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NAVIGATING COMPLEXITIES:
An Integrative Approach to English Language Teacher Education

by

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Abstract: This article is an analysis of one undergraduate English language teacher education program's integrative theoretical framework that is structured around three pillars: interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, and teacher exploration. First, the authors survey the unique complexities of language teaching and learning. Then,

they introduce this particular English language teacher education program and its three-pillared theoretical framework, focusing on how these pillars contribute to the program individually and integratively. The authors include examples of how this framework has manifested in program graduates' own professional practices. They conclude with considerations of the role of integration in this framework and program of study.

***Keywords**:* integration, interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, teacher exploration, language teacher education, English as a second language, English language learners

Introduction

Teaching English as a second or foreign language means situating oneself in a dynamic, complex, politicized, and context-driven web of considerations. Negotiating pedagogy, language acquisition research, competing teaching methodologies, cultures, systemic education, and teachers' own reflections of their crafts, English language teachers are challenged to cross a variety of boundaries to integrate these considerations into communicative lesson planning, formative curriculum design, and student advocacy. English learners (ELs) embark on journeys that often cover even more challenging terrains, navigating a wide and dynamic array of linguistic, cognitive, developmental, cultural, societal, and even familial challenges; their ongoing ethnolinguistic identity negotiation is also a highly complex phenomenon.

Given the complex nature of language teaching and learning, how can language teacher education provide pre-service teachers with a comprehensive development approach? This analysis explores one undergraduate English language teacher education program's integrative, three-pillared theoretical framework: interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, and teacher exploration, or integrative critical exploration (ICE). As an integrative framework, ICE provides pre- and in-service language teachers with a comprehensive, transformative, and reflective process of constructing and re-constructing their own teaching practices in response to the uniquely complex and ever-changing demands of the language classroom.

As stakeholders in this language teacher education program—its lead faculty member and four graduates—our objective is to present a theoretical justification as well as an experiential account of the ICE framework both in the program and in these TESL graduates' professional experiences. While we recognize the importance of interdisciplinarity as essential for the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic, our focus is on

integration as an essential feature of interdisciplinarity and as a feature of the broader ICE framework itself.

First, we consider the complexities of language teaching and learning. Then, we provide an overview of the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) program. Next, we analyze the TESL program's ICE framework by considering its three pillars: interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, and teacher exploration. With this framework, we then explore key points of integration—how ICE as an integrative framework manifests both directly and indirectly throughout the program of study. We then examine how this framework has manifested in program graduates' own professional practices before concluding with considerations of the role of integration in this framework and program of study.

The Unique Complexities of Language Teaching and Learning

The rationale for the ICE framework is based on what we recognize as the range of unique and pervasive complexities characterizing language teaching and learning (Graves, 2000; Kaufman & Brooks, 1996; Richards, 2001; Tamjid, 2007). Complexity, determined in part by the human experience and condition, poses ongoing challenges for organizations and individuals in organizations tasked with managing goals and outcomes: "In order to survive, organizations [and individuals] must find ways to interpret events so as to stabilize their environments and try to make them more predictable" (Lissack, 1999, p. 111). What types of complexities do language teachers face in their day-to-day teaching practices? How do they interpret and attempt to stabilize their environments?

The Complexities of Language Teaching

Certainly, it is arguable that all teaching and learning is complex, fraught with an array of variables from which emerge unpredictable factors. However, as language education specialists, we are particularly interested in and compelled by the uniquely complex nature of what we and our learners are tasked to do. English language teaching is situated, negotiated, and dynamic (Brown, 2007; Canagarajah, 1999; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Graves, 2000); it necessitates accessing, developing, and integrating a variety of competencies, including but not limited to linguistic, pedagogical, political, and intercultural. This has a significant impact on English language teachers' identities (Johnston, 2003; Norton, 1997), in that they position

themselves as linguists, educators, cultural liaisons, advocates—often playing multiple roles concomitantly. Furthermore, Johnston (2003) notes that within the broader field of education, English language teaching is often marginalized due to the failure of the education system (and society) even to recognize that these competencies are necessary to teach English as a second or foreign language. The result is the misconception that "if you can speak it, you can teach it."

Teaching language "is not an imperfect craft," suggests Graves, "but a dynamic one" (2000, p. 7). Developing any given set of curricular objectives and developing lesson plans, for example, reflect these multiple competencies, including the following considerations:

- Whose English?
- What is the role of communicative competence?
- What do these learners need in the mainstream classroom? Outside the classroom?
- How culturally familiar are these students with the tasks assigned?
- What personal, developmental, and experiential considerations must I make in order to maximize the experience for individual students?
- What role does language teaching methodology play, if any?
- What are the implications for individual and collaborative activities?

These competencies are essential for what Freire (1986) describes as problematizing the language teaching-learning dynamic; Graves (2000) sees problematizing as "rooted in the assumption that the teacher who teaches the course is the best equipped to understand its challenges and to mobilize the sources needed to meet those challenges" (p. 20). A problematizing approach, in turn, affords English language teachers greater autonomy from external pressures from politicians, administrators, and publishers vis-à-vis standardized testing and best practices (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Kohn, 2000; Ohanian, 1999). These top-down pressures have a propensity to take precedence over—if not dominate—teachers' everyday decisions; Canagarajah (1999) suggests that when English language teachers perceive "more complexity to the subjects, the classroom, and the culture, we will find that [top-down] domination is not guaranteed" (p. 26).

English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers' roles are further complexified by their positioning as cross-cultural liaisons among a variety of stakeholder groups, including their students, their students' care providers, mainstream teachers, education specialists, school administrators, and social services.

We reject a culturist or essentialist approach that tends to reduce and totalize cultural complexities—moving beyond "façade diversity based on cultural unicity to the diversities that each and every one of us have in us to see the potential constructive and manipulatory power of culture" (Dervin, 2011). As liaisons, ESL teachers move beyond their roles as language acquisition specialists; they may act as cultural ambassadors, interpreters, negotiators, advocates, and even legal experts. They recognize that they will be tasked with considering the whole learner's needs (Genesee, 1994). Igoa (1995) discusses ELs' needs in the ESL classroom as a comprehensive construct that includes cognitive, academic, and psychological considerations. She suggests that ESL teachers need a flexible, holistic approach that moves beyond simple English language instruction (Igoa, 1995).

The Complexities of Language Learning

ELs may be typically ascribed a single identity by others—primarily as speakers of limited English. Or, they may be singularly identified by their home cultures. With this essentialist approach, cultural identity is structured around assigned characteristics that ultimately determine cultures as bounded spaces (Dervin, 2011). This approach is not uncommon; according to Dervin, "Complexity needs to be reduced on a permanent basis as the human mind needs to box and categorise experiences, ideas, others . . . to 'survive'" (2011, p. 5). However, some theorists suggest that the notion of "cultural identity" in itself is problematic—a polysemous "floating signifier" based on "imagined communities" (Dervin, 2011). Regardless of the ascribed identity by others, ELs' identity negotiation is just one example of the range of factors that constitute the complex nature of second language learning and acquisition.

Moving away from a more structural approach to cultural theory and research and toward more fluid and postmodern approaches to cultural identity, we perceive ELs as navigating a complex and dynamic array of personal, familial, cultural, developmental, and social factors in and out of the classroom, resulting in a constructed, complex social identity. ELs are not simply engaging in a mechanical process of English language practice and content understanding, also referred to as a "banking education model" (Freire, 1986); rather, they are navigating a fluid, potentially transformative process of identity development and constant negotiation of themselves as learners and individuals (Norton, 1997; Cummins, 2000). "Learning a language is a social activity above all," suggests Wright (1990); "It is subject

to a unique set of conventions [that] derive in part from the deeper and less accessible social and psychological dimensions of the teacher-learner relationship" (p. 83).

In laying out a theory of social identity complexity, Roccas and Brewer (2002) suggest that individuals in general navigate an array of considerations in terms of their social identity, including the overlap among the various groups in which they hold membership. The authors suggest that for individuals whose groups partially overlap (as opposed to not at all or completely), cognitive demands may increase if the individuals pursue coping strategies that merge their identities as opposed to strategies that compartmentalize or nullify identities (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). Furthermore, these identities are dynamic, accentuating various connections and distinctions at key points in individuals' daily lives. For example, Deaux (2001) suggests that location—while not a primary determiner of identity—contributes to the "ecological self" (p. 8); it is a significant player in the ongoing management of social identity.

ELs—especially those for whom English will be a clear identity marker—face journeys into bilingualism and thus, by varying degrees, biculturalism, that pose for them uniquely complex identity questions. Deaux (2001) suggests that when faced with navigating a new ethnolinguistic sphere, individuals may choose one or the other, or they may "use the two sources of identity as the basis for a new emergent form of social identification" (p. 3). For example, in the mainstream classroom, some ELs may choose to align their social identity with that of the dominant group's perspective in an attempt to assimilate into the dominant language group. Other ELs may choose to merge their identities into a complex intercultural identity, constructing polysemous social identities that are both differentiating and inclusive based on ingroup and outgroup distinctions.

By exploring just some of the complexifying factors of the language teaching-learning dynamic, we provide a rationale for the ICE framework for pre-service English language teachers: an integrative framework for the uniquely complex and ever-changing demands of the language classroom. Before moving into an analysis of the ICE framework itself, we first provide an overview of the Teaching English as a Second Language program.

The TESL Program of Study

The TESL program is housed in the Department of Languages in the College of Arts and Sciences at Union University, a small liberal arts school located

in the Southeastern U.S. In its fifteenth year, this twelve-course program—totaling thirty-four undergraduate credits—provides a major or minor for individuals who either want to teach English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) abroad or who want to teach ESL in U.S. K-12 contexts. (Students seeking pre-K-12 teaching licensure complete both the TESL major and a teacher education program housed in the University's School of Education.) TESL students often complete second majors and/or minors, including but not limited to Spanish, French, and Intercultural Studies.

TESL courses begin at the second year and end with a fourth-year program capstone. In addition to TESL courses, the program includes courses from the Departments of English and Intercultural Studies, and students choose an additional elective from Political Science, Philosophy, or Sociology. The TESL courses address language structure and acquisition, ethnolinguistic identity, assessment, literacy, elementary learners, language teaching methodology, and curriculum and materials development. Students also complete three field experiences at the second, third, and fourth levels (see appendix for a complete list of courses).

The Three Pillars: Interdisciplinarity, Critical Pedagogy, and Teacher Exploration

As the theoretical framework for the TESL program, ICE consists of three pillars: interdisciplinarity, an approach to researching complex phenomena; critical pedagogy, a teaching philosophy based on Marxist theory and most clearly identified with the work of Paulo Freire; and teacher exploration, an innovative approach to language teacher education that is an alternative to more traditional teacher training approaches. The desired outcome of this integrative framework is a comprehensive, transformative, and reflective approach to teaching that is aptly suited for the complexities of language teaching and learning. We begin our analysis of this framework by providing an overview of each pillar and its individual contribution to addressing the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic.

Interdisciplinarity and the Complexities of Language Teaching and Learning

Interdisciplinarity—as an organizational approach and a research methodology—is based on the belief that complex problems or phenomena warrant a complex research approach (Klein, 1990; Klein, 1996; Repko,

2011; Repko, Newell, & Szostak, 2012). Interdisciplinary researchers place the phenomenon or problem at the center of the research process. They forego singular dependence on discipline-specific discourses and accompanying research approaches and undergo the highly involved task of crossing disciplinary boundaries to integrate a range of relevant theory and research for a more comprehensive understanding of a complex phenomenon (Repko, 2011; Repko, Newell, & Szostak, 2012).

While interdisciplinary theorists and researchers describe the integrative element of interdisciplinarity as interpretable if not contested in terms of definition, scale, measurement, and impact (Badley, 2009; Fuchsman, 2009; Leonard, 2012; Newell, 2006), integration is essential for truly interdisciplinary approaches to complex problems. According to Klein, interdisciplinarians "detach a category as subject and object from existing disciplinary frameworks," in order to "fill gaps in knowledge from lack of attention to the category, thereby creating new pidgins and creoles in hybrid communities" (1996, p. 36). Klein suggests that true interdisciplinarity is achieved through "through a series of integrative actions" that require "active triangulation of breadth, depth, and synthesis" (1996, p. 212). This synthesis, or integration, with disciplinary research as the foundation, distinguishes interdisciplinarity from multidisciplinarity, in which a researcher accesses but does not integrate relevant theory and research from multiple disciplines (Repko, 2011; Repko, Newell, & Szostak, 2012).

Interdisciplinary integration is especially valuable for pre-service English language teachers who often see disconnects between data about linguistics generated through the natural sciences, for example, and everyday teaching practices (Lange, 1990). TESL students navigate a multidisciplinary range of courses that attempt to capture just some of the disciplinary considerations that contribute to the complexities of language education. Courses include content from psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, developmental psychology, education, and the arts. In addition to disciplinary theory and research, pre-service teachers explore grand theories, from the structuralism of Noam Chomsky to the Marxist theory of Paulo Freire to the feminist framework of Chicana/o studies advocate Gloria Anzaldúa.

Without key integrative curricular features, the TESL program would be multidisciplinary in nature: Students would consider a wide range of disciplinary considerations with no structured integration. According to Badley, "integration involves curriculum or instruction that combines, draws upon or encourages students to see connections between the contents

of two or more academic disciplines" (2009, p. 115). TESL students integrate various disciplinary considerations into their synthesizing research assignments, assessments, field experiences, and a capstone course. With these integrative components, students develop more comprehensive understandings of a range of phenomena relevant to the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic (Repko, 2011; Repko, Newell, & Szostak, 2012). They also develop more interdisciplinary ways of seeing and approaching their own crafts as educators in the classroom. This is a vital step in their professional growth: developing the ability to move beyond disciplinary boundaries in an attempt to create a more comprehensive understanding of the language teaching-learning dynamic.

Critical Pedagogy and the Transformative Potential of the Language Classroom

Critical pedagogy, a Marxist-inspired philosophy and approach to education championed most notably by the late Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, seeks the transformative in the teaching-learning dynamic (Canagarajah, 1999; Freire, 1986; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2002). Predicated on the belief that societal power structures have direct implications for education (Shor, 1999), critical pedagogy seeks to dismantle societal systems of oppression reflected in what Freire describes as a banking approach to education, in which

> knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as a process of inquiry. (1986, p. 58)

Freire suggests that a banking approach to education leads to narration sickness—that is, that the narrative of the classroom is top-down—unidirectional—dominated by the educator and leaving the students in a culture of silence. The result is what Freire (1986) describes as rightist sectarianism—the maintenance of societal structures that oppress some while reinforcing the power position of others—a power structure that, Freire believes, oppresses both parties—those with power and those subjected to it.

Rejecting the banking approach as a norm-reinforcing device—often described as a hidden curriculum designed to maintain class distribution (Sanchez, 1994)—critical pedagogy sees authentic, problem-posing education as a tool for societal change. Eliminating the power structure in the classroom provides a framework for re-considering power structures

in society. For second language teaching and learning, the challenge is to move beyond basic language and literacy instruction to a more complex framework in which

> issues critical to the language learners' lives become focal points of learning and teaching. Language learners and teachers together identify and pursue the areas of knowledge relevant to them. Thus, the learners can gain perspective on those societal forces that help to shape their lives. (Richard-Amato, 2010. p. 5)

Kincheloe captures this complexifying nature of critical pedagogy with key descriptors that speak to the language teaching-learning dynamic, including being "inquiry-oriented, socially contextualized, dedicated to an art of improvisation," and "extended by a concern with critical self- and social-reflection" (cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003, pp. 14-15).

In addition to being an integral part of the ethos of the TESL program, critical pedagogy greatly influences key aspects of the program's course delivery. For example, students in a third year field experience work closely with the professor of record to construct a participant observation field experience in which the pre-service teacher identifies the research phenomenon and site, selects a range of data collection methods, and dialogs regularly with the professor throughout the organic process; the professor acts as a guide or facilitator. In another course, students read the approach's seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by Paulo Freire, as a foundation for understanding this approach. Furthermore, throughout the program of study, students read a range of theory and research that directly and indirectly integrates critical pedagogy; many focus on critical pedagogy in their program capstones.

Teacher Exploration and the Art of Reflective Agency

Teacher exploration offers pre- and in-service language teachers a situated, context-driven framework for developing their own teaching approaches and philosophies. Formative in nature, teacher exploration is a reaction to more summative notions of best practice and prescribed methodology found in teacher education programs (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Gebhard, Gaitan, & Oprandy, 1990). Criticism of traditional language teacher education programs—and their over-dependence on methodology—has resulted in calls for alternative approaches to language teacher development. Brown (2007), for example, suggests that language teachers should forego methodological loyalty for a set of principles—cognitive, socioaffective, and linguistic—as

their guiding framework. Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that methods-based teacher training programs fail to capture the realities of teachers' needs and approaches, suggesting that a "post-methodological" approach to language teacher education means not just an alternate method, but an alternative to method; a valuing of teacher autonomy over prescription; and "principled pragmatism" or an appreciation of "how classroom learning can be shaped and re-shaped by teachers as a result of self-observation, self-analysis, and self-evaluation" (p. 33). Similarly, teacher exploration provides language teachers with an evolving approach to negotiating the dynamic and complex terrain of the language classroom without dependence on traditional language teaching methodology as the developmental framework. In fact, Gebhard and Oprandy (1999) suggest that

> the more elements of the teaching-learning dynamic that reveal themselves to us, the more we want to explore. Thus, a cycle is created; increasing awareness makes teachers curious to explore further, leading again to fresh insights and new questions to explore. (p. xiv)

Awareness is the essential goal for teacher exploration—a deeper awareness of what we as language teachers do, and why—driven in part through highly reflective engagement with our own decisions and actions as language teachers (Bartlett, 1990; Fanselow, 1988; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Gebhard, 2006; Graves, 2000; Richards, 1998; Wallace, 1991). Developing awareness values description over prescription, teachers' personal connections to teaching, and attention to process (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). Teacher exploration offers a number of approaches to developing awareness that language teachers may employ as they consider their own teaching context, learners' needs, and their own beliefs about teaching and learning, including descriptive observation, problem-posing (and solving) action research, journaling, and collaboration with peers and supervisors (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999).

Teacher exploration is appropriately structured and scaled for addressing the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic. Methods-driven teacher training tends to reduce and simplify the art of teaching into a set of prescriptions and best practices that "stultifies" the pre- and in-service teacher (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999; Graves, 2000). Kumaravadivelu (2003) recognizes that "methods alone are too inadequate and too limited to satisfactorily explain the complexity of language teaching operations around the world" (p. 29). He suggests that methods-based teacher training

> ignores the fact that the success or failure of classroom instruction

> depends to a large extent on the unstated and unstable interaction of multiple factors such as teacher cognition, learner perception, societal needs, cultural contexts, political exigencies, economic imperatives, and institutional constraints, all of which are inextricably woven. (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 29)

In the TESL program, teacher exploration results in reflective agency. Mindful, context-driven, and formative, reflective agency demands that teachers proactively approach lesson and curriculum planning, including content and instruction, with the range of knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness (Richards, 1991) appropriate for the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic.

Teacher exploration is essential to the TESL program's curricular structure and course delivery. Faculty are committed to providing their pre-service teachers with a range of current theory and research relevant to the situated, whole learner; to structuring ways for their pre-service teachers to consider and explore; and to developing reflective agency and the autonomy that Kumaravadivelu describes. Program features that contribute to this exploratory commitment include an interdisciplinary curriculum, individualized research pursuits, reflective journaling of field experiences, and course blogs.

ICE: An Integrative Framework

While the ICE framework's three pillars—interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, and teacher exploration—each have distinct philosophies and purposes, these pillars also integrate with each other to constitute a comprehensive, transformative, and reflective approach to navigating the complexities of the language teaching-learning dynamic.

A Comprehensive Understanding of Language Teaching and Learning

Interdisciplinarity provides a framework for TESL students to integrate key disciplinary perspectives in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the complex problems inherent in the language teaching-learning dynamic. Critical pedagogy and teacher exploration reinforce this outcome. Critical pedagogy allows for a more comprehensive approach to teaching and learning by rejecting traditional educational approaches that simply deposit information into learners—thus reducing and totalizing the learning

experience. By affording pre-service language teachers the opportunity to co-construct the learning experience with the educator, critical pedagogy in the TESL program provides stakeholders access to a more comprehensive range of topics, purposes, and meanings. In addition, teacher exploration provides a context-driven approach to teacher development by situating the teacher and student in context, by recognizing the limitations of pre-designed curricula and assessment, and by understanding that teachers themselves are best suited for making ongoing pedagogical decisions through reflective agency. This approach affords teachers a more comprehensive array of methodological choices in order to achieve their goals.

The Transformative Potential of Language Teaching and Learning

While critical pedagogy affords TESL students new ways of seeing the transformative potential of the teaching-learning dynamic, interdisciplinarity and teacher exploration also contribute to the transformative nature of the TESL program. For example, interdisciplinarity provides language teachers with a structured framework for transforming their understandings of language teaching and learning—to move beyond narrow disciplinary perspectives that may address only individual factors relevant to language teaching and learning. Furthermore, teacher exploration provides teachers the ability to transform their own practices into contextually relevant, student-centered decisions. As a formative approach that rejects more traditional education models that often prescribe best practices for any given teaching context, teacher exploration transforms teaching from a model of received knowledge into one of reflective agency.

The Role of Reflective Agency in Language Teaching and Learning

Reflective agency, a core value of teacher exploration, is enhanced by both interdisciplinarity and critical pedagogy. Each approach provides the researcher/educator/learner (often a hybrid of the three) with a mindful consideration of context, stakeholders, and teachers' own beliefs and experiences. First, interdisciplinary research encourages a remarkable amount of reflective agency. Through extensive reflection and analysis, interdisciplinary researchers assess the level of complexity of the given phenomenon, identify key insights from relevant disciplines, and develop a

more comprehensive understanding of the problem. Similarly, TESL students mindfully navigate a range of considerations about language teaching and learning. Second, reflective agency is germane to critical pedagogy, which challenges learners to develop what Freire (1986) describes as praxis: the relationship between reflection and action that is an essential goal for learning.

The following are just three examples among many of how ICE as an integrative framework manifests in the TESL program. According to Leonard (2012), integrative learning "demands active engagement in some kind of connection-making. Focusing on the process of integration has implications for faculty and administrators crafting intentional environments to support integrative learning" (p. 65). As evident in the following examples, class discussions, research assignments, and assessments are designed for TESL students to engage in connection-making; they provide students with the opportunity to formatively develop integrative approaches to complex problems they will face in language teaching-learning dynamics.

Integration Point I: The Complexities of Literacy and Literacy Instruction

In the program's literacy course, third-year students explore literacy from the inside out through a multidisciplinary array of theory and research, including critical pedagogy. They then integrate this theory and research through synthesizing assessments and research assignments in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the complex phenomenon of literacy. Students begin with Wolf's *Proust and the Squid*, which provides an accessible overview of the neurological aspects of reading. Students then move from reading and the mind to the sociocultural context of reading—considering Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, Gee's discourse theory, and reader-response theory. Next, students broaden the scope of their investigative lenses to consider literacy in society—how literacy is used and misused, focusing on the Marxist-based critical literacy movement that emerged in the 20th century, especially the work of Paulo Freire.

Integration Point II: The Complexities of Ethnolinguistic Identity

In a fourth-year seminar, TESL students take an integrative journey through theory and research relevant to the complexities of ethnolinguistic

identity. The course is structured around three units: African-American Vernacular English, Chicana/o studies, and language and gender. Through lectures, readings, and class discussions, students explore not only a variety of disciplinary threads relevant to ethnolinguistic identity negotiation (linguistics, political science, history, psychology) but also the grand theories of structuralism, Marxism, and feminism. Many TESL students begin to unpack their whiteness. Assessments consist of essay prompts, case studies, and samples from literature intentionally structured as spaces for students to integrate relevant course content for a comprehensive understanding of identity negotiation. For their research projects, students integrate a variety of disciplinary considerations for complex topics, including lavender linguistics, Quechua language and culture, Chicana/o language, and interlingualism.

Integration III: The Complexities of Curriculum Design

In a culminating, fourth-year curriculum and materials development course, TESL students integrate content from prior TESL courses to develop a 45-contact hour curriculum for a context of their choice using a comprehensive model of curriculum development. Students are not prescribed methods, approaches, or curriculum content. Rather, they are tasked with constructing and rationalizing their own plans by integrating relevant content from the TESL program and course text for the teaching-learning sites they have identified.

Initially, the students and professor collaboratively construct a list of theory and research from prior TESL courses that may act as curricular considerations and content for students' projects. Students also read and discuss a comprehensive textbook, Richard-Amato's *Making it Happen: From Interactive to Participatory Language Teaching* (2010), that reflects the TESL program of study, reinforcing and enhancing knowledge and skills from the prior classes. Students develop goals and outcomes for their plans through conducting a needs analysis, a context analysis, and a personal beliefs analysis relevant to the teaching site. For these analyses, students integrate relevant information from the TESL program with their own previous experiences as pre-service teachers and language learners. Furthermore, they employ a critical framework for understanding learners' needs and sociopolitical context for the curriculum. Students then develop their 45-contact hour plans, rationalizing them based on their pre-determined goals and outcomes.

ICE in Action: Teachers' Voices

We now consider four examples of how this ICE framework impacts the teaching behaviors of the authors of this article who are graduates of the TESL program.

Nurturing Critical Hope in the ELL Classroom: Thad Williams

This example is situated in the context of my work as a high school English language learner (ELL) teacher and district ELL professional development coach in a large public comprehensive high school. While first-generation immigrant students in my secondary English language course share the common need to develop English language proficiency, they also demonstrate varying levels of academic development, acculturation, socio-emotional development, identity development, and active participation in the class, further complexifying their needs beyond second language development. As I worked with a group of secondary teachers to address the needs of learners in this context, we developed the following lesson that incorporated student identity texts and a critical hope framework that challenged notions of optimism and the American Dream (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). As Duncan-Andrade points out, a critical hope framework allows actors to challenge false hope and mere optimism, and engage in authentic tasks of participation, identity development, and collective struggle (2009). Duncan-Andrade writes,

> Critical hope audaciously defies the dominant ideology of defense, entitlement, and preservation of privileged bodies at the expense of the policing, disposal, and dispossession of marginalized "others" . . . . False hope would have us believe in individualized notions of success and suffering, but audacious hope demands that we reconnect to the collective by struggling alongside one another, sharing in the victories and the pain. (2009, p.9)

In this lesson, students explored identity through the themes of journey and immigration with this essential question: What are the most important factors shaping who we are as individuals? Building on key terms and concepts, students watched two video clips: 1) a monologue from a Nigerian-American youth discussing his identity and journey between multiple worlds; and 2) a video based on the "The Circuit" by Francisco Jimenez. Students then participated in an "I Read, You Read" activity in which they used metacognitive markers—active reading tools such as annotating,

highlighting, marking up the text—to engage with the text while they read and talked through the passage. Students built on this task to create what Cummins, et al. (2005) call individual "identity texts" that are aptly suited for the complex nature of the lesson's goal:

> These products, which can be written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic, or multimodal combinations, are positive statements that students make about themselves. Identity texts differ from more standard school assignments in both the process and the product. The assignment is cognitively challenging, but students can choose their topics. They decide how they will carry out the project and are encouraged to use the full repertoire of their talents in doing so. (Cummins, et al., 2005, p.40)

Students generated their own narratives that challenged "false hope" and embraced elements of critical hope through a deeper understanding of their own identities and journeys. For example, through this lesson, Jessica[1], a Salvadorian student, challenged the notion of the American Dream and questioned the differences between what she believed when living in El Salvador about living in the United States and what she now knows and believes. This played a central role in her identity text and narrative as she expressed ideas of who she was and who she is becoming.

A second example from this lesson is the tension Sabal[2], an Indian student, struggled with, torn between his father's expectations about his future and his own. As a new immigrant to the United States, Sabal took great pride in film and art critique and saw his educational experiences in both India and the U.S. leading him toward a future in art criticism. This goal was met with great challenge from his father, and Sabal wrestled in his narrative with hopes that the American Dream would allow him to pursue his life desires. However, he met a different reality with threats from his father that Sabal would have to return to India if he did not succeed in advanced placement math and science courses.

In what ways does this lesson integrate the three pillars of the ICE framework in its design, facilitation, and student learning outcomes? First, with a design based on theory and research from linguistics, social psychology, child growth and development, education, and culture studies, this lesson afforded students English language development through a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to exploring their own identities. Second, critical pedagogy, manifesting in this lesson as critical hope, was an

[1] Pseudonym
[2] Pseudonym

integrative theme throughout the experience. Critical hope guided the lesson and students' use of identity texts to make sense of their own experiences and journeys while using language to share these authentic stories. Third, this lesson's design and implementation were based not only on methodology alone, but also on faculty reflections upon what we as a curriculum team believed should happen for these learners. With no mandated curriculum for this lesson, the secondary teachers and I depended on our understandings of the context of the classroom, our perceptions of these learners' needs, and our own knowledge and beliefs about language teaching and learning. Furthermore, as the lesson facilitator, I worked alongside the students as they used their own experiences to construct language and critical consciousness simultaneously, responding to their individual needs and evolving identity texts as opposed to simply implementing a pre-formatted, pre-structured lesson plan. Interdisciplinarily grounded, critically informed, and exploratorily designed and implemented, this identity text lesson demonstrates the flexibility of the ICE framework for addressing the context-driven and complex needs of these English language learners.

English Language Support in a Youth Leadership Exchange Program: Bethany Hobbs

I designed and implemented an English language support program for Iraqi high school students participating in a six-week cross-cultural leadership development program with high school students from the United States. The goal of this exchange program is leadership development based on the promotion of mutual understanding, respect, and collaboration between the U.S. and Iraq. Upon completion of the exchange program, both U.S. and Iraqi students returned home and implemented action plans ranging from arranging park clean-up initiatives to starting a nonprofit health organization.

The complexities that the Iraqi participants faced—cultural, experiential, linguistic—coupled with power dynamics resulting from the historical relationship between the U.S. and Iraq—were clear indicators to me that I would need go beyond traditional curriculum development and teaching methodology to develop a curriculum that utilized the ICE framework. I was tasked with exploring ways of addressing the second language the participants would have to immerse themselves in and the ways that power would play out—the liberating and transformative implications of the experience. Thus,

I applied the ICE framework to develop an interdisciplinary, critically informed, and exploratory approach for these Iraqi participants.

By integrating theory and research from history, economics, public health, biology/ecology, government administration, and education, the students employed an interdisciplinary approach to community-organizing issues. Disciplines correlated with different stages of the program and its different sites; this complex program was "located across an expanse of physical sites and social relations" (Klein, 1996). Initially, in Brattleboro, Vermont, I taught classes to build a historical and social background for their educational tour. Then, students visited multiple learning sites. In Portland, participants met with professionals from the fields of public health, biology/ecology, local government, and education. Participants also met with indigenous community leaders. In Washington, D.C., they met with national and international government officials. Throughout their travels I acted as support for their ongoing language development through my roles as an educator, cultural liaison, and advocate.

Through class dialog and the writing and revision process, students integrated the relevant data they collected throughout the program into comprehensive action plans for their own communities. Each plan integrated a unique balance of perspectives based on students' established goals for their plans.

As part of this integrative approach, I included a critical component in the program, having participants facilitate their own critical framing of their experiences, which then contributed to their courses of action. For example, throughout the program the students and I critically analyzed the manner in which history has shaped the social representations their U.S. peers would already have of them and the resulting impact on their own identities (Duveen, 2001). The program participants' cross-cultural knowledge of each others' cultures, developed through historically informed (and frequently misinformed) social representations, often resulted in interactions where U.S. participants were even hostile at times. However, the ongoing efforts of the students to "re-present" their identities through negotiation (Phelps & Nadim, 2010) were supported by the critical pedagogy of the program.

Furthermore, in order for their program projects to be realistic, I encouraged Iraqi participants not to deproblematize the future; these participants needed to understand that their immediate futures would not be problem free. Thus I encouraged them to explore the causality for the circumstances in their lives (Freire, 2004) as they designed their action plans. In developing critically informed action plans, participants described

the concrete reality of their action plans during their daily dialog sessions; considered how to make change by critically questioning, deconstructing, and recreating knowledge; and assessed historic and material circumstances to define their expectations for change.

In addition to emphasizing the interdisciplinary and critical nature of the program, as program designer and facilitator, I employed an exploratory approach by using my own understanding of the complexities of language teaching and learning, the goals of the exchange program, and the contexts participants would be operating in as guideposts for planning students' language support. Rather than approach the topic of leadership and action through prescriptions on how to be a leader, or via best practice guides, I considered student needs as well as the various contexts that factored into the program to construct a context-specific approach. I included case studies, documentaries, and site visits to several organizations so that their action plans could be implemented with relevance to community needs.

The curriculum itself reflected my exploratory approach: Just as I moved beyond set methodologies of instruction, so, too, did the Iraqi participants move beyond received knowledge as an inadequate means of developing agency. Although many of the site visits in Portland were focused on the problem of homelessness, students were not compelled to design action plans about this need in their own communities. Instead, they often absorbed the various approaches used by organizations (e.g., how to educate people about the issues, how to raise funds, etc.) and translated what they saw in terms of issues they could realistically address in their home environments. For example, one group of students from Baghdad designed an action plan to go into schools and teach younger children about hygiene and nutrition. A student from Burlington, Vermont, created a club at his school for people to learn more about the Middle East.

I also had to be flexible throughout the program, reflecting on the immediate contexts we were in and the often fluid and certainly evolving needs of the Iraqi participants. My own awareness of my behaviors as a program facilitator allowed me to constantly adjust and create a relevant approach to teaching the learners. As I got to know the students from the U.S. and Iraq, I realized my pre-existing ideas of what an action plan should look like needed to change. Application of the ICE framework was essential for addressing the complex goals and outcomes of this program, providing the interdisciplinarity, critical framing, and exploratory approach necessary for me to do my work well and for Iraqi students to develop comprehensive action plans for their communities.

Dialog Journals as an Integrative Writing Task in the ESL Classroom: Tyler Glodjo

As an ESL teacher, I utilized the ICE framework to implement dialog journaling as a means to motivate struggling writers in a third grade classroom. The students in this class each spoke in a variety of discourses in differing school contexts, shifting from academic English with teachers to African American Vernacular English or Spanish with their peers. However, the vibrant and skilled use of language evident in their speaking practices was absent in their classroom writing tasks. They wrote little during class assignments due to a lack of confidence in their own writing skills, which likely resulted from a preoccupation with conventions of writing such as spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Certainly, developing voice in writing is a highly negotiated act for emerging writers—even in their first languages. For young second-language writers, developing voice in a second language is far more complex, with potentially significant implications for their identities, including how they perceive their own developing bilingualism and biculturalism and how they perceive their positioning in relation to their native language networks and English-speaking peers.

I introduced dialog journals, a composition practice in which students and teachers write back and forth to each other, to motivate students to write using informal communication, pulling from their vibrant speech practices instead of standard academic discourse. These journals afford both educator and learner the opportunity to consider writing beyond product-oriented and mechanics-focused writing approaches—to consider the what, the who, the how, and the why that are essential to any writing task. Students responded positively to the assignment, drawing from their own cultural, linguistic, and academic resources and using creativity in forming their entries. As the sole audience for students, I responded to their ideas, shared relevant personal experience, and sought further dialog.

I approached this assignment using the ICE framework. First, since my goal was more complex than simply practicing writing mechanics, this assignment design required an integration of disciplinary approaches comprehensive enough to speak to the more complicated nature of voice in second language writers. Viewed from the perspective of psychology, the practice of dialog journaling integrates schema theory, as well as motivational considerations for communication. Viewed from a perspective incorporating theory and research from composition and sociolinguistics, dialog journals provide students with a space to explore discourse, including

appropriateness of written tone, style, and audience expectations through their texts and feedback. Viewed from the perspective of language education, the dialog journal assignment integrates communicative language teaching practices that facilitate linguistic development through contextual and meaningful communication.

The second pillar of the ICE framework, critical pedagogy, is evident in the dialog journal assignment in that students welcomed the opportunity to "speak" through written text knowing they would also be heard. Their right to speak (Bourdieu, 1991) was not constrained by the academic rules of grammar and spelling, and their right to be heard was not subject to critique or correction. In this class, dialog journals became a means of critical praxis—reflection and action—for addressing oppression and dehumanization (Freire, 1986). Students chose to reflect on and critique their lived experiences, first on paper and then verbally in class, resulting in the transformation of their reality through social action. The students wrote about social issues and marginalizing situations they faced regularly in and out of school, often transcending journal writing to engage the issues in class discussion, as well. For example, every student shared the experience of being bullied. Bullying on account of physical size, gender, ethnicity, and language was a common experience. As they said in both journals and class dialog, the students often felt silenced by bullying and failed to report its occurrence. Engaging the issue through the written and spoken word empowered the students to take collective action, such as developing plans to prevent opportunities for bullying and procedures for reporting it when it occurred. In addition, by participating in the dialog journals through response, I became a student of my students' words, and thus their worlds (Freire & Macedo, 1987), challenging the traditional conceptualization of classroom relations and the possibilities of student agency. The integration of psychological, sociolinguistic, sociological, compositional, and educational perspectives fostered an interdisciplinary criticality that resulted in a (co) construction of meaning between teacher and students aimed at changing our shared world.

Third, the dialog journals reflected my use of an exploratory curriculum development and implementation. Rather than address these students' lack of motivation to write through pre-formatted curricula and prescribed methodological design, I considered what the students needed educationally and experientially, what their immediate learning contexts would allow for, and my own values as a language teacher. Dialog journals happened to work well for these learners and for me in this particular context. The integrative

nature of ICE as an interdisciplinary, critical, and exploratory framework made possible a classroom writing practice that addressed complex educational and social realities for the benefit of both teacher and students.

English Learner Advocacy and Support in Secondary School Settings: Victoria Stargel

The ICE framework has proven essential to my ability to navigate the demands of my complex professional roles as a full-time itinerant English Language Development (ELD) teacher in a metropolitan public school system. I travel to multiple schools with English language learner (ELL) populations that are not large enough to require their own ESL teacher. In addition to classroom teaching responsibilities at select schools, my roles include being a student advocate and an English learner (EL) expert in two urban high schools; one is struggling to meet its annual measurement objectives, while the other one is more successful in meeting its state and district standards.

My goal for working with teachers and administrators as a student advocate and EL expert in both schools is to build a culture of highly situated understanding and practice, developed from a dialogically cultivated, integrative consideration of the various stakeholders' perspectives. The complex nature of my responsibilities, the need for a dialogical approach in my work with my peers, and the importance of maintaining an exploratory spirit given the situated and evolving nature of our work with ELs warrant my utilizing the ICE framework as a comprehensive approach to my roles in these schools.

First, in order to artfully navigate this complex array of scenarios, tasks, and positions, I use my interdisciplinary understanding of the language teaching-learning dynamic to create a common ground upon which general education teachers and I can address the needs of ELs more comprehensively. Throughout my day, I integrate a range of multiple disciplinary perspectives, including those of linguistics, developmental psychology, and educational policy and planning, as I collaborate with ELs' stakeholders. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of my work requires more than merely cross-disciplinary measures; my colleagues and I are building new ways of understanding language teaching and learning complexity. We explore and construct specific strategies for their classrooms based on our professional knowledge and skills, our perceptions of ELs' needs, and our knowledge of curricular content. Often, mainstream teachers can begin to see themselves

as language teachers and cultural mentors in addition to content area instructors.

The second ICE pillar, critical pedagogy, is also integral to my ability to effectively engage mainstream teachers in order to meet the needs of ELs. As linguistically, culturally, and socioeconomically marginalized students, language learners in these schools need advocacy that goes deeper than simple language support. Thus, my dialog with mainstream teachers includes our critical considerations of the marginalized spaces from which many of our ELs originate. Furthermore, I emphasize the individual contributions ELs can make to their own learning. Through this dialogical process, my goal is to critically co-construct classroom approaches that validate these learners' languages, cultures, and experiences.

This dialogically-based co-construction reflects not only Freirean principles but also the third pillar of ICE, teacher exploration, which was foundational to my undergraduate training in the TESL program and essential to my own approach to coursework for my teaching licensure in the Department of Education. Specifically, I frequently meet one-on-one with teachers in order to facilitate their agency by exploring ways they can make their instruction accessible to ELs with varying proficiency levels. I encourage teachers to try strategies that work with their content area, individual teaching style, and specific student needs.

One example of how the ICE framework shapes my role as an EL expert is a collaborative initiative with a music teacher who was seeking out ways to more effectively motivate ELs to engage in a song-writing project. Each concept that forms a pillar of the TESL program at Union played a distinct yet integrative role in this collaboration. With my understanding of the cognitive and linguistic impacts of learning in a second language and his understanding of music theory and pedagogy, we were able to discuss the complexifying factors of his lesson and co-constructed a graphic organizer as a means of more effectively structuring the lesson for ELs. The graphic organizer integrated not only my own interdisciplinary understanding of language teaching and learning but also the other teacher's understanding of music theory and practice. Critical pedagogy was an essential feature of the lesson itself; the music teacher challenged students to explore social problems and their own experiences through the lyrics they composed. Finally, this lesson was not based on any prescribed notions of best practice or pre-formatted curricula but was exploratorily developed: a highly situated response to a specific need.

Conclusion: ICE and integrative Learning

Interdisciplinary theory and research have provided the academy with a robust and evolving discussion of integration—both theoretical and practical (Badley, 2009; Fuchsman, 2009; Klein, 1990; Klein, 1996; Leonard, 2012; Newell, 2006; Repko, 2011; Repko, Newell, & Szostak, 2012). Through the ICE framework of the TESL program at Union University, integration is theoretical, pedagogical, and applicable; it is both a program goal and a learner outcome. Badley (2009) recognizes that preparing teachers for an integrative approach to the teaching-learning dynamic is no simple feat; "integrative teaching requires its teachers to learn a new mindset, a new language, and new instructional practices" (p. 121). In defining integrative learning, Schneider (2003) provides an applicable perspective to the roles integration plays in the TESL program:

> Integrative learning . . . is not a synonym for interdisciplinary learning. Rather, integrative learning is a shorthand term for teaching a set of capacities—capacities we might also call the arts of connection, reflective judgment, and considered action—that enables graduates to put their knowledge to effective use. Thus defined, integrative learning may certainly include the various forms of interdisciplinary learning. (pp.1-2)

With interdisciplinarity, critical pedagogy, and teacher exploration acting as its integrative framework, The TESL program provides its students with course content, assignments, research opportunities, and field experiences that foster the "set of capacities" Schneider (2003) is describing as integrative learning. Specifically, TESL students pull from relevant sources (interdisciplinarity), frame these complexities critically (critical pedagogy), and move beyond traditional methodological prescriptions (teacher exploration). In doing so, these pre-service teachers not only develop the knowledge and skills of English language teaching but also the attitude and awareness necessary for a comprehensive, transformative, and exploratory approach to their own crafts as teachers.

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Appendix: TESL Program of Study

Courses In the TESL Program
TESL 210: Language & Content Tutoring
TESL 220: Principles of Language & Acquisition
TESL 315: Critical Context of Literacy
TESL 320: ESL Assessment
TESL 350: Instructional Methodology
TESL 410: Curriculum & Materials Development
TESL 440: Theories of Language
TESL 490: Capstone

Additional Courses From Other Disciplines
ICS 320: Intercultural Communication
EDU 423: Teaching Modern Languages in Secondary School
ENG 460: Advanced Grammar
PSC 232: Comparative Political Systems
PHL 349: World Religions
SOC 419: Social Diversity and Inequality