

Redrawing the Boundaries on Theory, Research, and Practice Concerning Language Teachers' Philosophies and Language Teacher Cognition: Toward a Critical Perspective

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Two areas of investigation and professional practice—language teachers' philosophies and language teacher cognition—can be considered as related, perhaps overlapping, insofar as they are both the result of thought. The concept of a philosophy of teaching may hold together sets of language teacher cognitions, or guide specific investigations of such sets, and thus might contribute to redrawing the investigative boundaries of this area. Theoretical discussion in this article explores this matter, and supports the general idea of expanding the boundaries of language teacher cognition in ways that might facilitate inquiry into philosophies of teaching. Guided by critical perspectives on second language teaching, this exploration narrows down to focus on one category of language teachers' philosophies—critical ones—and considers what some of their content might be, what *cognitions* or areas of cognitive activity might be involved, and further considers problems of conceptual and theoretical congruence. In concluding, practical implications in terms of content for language teacher education and associated research are briefly considered.

Keywords: language teacher cognition; philosophies of teaching; critical pedagogy; language teacher development

IN THIS ARTICLE, I RESPOND TO THE SUGGESTION that language teacher philosophies could interact productively with language teacher cognition. First I identify the two areas of interest—philosophies of teaching and language teacher cognition—and I attempt to set them in relation to one another. Arising out of rather different source disciplines (philosophy of education and cognitive psychology, respectively), they have different intellectual inheritances. Nevertheless, there are shared conceptual areas, so they could

be mutually informative. I identify some conceptual inheritances in (language teacher) cognition that suggest a narrowness of boundaries. Second, I focus on critical philosophies of teaching, perspectives taken by teachers with a particular adherence to or interest in democratic values. If language teacher philosophies are made up of sets of beliefs, of bodies of knowledge, or language teacher cognitions, then investigations of language teacher cognitions could be guided by the possibility that they are collected under a philosophy of teaching heading. I then note critical discussion of this area. I conclude by addressing implications of this for critical language teacher development, and identify some important concepts and areas for developing practice to explore.

I am using the word *critical* in several overlapping senses, indicated by the following points. First, the intellectual descent of this term can be traced at least to Kant (1998/1781), meaning a rigorous inspection and potential revision of concepts. Second, in the 1930s, Horkheimer (1972/1937) developed critical theory to refer to a critique of society prioritizing values such as equality, freedom, and social justice. In the 1980s, this second understanding of the term was attached (by Giroux, with Freire's concurrence) to the developing field of critical pedagogy (which might otherwise have been called radical pedagogy, cf. Crookes, 2009b). Third, and somewhat in reaction against this sense as being too restrictive, is the use found in Pennycook (2001) as indicating a form of problematizing practice. Pennycook would suggest that unless a form of teaching (or theorizing, or professional practice) is reflexive and willing to critically inspect its own assumptions, it cannot really be critical.¹

Language teacher cognition, a relatively recent line of work, refers to aspects of (language) teacher thinking. Though the area may have broadened out recently, its primary intellectual inheritance is from mainstream cognitive psychology. This has traditionally been the main research field that studies *cognition* (itself part of and reflecting mainstream culture, or to put it more strongly, dominant Enlightenment structural conceptions of the cognitive individual person, and associated methodological individualism) as influencing the earlier area of *teacher thinking*. Borg's work (e.g., 2003) makes persistent use of the plural *cognitions*, usually interchangeably with *beliefs*, presumably the results of cognition, or of cognitive processes. Other researchers in this area also refer to beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge.²

One can also arrive at the area referring to teacher thinking from educational philosophy, via the 100-year-old term, *philosophy of teaching*. This can refer to a teacher's short statement of views about preferred teaching practices or teachers' perspectives concerning the ethically, morally, and philosophically important aspects of their work. The existence of this term, and approaches to teacher education guided by it, suggests that teachers would benefit from consulting the philosophy of education when developing a guiding perspective (cf. Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Feryok, 2008; Kubanyiova, 2014) for making sense of their professional lives, which are moral practices carried out under often challenging circumstances.

A language teacher may have a philosophy of teaching, that is, views or principles informing and guiding professional practice and an accompanying body of professional knowledge. Sources for this include one's own experiences as a student, one's personal values, and broader life experiences and reflections. As a statement that is part of professional educational development and practice, and because of its possible relationship to established positions in the philosophy of education or engagement with philosophies of schooling, a *philosophy of teaching* is a broader, more encompassing, and more institutionally and historically located entity than is implied by the term *beliefs*. In addition, it should be a relatively comprehensive and congruent entity. In providing a rationale for a teacher's practice, it has the potential to act as a guide to inquiry. It is not easy to rationalize why any one belief (or teacher cognition) rather than another should be investigated by a researcher or advocated for by a teacher educator. Philosophies of teaching, on the other hand, can be argued for on moral, ethical, or sociopolitical grounds and thus a research agenda concerning them can itself be justified as likely to have benefit given a particular analysis of an educational institution or culture.

Certainly, as a language teacher educator, I am interested in knowing how language teachers use the knowledge they are supposed to have of areas of professional practice. Second language acquisition (SLA), for instance, provides information about error treatment, and research grounded in language teacher cognition has investigated how second language (L2) teachers use that kind of information when they teach or correct students' errors (e.g., Mori, 2011; Yoshida, 2010). But if one also thinks of language teaching as a cultural, moral, social, and political practice, then similarly it is desirable to know what informs less instrumental areas of language teachers' classroom practices, or their professional work as it involves actions beyond the classroom. Do language teachers, for example, hold the view that they should treat all students equitably (regardless, say, of race or gender)? What is their understanding of the aims of (language) education (in their school, culture, or country)? And if so, how do they draw on these perspectives in informing action, including, but also going far beyond, error treatment?

These questions should be of importance to those of us who are language teacher educators. We should try to understand our students' developing philosophies of teaching, and we should offer support to them in their development. Even

though *thinking* of all kinds must be involved in the development of such understandings, these areas of professional practice are not necessarily indicated by the term *language teacher cognition*. This is at least partly the result of the dominant inheritances of the term cognition, whose foci derived from the first flush of U.S. cognitive psychology. A central research agenda, as Anglo-American cognitive psychology began, was how experts used knowledge to complete tasks and individuals' immediate cognitive processing of problems. Extended to teachers, this became an interest in how teachers (as experts) drew on their professional knowledge or made classroom decisions, but not more values-laden matters.

Although the term *philosophy of teaching* is longstanding, and many personal statements of philosophies of teaching have been made as the result of teacher thinking, the term does not indicate a corresponding well-developed area of empirical investigation (Alsup, 2005; Peterson, 1933). Perhaps through contact with the general area of language teacher cognition(s), there could be mutually beneficial growth. The aim of this theoretical contribution is to outline such opportunities while being cautious about areas of potential incommensurability.

PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

Conceptual Sources, Range, and Manifestations

The concept of a *philosophy of teaching* has long been in existence (e.g., *The Philosophy of Teaching*, 1835; Sands, 1869). Published versions emphasize a teacher's core principles and practices, often developed within or from philosophy of education (Ortman, 1962; Passmore, 1980; Peters, 2009; Tompkins, 1903; van Petten Henderson, 1947), and range widely. On the one hand, teachers produce short statements that may indicate points about what works for them; on the other hand, we have publications that depict teachers' general perspectives (e.g., Pennington & Urmston, 1998; Skeel & Decaroli, 1969). Recent advice—"A philosophy of teaching statement should reveal the deeper structures and values that give meaning and justification to an approach to teaching" (Pratt, 2005, p. 32)—is consistent with the earliest references. For recent resources for use in the development of such entities in applied linguistics, see Crookes (2003, 2009a, 2009b).

Early publications in this area were essayist but drew to some extent on the developing fields of philosophy of education and psychology (e.g., Ev-

erett, 1859). In recent decades, with the increased bureaucratization of teacher promotion and contract renewal processes (at least in North America) since the 1990s, there has been an upsurge in the area and a concomitant increase in actual written documents—*philosophy of teaching statements*, characterized as "descriptions of how the teachers think learning occurs, how they think they can intervene in this process, what chief goals they have for students, and what actions they take to implement their intentions" (Chism, 1998, p. 1). Material beyond the narrowly pedagogical also appears in these statements. For instance, Alsup (2005) refers to "language reflective of current political discourse" and "personal ideologies of education" (p. 169) as a legitimate feature of some of her collected philosophy of teaching statements. Casanave (2004) says that "in further articulating a philosophy of L2 teaching and learning" (p. 11) we should consider what factors are deemed "efficient, productive, and even moral in leading to future goals for self and students" (p. 11). In Casanave's (2004) statement of what L2 teachers should know, she considers domains addressed by language teacher cognition studies but also areas in the broader field of education that have yet to be reached by them (my emphases):

It is not enough to know thyself. Teachers must also know the content of their fields and which issues are historically important and currently unresolved. (. . .) That includes theories of teaching, knowledge of teaching and communication skills, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision-making skills, and *knowledge of the contexts of teaching* (. . .) curricular knowledge, [and] *knowledge of educational purposes and philosophies*. (p. 15)

Educational purposes are also often referred to as the aims of education. They should feature prominently in a philosophy of teaching since, as a rationale for (language) teaching, a statement of a philosophy of teaching almost by definition addresses questions of why, to what end, the teacher producing it thinks language is to be taught.

Also implied by the nature of a philosophy of teaching is a *moral component*. The moral dimension in the practice and philosophies of language teachers is indicated by Johnston (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2002; Johnston, 2003) who reflected on both his own teaching, in terms of values and morality, and on aspects of one of his language teacher students' philosophy of teaching. This responds to his point that while teaching is "first and foremost a moral activity" (Buzzelli & Johnston 2002, p. 8), "preservice teachers enter teacher education programs with (. . .)

philosophies of teaching [which are] often ignored and left unexamined" (p. 137). One problem with the moral component of philosophies of teaching is just the ambiguity of the word *moral*. Deckert (2006) criticizes Johnston for making it cover all aspects of good and bad. One response would be to go further into philosophy, to moral philosophy, where systems of morals are identified, developed, and investigated as part of the domain of ethics (the philosophical study of morals and morality). An often-used specification of morals is by Turiel (1983) who defines them as "prescriptive judgments of justice, rights, and welfare pertaining to how people ought to relate to each other" (p. 3).^{3,4} Justice and rights occur regularly in professional codes of ethics, and most professional teachers are familiar with such sets of ethical principles and use them in their practice (cf. Crookes, 2003).

Relationship of a Philosophy of Teaching to the Discipline of the Philosophy of Education

Philosophy of education provides material for the development of a philosophy of teaching. Ever since the rise of this area (e.g., Rosenkrantz, 1886), part of the work of philosophers of education has been to provide resources for the preparation of teachers. Some philosophers of education have been public intellectuals. Unlike conventionally understood (objectivist) empirical research, analyses and syntheses of educational ideas that scholars in this area produce are explicitly values-laden, most obviously concerning the aims and role of education in society.

This is clear in what systematizing philosophers of education have called *philosophies of schooling* (Crookes, 2003; Power, 1982). Specialists in this area have identified a handful of systems of ideas within the philosophy of education that have been implemented, not just by individual teachers but institutionally and historically. A common set would be perennialist, progressivist, essentialist, and social reconstructionist philosophies of schooling. Perennialists are concerned with aspects of cultures they identify as true for all time; progressivists seek the development of the individual and thereby the improvement of society; essentialists focus on those things essential in an education intended for practical use as understood in a conventional or indeed conservative way; social reconstructionists focus on education for substantial societal change and improvement. All derive from modernist viewpoints and can certainly be criticized for oversimplification; however, they constitute points of departure for more sophisti-

cated or individually tuned philosophies of teaching. Exponents of these positions also discuss what concepts, in what kind of arrangement, support which types of curricula and practices that would achieve such aims.

However, in regular education, it would appear that little of this theoretical material on the moral and ethical aspects of teaching makes its way through into teachers' conceptions of their work in a such a way that they can articulate their views and act upon them in this area (Goodlad, 2003). In language teaching, we have some source material against which morally developed language teachers' philosophies of teaching might be developed (cf. Clarke, 2008; Crookes, 2009a). But given the instrumental nature of most language teacher education programs around the world, not to mention the superficial, mainstream, neutral understanding of language that they often manifest (Ramanathan, 2002), it would be surprising if this area of language teachers' philosophies was generally well-developed or identifiable in language teachers' remarks about their work. In language teaching, we must rely on a small number of case studies in which equivalent matters come up (e.g., Hayes, 2010); but it seems likely that many language teachers, like teachers generally, do not see their work as moral and are not supported in seeing their work as broadly moral let alone sociopolitical in nature.

LANGUAGE TEACHER COGNITION

Language teacher cognition emerged from the area known as teacher thinking in the 1970s, but replaced the term *thinking* with the term *cognition*. The dominant perspective on cognition in English at that time was manifested in the problem solving of experts and in attempts to model individual cognitive processes on the information-processing capabilities and processes of the digital computer. Teacher cognition or thinking studies appeared with the same or parallel interests: the thought processes of the expert teacher, teacher problem solving, and moment-to-moment decision making (Woods, 1996, 1997). Mainstream conceptions of cognition were thus drawn on for empirical work in our field in the late 1980s and on into the 1990s.

If a teachers' philosophy of teaching is a mental, or cognitive, entity, it should be capable of being studied by the area known as language teacher cognition. In most of this article, I accept this position, in the hope of encouraging specialists who are comfortable with the term to consider extending their work to broader areas suggested by the

term *philosophies of language teaching* (but I return to the matter at the end of the piece). Presumably language teacher cognition studies can help us understand how cognitive entities are structured, how they prompt or support teachers' teaching or other actions, and how they are developed and/or changed. But problems could emerge if the concepts embodied in the tradition of teacher cognition studies are inconsistent with those in the philosophies of teaching being investigated or if they unintentionally bracket out domains because of unrecognized initial assumptions, some of which are discussed next.

Mainstream Views of Cognition

Critics of Anglo-American cognitive psychology (e.g., Bowers, 1990; Sampson, 1981) suggested that it carried over from its source culture and philosophical inheritances a conception of the mind that was individualist. It imagined a cognizing system that was independent of cultural context, which conformed to the liberal definition of the person as *unencumbered* (Rawls, 1971): not notably affected by gender, race, or class—a fairly automatic processing system. In addition, the most prominent non-Anglo-American cognitive psychology present at the time when teacher thinking research began was Piagetian developmental psychology. This theorizes an individual actively involved in the construction of his/her world. Piaget's classic experiments proceeded mainly by way of documenting the individual child's exploration of the physical environment. Perhaps this was a natural reflection of the way Piaget, a professor's son, a precocious student of natural science, saw the world himself. It is now generally understood that the success and popularity of these studies of the middle-class European child's mental abilities encouraged or supported a dehistoricized, acultural, and individualistic (yet constructive) conception of cognition. Highly influential, it was how millions of teachers and parents came to understand the nature of cognition and cognitive development, in turn contributing to the overall mainstream view of cognition taken up by language teacher cognition.

Socially Mediated and Distributed Cognition

Studies of the history of ideas (e.g., Foucault, 1971) and the sociology of science (e.g., Barnes, 1977) indicate that science is just as capable of bringing concepts into society, or constructing them in a creative way, or narrowing them in a

particular way, or indeed excluding them, as it is capable of discovering them as facts. Social sciences together with their associated discourse processes have a way of sometimes reinforcing one of a number of available concepts in any given area (such as child development), so that after a generation or so, everybody knows that this is, for example, how (all) children (naturally) develop. Some ideas are encouraged and proliferate, reifying further the spirit of the times, or sometimes changing common sense. Others are suppressed.

It is important to see mainstream cognitive psychology, discussed previously, as one arguably easy choice made by those researching teacher thinking out of a range of potential alternatives. Non-mainstream conceptions of cognition at the time that research on teacher thinking started to flourish were scarce. The strongest alternative available then was *Soviet psychology*, but this material was marginal. This socially and culturally mediated conception of cognition only had substantial impact in the West after the gradual and partial publication of Vygotsky's work in English as late as the mid 1980s, but the effects were slow to arrive.

There are of course crucial differences between Vygotskian cognitive psychology and what I have called mainstream cognitive psychology. Vygotsky was driven by the general aspirations (of his time and place) for human improvement. Progress, for him, was related to the development of human consciousness, and he was interested in how this came about or might come about; indeed, he almost certainly felt a responsibility to carry out research that would lead to such progress (cf. Vygotsky, 1994/1931). His psychology was thus normative and also reflected a critique of society (Robbins, 2001). Also, his conception of the human being took from Hegel and Marx the view that humanity can improve itself through work, through cultural action (Kozulin, 1990). It sees human beings as embedded in culture. They learn not directly from perception but always through a mediated engagement with reality. Learning is mediated, through the intervention of other individuals and through culture and its material artifacts. A psychology that is driven by these concerns will have a rather different research agenda from one whose main tool for explaining human perception and learning is to model it on abstract information processing systems, or whose main understanding of learning is that it develops from preexisting cognitive structures genetically inherent in the human brain.

Since these developments, a range of nonindividualist models of cognition have developed with

increasing vigor and visibility in recent decades. Gibson's *ecological cognition* (Mace, 1977; but see also Barker, 1968; van Lier, 2004) has paved the way for situated, embodied, and distributed cognition. Of these, the latter, distributed cognition, seems particularly appropriate for redrawing boundaries of research in this area, as it may apply to teachers working and interacting in departments or teams, though because of its newness, there is little empirical work on language teachers to be considered. One exception (Bartels, 2006) discusses distributed cognition in the language classroom.

Seen from the point of view provided by the diversity of options in present-day studies of cognition, the intellectual inheritance of language teacher cognition is unduly narrow. One response to this is that a newly expanded range of understandings is already being deployed in this area; Borg's (2012) current view of language teacher cognition encompasses not only what "teachers think, know and believe" (p. 11) but now also "attitudes, identities and emotions" (p. 11), and further states that "identity (. . .) should be recognized as an important strand of teacher cognition research" (p. 11). It is important, however, that this "encompassing" (Feryok, 2010, p. 272) or subsuming expansion (in which cognition becomes the superordinate category) be accompanied by discussions of the theoretical inheritances, compatible or not, of these disparate entities, which do not easily fit together with the older dominant understanding of cognition (cf. Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015).

While the borders and boundaries of language teacher cognition apparently are already being extended, the Vygotskian tradition would suggest, given that tradition's focus on the socially mediated nature of cognition, that the social contexts through which language teacher cognition emerges and is embedded are crucially important (cf. Cross, 2010). The (extended, reflective) process by which one arrives at a philosophy of teaching is notably not like expert problem solving, not like moment-by-moment decision making, and thus incongruent with the original focus of language teacher cognition. The classic philosophers of West and East, Socrates and Confucius, proceeded substantially through a dialogical process. Such philosophizing is culturally and historically located, and depends crucially on a social, interactive form of thinking together. Or, as Bakhtin (1929/1984) states: "Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born *between people* collectively searching for truth, in the process of their

dialogic interaction" (p. 110). While accounts based on mainstream cognitive psychology result in cognitions, they are based on an understanding that is distant from the dialogical, the social, the cultural, and the historically located, and is likely to bracket out, not perceive, or simply fail to engage with these dimensions or aspects of (teacher) cognition.

However, the work of Vygotsky and those who developed his ideas (such as Leont'ev) has been seen as limited in that, despite their Marxist inheritances, and even though cultural mediation is contemplated, they failed to embody a sensitivity to issues of power, most obviously manifested in terms of class, let alone other sites of oppression such as race and gender, in their work. If this view is to be given some consideration, a more critical perspective on language teacher cognition is needed.

Toward a Critical Perspective on Teacher Thinking and Cognition

In building a theoretical case for a critical perspective on teacher thinking and cognition, the cultural view on cognitions (Riós, 1996) is particularly important for my argument. If we think in terms of a mainstream culture that is subject to critique and in need of improvement, then cultural cognitive models that might be both teachers' philosophies and aspects of language teacher cognition are equally manifestations of this culture. Insofar as language teacher cognition as a research entity itself is a manifestation of mainstream culture, it is unlikely to have a research agenda that will be on the lookout for alternatives because of the effects of *cultural hegemony*. Ideas of mainstream culture, often pervasive, allow most people few alternative ways of thinking about any phenomenon or issue (and thus inhibit active forms of social action or change to improve conditions). Language teacher education (Ramanathan, 2002) can be seen as part of this pattern.

Such alternative ways of teacher thinking, however, imply critical perspectives, which should be adopted to supplement current research and theory concerning teacher thinking (even when that encompasses attitudes, identities, and emotions). An example of adopting a critical position in the study of teacher thinking is the work of Kincheloe (1993; also drawn on for our field by Kumaravadevelu, 2003). He made it clear that teacher thinking had been theorized in mainstream accounts as located within Piagetian cognitive psychology and pointed out its assumptions that mainly reflect its

Piagetian historical and cultural location. Kincheloe agreed that the thinking teacher constructs the world through cognition, but also wanted to draw on a theory of the person and of society more tuned to the ailments of society. His initial resource here was modernist critical theory, though he also took up a postmodernist reflexivity, as indicated in this quote:

Critical theory is concerned with extending a human's consciousness of himself or herself as a social being. An individual who gains such a consciousness would understand how his or her political opinions, religious beliefs, gender role, racial self-concept, or educational perspectives had been influenced by the dominant culture. Critical theory thus promotes self-reflection. [Teacher students should] cultivate a critical, theoretically grounded view of the construction of their own consciousness as a prospective teacher. Why is it that I have decided to teach? What forces in my life have shaped this decision? (. . .) Students undoubtedly come to know themselves better by bringing to consciousness the process by which their consciousness was constructed. (Kincheloe, 1993, p. 109)

So constructivist, yes, but critical constructivist, is the form of teacher cognition that Kincheloe would like to see. Through a form of critical, self-reflective teacher cognition, which draws on the insights of critical theory and some parts of postmodernist ideas, a critical teacher's philosophy of teaching might be formed. Kincheloe's formulation suggests aspects of a critical teacher education process, and he arrives at it through a critique of the teacher thinking literature (as it was in the 1990s). Both language teacher cognition and language teachers' values and philosophies can be approached in this way, with a particular emphasis on, and hope or search for, *critical philosophies of language teaching*, or for what might make them possible. That is the focus of the preliminary sketch in the following section, which highlights how the boundaries of current research and practice might be redrawn.

DEVELOPING LANGUAGE TEACHERS' CRITICAL COGNITIONS AND CRITICAL PHILOSOPHIES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

Theories of language learning, language teaching, school, society, and the person, that is, in this case, the L2 learner, all have sociopolitical roots and moral and political implications. Uncovering them is potentially important for the developing language teacher, but opportunities for such teachers to do this are comparatively rare (cf. Pennycook, 2004; see Kumaravadivelu, 2003, pp. 13–

15, for an explicit set of identity choices, notably that of *transformative intellectual*). When beliefs surface in language teacher cognition, they may be constrained to pedagogical areas, or relate to language learning merely as an individual matter (cf. Borg, 2011). As Kincheloe (1993) comments:

Without this meta-awareness of a system of meaning, teachers and administrators may learn how to construct schools but not how to determine what types of schools to construct. They will not grasp the connection between political disposition and the types of education that are developed. Grounded on an understanding of such connections, post-formal teachers, administrators and teacher educators realize that school problems are not generic or innate. They are constructed by social conditions, cognitive assumptions, and power relations and are uncovered by insightful educators who possess the ability to ask questions (. . .) that lead to innovations that promote student insight, sophisticated thinking and social justice. (p. 150)

Assuming that some aspects of a teacher's philosophy are developed along with other aspects of beginning level professional practice through formal coursework (and socialization within an academic program), then we can ask what formal coursework, what content, might be appropriate for the development of critical language teacher philosophies, seen now as a systematic collection of language teacher cognitions in specific, mutually related areas. A very brief answer would be to recommend sources to be included in coursework, such as Crookes (2013), Hawkins (2011), Kumaravadivelu (2003), Morgan (2009, 2010), Morgan and Vandrick (2009), Pennycook (2001), Ramanathan (2002), or Reagan (2004). Morgan (2009, 2010) specifically presents critical material as a single language teacher education course, while Pennycook (2001) discusses coursework and content briefly at the level of a teacher education program, though how this content would relate to specific areas of critical language teacher philosophies is a question too big to tackle here.

However, we should also note that student teachers come into teaching with views resistant to change by coursework. The question, then, is this: What effect, if any, does the kind of coursework have on which aspects of critical philosophies of teaching and language teacher cognitions, at which levels? Mainstream psychological research on attitudes has been reviewed together with exploration of language teacher beliefs change by Kubanyiova (2012). However, this stays at the level of how humans in general process persuasive messages. And while there are the beginnings of

investigations of language teacher belief change during formal training (Borg, 2011), little is known in this area concerning what critical language teachers know or believe, let alone how they develop. To inquire into this, a first move would be to back down to an area that is well established within language teacher cognition, concerning the parts of a philosophy of teaching that concern teachers' professional knowledge. I will address this briefly in the next subsection. But if a thorough investigation of the critical language teacher's philosophy of teaching and associated language teacher cognition is contemplated, we also need the dynamics of the phenomenon—a developmental perspective on it, to which I turn (again briefly) in subsequent sections.

Developing Critical Conceptions of Professional Knowledge in Language Teaching

The potential for critical theories of language acquisition (or learning) to develop among language teachers has risen with increased availability of sociocultural theories of learning in L2 studies. Despite the philosophical inheritances one would expect to find in the work of those scholars, a sensitivity to power and inequality in respect of class in L2 learning is almost entirely absent in SLA (according to Block, 2014). Instead, or as well, theories of learning which are explicitly tuned to feminism and race, culture, social structure (cf. Gebhard, 1999), or poverty (Panovsky, 2003) may have to be accessed. We can of course draw from the work of critical scholars, such as Bigelow (e.g., 2010), Norton and Toohey (2004), and Pavlenko (Norton & Pavlenko, 2004), but developing critical teachers also need access to broad critical theories and critical versions of the source domains of their professional knowledge (see Crookes, 2013).

In applied linguistics we have a small area of empirical work concerning the knowledge that language teachers have of language. Moving to the corresponding (smaller) category of *critical language teachers* and their knowledge, equivalent studies are on a much smaller scale. There is of course material for coursework presenting a morally or politically informed conception of language that would enable the development of critical philosophies of language teaching as aspects of critically based understandings of teacher cognition (e.g., Clarke & Morgan, 2011; Crookes, 2013; Janks, 2014; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Reagan, 2004). But as yet, we do not have many studies that indicate what a critical language teacher knows (or has retained from coursework) in this

area (but cf. Chun, 2015). Work done in Australian and U.S. contexts with systemic functional theories of language and discourse in critical literacy approaches (e.g., Gebhard, 2010; Macken-Horarik, 1998; Schlepppegrell & Colombi, 2002; Schlepppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006) shows researchers working with teachers to make these theories operate in classrooms where there are L2 learners.

When it comes to formal knowledge of educational institutions, not to mention cultures, mainstream applied linguistics (let alone SLA, cf. Gebhard, 1999) has too narrow a focus (on language) to be a good source for language teacher cognitions of the more abstract and broadest kind encompassed by philosophies of teaching, despite Freeman and Johnson's (1998) call for the domain of sociocultural and sociohistorical contexts to be a core component of the knowledge base for L2 teaching. A conception of the discipline indicated by van Lier's (2004) *critical ecological linguistics* suggests language teacher education courses that take up the critical sociology of education, valuable for the development of critical philosophies of language teaching.

The problem that comes to mind here is again that of the limited impact a year or two of coursework is likely to have on aspects of personal identity, overall view of society, and a (critical) role within it. But without substantial coursework that presents a critical view of school and of society, from where are teacher students going to get them? Some language teachers do have them, and probably didn't get them from coursework. Where did they get these critical language teacher cognitions? So, a broad perspective in this area takes us beyond the short period of formal coursework, into longer term considerations of teacher development. Central concepts here are critical consciousness and the autobiographical narratives of critical teachers.

Critical Consciousness

A critical consciousness is a key element of a critical philosophy of teaching. This is identified by Freire (e.g., 1973) as *conscientização*—the goal of a critical pedagogy. It is hard to imagine a teacher having a critical philosophy of teaching without this as a core concept. Consciousness can (initially) be identified as a psychological state. But critical psychologist Martín-Baró (1994) emphasizes its reflective and societal nature:

Consciousness is not simply the private, subjective knowledge and feelings of individuals. More than anything, it represents the confines within which

each person encounters the reflexive impact of his or her being and actions in society, where people work out knowledge about the self and about reality that permits them to be a somebody, to have a personal and social identity. (p. 38)

So investigating a language teacher's consciousness ought to be a prominent item for a critical language teacher cognition research agenda.

Edelsky and Johnson (2004, cf. Crookes, 2013) ask where such a critical perspective comes from, and answer in terms of one teacher, who

came to teaching with experience working with others in struggles for social justice (. . .) honed by her work with [critically-oriented curriculum projects in Portland, Oregon], she sought out books and attended national conferences that offered a critical perspective, then, is (. . .) join with others who have a critical perspective (. . .) watch (. . .) events closely (. . .) [and] ask "Why is it like *this*?" (p. 134)

Previous experiences in organizing and participating in social justice struggles outside of education show up as a feature in the early lives of critical language pedagogy specialists, such as Auerbach (2001) or critical English for academic purposes (EAP) specialist Benesch (2012), who refers to her deep involvement, as a teenager, in the U.S. anti-Vietnam War movement (or similarly, as a good example of a classroom teacher who was an organizer, see Cowhey, 2006).

Torres (1998) provides 11 interviews with prominent critical pedagogy experts, focusing on their personal biographies, from which it seems that the availability of alternative ideas is crucial to their development of a critical consciousness. Giroux (in Torres, 1998) states the matter concretely when referring to his own development as a (critical) high school teacher. Initially, he says, he had no resources to back up his intuitions concerning such matters as the power implications of the physical arrangement of the classroom. It was reading the literature of critical pedagogy, encountered by chance, that provided this (a point also made by Pennycook, 2001). The conditions for developing, or acting upon, such understandings may come later.

What is needed for critical language teacher cognitions to coalesce as critical language teacher philosophies—under what conditions, with what practices? The social aspects of development should be considered. Ríos (1996), discussing programs intended to "affect the thinking of pre-service and in-service teachers with respect to issues of diversity" (p. 6), summarizes findings saying that "programs that combine academic training with exposure to different ethnic groups (via

fieldwork) were most effective for changing attitudes and improving teaching" (p. 6; cf. Ginsburg & Lindsay, 1995). In more recent language-related work, Kubanyiova (2012) advances the idea that a person may have an image of an alternative or ideal self to which they intentionally change. Though this may be perceived as individualistic and in this respect consistent with how language teacher education has tended to operate, she points out "There is a growing awareness of the need to understand teachers' cognitions and practices within their communities (. . .) and (. . .) social 'ecosystems'" (pp. 190–191). Not only could teachers' cognition be considered as part of a social ecosystem, one could also apply social learning theory, in its recent manifestations. In this perspective, individuals learn through increasingly legitimate peripheral participation within a group. The critical viewpoint questions the absence of a concern for the role of power in this theoretical line, resulting in power-sensitive developments such as that of Bucholtz (1999). A balance between individual and social perspectives needs to be struck, but the importance of power and power differentials in this area should also be kept in play, according to a critical view.

A Developmental Perspective on Critical Philosophies of Teaching

As lifelong learning and development across the lifespan have become more of a focus (as aging populations increase around the globe), both psychological and social developmental perspectives can be brought to bear. Considering language "teachers' mental lives," Kubanyiova (2012, p. 192) emphasizes the importance of initial conditions consistent with the idea that "teachers' prior learning and teaching experiences" play a major role in "shaping their current practices and sense-making processes" (p. 192). In terms of the development of language teachers' critical stances, this means considering aspects of their development as young people, before they were teachers, as well as aspects of their subsequent development as adults. How do teachers grow in their application of (e.g., moral and socially critical) ideas in their teaching and their work as teachers? This is a question concerning the extent to which developing teachers have the ability to teach on the basis of the developing cognitions that reflect their philosophies of teaching. Given the basic idea of cultural hegemony, how is it that some (language) teachers develop the intellectual (and social) structures that support resistance to oppressive administrative structures and scripted

curricula or to a common sense that is actually already ideologically loaded and actually detrimental to their professional identity? With what trajectory does the moral sense of right and wrong, the identification with principles of fairness and justice, occur among developing (critical language) teachers?

Existing studies of moral development per se mainly relate to the pre-adult years, though the question could be pursued perhaps through studies of teacher biographies. The English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher whose professional life is documented by Hayes (2010) developed his initial explicit understanding of education as a moral duty from a mentor teacher; we have as yet few such morally oriented narratives of TESOL professionals to analyze (but cf. Vandrick, 2009). Another area that could be explored in a preliminary attempt to answer this question is that of political socialization (noted for the language teaching area by Murray & Christison, 2010; cf. Ginsburg, 2012):

From a critical perspective, the political socialization of teachers is viewed as a lifelong dialectical process because human beings are not only limited and enabled "in what they think and do by existing social relations and ideologies, but they are also active agents who, through their thinking and acting, help to produce and reproduce social structures and ideologies" (Ginsburg & Tidwell, 1990, p. 71; Murray & Christison, 2010, p. 210).

If we ask about the individual's development of a moral perspective and analysis that applies to society as a whole, this would concern their *politicization*, or processes studied within the area of *political socialization* (Niemi & Hepburn, 1995; Owen, Cook, & Paletz, 2011), an important area of social and educational practice and research (also signaled by terms such as *civics* and *political education*). As an area of research, this has tended to focus on socialization as an aspect of the development of children and adolescents. But some work in this area has extended to political development of adults. Significant changes in adult political consciousness occur through a process engendered by significant adult life events (participation in U.S. civil rights struggles, or involvement in a war, have been mentioned; involvement in the women's movement as causing resocialization is considered by Carroll, 1989). In related work primarily on education policy (from a critical standpoint), Anyon (2005) analyzed the resocialization of adults involved in the U.S. civil rights movement. It is important to recognize that this kind of analysis focuses on individuals

in contexts; the change in consciousness of the participants interacts with the development and change in the organizations that embody the social movements. For Anyon, the role of the group in fostering the change is essential. She refers to a group's "mobilization of available resources" (p. 205) which enable "a collective process of interpretation (. . .) and the [development of] repertoires of contention" (p. 205). In the end, she puts the causative weight for identity change on participation:

As people march, sit-in, prepare petitions and speeches, meet with politicians and school boards, and otherwise engage in contentious politics, they typically develop identities as activists and, ultimately, if a movement develops, identities as part of that movement. As I have argued, we do not typically get people involved in activism or social movements through exposure to critical pedagogy, social justice curricula, or books like this one, although these are crucial to providing information and analysis. Rather, as labor movement, peace movement, and civil rights activists will tell you—people are radicalized by actually participating in contentious politics. (p. 205)

Continuing the emphasis on not just individuals, she cites the work of the most prominent social movement scholar, Tilly, that "contentious politics always involves the social construction of politically relevant categories such as (. . .) feminists, civil rights activists, or suffragettes" (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, p. 58).

Commenting with minority students in mind, Anyon (2005) remarks that "fear, despair, and negative valuations of self (. . .) may keep social actors who have cause to get involved in political content from participating (. . .). A first step (. . .) is to help (. . .) students appreciate their own value, intelligence, and potential as political actors" (p. 179). One might extend this to language teachers: What language teacher cognitions are involved in seeing oneself as a political actor? Presumably when an individual language teacher engages in reflective self-analysis (cf. Feryok, 2010) this is a cognitive process resulting in revised cognitions, but dialogical or group processes of the kind that occur (or occurred) in consciousness-raising groups are also cognitive, though equally involving the emotions. Rational analysis, supported by the emotions, and with feedback and encouragement from peers and mentors, is part of what we expect to result in a change of consciousness, and in these cases the growth of critical consciousness. This is not the sort of language teacher cognition that would have been

imagined by early investigators in that area, but it may be the sort of cognitions that are needed if critical philosophies of teaching are to develop, or to move from initial reflections to actual implementation.

Philosophies of teaching might reasonably be expected to develop over time. Tabachnick and Zeichner (1986) found development and increasing consistency between young teachers' developing philosophies of teaching and their practice. Likewise, with a morally dedicated EFL teacher whose philosophy favors "spiritualist social welfare" (Hayes, 2010, p. 72), in mind, Hayes (2010) comments, "the concept of a vocation can be seen as something that can develop over time" (pp. 75–76). Critical language program administrators can assist in the development and maintenance of supportive professional networks, and the continuing and in some cases increasingly oppressive conditions of language teacher work may help to gradually radicalize teachers such that critical philosophies are developed. Again, the availability of resources is important. We may find that it is those teachers who have already had some years in the trenches that are better able to digest this material, see it as practical, and want the version that does not gloss over the problematic reality but is congruent with the experiences they have had and the direction of change they wish to move in. If the scholars of social movements and political socialization are correct, critical teacher education and critical teacher development processes need to be considered as extending beyond the graduate classroom and beyond the school walls, as changing language teacher cognitions are embedded and embodied in changing social contexts.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While engaging with the domain of language teacher cognition, I have done so without completely disputing the concept of cognition, or the cognitive. Had I done so, it would have been impossible to call for the extension of boundaries in that area with a view to encompassing *some* critical perspectives in language teaching thought. The versions of cognitive psychology I have adumbrated here imply a very considerable stretch towards the social end of cognition (consistent with a recent trend in applied linguistics to favor social theories of L2 learning over psychological theories of L2 learning). Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that there are other ways of doing psychology, and other ways of understand-

ing the person, beyond the cognitive; in addition, these are very much steered toward by one of the three versions of critical I mentioned earlier. Discursive psychology, for example (Billig, 2009; Harré, 2002), not to mention Conversation Analysis, is totally skeptical that we can study "intrinsically unobservable entities, whose existence can only be inferred from outward (. . .) language-based actions" (Billig, 2009, para. 14). And since the third sense of critical I mentioned at the outset, articulated by Pennycook (2001), is strongly influenced by Foucauldian perspectives, it is noteworthy that, as Balkin (1998) says, "Foucault does not seem to have any theory of internal mental processes or cognitive structures. (. . .) [He] is not simply antihumanist, he is also 'anticognitivist'" (p. 266). Within this tradition of critical applied linguistics, then, we should be talking about the acquisition of discourses (and discourse positions), not to mention identities (conceived as social rather than individual) as opposed to the acquisition of cognitions.

That said, and as other contributions to this special issue will also make clear, there is considerable advantage to be gained from casting a wide net where the theoretical bases for teacher cognition are concerned. It is likely to be valuable to the profession if the full range of teacher grounds for practice are considered, and although one may disagree concerning teachers' value orientations, if the general area in question is to be explored, we should not prematurely narrow our analytic vision. Those who are sympathetic to critical viewpoints in language teaching must face up to the difficulties experienced by any who wish to articulate or foster alternatives to mainstream values and viewpoints. A thorough and comprehensive, not narrow, depiction of the cognitive domains in question should aid the search for practical means for language teacher development in the area of critical (not to mention other) philosophies of language teaching.

There is already a substantial and respectable body of work in applied linguistics using the concepts of language teacher cognition. But perhaps language teacher cognition needs the concept and practices of philosophies of teaching, and perhaps the study (and development) of the philosophies of teaching needs to draw upon the concepts of language teacher cognition. Both will have better productive practical effects if they adopt what some would say is a realistic view of society; that is, one that sees it as usually not-so-good, problematic, inequitable, and very much in need of critique and improvement.

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NOTES

¹ Behind Pennycook's (2001) position is the concern that critical pedagogy had failed to take up the full implications of a shift in the understanding of systems of ideas (or ideologies) and the role of language (or discourse) in this that emerged in the intervening period, particularly the 1960s and 1970s (notably postmodern and postcolonial thought).

² Borg (2011) opens the area out; see also Borg (2006), Bartels (2006), and Woods & Çakır (2011) for terminological discussion and dispute.

³ For a more empirically grounded cross-cultural specification of the moral domain, see Haidt & Graham (2007) and Young & Dungan (2012), which arrive at five areas: harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity.

⁴ And adult culture, at that; language teacher cognition research has mostly been conducted in adult settings, where values might be less likely to be visible, one reviewer suggests.

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