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**INTERPRETATION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE
TEACHING**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the literature on communicative language teaching, or CLT, teacher education has not received adequate attention. My purpose in conceiving and editing this volume was to bring together a horizon-broadening variety of initiatives, projects, and activities related to teacher education that can make language teaching communicative in the broadest, most meaningful sense. The collection showcases some of the best work being done internationally to make CLT an attainable goal.

Ordering the chapters was a challenge. Themes appear and reappear, voices heard in one text are echoed in another. These links and recurrences contribute significantly to the cohesion and strength of the collection. As editor I have taken a hands-off approach to shaping individual chapters, striving, rather, to preserve the unique, contextualized perspective of each contributing author. Together, the contributors offer thought-provoking insights into the construct of CLT, as it has come to be known worldwide, and provide practical examples for meeting the challenges of educating language teachers in the new millennium.

For the most part, the chapter authors look at CLT from the perspective of practicing teachers. The impression throughout is one of hearing voices from the classroom. In some chapters, we hear from teacher educators, researchers, and

national policy makers, in addition to teachers. The result is a vivid representation of language teaching as the collaborative and context-specific human activity that it is.

CHAPTER II

LINGUISTIC THEORY AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning. The central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is ‘ ‘communicative competence,’ ’ a term introduced into discussions of language use and second or foreign language learning in the early 1970s (Habermas 1970; Hymes 1971; Jakobovits 1970; Savignon 1971). Competence is defined in terms of the *expression, interpretation, and negotiation* of meaning and looks to both psycholinguistic and sociocultural perspectives in second language acquisition (SLA) research to account for its development (Savignon 1972, 1997). Identification of learners’ communicative needs provides a basis for curriculum design (Van Ek 1975).

Understanding of CLT can be traced to concurrent developments in Europe and North America. In Europe, the language needs of a rapidly increasing group of immigrants and guest workers, and a rich British linguistic tradition that included social as well as linguistic context in description of language behavior, led the Council of Europe to develop a syllabus for learners based on notional-functional concepts of language use. The syllabus was derived from neo-Firthian systemic or

functional linguistics, in which language is viewed as ‘ ‘meaning potential,’ ’ and the ‘ ‘context of situation’ ’ (Firth 1937; Halliday 1978) is viewed as central to understanding language systems and how they work. The syllabus described a threshold level of language ability for each of the major languages of Europe in view of what learners should be able to *do* with the language (Van Ek 1975). Language functions based on an assessment of the communicative needs of learners specified the end result, or *goal*, of an instructional program. The term *communicative* attached itself to programs that used a notional-functional syllabus based on needs assessment, and the language for specific purposes (LSP) movement was launched.

Concurrent development in Europe focused on the *process* of communicative classroom language learning. In Germany, for example, against a backdrop of Social Democratic concerns for individual empowerment, articulated in the writings of the philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1970), language teaching methodologists took the lead in developing classroom materials that encouraged learner choice (Candlin 1978). Their systematic collection of exercise types for communicatively oriented English language teaching was used in teacher in-service courses and workshops to guide curriculum change. Exercises were designed to exploit the variety of social meanings contained within particular grammatical structures. A system of ‘ ‘chains’ ’ encouraged teachers and learners to define their own learning path through principled selection of relevant exercises (Piepho 1974; Piepho and Bredella 1976).

Similar exploratory projects were initiated in the 1970s by Candlin at the University of Lancaster, England, and by Holec (1979) and his colleagues at the University of Nancy, France. Supplementary teacher resources promoting classroom CLT became increasingly popular in the 1970s (for example, Maley and Du√ 1978), and there was renewed interest in building learners' vocabulary.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Hymes (1971) had reacted to Chomsky's characterization of the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and, retaining Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance, proposed the term 'communicative competence' to represent the ability to use language in a social context, to observe sociolinguistic norms of appropriateness. Hymes's concern with speech communities and the integration of language, communication, and culture was not unlike that of Firth and Halliday in the British linguistic tradition (see Halliday 1978). Hymes's 'communicative competence' can be seen as the equivalent of Halliday's 'meaning potential.'

Similarly, Hymes's focus was not language learning but *language as social behavior*. In subsequent interpretations of the significance of Hymes's views for learners, methodologists working in the United States tended to focus on the cultural norms of native speakers and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of duplicating them in a classroom of non-natives. In light of this difficulty, the appropriateness of

communicative competence as an instructional goal was called into question (Paulston 1974).

At the same time, in an empirical research project at the University of Illinois, Savignon (1971) used the term ‘ ‘communicative competence’ ’ to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge. At a time when pattern practice and error avoidance were the rule in language teaching, this study of adult classroom acquisition of French looked at the effect of practice in the use of coping strategies as part of an instructional program. By encouraging learners to ask for information, to seek clarification, to use circumlocution and whatever other linguistic and nonlinguistic resources they could muster to negotiate meaning, to stick to the communicative task at hand, teachers were invariably leading learners to take risks, to venture beyond memorized patterns. The communication strategies identified in this study became the basis for subsequent identification by Canale and Swain (1980) of *strategic competence* as one of the components in their well-known framework for communicative competence, along with grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence. (The classroom model of communicative competence proposed by Savignon [1983] includes the three components identified by Canale and Swain plus a fourth component, discourse competence, added by Canale [1983]. We shall look more closely at this framework below.) In the Savignon research, test results at the

end of the eighteen-week instructional period provided convincing evidence that learners who had practiced communication in lieu of pattern drills in a laboratory performed with no less accuracy on discrete-point tests of grammatical structure. Nevertheless, their communicative competence, as measured in terms of fluency, comprehensibility, effort, and amount of communication in unrehearsed communicative tasks, significantly surpassed that of learners who had had no such practice. Learners' reactions to the test formats lent further support to the view that even beginners respond well to activities that let them focus on meaning as opposed to formal features.

A collection of role-playing exercises, games, and other communicative classroom activities was developed subsequently for inclusion in the adaptation of the French CREDIF materials, *Voix et Visages de la France* (CREDIF, or the Centre de Recherche et d' Etude pour la Diffusion du France is, is a university-based institution that contributed to the dissemination of French outside France). The accompanying guide (Savignon 1974) described their purpose as that of involving learners in the experience of communication.

Teachers were encouraged to provide learners with the French equivalent of expressions like ' 'What' s the word for . . . ?' ' ' 'Please repeat,' ' ' and ' 'I don' t understand,' ' ' expressions that would help them participate in the negotiation of meaning. Not unlike the efforts of Candlin and his colleagues working in a European English as a foreign language (EFL) context, the focus was on

classroom process and learner autonomy. The use of games, role playing, and activities in pairs and other small groups has gained acceptance and is now widely recommended for inclusion in language-teaching programs.

Communicative language teaching derives from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes, at the least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research. The focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learners' participation in communicative events. Central to CLT is the understanding of language learning as both an educational and a political issue. Language teaching is inextricably linked with language policy. Viewed from a multicultural intranational as well as international perspective, diverse sociopolitical contexts mandate not only a diverse set of language-learning goals but a diverse set of teaching strategies.

Program design and implementation depend on negotiation between policy makers, linguists, researchers, and teachers. Evaluation of program success requires a similar collaborative effort. The selection of methods and materials appropriate to both the goals and the context of teaching begins with an analysis of learners' needs and styles of learning, socially defined.

2.1. Focus on the Learner

By definition, CLT puts the focus on the learner. Learners' communicative needs provide a framework for elaborating program goals with regard to functional

competence. Functional goals imply global, qualitative evaluation of learner achievement as opposed to quantitative assessment of discrete linguistic features. Controversy over appropriate language testing persists, and many a curricular innovation has been undone by failure to make corresponding changes in evaluation. Current efforts at educational reform favor essay writing, in-class presentations, and other more holistic assessments of learner competence. Some programs have initiated portfolio assessment, the collection and evaluation of learners' poems, reports, stories, videotapes, and similar projects in an effort to represent and encourage learner achievement. Assessment initiatives of this kind do not go unopposed. They face demands for accountability from school boards, parents, and governmental funding agencies. Measurement of learning outcomes remains a central focus in meeting educational challenges worldwide.

Depending upon their own preparation and experience, teachers differ in their reactions to CLT. Some feel understandable frustration at the seeming ambiguity in discussions of communicative ability. Negotiation of meaning may be a lofty goal, but this view of language behavior lacks precision and does not provide a universal scale for assessment of individual learners. Ability is viewed, rather, as variable and highly dependent on context and purpose as well as on the roles and attitudes of all involved. Other teachers welcome the opportunity to select or develop their own materials, providing learners with a range of communicative tasks. They are comfortable relying on more global, integrative judgments of learning progress.

An additional source of frustration for some teachers is research findings on the acquisition of a second language that show the route, if not the rate, of language acquisition to be largely unaffected by classroom instruction. (See, for example, Ellis 1985, 1997.) First language (L1) cross-linguistic studies of developmental universals initiated in the 1970s were soon followed by second language (L2) studies. Acquisition, assessed on the basis of unrehearsed oral communication, seemed to follow a similar morphosyntactical sequence regardless of learners' age or the learning context. Although the findings supported teachers' informal observations, namely that textbook presentation and drill do not ensure learners' use of the same structures in their own spontaneous expression, the findings were nonetheless disconcerting. They contradicted both the grammar-translation method and audiolingual precepts that placed the burden of acquisition on the teacher's explanation of grammar and the learner's controlled practice of syntactical and phonological patterns with a goal of near native 'accuracy.' The findings were further at odds with textbooks that promise 'mastery' of 'basic' French, English, Spanish, and so forth. Teachers' rejection of research findings, renewed insistence on tests of discrete grammatical structures, and even exclusive reliance in the classroom on the learners' native or first language, where possible, to be sure students 'get the grammar,' have in some cases been reactions to the frustration of teaching for communication.

Moreover, with its emphasis on sentence-level grammatical features, the dominant second language acquisition (SLA) research paradigm itself has obscured pragmatic and sociolinguistic issues in language acquisition. (See, for example, Firth and Wagner 1998.) Renewed interest in sociocultural theories of second language acquisition offer promise for expanding the research paradigm and bringing much needed balance (Lantolf 2000). In her discussion of the contexts of competence, Berns (1990) stresses that the definition of appropriate communicative competence for learners requires an understanding of the sociocultural contexts of language use. In addition, the selection of a methodology suited to the attainment of communicative competence requires an understanding of sociocultural differences in styles of learning. Curricular innovation is best advanced by the development of local materials, which, in turn, rests on the involvement of classroom teachers. (See Chapters 3 and 6 and Markee 1997.) Berns (1990, 104) provides a useful summary of eight principles of CLT:

1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.
2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.
3. A learner's competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.

4. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.
5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers' communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.
6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.
7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners' competence in each.
8. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language—that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning.

It has increasingly been recognized that learners' expectations and attitudes play a role in advancing or impeding curricular change. Among the available scales measuring learners' attitudes, the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) scale developed by Horwitz (1988) is designed to survey learners' views on issues affecting language learning and teaching. The scale includes five parts: (1) difficulty of language learning, (2) foreign language aptitude, (3) the nature of language learning, (4) learning and communication strategies, and (5) motivations and expectations. As Horwitz (1988) suggests, classroom realities that contradict learners' expectations about learning may lead to disappointment and ultimately interfere with learning. At the same time, classroom practices have the potential to change learners' beliefs (see Chapter 4 and Kern 1995).

2.2. What About Grammar

Discussions of CLT not infrequently lead to questions of grammatical or formal accuracy. The perceived displacement of attention toward more morphosyntactical features in learners' expression in favor of a focus on meaning has led in some cases to the impression that grammar is not important, or that proponents of CLT favor learners' ability to express themselves, without regard to form. While involvement in communicative events is seen as central to language development, this involvement necessarily requires attention to form. Communication cannot take place in the absence of structure, or grammar, a set of shared assumptions about how language works, along with a willingness of participants to cooperate in the negotiation of meaning. In their carefully researched and widely cited paper proposing components of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) did not suggest that grammar was unimportant. They sought rather to situate grammatical competence within a more broadly defined communicative competence. Similarly, the findings of the Savignon (1971) study did not suggest that teachers forsake grammar instruction. Rather, the replacement of structure drills in a language laboratory with self-expression focused on meaning was found to be a more effective way to develop communicative ability with no loss of morphosyntactical accuracy. Learners' performance on tests of discrete morphosyntactical features was not a good predictor of their performance on a series of integrative communicative tasks.

The nature of the contribution to language development of both form-focused and meaning-focused classroom activity remains a question in ongoing research. The optimal combination of these activities in any given instructional setting depends no doubt on learners' age, the nature and length of instructional sequence, the opportunities for language contact outside the classroom, teacher preparation, and other factors. For the development of communicative competence, however, research findings overwhelmingly support the integration of form-focused exercises and meaning-focused experience.

Grammar is important; and learners seem to focus best on grammar when it relates to their communicative needs and experiences (Lightbown and Spada 1993; Ellis 1997). Nor should explicit attention to form be perceived as limited to sentence-level morphosyntactical features. Broader features of discourse, sociolinguistic rules of appropriateness, and communication strategies themselves may be included.

2.3. How Has CLT Been Interpreted?

The classroom model we shall present shows the hypothetical integration of four components of communicative competence (Savignon 1972, 1983, 1987, 2000; Canale and Swain 1980; Canale 1983; Byram 1997). Adapted from the familiar 'inverted pyramid' classroom model proposed in Savignon (1983), the current model shows how, through practice and experience in an increasingly wide range of communicative contexts and events, learners gradually expand their communicative competence, which comprises grammatical competence, discourse

competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence (Figure 1.1). Although the relative importance of the various components depends on the overall level of communicative competence, each is essential. Moreover, all the components are interrelated. They cannot be developed or measured in isolation, and one cannot go from one component to the other as when stringing beads on a necklace. Rather, when an increase occurs in one area, that component interacts with other components to produce a corresponding increase in overall communicative competence.

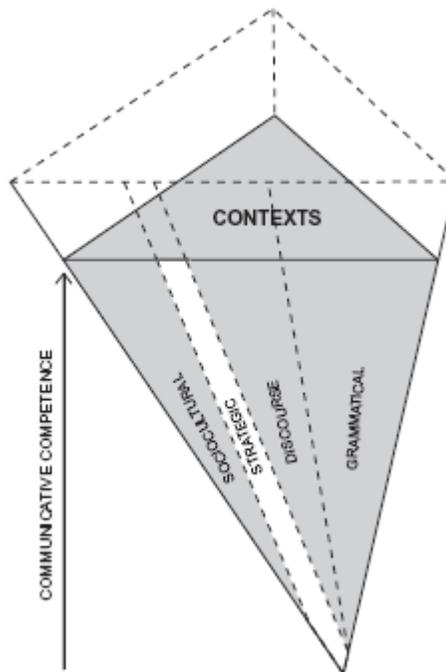


Figure 1.1. Components of communicative competence.

Grammatical competence refers to sentence-level grammatical forms, the ability to recognize the lexical, morphological, syntactical and phonological features of a language and to make use of those features to interpret and form words and

sentences. Grammatical competence is not linked to any single theory of grammar and does not include the ability to state rules of usage. One demonstrates grammatical competence not by stating a rule but by using a rule in the interpretation, expression, or negotiation of meaning. Discourse competence is concerned not with isolated words or phrases but with the interconnectedness of a series of utterances or written words or phrases to form a text, a meaningful whole. The text might be a poem, an e-mail message, a sportscast, a telephone conversation, or a novel. Identification of isolated sounds or words contributes to interpretation of the overall meaning of the text. This is known as bottom-up processing. In contrast, topdown processing involves understanding of the theme or purpose of the text, which in turn helps in the interpretation of isolated sounds or words. Both kinds of processing are essential for communicative competence. (See Chapter 10 for additional perspective on discourse.)

Two other familiar concepts that arise in discussions of discourse competence are text coherence and cohesion. Text coherence is the relation of all sentences or utterances in a text to a single global proposition. The establishment of a global meaning, or topic, for a whole poem, e-mail message, sportscast, telephone conversation, or novel is an integral part of both expression and interpretation and makes possible the interpretation of the individual sentences that make up the text. Local connections or structural links between individual sentences provide cohesion. Halliday and Hasan (1976) are widely recognized for their identification of various cohesive devices used in English, and their work has influenced materials for teaching English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). (For an illustration, see

Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman 1999.)

Sociocultural competence, a broader view of what Canale and Swain (1980) identified as sociolinguistic competence, extends well beyond linguistic forms and is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry having to do with the social rules of language use. Sociocultural competence requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. Although we have yet to provide a satisfactory description of grammar, we are even further from an adequate description of sociocultural rules of appropriateness. Yet we use them to communicate successfully in many different situational contexts. Learners cannot be expected to anticipate the sociocultural dimension of every situation. The likelihood of encountering the unexpected is easily seen for a language like English, which serves not only as a first language in many countries, and within different cultural groups in those countries, but also as a language of wider communication across national and cultural boundaries. Subtler, perhaps, but no less real variations in style and use in different settings can be observed for all languages. Participants in multicultural communication are sensitive not only to the cultural meanings attached to the language itself but to social conventions concerning language use, such things as taking turns, appropriateness of content, nonverbal language, and tone. These conventions influence how messages are interpreted. In addition to cultural knowledge, cultural sensitivity is essential. Just knowing something about the culture of an English-speaking country will not suffice.

What must be learned is a general empathy and openness toward other cultures. Sociocultural competence includes a willingness to engage in the active negotiation of meaning along with a willingness to suspend judgment and take into consideration the possibility of cultural differences in conventions of use.

Together these features might be subsumed under the term ‘ ‘cultural flexibility,’ ’ or ‘ ‘cultural awareness.’ ’ The ‘ ‘ideal native speaker,’ ’ someone who knows a language perfectly and uses it appropriately in all social interactions, exists in theory only. None of us knows all there is to know of a language in its many manifestations, both around the world and in our own backyards. Communicative competence is always relative. The coping strategies that we use in unfamiliar contexts, with constraints arising from imperfect knowledge of rules, or such impediments to their application as fatigue or distraction, are represented as strategic competence. With practice and experience, we gain competence in grammar, discourse, and sociocultural adaptability. The relative importance of strategic competence thus decreases; however, the effective use of coping strategies is important for communicative competence in all contexts and distinguishes highly effective communicators from those who are less so.

2.4. Shaping a Communicative Curriculum

Today, many proposed innovations in curriculum planning offer both novice and veteran teachers an array of alternatives. Games, tasks, juggling, and jazz have been proposed as aids to language learning. Rapidly increasing opportunities for

computer-mediated communication, both synchronous—via on-line chat rooms—and asynchronous—through the full spectrum of information and interactions available on the Internet as well as specialized bulletin boards and e-mail—hold promise for increased communicative opportunities for learners worldwide.

In attempting to convey the meaning of CLT to both preservice and in service teachers of English as a second or foreign language in a wide range of contexts, I have found it helpful to think of a communicative curriculum as potentially having five components (Savignon 1983, 1997). These components can be regarded as thematic clusters of activities or experiences related to language use. They provide a way to categorize teaching strategies that promote communicative competence. Use of the word ‘ ‘component’ ’ to categorize these activities seems particularly appropriate in that it avoids any suggestion of sequence or level. Experience with communicative teaching methods has shown that the five components can be profitably blended at all stages of instruction. Organization of learning activities into the following components serves not to sequence an instructional program, but rather to highlight the range of options available in curriculum planning and to suggest ways in which their very interrelatedness can benefit the learner.

CHAPTER III

THE ANALYSIS

3.1. Language for a Purpose

Language arts, or language analysis, is the first component on the list. Language arts includes the skills at which language teachers often excel. In fact, it may be all they have been taught to do. Language arts includes many of the exercises used in school programs throughout the world to help learners focus on formal accuracy in their mother tongue. Language arts in a second or foreign language program focuses on forms of the language, including syntax, morphology and phonology. Spelling tests, for example, are important if writing is a goal. Familiar activities such as translation, dictation, and rote memorization can be helpful in bringing attention to form. Vocabulary can be expanded through definition, synonyms and antonyms, and study of cognates and false cognates. Pronunciation exercises and patterned repetition of verb paradigms and other structural features can be used to lead students to focus on form, to illustrate regular syntactic features, or rules of grammar.

Learners of all ages can also enjoy numerous language arts games or activities for the variety and group interaction they provide. So long as they are not overused and are not promoted as the solution to all manner of language learning problems, games and other activities that focus on language arts in a wide range of formats are a welcome addition to a teacher's repertoire. Language for a purpose, or language

experience, is the second component on the list. In contrast with language analysis, language experience is the use of language for real and immediate communicative goals. Not all learners are taking a new language for the same reasons. It is important for teachers to pay attention, when selecting and sequencing materials, to the specific communicative needs of the learners. Regardless of how distant or unspecific the communicative needs of the learners, every program with a goal of communicative competence should pay heed to opportunities for meaningful language use, opportunities to focus on meaning as well as form.

In a classroom where the language of instruction is of necessity the second language, learners have an immediate and natural need to use it. Where this happens, language for a purpose is a built-in feature of the learning environment. In those settings where the teacher shares with learners a language other than the second language, special attention needs to be given to providing learners with opportunities for experience in their new language. Exclusive use of the second language in the classroom is an option. In so-called content-based instruction, the focus is something other than the language. The content, history, music, or literature, for example, is taught in the second language. Immersion programs at the elementary, secondary, or even university level, where the entire curriculum is taught in the second language, offer greatest possible exposure to language for a purpose. In addition, task-based curricula are designed to provide learners with the most opportunity to use language for a purpose.

Learners who are accustomed to being taught exclusively in their first language may at first be uncomfortable if the teacher speaks to them in the second, expecting them not only to understand but, perhaps, to respond. When this happens, teachers need to take special care to help learners understand that they are not expected to understand every word, any more than they are expected to express themselves in the second language as if they had been using it since childhood. Making an effort to get the gist and using strategies to enhance comprehension are important to the development of communicative competence. With encouragement and help from their teacher in developing the strategic competence they need to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning, learners often express satisfaction and even surprise.

My language is me: personal second language use, the third component in a communicative curriculum, relates to the learner's emerging identity in the new language. Attitude is without a doubt the single most important factor in a learner's success. Whether the learner's motivations are integrative or instrumental, the development of communicative competence fully engages the learner. The most successful teaching programs are those which take into account the affective as well as the cognitive aspects of language learning and seek to involve learners psychologically as well as intellectually.

In planning for CLT, teachers should remember that not everyone is comfortable in the same role. Within classroom communities, as within society at

large, some people are leaders and some prefer to be followers. Both are essential to the success of group activities. In group discussions, a few always seem to do most of the talking. Those who often remain silent in larger groups may participate more easily in pair work. Or they may prefer to work on an individual project. The wider the variety of communicative, or meaning-based, activities, the greater the chance for involving all learners.

‘ ‘My language is me’ ’ implies, above all, respect for learners as they use their new language for self-expression. Although language arts activities provide an appropriate context for focus on form, personal second language use does not. Most teachers know this and intuitively focus on meaning rather than form, as learners assume a new identity and express their personal feelings or experiences. Repeated emphasis on structural features in textbooks or on tests, however, may cause teachers to feel uncomfortable about their exclusive focus on meaning on these occasions. An understanding of the importance of opportunities for the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning and of the distinction between language arts and ‘ ‘my language is me’ ’ can help to reassure teachers that what they are doing is in the best interests of the learners for continued second language development. Respect for learners as they use their new language for self-expression requires more than simply paying less attention to formal ‘ ‘errors’ ’ that do not interfere with meaning. It includes recognition that so-called near-native performance, in fact, may not even be a goal for learners.

Language teaching has come a long way from audiolingual days when ‘ ‘native’ ’ pronunciation and use was held up as an ideal for learners. Reference to the terms ‘ ‘native’ ’ or ‘ ‘near native’ ’ in the evaluation of communicative competence is inappropriate in today’ s postcolonial, multicultural world. We now recognize that native speakers are never ‘ ‘ideal’ ’ and, in fact, vary widely in range and style of communicative abilities. Moreover, the decision about what is or is not one’ s ‘ ‘native’ ’ language is arbitrary and is perhaps best left to the individual concerned. Such is the view of Chenny Lai, a MATESL candidate studying in the United States: As to the definition of ‘ ‘native’ ’ or ‘ ‘first’ ’ language we discussed in today’ s class, I came up with the idea that we have no say about whether a person’ s native language is this one or that one. It is the speaker who has the right to feel which language is his native one. The native language should be the one in which the speaker feels most comfortable or natural when engaged in daily communication or, more abstractly, the one in which the speaker does all his thinking. There are two major languages spoken in Taiwan: Mandarin and Taiwanese. I don’ t have the slightest problem using either of them since I use both every day in equal proportion. But when I do my thinking, considering things, or even kind of talking to myself, my ‘ ‘mental’ ’ language is Mandarin.

Because of this, I would say that my native language is Mandarin. We probably can say that a person’ s native language can actually ‘ ‘switch’ ’ from

one to another during stages of his life. Since personality inevitably takes on a new dimension through expression in another language, learners need to discover that dimension on their own terms. Learners should not only be given the opportunity to say what they want to say in the second language; they should be encouraged to develop a personality in the second language with which they are comfortable. They may feel more comfortable maintaining a degree of formality not found in the interpersonal transactions of native speakers. The diary entry of a Japanese learner of English offers important insight into the matter of identity: I just don't know what to do right now. I might have been wrong since I began to learn English; I always tried to be better and wanted to be a good speaker. It was wrong, absolutely wrong! When I got to California, I started imitating Americans and picked up the words that I heard. So my English became just like Americans'. I couldn't help it. I must have been funny to them, because I am a Japanese and have my own culture and background. I think I almost lost the most important thing I should not have. I got California English, including intonation, pronunciation, the way they act, which are not mine. I have to have my own English, be myself when I speak English. (Preston 1981, 113).

At the same time, learners may discover a new freedom of self-expression in another language. When asked what it is like to write in English, a language that is not her native tongue, the Korean writer Mia Yun (1998), author of *House of the Winds*, replied that it was 'like putting on a new dress.' Writing in English made her feel fresh, see herself in a new way, offered her freedom to experiment. When

expressing themselves in a new language, writers are not the only ones to experience the feeling of ‘ ‘putting on a new dress.’ ’ The component ‘ ‘my language is me’ ’ calls for recognition and respect for the individual personality of the learner. (We shall return to the ‘ ‘native-nonnative’ ’ distinction with respect to users of English later in this chapter.)

Theater arts is the fourth component of a communicative curriculum. In the familiar words of Shakespeare, ‘ ‘all the world’ s a stage’ ’ (*As You Like It*, II, 7). And on this stage we play many roles, roles for which we improvise scripts from the models we observe around us. Child, parent, foreigner, newcomer, employer, employee, doctor, or teacher, all are roles that embrace certain expected ways of behaving and using language. Sociocultural rules of appropriateness have to do with these expected ways. Familiar roles may be played with little conscious attention to style. New and unfamiliar roles require practice, and an awareness of the way the meanings we intend are being interpreted by others. Sometimes there are no models. In the second half of the twentieth century, women who suddenly found themselves in what had been a ‘ ‘man’ s world,’ ’ whether as firefighters, professors, or heads of state, had to adapt existing male models to develop a role in which they could be comfortable. The transition is far from complete. Although women comprise more than 50 percent of the world population, their participation in many professional and political arenas remains limited. Men, for their part, often feel constrained in choosing roles more often assumed by women, for example, homemaker, secretary,

or nurse. If current social trends continue, however, by the end of the twenty-first century both women and men may find they have many more established models from which to choose.

If the world can be thought of as a stage, with actors and actresses who play their parts to the best of their ability, theater may be seen as an opportunity to experiment with roles, to try things out. Fantasy and play-acting are a natural and important part of childhood. Make-believe and the ‘ ‘you be . . . , I’ ll be . . . ’ ’ improvisations familiar to children the world over are important to self-discovery and growth. They allow young learners to experiment, to try things out, like hats and wigs, moods and postures, gestures and words. As occasions for language use, role playing and the many related activities that constitute theater arts are likewise a natural component of language learning. They allow learners to experiment with the roles they play or may be called upon to play in real life. Theater arts can provide learners with the tools they need to act—that is, to interpret, express and negotiate meaning in a new language. Activities can include both scripted and unscripted role playing, simulations, and even pantomime. Ensemble-building activities familiar in theater training have been used very successfully in language programs to create a climate of trust so necessary for the incorporation of theater arts activities (see Savignon 1997). The role of the teacher in theater arts is that of a coach: to provide support, strategies, and encouragement for learners as they explore new ways of being.

Language use beyond the classroom is the fifth and final component of a communicative curriculum. Regardless of the variety of communicative activities in the classroom, their purpose remains preparing learners to use the second language in the world beyond. This is the world on which learners will depend for the maintenance and development of their communicative competence once classes are over. The classroom is but a rehearsal. Language use beyond the classroom in a communicative curriculum begins with discovery of learners' interests and needs and opportunities not only to respond to but, more important, to explore those interests and needs through second language use beyond the classroom itself.

In a second language environment, opportunities to use the second language outside the classroom abound. Systematic 'field experiences' may successfully become the core of the course, which then becomes a workshop where learners can compare notes, seek clarification, and expand the range of domains in which they learn to function in the second language. Classroom visits to a courtroom trial, a public auction, or a church bazaar provide introductions to aspects of the local culture that learners might not experience on their own. Conversation partners, apprenticeships, and host families can be arranged. Residents of nearby retirement communities can be recruited as valuable resources for a range of research projects. Senior citizens often welcome the opportunity to interact with international visitors or new arrivals and can offer a wealth of knowledge and experience. They might be interviewed about noteworthy historical events, child rearing in earlier decades, or their views on politics, health care, or grandparenting.

In other than a second language setting, the challenge for incorporating language use beyond the classroom may be greater, but it is certainly not insurmountable. Such incorporation remains essential for both learners and teacher. Radio and television programs, videos, and feature-length films may be available along with newspapers and magazines. Residents who use the second language, or visitors from the surrounding community, may be able to visit the classroom. The Internet now provides opportunities to interact on a variety of topics with other language users around the world. These opportunities for computer-mediated communication (CMC) will increase dramatically in the years ahead. In addition to prearranged exchanges, learners can make use of World Wide Web sites to obtain a range of information, schedules, rates, locations, descriptions, and sources.

3.2. Putting It All Together

How do we put it all together? Is there an optimum combination of language arts, personal language use, language for a purpose, theater arts, and language use beyond the classroom? These questions must be answered by individual language teachers for their learners in the context in which they teach. Cultural expectations, goals, and styles of learning are but some of the ways in which learners may differ one from another. To the complexity of the learner must be added the complexities of teachers and of the settings in which they teach. Established routines, or institutional beliefs about what is important, weigh heavily in a teacher's decisions about what and how to teach and often make innovation difficult (see Chapters 3 and 7). Finally,

the need for variety must be taken into account. Learners who are bored with recitation of rules or with sentence translation may just as easily lose interest in games or role-play if either is allowed to become routine. Difficult as it is, the teacher's task is to understand the many factors involved and respond to them creatively.

Teachers cannot do this alone, of course. They need the support of administrators, the community, and learners themselves. Methodologists and teacher-education programs have a responsibility as well. They should provide classroom teachers with the perspective and experiences they need if they are to respond to the realities of their world, a changing world in which the old ways of language teaching may not be the best ways. The optimal combination for a given context of the analytical and the experiential is a focus of ongoing inquiry. A now well-established research tradition in second and foreign language learning and teaching, however, has clearly shown the importance of attention to language use, or experience, in addition to language usage, or analysis. The overwhelming emphasis in most school programs remains on the latter, though, often to the complete exclusion of experience in language use (for examples, see Chapters 3, 4, and 7).

3.3. Sociolinguistic Issues

Numerous sociolinguistic issues await attention. Variation in the speech community and its relationship to language change are central to sociolinguistic inquiry. Sociolinguistic perspectives on variability and change highlight the folly of describing the competence of a native speaker, let alone that of a non-native speaker,

in terms of ‘ ‘mastery’ ’ or ‘ ‘command’ ’ of a system. All language systems show instability and variation. The language systems of learners show even greater instability and variability in both the amount and rate of change. Moreover, sociolinguistic concerns with identity and accommodation help explain the construction by bilingual speakers of a ‘ ‘variation space’ ’ which is different from that of a native speaker. This may include retention of any number of features of a previously acquired code or system of phonology and syntax as well as features of discourse and pragmatics, including communication strategies. The phenomenon may be individual or, within a community of learners, general. Differences not only in the code itself but in the semantic meanings attributed to different encodings contribute to identification with a speech community or culture, the way a speech community views itself and the world. This often includes code mixing and code switching, the use by bilingual speakers of resources from more than one speech community.

Sociolinguistic perspectives have been important in understanding the implications of norm, appropriateness, and variability for CLT and continue to suggest avenues of inquiry for further research and development of teaching materials. Use of authentic language data has underscored the importance of context—setting, roles, genre, and so on—in interpreting the meaning of a text. A range of both oral and written texts in context provides learners with a variety of language experiences, experiences they need to construct their own ‘ ‘variation space,’ ’ to make determinations of appropriateness in their own expression of meaning.

‘ ‘Competent’ ’ in this instance is not necessarily synonymous with ‘ ‘near native.’ ’ Negotiation in CLT highlights the need for interlinguistic—that is, intercultural—awareness on the part of all involved (Byram 1997). Better understanding of the strategies used in the negotiation of meaning offers the potential for improving classroom practice of the needed skills.

CHAPTER IV

NATIVES AND FOREIGNERS

As a starting point, we might begin by asking ourselves whose language we teach and for what purpose. What is our own relationship with the language? Do we consider it to be foreign, second, native, or target? *Webster's New International Dictionary*, second edition, was published in 1950, a time when language teaching in the United States was on the threshold of a period of unprecedented scrutiny, experimentation, and growth. The dictionary provides the following definitions of these terms we use so often with respect to language. 'Foreign' derives from Middle English *foraine*, *forene*, Old French *forain*, and Latin *foris*, meaning 'out-of-doors.' Modern definitions include situated outside one's own country; born in, belonging to, derived from, or characteristic of some place other than the one under consideration . . . alien in character; not connected; not pertinent; not appropriate. Related to, or dealing with, other countries; not organically connected or naturally related; as a foreign body (biology, medicine), a substance occurring in any part of the body or organism where it is not normally found.

Those who are identified as teaching a foreign language, perhaps in a department of foreign languages, should ponder the meaning of the term. What does the label 'foreign' signal to colleagues, learners, and the community at large? Today we are concerned with global ecology and the global economy. The

‘ ‘foreign’ ’ students who used to walk university campuses and whose numbers have become increasingly important for balancing budgets in higher education have been replaced by international students. To excite national pride and assail their opponents, politicians are fond of evoking the dreaded ‘ ‘F’ ’ word, in phrases such as ‘ ‘foreign influence,’ ’ ‘ ‘foreign money,’ ’ and ‘ ‘foreign oil.’ ’

Nonetheless, one might object, ‘ ‘foreign’ ’ is still a useful term to use in distinguishing between teaching English in Osaka, Japan, and teaching English in, say, Youngstown, Ohio. In Youngstown, English is taught to nonnative speakers as a second language, whereas in Osaka it is a foreign language. The contexts of learning are not the same, to be sure. Neither are the learners—or the teachers. Do these facts change the nature of the language, though? What about the teaching of Spanish in Chicago, in Barcelona, in Buenos Aires, in Guatemala City, in Miami, or in Madrid? In what sense can Spanish in each of these contexts be described as ‘ ‘foreign’ ’ or ‘ ‘second,’ ’ and what are the implications for the learners of the label selected or for the teacher?

On the one hand, having taught French in Urbana, Illinois, for many years, I can easily identify with the problems of teachers of English in Osaka. More so, perhaps, than can those who teach ESL in Urbana with easy access to English-

speaking communities outside the classroom. On the other hand, however, teaching French in Urbana or English in Osaka is no excuse for ignoring or avoiding opportunities for communication, either written or oral. In this age of satellite television and the World Wide Web, a multitude of language communities is for some as close as the computer keyboard. In the decades ahead, the potential for language learning and language change that is inherent in computer-mediated negotiation of meaning will be increasingly recognized, both inside and outside language classrooms.

What may be a problem is the teacher's communicative competence. Is she a fluent speaker of the language she teaches? If not, does she consider herself to be bilingual? If not, why not? Is it a lack of communicative competence, or rather a lack of communicative confidence? Is she intimidated by 'native' speakers? The example of English as an international or global language is instructive. Such wide adoption of one language in both international and intranational contexts is unprecedented. English users today include (1) those who live in countries where English is a primary language, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; (2) those who live in countries where English is an auxiliary, intranational language of communication— for example, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Tanzania; and (3) those who use primarily English in international contexts, in countries like China, Indonesia, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Russia. By conservative estimates the number of non-native speakers of English in

the world today outnumbers native speakers by more than two to one, and the ratio is increasing.

Models of appropriateness vary from context to context. The use of the English language has become so widespread that some scholars speak not only of varieties of English but of world Englishes, the title of a professional journal devoted to discussion of issues in the use, description, and teaching of these many varieties. Depending on the context, ‘ ‘native’ ’ speakers may or may not be appropriate models (Kachru 1992). For an interpretation of the term ‘ ‘native speaker,’ ’ *Webster’s International Dictionary*, second edition, is not very helpful. A ‘ ‘native’ ’ is defined as ‘ ‘one that is born in a place or country referred to; a denizen by birth; an animal, a fruit or vegetable produced in a certain region; as, a native of France.’ ’ The dictionary cites, among expressions containing ‘ ‘native’ ’ as a modifier, ‘ ‘native bear,’ ’ ‘ ‘native bread,’ ’ ‘ ‘native cabbage,’ ’ ‘ ‘native dog,’ ’ and ‘ ‘native sparrow.’ ’ There is no mention of native speaker. To understand the meaning of ‘ ‘native speaker’ ’ in language teaching today, we must look to American structural linguistics and its use of ‘ ‘native speaker informants’ ’ to provide data for previously undescribed, unwritten languages, as well as to Chomsky’s representation of the ‘ ‘ideal native speaker’ ’ in his elaboration of transformational-generative grammar. In both cases the native speaker, real or

imagined, was the authority on language use. In audiolingual language teaching, the native speaker became not only the model for but the judge of acceptable use. See, for example, the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines* level descriptor that tolerates errors in grammar that ‘ ‘do not disturb the native speaker’ ’ (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 1986). That phrase has always conjured up for me images of people sitting around with big signs that say, ‘ ‘native speaker. do not disturb.’ ’ Having lived most of my adult life with a native speaker of French, I suppose I am no longer intimidated, or even impressed. Nor, I should add, is he intimidated or impressed by my American English. Native speakers of French, American English, or whatever language are fine, but they do not own the language they use; nor are they by definition competent to teach and evaluate learners.

There remains the term ‘ ‘target language,’ ’ used frequently by methodologists and language-acquisition researchers alike. ‘ ‘Target language’ ’ is laden with both behavioristic and militaristic associations. A target is not unlike the ‘ ‘terminal behavior’ ’ or end result identified in behaviorist learning theory. ‘ ‘Target language’ ’ evokes the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) that provided an experimental setting for the audiolingual methods and materials developed in the 1960s. Evoking as it does a monolithic, fixed goal for all, reference to language as a target misrepresents both process and progress in language learning.

CHAPTER V

THE CLASSROOM AS SOCIAL CONTEXT

Along with other sociolinguistic issues in language acquisition, the classroom itself as a social context has been neglected. Classroom language learning was the focus of research studies in the 1960s and early 1970s. Language classrooms were not a major concern, however, in the SLA research that gathered momentum in the years to follow. The full range of variables present in educational settings—for example, teacher preparation and experience, class size, learner needs and attitudes—was an obvious deterrent. Other difficulties included the lack of well-defined classroom processes and lack of agreement on what constituted successful learning. Confusion between form-focused drill and meaning-focused communication persisted in many of the textbook exercises and language test prototypes that influenced curricula. Not surprisingly, researchers eager to establish SLA as a worthy field of inquiry turned their attention to narrower, more quantitative studies of the acquisition of selected morphosyntactic features.

Increasingly, however, researchers' attention is now being directed to the social dynamics and discourse of the classroom. What does teacher-learner interaction look like? What happens during pair or group work? How much is the second language being used and for what purposes? If language use is essential for the development of communicative competence, then the nature and amount of

second language use in the classroom setting needs to be examined closely. Is the aim truly communication, that is, is the focus on the negotiation of meaning, rather than on practice of grammatical forms? What are the opportunities for interaction in the second language? Who participates? Who initiates discourse in the second language? What are the purposes of this discourse (Savignon 1997)?

Questions related to patterns of communication and opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning become all the more compelling as technological advances increase dramatically and alter the nature of such opportunities. E-mail, chat rooms, on-line teaching materials, and video-conferencing are, in effect, redefining the concept of ‘ ‘classroom’ ’ and, with it, the roles of teachers and learners.

5.1. What CLT Is Not

Disappointment with both grammar-translation and audiolingual methods for their inability to prepare learners for the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning, along with enthusiasm for an array of activities increasingly labeled communicative (see Chapters 2, 5, 6, 7, and 10) has resulted in no little uncertainty over what constitutes the essential features of CLT. Thus, a summary description would be incomplete without mention of what CLT is not.

The concern of CLT is not exclusively with face-to-face oral communication. The principles apply equally to reading and writing activities that involve readers and writers in the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning. (For an illustration of the interactive, interpretive nature of the reading process, see Fish

1980.) Communicative language teaching does not require work in small groups or pairs; group tasks have been found helpful in many contexts as a way of increasing the opportunity and motivation for communication. Classroom work in groups or pairs should not, however, be considered an essential feature and may well be inappropriate in some contexts.

Communicative language teaching need not entail complete rejection of familiar materials. Materials designed to promote communicative competence can be used as aids to memorization, repetition, and translation, or for grammar exercises. Similarly, a teacher who has only a grammar-translation manual can certainly teach for communicative competence. What matters is the teacher's understanding of what language learning is and how it happens. The basic principle is that learners should engage with texts and meaning through the process of use and discovery.

Finally, CLT does not exclude a focus on metalinguistic awareness or knowledge of rules of syntax, discourse, and social appropriateness. Focus on form can be a familiar and welcome component in a learning environment that provides rich opportunity for focus on meaning; but focus on form cannot replace practice in communication. The essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their communicative competence. Terms sometimes used to refer to features of CLT are 'task-based' (see Chapter 5), 'contentbased,' 'process-oriented,' 'interactive,' 'inductive,' and 'discoveryoriented.' CLT cannot be found in any

one textbook or set of curricular materials. Strict adherence to a given text is not likely to be true to the processes and goals of CLT. In keeping with the notion of context of situation, CLT is properly seen as an approach, grounded in a theory of intercultural communicative competence, that can be used to develop materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning. No less than the means and norms of communication they are designed to reflect, communicative language teaching methods will continue to be explored and adapted. Teacher Education and CLT Considerable resources, both human and monetary, are being used around the world to respond to the need for language teaching that is appropriate for the communicative needs of learners. The key to success in this endeavor is the education of classroom teachers. The remaining chapters directly address issues of CLT and teacher education. The contributors present accounts of teacher response to communicative English language teaching (CELT) in situations outside native-English-speaking countries (Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands), a report on an innovative technology-intensive program for elementary Spanish language instruction at a major U.S. research university, and a report on the promotion of learner autonomy in a multilingual European setting. The collection also includes a first-person narrative account of English language teaching by a Japanese teacher with many years' experience, an account of the first U.S. attempt to promote national standards for language learning, and a philosophical final

chapter that offers a modern critical perspective on applied linguistics and teacher education.

The research reports included provide a global perspective on language teaching for communicative competence in the twenty-first century. I have made a deliberate effort to blur the distinction between the contexts for foreign language teaching and for second language teaching, a distinction that, while useful in delineating features of access to the second language and of teacher preparation, obscures the common goals of multilingualism: the empowerment of learners and world understanding. In accordance with these goals, contexts for learning a range of different languages are included. Too often, accounts of second language acquisition (SLA) and CLT leave readers with the impression that English is the only language worth studying and that English language teachers, methodologists, and researchers are the only ‘ ‘experts’ ’ worth reading.

Moreover, I have sought to highlight the diverse nature of contributions to understanding CLT and educating language teachers. In writing about CLT, British scholars, on the one hand, have focused on the concepts and contributions of writers who are monolingual, predominantly male, and British. Their names appear in the publications of British university presses that include a broad range of materials intended for use by classroom teachers. These same names are also well known to employees of the governmentfunded British Council that conducts a variety of English language teaching programs worldwide. For U.S. foreign language teachers,

methodologists, and researchers, on the other hand, the ‘ ‘proficiency-oriented’ ’ language teaching promoted by the American Council for Teaching of Foreign Languages often remains the default descriptor. For U.S. scholars concerned with the teaching of Spanish, French, German, and other modern languages to speakers of English, CLT has tended until recently to be seen as a predominantly European and, perhaps, ESL concern. Although they share a concern for language learning, foreign language and ESL teachers in U.S. schools often function as two quite distinct professional groups.

The collection represents at least three different streams of scholarship. Some chapters are based on survey results, one is a somewhat reflective, personal account, two are conceptually more philosophical and historical than empirical. The difference in research paradigms, or ways of knowing, serves to strengthen the collection. Each chapter provides an example of sound research design or an original interpretation and approach to problems of coordination between language teachers and teacher educators over language policy and curricular and methodological change and innovation.

Together, the chapters serve as models for inspiration, adoption, and adaptation in other contexts where CLT is a goal. It is important to see what happens when teachers try to make changes in their teaching in accordance with various types of advice, whether directives from Ministries of Education, advice from so-called experts in teacher education and research, or other sources. The information provided

on language policy, methods, and materials specific to CLT in multiple contexts highlights the international interest in promoting CLT and provides important insights for researchers, program administrators, and prospective or practicing teachers.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 look at English language education in Japan from the perspective of the Japanese Ministry of Education, a teacher educator, and a classroom teacher, respectively. In Chapter 2, Minoru Wada, a former member of Mombusho (the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture) takes justifiable pride in the recent redirection of English language education by the Japanese government, including the introduction of a communicative syllabus, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, and overseas in-service training for teachers. Although Mombusho had previously encouraged attempts to make classrooms more ‘ ‘communicative’ ’ through the addition of ‘ ‘communicative activities,’ ’ it was apparent that teachers felt constrained by a structural syllabus that rigidly controlled the introduction and sequence of grammatical features. The perception that learners could not talk about their past experiences until their second year of study, when past tenses had been introduced, severely constricted communication. With the introduction of a new national syllabus, structural controls were relaxed and teachers were allowed more freedom in determining the sequence for introducing syntactical features. The theoretical rationale underlying the curriculum change in Japan includes both the well-known Canale and Swain (1980) model of communicative competence and the hypothetical classroom model of communicative competence, or ‘ ‘inverted pyramid,’ ’

proposed by Savignon (1983). In the conclusion to Chapter 2, Wada offers sobering evidence of the failure of previous attempts to introduce ELT reform in Japan. Nonetheless, he remains optimistic about the current efforts. The stakes are indeed higher, and the major difference between this and previous efforts may well be the involvement of Japanese educators themselves.

Chapter 3 is illustrative of current research on teacher development that focuses on teachers' beliefs in relation to their practices, rather than on teaching skills mandated by educators or policy makers. Kazuyoshi Sato follows the educational research model for classroom language teaching adapted by Kleinsasser (1993) in considering language teachers' beliefs and practices in the Japanese context. His yearlong study focuses on the department of English in a private senior high school. Multiple sources, including interviews, observations, surveys, and documents, yield valuable insight into how EFL teachers learn to teach in this particular school environment.

A third compelling voice in the case study of Japan is that of a classroom teacher, Kiyoko Kusano Hubbell, a fluent speaker of English with twenty years of classroom experience. In Chapter 4, in a welcome departure from mainstream academic prose, Kusano Hubbell offers a poignant narrative of her own struggles and triumphs as a teacher of English, from the perspective of her native Japanese language and culture. The insights she provides into learners' and teachers'

attitudes and experiences and the context in which they are shaped richly complement the findings presented in Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 5, by Liying Cheng, uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the influence of a new, more communicative English language test on the classroom teaching of English. The context for this particular study is Hong Kong, where ELT is moving toward a task-based model. In keeping with curricular redesign, alternative public examinations have been developed to measure learners' ability to make use of what they have learned, to solve problems and complete tasks. At the time curricular changes were introduced, ELT was characterized as 'test-centered, teacher-centered, and textbook-centered' (Morris et al. 1996). The ambitious multiyear awardwinning study (TOEFL Award for the Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Research in Second/Foreign Language Testing for 1998) that is the basis for this report reveals data on the extent to which the change in public examinations has influenced change in classroom teaching.

National standards are the focus of Chapter 6 by Ana Schwartz. Schwartz reports on efforts to establish and diffuse National Standards for Foreign Language Learning for U.S. schools. The standards were adopted in 1995 after extensive lobbying efforts by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages and the National Committee on Languages to include foreign languages in the national Goals 2000 Educate America Act that endorsed curricular standards in the subject areas of math, English, history, and science. Goals 2000 marked an important

turning point in the educational history of the United States, where issues of curriculum and assessment have remained the concern of individual states and local school districts. The new U.S. federal curricular standards remain voluntary, however. A decentralized system of education, along with distorted representation of the concept of communicative competence for purposes of language evaluation, represents an obstacle to true and meaningful implementation of communicative goals.

Chapter 7 offers the perspective of prominent language teacher educators involved in a national initiative to promote CLT in schools. Adopting a sociocultural perspective on language use and language learning as prerequisite to pedagogical innovation, Chaochang Wang considers attitude, function, pedagogy (Berns 1990), and learner beliefs with respect to the use and teaching of English in the Taiwanese context. This report of teacher educators' views is part of a larger study of CLT in Taiwan. Data for the study were both quantitative and qualitative and included teachers', learners', and parents' responses to questionnaires, in addition to the analysis of data from interviews with teacher educators reported here (Wang 2000). Cutting-edge advances in computer-mediated instruction are the focus of Chapter 8, by Diane Musumeci. Taking advantage of the technological resources available at a major research university, Musumeci designed and implemented an introductory multisection Spanish language program that has attracted considerable administrative attention for its cost-saving potential. This report looks at the new program from the perspective of a second language researcher and teacher educator. It discusses

teachers' persistent concern with grammar teaching, for which there is seemingly never enough class time, and considers the potential of technology as a tool for in-service teacher education.

Chapter 9, by Eus Schalkwijk, Kees van Esch, Adri Elsen, and Wim Setz, a team of teacher educators at the University of Nijmegen, in the Netherlands, looks at important and challenging implications of CLT not only for what is learned in a foreign language but for how it is learned. Autonomous learning influences teaching methodology and dramatically changes the roles of the language teacher and the language learner. To cope with these changes, future teachers have to be prepared both practically and academically. The historical overview of culture orientations in the first part of the chapter provides an important perspective on the influence of social views and values on the education of language teachers in generations past. (For a provocative and relevant discussion of their education as far back as the Middle Ages, when Latin was the *lingua franca* of the Western world, see Musumeci 1997a.) The multilingual nature of the European context in which these teacher educators work underscores the importance of innovation in language teaching in the effort to meet rapidly increasing demands for communicative competence in two or more languages.

In conclusion, Chapter 10, by Celeste Kinginger, provides a useful discussion of both theoretical and practical issues in language teacher education from the perspective of postmodern critical theory. Adapting the categories of primary discourse, or ways of understanding, proposed by Kramsch (1995a, 1995b),

Kinginger cites the notion of ‘ ‘error’ ’ in language learning and teaching to illustrate how teachers can develop interpretive skills to evaluate competing forms of discourse and cull from them in making decisions about their own teaching practice. The development of interpretive and reflective skills offers a practical alternative for educating language teachers, who currently seem compelled to choose a single methodological stance from a bewildering smorgasbord of options: audiolingual, grammar-translation, CLT, content-based, or total physical response, for example. This overview of the competing forms of discourse in language teacher education provides a useful perspective on the previous chapters in the collection, each responding to a particular context for language teaching.

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