ writing ___ pronunciation ___ intonation ___ conversation ___ working in a group ___ thinking about my learning ___ thinking about the language ___ knowing about other cultures ___ solving my problems ___ studying at home	
B. AIMS and STRATEGIES – Now that you know what your needs are, want do you want to improve this year? And what are you going to do? Think about your aims and strategies!		
AIMS – This year I want to improve: (e.g. Reading)	STRATEGIES	
	In class, I can:	Outside class, I can...
AIM 1:		
AIM 2:		
AIM 3:		
AIM 4:		
After identifying your aims and strategies, join in groups, discuss ideas and add some to your table!		

Fig. 2: Identifying needs, aims and strategies

AIMS & STRATEGIES FOR OUR CLASS		
This will be our <i>learning guide</i> .		
Indicate (✓) the strategies you try out. Try to use as many as possible!		
AIMS – This year we want to improve:	STRATEGIES	
	In class we can:	Outside class we can:
1. GRAMMAR	<input type="checkbox"/> Pay attention to explanations	<input type="checkbox"/> Be curious about grammar
	<input type="checkbox"/> Take notes in the notebook	<input type="checkbox"/> Study grammar in the notebook
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help (teacher/partners)	<input type="checkbox"/> Use the grammar book/coursebook
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask the teacher to give written information about grammar	<input type="checkbox"/> Study with someone who is good at grammar
	<input type="checkbox"/> Look for nouns, verbs, adjectives... in reading texts	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk and think about grammar
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pay attention to word meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Do the homework
...

Fig. 3: Monitoring learning strategies

Self-regulation checklists can also focus on specific tasks (e.g. role-play, debates, etc.), specific language competences (e.g. reading, writing, etc.), and cross-disciplinary competences (e.g. social skills in group work, behaviour problems, etc.). Figure 4 (Vieira and Moreira 1993) presents a checklist for monitoring role-play activities. As in the previous task, the students should reflect regularly with the teacher about their performance and problems. This task involves the following metacognitive strategies from Table 1 above: Advance preparation, Self-assessment, Discussing, and Setting short-term aims.

The above examples focus specifically on learning processes, but pedagogy for autonomy also entails metalinguistic/communicative awareness and tasks can be designed with the purpose of enhancing reflection on particular uses of language. Other approaches that may be used to support autonomy include the use of resource centres, project work, learning journals and portfolios, and self-directed learning materials. The latter usually integrate communicative tasks (e.g., writing a letter to a penfriend) together with guidelines and examples that help the learners understand the type of task (metacognitive task knowledge) and self-evaluate its outcome. Teachers can also create learning environments where learners make choices and self-direct their learning. Figure 5 presents material that was used by a class of 25 students of English (level 3) within such

EVALUATING ROLE-PLAY				
How well did you participate in role-play? Check your performance and problems.				
Dates				
MY PERFORMANCE				
<i>Did I.... (√: Yes / X: No / ?: Sometimes)</i>				
understand my role?				
adapt to my interlocutor?				
make myself clear?				
check the understanding of my message?				
try to understand my interlocutors?				
use repair strategies?				
succeed in playing my role?				
try to use the right vocabulary?				
try to use the right grammar?				
try to use the right stress/ intonation?				
try to use the right pronunciation?				
use non-verbal means of communication?				
MY PROBLEMS				
<i>Did I have trouble with... (√: Yes / X: No / ?: Sometimes)</i>				
motivation?				
attention/ concentration?				
topics/ ideas/ information?				
roles?				
language?				
repair strategies?				
turn-taking?				
time?				

Fig. 4: Monitoring role-play activities

an approach. Along with what the teacher called ‘normal lessons’ (where she taught the whole class and followed the prescribed syllabus and coursebook), she planned ‘self-directed lessons’ where students were given the opportunity to

decide freely on what to do in class. Her role was to counsel and support learners, not to teach them. For each lesson, students registered their decisions in a Learning Route, which allowed them and the teacher to monitor learning paths. The teacher managed to have a fixed classroom for English where she kept a variety of resources that students might use, including a computer with access to internet. Her approach proved to be very successful in terms of accounting for student diversity and meeting the students' interests and needs (Teixeira 2011). It is interesting to note that the students preferred the combination of 'normal' and 'self-directed' lessons as they felt they were both necessary for their learning: 'normal lessons' gave them a sense of security and cohesion as a class, whereas 'self-directed lessons' gave them a sense of direction, achievement and progress as individuals.

MY LEARNING ROUTE					
ACTIVITY	Dates				
Training pronunciation, intonation, expressiveness					
Learning grammar					
Learning vocabulary					
Watching a movie, a documentary...					
Listening to a text (story, dialogue, song...)					
Dialogue/ debate					
Reading/ interpreting a text					
Extensive reading (short story, magazine...)					
Writing (story, letter, <i>e-mail</i> , journal, poem...)					
Translating (FL-L1/L1-FL)					
Doing research (in books, <i>online</i>)					
Project work					
Doing <i>online</i> EFL activities					
Other:					
WORKING MODE					
Individual work					
Pair work					
Group work					

MATERIAL					
Adopted coursebook					
Adopted exercise-book					
Other coursebooks					
Personal notebook					
Worksheet from files (organised by the teacher)					
Magazine					
Book					
Grammar					
Dictionary					
Computer					
Internet					
Video					
DVD					
CD					
Other:					

SELF-EVALUATION					
Why did I choose the content/activity? What went well and not so well? Why? What difficulties did I have? How did I solve them? Did I give my best? What do I need to improve? Do I have any suggestions to improve these lessons?					
Date:					

Fig. 5: Planning and evaluating learning

As can be concluded from the previous examples, pedagogy for autonomy often involves teachers in materials/ task design. Table 2 proposes a checklist aimed at supporting teachers in task analysis and development. It can be used to analyse the tasks presented above.

Tab. 2: Guidelines for analysing and developing autonomy-oriented tasks

Is the task title suggestive and informative as regards the learning focus?	<i>Explicitness</i>
Are the task objectives and requirements stated or elicited?	
Is the task appropriate to the students (age, level, background knowledge, interests needs, expectations...)?	<i>Appropriateness to context</i>
Is the task appropriate to the learning situation (time available, connection with previous learning, quantity of input...)? Is it sequenced coherently?	
Does the task account for diverse interests and allow for differentiated learning?	<i>Differentiation</i>
Does the task promote useful language-specific competences?	<i>Usefulness</i>
Does the task promote useful cross-disciplinary/ lifelong learning competences?	
Does the task create conditions for meaningful learning (authentic, personalized, related to learner knowledge and experience...)	<i>Meaningfulness</i>
Does the task involve the use of learning resources (dictionary, coursebook, notebook, internet...)?	<i>Use of resources</i>
Does the task enhance cooperative learning?	<i>Cooperation</i>
Does the task enhance participation in decisions about teaching and/or learning?	<i>Negotiation</i>
Does the task promote reflection on the learning content?	<i>Reflection (content & process)</i>
Does the task promote reflection on the learning process (learning experiences, difficulties, styles, strategies, beliefs...)	
Does the task promote self-evaluation and evaluation of teaching (through reflection, checklists, questionnaires...)	<i>Evaluation</i>
Does the task provide or elicit suggestions for future work (expansion, remediation, transference...)?	

Approaches to pedagogy for autonomy in the classroom have tended to follow two main traditions (Jiménez Raya and Lamb 2008b: 64): one focussing on enhancing learner control over learning decisions (flexible learning, project work, independent learning...), and the other centring on internal factors that

influence learners toward accepting responsibility and controlling their thoughts and actions as learners (learning to learn, self-regulated learning, strategy training...). We believe that both approaches can be combined. Although the second one is perhaps more easily developed in the school setting, conditions can be created for the learners to take progressive control over various components of their learning process.

Both approaches require what has been called ‘autonomy support’ (Deci and Ryan 1985). This concept means that a person in a position of authority (e.g., a teacher) takes the other’s (e.g., a learner’s) perspective, recognises the other person’s feelings, and provides the other with relevant information and opportunities for choice, while reducing to a minimum the use of pressures and demands. Research has identified three manifestations of autonomy support in the classroom (Stefanou et al. 2004): (a) *organizational autonomy support* (e.g., allowing students some decision-making role in terms of classroom management issues); (b) *procedural autonomy support* (e.g., giving students choices about the use of different media to present ideas); and (c) *cognitive autonomy support* (e.g., providing opportunities for learners to evaluate work from a self-referent standard). It is hypothesised that organizational autonomy support may encourage a sense of well-being and comfort with the way a classroom operates, procedural autonomy support seems to encourage initial engagement with learning activities, while cognitive autonomy support may foster a more lasting psychological investment in deep-level thinking.

Generally speaking, pedagogy for autonomy involves the creation of an atmosphere of freedom that allows learners and teacher to explore possibilities cooperatively, to find out what is relevant and meaningful for them. This will contribute to the cultivation of an independent mind, encouraging learners to participate in meaningful educational experiences, explore ways in which they can profit from them, monitor their progress toward their goals, make adjustments in their efforts when necessary, and establish new and more ambitious goals as they attain previous ones. Teachers act as mediators of students’ empowerment as learners and citizens. As learners become progressively involved in their own learning, it is expected that they will develop a sense of agency that operates beyond schooling and permeates their life.

4 Concluding remarks

Autonomy can develop in spite of, in reaction to or in line with educational goals and pedagogical action. However, formal educational environments must act as

a stimulus for rather than as an obstacle to its development. Even in adverse settings, teachers can push reality forwards towards autonomy-oriented practices:

(...) seeds of ‘autonomy’ and ‘individualization’ are to be found even in the apparently inhospitable soil of whole-class instruction, and if we do not find these seeds there then we can, without straining our ingenuity greatly, think of ways of nurturing them, and of giving them a chance not merely to survive but perhaps even to thrive. Certainly we teachers would seem to have very little to lose, and learners could have a great deal to gain. (Allwright 1988: 38–39)

The notion of autonomy has to some extent become a buzzword, which, ironically, few would question as a goal for all learners. However, pedagogy for autonomy represents an educational approach that involves theoretical and practical choices, as well as political and moral positions and purposes. Moreover, it needs to be understood as a collective endeavour that involves various actors – teachers and learners, teacher educators, educational researchers, policy makers and managers – and is affected by various ‘cultural’ factors – personal, institutional, socio-political, that may act as constraining or propelling forces. This search demands a continuous struggle to surpass obstacles and act towards challenging goals and ideals. It demands willingness to deal with complexity, contradictions and uncertainty in empowering ways, because problems and dilemmas are inherent to pedagogical action, something that teachers should expect and be prepared to deal with without losing their hopes and ideals (Vieira 2007).

The conception of teaching and learning advocated in this chapter implies that teacher education needs to design curricula and pedagogies that prepare teachers for a complex, context-dependent environment in which knowledge is not fixed nor is it well-established. In the next chapter, our focus will be on teacher education for autonomy and we will introduce case pedagogy as a powerful strategy which may involve (prospective) teachers in challenging and reconstructing established practices in modern language teaching in schools. We believe that teachers need to develop decision-making and analytic skills that will enable them to make “thoughtful assessments that induce appropriate action” (Merseth 1992: 53). Teacher education, as Fullan (1992: 114) holds, is a matter of lifelong learning. Therefore, teacher education programmes need to promote what Ramsden (2003: 18) refers to as “general aims and higher level abilities,” which include the main components of autonomy: critical thinking, self-determination, and social responsibility.

Chapter 2

Teacher education for autonomy

In this chapter, we argue that if teacher education is to have a truly transformative effect upon modern language pedagogy in schools, it needs to take into account that equipping (prospective) teachers with specialist and pedagogical knowledge and a number of techniques is not enough. Teacher education further needs to find powerful strategies to encourage the development of critical competences and help teachers develop the dispositions and abilities necessary for the implementation of pedagogy for autonomy, often in adverse settings. We contend that the use of cases can promote reflective teacher development and foster pedagogy for autonomy, which will become more evident in the following chapters.

1 The role of teachers at school

One of the most crucial issues affecting (language) education at school is the conception of teaching adhered to and the view of the teacher that necessarily derives from this conception. Teaching may be regarded as a craft, as technology, or as an art. In turn, each of these conceptions implies different assumptions about the role of the teacher, and the education of teachers. These differences in philosophical conceptions are reflected in terminological differences (Richards and Crookes 1988). Richards (1998) adopts the taxonomy proposed by Zahorik (1986) that classifies conceptions of teaching into three categories: science-research conceptions, theory-philosophy conceptions, and art-craft conceptions. Science-research conceptions regard teaching as a type of scientific activity that develops teaching principles from research on the psychology of learning, logical reasoning and previous research, and from practices of effective teaching. In modern language teaching, audiolingualism, task-based teaching, and learner training are applications of research developments. Theory-philosophy conceptions draw on principles of a philosophical, political, or moral nature. The communicative approach to language teaching is one clear example. Art-craft conceptions emphasise invention and personalisation as the key factors in this view of good teaching. Post-modern approaches to language teaching (Kumaravadivelu 1994, 1999, 2001, 2003) would belong here. We would argue that all these conceptions have influenced teacher education pedagogies, although the science-research conception is perhaps the prevailing one, especially in university settings, where teacher training programmes often assume that professional competence consists in the application of research-based knowledge to practice.

Throughout history, different paradigms and theories of instruction have identified different roles for the teacher: from depositor of knowledge and deficiency expert, to catalyst and counsellor, to model, monitor and mediator of learning experiences. Yet, one of the most incomplete notions of the role of the teacher is also one of the prevailing ones: the teacher as presenter /evaluator of learning. Likewise, one of the most incomplete notions of teaching is the one heard most frequently: ‘covering’ material. Langer and Applebee (1982) note that we speak of cheating and grading rather than of helping and finding ways to solve a problem. All these notions are reflected in the common language-teaching practice that follows the sequence ‘present, drill, test, move on’. Somehow these notions assume teaching expertise in the materials themselves, an assumption that is rarely justified (Kramsch 1987).

None of the above definitions of the role of the teacher seems to include the purposeful sense of ‘teaching’ conveyed by Ausubel, Novak and Hanesian (1968) and others concerned with cognitive processing, that is, the deliberate guidance of learning processes along lines suggested by relevant classroom modern language learning theory. Parallel concepts emerging from recent learning theory (self-regulated learning) and cognitive psychology have provided a foundation for what is called ‘cognitive instruction’. Cognitive instruction refers to efforts to help students process information in meaningful ways and to become independent learners, to help students construct meaning, solve problems, develop and select effective strategies, transfer skills and concepts to new situations, and take responsibility for their own learning. Jones (1986) claims that social constructivist instruction has the potential to substantially alter the capability of the learner, especially the low-achieving learner. This type of instruction assumes two crucial roles for the teacher:

- that of the *architect*, who, based on the needs of the student and a rich repertoire of professional skills and knowledge, carefully plans the construction, connection, consolidation, and comfort of classroom experiences; and
- that of the *mediator* (Duffy and Roehler 1986; Williams and Burden 1997), who guides students to observe, activate prior knowledge, represent information, select strategies, construct meaning, monitor understanding, assess strategy use, organise and relate ideas, and extend learning.⁴

⁴ A concept central to mediation is the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*, a concept put forth by Vygotsky (1978), who suggested that learning activities should provide adequate challenges to the learner. Learning and development, in addition to individual cognitive development, come about as a result of teaching and learning in the ZPD.

Central to this notion of teaching, as distinct from the well-worn traditional ‘present – practice – test’ model, are the notions of *scaffolding* and *fading* (Vygotsky 1978; Wood, Bruner, and Ross 1976), which can be connected with the notion of ‘autonomy support’ presented earlier. In education, scaffolding and fading is a metaphor referring to a ‘structure’ that is used to help learners reach their goals and is removed gradually when it is no longer necessary, as when an actual scaffold is placed around a building that is under construction and is removed as the building nears completion. Lenski and Nierstheimer (2002) describe scaffolding as either directive or supportive⁵, depending on where the drive for the support originates. This expert guidance is more than simply providing practice opportunities, clear instructions, task guidance, and learner feedback; it is, rather, guiding learners in how to solve the task strategically and in how to define the situation or task for themselves. Expert guidance is also knowing when to remove the scaffolding, when to transfer control to the learner. Fading of scaffolding takes place as the learner acquires independence and no longer needs the teacher’s support to complete the task. To help the learner move toward self-direction there must initially be an external regulation of the learning activity, followed by the learner’s redefinition of the activity, in turn, followed by a shifting of responsibility from external to internal regulation (Diaz, Neal, and Amaya-Williams 1990). When this shift happens – in the transition from one stage to the next (Tharp and Gallimore 1988) – the lessening of assistance is when fading takes place. Fading is not a sudden process; it is evidenced by hints and feedback that gradually become less frequent and less detailed (Collins, Brown, and Newman 1989).

For effective teaching to come about, we must understand what makes teaching distinctive when compared to other professions. In this regard, the notion of pedagogical content knowledge is particularly useful. L. Shulman defines this kind of knowledge as follows (1993: 56–57):

- a *form of understanding* that teachers possess (or should possess) that distinguishes their thinking and reasoning from that characteristic of mere subject-matter experts. This is an example of the ‘wisdom of practitioners’;
- part of the *knowledge base of teaching*, a body of understanding, skill and – to some extent – disposition, that distinguishes teaching as a profession and which includes aspects of both technical rationality and those capacities of judgement, improvisation and intuition Schön has dubbed ‘reflection-in-action’. This is a component of the ‘wisdom of practice’; and

⁵ Directive scaffolding is part of a more teacher-centred approach, in which the instructor devises skills and strategies to teach specified content. Supportive scaffolding, in contrast, is learner-centred and occurs as the learner co-constructs knowledge with others.

- a *process of pedagogical reasoning and action* through which teachers bring their understandings to bear on the problem of teaching something in a particular context, thoughtfully enact their plans and spontaneously amend and improvise around them as the inevitably unpredictable moments of teaching arise, and by means of which these teachers develop new understandings, intuitions and dispositions.

Ultimately, teacher effectiveness is a question of definition, and most definitions include success in the socialisation of students and in the promotion of their affective and personal development as well as their success in fostering learning. One of the problems with the literature on effective teaching is related to the fact that it has too frequently concentrated on presenting lists of personal traits that teachers are expected to exhibit, like enthusiasm, flexibility, self-confidence, and interest in people (see Brophy and Good 1986; Bennet 1987; Bloom 1984; L. Shulman 1987; Reynolds 1992; Gow and Kember 1993). Even though one of the most consistent findings from research states that there is a high correlation between learner achievement and effective classroom management, we would like to highlight that a teacher cannot simply put a list of behaviours together and assume that “these will aggregate to good practice” (Nunan and Lamb 1996: 117). The teacher’s task is to produce behavioural and intellectual changes in learners who bring their whole selves to the classroom and are constantly changing those selves in interaction with one another (Clark and Lampert 1986).

Teaching is a highly complex activity that involves knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions. These are all necessary to effectively enact teaching that has an impact on students. In fact, views of teaching over the past several decades have evolved from an emphasis on teacher characteristics to a focus on teachers’ behaviour to more recent cognitive views of teachers as decision-makers and reflective practitioners. For Williams and Burden (1997), teaching is the:

intricate interplay between the learning process itself, the teacher’s intentions and actions, the individual personalities of the learners, their culture and background, the learning environment and a host of other variables. The successful educator must be one who understands the complexities of the teaching learning process and can draw upon this knowledge to act in ways which empower learners both within and beyond the classroom situation. (p. 5)

Cosh (1999: 24) maintains that good teachers “need not only knowledge but enthusiasm, confidence, self-value, and a desire to question, experiment, and grow professionally.” Successful teaching includes content and pedagogical content knowledge (L. Shulman 1986b), as well as the disposition “to understand the person, the spirit, of every child and find a way to nurture that spirit” (Dar-

ling-Hammond 2006a: 300). Teaching demands the ability to invent one's actions on the spot, and the knowledge used to generate such inventions must be drawn from an awareness of the immediate social environment and a deep knowledge of teaching methodologies. Teachers need to reflect on their practice in order to learn from and improve it continually.

From our perspective, teaching is somehow a social art that demands careful planning and preparation, “deep engagement with the material, awareness of oneself as a learner, realization of muddy spots and less intuitive constructs, thinking ‘on your feet’” (Savion 2009: 91), as well as ample knowledge of how learners learn. Teaching is a highly complex activity that demands both “the appliance of science’ and the exercise of humanistic imagination; it demands scholarship, rigorous critical inquiry, the collective creation of secure educational knowledge, on the one hand, and it requires insight, inspiration, improvisation, moral sensibility and a feel for beauty” (Saunders 2004: 163). Finally, we would like to highlight that a teacher’s job has also a fundamental component of intuitive knowledge and creativity. Teachers should be constantly exploring new pedagogical avenues, rather than simply acting as pedagogical robots applying the programmes they have been equipped with: whether simply adapting teaching to the real audience, as in providing the new learning materials required by the aims and interests of their learners, or exploring new paths/ways of dealing with the learning problems that learners experience, such as devising authentic tasks/projects that will help learners to understand the ins and outs of what is being learnt, and supporting learner development and autonomy.

2 The complexity of teaching and teacher education

There is a widespread idea that teaching is easy and that “anyone can teach”. Even if one observes good teaching, it is almost impossible to glean a deep understanding of its complexity. Actually, “Good teaching tends to reinforce the view that teaching is effortless because the knowledge and experience supporting it are invisible to those taught” (Munby, Russell, and Martin 2001: 887). However, teaching and learning to teach are complex enterprises. There are several inherent challenges to the task.

The basic characteristic of the profession is “its inherent variability: over time and space, teaching situations are constantly affected by changes that have direct repercussions on teaching” (Holec 2011: 111). This will require of teachers that they constantly renew their teaching practice. According to Dzubay (2001),

changing how one teaches is similar to asking her/him to change who they are, what they value, and how they think. This is, then, no simple request. It is often argued that change brings about vulnerability, doubt, anxiety, and fear. At points of change, the teacher is likely to experience internal conflict as old and new meanings or values clash and to feel disoriented as new teaching strategies require new behaviours. These are points at which stress can increase and the teacher might perceive the process as too risky and abandon it altogether. Therefore, one of the challenges of teacher education is to prepare teachers for ongoing pedagogical inquiry.

Second, learning to teach entails understanding teaching in different ways from those observed during our experience as students. Lortie (1975: 61) referred to this phenomenon as ‘the apprenticeship of observation’. There are important constraints derived from this apprenticeship: “Students do not receive invitations to watch the teacher’s performance through the wings; they are not privy to the teacher’s private intentions and personal reflections on classroom events. Students rarely participate in selecting goals, making preparations or post-mortem analysis. Thus they are not pressed to place teacher’s actions in a pedagogically oriented framework” (Lortie 1975: 62). In addition, the apprenticeship of observation is associated with the idea that “teachers teach the way they were taught” (Heaton and Mickelson 2002: 51) and may explain the seeming lack of influence of teacher education programmes on teachers’ practices and beliefs. Research suggests that the apprenticeship of observation may have a pervasive effect: “Because teachers have logged over 3000 days as classroom participant observers, they have not only developed strongly entrenched beliefs about teaching and learning but have also developed a strongly entrenched belief that they already know what teaching is all about and that they have little to learn.” (Kennedy 1991: 9). Consequently, teacher education faces the daunting task of countering preconceptions and unexamined assumptions such as the belief that teaching depends mainly on personality factors, on concern for individual learners, and on teaching styles, with little appreciation of the role of subject matter, of social context, or of pedagogical knowledge (Paine 1990). If these preconceptions are not addressed, (prospective) teachers may retain these beliefs and will tend to imitate superficial aspects of teaching (Richardson and Placier 2001).

A third challenge teacher education in general faces is the problem of enactment. This problem often results in complaints that teacher education programmes are too theoretical because they do not provide (prospective) teachers with the tools and practices that would allow them to put into action the ideas studied. According to Kennedy (1999), learning to teach requires learning to think and to act like a teacher. Teaching does not only demand teachers that are competent in keeping order and delivering information but teachers that have developed

the competence to help diverse groups of learners to learn increasingly more and more complex material and to help them become lifelong learners. In addition, as Darling-Hammond (2006a: 300) indicates currently teachers are expected to prepare almost all students “for higher order thinking and performance skills.” These goals are in sharp contrast to the goal of more traditional approaches to education, namely, the transmission of knowledge and values from one generation to the next. Teachers need to understand the multidimensional nature of the classroom, so they must learn to cope with the problem of complexity arising from the ever-changing nature of teaching and learning in classrooms. Teaching is an extremely complex task (Lampert 2001). “Real teaching happens within a wild triangle of relations – among teacher, students, subject – and the points of this triangle shift continuously” (McDonald 1992: 1). Teachers have to draw on several types of knowledge, social contexts, school culture, curriculum and teaching, and integrate what they know to create engaging foreign language learning tasks. Accordingly, separating theory from practice creates a false dichotomy.

It goes without saying that knowing the story of teaching involves more than meets the eye. Knowing how to teach does not simply entail behavioural knowledge of how to do particular things in the classroom; it involves a cognitive dimension that links thought to activity, centring on the context-embedded, interpretative process of knowing what to do (Freeman 1996). Teaching is about knowing what to do under particular and unique circumstances (Jiménez Raya 2009), and as Paley (1986) says, it is a constant search for the learners’ point of view. Furthermore, teaching for a more democratic school entails the ability to disclose constraints and find spaces for manoeuvre by developing re(ide)alistic practices, that is, practices that stand between reality and ideals and explore significant possibilities for democratic change (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007; Vieira 2006, 2010a, 2010b).

Nowadays, traditional approaches to teacher education and development are under increasingly critical scrutiny because of their perceived inability to meet the professional needs of teachers. For the most part, these approaches have emphasised academic knowledge, in the hope that teachers would apply it once they started teaching. However, (prospective) teachers cannot come to understand teaching and develop teaching expertise only through lectures or through a focus on technique. Educational experience needs to take a more central role in professional development programmes, as proposed long ago by Dewey (1938), Knowles (1975, 1978) and Schön (1987). This does not mean that teacher education should be exclusively focussed on how things are to be done in classrooms to the exclusion of *why*. Ethical and political dimensions of teaching and learning to teach must be given attention so as to encourage reflection on the justifications and implications of practice. This would allow us to envisage pedagogy as a space for

critical reasoning on the purposes of education for teacher and learner empowerment, and for social transformation (Smyth 1987; Zeichner and Tabachnick 1991; Freire 1996; Zeichner 2010a).

The advance of constructivist and inquiry-oriented approaches has paved the way for new considerations in the professional development of teachers (Kincheloe 2003; Jiménez Raya 2011b). New paradigms of teacher educational development have placed as much emphasis on *how* teachers learn as on *what* and *why* they learn. One such approach that holds promise for significant professional development is the case method, which will be discussed and illustrated in chapters 3, 4, and 5 within the context of modern language teacher education. In a discussion of liberal education, L. Shulman (2004a) argues that it entails a combination of passionately embracing the understanding of facts and ideas along with the nurturing of critical, sceptical attitudes. He further contends that the kind of teacher education pedagogy needed in order to achieve that sort of combination and to facilitate understanding is a pedagogy of cases, that is, “accounts of the development of human understanding that are rooted in stories of human accomplishment within a historical and cultural context” (p. 401). For him, the contextualisation of understanding supplies the necessary depth, the context and the humanity. Cases may provide the basis for experiential learning and prevent the risks of technical rationality in professional education. As Schön (1987) argues, professionals’ expertise rests not so much on external knowledge or an *objectivist* relation to reality, but rather on a *constructionist* view of reality with which they establish a *reflective conversation* so as to respond to the complex, unique and conflicted zones of practice (p. 36). As he points out, “the problems of real-world practice do not present themselves to practitioners as well-formed structures. Indeed, they tend not to present themselves as problems at all but as messy, indeterminate situations” (p. 4). Therefore, problem setting is an ontological process and a form of ‘worldmaking’ that involves “an appreciation of the situation that gives it coherence and sets a direction for action” (Schön 1987: 4).

Conceptual change theory (Posner et al. 1982) maintains that modifying strongly-held beliefs demands the introduction of discordant images and information to provoke dissonance. However, the alternatives suggested must be plausible and vivid in order to make an impression and must be accompanied by experiences and questions that force the teachers to identify the discrepancy between their current beliefs or knowledge and the alternatives presented. The use of a vivid case by itself, as the evidence suggests, will not necessarily bring about the change, for teachers may tend to reduce dissonance by denying or distorting the information that causes the conflict. Case analysis must then involve the use of multiple frames of reference that lead teachers to consider different points of view, and it must also be complemented with case construction, that is,

the opportunity to design, develop and analyse practices that respond to teachers' concerns and interests. Teacher-initiated inquiry can help teachers become more critically aware of the justifications and implications of their practice, envisage alternatives that are more consonant with their espoused theories and aspirations as regards learner development, and become more empowered to develop a re(ide)alistic pedagogy.

The way that teachers are educated, the way that schools are organised, the way that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers produce a system that is more likely to perpetuate the *status quo* than to change it (Fullan 1993: 3). Although there are no unique answers to how teacher education can enhance transformation, we believe that a concern with teacher and learner autonomy in teacher development programmes is crucial if we believe that teachers should be critical agents of change.

3 Autonomy and reflective teacher education

A central argument of this book is that teacher and learner autonomy are valid educational concerns and therefore teacher education should support the development of pedagogy for autonomy in schools. However, one of the difficulties that we face is that there is little research on how teacher education can best promote both teacher and learner autonomy in the school context (Benson 2001, 2011; Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2008), despite the fact that autonomy has become a buzz-word in the field of language education. Accounts of teacher education programmes directed at fostering learner and teacher autonomy are scarce. In addition, the information available on the relatively few teacher education programmes is generally insufficient to draw definite conclusions about their effectiveness.

Indeed, as the notion of autonomy has become integrated in official discourses and more and more associated with classroom teaching, the role of the teacher in promoting learner autonomy has increasingly become regarded as central. The European Commission maintains that

teachers should be equipped to respond to the evolving challenges of the knowledge society, participate actively in it and prepare learners to be autonomous lifelong learners. They should, therefore, be able to reflect on the processes of learning and teaching through an ongoing engagement with subject knowledge, curriculum content, pedagogy, innovation, research, and the social and cultural dimensions of education. Teacher education needs to be at higher education level or its equivalent and be supported by strong partner-

ships between higher education and the schools or other institutions where teachers will gain employment. (European Commission 2005: 2)

What sort of teacher education programme is needed to foster teacher and learner autonomy? Teacher education programmes certainly need to help teachers expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their professional development, and enhance their effectiveness with students. In addition, they should help them gain specific, concrete, and practical ideas that directly relate to the day-to-day operation of classrooms (Fullan and Miles 1992). However, we are strongly convinced that teacher education should also concentrate on teacher empowerment to promote learner empowerment, thus contributing to the development of a scholarship of pedagogy based on humanistic and democratic values (Jiménez Raya 2001, 2007, 2009; Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007; Vieira 2007, 2009b,c; Vieira et al. 2010). Reading about pedagogy for autonomy in modern language teaching or memorising autonomy-related principles does little to prepare the teacher to the complexities of teaching for autonomy. As we pointed out elsewhere,

The shift from the still prevailing image of the teacher as consumer and technician to an expanded conception of the teacher as knower, thinker, inquirer and agent of change, has implications for the duration, content and design of teacher education programmes: long-term, autonomy-based, inquiry-oriented methodologies seem to have high potential to support teacher and learner growth as interdependent phenomena; collaboration among teachers and school-university partnerships also seem to enhance the emancipatory potential of programmes. (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2008: 296)

The knowledge society is demanding teachers who have acquired competences, knowledge and skills that will translate across disciplines and careers. In this regard, universities and teacher education agencies need to become aware that employers are looking for young men and women that have the capacity to think critically, analyse issues, solve problems, communicate effectively, and take on leadership. These demands require that teacher education programmes experiment with new ways of educating teachers. The Bologna Process can be regarded as an opportunity for universities and teacher education agencies to adopt research-supported models that promote more substantial and transformation-oriented learning goals such as autonomy, motivation, initiative, self-regulation and creativity (Jiménez Raya 2013), rather than the commonsense approach of outcomes-based assessment that places the emphasis on the role of knowledge transmission and “measurable outcomes under the banner of accountability” (Salinas, Kane-Johnson, and Vasil-Miller 2008: 25).

Over the last decades, there has been an appeal for innovation in teacher education through the incorporation of practices that encourage teachers to become more reflective in their practice (Schön 1983; Zeichner and Liston 1996; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999; Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Ball 2000; Wise and Leibbrand 2001; Farrell 2008; Vieira et al. 2010). The idea is that teacher education can best help teachers to improve by encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to work with colleagues. However, there is a high risk that the current standards movement may actually reduce the role of the teacher to that of implementor of a few narrowly focused outcomes:

...the image of teachers as professionals who learn from practice and document the effect of their teaching on students' learning is a clear part of the discourse of the new teacher education. Experienced as well as prospective teachers are expected to function as reflective practitioners, work collaboratively in learning communities, and demonstrate that their teaching leads to increased student achievement. But, a narrow interpretation of higher standards – and one that is lurking beneath the surface of the discourse that heralds the paradigm shift in teacher education from “inputs to outputs” – threatens the idea of teaching for change. (Cochran-Smith 2001: 180)

Various experts in teacher education emphasise the need for teacher education programmes to link theory and practice and “to integrate the two in such a way that it leads to integration within the teacher” (Korthagen and Kessels 1999: 4). Likewise, Ball (2000: 244) highlights the need to understand better the work that teachers do and the need to analyse the role played by content knowledge in that work. Loughran (2002a: 33) contends that “...for reflection to genuinely be a lens into the world of practice” it is of prime importance that the nature of reflection be identified so that it can offer ways of questioning those assumptions that are usually taken for granted, as well as encouraging teachers to see their practice through others' eyes. Reflection is regarded as the “active process of exploration and discovery which often leads to very unexpected outcomes” (Boud, Keogh and Walker 1985: 7).

Dewey (1933) distinguished between impulsive action, routine action, and reflective action. The first two are basically undertaken in a passive, unthinking manner. In contrast, the basis for reflective action is grounded on “the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it” (Dewey 1933: 9). Schön (1983: 4) provides us with a way of fundamentally re-thinking how we view professional practice. His thesis rests on the claim that whereas in the past, professionals laid claim to “extraordinary knowledge in matters of great social importance”, there is presently a public loss of confidence in professionals (especially teachers) who claim to have extraordinary knowledge. This insight is of particular interest to student teachers,

who should assume it and make it their own. Reflection has become something of an “educational slogan...that lacks sufficient conceptual elaboration and programmatic strength” (Liston and Zeichner 1987: 2). In particular,

...reflection can mean all things to all people...it is used as a kind of umbrella or canopy term to signify something that is good or desirable...everybody has his or her own (usually undisclosed) interpretation of what reflection means, and this interpretation is used as the basis for trumpeting the virtues of reflection in a way that makes it sound as virtuous as motherhood. (Smyth 1992: 285)

In fact, reflective teaching has become a slogan that is embraced by teacher education to justify whatever is being done. Reflection in teacher education has not necessarily contributed to fostering genuine teacher development or to the enhancement of teachers’ role. In many situations, it may have contributed to the creation of “an illusion of teacher development” (Zeichner and Liu 2009: 70). In the way reflection has been practiced in teacher education, Zeichner and Liu (2009) identify four major constraints that undermine the potential for genuine teacher development and empowerment:

(1) a focus on helping teachers to better replicate practices suggested by research conducted by others and a neglect of preparing teachers to exercise their judgment with regard to the use of these practices; (2) a means-end thinking which limits the substance of teachers’ reflections to technical questions of teaching techniques and ignores analysis of the ends toward which they are directed; (3) an emphasis on facilitating teachers’ reflections about their own teaching while ignoring the social and institutional context in which teaching takes place; and (4) an emphasis on helping teachers to reflect individually.

Overcoming these constraints implies the promotion of teacher-led inquiry, critical reflection about the purposes and implications of pedagogical choices, the analysis of historical and structural forces that surround and influence teaching, and a dialogical approach to professional reflection. This way, reflection can become a political practice that fosters personal and social reconstruction.

There is a general consensus regarding the idea that reflection needs to be accompanied by action. In this sense, reflection can be understood as a way of thinking about educational matters and developing reflective judgement, which involves the ability to make rational choices and to assume responsibility for those choices (Kitchener and King 1981; Ross 1990; Schön 1983, 1987, 1991). Ross (1990: 99) identified the following elements of the reflective process:

- Recognising an educational dilemma.
- Responding to a dilemma by recognising both the similarities to other situations and the unique qualities of the particular situation.
- Framing and reframing the dilemma.

- Experimenting with the dilemma to discover the consequences and implications of various solutions.
- Examining the intended and unintended consequences of an implemented solution and evaluating the solution by determining whether the consequences are desirable or not.

Whatever definition of reflection we subscribe to, the reconstruction of the learning experience is an essential aspect in the reflective process. To achieve this aim it becomes necessary for teachers and student teachers to describe their learning experience and think about the attitudes and emotions that affect their comprehension of the phenomenon. The development of the capacity to reflect also requires the development of a range of different attitudes and abilities, such as introspection and retrospection, open-mindedness, and willingness to accept responsibility for learning decisions and actions (Dewey 1933). The practice of introspection or retrospection involves the thoughtful reconsideration of everything that happens in a classroom with an eye toward improvement. The open-minded student teacher/teacher should be willing to consider new evidence and admit the possibility of error. Those involved in teacher education often observe how reticent both student teachers and teachers are to accept new educational developments and insights, and how they resist modifying their implicit conceptions in the light of new input.

Smyth (1984: 63) considers that reflection, critical awareness, or enlightenment on their own are insufficient – they need to be accompanied by action. The characteristics of mature reflective judgement assume that student teachers and teachers must also develop the ability to view situations from multiple perspectives, to search for alternative explanations of classroom events, and to use evidence in supporting or evaluating a decision or position. Moreover, since our experiences as teachers have meaning for us in terms of our own “historically located consciousness” (Smyth 1989: 4), one of the tasks for teacher education is to help teachers work at articulating that consciousness in order to interpret the meaning of experience. Regarding critical thinking, Brookfield (1991) identified key components that also reflect some of the indispensable conditions for reasoned decision-making and judgement. The model includes awareness of assumptions, contexts, alternatives, and being reflective and critical of each. Critical thinkers are usually aware that their perspectives are grounded in assumptions. In addition, they recognise that these assumptions mirror, to some extent, the contexts they are embedded in. They are also aware that different contexts generate singular assumptions, hence leading to other viewpoints. Furthermore, critical thinkers have the ability to envisage alternative perspectives. Brookfield’s model of critical thinking implies that although reasoning may help individuals choose among different alternatives, awareness of the

options and questioning them is prior to actually choosing among them. Basically, teacher critical reflection is associated with elements that are essential to meaningful learning and cognitive development such as:

- The development of metacognition.
- The ability to self-evaluate, that is, the capacity to judge the quality of one's actions on the basis of evidence and explicit criteria for the purpose of improving.
- The development of critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making.
- Understanding the learners.

All of these should result in better teaching.

Each element is a dimension of the reflective process and is, by itself, a compelling argument for the emphasis on reflection in teacher education. The goal is to engage teachers actively in the process of reflection to enhance their capabilities and to increase teacher educators' awareness of teachers as learners. Conscious and critical reflection is necessary because it focuses the teachers' attention on the why and what of teaching practice. Such a focus enables the teacher to cope with the constraints and make use of the opportunities afforded by both external and internal factors to find spaces for manoeuvre. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that reflective teaching empowers teachers and rejects the conception that regards teachers as mere implementors of decisions taken by others. It rejects top-down educational reform and top-down professional development. Actually, research has shown that the latter has been largely ineffective in bringing about substantial changes in classroom practice (Fullan 1982; Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins 1994). Concurrently, there have been recurring appeals for the need to recognise the central role of the teacher in bringing about innovation in teaching (Fullan 1993; Hargreaves 1994). Efforts to change practice for the better require merging diverse self-interests in support of common educational goals and values.

There have been various attempts to characterize the reflective teacher. Zeichner and Liston (1996: 6) suggest that the reflective practitioner:

- examines, frames and attempts to solve the dilemmas of classroom practice;
- is aware of and questions the assumptions and values he or she brings to teaching;
- is attentive to the institutional and cultural contexts in which he or she teaches;
- takes part in curriculum development and is involved in school change efforts; and
- takes responsibility for his or her own professional development.

Reflective teachers can distance themselves from their practice and observe what they do from a critical perspective. The critically reflective teacher has a well grounded rationale for practice that s/he can call on to make difficult decisions in unpredictable situations. This rationale – a set of critically examined fundamental assumptions about why the teacher does what s/he does in the way that s/he does it – anchors teachers in a moral, intellectual and political project and gives them an organising vision of what they are trying to accomplish (Brookfield 1995).

Reflective teacher development directed at the promotion of pedagogy for autonomy appears to entail the enhancement of four macro-competences that help teachers reshape their professional identity and practices (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007):

- a. Developing a critical view of (language) education
- b. Managing local constraints so as to open up spaces for manoeuvre
- c. Centring teaching on learning
- d. Interacting with others in the professional community

The enabling conditions for each competence can be formulated as questions that may assist language teachers' reflection on their *willingness*, *ability* and *opportunity* to develop their own and their students' autonomy (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 53–54). In reading through these questions, particularly as regards 'centring teaching on learning', we can identify the learner competences involved, which signals the close relation between teacher and learner development towards autonomy. Teacher development programmes should then be designed so as to enhance the four macro-competences and the corresponding enabling conditions.

Developing a critical view of (language) education

Am I willing/ am I able/ do I have the opportunity to...

- understand myself and my students as agents of educational and social change?
- see teaching as an inquiry-oriented activity (as situations are often unique, uncertain and problematic)?
- keep informed about approaches to language education and how they can promote learner autonomy?
- realise the role of language education in promoting plurilingual/cultural competence?
- be open and encourage learners' openness to linguistic and cultural diversity?

- take a critical stance towards values and ends of language education in school curricula?
- take a critical stance towards the educational value of syllabi, textbooks or other instructional materials?
- encourage learners to be critical towards social and educational values and practices?
-

Managing local constraints so as to open up spaces for manoeuvre

Am I willing/ am I able/ do I have the opportunity to...

- uncover constraints to autonomy (my own and the learners’) and face dilemmas as integral to teaching?
- challenge school routines and conventions (be subversive if necessary)?
- compromise between tradition and innovation without losing my ideals?
- shape pedagogical choices so as to open up possibilities for greater learner autonomy?
- share my pedagogical beliefs and concerns with learners?
- involve learners in finding creative solutions to problems that affect their learning?
- accept disagreement and conflict as dimensions of classroom communication and decision-making?
- articulate the personal aspects of learning (individual expectations, needs and interests) with the social/ interactive nature of the classroom/ school culture?
-

Centring teaching on learning

Am I willing/ am I able/ do I have the opportunity to...

- foster the learners’ self-esteem and willingness to assume responsibility for learning?
- involve learners in reflection about language and the language learning process?
- foster knowledge of and experimentation with language learning strategies (in and outside class)?
- foster the self/ co-management of language learning activities (planning, monitoring and evaluation)?
- foster the negotiation of ideas and decisions with and among learners?
- encourage co-operation and team work among learners?
- find ways to enhance the formative role of [self-]evaluation and [self-]assessment (e.g. through self-evaluation and negotiation of assessment)?

- collect and analyse learner data so as to understand and improve teaching and learning (e.g. through observation, questionnaires, checklists, diaries, portfolios, interviews, etc.)?
- encourage learners to learn how to collect and analyse data on their own learning in order to better understand their strengths and weaknesses?
-

Interacting with others in the professional community

Am I willing/ am I able/ do I have the opportunity to...

- *share my theories, practices and concerns with significant members in the professional community?*
- *invite others (learners, peers, mentors, etc.) to help me improve teaching and learning (e.g. through observation and feedback, material production, analysis of students' work, etc.)?*
- *disseminate experiences and confront my voice with other voices in the professional community?*
- *participate in public debate on issues regarding schooling and education in general?*
-

Teacher reflection is the basis for pedagogical inquiry. According to Stenhouse (1976: 142–3), “curriculum research and development ought to belong to the teacher and...there are prospects of making this in good practice. It is not enough that teachers' work should be studied: they need to study it themselves.” Stenhouse (1985: 144) argued that engaging in systematic inquiry is essential to becoming an ‘extended professional’. He further adds that the most outstanding characteristic of the extended professional “is a capacity for autonomous professional development through systematic self-study, through the study of the work of other teachers and through testing of ideas and classroom research procedures.” (Stenhouse 1985: 144).

Recent literature also claims that inquiry-based approaches to teacher education hold the promise of nurturing the intellectual leadership capacity in teachers as well as supporting their disposition towards continuous learning and growth envisioned by Dewey (Goodlad 1990; Tabachnick and Zeichner 1991; Zeichner 1993a, 2010a; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999; Norlander-Case, Reagan, and Case 1999; Conle 2001). The idea of fostering inquiry in teacher education programmes is intended to provide teachers with opportunities to understand the complexity of the teaching and learning process, and also to struggle for teacher and learner empowerment in schools. The teacher researcher is a teacher who:

(a) develops a critical understanding of education by inquiring into theories, practices and contexts; (b) develops action (research) plans whereby the paralysing effect of situational constraints is counteracted, the limits of freedom are challenged, and possibilities are explored; (c) realizes the importance of making choices and assuming responsibility, taking risks and being creative, managing tensions and dilemmas, dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty, negotiating and compromising; (d) engages in self-/co-evaluation of professional development processes and outcomes on the basis of locally relevant criteria; and (e) disseminates experiences and confronts his/her voice with other voices within the professional community, so as to contribute to the emergence of collective knowledge, language and practice (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2008: 290; Vieira 2003).

Reflective judgement, critical thinking, and pedagogical inquiry can be fostered in teacher education through the use of cases. In fact, case pedagogy is increasingly being advocated as a teacher education strategy that will prepare teachers for the complexity of classrooms. The goal of case pedagogy is to provide student teachers with opportunities to become aware of the context specificity of the teaching and learning process and to help them to ‘think like teachers’ (Harrington and Garrison 1992). The latter can be combined with a dialogue between teacher educator and teachers or among teachers themselves about the dilemmas presented in the case. Such a dialogue can involve a discussion of actual teaching experiences, questions about cherished assumptions and practices, as well as the reformulation of alternative possibilities for pedagogical action (Smyth 2001), which they can explore in the classroom. Case pedagogy can provide context-bound knowledge by allowing the teacher to come to know specific scenarios they are likely to encounter once they start teaching and around which they will be required to think and to suggest possible solutions. Inquiry in teacher education should also be determined by experience, framed by pedagogical theory, and, most important of all, it should inform practice. Therefore, how teacher education is constructed and implemented has important implications for the kind of inquiry it generates. For instance, inquiry driven by cases can provide opportunities to experience problem framing as well as problem resolution.

Learning of whatever type is always contextually bounded (situated), shaped by the purpose, situation, and activity of learning. It is influenced as well by the unique configuration of people in the learning setting. It occurs through active participation in an authentic setting, and this engagement fosters relevant, transferable learning much more than traditional information-dissemination models. However, this kind of learning is more than just learning by doing; situated learning requires a deeper embedding within an authentic context. Human actions of any nature are socially situated, affected by cultural, historical, and institutional factors (Wertsch, del Río, and Álvarez 1995; Wertsch 1998). This situatedness is a key component of the learning environment and thus needs to be considered

in a cognitive apprenticeship. Tools utilised in certain learning activity networks (Engeström 1987) are different from those used in other activity networks. An *activity system/network* is “ongoing, object-directed, historically-conditioned, dialectically-structured, tool-mediated human interaction: a family, a religious organization, an advocacy group, a political movement, a course of study, a school, a discipline, a research laboratory, a profession and so on” (Russell 1997: 510). These activity systems are mutually (re)constructed by participants who employ certain tools and not others (including discursive tools such as speech sounds and inscriptions).

Research by teachers represents a situated way of learning about teaching and learning that will alter –not just add to– what we know of the field. The dissemination of research efforts will challenge our current assumptions about theory-practice connections, about schools and universities, and about inquiry and innovation in modern language teaching (Jiménez Raya 2009). In fact, in education the gap between theory and practice is wide. There are those who theorise and those who practise, without much dialogue between the two parties. Preston and Symes (1995: 3) highlight the somewhat “pragmatic cast of mind of many teachers that makes them extremely resistant to education inquiry, despite the fact that teachers are part of the knowledge industry, part of the marketplace of ideas.” However, we must not forget that this pragmatic attitude has been reinforced by the hegemony of academia in defining what constitutes valid knowledge – knowledge that is produced by academic researchers, often without the participation of teachers except for getting access to school data. The fact is that teachers’ thoughts and actions do not happen as separate domains (Freeman 1994). Public theories do play an important role in helping us confront and challenge our self-definitions so that we can better understand our actions (Taylor 1990), but the teacher research paradigm gives rise to the emergence of an epistemology of practice whereby teachers can theorise experience and (re)construct personal theories about teaching and learning. Teacher inquiry is expected to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and confidence that will enable practising teachers to act as responsible professionals by bringing to the surface controversial assumptions and ideas embedded in the institutional context itself, so that they can be discussed in the light of different educational perspectives. When teachers become researchers, they can actually take control of their professional lives and classrooms in ways that transcend the conventional definition of the teacher. Through teacher research, education can reform itself from within.

4 Concluding remarks

Powerful teacher education strategies should consider the complexity of teaching and involve (prospective) teachers in questioning and reconstructing established practices in schools. We would contend that modern language teachers who are interested in implementing pedagogy for autonomy should get into the habit of becoming critical inquirers of the political and moral nature and impact of approaches to school pedagogy, and work collaboratively with teachers of other subjects in their educational communities (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007). According to Jiménez Raya and Vieira (2008), the moral and political contours of pedagogy for autonomy *in practice* are rarely discussed or evidenced in descriptions and examples of pedagogical experimentation in schools.

As Vieira (2009b) puts it, pedagogical inquiry can heighten transformative learning and become a powerful instrument against the reification, decontextualization and technocratization of knowledge. Inquiry, as Pascale (1990: 14) holds, is the engine of vitality and self-renewal. Teachers' ability to deal with pedagogical change and innovation, "learn from it, and help students learn from it will be critical for the future development of societies" (Fullan 1993: ix). Teacher education needs to promote a strategic understanding of pedagogy for autonomy, that is, the wise (re)construction of knowledge about why and how to promote it in situations where principles conflict and a simple solution is not feasible. It is our contention that teacher education can help teachers play this fundamental role. One possible way is to focus on teachers' agendas and support their efforts to challenge and transform dominant pedagogies through reflective practice and pedagogical inquiry. In particular, we advocate the use of case pedagogy based on the idea that knowledge of teaching is built on prior knowledge, connected with experience, evolving and consequential, providing teachers with insight into alternative solutions rather than 'correct' answers. The implicit assumption is that encouraging (prospective) teachers to evaluate the local relevance of pedagogical practices from various perspectives through reflection and inquiry will further promote teacher professional reasoning and development. We hope to make these ideas more evident in the next three chapters, where a case-based approach to teacher development towards autonomy is discussed and illustrated.

Chapter 3

Working with and learning from cases

In this chapter we discuss the potential value of a case-based approach to teacher education, assuming that it may expand professional competences necessary to promote autonomy in schools by helping teachers to understand and explore teaching as a space of possibility. We will present the rationale of the approach as well as some relevant research studies focussing on its use, thus paving the way for the next two chapters, where we will present two different strategies that illustrate case pedagogy in language teacher development contexts.

1 Professional development and the case method

Enkenberg (2001) harshly criticises university education because the learning is usually separated from expert practice. This separation is tricky because expert practice is crucial to real-world performance and it is difficult to teach merely through explanation or lecture. When teacher education is merely transmissive, that is, skills and knowledge are taught abstractly, students experience difficulties in understanding their relevance in concrete, real-world situations. In addition, many student teachers will fail to see the relationship between teacher education and teaching. Teaching from whatever methodological standpoint requires a conception and personal understanding of it as well as the ability to think critically about it and to translate critical analysis into deliberate action. The production of meaning is therefore a necessary condition for the functioning of any social practice.

Professional development is a continuous process that is based on a critical understanding of the profession. It is about change: change in individuals, change in their perspectives and personal theories, and change in their practices. We agree with Cole's and Knowles' (1993) assumption that professional development encompasses a lifelong continuum of meaningful experiences from which teachers can learn and grow, both professionally and personally. Cases present specific concerns and dilemmas that raise questions and stimulate reflection. They provide the potential for making connections between the act of teaching and the cognitions and feelings that explain and motivate it. "They offer a vehicle for making tacit explicit" (Richert 1991a: 117) and for student teachers to become "scholars of their own practice" (Richert 1991b: 141). In turn, reflection involves a dialogical discussion with self and others. The process of reflection involves questioning what one believes to be true. In the reflective process, teachers are

expected to reconceptualise cases in terms of their own experience. “Through the notion of effective reflective practice, it is possible to consider teacher knowledge through particular concrete examples” (Loughran 2002a: 39). Working with cases is a teacher education strategy that speaks to “the potential that humans possess for shaping not only the world, but themselves” (Eisner 2004: 10).

Suggestions for change and innovation in initial and in-service teacher education have derived from a growing understanding of the professional development of teachers, thanks to research agendas such as studies on teacher beliefs, novice/expert studies; investigations into teacher thinking and decision making; as well as research on teacher change. Research has also found evidence for the developmental nature of learning to teach (Richardson-Koehler 1985; Griffin 1987; Hunsaker and Johnston 1992; Cole and Knowles 1993; Harrington 1994). Accordingly, the philosophy and goals of teacher education programmes should address the needs of teachers at various points in their development. They have to learn to deal with the many teaching and learning dilemmas they will face in the course of their work. Because teaching is an “ill-structured domain” characterised by uncertainty and ambiguity (Spiro et al. 1987: 2), teacher education programmes cannot guarantee that teachers will understand the dilemmas of teaching merely through the presentation of techniques and methods. Because teaching is so complex and uncertain, learning to teach requires the opportunity to observe and to practise teaching from different perspectives:

In ill-structured domains, general principles will not capture enough of the structured dynamics of cases; increased flexibility in responding to highly diverse new cases comes increasingly from reliance on reasoning from precedent cases. Thus, examples/cases cannot be assigned the ancillary status of merely illustrating abstract principles (and then being discardable); the cases are key – examples are necessary, and not just nice. (Spiro et al. 1988: 7)

In addition, the highly context-dependent nature of teaching makes it necessary for teachers to examine principles applied in particular situations. To this end, we need to look for alternative strategies that will help these teachers develop conditional knowledge and a way of knowing that will actually reflect and tackle the complex, context-dependent nature of teaching as well as the moral embeddedness of teaching and learning (Reynolds 1989; Houston 1990; Harrington 1994). After studying a complex teaching problem in a medical school, Spiro et al. (1987) came to the following conclusion:

The best way to learn and instruct in order to attain the goal of cognitive flexibility in knowledge representation for future application is by a method of case-based representations which treats a content domain as a landscape that is explored by ‘criss-crossing’ it in many

directions, by reexamining each case 'site' in the varying contexts of different neighboring cases, and by using a variety of abstract dimensions for comparing cases. (Spiro et al. 1987: 178)

Research has also shown that clinical and field experience components of pre-service programmes are effective strategies to provide student teachers with this knowledge (Buchmann and Schwille 1983; Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann 1985; Houston 1990; Calderhead and Shorrock 1997; Darling-Hammond 2006b). Researchers in this field have also found that the construction of professional knowledge is nurtured and fostered by professional dialogue (Barnett and Ramirez 1996; Ingvarson and Marrett 1997; Schifter and Fosnot 1993; L. Shulman 1996). Furthermore, recent trends in cognitive psychology have acknowledged the importance of cognitive flexibility⁶ in ill-structured domains. Others similarly suggest that complex knowledge is best conveyed by its representation in multiple, context-dependent situations (Spiro et al. 1987; Spiro et al. 1988). Freeman and Johnson (1998) advocate a reconceptualisation of the knowledge base for language teacher education and argue that the core of the new knowledge base for teacher education must focus on the activity of teaching itself; it should be centred on the teacher who does it, the context in which the teaching takes place, and the pedagogy by which it is done.

Advocates of case pedagogy for teacher education have argued by analogy to case pedagogy in other fields of professional education. Actually, cases have a long history in the training of business, law, social work, and medical professionals. The origins of the case method are to be found in the field of law and in the work of cognitive psychologists and curriculum theorists (Merseth 1991a,b). According to Merseth (1991b), it was Christopher Columbus Langdell, first dean of the Harvard Law School, who proposed the case method in legal education precisely because he believed that cases could become the most powerful medium for teaching theory. From J. Shulman's (2002) perspective, the use of cases draws on the tradition of business school cases which are researched-based, problem-focused narratives of authentic events, crafted to motivate analysis and discussion about the problems that business school students are expected to face when they graduate (Christensen, Garvin, and Sweet 1991), but is also influenced by Jerome Bruner's distinction between paradigmatic and narrative ways of knowing. The former takes the form of principles, which is the kind of knowledge that social

⁶ Cognitive flexibility refers to the capacity to restructure knowledge in multiple ways depending on changing situational demands (i.e. difficulty or complexity of the situation). The ultimate goal of cognitive flexibility is to help develop learners' ability to understand different situations (Graddy 2001).

scientists generate from their research. But principles alone cannot inform good teaching. Knowledge is more situated and often takes the form of good stories.

Doyle (1990) claims to have found evidence of the use of case pedagogy in teacher education as early as 1864. McAninch (1991) also mentions several predecessors of recent casebooks. Nevertheless, research concerning the impact of case pedagogy in the education of teachers did not really start until the late 1980s. In the two following sections we highlight potential uses and gains of a case-based approach to teacher development.

2 What is a case and how can cases be used?

Grossman (1992) wonders whether cases are instances of theory exemplifying theoretical learning, or whether they are instances of practice from which one can learn about teaching. These and other questions surround the use of cases in teacher education.

L. Shulman (1992: 3) maintains that a teaching case is a “description of episodes of practice, a selection of reality, a slice of life, a story designed and presented as study material, an exercise, a puzzle, or a problem.” Barnes, Christensen and Hansen (1994: 44) define cases as a “partial, historical, clinical study of a situation that is usually presented in narrative form to support student involvement, it provides data—substantive and process—essential to an analysis of a specific situation, for the framing of alternative action programs, and for their implementation recognizing the complexity and ambiguity of the practical world.” Lynn (1999: 42) also gives the following definition: “A teaching case is a story, describing or based on actual events and circumstances, that is told with a definite teaching purpose in mind and that rewards careful study and analysis.”

By and large, cases describe complex situations that can be used in learning about professional practice (Richert 1991a). A case typically includes the perspectives and feelings of the case teacher/writer as he or she describes a series of events. A case is supposed to be rich with detail and dialogue about the quandaries and challenges reported (Shulman and Sato 2006). Cases can also include reflective comments by the author and/or teacher. All this material is intended to raise questions about critical issues in teaching; otherwise cases are of little value. In addition, cases have to be representative of classroom dilemmas, problems, or obstacles. Therefore, an effective case is not just a story; rather a good case has as its goal the coherent presentation of rich data. A case relates an event – or series of events – that contains enough perplexities and critical incidents to encourage a rich educational discussion. Most importantly, a case

is expected to be a “case of something”, which means that it should illustrate concrete realisations of general ideas or principles that may apply to other cases (L. Shulman 1986a: 11). Effective cases should weave together learning about the knowledge, skills and dispositions that form part of teaching by creating the conditions for teachers to practise ‘thinking like a teacher’ (Kleinfeld 1992; Zeichner and Liston 1996).

On working with a case, we enter the experience of others and make links to our own experience, using both as lenses through which to look at our future work. In doing so, we question pedagogical practices, look at them from various angles, uncover the personal theories they embody, and confront those theories with alternative views. As L. Shulman puts it, “every case, in its particularity, derives its ‘case-ness’ from its connection to other cases and to organising theories and principles” (2004a: 479). Many teacher educators nowadays share the hope that L. Shulman enunciated about cases and case pedagogy when he wrote:

I envision case methods as a strategy for overcoming many of the most serious deficiencies in the education of teachers. Because they are contextual, local, and situated – as are all narratives – cases integrate what otherwise remains separated... Complex cases will communicate to both future teachers and laypersons that teaching is a complex domain demanding subtle judgement and agonizing decisions.” (L. Shulman 1992: 28)

Sykes and Bird (1992: 466) classify the use of cases into four distinct approaches, including their associated conversations and approach to reasoning⁷:

- The *foundational* approach emphasises theory, regarding teaching as a matter of applying theory to practice. Cases in this category typically try to exemplify or illustrate different instances of theory. Sykes and Bird (1992) argue that teacher education in the USA has traditionally over-emphasised this approach. They argue that teacher education has systematically valued theory over practice, arguing for an exploration of all of the different types. This approach to cases does not assume any direct relationship between theory and cases but aims to cultivate analytic skills in the application of

⁷ Sykes and Bird (1992: 466) present four types of “conversation and reasoning” that they consider might be desirable in teacher education and in teaching. These identify four types of community of practice. The first kind of conversation focuses on theory and regards teaching as the application of theory to practice. Cases are regarded as instances of theory. The second one is also concerned with the relationship between theory and practice but reverses the emphasis, assigning greater relevance to situated problems of practice. Cases in this community are used to stimulate deliberate and reflective action. The third kind of community uses stories and alternative narrative modes of communicating and knowing. The fourth one is similar to the tradition of moral casuistry. Members of this community would reason from case to case by analogy, using cases as a body of knowledge.

ideas and to convey theoretical knowledge about teaching in a form that will be useful to the interpretation of situations, the making of decisions, the choice of actions, and the formation of plans and design, that is, it seeks to promote a strategic understanding (L. Shulman 1986b).

- The *pragmatic* approach highlights practice, giving teachers the opportunity to think like a professional through vicarious experience. Cases in this category describe situated teaching problems that are used for deliberation and reflection, often aided by theory. In this approach, professionals deliberate on a case and the teaching issues it presents, using research findings, theory, and principles to make sense of the case. “Through case deliberations students develop a proper appreciation for the value of theory, learning its uses in wise, self-reliant ways” (Sykes and Bird 1992: 471).
- The *narrative* approach relies on narrative accounts of teaching, usually in the absence of theory. The surging interest in cases stems from an increasing appreciation of the value of “narrative” forms of thinking as opposed to abstraction and generalisation (Bruner 1986). “The conclusions of much formal research on teaching”, Bolster (1983: 295) points out, “appear irrelevant to classroom teachers – not necessarily wrong, just not very sensible or useful.” Furthermore, narrative inquiry is receiving increasing support from research in teacher education (Clandinin 1986; Clandinin and Connelly 1996; Connelly and Clandinin 1990, 1995; Conle 2001). Central to learning from narratives is the use of “multiple frameworks composed of concepts, ideas, and values” (Sykes and Bird 1992: 473). As L. Shulman suggests (2004a: 474), “to assert that a narrative is a *case* is to engage in an act of theory”: it requires teachers to connect the narrative to personal/ other experiences, that is, to other cases, and also to “categories of experience, to theoretical classifications through which they organise and make sense of their world” (L. Shulman 2004a: 474). Narratives provide powerful advantages in simulating and representing complex, multidimensional realities. Sykes and Bird (1992) hypothesise that reading rich narratives may help prospective teachers to gain the understanding they need in teaching. Narrative forms of thinking seem to be far more compatible with the ways teachers actually organise their experiences and develop professional knowledge. Stories point toward deep beliefs and assumptions that people often cannot convey in propositional or denotative form, that is, the ‘practical theories’ and deeply held images that guide their actions (Mattingly 1991). Schön (1983, 1987) has argued that much practical knowledge is tacit. The value of stories, Nymark (2000) argues, resides in their capacity to tap into the unconscious qualitative phenomena that pervade organisations.

- In the *casuist* approach the basis for viewing reports of experience as cases comes from a regard for the ‘storied’ nature of knowledge (Carter and Anders 1996). Cases are considered a body of knowledge in themselves. Members of a community share precedent cases and compare them without resort to theory, exploring and counterbalancing critical incidents from the classroom, which encourages them to identify similarities and differences, “to reason from case to case, and to create a set of cases to which they can refer as they gain new knowledge – all features of casuistic case study” (Jay 2004: 47). Grossman (1992) argues that teachers tend to think and talk in terms of stories, which is a common way to organise knowledge in ill-structured domains (Spiro et al. 1987). Teaching represents one of these ill-structured domains characterised by uncertainty and ambiguity. Some argue that the casuist approach helps “organize ... knowledge of teaching and serve as precedent cases from which [to] reason about current dilemmas” (Grossman 1992: 232).

In a review of the use of case pedagogy, Kagan (1993) has identified three different uses: (a) as instructional tools to help novices connect theory to practice and develop problem-solving skills (L. Shulman 1986b); (b) as instruments of research on teacher cognition (Kagan and Tippins 1993; Calderhead and Shorrock 1997; Moje and Wade 1997); and (c) as catalysts for stimulating change in teachers’ pedagogical beliefs and practices (Carr and Kemmis 1986; Carter 1988; L. Shulman 1992). These three approaches to case-based pedagogy adopt different working perspectives. However, they all reflect a notion of learning to teach as a contextualised local activity, embedded in a particular context, time and space, and affected by numerous field dilemmas that teachers face in their teaching practice (Moje and Wade 1997).

L. Shulman (1986b) suggests that in pre-service teacher education cases are mainly used to exemplify theoretical principles, maxims and norms. Hence, the selection of teaching cases is thought to be an essential component in a teacher education programme that aims at preparing teachers for the complex task of teaching, providing context-bound knowledge of specific critical incidents and problems that they will face (Carter 1988; Harrington and Garrison 1992). In in-service teacher education programmes, a more narrative tradition seems to underlie the use of cases as catalysts for professional development and to encourage innovation (Kagan 1993). This perspective supports the notion that knowledge can be inferred and developed from narratives, stories, accounts and images teachers have of their teaching, as portrayals of their teaching world and of the knowledge used as a basis for action (Elbaz 1983; Bruner 1986; Rosen 1988; Connelly and Clandinin 1990).

Different approaches to case pedagogy have points in common and can be combined, not only for case analysis but also for case construction, which is not so emphasised in the literature. Actually, teachers can build cases by designing, developing, evaluating, and narrating pedagogical experiments. All these processes entail the interrogation and transformation of personal theories and practices, the theorisation of teaching and learning processes, and the exploration of a *language of experience* for writing about their practice (see Vieira 2009b, 2010b, 2011b). This approach will be illustrated in chapter 4. Moreover, teacher educators can collaborate with teachers to build cases from their experience and present those cases not as narratives but as multimodal texts where different resources are combined (e.g. short narratives, reflective tasks, teaching materials, classroom data, classroom videotapes, and theoretical information). These cases are specifically constructed to be used by other teachers so as to promote reflectivity and innovation (see Jiménez Raya 2011b; Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011). This second approach will be illustrated in chapter 5.

3 Reasons for the use of cases in teacher education

There are a considerable number of publications that argue that the effects of teacher preparation programmes fade away as soon as student teachers graduate and start teaching (Lortie 1975; Zeichner and Liston 1987; Zeichner and Tabachnik 1981; Zeichner, Tabachnik, and Densmore 1987). In the 1990s, as part of a call for encouraging reflective practice, several theorists proposed the case method as a way to nurture reflection while minimising problems associated with field experiences (L. Shulman 1987; Carter 1988; Merseth 1991a; J. Shulman 1992; Harrington 1995). Many teacher educators have argued for the use of case pedagogy in pre-service and in-service teacher education (Greenwood and Parkay 1989; Christensen 1987; Shulman and Colbert 1989; Doyle 1990; Florio-Ruane 1990; Merseth 1991a, 1996; Richert 1991a, 1991b; Sykes and Bird 1992; J. Shulman 1992; McAninch 1993; Barnes, Christensen, and Hansen 1994; Barnett 1998; Kinzie, Hrabe, and Larsen 1998; Darling-Hammond and Sykes 1999; L. Shulman 2004a; Vieira 2009a; Jiménez Raya 2011b; Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011). Two factors have stimulated the interest in case pedagogy in teacher education. The first is connected to the nature of teacher knowledge, springing from recent work on constructivist approaches to teacher education, teacher knowledge, and teacher cognition. Second, appeals for the reform of teacher education bolster the use of alternative methods in teacher education programmes.

Furthermore, various researchers believe that it is somehow possible to capture the relationships between teacher actions and student outcomes and make it available for teachers⁸ (Berliner and Rosenshine 1976; Brophy and Good 1986; J. Shulman 1992; Goldblatt and Smith 2004). Another trend of research in teacher education suggests that teachers do not operate from a set of theories or principles, but rather they build multiple strategies for practice through experience in contextualised situations. Recent research on teacher thinking highlights that knowledge is context-specific, non-fixed and continually evolving (Clark and Lampert 1986; Clark and Peterson 1986; Calderhead 1987). Accordingly, teacher activity derives from induction from multiple experiences, not deduction from theoretical principles. Rather than acting deductively, they do it inductively, grounding their actions on experience. These researchers maintain that teachers are professionals who make decisions and plans grounded on *principled knowledge* that they adapt to the particulars of their teaching context. Other researchers on teacher knowledge suggest that skilful teachers create multiple scripts from experience in contextualised situations. Many of the concepts that are part of teacher education for learner autonomy, such as “autonomy,” “metacognition,” “active learning,” “autonomy support,” “self-regulation,” “learning to learn,” or “cooperative learning” are indexed to situations of use in classrooms. From the perspective of sociocultural theory, this means that such concepts are best learned in the context of authentic activities in schools and classrooms. The implication is that for these concepts to become part of the teachers’ working vocabulary and repertoires, theoretical knowledge needs to be bonded to situations of use, and this insight leads logically to an interest in apprenticeship and simulations as well as other forms of field experience. Cases are then expected to constitute learning tools within field experiences.

Traditionally, teacher education has held contrasting interpretations regarding the appropriate roles for theory and practice in teacher education. Dewey (1965) deemed this dichotomy as particularly inappropriate in a professional field such as teaching. Debates and tensions have been a permanent feature in teacher education theory. In teaching, theory and practice are two faces of the same coin rather than dichotomous realities. Learning to teach is a complex developmental process that is facilitated by participation in the social practices associated with teaching (Jiménez Raya 2009). Accordingly, the mere demonstration of the behav-

⁸ Leinhardt (1988) contends that a well-researched, wisely annotated library of videotaped expert lessons (i.e. cases) would be extremely helpful to novices in “building a rich taxonomy of lesson scripts that are known to be successful”. This way cases would be employed to display well-articulated classroom processes for modelling and emulation, rather than provide material for inquiry.

hours associated with teaching will not necessarily result in measurable and socially significant changes in student teachers' behaviour. Teaching is a socially constructed activity that requires the interpretation and negotiation of embedded meanings within the classrooms and schools where teachers teach. The acceptance of this assumption also implies that teachers' knowledge is constructed by teachers themselves, and that it is mainly experiential. Accordingly, theory will only inform classroom practice to the extent to which teachers can make sense of the theory (Fenstermacher 1986). Nonetheless, theory is a necessary component of professional development because theoretical resources provide ways for teachers 'to think outside taken-for-granted frames'.

Clark and Lampert (1986) call for a conception of knowledge of teaching that goes beyond the polarising views presented above. They maintain that teachers need contextual knowledge because their decisions are situation-specific. Thus, the "specificity and localism of cases as instructional materials may not be problematic for learning; indeed they may be far more appropriate media for learning than the abstract and decontextualised lists of propositions or expositions of facts, concepts, and principles" (Clark and Lampert 1986: 24). Knowledge of teaching is also interactive. Teachers pose questions to students, expect responses, and watch for signs of understanding. For them, teacher knowledge is also speculative as there is a great deal of uncertainty caused by the multitude of constantly-competing hypotheses about it.

The purposes of the case method in teacher education for learner autonomy must take into consideration the nature of the body of knowledge available in the professional field of modern language teaching, a body of knowledge that is not well-defined or completely codified. Teaching is a profession that is organised around human interaction and strongly influenced by specific contexts. The potential of cases resides precisely in that they can help teachers to apply teaching principles and even to devise new ones, as teachers are often expected to achieve "...complex and even conflicting goals. Under these circumstances, *a priori* knowledge identified by researchers about the relationship among particular decisions or actions and their outcomes is of limited worth" (Clark and Lampert 1986: 28).

Teachers' knowledge about teaching is not merely an extended body of facts and theories but it is instead largely experiential and socially constructed out of the experiences and classrooms from which they have come. Van Manen (2003: 16) argues that practical knowledge exists in the teaching situation of the classroom, a kind of "felt sense of the classroom" and not primarily in the intellect of the head. Cases offer the possibility of integrating knowledge from research and teachers' craft knowledge in a way that is useful and relevant to other teachers because of their close connection to the genuine processes of teaching and

learning that actually occur in classrooms (Jiménez Raya 2009). From this point of view, knowledge about teaching is not separate from actual practice; it is co-extensive (Lather 1986). In addition, a consequence of generating knowledge that is linked to practice is that it is detailed, concrete, and specific.

Over the last three decades, the field of teacher education has struggled to extend Dewey's ideas to the development of research programmes and adult education curricula based on the notion of 'learning from experience'. These programmes are developed on the premise that teacher learning is more effective when it is relevant to teachers' vicarious experiences (Stake 1988), to their everyday dilemmas, concerns and stages of professional development (Hunt 1978; Brundage and MacKeracher 1980; Feiman-Nemser and Floden 1981; Fessler 1985; Elbaz Luwisch 2001), when there is a focus on both theory and practice (Abd-Haqq 1998; Sykes and Bird 1992; Carter 1993; Carter and Anders 1996; Darling-Hammond and Sykes 1999), when it encourages reflective inquiry (Schön 1983, 1987, 1991; Richards and Lockhart 1994; Zeichner and Liston 1996; Akbari 2007) and when it allows for teachers to share their experiences with other colleagues in supportive and conversational frameworks (Florio-Ruane 1991; Clark 1995; Connelly and Clandinin 1995; Rust and Orland 2001; Bausmith and Barry 2011).

Kleinfeld (1992) argues that teacher education cannot offer teachers clear rules "for navigating through the terrain" (p. 40). What teacher education can do is to help teachers develop the ability to think clearly about the complex empirical and normative questions they will face in various teaching situations. Because teaching is a highly context-dependent activity, it is only possible to hint at a few of the crucial issues and dilemmas in pedagogy for teacher and learner autonomy. Teacher education can also help (student) teachers focus on the features of the situation they may want to attend to. It can further offer them research knowledge and practical examples of both successful and unsuccessful language teaching that may be helpful. But, in the final analysis, they will be on their own.

The literature on the use of the case method in teacher education highlights numerous advantages (L. Shulman 1989; J. Shulman 1992; Sykes and Bird 1992; Carter and Anders 1996). Some of them are: cases help (student) teachers discover what they know and believe about teaching and learning (Parker and Tiezzi 1992: 86); cases present an alternative to learning in the field (Richert 1991a); cases help prevent learning pitfalls in the context of practice (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann 1985); cases act as a bridge between the abstract nature of principles and of teaching standards and classroom practice (L. Shulman 1996; Shulman, Whittaker, and Lew 2002); cases give teachers "a stock of educational strategies for use in analogous problem situations" (Kleinfeld 1992: 35), "illustrate approaches, and encourage problem-solving" (Carter and Anders 1996: 578). Case pedagogy also changes the focus of learning away from the simple memorisation

of facts to the application of theory, concepts, and techniques to practical, real world problems, fostering active, experiential, responsible learning by involving teachers in their own development process (Christensen, Garvin, and Sweet 1991; Gallagher, Stepien, and Rosenthal 1992; Albanese and Mitchell 1993; Carlson and Schodt 1995). As Merseth (1991a) writes, cases convey the message that teaching is complex, contextual and reflexive.

Advocates of this instructional method contend that cases contribute to making pedagogic learning relevant and meaningful to teachers through the active participation in the analysis, discussion and solving of real problems in learning to teach (Carlson and Schodt 1995; Levin 1995; Tillman 1995; Erskine, Leenders, and Mauffette-Leenders 1998). In addition, cases can be viewed as (L. Shulman 1992: 2):

1. Creating or increasing motivation for learning
2. Providing unique benefits to practitioners who participate in writing as case authors or commentators
3. Supplying specific antidotes to the dangers of overgeneralisation from either the learning of principles or from prior cases.
4. Serving as the instructional material around which participants can form communities for discussion or discourse.

Discussion pedagogy is said to offer substantial advantages when the educational goals are critical thinking, autonomy, problem-solving, and the development of qualities such as sensitivity, cooperation, and zest for discovery (Barnes, Christensen, and Hansen 1994). The achievement of these complex, value-laden instructional goals entails that both teacher educators and teachers modify their traditional roles and responsibilities. The case method requires a teacher educator to be guide, tutor, coach, or facilitator, a role repeatedly advocated by proponents of participatory learning (Wilkerson and Feletti 1989; Aulls 1998; Erskine, Leenders, and Mauffette-Leenders 1998).

There are at least three different purposes for using cases:

- a) cases as exemplars (i.e., to exemplify principles)
- b) cases as opportunities to practise analysis and to contemplate action (i.e., to practice decision-making and problem-solving)
- c) cases as stimulants for personal reflection (i.e., to encourage teachers to reflect on practice, often with teachers writing their own cases) (Merseth 1996).

The arguments for the use of cases in teacher education are abundant and wisely grounded in theory. Yet, some of the claims have not been tested empirically. Research on case pedagogy is still scarce, particularly in teacher education for

learner autonomy. There are, however empirical studies that have investigated the potential of cases for professional development and teacher learning. In the following section we briefly present some of those studies.

4 Research on the use of cases in teacher education

As we have commented in the previous sections, teacher education has expressed a tremendous enthusiasm for case pedagogy. The spread of case pedagogy in teacher education and the appeals for the need to conduct research to validate the numerous claims made on the benefits of its use have motivated a number of research projects to investigate its potential for professional development and teacher learning. Initially, research tried to conceptualise case pedagogy by focussing, according to L. Shulman (1992) and Sykes and Bird (1992), on theoretical discussions around epistemological and methodological issues and implications of case pedagogy for teacher learning (see also Merseeth 1991a; Lynn 1999). This research strand has produced valuable insights; however, the need for empirical research is still a pressing matter. Carter (1990: 307) also recommended that studies on teachers' knowledge pay more attention "to the substance of what teachers... know about classrooms, content, and pedagogy". Moje and Wade (1997) voice a similar claim. They suggest that we need to learn more about "what case methods mean for teachers' thinking, how teachers think and reason about teaching via teaching methods and case discussions" (p. 692).

One of the gains of case-pedagogy refers to the articulation of theory and practice. In a project conducted by Welty and Kaufman in two educational psychology courses⁹, the researchers gave students in the two courses, one case-based, one lecture-based, the same case to analyse in writing at the beginning and the end of the course. Using content analysis, they looked for evidence of students' ability to link theory with practice. They found significant evidence that students in the case-based class could apply theory to teaching situations much more readily than their peers in a lecture-based educational psychology course. All students in the case-based class were able to use applicable theory, while only half of those in the lecture-based class were able to. Similar results were obtained by Bruning et al. (2008), who conducted two studies in multisection introductory child and adolescent development classes to determine effects of the intro-

⁹ "Using Case Method to Link Theory and Practice in Two Educational Psychology Courses", in <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse/lessons3/pace.html>

duction of abbreviated teaching case studies that were then discussed either in face-to-face or online formats. Their general goal was to experimentally examine whether a case-based teaching approach improved students' ability to think critically about educational issues depicted in case studies and warrant their thinking by application of psychological constructs. Students receiving teaching case studies in either format in both classes showed improved ability to critically analyse cases compared to control participants. Both case study groups in the child development class also showed increased application of psychological concepts in analysing new cases. The authors interpreted the results as supporting a case analysis approach in educational psychology classes and the use of online methods for presentation and discussion of abbreviated cases.

Another major outcome of case pedagogy appears to be the enhancement of critical abilities. Kleinfeld (1989, 1991) demonstrated that teaching with cases helps students to understand the meaning of events, increase their ability to frame educational problems, and improve their thinking regarding alternative courses of action. The development of critical abilities is also documented by Harrington, Quinn-Leering and Hodson (1996) after studying the case analyses of 21 students. Their results show that case pedagogy contributes to the development of three elements of critical reflection: the ability to identify and acknowledge different perspectives (open-mindedness), the ability to consider the moral and ethical consequences of choices (responsibility), and the ability to identify and clarify the limitations in one's assumptions when making decisions (wholeheartedness). The role of cases in enhancing student teachers' ability to deal with dilemmas was investigated by Welty, Silverman, and Lyon (1991) in a qualitative research project to examine the extent to which cases help students appreciate a broader range of perspectives in certain educational dilemmas. They used content analysis of student papers as the primary research technique and found that, over time, students became more analytical in their approach to problems, were more likely to evaluate a variety of solutions rather than being satisfied with one right answer, were more open to their fellow students' ideas, applied theory to support their ideas, and displayed more satisfaction with the quality and quantity of their learning in their case-based course. Another study focused on educational dilemmas was developed by Cherubini (2009). He reports on a qualitative constructivist research study employing case-based pedagogy to investigate how Education undergraduate students made sense of the complex dilemmas inherent in the cases and in particular, the factors that exerted an influence on their critical thinking processes. In the study, Cherubini identifies three core categories that emerged from the data, including participants' evolving sense of self-confidence, their priority to maintain social cohesion over individual student outcomes, and participants' willingness to challenge taken-

for-granted stereotypes. Further, he discusses the process of participants' engagement as they reflected upon the complexities of each case to arrive at new levels of awareness regarding their professional conduct, responsibilities, and behaviour in view of the Standards of Professional Practice. Kleinfeld (1991) also documents the role of case methods in the development of students' skills in spotting the issues in an ill-structured domain, framing the problems in productive ways, understanding the conflicts from the perspectives of different actors, and developing problem-solving alternatives. Kleinfeld studied two classes. In one she used cases and in the other she used discussions of practical examples and readings. The researcher studied mid-term examinations that included cases for analysis, classroom observations, an attitudinal survey, and the standard evaluation process. Based on the analysis of the data, she established that "students taught by the case method approach showed significantly greater ability to analyze an educational problem" than the students in the control group.

L. Shulman (1992) holds that the power of case pedagogy rests primarily in the content of the case, and not in how it is used in teacher education (e.g., it is lectured about, discussed, or simply read). For example, dilemma-based cases appear to be particularly useful in the development of reasoning skills. Harrington (1995) conducted a study to investigate this hypothesis and defined pedagogical reasoning in terms of five skills: problem identification, considering multiple perspectives, warranting solutions, consideration of consequences of proposed action, and the reflectiveness of students' critique of their analysis and solution for the case. Student teachers were asked to identify and discuss in their written case analyses the issues in the case; how they would prioritise the issues; based on that, what it was a case of; what the different perspectives on the issues were; what the educator's solution should be; what the possible consequences to that solution might be; and how they would critique their solution and analysis. Her findings suggest that the developmental nature of learning to teach is reflected in students' analyses of events embedded in cases and that dilemma-based cases provide opportunities to further encourage the development of professional reasoning in prospective teachers.

Nonetheless, other researchers contend that the value of case pedagogy is in the discussion process itself, rather than in the content of the case (Welty 1989; Merseth 1991b; Richardson 1991; Barnes, Christensen, and Hansen 1994; Flynn and Klein 2001). A study was conducted by Levin (1995) to investigate whether discussion is a crucial variable in teachers' learning from cases, by looking at what teachers understood from just reading and writing about a case, compared to what they thought when also discussing it. She used quantitative and qualitative analyses of participants' writing and oral discourse from the case discussions, and examined the quality, form, and content of the thinking of 8 student teachers,

8 beginning teachers, and 8 experienced teachers. According to the findings, discussion appeared to act as a catalyst for reflection for highly experienced teachers; in the case of less experienced teachers and student teachers, discussion appeared to allow them to clarify or elaborate their understanding and increase their perspective on the issues in the case; in the control group (only reading and writing about a case), teachers reiterated their original thinking about the case, rather than gaining new perspectives.

The potential of case discussion was also investigated by Moje and Wade (1997). Drawing on sociocultural theories, they examined teacher thinking during case discussions in two university content literacy courses. Their purpose was to understand the sociocultural and semiotic tools pre-service and in-service teachers use to mediate and construct images and issues of teaching related to the teaching of literacy. Their findings indicated that case pedagogy has the potential to help teachers reflect on practice and explore other important issues in teaching. Their research further supported the claim that cases can serve as tools for mediating thinking about teaching. Combined with structured field experiences (Kagan 1992), they may represent a way to familiarise student teachers with potential students and secondary school classrooms, while encouraging them to move beyond technical rationality towards critical and reflective thinking about school education (Grossman 1992; Calderhead and Gates 1993). On the basis of their study, Moje and Wade recommend that cases be carefully crafted as tools to both highlight and challenge teachers' assumptions about learning and teaching.

The role of cases in providing rich and active learning environments is underlined by Grabinger (1996), who states that cases allow students to construct knowledge in an authentic environment, work cooperatively to produce something of real value, and assume personal responsibility for learning. However, the gains from case-pedagogy seem to vary depending on the interaction patterns that are promoted in case discussion. For example, Dröge and Spreng (1996) compared student-led and instructor-led case analysis methods that focused on both process and output by dividing responsibility among 'presentation,' 'solution,' 'critique,' and 'hand-in' student groups. They found that students perceived that the student-led case class was superior in terms of career preparation, use of time, satisfaction, involvement and achievement of educational goals (such as understanding the material) and specific skill competencies (such as oral skills). Another study conducted by Griffith and Laframboise (1997), based on a qualitative analysis of small- and large-group case discussions, showed that even though student discussions were based more on personal experiences than on theory and course content, more meaning was constructed during small group discussions during which the group reached consensus. This was not the case in large group discussions. Small group case discussion also seems to be more productive

than individual work with cases. Flynn and Klein (2001) developed a study where a group of college students completed two cases either individually or in small discussion groups. Measures included two case analyses, time on task, an attitude survey, and document analysis. The results revealed significant performance and time differences between instructional methods on the first case, but not on the second case. In addition, results indicated significant differences in student attitudes between treatments. Generally, participants who worked in groups liked their method considerably better than those who worked alone, felt they learnt more working in a group than they would have working alone, and expressed a preference for working in a group if they had to do the class over again. Collaboration in case analysis can also involve team competition, as is documented by Kinzie, Hrabe, and Larsen (1998). They report on the design and use of a Web-based instructional design case in a team case competition in which six universities participated. Their research showed that team collaboration and competition were regarded as motivating factors by students.

One of the advantages of case pedagogy is the enhancement of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. In exploring this potential, attention is drawn to subject-specific aspects of professional development and expertise. Barnett (1991) used the cognitive flexibility and knowledge transfer theory proposed by Rand Spiro and colleagues to frame the design of a case-based curriculum for use in mathematics teacher education. The paper includes an analysis of four discussions based on a case. The analysis also shows the potential of subject-specific cases for enhancing mathematics teachers' pedagogical thinking and reasoning. Barnett (1991: 263) declared that "by prompting mathematics teachers to frame problems, analyse situations, and argue the benefits and drawbacks of various alternatives, cases can play a critical role in expanding and deepening pedagogical content knowledge." Barnett and her colleagues have carried out extensive research to determine the usefulness of cases in the expansion of pedagogical content knowledge (Barnett 1991; Barnett and Tyson 1993a, 1993b). They started exploring the ways in which experienced and novice teachers responded to cases on mathematical topics such as rational numbers. They found that, unlike veteran teachers, novices emphasised pedagogy less than content. They argued that case discussions were "nevertheless helping them construct pedagogical content knowledge" (Barnett and Cwirko-Godycki 1988: 30).

Some studies on case-pedagogy investigate potential uses of teacher-written cases in professional development. For example, a study by Barnett (1998) focuses on a professional development process that uses teacher-authored cases (narratives about actual classroom experiences) as a stimulus for discussing mathematical, pedagogical and philosophical concepts and issues. The author studied how specific aspects of the cases and the case discussion process contrib-

ute to a climate that is conducive for motivating increasingly informed and strategic inquiry. The results focus on four essential areas: (1) development of one's own understanding of mathematics; (2) use of the student perspective as a source of feedback; (3) a recast of the familiar as strange and the simple as complex; and (4) critical examination of alternative views and ideas. The author concludes that the *Mathematics Case Methods Project* demonstrates the remarkable value of collective inquiry and critical reflection. In particular, according to Barnet, the study illustrates how collective inquiry provides the chance to co-generate ideas that might not otherwise emerge through individual reflection or even by sharing ideas among several individuals. Barnet further claims that their work also shows how inquiry can become informed through the public scrutiny of ideas, which helps to reveal holes, blind spots, incongruences and mistakes in thinking.

Another approach to the use of teacher-written cases can be found in Orland-Barack's (2002) qualitative study to examine mentors' interpretations of their practice as revealed through writing and discussion of their cases in a university postgraduate course in Israel. The author adopted an interpretive stance to inquiry into the cases written by 15 in-service mentors who participated in a university postgraduate course on mentoring. The findings draw primarily on data from the written cases, supported by Orland-Barack's field notes of the discussions during the debriefing sessions, and participants' written reflections submitted to the course professor at the end of the course. The data was examined for emergent features of the practice of in-service mentoring in the Jewish and Arab sectors within the Israeli school system. Content analysis of the cases and of the discussions that followed their presentation in class revealed a unique 'discourse of mentoring' or 'language of practice' that reflected mentors' concerns over issues of *accountability* and *boundaries* of roles in their practice. The study reveals, from a programmatic perspective, that a university teacher education course based on case pedagogy constitutes a safe and challenging context for mentors to voice dilemmas inherent in their field experiences that are often silenced by the system.

Goldblatt and Smith (2004) also used teacher-written cases, claiming that their discussion altered teachers' views. Their study focused on an experiment with case work, in which 18 teachers wrote narratives describing their professional dilemmas. Through reflection and collaborative group work these practitioners co-created a set of cases, mapping them back to the standards in order to ascertain how the standards had been embedded or absent from their daily practice. To validate the effectiveness of the method, they used the cases in pre-service, in-service, principal and supervisory personnel venues. They also recorded the impact of the 'case institute' in a focus group session with the original writers. They contend that reflecting on dilemmas exposed personal theories, values

and ethics. Furthermore, teachers' deeply seated contentions were challenged through deliberation on the complexity of teaching problems. Opposite interpretations of the same situation resulted in participants looking critically at themselves. Their conclusion is that cases were effective, reliable and valid catalysts in teacher education. Repetitive themes along with the replication of statements in participant observations confirmed the reliability of cases as a useful methodology. They argue that their research substantiated the importance of cases in terms of teaching teachers about standards, developing and reinforcing identity.

Haley (2004) presents the case study of one intern student teacher involved in his 15-week experience in a linguistically and culturally diverse secondary school setting and how his case was used in a foreign/ second language methodology course. Haley examines the extent and nature of the student's critical reflections in determining the basis of sound methodological and pedagogical approaches to second language instruction. The author claims that the study demonstrates benefits of its use in one particular teacher education program. Additionally, Haley highlights, within the case study, the use of reflection and the creation of the professional development portfolio. Results indicated that the case-based method can be a valuable instructional tool in a methods class. Haley claims that students studying this case in the teacher education program discovered that they were able to link theory to practice and could understand and use educational theories and principles in becoming effective language educators.

The only study we found that is explicitly related with teacher autonomy was conducted by Barnett and Tyson (1993a). They investigated how case discussions support teachers' professional development by shifting their perception of authority from external to internal and collective sources. The primary data included transcripts of case discussions and interviews, as well as mathematics assessments of teachers. The findings demonstrated, according to the authors, that case discussions provide opportunities for: realising that capability and wisdom exist within the group; developing a critical stance; and developing stronger, more refined content and pedagogical content knowledge. The authors claim that teachers that capitalise on these opportunities have a richer sense of their own autonomy.

The studies presented above show various benefits of case pedagogy in teacher education. On the basis of this selective literature review we can assert that case pedagogy offers a promising opportunity for teacher educators to explore more effective pedagogies in teacher education. To develop our understanding of case pedagogy in teacher education for learner autonomy the teacher education profession needs to engage in empirical research as well as in case development and exploration. As in research on education in general, research on case pedagogy in teacher education for learner autonomy will have to consider the student-

curriculum-teacher triangle. When we focus on the interactions, “we enter a hall of mirrors that extends to infinity” (Cronbach 1975: 119). In the future we will also need to compare case pedagogy with other teacher education strategies and other instructional materials. Following the suggestions by Fenstermacher (1994) and Merseth and Lacey (1993), researchers will have to think very carefully about the intended outcomes of case pedagogy and the research objectives. In addition, it is central to bear in mind that the relationship between the purpose, use, and outcome of case pedagogy varies considerably. In their 1992 review article of the case idea, Sykes and Bird stated that the “future of the case idea, we suspect, rests more on development than research, or perhaps on research in the context of development. We mean that the central task ahead is to create and use rich and interesting case materials in a variety of settings for a variety of purposes, while simultaneously studying those uses” (Sykes and Bird 1992: 509). They also suggested that case pedagogy should be compared with other teacher education strategies and materials. Merseeth (1996: 739) pointed out that prior to the undertaking of such studies it was necessary to clarify the intended outcomes of case use. “Are they looking for effects on teacher cognition, on teacher behavior in classrooms, or on personal beliefs and feelings?” She further suggested three general lines of research, which we still consider valid:

- Research on case materials design for teacher education and their impact.
- Research on different practical approaches to case pedagogy. This strand of research should seek to explore issues of curriculum, variations in pedagogy, sequence within teacher education programmes, and teacher educator characteristics.
- Research on the influence of students’ characteristics on learning from cases.

Finally, we would like to stress that the significance of research on case pedagogy is greatly dependent on the actual development of cases on the basis of teacher experience. Paradoxically, the development of cases is a very complex and time-consuming process but it is not usually acknowledged as “research” by the profession. As we hope to illustrate in the two following chapters, case construction by teachers and teacher educators can become a form of pedagogical research that requires and promotes the ability to take a critical stance towards education and educational contexts, to frame relevant pedagogical problems, to interrogate and reshape dominant practices through inquiry-oriented action plans, to theorise action taken in the light of (personal and public) theories and classroom data, and to narrate educational experience in a coherent and reflective way. What we are suggesting here is that case pedagogy can be much more than a teacher education method. As a form of pedagogical research, it can also become a method for inquiring into school pedagogy and for developing a scholarship of

teacher education. This should make policy-makers and teacher educators alike reconsider their stance towards what counts as research in the teacher education profession.

5 Concluding remarks

L. Shulman (1992: 1) states that “case methods are expected to be more engaging, more demanding, more intellectually exciting and stimulating, more likely to bridge the apparently unbreakable division between principle and practice, and more likely to help novices to learn to think like a teacher.” However, as Remillard (2000: 71) holds, “cases are not a panacea.” Like other teacher education tools they do not stand alone, they need to be supplemented with other material and teacher education strategies. Multiple factors influence teacher learning – using cases alone in teacher education is no guarantee of learning. Furthermore, we need to be alert to the potential risks of using personal narratives as learning tools that may limit rather than expand a critical view of education. As Tochon (1994: 241) points out, “There is no absolute in the story nor in story making; action takes precedence. There are just interpretative processes, slips and slides of meaning. Just language in motion. Thus narrative creates the delusion of manipulable knowledge and meaning, and it may prevent the individual from finding his/ her own ultimate implication.” This is why it is crucial to link story to experience and use multiple frames of reference to analyse and write cases. Provided that an inquiry stance is developed in case pedagogy, we tend to go along with L. Shulman (2004a: 543–544) when he argues that cases can become the *lingua franca* of teacher learning communities:

Cases are ways of parsing experience so practitioners can examine and learn from it. Case methods thus become strategies for helping professionals ‘chunk’ their experience into units that can become the focus for reflective practice. Cases therefore can become the basis for individual professional learning as well as a forum within which communities of professionals (...) can store, exchange and organize their experiences. They may well become, for teacher education, the *lingua franca* of teacher learning communities.

While the arguments for adopting case-based pedagogy in teacher education are rich and powerful, there are still many unanswered questions about the nature of case-based pedagogy in teacher education for learner autonomy. As Grossman (1992: 227) puts it: “our enthusiasm for a new method that promises to link theory and practice in a way that engages students cannot overshadow the need to understand more about what students are actually learning when we teach with

cases or to examine the potential pedagogical pitfalls in using case methods.” Nevertheless, on the basis of our own experience as teacher educators working with cases, we can hold that case pedagogy can be very valuable for prompting teachers to consider issues of autonomy, introducing them to alternative pedagogies. As will be illustrated in the following chapters, we have found evidence to argue that cases tend to enrich teachers’ analyses of key questions and critical issues by representing them in their full complexity. Moreover, they steer teachers into the processes of examining and reshaping their deeply held beliefs, scrutinising their own practices and generating actions that are more humanistic and democratic.

Chapter 4

Teachers writing cases from their own experience

This chapter illustrates a case-based approach for in-service teacher education and is based on the experience of one of us in the context of a post-graduate educational course for language teachers.¹⁰ We describe it and discuss its potential for promoting teacher and learner autonomy. Although our main focus is on teachers writing cases from their own action research experience, the approach also integrates the analysis of teacher-written professional narratives. An example of case construction focusing on oral reading is analysed on the basis of teachers' records of experience so as to illustrate the dynamics of pedagogical inquiry within the proposed approach.

1 Who are we as teacher educators?

This is perhaps the first question to ask when we talk about approaches to teacher education, since these depend largely on teacher educators' professional biographies, ideologies and aspirations. The same question is posed by Lunenberg and Hamilton (2008) to discuss how teacher educators construct their identities, and whether they are/should be consumers or producers of knowledge. The authors reflect about the vagueness of teacher education as a multi-layered profession, arguing that teacher educators must connect their personal history with practical theory and develop public knowledge through self-inquiry. They further advocate the constitution of communities of practice where teacher educators can work together to produce that knowledge.

Inquiring into our pedagogies is one way of understanding not only who we *are* but who we *wish to be* as teacher educators. A scholarship of pedagogy can make teaching *community property* and promote faculty development as an experience of transformation, helping them reshape their identity and practice (Shulman 2004b). Actually, the approach we present here was initiated by Flávia in 2003 within a multidisciplinary project that involved a community of practice

10 The approach has been developed in a course that is part of a two-year MA programme on supervision and language education, at the University of Minho (Braga, Portugal). The course takes place in the first semester (15 weekly lessons of 3 hours each). Each year the programme is attended by 15–20 schoolteachers. Teachers of French, German, English, Spanish and Portuguese can enrol in the programme.

where teachers inquired into their own teaching.¹¹ It was then that she decided to explore and inquire into the role of professional experience in post-graduate language teacher education. She had always acknowledged the value of educational experience in teacher development for teacher and learner autonomy in schools, but that was the first time that it became the core of her course rather than just one of its components. Based on that first exploration, she subsequently developed the approach here presented.

Developing a case-based pedagogy involved a quite significant change in her practices. It entailed starting to centre her teaching on the teachers' experience more intentionally, thus moving away from a system where teacher education practices are rather predictable as they depend mostly on the teacher educators' knowledge and choices. Another change was that she also started to inquire into her own and the teachers' practice more systematically than before, and she began to write about and disseminate her experience as a teacher educator. She feels that her involvement in the scholarship of pedagogy (SoP) in teacher education has reshaped her professional identity:

For me (...) being involved in SoP has become a *moral and political imperative*. If I had to sum up my experience, I would say that it has been an exciting journey of self-discovery, an emotional and intellectual challenge to become a better educator, within a more collective struggle to build re(ide)alistic practices that transform the role of pedagogy in the academic milieu. (...) It has allowed me to excavate my *self* – who I am and why, what I want for my students and what for, what external and internal forces constrain my theories and practices and what I can do to counteract them. (Vieira, Almeida, and Silva 2008: 632/634)¹²

When teacher educators experience empowerment and transformation in their own professional development, they can better appreciate the fact that teachers' development should also be about empowerment and transformation. This calls our attention to the question we started with – who are we as teacher educators? – as well as to the conditions that may hamper or foster the development of our profession in our communities. We would argue that case pedagogy poses that question and can help us redefine the purposes and outcomes of teacher education pedagogy.

¹¹ The project aimed at articulating research, pedagogy and professional development through pedagogical inquiry and the dissemination of practice (for further details, see Vieira 2009e).

¹² This paper integrated the authors' personal accounts of their Scholarship of Pedagogy experience. These are excerpts from Flávia's reflections.

2 Exploring cases for teacher and learner autonomy

If we believe that teacher development should be an empowering, transformative experience, then we should consider the role of knowledge in teacher education practices: What knowledge is privileged and by whom? Who produces it, how, and in whose interests? What is its social relevance? Who assesses its worth?

The promotion of teacher autonomy requires that teachers are directly involved in the (de/re)construction of professional knowledge. This knowledge is multidimensional: it is practical and theoretical, normative and uncertain, technical and moral, autobiographical and socially constructed, shaped by ideologies and also determinant for the reshaping of ideologies (Vieira 2009c, 2011b). It is also paradoxical, as it is situated between knowing what to do and accepting not to know it (Contreras 2010: 247). Therefore, its (de/re)construction is not a straightforward process. In fact, it involves a myriad of processes that need to be constructed with and by the teachers, around their professional experience, so as to create opportunities for them to appreciate the complexity of teaching as an ill-structured domain, become critical about the justifications and implications of their action, develop their ability to disclose and surpass constraints, and make decisions based on values that are conceptually and morally valid. From this perspective, teacher education programmes should enhance teachers' epistemological autonomy as they struggle for a better education in schools, thus avoiding inertia, scepticism or cynicism, which often undermine professional development and innovation.

The use of teaching cases can fulfil these purposes by enacting a *pedagogy of experience* (Vieira 2009b, 2010b, 2012), that is, a pedagogy that is rooted in education *from, through and for* experience (Dewey 1963: 29). In previous chapters, we have already pointed out the potential value of cases in teacher education. As a lingua franca in teacher development communities (L. Shulman 2004a), they can create bridges between different aspects of teacher development that are traditionally kept apart: theory and practice, knowing and doing, research and teaching, reality and ideals. Surpassing these dichotomies appears to be necessary if we are to build what Zeichner (2010b) calls a “third space” in teacher education, a space where the hegemony of academic knowledge is replaced by a combination of different kinds of knowing and where participants negotiate understandings. This negotiation involves the creation of a “third idiom” (Shor 1992), a new discourse that emerges from inquiry-oriented dialogue, standing somewhere between the academic and non-academic idioms:

The dialogic third idiom is simultaneously concrete and conceptual, academic and conversational, critical and accessible. (...) It transforms both idioms [the teacher's and the learner's] into a new discourse, the third idiom, which relates academic language to concrete experience and colloquial discourse to critical thought. (...) This invented third idiom philosophizes experience while experientializing philosophy. As a discourse evolved in a democratic process, it rejects the unilateral transfer of culture from the teacher to the students. (...) The current academic canons of language and subject matter need to be transformed in a multicultural way with and for students, to reflect their language and conditions. (Shor 1992: 255–256)

Although Shor refers to teaching in schools, his concept also applies in teacher education contexts, where the distance between teacher educators and teachers as regards specialised knowledge often hampers dialogue and silences teachers, as if all of a sudden they lacked a language to talk about their own profession. A focus on professional experience through the use of cases opens the road for the emergence of content and language that are more “multicultural” in the sense that they incorporate different forms of knowing, and also a new form of communication that is contingent on the participation of everyone and whose major goal is negotiation for intercomprehension. Because knowledge is constructed collaboratively and is related to professional experience, teachers feel more confident and willing to participate, and they can appreciate theoretical input more fully as an instrument to reconfigure their own theories and practice. Therefore, along with other researchers, we would contend that to a large extent the value of case pedagogy is in the discussion process itself (Barnes, Christensen and Hansen 1994; Flyn and Klein 2001; Merseeth 1991b; Richardson 1991; Welty 1989).

The approach we describe below integrates case analysis and case construction. At the beginning of the course, the teacher educator explains the rationale of the approach and case analysis is initiated so that a focus on professional experience is ensured and theoretical input can be related to it in a systematic way. Not much later, teachers start to design a pedagogical experiment that is the core of case construction. This involves planning, implementing, evaluating and narrating the experiment. Case analysis and case construction develop simultaneously and feed into each other in productive ways. A brief description of how they unfold is given below.

2.1 Case analysis

In case analysis, teachers are guided in the interpretation of professional narratives (of about 15–20 pages) produced in previous years by other teachers within case construction in the same course (see section 2.2 below). Those narratives

illustrate pedagogical experiments of pedagogy for autonomy in language education and provide useful examples of what is expected from teachers in the construction of their own cases.¹³

Different frames of reference are used for analysis, emerging from the teachers' own experience and personal theories, and also from theoretical input provided by the teacher educator, so that they can explore answers to the question "what is this a case of?" (L. Shulman, 2004a). In trying to answer it, teachers appreciate the authors' experience from different angles and expand their own professional knowledge in diverse directions. The role of the teacher educator is to facilitate reflection and dialogue, question tacit beliefs and assumptions, provide alternative points of view, and expand theoretical knowledge.

Case analysis begins in a rather unstructured fashion, focussing on what the teachers found most relevant after their first reading of the narrative. Dialogue is encouraged, usually starting with a very general question such as: "What would you like to say about this pedagogical experiment?" Collaborative reflection proceeds in a quite unpredictable way as the main purpose of this first reading is to begin establishing connections between the narrative and the teachers' personal theories and experience. As the narrative is discussed, the teachers' tacit assumptions and beliefs begin to emerge and become the focus of reflective dialogue. Cognitive dissonance begins to unfold as different perspectives are confronted and teachers start to question their own ideas and practices in the light of both the narrative input and its collective discussion. The teacher educator needs to be attentive to everything that is said so that s/he can instigate critical reflection and support non-judgemental interaction whereby participants begin to excavate their own selves. Asking questions about what is said is of paramount importance: "Why do you say that...?", "Can you give an example of...?", "How does... relate to...?", "What are the implications of...?", "Why does... occur?", "What if...?". Everyone's opinions are seen as valid contributions for collective reflection and no unique understandings are sought. Rather than reaching consensus, it is important to promote divergent thinking and the confrontation of perspectives.

After this first stage of analysis, teachers are provided with theoretical input that can support more oriented re-readings of the narrative or parts of it, often in

13 When the approach was implemented for the first time in 2003, these narratives did not exist and other narratives were used, namely teacher narratives published by members of the GT-PA – Grupo de Trabalho-Pedagogia para a Autonomia/ Working Group-Pedagogy for Autonomy (see Vieira 2009d). Narratives published in English on the promotion of autonomy can be found in the literature (e.g. Sinclair, McGrath, and Lamb 2000; Barfield and Nix 2003; Barfield and Alvarado 2013; Palfreyman and Smith 2003; Barfield and Brown 2007; Jiménez Raya and Lamb 2008a; Kalaja, Menezes, and Barcelos 2008).

groups before collective discussion, with the aim of exploring focused answers to the question: “what is this a case of?”. Narratives always include their authors’ own answers, but these can be questioned and expanded, depending on the frameworks of reference used. As L. Shulman puts it, “Were it grammatically correct, I would prefer asking the question ‘what are this a case of?’” (2004a: 467).

The role of theoretical input (which can be purely theoretical or based on empirical studies) is to expand teachers’ horizons as regards teacher/ learner empowerment and develop their ability to scrutinise experience. In this particular course, they are asked to read texts focusing on a constructivist approach to education, democratic education and pedagogy for autonomy, reflective teacher education (including case-based pedagogy), and teacher inquiry. Apart from the texts that support case analysis directly, other texts are recommended to expand knowledge. Theoretical input is always discussed in class and teachers have the opportunity to raise any issue they find relevant – what surprised them, what they could (not) relate to their own ideas and practice, what they could (not) fully understand or appreciate, etc.

Frames of reference for the analysis of narratives are selected on the basis of what the teacher educator finds more relevant at a particular moment in the development of the course. One or more inputs can be provided and used sequentially, depending on the time s/he wants to spend with each narrative. Instead of full texts, excerpts of texts and reflective tools can also be used, like the example below, based on Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira (2007: 54), which can help teachers analyse the extent to which a particular narrative/ pedagogical experiment is a case of *centring teaching on learning*, a central requisite of pedagogy for autonomy.

Centring teaching on learning

Does the experiment...

- Foster the learners’ self-esteem and willingness to assume responsibility for learning?
- Involve the learners in reflection about language and the language learning process?
- Foster knowledge of and experimentation with language learning strategies (in/outside class)?
- Foster (self/co-)management of learning activities (planning, monitoring and evaluation)?
- Foster the negotiation of ideas and decisions with and among learners?
- Encourage cooperation and team work among learners?
- Enhance the formative role of (self-)evaluation and (self-)assessment?

- Integrate the collection and analysis of learner data so as to understand and improve teaching?
- Encourage learners to collect and analyse data so as to understand strengths and weaknesses?

By relating a particular framework with the narrative/ experiment at hand, teachers also discuss their own understandings of the framework and how it connects with their personal experience. At this stage, the teacher educator expands and clarifies theoretical input. Again, s/he must conduct the dialogue so as to promote critical reflection and encourage participation and the negotiation of perspectives. Interaction continues to be quite unpredictable, although more oriented towards the exploration of particular views and practices of language education. Everyone's opinions are valid contributions for collective reflection, but reaching some consensus becomes important as regards theoretical understandings and how they apply to the case.

In scrutinising narratives from different angles, teachers theorise practice, expand professional knowledge, revise their own experience, and complexify their views of teaching and learning. Because the narratives illustrate inquiry-oriented pedagogy, they also begin to appreciate the value of teacher inquiry for teacher and learner empowerment, and become increasingly aware of their own role as potential agents of change.

All the processes involved in case analysis contribute greatly to (de/re)construct teachers' professional knowledge. However, giving teachers the opportunity to plan and enact change is necessary to expand those processes further. This is the goal of case construction, where teachers become authors of autonomy stories.

2.2 Case construction

In case construction, which starts shortly after the course begins, teachers are guided in the design of small-scale, collaborative action research experiments aimed at promoting pedagogy for autonomy, which they carry out in the classroom (one teacher per group, in one class). Classroom data for analysing and evaluating experiments can be collected in many different ways (e.g. observation, reflective records, questionnaires, learner assignments, etc.). In interpreting and narrating those experiments, teachers try to answer the question "what is this a case of?" by triangulating personal theories, theoretical input and classroom data.

For designing the pedagogical experiments, a set of guiding questions that ensure an action research approach is provided:

- What interest, dilemma, problem, concern... would we like to explore? Why?
- What are the purposes of inquiry?
- What is the context for experimentation? (participants, previous experience...)
- What action strategies might be useful? What materials/ resources will be needed?
- Who participates in the evaluation of the experiment and what data collection strategies/ instruments might be used to evaluate it?
- What impact can the experiment have on teacher and learner development?
- What readings will be needed? About what and for what?
- What vision of education underlies the experiment?

The designing phase is supported by the teacher educator in class and through e-mail. This includes giving feedback to the teachers' plans and data collection materials, as well as suggesting readings about the topics they choose to explore. Each experiment should involve around 2–3 lessons at school, taught by one teacher in each group and observed by colleagues whenever possible. By making experiments collaborative and reducing their number, the teacher educator's support increases, cooperative learning is encouraged, and the quality of experiments and narratives is enhanced.¹⁴

Deciding on the focus of pedagogical inquiry engages teachers in thorough discussions about their concerns regarding language teaching and learning (e.g. Why do students resist oral participation in class? How can they be helped to develop more creative writing? Why are they so demotivated in class?...). Choosing a topic takes time and is not always easy as group members may have different experiences and opinions about what is worth exploring. Even when they reach a consensus, the problems they set are not always clearly framed and need to be discussed with the teacher educator so that the objectives and strategies of inquiry are consistent, feasible, and related to valid educational purposes. On the other hand, the connection between their concerns and learner autonomy are not always straightforward, since most teachers lack previous experience of

14 When the approach was explored for the first time, all teachers were asked to develop individual small-scale experiments during the course. Even though the overall evaluation of that approach was quite positive, it also showed that there was no time for the teacher educator to support the design of all the experiments, collaboration among teachers was low, and the resulting narratives were too short and sometimes not critical enough.

autonomy in the classroom. Another difficulty relates to data collection. Teachers are rarely used to evaluating their action, so their first tendency is to separate teaching from research strategies. On the contrary, data collection strategies and instruments should have both a pedagogical and a research purpose so that inquiry can be used in the service of pedagogy. For example, if they want to explore a particular language skill and an initial questionnaire is used to collect the students' perceptions of attitudes and competences regarding it, the students' answers should be later discussed in class so as to increase learning awareness and pave the way for future learning activities.

Acknowledging and surpassing this kind of difficulties are part of professional growth and this is why the planning phase takes time. Teachers need time to read, to revise plans and materials, and to become aware of justifications and implications of their choices. The teacher educator needs time to discuss and elaborate their ideas, give practical suggestions and provide examples, revise materials, and propose readings. Actually, the whole strategy requires the creation of “public time”, that is, time spent in reflective dialogue and negotiation of perspectives and decisions, and not “entrepreneurial time”, that is, accelerated time used to fulfil instrumental objectives whose rationale is not questioned (Giroux 2007).

The phases of implementation, analysis and narrative writing are conducted by the groups with no direct interference from the teacher educator. Because planning is thoroughly discussed and supported, conditions are created for the teachers to act more independently. Moreover, teacher empowerment necessarily entails learning to manage insecurities, uncertainty and dilemmas, both individually and cooperatively. On the other hand, case analysis supports case construction as regards the integration of theory and practice, data analysis and narrative writing.

Group narratives (of about 15–20 pages) should be written in a personal style that combines the rigorous analysis of experience with the integration of theoretical knowledge and the use creative language (analogies, metaphors...). They should be examples of writing *from* the self rather than *about* the self (Contreras and Pérez de Lara 2010), ensuring that the writers' stance is both close to lived experience and critically detached from it, and giving potential readers the opportunity to learn from it. Writing is seen not as an instrument to report on what happened but rather as a method of (self)inquiry whereby teachers construct understandings of pedagogy as an ineffable phenomenon (Van Manen 1990).

The narratives of autonomy experiments are assessed by the groups and the teacher educator as regards intelligibility, situational relevance, the quality of teaching approaches, criticality, integration of theoretical knowledge, rigour, and clarity of language. After assessment, groups are invited to revise their narratives

on the basis of the teacher educator's written feedback, and permission is asked to use the revised versions with other teachers for case analysis as well as for research and publication purposes. This is the reason why it has been possible to use the teachers' narratives for case analysis as described in section 2.1 above.

Teachers are also encouraged to disseminate pedagogical experiments in schools and professional conferences, and some have done it. Sometimes, their experiments open up possibilities for further exploration within their master dissertations, either through more extensive action research studies or through descriptive studies that focus on autonomy-oriented practices.

In the approach suggested here, teacher educators seek to use their power to empower teachers, providing opportunities for and supporting self-directed development. We hope that this becomes more evident in the following section, where a teacher-constructed case is analysed.

3 Building cases from inquiry into experience

In this section we illustrate the process of case construction by drawing on a pedagogical experiment focussed on oral reading in the English classroom, conducted by a group of four secondary schoolteachers (Teixeira et al. 2010). Through the analysis of that process, illustrated with excerpts from their narrative and other elements of their course portfolio, we hope to show how teacher inquiry and writing from experience can empower teachers to pursue teacher and learner autonomy in language education.¹⁵

3.1 Getting started: defining the focus and purpose of pedagogical inquiry

When teachers realise that their teaching is unsatisfactory and decide to move towards more learner-centred pedagogy, they are aware that their path is uncertain but they are also determined to challenge established regimes and subvert current practices. As this group of teachers wrote in the introduction to their port-

¹⁵ Permission was given by the teachers to use excerpts of their narrative and other elements from their course portfolio. The course portfolio integrates the narrative and other support documents, as well as an introduction and a reflective evaluation of the course. All excerpts presented here are translated from Portuguese, including some of the students' interventions quoted from class interaction. The present section builds on a previous (shorter) analysis of the same narrative (see Vieira 2010b).

folio, “by rejecting conformity and facing uncertainty, dilemmas and tensions, with a lot of persistence and effort, we chose to break with the limits of our everyday life and let subversion cross our sinuous way.” They somehow “get off the rails”, as Schostak suggests when he talks about enacting change in schools: “If a formal curriculum is imagined as being like a chariot race where competitors go round and round in circles until some arbitrary finishing point is reached, then deliberate crashes, derailings or simply stopping and not playing the game become the only real challenges to the system” (Schostak 2000: 37).

Getting off the rails becomes a way of struggling for teacher and student empowerment by rejecting a position of subjugation to authority and reclaiming the right to direct pedagogical action. However, developing a self-directed, inquiry-oriented approach towards more democratic teaching is not a straightforward process. In the introduction to their portfolio, these teachers also write about their lack of experience “in looking at teaching as an act of inquiry” and how they started “with a lot of worries and uncertainties” that decreased progressively as they began “visualising a relevant, coherent path that presupposed the integration of theory and practice, based on processes of negotiation, in which the teacher educator’s role began to fade away as [their] transformation as teachers-learners became visible”.

Conversations with teachers during the stage of deciding on a focus for inquiry show that they are often unsatisfied with their teaching and eager to learn about alternative strategies, but they also feel unprepared to do it and disempowered by a school culture that stifles autonomy. Along with Kincheloe (2003: 2), we can say that “teachers understand that something is not right”. As they begin to disclose silenced beliefs and desires, but also criticisms, fears and anxieties, they become painfully aware of the gap between “espoused theories” and “theories-in-action” (Argyris and Schön 1974), which may generate feelings of insecurity and uneasiness. As L. Shulman (1992) puts it, pedagogy starts with frustration, that is, an awareness that something is wrong and needs to be changed.

This group of teachers decided to develop an experiment on oral reading in the English classroom because they were often confronted with their students’ attitudes of resistance to this practice. They began to question the reasons why that happened and how that situation might be changed. In dialogue with the teacher educator, they eventually realised that the most usual routines for oral reading in class have no educational value whatsoever: asking the students, one by one, to read a text (any kind of text) by chunks as the initial step of reading comprehension tasks, and correcting some or all the pronunciation mistakes they make as they read. Furthermore, these routines are totally artificial: we can hardly find any other situation where a group of people have to read text chunks aloud without knowing the text in advance and with no other purpose than just

reading aloud. It is easy to understand why this practice may generate feelings of uneasiness, anxiety and resistance in the students. However, none of this seemed to be evident to these teachers before they reflected about what, why and what for they did what they did.

Their narrative provides a thorough account of the rationale for a plan of action whereby they sought to transform traditional oral reading routines into a meaningful practice by making it more learner/ learning-oriented. Nevertheless, finding an area for improvement and designing an autonomy-oriented learning plan is not as easy as the teachers' narratives often seem to suggest. Actually, when the group first started to think about their focus for inquiry, oral reading was not their concern. Their starting point was quite different. They brainstormed several possibilities and wanted to experiment with new technologies in class: podcasting. One of the teachers was enthusiastic about and experienced with technology, and they all realised that students enjoy it and need to learn how to use it. However, when questioned about their *pedagogical* purposes, they were not clear about them, even though later on, in the introduction to their portfolio, they write that technology "would only be pedagogically useful in the service of the development of other competences". After thoughtful consideration of how this might be accomplished, the focus on oral reading competences emerged as a possibility. Podcasting could be a useful resource for students to record and listen to their readings, but was no longer the focus of their work. Furthermore, as they started to plan the learning tasks and discuss them with the teacher educator, their attention was also directed at how they might enhance the students' abilities to learn how to read. They eventually decided to raise students' awareness of oral reading difficulties and competences, and involve them in self-correction, self-evaluation, and reflection about the approach to be implemented.

In the narrative, they theorise their experiment as a case of promoting learner autonomy, stating that what interested them "was the process of each student's transformation. More important than the product (improving students' performance in expressive oral reading) was the process of developing metacognitive strategies". They also write that the experiment was a case of professional collaborative inquiry that enhanced a reflective, (self-)regulatory stance towards teaching. We can see how the development of this stance started at the planning stage, as they moved away from a rather technical view of teaching (using technology because students like it and need to learn how to use it) to a transformative view of pedagogy where their concerns with learning became the springboard for more informed, learner/ learning-centred action. Until a final plan was reached, several possibilities were discussed. As they say in the introduction to their portfolio, "the imperative of an extensive working agenda was... TRANSFORMATION.

Like Penelope, we wove and re-wove our ‘shawl’: the plan, the objectives, the activities, the materials... were successively reformulated.”

As suggested by Schön (1987: 4), problem setting is a form of worldmaking that requires practitioners to make sense of messy, indeterminate situations. Moving away from a technical view of teaching demands tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity, as well as self-determination to find a plausible path of (self)discovery. Having a set of guiding questions to plan the experiments has proved to be crucial in this respect. It supports teacher reflection on various components of pedagogical inquiry, encourages thoughtful consideration of justifications and implications of choices, and facilitates dialogue with the teacher educator. As teachers write and re-write their answers to their planning guide, they reconceptualise their projects and make them more informed, more coherent, and more oriented by a democratic vision of language education.

3.2 De-schooling professional knowledge

The (de/re)construction of professional knowledge is a major purpose of case pedagogy. This often entails questioning and transforming ingrained ideas and practices by moving from choices based on a notion of “school knowledge” to choices based on a notion of “action knowledge” (Barnes 1976), that is, knowledge that relates to life experience. For these teachers, this became evident when they had to choose the text to use for oral reading in class, still at the planning stage:

After choosing our topic, the appropriateness of the text was another challenge. As we were not aware of what oral reading entails in scientific terms, our choices focussed on dialogues in which oral reading was just about using speech acts: *At the Restaurant; Job Interview*. In revising our plan, the teacher educator alerted us about the need to reconsider our choice:

‘Well, you have to think this further, because an interview is NOT a type of text to be read aloud. What types of texts are liable to be read aloud? If you want to use an interactive text, it seems to me that it will have to be, for example, a theatre play... When actors perform the play they do not read because they already learnt the text by heart, but the process to get there is an oral reading process. It might also be a dialogue in a piece of literature, since reading literature aloud is also an authentic task.’ (F. Vieira, feedback on plan).

This stage was a turning point in our own learning process. (Portfolio: Introduction)

When the teachers say this was a turning point in their learning process, they are acknowledging the fact that teacher development entails informed decision-mak-

ing, which requires, as we have pointed out earlier, the expansion of pedagogical content knowledge (L. Shulman 1993). They needed to read and learn about (oral) reading in order to better understand how to promote it in class. At several points in their narrative, they draw on their readings to support their choices (e.g. Dawson 2000, Oakley 2003, Rennie 2003, Abromitis 2009, Marinaccio-Eckel and Donahue 2009), including the criteria used for selecting the final text: a simplified version of part of a play written in verse and related to a well-known fairy tale – *Cinderella*¹⁶. This choice is justified on the basis of adequacy for expressive oral reading, authenticity, relation to students' experience and appropriateness to their linguistic level. Somehow, they had de-schooled their reasoning to make a choice that was more action-oriented and educational.

Promoting action knowledge in school is important for all students, but it is particularly relevant for students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have learning difficulties. This was the case of the class where the teachers chose to implement their plan, a class of 11 students who were attending a vocational programme that is equivalent to the 9th grade (level 3 of English). Students in these programmes usually have a history of school failure and low expectations regarding academic achievement. Enhancing motivation through investment in meaningful learning is thus crucial in this context.

De-schooling professional knowledge is also about imagining pedagogical approaches that subvert dominant teacher-centred practices and are more in accordance with “an exciting vision of schooling”, a vision that stresses “the role that education can play in producing a just, inclusive, democratic, and imaginative future” (Kincheloe 2003: 111). This could be observed as the teachers engaged in creative strategy planning, with the support of the teacher educator. Their intervention was radically different from their usual oral reading practice, although the first step was intentionally similar. One of the usual routines – asking students to read a text aloud with no previous preparation – was performed with the intention to subsequently raise the students' awareness of its inadequacy. The teacher arranged the students in groups, gave them a scene from the script of the play *Cinderella*, and asked them to read it aloud by playing different roles. This is how they describe this step as it occurred in class:

The students organize themselves into groups and the teacher asks them to read the text aloud. The incredulous actors begin and moments of “robot reading” follow, full of hesitations, *It's you... No, it's you*, in a slow, syncopated rhythm, with strange pronunciation... They do not question the strategy, but an effort to please is noticeable. Finally, when asked about what they did, they answer: *A dialogue among characters, A theatre play, Reading...*

¹⁶ *Cinderella* from Charles Perrault, retold by Dooley and Loyd, 2004, Berkshire: Express Publishing.

What type of reading? one insists... They get to the idea of expressive reading. “Leitura Oral Expressiva” [Expressive Oral Reading] is written on the blackboard.

When questioned about the easiness of the first task, the actors intervene with divergent comments: *Simple text, Not very long* or *Because we did not know the text, it was difficult*. Difficulties pour in through brainstorming and they seem to begin to understand that the stage director *did not freak out, all this is a new performance technique that she wants to test*. When confronted with the question *What is good reading?* they are still staggering and uncertainty seems to hang over their minds again: *Is she thinking that we have to invert roles?! Are we supposed to be the teacher/ stage director?!* Then the explanation comes – *You were not well instructed. Ah!* The mystery starts to be disclosed, but the strategy of this play is not yet revealed: *It was done on purpose, later on you will understand why.* (Portfolio: Narrative)

When classroom action is described in the narrative, it is presented in the style of a play script as above, and divided into “scenes”. These scenes, summarised below, correspond to three important elements of centring teaching on learning: awareness-raising, self-directed practice, and self-evaluation. They were developed in two sequential lessons of 90 minutes each.

Scene 1: awareness-raising

- In groups: students read an excerpt of the play aloud, without any previous preparation
- Brainstorming (blackboard) about Expressive Oral Reading: problems felt
- Filling in a diagram: students match problems with reading competences (intonation, expressiveness, rhythm, punctuation, pronunciation, fluency, understanding)
- Reading a set of guidelines for expressive oral reading and filling in the blank spaces with given words (e.g. *Read the text (silently) before reading it aloud.*)

Scene 2: self-directed practice

- In groups students prepare for oral reading by using the guidelines, dictionaries and a CD with a model reading; they record their readings, listen to them and self-correct (podcast)
- Each group presents their final recordings to the class

Scene 3: self-evaluation

- Self-evaluation of reading performance before and after the preparation strategies (the self-evaluation instrument integrates the problems pointed out by the students in scene 1, grouped under the reading competences presented in the diagram)
- Class conversation about the whole experience

When considering the above sequence, we can see how the students themselves, and not just the teachers, were supported to de-school their ways of knowing by becoming more directly involved in understanding what reading aloud is about, by experimenting with reading strategies, by participating in self-reflection and by evaluating the whole experiment with the teacher. This is coherent with the objectives set for the experiment:

Through this experiment we sought to develop the students' oral reading competence in a foreign language, stimulating them for that purpose; to promote their initiative, critical mind and autonomy; to develop their problem solving strategies; to promote collaborative and autonomous work in class, with the help of various resources; and to enhance their taste for oral reading. (Portfolio: Narrative)

3.3 Students as critical consumers and creative producers of knowledge

Learner-centredness is the core principle of pedagogy for autonomy and it can be enacted in many different ways. In this teachers' experiment it meant: incorporating the students' ideas in the teaching strategies, rather than giving them pre-defined information on how to learn; letting students direct their own learning; involving them in self-evaluation and the evaluation of teaching. In this way, the students were given opportunities to become critical consumers and creative producers of knowledge, rather than passive recipients of teacher knowledge (Vieira 1998).

By asking the students to read the text without any previous preparation, the ground was set for collective reflection on difficulties, competences and strategies involved in oral reading. The brainstorming activity allowed the students to voice their difficulties, which confirmed the problems previously identified by the teachers in the oral reading routine they used to follow before this project:

I was not expressive / I read in a low voice / I did not respect the punctuation

I did not say the words well / I had difficulties pronouncing the words

I did not read the text throughout / I hesitated in some words

I didn't understand the meaning of words / I had no instructions to follow

With the purpose of raising the students' awareness of oral reading competences, a diagram was presented with elements that compose those competences (into-

nation, expressiveness, rhythm, punctuation, pronunciation, fluency, and understanding) and the students were asked to match them to the above difficulties. Students realised that oral reading is a complex activity and their difficulties may relate to different competences. Then, they were asked to reflect about strategies that could help them develop expressive oral reading abilities, and they filled in a set of guidelines (in Portuguese) they would later use to prepare for expressive oral reading:

In order to read expressively, I need to:

1. Read the text in _____ before reading it aloud.
2. Use support techniques as I read: signal what I don't understand, consult the _____ and write the meaning of new words, take note of unfamiliar pronunciation, etc.
3. _____ the global meaning of the text.
4. _____ to the oral text, more than once, before reading it aloud.
5. Read it _____ several times to practice expressiveness.
6. Practise oral reading in _____ (dramatic text)
7. Train the _____ and the _____ through access to reading models.
8. Ask for the help of others (more fluent students/ teacher) to overcome my _____.

*understand *dictionary *pronunciation *listen *aloud *dialogue *silence *difficulties
*intonation

(Portfolio: Narrative)

After these reflective tasks, the groups started working on their own. They read the play in silence, worked together on reading comprehension, rehearsed and recorded their oral readings until they were pleased with their performance, and played their recordings for their classmates. Their involvement was extremely high and the final result was satisfying:

The students talk in a low voice, seeking to assimilate their role (...). There is a tacit agreement, no one argues: one student looks up words, another writes the translation, still another searches for its pronunciation in the computer. They read and activate mechanisms of self/co-correction without interrupting one another: *'Shame! What a terrible shame!'¹⁷, Start again, you are not using the right intonation!, Can't you respect the rules as you read?*

The echo of their words instigates our reflection on the Chinese proverb: Don't give the fish, teach how to fish.

(...)

¹⁷ One of the lines in the play script.

The audience¹⁸ does not appear for the second rehearsal and the stage manager goes on with her work, clarifying her role: to coordinate the actors. The actors do not slow down and keep on doing their best: *You have to write an accent here so that you know that you have one more syllable to pronounce, Why don't you write above the word the way you pronounce it? It's easier, You always get the beginning wrong, make a note!, Remember that song by David Gueta Choose, then you know how to pronounce 'choose'...*

(...)

... Applause is heard! They reflect on the faces and the voices of the students who have enthusiastically recorded and self/co-corrected their readings, now looking serious and concentrated as if in an audition... suddenly, the buzz that sometimes occurs in class as a result of group work gives place to bodies inebriated by their own voices and oral performances... Yes, the applause is deserved, with the right to a BRAVO!

The students were able to read with good proficiency, and their self-evaluation shows their awareness of progress from the initial reading to the final one (Table 3; $n = 11$).

Tab. 3: Students' perceptions of progress in oral reading

<i>Problems</i>	Initial reading			Final reading		
	✓	?	x	✓	?	x
Intonation and expressiveness						
– I was not expressive	3	8	0	0	1	10
– I read in a low voice	2	7	2	1	0	10
Rhythm and punctuation						
– I did not respect the punctuation	4	3	4	0	3	8
Pronunciation						
– I did not say the words well	5	6	0	1	2	8
– I had difficulties pronouncing the words	5	6	0	0	5	6
Fluency						
– I did not read the text throughout	3	4	4	0	4	7
– I hesitated in some words	5	4	2	0	8	3
Understanding						
– I didn't understand the meaning of words	4	7	0	0	1	10
– I had no instructions to follow	7	3	1	0	1	10

✓ – I felt this problem a lot / ? – I felt this problem a little / x – I didn't feel this problem
(Portfolio: Narrative)

¹⁸ The teacher's colleagues, who could not observe the second lesson.

The class enjoyed these lessons and showed interest in repeating this type of oral reading task. A student who had always failed English in previous years even suggested that the class could stage a play. They also showed metacognitive awareness: they realised that preparation to read was crucial for getting a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence, that difficulties can become positive elements in learning provided that they are aware of them and how to surpass them, and that useful resources can enhance learning and be used in various learning situations.

In reflecting about the experiment, the teachers highlight what they perceived to be its major educational purposes and gains for the students:

Gradually, they liberated themselves and started to look for strategies to solve their difficulties, gaining self-confidence and autonomy in accomplishing, monitoring and evaluating their performance and progress. This interactive strategic learning, as opposed to individualistic and competitive learning, is essential for students to develop cooperation, co-responsibility, self-direction, sharing and negotiation competences, allowing a higher level of commitment to the proposed tasks, making students constructors of knowledge, and respecting their interests and learning pace. (...) This perspective is close to that of critical constructivists who “support the notion that one of the central roles of teaching entails student commitment to the process of knowledge construction” (Kincheloe 2006: 11). For this reason, we believe that this kind of practice dilutes inequalities and injustices in the classroom, paving the way for a democratic and emancipatory school (Zeichner 1993b: 26). (Portfolio: Narrative)

This quotation reveals that as teachers open up opportunities for their students to become critical consumers and creative producers of knowledge, they develop a more critical view of education and start to feel more empowered as agents of change. Although this pedagogical experiment was very small and involved only a few learning tasks, it represented a significant change in the teachers’ pedagogical reasoning and pedagogical roles in the classroom. Their students had many difficulties, low self-esteem, and fear of public exposure. The fact that during two classes of 90 minutes they were able to show more self-confidence and willingness to learn, as well as some ability to self-direct their learning and reflect about it, is certainly an important outcome to be considered. The experiment can thus be seen as a case of how small-scale, teacher-led inquiry can promote learner autonomy to *some* significant extent. It is also an example of how teachers can develop re(idea)listic practices that explore the space between realities and ideals (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007), when they are given the chance to enter that space within a supportive environment.

3.4 Relearning to write

As we have pointed out before, rather than reproducing experience, writing from experience should explore and amplify its meaning, allowing both writers and readers to glimpse the existential structures of experience (van Manen 1990: 127). From this perspective, writing becomes a method of (self)discovery that mediates between living and thinking (Contreras and Pérez de Lara 2010: 81).

These teachers' narrative fluctuates between two types of language. They adopt a hybrid discourse that results from a combination of formal and creative uses of language, which reminds us of the "third idiom" referred to by Shor (1992). They use a more academic-like discourse to present the *backstage* of pedagogical action (theme, pedagogical choices, context, data collection strategies, conclusions), and a more theatre-like discourse to present action *on stage*. Actually, the narrative as a whole is conceptualised as a *play*, as we can see from its title and table of contents, reproduced below with a brief explanation of section contents in brackets:

Oral reading... What's the drama after all?

Act I – Conspiracy on backstage...

[presentation and justification of theme and scope]

Act II – Preparing the stage set...

[explanation and justification of pedagogical choices]

Act III – ...and assigning roles

[presentation of context and participants]

Act IV – The stage director defines a strategy...

[summary of teaching and research strategy]

Act V – Raising the curtain...

[descriptive-analytical account of pedagogical action, based on observation and data collection]

Act VI – Dropping the curtain...

[final evaluation: outcomes, and implications]

The title of the narrative – *Oral reading... What's the drama after all?* – draws on two meanings of “drama” in Portuguese: a theatre play (the case story) and a tragic event (the problems associated with traditional oral reading practices). The Portuguese equivalent to the question raised (“Qual é o drama afinal?”) is used in colloquial speech to mean “What’s the big deal?”, inducing the idea that oral reading need not be a “tragic event” provided that it is “performed” meaningfully. This idea points out the main outcome of pedagogy for autonomy as pedagogy of possibility – what seemed impossible becomes possible.

The staging metaphor in the title gives prominence to the role of the students as actors and the teacher as stage director. Rather than weakening the role of the teacher, pedagogy for autonomy is seen to strengthen that role – s/he is no longer a technician; s/he becomes a curriculum designer and a facilitator of learner empowerment. On the other hand, students occupy the central stage of pedagogy, acting from a negotiated script that provides them with both support and opportunities for self-direction. These teachers’ play could also be written from a different perspective, where the teacher educator is the stage director and they, together with their students, are the actors. To some extent, case-based pedagogy (and this chapter itself) entails that perspective.

The way classroom action is presented in *Act V – Raising the curtain* is a good example of the search for a language that reflects the uniqueness of pedagogical experience. Descriptions look like a detailed, vivid play script that allows the reader to picture the scenes on stage and listen to different voices. As in a play script, not everything is revealed: there are a lot of implicit meanings, gaps to fill in, room for imagination and speculation about action.

In writing *from* experience, one needs to challenge academic modes of writing where the enunciating subject is absent and experience is asphyxiated by an excessive use of classification, categorisation, hierarchisation, and abstraction (Larrosa Bondía 2010). One may need to unlearn what schools and universities often teach us about what counts as legitimate writing: writing that perpetuates modes of knowing that are both domesticated and domesticating, contrary to self-discovery and the problematisation of reality, as if reality were out there to be described as an objective entity separated from our selves (Karlsson 2008). And so, one needs to relearn writing so as to bring it closer to the self and the intellectual and emotional aspects of lived experience.

In presenting and discussing the case developed by these language teachers, we hope to have shown that inquiry and writing from experience can empower teachers to pursue and theorise autonomy in language education. Like Johnson and Golombek (2002: 6) we believe that “teachers’ stories of inquiry are not only *about* professional development; they *are* professional development.”

4 Value and shortcomings of experience-based teacher education

In this final section we summarise gains and shortcomings of the proposed approach, based on the systematic analysis of the teachers' narratives and reflections about case-based pedagogy, participant observation and reflective records of practice, as well as writing about the experience as in the present chapter, which is also a way of figuring out what teacher education practices are about.

Five major gains have been identified as regards teacher empowerment for learner empowerment: agency in professional development, complexified vision of education, reconstruction of pedagogical action, repositioning the self in relation to others, and closeness of language to experience (Vieira 2012: 58–60):

Agency in professional development

- Integration of professional interests in teacher education curricula
- Negotiation of perspectives for understanding and transforming educational experience
- Participation in decision-making about the purposes and processes of change
- Participation in self-evaluation and evaluation of teacher education pedagogy
- Critical stance towards instrumental rationality in teacher education

Complexified vision of education

- Expansion of ethical-conceptual frameworks for analysing educational experience
- Increased awareness of the mismatch between espoused theories and practices
- Increased awareness of historical and structural forces that constrain autonomy
- Resonance of public theories in the reconstruction of personal theories and practices
- Increased tolerance towards uncertainty and ambiguity in educational experience
- Critical stance towards instrumental rationality in school education

Reconstruction of pedagogical action

- Critical analysis of previous educational experience
- Openness to change oriented by democratic values
- Awareness of constraints to change and search of spaces for manoeuvre

- Development of pedagogical action that challenges established routines
- Valuing learner voices in pedagogical change and inquiry
- Evaluation of the consequences of change upon self and learners
- Acknowledgement of the transitional, incomplete nature of pedagogical action
- View of pedagogical inquiry as a source of valid professional knowledge

Repositioning the self in relation to others

- Expression of personal meanings in the construction of collaborative projects
- Collegial supervision of educational experience and dialogic approach to teaching
- Management of conflict, dissonance, divergence... in the search for understanding

Closeness of language to experience

- Expansion of educational metalanguage
- Dialogic (de/re)construction of knowledge
- Search for language that ‘translates’ lived experience
- Development of writing as a method for (self-)understanding

As regards shortcomings, these derive from personal and situational constraints. Case analysis and case construction require a set of conditions that may be difficult to create:

- Use and production of cases that are thought-provoking and can be related to relevant professional experience and theoretical ideas
- Time to explore cases in different directions, using multiple frames of reference
- Expanded contextual and theoretical knowledge to analyse complex educational phenomena
- Articulation of the uniqueness of educational experience with general concepts and principles
- Ability to integrate theory and practice in a rather unpredictable, flexible way
- Ability to conduct a reflective, dialogical approach in the construction of professional knowledge
- Creativity and ingenuity as regards generating and evaluating innovative practices
- Development of inquiry and writing competences (attitudes, knowledge, abilities)

Even though our approach is directed to in-service teachers, after some adaptations we have more recently started to implement it with pre-service teacher education groups. We encourage them to analyse professional narratives before or during the *practicum*, to develop case construction in the *practicum* or to implement small experiments in their supervisors' classes. If learning to teach requires learning to think and to act like a teacher (Kennedy 1999; L. Shulman 1992), then close collaboration among school supervisors, teacher educators and student teachers in case-building would be useful in this respect.

5 Concluding remarks

Experience-based teacher education as illustrated above is one of the most important strategies to counteract the divorce between theory and practice, knowing and doing, academic and professional knowledge, research and teaching. In this sense, it may enhance teacher education as a hybrid “third space” (Zeichner 2010b), and also promote an understanding of school pedagogy as “the third margin of the river” (Nóvoa 2011), that is, a place where rigid views of what is and should be done are replaced by exploratory, never-ending journeys of discovery.

However, this kind of approach may go against the grain in professional contexts: schools and teacher education institutions. Teachers often complain that their colleagues are not willing to engage in pedagogical inquiry or even learn about their experiments. On the other hand, teacher educators often work in isolation and their work is undervalued, which also reduces possibilities for collective change. Under these circumstances, the gains from case-based pedagogy are mostly for those who participate directly in it – the teacher educator, the teachers, the students involved in the pedagogical experiments, and perhaps the students that those teachers will teach in the future. Is this good enough? Yes, until we are not able to create better conditions for an inquiry-oriented approach to flourish in teaching and teacher education contexts. If that approach were more familiar than it is, case-based pedagogy would certainly be more easily implemented and would have a larger impact.

Chapter 5

Teacher educators writing cases from teachers' experience

This chapter describes an approach to case writing by teacher educators, drawing on our experience within a European project (EuroPAL 2004–2007)¹⁹ whose main purpose was to develop a framework for teacher and learner development towards pedagogy for autonomy in language education. A case-based approach for teacher education was designed which resulted in the production of a multi-lingual, interactive DVD (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011) which integrates cases designed by the project team members with the collaboration of schoolteachers, providing various examples of pedagogy for autonomy in action, together with theoretical input and teacher development tasks. We present samples of one of those cases, which was developed by one of us with the collaboration of an English schoolteacher, focusing on learning how to learn a language.²⁰ These cases are specifically directed at in-service teacher education, but they can also be adapted for use with pre-service teachers and an example is given where this approach is combined with the one presented in the previous chapter. It is our intention to illustrate a productive strategy for teacher educators to write cases with the collaboration of teachers by incorporating their educational experience in multi-modal materials that integrate practical and theoretical knowledge and propose paths for reflection and innovation in schools.

1 Designing the cases: teacher educators as architects of professional learning

The case construction strategy here described draws on the EuroPAL framework for teacher and learner development for autonomy in language education (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007) and on the literature on case-based pedagogy in teacher education (see chapter 3 above). In our approach, teacher educators become architects of professional learning materials designed so as

¹⁹ *A European Pedagogy for Autonomous Learning – Educating Modern Language Teachers Through ICT*, a European project funded by the SOCRATES programme, action Comenius 2.1, from October 2004 to October 2007 (coord. Manuel Jiménez Raya).

²⁰ Permission was obtained from the publisher to reproduce part of the DVD material for other publications.

to promote four macro-competences which are also professional development goals:

- *Developing a critical view of (language) education*
- *Managing local constraints so as to open up spaces for manoeuvre*
- *Centring teaching on learning*
- *Interacting with others in the professional community*

The cases were also designed so as to illustrate and promote the development of nine pedagogical principles of pedagogy for autonomy, even though each case usually focuses on only some of these principles, depending on the pedagogical approach that is being illustrated: responsibility, choice, and flexible control; learning to learn and self-regulation; cognitive autonomy support; integration and explicitness; intrinsic motivation; learner differentiation; action-orientedness; conversational interaction; and reflective inquiry.

Case writing starts from real teachers' explorations of pedagogy for autonomy (*case teachers*), which teacher educators (*case writers*) interpret together with them, so as to design reflective tasks that help other teachers go through the case with a double focus: the case teachers' experience and their own experience. Theoretical input and practical instruments and tasks are added in order to help teachers interpret each case and expand their pedagogical understanding and expertise as regards pedagogy for autonomy. Suggestions for pedagogical experimentation are offered to encourage teachers to innovate their teaching along the lines of each case. Figure 6 presents the overall structure of cases.

Each case is constructed around a Theme that is explored in Episodes and Scenes. These metaphors are intended to highlight the narrative nature of experience.

- The *Theme* of each case represents the main focus of the case teacher's experience (e.g. "helping students learn how to learn a language"). Focusing cases on a theme increases case coherence and allows for a smooth combination of theoretical and practical knowledge in a meaningful way.
- Each theme is organised into three *Episodes*: *Understanding the background*, *Looking at practice*, and *Exploring Possibilities*. The first episode introduces the theme and focuses on the case teacher and his/ her professional context. The second episode fosters the conceptual development of the theme, along with tasks centred on the case teacher's specific practices for promoting autonomy. The final episode focuses on the case reader by providing suggestions for pedagogical inquiry within the theme and includes his/her self-evaluation of professional development. Episodes are intended to foster the analysis of the case teacher's experience from different angles, as well as encourage innovation along similar lines. They are divided into *Scenes* that

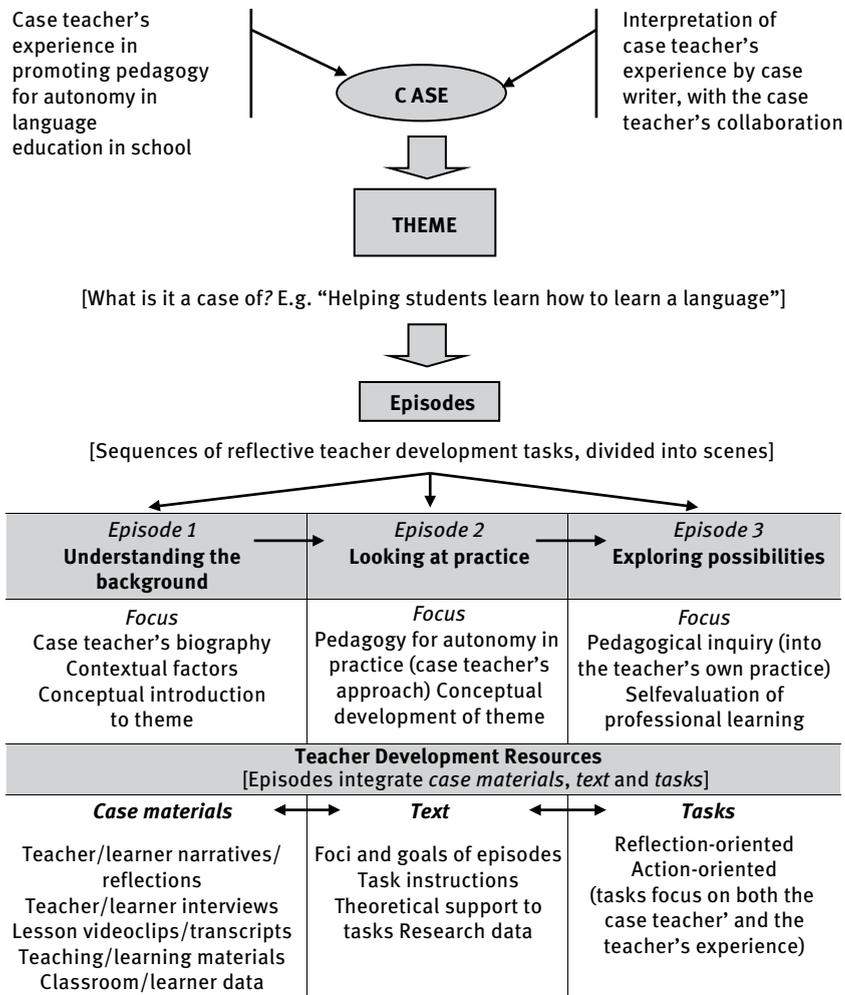


Fig. 6: Case structure

signal relevant dimensions of each case and help teachers move gradually from a focus on the case teacher's practice to a focus on their own practice, from understanding the illustrated approach to exploring it themselves.

- Episodes and Scenes integrate: (a) *case materials* directly extracted from the case teacher's experience (e.g. teacher/ learner reflections, teaching/ learning tasks, lesson videoclips, teacher/ learner interviews...), (b) explanatory/informative *text* related to the case teacher's experience, the proposed tasks

and the conceptual/ research background, and (c) reflection/ action-oriented *tasks* with a focus on various aspects of the case and the teachers' personal professional experience.

In the EuroPAL project, each case was written by a teacher educator who knew the corresponding case teacher, and each teacher provided feedback on his/ her case. In addition, all EuroPAL team members read and provided feedback to the author of the case so as to ensure the internal cohesion of the material. Alternative procedures can be used, for example by involving the case teachers in case design from the start, provided that they feel willing and prepared to do it. Building this kind of cases is time consuming and demands theoretical knowledge as well as ability to relate it to teaching experience. It also requires at least some previous experience in designing teacher education tasks. A challenging approach would be to integrate the writing of this type of cases into teacher education programmes as a core task to be developed by the teachers and the teacher educator. This could also be done within learning communities where teacher educators and teachers work together.

The cases do not present themselves as conventional narratives, but rather as multi-modal texts which combine various types of resources creatively so as to guide a theme-oriented journey of inquiry on the part of the teachers-users, either on their own or in formal teacher education contexts. As teachers make that journey, they find plenty of opportunities to analyse the case teacher's experience through reflective tasks that bring together diverse frames of reference – their own experience, reflective tools, theoretical input and research data. These tasks are intended to help teachers theorise action and think about how they might explore their own teaching along similar lines. They should foster their competence to promote pedagogy for autonomy by helping them uncover personal theories, confront perspectives, scrutinise their own practices and take an exploratory approach to teaching with a focus on learning.

To make these ideas more concrete, we will have a look at some elements of one case. It refers to the experience of Clara Lima, an experienced teacher of English in lower-secondary school (age 12–15) who seeks to develop her students' ability to learn how to learn English. Table 4 presents an overview of how her case is organised. Episode 1 introduces the background to Clara's approach to learning how to learn by focusing on her professional biography, her views of teaching and learning, her pedagogical concerns, and situational constraints. It further introduces the concept of "learning how to learn" and gives some information on educational policies in her country (Portugal). Episode 2 moves deeper into Clara's practices and professional reflections, and instigates readers to connect them to their own experience. Reflective tools and theoretical input are provided

as appropriate. Episode 3 supports teachers to design a small-scale pedagogical experiment with a focus on learning how to learn and includes an overall self-evaluation of their professional development

Tab. 4: Organisation of Clara’s case (Episodes and Scenes)

<i>Episode 1</i>	<i>Episode 2</i>	<i>Episode 3</i>
<i>Understanding the background</i>	<i>Looking at practice</i>	<i>Exploring possibilities</i>
1. What does <i>being a teacher</i> mean?	3. How can <i>learning how to learn</i> be promoted?	4. How can learning how to learn be promoted <i>in my case</i> ?
2. What does <i>learning how to learn</i> mean?		5. What have I <i>learnt</i> ?

In order to clarify the way each scene is structured around tasks, text and case materials, we present in Table 5 a descriptive overview of Scene 1 from the first Episode – “What does *being a teacher* mean?”. The description highlights the reflective nature of cases and their connection with both the case teacher’s experience and the experience of the teacher who reads them. It also shows that in writing these cases, teacher educators develop a scholarship of teacher education by inquiring into the case teachers’ experience and developing teacher education materials that relate that experience to tasks and theoretical input. Furthermore, when they use these materials with other teachers, they also develop new understandings of it on the basis of how the teachers connect them with their own experience. Therefore, professional experience plays a pivotal role in this approach. Cases are open to diverse interpretations and may inspire various forms of context-sensitive pedagogical inquiry.

The expansion of didactic knowledge through theoretical and practical input is a central component of cases. In Clara’s case input refers to different aspects of *learning how to learn*: the concept itself and its connection with other concepts such as “learning awareness”, “learner training” and “self-regulation”; the educational value of learner training; learning strategies (cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective) and the notion of “the good language learner”; teaching strategies and materials for promoting and evaluating learning how to learn in class; steps that may be followed to develop action research plans focused on learning how to learn. Theoretical and practical input is provided to support professional learning and inquiry.

Tab. 5: Overview of case scene (Scene 1 from Clara's case)

Tasks for teacher/ user	Support elements (text and case materials)
Reflecting on what being a teacher means – finding a metaphor: “Being a teacher is like...”	Task instructions Metaphors teachers may choose from (e.g. “growing a garden”, “living a nightmare”)
Justification of personal metaphor and discussion with peers	
Reflecting on personal reasons for becoming a teacher, changes during one's career, difficulties involved in teaching, impact of constraints, self-image as a ‘reflective teacher’	Task instructions Excerpts from Clara's narrative about her experience as a teacher, focusing on the same topics Questions for reflecting about personal experience and ideas as compared with Clara's
Writing a personal narrative on the topics above	Task instructions
Exchanging ideas with another teacher or with a mentor	
Reflecting on constraints to learner autonomy pointed out by Clara (e.g. “learner disaffection towards school”) and identifying possible strategies to deal with them	Task instructions Quote (Benson 2000) List of constraints taken from Clara's narrative
Discussing ideas with peers, students, mentors	
Expanding reflection on constraining factors with reference to theoretical input and identifying transformation strategies	Reflective tool about constraining factors (adapt. from Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007)
Reflecting about the personal relevance of pedagogical questions raised by Clara (e.g. “Am I aware of my learners' needs?”)	Task instructions Excerpt from Clara's narrative with questions she asks herself as a “student-centred teacher”
Interviewing one or more teachers by taking the questions above as a starting point (e.g. “Are you aware of your learners' needs? How?/ Why not? How does that help you/ them?” etc.)	

Tasks for teacher/ user	Support elements (text and case materials)
Jotting down personal ideas on practical implications of “centring teaching on learning”	Task instructions
Expanding reflection with reference to theoretical input, by self-evaluating personal willingness, ability and opportunity to develop learner-centred teaching	Reflective tool about centring teaching on learning: learner-centred practices (adapted from Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007)
Choosing one or two areas for improvement on the basis of the previous task and making notes on steps to take and potential benefits for teacher and students	Planning grid (areas, steps, benefits)
Discussing ideas with students, peers or mentors	
Going back to the initial metaphor on what being a teacher means and reflecting on the extent to which it implies the idea of “centring teaching on learning”	Task instructions
Proposing an alternative metaphor (optional)	

One of the conditions for expanding didactic knowledge is the presentation of real approaches used by the case teachers as a source of inspiration and reflection. For example, in the task presented in Figure 7 teachers are invited to analyse a writing project developed by Clara. The analysis allows teachers to reflect about the extent to which this project promotes the students’ competence to learn how to learn. Through this kind of tasks, teachers theorise real experience, which is a way of answering the question “what is it a case of?” (L. Shulman, 2004a).

Other practice-based materials like lesson videoclips, learner assignments and teacher reflective records can also be used for analysis. For example, teachers may be asked to reflect about critical episodes of practice reported by the case teacher (Figure 8).

See how Clara planned a writing project on “Teenage Problems”. As you read her plan and materials, evaluate her approach in terms of *promoting the students' competence to learn how to learn*.

Promoting learning how to learn – teaching strategies	Present	Not present	Not sure
Negotiating with learners about course content and methodology, if appropriate			
Sharing with learners, in a way that is accessible to them, information about language and language learning			
Encouraging discussion in the classroom about language and language learning			
Increasing learner awareness of the wide range of alternative learning strategies available for language learning			
Creating a learning environment where learners feel they can experiment learning strategies and monitor their progress			
Allowing learners to form their own conclusions about language learning and respecting individual points of view			
Counselling and giving guidance to individual learners when possible			

Further questions for reflection:

- ✓ Do you find Clara's approach...clear? useful? too prescriptive? too long? too complex?...
- ✓ Would her materials be suitable for/adaptable to your context? Why/why not?
- ✓ Do you usually give your students information on learning strategies and try to create opportunities for them to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning? Why?/why not? In what language do you do it? Why?
- ✓ Did you get any inspiration from Clara's approach? Would you like to make any changes to it?

Fig. 7: Theorising teaching approaches (task from Clara's case)

Clara describes a difficult situation that occurred when the students started to plan their writing project.

- ✓ What factors seem to hinder her students' engagement?
- ✓ How does that affect Clara's attitudes and performance?
- ✓ Would you react differently? Why?

If possible, discuss the episode with students, peers or mentors...

Students organised themselves in groups and started to draw the plan of their project. The atmosphere was quite pleasant and the groups got involved in the task. Only one group needed my help. Well, I offered it because I know that the three boys aren't motivated to learn anything related to school matters. They are aware of the fact that the school year is already lost and have accepted it without even trying to fight against it. They are always put aside when it comes to working in groups, mainly because they don't show any interest in collaborating. So once again they were alone waiting for the lesson to finish. However, I decided to make one last effort to make them feel they could do the project even if at an elementary level.

I sat down with them and we drew the plan. I can't say they felt very enthusiastic but at least they didn't refuse my help. Since the beginning of the school year these students had behaved as if they were living a permanent sacrifice. They didn't want to learn, that's what they said. No matter what we did in class they were the last to participate. So I wondered, is it worth the effort? Is there any hope for these students? Am I doing this because I want to feel that at least I gave them a chance and haven't given up yet? Will they feel they are still part of a team? I really doubt it. But I like challenges, so let's wait and see what happens. (My Diary)

Fig. 8: Reflecting about critical episodes (task from Clara's case)

Theoretical input plays an important role in expanding didactic knowledge and it is always related to practice through reflection. The sequence presented in Figure 9 illustrates this idea, with a focus on the relation between classroom interaction, learner participation/ involvement and learning how to learn. At the end of each Episode, a list of references is provided.

Learning how to learn implies student involvement and participation in the learning process. What role can classroom interaction play here?

Van Lier, for example, distinguishes *transmission-oriented* from *transformation-oriented* interaction as follows, the latter being more likely to promote learner autonomy (1996: 178/179). The former refers to the delivery of information or directives from one person (the knower) to another or others, in a one-way, monologic format. Typical exponents are lectures, sermons, recipes in a cook book, drills and commands. In classrooms, this is the typical monologic lecture format, and the prototypical 'banking model' described by Freire (1970). Transformation-oriented information refers to jointly managed talk that has the potential to change learning situations, role relationships, educational purposes and procedure. Here it is no longer the case that one person, the teacher, has the agenda, and the students have no option but to follow it. Rather, the agenda is shaped by all participants, and educational reality may be transformed. Participants' contributions are self-determined or produced in response to others' requests. At this level it is appropriate to speak of true *co-construction* of meanings and events. These two modes of interaction can be represented as poles of a *continuum* where different communication practices are located differently:

Transmission	1	2	3	4	5	Transformation
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Look at a video clip from one of Clara's lessons and try to locate it in the above continuum. If possible, discuss your opinions with others.

(...)

Bearing in mind this distinction, ask a colleague or mentor to observe the process of interaction in one of your lessons. Ask him/her to use the table below.

Classroom interaction features	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Content-oriented				
Process-oriented				
Jointly managed by teacher and learner				
Teacher controlled				
Learner controlled				

Discuss the observer's notes. To what extent was the interaction in your lesson transmission-oriented or transformation-oriented?

Transmission	1	2	3	4	5	Transformation
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Would you like to introduce changes in the interaction process in your teaching?

Fig. 9: Articulating theory and practice through reflection (tasks from Clara's case)

Instigating pedagogical inquiry is another central purpose of cases and it is the main focus of Episode 3, where support is provided for the development of small-scale experiments in the teachers' own classes. In the case we are looking at, teachers are asked to design, implement and evaluate an action research plan for promoting learning how to learn. The steps for them to follow are: selecting one class; selecting an area for learner development; designing and implementing a working plan; monitoring and evaluating their experience. Suggestions are given for developing each step. Figure 10 presents the suggestions for step 2 – Selecting an area for learner development. As teachers consider the different strategies they might use, they learn about how to collect and incorporate learner data into their teaching plans.

You can choose the learner development area by diagnosing your students' learning problems or needs, using one or more of the following strategies. Choose those you find most relevant to your situation.

Diagnosing learning problems or needs

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Information you can collect</i>	<i>Strategies I will use & information I want to collect</i>
<i>Observation in class</i> (on you own or with the help of students, peers, mentors...)	Willingness and ability to use the FL Speaking/listening/interaction skills Willingness and ability to participate Willingness and ability to work with others Willingness and ability to learn how to learn General attitudes and behaviour ...	
<i>Analysis of teacher's and students' reflective records</i> (e.g., journals and portfolios)	Any information that is useful for diagnosing learning problems or needs	
<i>Analysis of students' language work</i> (tests, assignments, portfolios, etc.)	Mainly language ability (reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, socio-cultural competence, etc.)	
<i>Dialogue with and among the students</i> (class, groups or individuals)	Previous learning experiences Learning habits and preferences Personal goals and expectations Strengths and difficulties (in any area of language learning) Areas for improvement Willingness and ability to learn how to learn General attitudes and behaviour ...	

Diagnosing learning problems or needs		
<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Information you can collect</i>	<i>Strategies I will use & information I want to collect</i>
<i>Questionnaire to/ interview with the students</i>	Previous learning experiences Learning habits and preferences Personal goals and expectations Strengths and difficulties (in any area of language learning) Areas for improvement Willingness and ability to learn how to learn General attitudes and behaviour ...	
<i>Learning strategy checklists/ monitoring sheets</i>	Use, usefulness and easiness of learning strategies (in any area of language learning) ...	
<i>Other:</i>		

Fig. 10: Selecting an area for learner development (task from Clara's case)

All cases end with an evaluation of professional learning, which may generate further discussions with the teacher educator and peers. Figure 11 presents a self-evaluation task where teachers are asked to make notes on what they learnt from Clara's case, with reference to its episodes/ scenes and the corresponding teacher development aims.

In writing and using this type of cases, teacher educators become active inquirers of teaching and teacher education practices. It is a challenging endeavour that requires:

- Having an ethical-conceptual framework as regards teaching and teacher education, which in our case is based on a view of autonomy as a collective interest grounded in democratic values;
- Assigning a central place to professional experience in teacher development and acknowledging the role that case-based pedagogy can play in it;
- Assuming that teacher educators can produce knowledge with the direct collaboration of teachers and designing teacher development materials that take teachers' professional experience as the starting point;
- Finding teachers who explore pedagogy for autonomy in language education and are willing to contribute to the writing of cases by sharing ideas and materials;

What have I <i>learnt</i> ?		
Episodes & scenes	Teacher development aims	My learning (progress and problems)
1. Understanding the background		
	<i>Reflecting on:</i>	
What does <i>being a teacher</i> mean?	✓ Professional identity	
What does <i>learning how to learn</i> mean?	✓ Constraints to teacher and learner development	
	✓ How teaching can focus on learning	
	✓ Learning how to learn	
2. Looking at practice		
	<i>Reflecting on:</i>	
How can <i>learning how to learn</i> be promoted?	✓ Teaching and learning tasks	
	✓ Classroom interaction	
	✓ Teacher and learner roles	
	✓ Evaluation of teaching and learning processes	
3. Exploring possibilities		
How can learning how to learn be explored <i>in my case</i> ?	– Designing, implementing and evaluating an action plan to promote learning how to learn	
	– Reflecting on professional learning	
What have I <i>learnt</i> ?		

Fig. 11: Self-evaluation of professional development (task from Clara's case)

- Collecting and assembling various resources that can be creatively combined to produce multi-modal texts that are coherent, motivating and inspiring;
- Getting feedback from the case teachers to ensure that cases are faithful to their experience and provide interpretations they can identify with;
- Working with other teacher educators that can provide useful feedback on case writing and, if possible, on the use of cases;
- Being willing to develop experience-based, dialogical teacher education practices where teachers can (de/re)construct their professional knowledge in a supportive environment;
- Helping teachers inquire into their own practices and making the most of their effort to promote educational change;
- Being willing to inquire into and disseminate case pedagogy in order to scrutinise its potential for teacher and learner development, and also for the development of the teacher education profession.

Meeting these conditions may not be easy, but they ensure that case writing and case pedagogy become part of the scholarship in teacher education and support educational change.

These cases can be used by teachers working on their own, but we would like to emphasise their use in teacher education contexts, as we believe that interaction among peers and with teacher educators can greatly enhance their impact on teacher development. They were originally developed for in-service language teacher education, but they can also be used by pre-service teachers during their *practicum*, or even before that. In the latter case, some of the tasks would have to be adapted by referring to the student teachers' experience as language *learners* and by focussing inquiry on its planning stage, unless some form of micro-teaching is feasible.

Some of the strategies for case analysis based on professional narratives, described in the previous chapter, also apply here with slight differences:

- Pedagogical rationales and practices are analysed with diverse frames of reference emerging from the teachers' and the case teacher's experience and personal theories, and also from theoretical input and reflective tools provided in the material.
- Teachers explore answers to the question "*what is this a case of?*" (L. Shulman, 2004a), thus appreciating the case teacher's experience from different angles and expanding their own professional knowledge in diverse directions.
- The role of the teacher educator is to facilitate reflection and dialogue, question tacit beliefs and assumptions, expand and challenge the teachers' reasoning, and provide additional theoretical input as needed.
- Because some of the tasks involve teachers in pedagogical inquiry in professional contexts, the teacher educator must also support decision-making and provide constructive feedback on teachers' action.
- Theoretical input (which can be purely theoretical or based on empirical studies) is aimed at expanding teachers' horizons as regards teacher/ learner autonomy and developing their ability to analyse and reshape experience.

The teacher educator can either provide all the material at once or divide it in chunks for analysis. In either case, s/he must decide which tasks will be done by the teachers on their own and which will be discussed collectively. In order to move the case analysis in further directions, the case teacher can be invited to come to class and talk to the teachers about the experiment and other experiments within the case theme.

Multi-modal cases like the ones we propose here can be combined with the use of teacher narratives as described in the previous chapter. One way of doing this is to ask teachers to narrate their final action research experiments for further

analysis after completing the case tasks. Another way is to develop a hybrid approach where cases written by teacher educators are used in conjunction with teacher-written cases. This approach is illustrated in the following section.

2 A practical example: developing a hybrid approach

The combination of narrative and multi-modal cases may be particularly useful for incorporating the advantages of both types of cases. Teacher-written narratives are more authentic and more open to diverse interpretation, and may be used in more flexible ways. Their story-like structure may facilitate the understanding of the teacher writer's rationales and enhance reader engagement. Furthermore, as illustrated in the previous chapter, they may be particularly useful in situations where teachers are also expected to produce narratives. On the other hand, multi-modal cases written by teacher educators are more structured and provide more guidance to the teacher learning process as they integrate a learning agenda in the way they combine and sequence a set of tasks, texts and materials. They may facilitate the relation between the case teacher's experience and personal experience, the articulation of theory and practice, and the identification of critical aspects of pedagogy for autonomy.

Here we present a hybrid approach implemented with a small group of five pre-service student teachers before the *practicum*, in an English Language Teaching Methodology course during one semester (15 sessions of 5 hours each).²¹ Two students had some previous teaching experience, and only one had received educational training. They were in the first year of a two-year MA programme in Teaching (Spanish and English) and their previous training was done in subject-specific areas – language, linguistics, and literature.²²

The approach integrates the use of teacher narratives and a multi-modal case (Clara's case, presented above).²³ As regards frames of reference for case analysis,

21 The approach here described was developed by Flávia in 2011/12. A similar experiment was also carried out by Manuel in the same year, with pre-service student teachers who were already doing their *practicum*. Because the contexts determine the way a case-based pedagogy is developed, we decided to focus on one of the experiments.

22 Due to the reform of pre-service teacher education within the Bologna Process in Portugal, educational subjects (including teaching methodology) are only taught at the MA level after students complete a three-year graduate programme in the subject-specific areas.

23 The version used was the one published on a DVD (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011). The tasks referring to teaching experience were adapted so as to focus on the students' experience of teach-

the work produced within the Europol project, especially the book by Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira (2007), was given particular prominence since it presents a framework for teacher and learner autonomy in language education. Other texts were read and suggested, particularly for the design of individual autonomy-oriented pedagogical projects which were the main course assignment. These projects were developed as a kind of case construction and were intended to be the basis for the development of larger projects during the *practicum* in the following year.

The course was organised into four dimensions: *Getting ready to learn about pedagogy for autonomy*, *Expanding competences towards pedagogy for autonomy*, *Expanding knowledge on language skills development and evaluation*, and *Designing and evaluating a pedagogical project*. These dimensions correspond to sequential stages, except for the last one: the development of pedagogical projects took place during the semester with the teacher educator's support in and outside class. Case analysis was developed in the first two stages, which occupied most of the course time. As for the third dimension – *Expanding knowledge on language skills development and evaluation* –, it aimed at enlarging and systematising didactic knowledge on the basis of theoretical input and materials analysis. Because case pedagogy is time-consuming, a decision was made with the students to use some time (in our case, 15 hours) for covering course content that was relevant for them as prospective teachers.

The experiment illustrates an intention to develop a scholarship of teacher education by inquiring into case-based pedagogy: *What are its benefits and constraints for promoting student teachers' competences as regards pedagogy for autonomy in language education?* In order to answer this question, questionnaires and learning logs were used along with class reflection and a teaching log written by the teacher educator; the students' final assignments – pedagogical projects – were analysed in terms of competence development and perceived gains from case-based pedagogy.

What follows is a brief description of the experiment (rationale and learning tasks).

1. Getting ready to learn about pedagogy for autonomy

Rationale

- A need for learning can be created by starting from and challenging the students' personal theories and experience

ing as learners. Because two of the students already had some previous teaching experience, some of those tasks were discussed with them.

- Knowing about the students' theories and experience helps the teacher educator create a student-centred, dialogical learning environment from the beginning
- Reflection about learning helps the students and the teacher educator monitor the teacher education approach, and enhances their role in shaping teacher education pedagogies

Learning Tasks

Entry questionnaire (individual) on students' representations of: self as (prospective) foreign language (FL) teachers; FL teaching principles; FL learning; obstacles/ dilemmas of (FL) teaching in schools (this questionnaire was taken up again at the end of the course so that the students could change/ expand their initial answers)

Encouraging discussion among the students about their representations of FL teaching and learning, on the basis of their answers to the entry questionnaire (teacher educator as observer)

Imagining/ planning “an ideal English lesson” collaboratively (Instruction: “Plan what you think would be an ideal English lesson”)

Reading on “visions of the classroom” (Tudor 2001): 1. Reflecting on visions that are most absent in school practices and why; 2. Revisiting the lesson plan in the light of theoretical input – which vision(s) does it incorporate/ exclude?

Learning about *Centring teaching on learning* (Jiménez Raya, Lamb and Vieira 2007: 54): 1. Analysing a short narrative on making homework meaningful to students (case 1) – to what extent does it illustrate centring teaching on learning?; 2. Revising the lesson plan – how could it be expanded so as to become more learning-centred?

Learning log 1: *To what extent have the previous tasks challenged my ideas about language education?* (discussion of ideas in the following lesson)

2. Expanding competences towards pedagogy for autonomy

Rationale

- Case analysis can develop professional competences, by helping the students integrate theory and practice and get a re(ide)alistic understanding of pedagogy *as experience*
- Theoretical input should support case analysis and help the students complexify personal theories (rather than being an end in itself)
- Reflection about learning helps the students and the teacher educator monitor the teacher education approach, and enhances their role in shaping teacher education pedagogies

Learning Tasks

Reading/ analysing two short narrative accounts (cases 2, 3) written by English teachers on: 1. promoting pedagogy for autonomy through portfolios (A. Mamede); 2. promoting pedagogy for autonomy through learning how to learn (C. Lima) (reported in Vieira, Mamede,

and Lima 2008) – to what extent are they cases of pedagogy for autonomy in action as regards the learner competences that are promoted? (with reference to Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 45–47)

Learning log 2: *Think about the teaching approaches in the two narratives: What was new for you in these approaches? Are they feasible? If not, what factors may hinder them? To what extent/ in what aspects do you identify yourself with them?* (discussion of ideas in the following lesson)

Conceptualising previous work as *case pedagogy* in teacher education: brief introduction to a case-base approach within a pedagogy of experience in teacher education

Reading/ analysing a more extensive professional narrative (case 4) of pedagogy for autonomy with a focus on oral reading (Teixeira et al. 2010)²⁴ – to what extent is it a case of pedagogy for autonomy in action as regards teacher and learner roles?

Conversation about the experiment with one of the teachers who implemented and narrated it (A. C. Teixeira) on the basis of students' pre-defined questions; Listening to/ discussing her account of how she developed learner self-direction in her MA dissertation project (case 5) and reading about it (Teixeira 2011)

Learning log 3: *How do the ideas below relate to your recent learning experience – analysing a narrative on oral reading, talking to one of the teachers and learning about her experience on promoting self-direction?*

Working with pedagogical cases is a form of experiential learning: we enter the experience of others and make links to our own experience, using both as lenses for thinking about our future work. As we do this, we question pedagogical practices, look at them from various angles, uncover the personal theories they embody, confront those theories with alternative views... (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011: 10)

Analysing excerpts of students' log entries in terms of the value of cases for professional learning, with reference to Shulman's (2004a) ideas on case pedagogy

Reading a booklet on educational policies and pedagogy for autonomy in Europe – the case of Portugal (Vieira 2011a, in Miliander and Trebbi 2011)

Reading about the Europol Project and a case-based approach to teacher education for learner autonomy (Jiménez Raya and Vieira 2011, introductory booklet to DVD with cases)

Going through the introductory unit of the DVD, on pedagogy for autonomy (based on Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira, 2007): reading, reflective tasks, discussion with peers / teacher educator

²⁴ This is the narrative analysed in the previous chapter.

Discussing constraints to pedagogy for autonomy and strategies to overcome them (social and educational factors, learner factors, teacher factors): reading and reflective task to identify constraints and strategies in the Portuguese context

Going through Clara's case – *Helping students learn how to learn a language*: reading, reflective tasks, discussion with peers/ teacher educator

Final discussion about the case: After reading about Clara's experience, what did you find more interesting, relevant, inspiring...? What have you learnt by exploring Clara's case? What knowledge, abilities, values, attitudes... have you developed? What difficulties/ problems did you have in exploring this material? (you may refer to motivation, understanding the case material, doing the reflective tasks, technical problems, the way the material is presented/ developed, etc.)

Mid-term course evaluation questionnaire – reflection about the course and suggestions for its development

3. Expanding knowledge on language skills development and evaluation

Rationale

- Case pedagogy takes a lot of time and reduces the amount of content covered
- Time is needed to expand and systematise relevant pedagogical knowledge (as suggested by the students in the mid-term course evaluation questionnaire)
- Expanding and systematising knowledge *after* case analysis may help the students better understand the relevance of that knowledge for promoting autonomy, as they are better able to relate it to pedagogy for autonomy in action as illustrated in cases
- Reflection about learning helps the students and the teacher educator monitor the teacher education approach, and enhances their role in shaping teacher education pedagogies

Learning Tasks

Focus on oral communication development and evaluation

Information and reflective tasks (including analysis of teaching materials) on: authentic vs. classroom communication; criteria for communicative activities; classroom discourse & pedagogical roles; approaches to oral skills development, communication strategies, use of L1 in class, (self-)evaluation of oral communication learning strategies

Focus on reading and writing development and evaluation

Information and reflective tasks (including analysis of teaching materials) on: classroom cultures of reading and writing vs. theoretical knowledge and curricular orientations; reading & writing competences and strategies; approaches to reading & writing development

Focus on language learning assessment

Information and reflective tasks (including analysis of teaching materials) on: testing vs. others forms of assessment; product vs. process assessment; principles for formative assessment

Learning log 4: *Were these lessons on language skills development and evaluation important for your learning? Why/why not? Do you think that these lessons should have been taught at the beginning of the course? Why/ why not?* (discussion of ideas in the following lesson)

4. Designing and evaluating a pedagogical project

Rationale

- Designing and evaluating a pedagogical project is a form of case construction that helps the students develop professional competences and prepares them for the *practicum*
- Reflection about learning helps the students and the teacher educator monitor the teacher education approach, and enhances their role in shaping teacher education pedagogies

Learning tasks (during the semester)

Providing and discussing guidelines for designing and evaluating an individual pedagogical project (case construction)

Designing the project with the teacher educator's support (in class/ through e-mail/ in tutoring sessions): a learner-centred pedagogical sequence of tasks related to the development of a particular language skill (listening, speaking, interacting, writing, reading)

Presentation of projects in class and discussion of the extent to which they represent cases of pedagogy for autonomy in language education

Writing the project (10–12 A4 pages) with the following structure:

Sections	Content
<i>The project and my vision of language education</i>	Summary of the project and of the vision of language education that underlies it
<i>My pedagogical choices: what and why</i>	Presentation and justification of: skill area chosen; context for implementation; pedagogical intentions; communicative and learning competences to be promoted; activities and materials to be used; strategies designed for monitoring and evaluating pedagogical action
<i>What is the project a case of?</i>	Overall conceptualisation of the project: what beliefs, assumptions, principles, values... does it seek to represent/ illustrate within language education?
<i>What I learnt and did not learn with this project</i>	Learning outcomes (as related to the course objectives), difficulties, shortcomings, questions/ doubts raised for further understanding/ exploration

Self-evaluating the project on the basis of agreed criteria, also used by the teacher educator to assess the project:

1. Clear presentation of the project (structure, intelligibility)
2. Internal consistence of task sequence
3. Articulation of communicative and learning competences in task sequence
4. Relevance of the task sequence as regards competence development
5. Problematisation of choices (justifications, implications, shortcomings...)
6. Integration of theoretical input regarding the skill area and pedagogy for autonomy
7. Formal correctness (language, bibliographic references)

Teacher educator's feedback on each project (written)

The data collected from questionnaires, logs and projects showed that the case-based approach was highly appreciated by the students and promoted competences needed to enhance a pedagogy for autonomy: a critical view of (language) education; critical awareness of constraints and spaces for manoeuvre in the school setting; and the ability to plan teaching centred on learning. In their *practicum*, student teachers are expected to develop a project in one class, on the basis of which they have to write a report that shows their ability to centre teaching on learning and inquire into practice. The fact that the students had to design a project was felt to be important to prepare them for that challenging task.²⁵

At the beginning of the course the students had no idea about pedagogy for autonomy, except for one student who already had some educational training. The “ideal lesson” they were asked to plan at that stage was clearly influenced by their experience as language learners (the apprenticeship of observation), and even though it was intended to motivate the learners by focusing on musical bands, it was mostly teacher-centred. On the contrary, the pedagogical projects designed during the semester were all learning-centred, showing that the students were willing to engage in re(ide)alistic practices. Here is an example of how the students approached project design with the intention to counteract common beliefs about language learning:

When I asked some English teachers what they think about doing a debate with 9th graders, they all said that it would be impossible, due to the students' level of knowledge and maturity. Therefore, in the present project a plan of action is designed that allows the transition from impossibility to reality by seeking to create the knowledge conditions that allow everyone to participate and, above all, the necessary self-confidence conditions through a focus on content rather than on form and through the organisation of debates in very small

²⁵ Three of these students were later supervised by Flávia in the *practicum*, where they had the opportunity to refine and expand their projects with an enhanced sense of commitment to pedagogy for autonomy in language education.

groups where the main goal is not the debate itself but rather the outcome of the debate.
(P., project; translated)

The direct contact with autonomy-oriented professional experience supports prospective teachers in understanding the relation between theory and practice and believing that change is possible. However, it is also important that they become aware of constraints to autonomy and develop a critical understanding of school education. At the beginning of the course, in the entry questionnaire, these students were not able to identify many obstacles to language education at school, focusing mainly on the learners' lack of motivation and discipline. One of them just wrote: "I don't know". Later on, after analysing some cases and doing some readings on pedagogy for autonomy, they were all more able to take a critical stance. In one of the learning tasks, the student who had no idea about constraints wrote the following reflection, which relates to the prevalence of a transmission model of teaching and the pervasive effects of the apprenticeship of observation:

In the Portuguese context, teachers are still too conditioned by the so-called "syllabus" and tend to follow it without any change. It's like a rule that can never be broken. Tradition consists of transmission lessons with the teacher talking and the students listening, with little or no room for discussion... We tend to create an image of the teacher we want to be on the basis of what we see our teachers doing. Therefore, our system is probably reproducing itself decade after decade, because teachers teach the way they were taught... Studying is seen as something that will allow people to have a better life in the future. Unfortunately, the dominant institutional culture does not help to build that vision, since the ministry of education, the schools and even the teachers do not want to change the system and have maintained an outdated culture, being afraid of changing into something they do not know yet, afraid of making things worse. (F., reflective task; translated)

By enhancing students' awareness of what goes wrong in education and showing them alternative practices, case pedagogy can help students envision a different future for education. It can help them understand that rules *can* be broken and that schools need to change into something not known yet, because things can get better when autonomy becomes an educational goal.

3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter we have illustrated a strategy that involves teacher educators in writing and using cases that integrate the professional experience of real teachers who seek to promote pedagogy for autonomy in schools. By combining that experience with theoretical input and reflective tasks, teacher educators produce multi-modal texts that can help other teachers understand how autonomy can be promoted and support them to develop autonomy-oriented experiments in the language classroom. In doing so, teacher educators also develop their own understanding of teaching and of their role in enhancing educational change.

Although these cases are not presented as narratives, they draw on the story-like nature of pedagogical experience by evolving around one teacher's story of autonomy and also by engaging other teachers in reflecting on their own professional stories. They further inspire them to develop new stories through classroom-based inquiry that involves their own students in building re(ide)listic practices (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007). Overall, they create spaces where multiple experiences and diverse knowledge representations crisscross the terrain of professional development for teacher and learner autonomy. Finally, they can be combined with the use of professional narratives within a hybrid approach, even with prospective teachers, as illustrated in the example above.

For teacher educators, writing and using cases as well as reflecting about and disseminating case-based pedagogy can become a form of self-study that “creates opportunities to develop the relationships and understandings in teaching and learning that tend to characterize much of the work of teachers, but have largely been ignored in the past by academia” (Loughran 2002b: 245). The fact is that teacher educators *are* teachers and cannot do their job as if they were something else. If they advocate teacher inquiry in school, then they must do it themselves in their institutions. As Myers (2002) suggests, challenging the belief that “telling, showing, and guided practice” constitute adequate teacher education requires that teacher educators engage in individual and collaborative self-study as learners of teaching and teacher education. We would add that schoolteachers must become their partners in this endeavour, and we believe that case writing from teachers' experience and case-based pedagogy can greatly enhance a more democratic and inspiring approach to the development of the teacher education profession.

Conclusion

This book was written with the intention to address two interrelated concerns about teacher education and school pedagogy:

- *how can teacher education become a powerful space for enhancing democratic educational change that integrates teacher and learner development?*
- *how can teacher education integrate and enhance professional knowledge so as to promote teacher empowerment and (inter)personal transformation?*

Based on the specialised literature and on our experience as teacher educators and educational researchers, we proposed an ethical and theoretical framework for the integrated development of teachers and learners towards autonomy in language education in a school context. Autonomy is conceived as a collective interest in the service of democracy, and also as a personal “competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation” (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007: 1). Within this framework, we proposed and illustrated a case-based approach to teacher education that seeks to provide answers to the above questions.

We assume that teacher and learner empowerment entails a democratic stance and a re(ide)alistic practice, thus embracing the idea that teaching and teacher education are moral and political activities that seek to disclose and counteract barriers to transformation. Because schools are complex scenarios where humanistic concerns co-exist with a growing rise of technocracy, bureaucracy and accountability, teachers need to manage and find a way through conflicting rationalities with the purpose of enhancing education as a space for empowerment. Case-based teacher education can help fulfil this purpose because it entails a deep concern with the complexity and uniqueness of professional experience and a deep belief in teachers’ agency as critical producers of knowledge and enactors of change.

In an ‘era of supercomplexity’ (Barnett 2000) teachers need to develop a capacity to think critically, analyse issues from various angles, manage ambiguous problems, communicate with different stakeholders, take on leadership in curriculum development, and learn throughout life because “one never learns to teach once for all. It is a continuous, ongoing, constantly deepening process” (Shulman 2004a: 517). The challenge for teacher education for learner autonomy is to help student teachers and practising teachers to think in powerful ways about education and find strategies that enable them to address constraints in their

struggle for an education that is more rational, just and satisfactory. Improving the quality of learning requires improving the quality of teaching, but the quality of teaching can only be improved through the implementation of educational policies and teacher development programmes that encourage and effectively support professional autonomy. As Feiman-Nemser indicates, “Unless teachers have access to serious and sustained learning opportunities at every stage in their career, they are unlikely to teach in ways that meet demanding new standards for student learning or to participate in the solution of educational problems” (2001: 1014–1015).

Without the competence to engage critically and without a strong professional identity teachers may find it difficult to assume responsibility for curricular decisions. Research on teacher professional development has emphasised the centrality of teacher involvement in pedagogical inquiry to create knowledge about curriculum development and educational processes in collaboration with higher education institutions and others. In order to become leaders of educational thought, (prospective) teachers should acquire the willingness and ability to develop a critical view of education, to disclose constraints to autonomy and open up spaces for manoeuvre, to centre teaching on learning, and to interact with significant others in their professional communities (Jiménez Raya, Lamb, and Vieira 2007). Teachers as the central agents of (modern language) education need to feel that they are part of the process of building a school climate in which they themselves, administrators and education experts cooperate to improve students’ learning, to increase the power of teaching, and to redesign the curriculum.

We strongly believe that a case-based approach to teacher education can foster pedagogy for autonomy by helping teachers explore the space of possibility, that is, what *can* be, shortening the distance between reality and ideals. Case pedagogy is based on the assumption that knowledge is constructed, built on prior knowledge, linked to experience, permeable, evolving, and consequential. Since teaching represents an “ill-structured domain” characterised by uncertainty and ambiguity (Spiro et al. 1987: 2), case pedagogy can be used to help teachers “understand the contingent and contextualised nature of teaching” (Grossman 1992: 231) and provide them with insights into alternative solutions to pedagogical problems rather than ‘correct’ answers. Encouraging teachers to appraise different solutions from various perspectives (e.g., normative, interpretive, and critical standpoints) will promote professional reasoning. Cases convey contextual knowledge and give teachers the opportunity to understand the situated nature of evidence, the interrelationship between practical and theoretical knowledge, and the moral and political nature of teaching (L. Shulman 1986b;

Harrington and Garrison 1992; Fenstermacher and Richardson 1993). In trying to promote pedagogy for autonomy, a case-based approach also avoids attitudes of disbelief and scepticism common to many teachers who think that autonomy is a utopia or a theoretical construct that has nothing to do with life in classrooms. By analysing narratives of autonomy-oriented experiments and by experimenting with autonomy themselves, teachers learn that pedagogy for autonomy can be promoted in many different ways and to varying degrees, with significant implications for the quality of teaching and learning. This is what happened in the experiences reported in chapters 4 and 5, where teachers and student teachers reconfigured their willingness and ability to promote autonomy in language education and became more hopeful in a better future for education.

Case pedagogy presupposes that cognition is a social and situated phenomenon (J. Shulman 1992; Sykes and Bird 1992). If all knowledge is situated in – and grows from – the contexts of its use, then learning to teach should also be situated in sites of teaching and learning (J. Shulman 1992; L. Shulman 1992; Richardson 1991). According to Sykes and Bird (1992), coupled to the indexical character of conceptual knowledge there is an emphasis on the activity within which concepts are used. Thus, the promotion of conceptual understanding requires attention to situations of use. Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky 1978, 1986; Smagorinsky 1995) stresses the social nature of learning by positing that the social and the individual are, according to Cole (1985: 148), “mutually constitutive elements of a single, interacting system”. Learning encompasses the use of cultural and symbolic tools such as language, texts, and experiences to forge understanding of the subject under study (Smagorinsky 1995) while we engage in specific activities within specific environments (Rogoff 1990; Tulviste 1991). Because knowledge is situated, it is partly a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used.

Case-based pedagogy can create rich learning environments to mediate teacher thinking and action with reference to assumptions and principles of pedagogy for autonomy. Experience and language assume a central role as mediating tools and case pedagogy can be conceptualised as a form of pedagogical inquiry developed through a “reflective conversation” with experience whereby “our perceptions, appreciations, and beliefs are rooted in worlds of our own making that we come to *accept* as reality” (Schön 1987: 36). This does not entail, however, a solipsistic attitude in professional development. Teacher educators and teachers seek to build a dialogic understanding of experience that conciliates theoretical with practical concerns, using multiple frames of reference to (re)shape thought and action. Because cases are ‘cases of something’, learning from and with them entails an articulation between the particularities of teaching and the ethical and theoretical rationales that can help us scrutinise the justifications and implica-

tions of pedagogical choices, as well as the historical and structural forces that may restrain or facilitate the development of autonomy in schools.

We proposed two strategies for the development of case pedagogy in formal teacher education contexts, one involving teachers in the analysis of teacher-written narratives of autonomy and in the construction of autonomy cases based on small-scale action research projects, and the other involving teacher educators in writing multi-modal cases from teachers' experience of autonomy and using them with other teachers for case analysis and pedagogical experimentation. Both strategies rely on a genuine interest in educational experience and in the belief that teacher development should centre around it. They both aim at teacher and learner empowerment based on democratic values, thus requiring that teacher educators and teachers become curriculum managers, pedagogical inquirers, and co-constructors of pedagogical knowledge. To a certain extent, case-based teacher education can be a way to promote not only more democratic school pedagogies but also more democratic teacher education and educational inquiry. It can foster a scholarship of teaching and teacher education and provides opportunities for self-study research, thus empowering teachers and teacher educators as critical producers of knowledge and agents of change within their professions (Loughran 2007; Zeichner 2007; Lunenberg and Hamilton 2008).

The practical approaches suggested in this book were designed, experimented and evaluated by the authors in their work as pre/in-service teacher educators, and this experiential basis increases their potential transferability to similar contexts. As a result of experimentation, and also on the basis of relevant literature, we can identify some major conditions that need to be met in order to consolidate a case-based approach intended to promote teacher empowerment and enhance democratic educational change:

- Developing an ethical-conceptual framework that integrates teacher and learner development based on a view of autonomy as a collective interest and a personal competence grounded in democratic values;
- Acknowledging the complexity of teaching and learning, the uniqueness and indeterminacy of educational phenomena, the existence of conflicting values and rationalities operating in professional contexts, and the re(ide)alistic nature of attempts to challenge and transform dominant pedagogical cultures;
- Assigning a central place to professional experience and pedagogical inquiry in teacher development, and assuming that teachers and teacher educators can become partners in the production of professional knowledge and in the reconstruction of educational practices;

- Using and producing autonomy-oriented cases that are thought-provoking and can be potentially related to professional experience and theoretical frames of reference;
- Combining case analysis with case construction so that teachers can not only appreciate what other teachers do to promote pedagogy for autonomy but also experience it themselves;
- Adopting a dialogical, reflective approach in the analysis and construction of cases, where all interventions are valid contributions to the negotiation of perspectives and the collaborative production of knowledge;
- Creating a safe, supportive learning environment where communication and interpersonal relationships are based on mutual respect, negotiation, and understanding;
- Developing oral and written forms of discourse that best translate lived experience and allow teacher educators and teachers to communicate effectively and relate experience to theoretical ideas;
- Inquiring into and disseminating case pedagogy in order to scrutinise its potential for teacher and learner development, and also for the development of the teacher education profession.

Despite the educational potential of case pedagogy, it is not a solution for the problems of teaching and teacher education, and more research needs to be carried out to understand its value and limitations, especially for the development of pedagogy for autonomy. As regards future research, we believe that the most promising road is the continuous exploration and assessment of case-based approaches carried out by teacher educators, in a self-study fashion whereby they scrutinise and disseminate their practices. As Loughran points out (2007: 18–19), self-study research is a demanding task:

There is little doubt that those teacher educators who adopt a self-study methodology for inquiring into their teacher education practices are indeed serious about seeking to better understand the complex nature of teaching and learning about teaching. However, if the outcomes of self-studies are to genuinely affect the work of teacher education beyond the individual, then (...) there is an ongoing need for such work to demonstrate a scholarship central to research more generally (e.g., to make the work available for public critique, critical review, and evaluation by members of that community and be such that members of that community begin to use, build on, develop, adapt, adjust, and innovate the work in ways meaningful to their own teaching and learning context).

Even though this book is not in itself an example of self-study research, it emerges partially from self-study focused on the case-based approaches illustrated. Actually, if it weren't for our previous experience in writing and using cases, we would

not have ventured to publish a book on case pedagogy, as we firmly believe in the power of experience as a pillar of professional knowledge. By making our experience public to other members of the educational community, we hope they can scrutinize our ideas, build on our work and feel inspired to explore the use of cases for promoting teacher and learner autonomy.

We believe this book raises controversial issues as regards the purposes of (language) teaching and teacher education, with implications on how these should be conducted. Our stance is clearly based on a humanistic and democratic ideology that takes autonomy as the core value around which teaching and teacher education should develop, with the ultimate goal of making learning in schools more meaningful and empowering. We are aware, however, of potential shortcomings of and criticisms to our stance – Are we too utopian in appealing to autonomy as an educational goal? Is our view of autonomy too biased or restricted when we associate it with a democratic view of education? Is it too naïve to assume that teachers can be critical intellectuals and agents of change, or that teacher educators will be willing to value teachers' experience and take it as the axis of teacher development programmes? Is it too unrealistic to assume that teacher education institutions might embrace pedagogies that empower teachers and learners? Is it feasible to expect a future where academics work more closely with teachers in the production and distribution of educational knowledge? Is our cross-disciplinary approach to issues of teaching and teacher education too broad to be useful for language teachers and teacher educators?...

The question is then: What are we missing in what we believe and aim at? In other words, what is it that we *do not know* in what we *know*? This is something that might be asked of any perspective on teaching and teacher education, which means that all views need to be self-critical and transitional. Actually, the perspectives we advocate in this book have a history that explains how we came to be who we are. This is exactly what happens with any educator, and this is why we think that teacher education must relate to teachers' educational experience and involve them in self-inquiry into how they came to be who they are, and who they want to become. As Brew (1983: 97) points out, experiential learning involves self-discovery and unlearning in a permanent search for knowledge through the realisation of not knowing: "The higher point of knowing is not knowing: herein lies the paradox of learning from experience."

In the process of (un)learning from educational experience, we struggle to find a meaning for what we think and do, and this often implies saying *no* to whatever makes education absurd, irrational and empty (Contreras & Pérez de Lara 2010: 38). As Schostak and Schostak put it (2008: 250), "addressing 'wrongs' is the radical heart of emancipatory research methodologies and educational practice. (...) It is a return to the beginning: what sort of community is desired?"

Ultimately, this question is posed by this book as an unresolved issue we need to address constantly as educators: What sort of communities do we desire in schools, teacher education institutions, and society at large? Returning to the beginning may well be the only way to move forwards.

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