Research, Standards and Teaching in L2: Toward a *Principled* Perspective

Mark K. Warford, Ph.D.
State University College at Buffalo

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Metaphors driving L1 vs. L2 through the ages...**
- Prior to the 1950's: Grammar-translation (learner-as-scribe)

- L1 is the medium of instruction in the translation of L2 (classical) texts.

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Metaphors driving L1 vs. L2 through the ages…**
- 1950's-1960's:
Audio-Lingual Methodology
(learner-as-pet /-lab rat)

- Exclusive, controlled, rote use of L2. Why?
- 1) L1 is a "habit" that needs to be broken,
- 2) unrestricted L2 may lead to 'nasty' errors.

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Metaphors driving L1 vs. L2...**
- 1970's-Present: learner-as-computer
- Cognitive Code Methodology
- Grammar-based syllabus
- Teacher explanation of L2 rules in L1, then
- Form-focused language practice from mechanical, to meaningful, to communicative varieties.

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Metaphors driving L1 vs. L2...**
- 1980's-Present: Proficiency Movement
- (learner-as-networker/processor)
- Emphasis on natural, communicative approaches, functional syllabus.
- Class should flow like a nice conversation.
- Student use of L1 discouraged.
- L2 may either be forced or a silent period observed in light of the *affective filter*.
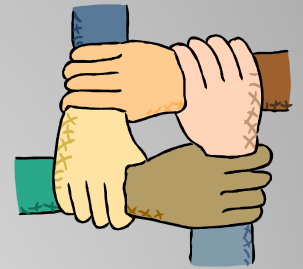
I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Major metaphors driving L1/L2...**
- 1990's-Present:
- Sociocultural Theory
- learner-as-*participant*
- Teacher models and dialogically teaches L2 concepts (PACE Model)
- L1 is an important semiotic tool students use to manage language learning tasks; **don't** discourage them from using it.
- Debate: Does same apply to teachers?
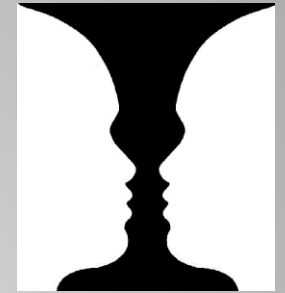
I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Major metaphors driving L1 vs. L2...**
- 2000-Present: Ecological-Semiotic perspectives
- Learner-as-global citizen/-activist
- Extends SCT into q's of power and agency, the *affective* quality of learning.
- Classroom environment and participation structures shape learning (*affordances*).
- Exclusive use of L2 is seen negatively. Why?
- Students emotionally tied to primal 'iconic' value of L1 (*mother* tongue!).

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Maximizing L2 and the standards:**
- Long-standing tenet of *proficiency-oriented instruction (POI)*:
- Five Hypotheses of POI:
- Principle I, Corollary 4: "*The proficiency-oriented classroom is one in which such natural acquisition opportunities are exploited as fully as possible*" (Hadley, 2000, p. 83).

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

- **Maximizing L2 and the standards:**
- ACTFL and regionals have published official statements underscoring imperative of teaching in L2 (90-100%)
- Figures prominently in standards for teacher education (maximalist positions)…
- Chart [comparing standards](#)

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

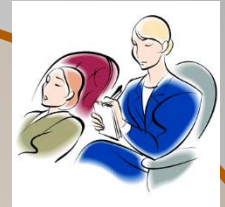Toward a *principled* perspective on L1/L2: New metaphors…

Counselor

Architect

Physical space suggests open, flowing participation structure: students have part in shaping content and flow)

- Iconic appeal
- Input
- Inter-action

Unconditional positive regard and empathy (Rogers) and attention to relatedness needs (Deci & Ryan)

Warford, M. K. (2009). Architecture, counseling and teaching in the target language. *Babylonia, 59*(1), 23-29.

I. Research, standards and teaching in L2

Toward a *principled* perspective on L1/L2:

1. Learners need rich input and interaction.
2. Dialogic approaches L2 grammar may be of use
3. Teacher translation to (explanations in) L1 undermines acquisition, critical thinking (efficiency≠effectiveness).
4. Students (<u>NOT</u> TEACHERS!) need L1 (monitor).
5. Don't coerce student output in L2.
6. #3,4,5= prompt **students** to *paraphrase* in L1.
7. To the max. extent, lesson and class should promote authentic engagement in L2 & C2.
8. <u>Learning</u> in the target language is not a permission 'freely given' (Macaro, 1997).

- *See Macaro's (2001) article in MLJ for more info. on virtualist vs. optimalist and maximalist stances on classroom code-swtiching.

Teachers *earn student 'permission'* when they…

1. provide comprehensible input that is directed toward communicative goals;
2. make meaning clear through body language, gestures, and visual support;
3. conduct comprehension checks to ensure understanding;
4. negotiate meaning with students and encourage negotiation among students;
5. elicit talk that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time;
6. encourage self-expression and spontaneous use of language;
7. teach students strategies for requesting clarification and assistance when faced with comprehension difficulties;
8. and offer feedback to assist and improve students' ability to interact orally in the target language.

(ACTFL Position Statement, May 2010)