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Beyond the Language-Content Divide: Advanced Collegiate Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

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Beyond the Language-Content Divide: Advanced Collegiate FL Teaching and Learning

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Outline

- Overview & brainstorming activity
 - Main foci in the research
 - Gaps and future directions
 - Audience reactions, insights, and questions
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Overview

- Review of research on advanced-level FL teaching and learning in collegiate contexts
- Focus on the merging of language and literary-cultural content
- Framing Question: *What is the relationship between language, literature, and culture and how are they instantiated through FL curricula and instruction at the advanced undergraduate level?*



Brainstorming Activity

- What are the biggest challenges to merging language and literary-cultural content at the advanced level? Consider this questions from the perspective of *yourself*, *your students*, and *your department*?
- Provide at least one example of how you would merge the study of *language* and *literary-cultural content* in advanced-level FL courses to overcome these challenges.



Overview

Three foci evident in the research:

1. *Conceptualization* of literature and culture and their role in the advanced-level curriculum.
2. Integration of language and literary-cultural content at the *course* level.
3. Merging of language and content at the *curricular* level.



Overview

- *Advanced* = learners whose language abilities allow them to enroll in courses beyond the introductory/intermediate classes that often form part of a university's FL requirement
- These learners represent a range of FL abilities, some of which are consistent with Advanced levels as defined by ACTFL, others of which are not



Conceptualizing Literature & Culture

LITERATURE

- *Theoretical perspectives* focused on merging literary study and analysis with language-oriented concepts related to SLA, pragmatics, or **genre** (Byrnes & Kord, 2002; Gramling & Warner, 2012; Scott, 2001)
- *Practical approaches* ranging from integrating literature across the curriculum to implementing visual texts in instruction (Barnes-Karol, 2002; Etienne & Vanbaelen, 2006; Finn, 2003; Melin, 2010)



Conceptualizing Literature & Culture

CULTURE

- *Theoretical frameworks* including hermeneutics to the *Standards* (McGee, 2001; Reeser, 2003; Urlaub, 2012)
- *Practical approaches* such as cultural immersion and establishing links between film and culture (Péron, 2010; Sconduto, 2008; Stephens, 2001)



Conceptualizing Literature & Culture

CONCLUSIONS

- Research on conceptualizing literature and culture promotes integration of language and literary-cultural content at the advanced undergraduate level
- The specific place of this content in a holistic collegiate FL curriculum has not been solidified



Integrating Language & Literary-Cultural Content at the Course Level

LANGUAGE IN LITERARY-CULTURAL COURSES

- Adapting CLT techniques typically used in lower-level language courses to advanced-level literary-cultural courses (Erickson, 2009; Kraemer, 2008; McLean & Savage, 2001; Nance, 2002, 2010; Russo, 2006; Thompson, 2008; Weber-Fève, 2009)
- Sensitizing students to how form and content mutually inform one another in FL texts (Berg & Martin-Berg, 2002; Eigler, 2009; Krueger, 2001)



Integrating Language & Literary-Cultural Content at the Course Level

LITERATURE & CULTURE IN LANGUAGE COURSES

- Developing students' advanced writing capacities through interpretation and analysis of FL texts (Allen, 2009a; Bueno, 2009; Villanueva, 2005; Zinn, 2004)
- Using FL texts to present grammar in context, develop linguistic competencies, and encourage critical-thinking skills (Mojica-Díaz & Sánchez-López, 2010; Paesani, 2006b, 2009; Scott, 2004; Zyzik, 2008)



Integrating Language & Literary-Cultural Content at the Course Level

LITERATURE & CULTURE IN LANGUAGE COURSES

- Emphasizing language variation in texts to introduce students to varied speakers and settings not traditionally encountered in the classroom (Etienne & Sax, 2006; Paesani, 2006a)



Integrating Language & Literary-Cultural Content at the Course Level

CONCLUSIONS

- Overall, proposals were mainly focused on advanced *language* courses
- Proposals focused on *literature* or *culture* courses were limited to *introduction to* literature or civilization
- Empirical studies point to the need for explicit attention to advanced linguistic development in these courses

(Bueno, 2002, 2006; Donato & Brooks, 2004; Laimkina, 2008; Mantero, 2002; Polio & Zyzik, 2009; Ryshina-Pankova, 2006, 2010; Zyzik & Polio, 2008)



Implementing Curricular Solutions

- STANDARDS-BASED MODELS: integrative approaches to merging language and literary-content
 - 3R model (Ketchum, 2006; McEwan, 2010)
 - heuristic rereading of the *Standards* (Arens, 2008, 2010a)
- LITERACY-BASED MODELS: literacy as a curricular goal and a pedagogical framework to facilitate interaction with a variety of oral and written target language texts (Mantero, 2006; Redmann, 2005a, 2005b; Swaffar, 2004; Swaffar & Arens, 2005)



Implementing Curricular Solutions

- **GENRE-BASED MODELS (GUGD):** focused on the notions of literacy together with a genre-oriented, socio-cognitive approach to advanced FL learning; language as a symbolic or social resource available to the learners/users within a discourse community (Byrnes, 2008a; Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Crane, 2006; Maxim, 2005, 2009a; Rinner & Weigert, 2006)



Implementing Curricular Solutions

CONCLUSIONS

- Standards, literacy-based, and genre-based models provide an intellectual foundation for merging language and literary-cultural content across the curriculum
- Provide responses to concerns regarding how a holistic, integrated curriculum, as proposed in the MLA Report might be realized



Gaps and Future Directions

The specific place of integrated content in a holistic collegiate FL curriculum has not been solidified, in part due to differing conceptions of literature and culture

- *Are literature and culture as objects of study conceived of differently by different program members?*
- *If so, how do these differing concepts of literature and culture affect advanced undergraduate FL instruction?*



Gaps and Future Directions

Most proposals for merging language into literary-cultural content courses are for “introduction to” culture/civilization, film, or literature courses.

- *Does explicit attention to linguistic development enhance learning of literary-cultural content?*
- *Do student and instructor perceptions change when explicit attention to linguistic development forms part of advanced literature and culture courses?*



Gaps and Future Directions

What it means to be a teacher of language versus a teacher of literary-cultural content may be distinct within and across faculty members.

- *What are best practices in teacher preparation for integrating language and literary-cultural content?*
- *What theoretical models are most suitable to frame such teacher preparation practices?*



Gaps and Future Directions

Few alternatives for curricular solutions exist in the research, which can impede finding program-appropriate solutions to overcoming bifurcation or improving articulation across levels

- *How can curricular solutions such as the Standards or literacy be applied to special student populations (e.g., heritage learners)?*
- *What curricular solutions are appropriate for programs using online or hybrid models of instruction?*
- *What is the impact of departmental or institutional culture on design and implementation of curricular solutions?*



Gaps and Future Directions

The research reviewed reflects only a minor focus on empirical studies and among these, only two studies focused on merging content into advanced language courses.

- *What is the impact of specific pedagogical approaches for integrating language and literary-cultural content?*
- *What is the relationship between particular curricular solutions and students' linguistic development?*
- *How does the use of new technologies and digital media affect students' access to literary-cultural content and influence their advanced FL learning?*



Reactions? Insights? Questions?

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