Dialogic authorial academic language learning: An alternative to genre pedagogy

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Abstract

This paper reenvisions academic language learning in the university from a dialogic authorial perspective inspired by the work of Bakhtin. I argue that language pedagogues have misappropriated the radical alternative Bakhtin poses for language learning in his critique of genre through adopting a Vygotskyian internalization approach to discourse and a post-structuralist interpretation of Bakhtinian dialogic discourse as intertextuality. I explore how genre pedagogy has adopted these misunderstandings of Bakhtin to prioritize students' and scholars' socialization within pre-existing, commonly accepted, shared, authoritative patterns of discourse. I claim that genre pedagogy tends to legitimize the practice of university writing curricula to postpone students' engagement in meaning making, focusing on training over education. I explore the consequence of this prioritization on socialization and training in form for suppressing students' dialogic addressivity to and problematization of the ideas of others, which is an essential for meaningful academic discourse. By contrast, a dialogic authorial approach to language learning prioritizes education through students' and scholars' ontological engagement in posing problems and authoring meaning in communion with others. The expectation is for language forms to become a necessary byproduct of the production of utterances that are meaningful to oneself and responsive to others. When focused on meaning, academic language forms become invisible except when there are challenges with intelligibility or modality. I argue for a radical rethinking of university language learning curricula in terms of a focus on voice and the "stylistics" of form to serve meaning making.

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Participation in dialogue is essential for academic language learning. Even if one does not have a firm grasp on how to define dialogue, this statement seems very apparent. Yet, I argue that genre pedagogy, a dominant curricular approach to academic language learning, too readily suppresses students' and

scholars' unalienated authorship – their interested and provocative dialogic addressing, responding, questioning, deconstructing, and problematizing of ideas with each other and the world – in favor of prioritizing their disciplinary or academic socialization within pre-existing (and supposedly commonly accepted and shared) authoritative patterns of discourse. Genre pedagogy further legitimizes the practice of educators to postpone students' engagement in meaning making. In this paper, I argue for a radical alternative to genre pedagogy developed from the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin (1981), which I term dialogic authorial language learning. I will end the paper with a discussion of the possibilities for this approach, which requires a fundamental rethinking of the university academic language learning curriculum.

Genre pedagogy and the socialization of form

Genre pedagogy is a common curricular framework within university composition courses designed to prepare students and novice scholars for academic work and careers. Through genre pedagogy, educators focus on the "linguistic resources" – essentially discursive forms – considered to be essential precursors for intelligible and meaningful communication within the "social arrangements and activities" familiar to those within a discipline or professional interest area (Bazerman, 1997, p. 19). The genres are seen as serving an essential mediating function that socialize students or scholars' discourse within the supposedly shared rhetorical practices of the discipline they are entering (Devitt, 2009).

Imitative socialization approach to genre pedagogy

A common understanding of genres in writing pedagogy is that they are model disciplinary discourse forms to be imitated so that students and novice scholars can develop and communicate their own ideas academically. In an imitative socialization approach to genre, students and novice scholars learn to "express themselves" through imitating the forms of those who are proficient in academic discourse, and by doing so, develop linguistic and rhetorical skills that allow them to master academic communication for their own future purposes within specific "academic communities" (Swales, 1990). By focusing on imitation of forms, educators prioritize organized, logical deduction of elements deemed to be familiar, expected, or conventionally accepted within academic discourse. Trying as much as possible to have students imitate the linguistic forms and rhetorical appeals extracted from authoritative models within academic disciplines, these educators attend to patterns of linguistic forms such as "old-to-new information flow" or "problem-solution-evaluation" organization, commonly encountered toolkit expressions of modality and certainty in different fields of study, or effective rhetorical appeals to ethos and credibility, among other concerns (Swales & Feak, 2012). For example, the following activity is suggested as an introductory activity in a widely used academic English textbook for graduate students,

> Referring to one or more 'model' papers in your discipline, notice in particular such matters as how the papers are organized, how phrases are used, and where and why examples or illustrations are provided (Swales & Feak, 2012, p. 2).

Swales could rely upon Vygotsky to further posit that imitative practices allow for a bounded type of creativity,

> Vygotsky (1984, p. 263) stressed that by imitation he did not mean 'mechanically copying an intellectual operation.' Rather, it refers to reconstructing an activity with the help of others. It is called 'imitation' because it concerns the re-enactment of a pre-established cultural activity, but it is still an act of creation allowing the child [or student or scholar – MPS] to make his [sic – MPS] own version of the imitated activity within the boundaries allowed by the social environment that is in charge of controlling the acceptable variations within the socially shared definition of that practice (van Oers, 2012, p. 143).

It is notable that van Oers emphasizes the importance of developing one's "own version of the imitated activity." Rather than learning the supposedly right way to write or speak in the disciplines, genre educators can stress recognition and production of the forms and patterns that are "adequate" for participation within an academic disciplinary culture (Bazerman, 1985). Bazerman, for instance, has called for a focus on *kairotic[1]* textual elements, which calls attention to the rhetorical adequacy of communication, style, content, and form within certain "social arrangements" (Motta-Roth, 2009, p. 324). However, it is notable here that curricular priority is still being placed upon the reconstruction of form over the meaning of the writing itself for the students and the development of student voice. I will soon call into question the prudence of socializing students into forms prior to engaging in making meaning.

Critical socialization approach to genre pedagogy

Many genre pedagogues are rightfully concerned, however, with the authoritative power of the genres in imitative socialization to limit or silence student authorship. In response to this concern, another approach to genre pedagogy emphasizes students' and novice scholars' critical awareness of genre through "a conscious attention to [the diversity of] genres and their potential influences on people and the ability to consider acting differently within [similar or quite different] genres" in the future (Devitt, 2009, p. 347). These educators notably still prioritize the value of learning to write in the genres as essential for socialization within academic disciplines but encourage writers to take a critical stance toward the forms they employ. Bazerman (1992) argues that it is through becoming critically aware of and responsible for the use of structural forms in academic writing that students and scholars become liberated to participate within their disciplines,

> The more precisely we learn how the symbols by which we live have come into place, how they function, whose interests they serve, and how we may even leverage on them to reform the world, the more we may act on our social desires. Exposing the choice making that lies behind the apparently old and taken-for-granted world forces us to address the ethical question of our responsibility for our world. Criticism, however, is only the beginning of action. Action is a participation, not a disengagement. Participation is the other side of rhetoric: the art of influencing others through language in the great social undertakings that shape the way we live (Bazerman, 1992, p. 62).

To Bazerman, "participation" in the genres allows for meaningful and responsible contention within the disciplines. The critical genre pedagogues thus see the genres as stable sites of critical analysis and resistance, and students and scholars are even suggested to ideally become "quietly subversive" in their relationship to their disciplines or fields of study (Russell, Lea, Parker, Street, & Donahue, 2009). Bazerman has further argued that there is power in "learning to wield tools of symbolic power for immediate rhetorical purposes" (Bazerman, 2001, p. 25),

> If students want the power of their discipline, they have to develop the appropriate ways of expressing and using the knowledge. Students need to learn to speak with voices recognisable as legitimate, warrantable and powerful within the disciplines and professions (Bazerman, 2001, p. 25).

Through using the rhetorical tools of the disciplines, then, Bazerman argues that students' or scholars' discourse undergoes "refinement," and their ideas undergo a "discursive transformation" wherein they can learn to integrate "knowledges and selves" and engage in "complex discursive resources and presentations" (Bazerman, 2001, p. 28). Learning to participate in refining one's voice within the genres is

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[1] Kairos is defined as "a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment" (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kairos)

thus considered to be learning to participate "in new ways of thinking and acting" which "can enrich and expand one's identity" (Bazerman, 1992, 2002 in Russell et al., 2009, p. 411).

Thus, Bazerman argues that while many educators may wish to prioritize nurturing and sustaining students' voice, socialization within the academic genre may supercede such a focus in that the genres may be what "students will find most valuable for their ethical and personal development" (Bazerman, 1992, 2002 in Russell et al., 2009, p. 411). However, it is my contention that this refinement of discourse through the genres – one's socialization within the ready-made genres of academic practice – becomes an educational end in itself over production of meaning. In this sense, genre pedagogy, particularly critical genre pedagogy, promotes a "closed participatory socialization" model of education in which the "goal is students' mastery of sociocultural practices in contrast to a dispassionate and decontextualized toolkit of essential knowledge and skills [as seen in the imitative model]… it treats cultural practices as ready-made for students to learn and, thus, defines education as reproduction of the ready-made culture (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2012, pp. 160-161).

Genre pedagogy and the postponement of meaning

In essence, then, the genres do not necessarily need to be relevant, interesting, or important to the students or scholars except to develop the needed skills or rhetorical moves needed to participate in the genres themselves (Matusov, Smith, Soslau, Marjanovic-Shane, & von Duyke, 2016). Meaningful participation is expected to be postponed, as generic systems are thought of as internalized "frames" for action which can be "transferred" to meaningful participation later on. Bazerman compares the pedagogical value of genres in writing to that of learning the classification systems of trees in botany. When the botany student internalizes the scheme of the names of trees, the student is argued to become capable of greater observation and thinking about trees,

> Learning the names of trees and their distinctive features only becomes part of creative thinking about botany and evolution after the scheme has become internalized, to reshape perception, which allows for fresh observation and fresh thought (Bazerman, 2009, p. 288).

The assumption here is that like the classification system of trees the genres are symbolic cultural systems which underpin meaningful communication in a particular discipline, reshaping perception and understanding as they are employed in writing or speaking. The reshaping of perception and thinking is posited as a consequence of successfully reproducing the patterns (regardless of whether the patterns are imitated or critically engaged with). The assumption is that these shared discursive forms or practices are needed prior to meaningful participation in academic practices.

In genre pedagogy, then, students and scholars are expected to develop language skills considered existent (and sometimes hidden) within disciplinary practices and recognize and learn to produce key, pre-set patterns in language forms prior to engaging in meaning making. From a Vygotksyian/Brunerian perspective, these internalized cultural forms and patterns "scaffold" meaningful communication,

> …[it is an] evolutionary fact that mind could not exist save for culture. For the evolution of the hominid mind is linked to the development of a way of life where "feality" is represented by a symbolism shared by members of a cultural community in which a technical-social way of life is both organized and construed in terms of that symbolism. This symbolic [or generic – MPS] mode is not only shared by a community, but conserved, elaborated, and passed on to succeeding generations who, by virtue of this transmission, continue to maintain the culture's identity and way of life [including within an academic practice]… Meaning making involves situating encounters

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with the world [or academic discipline] in their appropriate cultural [disciplinary] contexts in order to know "what they are about." Although meanings are "in the mind," they have their origins and their significance in the culture [discipline] in which they are created. It is this cultural [generic/disciplinary] situatedness of meanings that assures their negotiability and, ultimately, their communicability (Bruner, 1996, p. 3).

However, a major challenge here with genre pedagogy for imitative socialization or critical socialization is that the "appropriation" or "internalization" of the genre can become an end in itself, where the value of the utterance for the purposes of expressing meaningful ideas in a course or a discipline is not considered. This is a common issue in the curriculum of preparatory institutes and departments working to prepare multilingual students for university work in English-speaking universities. For instance, I recall the head instructor of graduate preparation I worked with at an intensive English program informing me that the "content" of what the provisionally admitted international graduate students write was not of significant concern. He argued that since the graduate departments would be teaching the students to focus on meaningful content in their disciplines, what mattered more for assessment purposes and to prepare them for graduate work was the form in which the students were writing. However, I noticed over time that the writing of papers to fit into the instructors' vision of the genre became an end in itself. Students also continually complained that the language study was simply postponing their degree program and that the writing genres, such as data commentary and case analysis for business students, designed to be helpful to their graduate work, seemed frequently irrelevant to them. It also was not lost on the students that their language instructors had little expertise in the discipline in which they were entering. In turn, plagiarism was quite rampant (see Smith, 2022, in preparation, for further discussion of academic dishonesty). Many students also struggled severely with motivating themselves to write in such an environment. Indeed, educational tasks focused on pattern recognition and (re)production can easily become alienating and tedious in their inauthenticity. The prioritization on pattern recognition and pattern production can thus not only postpone but also circumvent the possibility for meaning making, authorial agency, and "ontological engagement" within dialogue (Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019, pp. 143-173; Matusov, von Duyke, & Kayumova, 2016). The overemphasis on written text over discourse has indeed been found to be a common feature of academic language pedagogy for international English language learning students. As Leki writes,

> The texts are, institutionally, the *sine qua non* of the evidence of learning whereas the preparations and processes accompanying text production may be only minimally present or may even be undetectable (Leki, 2017, p. 234).

Furthermore, Leki argues that language instructors overly "call attention" to the writing production of second language learners, leading students to too easily focus on generic and grammatical forms rather than to the discourses to which the students are responding and addressing. Notably, Leki claims this issue is not as widely problematic for content-area educators, who may more readily tolerate second language writing if it is understandable.

Is learning the genres really necessary for participation in academic and scientific discourse?

Language educators should also be aware of how *little* undergraduate and graduate level genre writing has in common with workplace and professional writing. Students in college composition courses are engaged in a practice of relying upon forms developed by writers who are part of a community they are not members of, rendering the notion of genre difficult to integrate with school writing (Leki, 2017). Professional writing tends to have a social/communal function to respond to a particular situation or concern, while school writing exists for the purpose of evaluating the writer or helping students to think and

reflect about ideas (Leki, 2017), rendering questionable much of the idea that somehow the practice in the writing genres themselves will transition effectively within professional settings.[2]

I thus argue that the value and necessity for participation in academic discourse of practicing many of the patterns and forms taught in composition courses may be overstated and even ill-advised. It is questionable if anyone other than an undergraduate or graduate student ever writes essays such as rhetorical analyses or argument essays, as "in many cases students are asked to produce school genres they have never seen and their teachers have never written" (Leki, 2017, p. 243). In my current practice as a composition instructor for multilingual immigrant learners, I have experienced a great deal of confusion among students and faculty surrounding the genre of the rhetorical analysis, in particular. I realized when I entered the university that I had never written nor was explicitly taught about rhetorical devices in college, and many faculty at my institution have stated the same. Just recently, based on concerns from faculty that students struggle greatly with understanding how to organize the rhetorical essay and develop an analysis of ethos, pathos and logos of a text or speech, the English department is considering replacing the rhetorical analysis with a "position paper" instead. The idea behind the position paper would be that it would be a more encountered genre for the students and more likely to be helpful for future college work and professional work, but there is no reason to believe that writing the position paper will not just become another end in itself to pass the composition course.

For undergraduates, as is noted in Lemke's (1990) sociocultural studies of school science discourse, it becomes apparent that overly focusing on genre can also limit students' mastery of scientific concepts and the relationships to each other if colloquial discourse is also not reflected upon. Lemke found that meaningful dialogic inquiry on unknown ideas and perplexing dilemmas in the sciences is regularly colloquial (Lemke, 1990). In his view, authoritative discourse patterns and forms may give students the illusion of an explanation and effectively block further inquiry on scientific questions. For example, Alan Alda, the actor who developed an interest in science from his work on documentaries interviewing scientists for public television in the United States, wrote in the journal *Science*,

> I was 11 and I was curious. I had been thinking for days about the flame at the end of a candle. Finally, I took the problem to my teacher. "What's a flame?" I asked her. "What's going on in there?" There was a slight pause and she said, "It's oxidation." She didn't seem to think there was much else to say. Deflated, I knew there had to be more to the mystery of a flame than just giving the mystery another name. That was a discouraging moment for me personally, but decades later I see the failure to communicate science with clarity as far more serious for society (Alda, 2012).

It may that, in writing pedagogy, the genres, because of their authoritative place in the curriculum, provide a similar illusion to students that their writing is well structured, understandable, and meaningful when it may just have an academic appearance.

By emphasizing the commonality and sharedness of academic genres, and reifying these shared patterns of discourse as part of an academic or disciplinary culture, then, the writing or language instructor may thus not always be helping students to gain access to desired academic practices but may instead grant greater legitimacy for sometimes alienating instructional practices which postpone meaning. It seems that genre pedagogy more readily justifies the curriculum of the university composition departments over promoting students' and scholars' voice in writing. Indeed, Leki (2017), an intensive English program instructor of international students herself, noted in her ethnographic research that assigned writing in

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[2] My use of the term "transition" over transfer is intentional. See Beach (1999) for a discussion of "consequential transitions" as an alternative to the cognitive notion of transfer.

general education and later academic coursework was only slightly similar, at best, to the writing of college composition courses. She argued that, unlike the writing in composition courses, general education writing, for example, was either much more formulaic and homogenous (as in a biology lab report), was short-answer exam based (as in history), or meant to determine if students completed other activities. There may also be much less need for individual writing than what composition departments (and the university instructors convinced by them) care to admit. For example, two international ESOL students in engineering and marketing that were part of Leki's (2017) ethnography had frequent opportunities to participate in group-work writing assignments, so they rarely if ever had to write anything by themselves. In fact, Leki argues that genre pedagogy, and analyses like contrastive rhetoric, might better suit the need of experienced writers – for example, those wishing to improve their flow of ideas or argumentation structure – rather than novice undergraduate or graduate students.

For novice scholars and more advanced students, instruction in the genres may also be questionably relevant to university courses, as discussed above, and to the development of meaningful scientific, professional, and disciplinary work more generally. As Li (2012) suggests, to engage in their research assistantships or fellowships, graduate students and novice researchers arguably do not need to write yet according to appropriate or even academically honest standards, at least in some departments. For example, Li (2012) reports on the common practice of novice researchers in biochemistry regularly copying and "borrowing" whole sections of text from manuscripts published in a similar field to insert into their articles. The pressure on the novice researchers to publish findings – and the pressure on the research professor to have them publish – dictated the lead researcher Leki studied to continually edit plagiarized and poorly written text in order to ensure grant funding and career prospects were not harmed. The assumption of the novice researchers was that it was the duty of the lead researcher to approve the final writing product, not their responsibility. Knowledge of genre may thus be important for scientific discourse for those responsible for final production of texts. Network-actor theory also makes an important related point that it matters less how one writes a manuscript than who is writing it, reading it, and citing it. In analyzing valid markers of recognized scientific practice, Latour (1987) emphasizes the role of recruiting support of ideas from colleagues in scientific inquiry over mastery of the structural-functional and conceptual patterns of discourse. In academic practice, it may thus matter more "who is doing the talking" and who is recruited to support the text more than what forms are employed to write or speak (Latour, 1987; Wertsch, 1991, p. 63). When it comes to learning genre, it seems that less is more, if the goal is to turn students and scholars into proficient scientists rather than writers.

Bakhtin's alternative to the notion of genre

In this section of the paper, I present a Bakhtinian authorial dialogic approach to university writing pedagogy which is distinctively different from the genre approach. However, before presenting Bakhtin's proposal for language pedagogy, it is notable to point out the ways in which Bakhtin's notion of dialogue has been misunderstood in the field of composition studies. This translated quote from Bakhtin is frequently cited by English-speaking scholars in writing pedagogy for justifying the generic shaping of voice,

> The word in language is half someone *else's*. It becomes "*one's* own" only when the speaker populates it with his [sic] own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker get his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 293-294).

This oft-cited passage is used to support the idea that in genre-based language learning students are "appropriating" cultural-historically authoritative models within the genres in order to make the words within the models "one's own" over time. Through imitating genre in the language classroom, students are said to arrive at "appropriating" the same or similar intentions as the more culturally advanced authors of model texts, enculturating themselves into academic practice or at least within supposedly shared ways of producing text within a particular field of study (cf. van Oers, 2012).

It is important to note, however, that this passage has been problematically interpreted from a structuralist English translation of Bakhtin's work. Appropriation refers to "the use of pre-existing objects or images with little or no transformation applied to them" (Wikipedia, "Appropriation"). The root of the word "appropriation" is "proper" or "property", which conjures up a sense of individual ownership over an utterance – "belonging exclusively to one person, private, personal (c1130)" – something which is "rendering a concept exactly (c1265), that is the same identical (c1280)," or something which is "suitable for a specified or implicit purpose or requirement; appropriate to the circumstances or conditions; of the requisite standard or type; apt, fitting; correct, right" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2007). If *присвоение* is translated as appropriation, it is quite reasonable to claim that Bakhtin saw genres as ready-made, shared properties of discourse, ready for students and teachers to take in and use for "their own" desires. However, in the passage above, the translation of the Russian term *присвоение/prisvoenie* as "appropriation" can also be translated as "stealing" (Matusov, personal communication, 2019). Appropriation focuses on pre-set and "specified" objectives and uses for a particular text, while stealing/embezzlement focuses on unrestrained or unauthorized activity with the words of another, a casting off of what is expected and appropriate, and a venturing toward what cannot be predicted or controlled (cf. the notion of "off-script" learning in Kennedy, 2005). As the Ukrainian Bakhtinian educator Iryna Starygina has noted (see Matusov et al., 2019, p. 89), a tension exists in Bakhtin's work between the notion of genre ("I have to say it this way") and volition ("I want to say it this way"). If we interpret what Bakhtin states about genre in the light of "embezzlement," the language learning environment is no longer focused on *reproduction* of ready-made cultural frames. Rather, students and scholars focus on production and creation of the new and the unexpected. Embezzlement is an act of *misappropriation* of the ideas of another rather than reproduction! Students and scholars, in turn, can be said to be joining disciplinary cultures through becoming responsible but unrestrained participants in what Russian Bakhtinian educator and philosopher Alexander Lobok (2011) has articulated as a "constant creative transcending" of pre-existing cultural practices (Matusov, 2011a, p. 27).

A further dialogic (rather than structuralist) interpretation of what Bakhtin refers to by genre is that any re-production of generic forms, grammar, syntax, and so on is a by-product of students' and scholars' authorship and the critical pruning of discourse which takes place within a community concerned with the quality and nature of the production emerging out of that authorship. The form of the utterance is readily ignored for the purpose of meaning.

If Bakhtin did not mean to focus on "the word" or the form of discourse as a *property* which is acquired and used for articulating ideas, what did Bakhtin mean to focus on by the use of "one's own word"? It is important to note that the focus on the word becoming "one's own" is much less discursive in its orientation than Bakhtin's later notion of "double-voicedness," as is evident in comparing the passage from Bakhtin above with the one below,

> Someone else's words introduced into our own speech inevitably assume a new *(our own)* interpretation and become subject to our evaluation of them; that is, they become *double-voiced*. All that can vary is the interrelationship between these two voices. The transmission of someone else's statement in the form of a question already leads to a clash of two intentions within a single discourse: for in so doing we not only ask a

question, but make someone else's statement problematical. Our practical everyday speech is full of other people's words: with some of them we completely merge our own voice, forgetting whose they are; others, which we take as authoritative, we use to reinforce our own words; still others, finally, we populate with our own aspirations, alien or hostile to them (Bakhtin, 1999, p. 195, emphasis mine).

In this later passage by Bakhtin, a notable emphasis is placed on a "new interpretation," which I argue is what Bakhtin appears to mean by "our own" voice (rather than a Vygotskian internalization of cultural-historical patterns of speech). This second passage from Bakhtin also emphasizes one's critical evaluation of the ideas of the other. Through Bakhtin's insight that the word of another is "double-voiced" in our response to it, the attention of the educator becomes focused on questioning and engaging in the problematics, questions, and uncertainties of utterances and not on what is shared in discourse. The word of another is never imitated, nor is it simply "internalized" and "transferred" into imagined or real future practices. Rather, the patterns and forms from the voices of others – the genres – are responded to with our own words, sometimes borrowed directly, sometimes seen as "authoritative," and sometimes seen as "alien or hostile" to us.

As I will point out soon, the later Bakhtin helps us realize that his project is more about authorship within dialogue – the creative addressing of the new, the surprising, the provocative – rather than internalization, with generic forms in service to that authorship. Authorship is the primary goal of education then rather than the ability to engage in generic discourse, which I will argue is a training and socialization objective (and is thus non-educational).

What is the site of meaning? Dialogue or the text?

Most of the "standard glossaries of literacy and cultural theory" define genre as an element of intertextuality, and intertextuality as an important element of genre. A central focus on the notion of "intertextuality," which is also misattributed to Bakhtin, is seen in Bazerman's work,

Intertextuality forms one of the crucial grounds for writing studies and writing practice. Texts do not appear in isolation, but in relation to other texts.… When we read, we use knowledge and experience from texts we have read before to make sense of the new text, and as readers we notice the texts the writer invokes directly and indirectly… the genre of any text or text to be written… grows out of a history of prior texts that set exemplars and expectations. Showing students models of prior texts that accomplish the tasks they are facing and helping them see how they can build on and modify that history of genre models can help provide guidelines as well as space for originality relevant to the specifics of the current task (Bazerman, 2004, p. 63).

The term "intertextuality" first appeared in the work of the French scholar Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s. As a structuralist, Kristeva prioritized the text as the *site* of meaning, although she interestingly questioned whether the text could be the *source* of meaning (Todorov, 1984). It was Kristeva who first brought Bakhtin to the attention of Western academics within her seminars with Roland Barthes in Paris (Lesic-Thomas, 2005). After becoming familiar with Bakhtin's work in Bulgaria, Kristeva translated Bakhtin's writing from Russian and Bakhtin's work, and in turn, the translations took on structuralist overtones characteristic of her own work (Todorov, 1984). Bazerman (2004), in his article published in an edited book on Bakhtinian approaches to education (Ball & Freedman, 2004), acknowledges that the term "intertextuality" emerged from the work of Kristeva (1980). Interestingly, Bazerman even is aware that

the term intertextuality, or any Russian equivalent, appears nowhere in the works of either Bakhtin or Volosinov (Bazerman, 2004, p. 54).[3]

Yet, despite this awareness of this issue, Bazerman and other genre scholars interpret Bakhtinian ideas of dialogue through a structuralist lens. Furthermore, it is quite curious, despite Bazerman's reference to structuralism in shaping genre theory, how highly critical Kristeva was of the notion of genre (Allen, 2000; Duff, 2002). As Allen (2000, p. 34) notes, Kristeva, along with other structuralist thinkers in the social upheaval of late 1960's Paris, challenged the possibility for stable sources of signification (including the existence of genres themselves), arguing that the text is a site of infinite "ongoing transformations and/or productions" (Kristeva, 1986, p. 87). There is thus a significant ambivalence with the authority of the genres in the work of Kristeva (Duff, 2002). Kristeva and especially Barthes articulated how the concepts of intertextuality and genre exist in a "basic tension" with each other (Duff, 2002, pp. 54-55). Intertextuality is a radically relativistic notion that does not easily lend itself to being adopted for the authoritative analysis of model texts.

The consequence of Kristeva's interpretation of the centrality of text over Bakhtin's focus on discourse, and the focus on shared meaning over Bakhtin's focus on dialogic and critical responses to utterances as a source of meaning, is that

> "discourses" become "textual practices", genres become "textual arrangements", "utterances" become "textual functions", and the category of "voice" disappears altogether (Duff, 2002, p. 61).

In essence, then, it can be argued that texts do not interact with one another; people interact with each other referencing texts, sometimes relying upon texts to build support for ideas and to ward off detractors of them (Latour, 1987).

Nearly two decades after Kristeva began to share Bakhtin's ideas with Western scholars, Bakhtin's seminal texts were more carefully translated. The Russian word *разноголосие/raznogolos'e* was translated as "heteroglossia" instead of "intertextuality." Bakhtin's focus on *разноречие/raznorech'e* can be even more clearly, although perhaps less elegantly (because of the mixture of Greek and Latin roots), translated as "heterodiscoursia" (Matusov, 2011b). The focus on the diversity (*разно*образие/*raznoobrazie*) of discourses (*речи/rechi*) rather than texts in a pedagogical setting calls educators' attention to "interaddressivity and interproblematicity in the classroom" (Matusov, 2011b, p. 115). Educators, students, and scholars can instead focus on what is "new, interesting, and important" that can be contributed by each participant in the classroom/disciplinary setting, as well as a prioritization on "ontological engagement" in that setting (Matusov, 2011b, p. 115). From a Bakhtinian heterodiscursive perspective, the academic language classroom can be envisioned as inviting students to participate within

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[3] Many genre scholars have conflated the work of Mikhail Bakhtin with Valentin Voloshinov, assuming these authors are the same person publishing under two different names, despite the fact that the assumption that Bakhtin wrote under the name Voloshinov to hide from the Soviet authorities had been highly criticized by Bakhtinian philologists years earlier (see Morson & Emerson, 1990, Chapter 4). Philologists have argued that Bakhtin cannot be the same person as a Marxist theoretician (Volosinov) who held ideas quite antithetical to Bakhtin's central vision of dialogicity and double-voicing, among other concepts. Volosinov, indeed, cited these central concepts of Bakhtin's oeuvre "as symptoms of decadent 'relativistic individualism'" (Morson & Emerson, 1990, pp. 124-125).

> historically valuable discourses, to become familiar with historically, culturally, and socially important voices, to learn how to address these voices, and to develop responsible replies to them without an expectation of an agreement or an emerging consensus (Matusov, 2011b, p. 115).

A focus on heterodiscursive voice and responsible utterances over shared cultural forms has important consequences for academic language pedagogy, as it focuses students on critical dialogic addressing of voices within the genres, addressing the voices of relevant others (one's peers, the instructor), and developing one's responsibility to the diverse concerns of others. Heterodiscursivity does not demand agreement with set cultural expectations, but rather emphasizes one's creative authorship. The genres, in turn, are put into service to support students' authorship. Authorship and the focus on the new, unexpected, and unfamiliar is thus prioritized in Bakhtinian critical dialogue over the focus on shared cultural meanings and forms.

When one reviews the notion of genre from the whole oeuvre of Bakhtin's work on dialogic authorship, it becomes difficult to see genres as isolated from the dialogic events from which they emerge. While most genre pedagogy insists on socializing students into the cultural annals of the familiar, the Bakhtinian concept of authorship prioritizes creating the new and unfamiliar. The familiar patterns of the genres are at the service of developing one's authorial voice,

> Genres provide a specific field for a specific activity, and such activity is never just an 'application,' 'instantiation,' or repetition of a pattern. Genres carry the generalizable resources of particular events; but specific actions or utterances must use those resources to accomplish new purposes in each unrepeatable milieu. Each utterance, each use of a genre, demands real work; beginning with the given, something different must be created [i.e., mastery of a genre requires its transcendence from the author] (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 291).

Note how Bakhtin dismisses the simple reproduction or re-enactment of structures or forms as authorship. Rather, within dialogic authorship, a participant makes a "bid for a unique creative contribution fully or partially recognized by a relevant community and by the participant him/herself" (Matusov, 2011a, p. 24).

Thus, there is a definite incompatibility in Bakhtin between genre and authorship. Crucially, in authorial discourse, as Wittgenstein would note, the form of the utterance becomes invisible, as otherwise the speaker or writer would be prevented from meaningfully expressing the message (Guetti, 2004). Even in Wittgenstein's language game of the simplistic language of two construction workers passing objects to each other and saying phrases like "lower brick three" (lower the brick on the count of three), a syntactical form which would presumably be quite easy to learn, there is a peculiar social practice in place which values, needs, or desires this simplistic form of communication (Guetti, 2004). For Wittgenstein, then, the embeddedness in social practices of the utterance is primary over the training and study of form. A similar argument can be made surrounding the genre of nursing care plans; in practice in the hospital, such plans are formulated in generic ways to facilitate actions on the part of the staff. However, because in school the form is prioritized over the action, the development of care plans can feel tedious and inauthentic (Leki, 2017). In genuine nursing practice, in creating texts such as nursing care plans, while the effectiveness of the form of communication may be questioned, the language and form ultimately becomes invisible in communicating the intent of the writer. If this were not the case, nurses might become slaves to forms, distracting themselves from important communication with members of the medical team. Of course, this does not deny the possibility of interest in analyzing the linguistic features of academic and professional utterances as an end in itself, but this is arguably an exception to the general invisibility of the genre in meaningful discourse.

Another important consideration in both Bakhtin and Wittgenstein's view of discourse is that authorial discourse (language games) cannot be played with just one player (Guetti, 2004). The discourse exists always in response to another voice. The meaning of an utterance for Bakhtin does not lie in its capacity to reproduce or mirror what has been said before but rather lies within its responsibility to other utterances (note the emphasis on *response* in the word responsibility). This focus on one's responsibility to the utterances of others within dialogue is the central notion which distinguishes Bakhtin's notion of genre from notions which are more commonly found in the literature. For instance, in his interpretation of Dostoevsky's novels, Bakhtin insisted on the inseparability of voice from dialogue in sharp contradistinction with the ideas of the Russian formalist Shklovksy, who emphasized, like Bazerman, the discursive origin or source of voice (Bakhtin, 1999, p. 38ff.). If the source of voice is overemphasized in pedagogy, the concern is that students' and scholars' creative authorship may be disrupted or blocked by the attention to the form of the utterance. What may matter more than linguistic tools like genres for academic language development is how students and scholars begin to dialogue with these ideas, to develop new ideas. Indeed, multilingual undergraduate writers may well succeed and be confident in their L2 writing tasks without actively writing themselves, as they can be actively engaged with their L1 and L2 peers in formulating ideas without doing the writing themselves (Leki, 2017). In this sense, the form and even the authorship of the writing is ultimately invisible. Language learning thus needs to consider "socioacademic relationships" – "friendly relationships that students develop with peers and teachers through their academic interactions in shared classes" (Leki, 2017, pp. 261-262). Furthermore, the "funds of knowledge" existing within the students' out-of-school and home experiences could be more prioritized (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), and more attention could be paid to the activity systems in which the students' and scholars' language use is situated (Hutchins, 2006).

A critical authorial dialogic curricular alternative to genre pedagogy

Rather than focusing on internalization of forms and postponement of meaning, a dialogic authorial curriculum for developing academic writing focuses on instructors, students, and scholars engaging in critically important and relevant dialogue on questions of concern to them. A dialogic authorial writing curriculum prioritizes the value of engaging in academic discourses for the students' and others' interested purposes. Only after a meaningful discourse is articulated (which seeks a response from others) is it necessary or desirable for students to analyze the form and organization of ideas and the ideas of others (Bakhtin, 1981; Matusov & von Duyke, 2010).

As an example of the danger of focusing on form prior to engaging in meaningful discourse, Matusov (2015) presents the responses of teachers and pre-service teachers to a young African-American elementary student's discourse in response to the story *Anansi the Spider*:

> Teacher: Which spider was your favorite character?
> Jamal: Well, I had about three or four of them that I liked, because some of them reminded me of different people. Cause at home I have two sisters and one brother, and my cousin Ree-Ree lives with us sometimes when her mom is not sick. I don't know why her brother Durrell doesn't come to our house but the Spider named "See Trouble" reminded me of Durrell. It seems like Durrell always knows when something is about to happen, but he never gets in trouble, but the rest of us do. My sister Dana is just like that spider named "Thirsty" she always likes to get everybody on her side of a story, but some time she can be mean, like the time she threw this bottle at my brother JJ because he would not leave her alone (Howard, 2002, cited in Matusov, 2015, p. 405).

What is notable here is how what Matusov called the African-American boy Jamal's more "topic-mosaic"-like discourse did not match the expected topic-centered genre expected of the school. When Jamal replied to the question with this discursive form, Howard (2002) noted that the teacher moved away

from discussing the students' contribution. The topic-centered discourse of an African-American student named Mike, by contrast, was validated and considered as desirable and as having more advanced use of narrative genre skills:

> Teacher: Which spider was your favorite character?
> Mike: Softy.
> Teacher: Why?
> Mike: Because he was soft and they needed him.
> Teacher: Why was his role important?
> Mike: Because he helped a lot (Howard, 2002, cited in Matusov, 2015, p. 404).

Pre-service teachers reading these utterances notably focused on the generic form of the boys' utterances rather than on the meaning of the utterances. In their analysis, the pre-service teachers felt that Jamal himself – not just his narrative – was "unfocused," "difficult to follow," and "illogical" (whereas Mike was "more logical" and "up to the point.") In response to these criticisms of Jamal, Matusov prepared a dialogic provocation in which he encouraged his students to think of Jamal's utterance not as a contribution in a class discussion but rather as an utterance one might hear at a family dinner table,

> Imagine that you are at your family dinner party. You are sitting next to 6-year old African-American boy, Jamal. His mother is a friend of your parents. Imagine that you overheard a conversation between Jamal and his mom about the book 'Anansi the Spider' and you hear Jamal's reply to his mom's question [in the same way] he said [it] to the teacher. Do you think you would find his reply unusual and interesting? If so, what kind of interest might you have in his statement? What kind of questions would you ask him about what he said? Please try to avoid asking schoolish questions that you are not personally interested in (Matusov, 2015, p. 406).

The pre-service teachers were then encouraged to think of questions that were "genuine and personally invested" in response to Jamal's story rather than questions which expressed a "fake" interest. Many questions they asked Jamal were "fake" in that Jamal answered them already in his story or they were uninteresting to address,

> Questions that we considered fake usually were the following, "How old is Ree-Ree?" (who cares?!), "Why does Durrell remind you of 'See Trouble' spider?" (Jamal had already explained it), "Why did Dana throw a bottle at J.J.?" (Jamal had explained it), "What did you find attractive in 'See Trouble' spider and 'Thirsty' spider?" (Jamal already said that they reminded him his siblings and cousins, people he knew), and so on (Matusov, 2015, p. 407).

It took time, but the pre-service teachers did end up asking "genuine and personally interested" questions that were potentially interesting to Jamal (and themselves). In turn, the pre-service teachers (unlike Jamal and Mike's teacher) engaged in authorial dialogic meaning making, defined "as a dialogic relationship between the genuine, personal, authentic question of one person seeking information and serious reply by another person in a never-ending dialogue" (Matusov, 2015, p. 409). It is Jamal's authorial and unique view of the world that is being engaged with by the teachers, and in turn, the teachers (and Jamal) transcend what is given in generic forms and discourses. There is a genuine interest, a creative transcending of cultural norms, and a dialogic addressing of the student as a genuine addressee whose reply to the question matters.

From a Bakhtinian perspective, achieving a particular form is thus not the focus of the language study or writing pedagogy, but is instead a by-product of students' effort for authorial meaning making within a community of participants interested in each other's ideas. This perspective advises against postponement of students' authorial meaning making within the language classroom for the development of language forms. Indeed, problem-posing within the academic language curriculum seems essential for 21st century work and university environments, which will increasingly require creative and improvisational problem-posing and open-ended thinking (Zhao, 2009). What matters in dialogic authorship is that any language form makes a difference to communicating meaningfully in dialogue with others. The focus is thus on the "differences which make a difference" in academic utterances and texts for communicating meaningfully with an audience (Bateson, 1987, p. 276). This means supporting student voice and initiatives, even when they move away from pre-set curricular endpoints. Participation in a messy, unfinalizable dialogue becomes an end in itself. The focus of instruction would not be based upon reproduction of form, searching for the "right" way of writing and speaking that is supposed to socialize students within a discipline, nor on socializing students or scholars within a genre, but instead upon continually ensuring novice academic writers have effectively developed, communicated, and supported their voices in response to interested others. Such instruction values polyphony in education, the "engaged coexistence of multiple yet unmerged voices" within dialogue (Sidorkin, 2002, p. 145).

Re-envisioning academic language pedagogy through a focus on voice

From the perspective advocated here, dialogic authorship is necessary for developing students' and scholars' academic voice, but it is clear that mainstream curricular practices in language pedagogy provide little support for voice and frequently impede it. Curriculum is structured mostly – if not exclusively — on the attainment of forms and assessment of those forms to the detriment of students' and scholars' agency in making meaning and finding their academic voices. Writing courses focus on the attainment of pre-set forms for the purpose of socialization and training, but such a curriculum is arguably not educational. When meaningful discourse is labeled as a secondary "content" issue in language curricula, students' and scholars' productions do not enter into dialogue with the concerns, judgements and values of others and become part of what Sidorkin (2002) would argue is the "wastebasket economy of schooling," where the product is just meant to illustrate the form and to serve little purpose other than to be disposed of after it is created. Making matters worse for developing voice and agency, assessment procedures focus on individual attainment of form, making unsafe the production of meaningful discourse and the experimentation with forms that one would undertake in producing it.

A dialogic authorial language curriculum helps to give guidance to an important dilemma in language teaching, the debate over attention to grammatical forms versus meaning in language pedagogy. In an effort to address this dichotomy, Long (1991, 2014) has argued for what he calls a "focus on form" approach over a more structural "focus on forms" based pedagogy (i.e., think of the traditional language syllabus which focuses students on "adverb clauses" one week and "relative clauses" the next) or "a focus on communication" pedagogy that eschews discussion on grammatical forms altogether. As Long (2014) writes,

> *…focus on form* involves *reactive* use of a wide variety of pedagogic procedures (PPs) to draw learners' attention to linguistic problems in context, as they arise during communication (… typically as students work on problem-solving tasks), thereby increasing the likelihood that attention to code features will be synchronized with the learner's internal syllabus, developmental stage, and processing ability. Focus on form capitalizes on a symbiotic relationship between explicit and implicit learning, instruction, and knowledge (p. 27, emphasis in original).

An exemplar provided by Long (2014) of the pedagogy needed for this focus on form is a "pedagogic task" designed to prepare a "sales report" on car production in the US and Japan. Notice the emphasis on the generic form of the sales report here, which is presumed to create a meaningful context for discussion of forms,

> [In this] *target task,* a learner might say something like "Production of SUV in the United States fell by 30% from 2000 to 2004." If the very next utterance from a teacher or another student is a partial recast, in the form of a confirmation check, e.g., "Production of SUVs fell by 30%?," as proposed in Long (1996b), the likelihood of the learner noticing the plural -*s* is increased by the fact that he or she is *vested* in the exchange, so is *motivated* to learn what is needed and *attending* to the response, already knows the meaning he or she was trying to express, so has freed up *attentional resources* to devote to the form of the response, and hears the correct form in close juxtaposition to his or her own, facilitating *cognitive comparison* (p. 27).

I argue that Long offers here an impoverished understanding of meaningful communication, as is revealed by his choice to focus on a pre-set, teacher-led generic "task" of a "sales report." While Long is definitely right that discussion of form can and should emerge in the context of meaningful communication, the example provides little to indicate that a student would be "vested" in this generic task (cf. Long, 2015, p. 27).

In my view, a *focus on form* should be subservient in language pedagogy to a *focus on voice,* which we could also term here a *focus on authorship,* with some less clarity for those unfamiliar with the specific use of the term *authorship* here. I call for language learners to be given more opportunities to work with instructors and academic mentors and advisors who support students' interests or stakes in academic discourse. The priority here is on dialogue that is generated when there is surprise, interest, or stakes in the discourse, where what someone says matters and is important to them, and when the student feels their values, ideas, and perspectives are addressed by the curriculum. The role of a language pedagogue is then to support the intelligibility and fluency of students' voices, with attention to forms like modality becoming strategically needed to communicate one's vested ideas. The implicit learning of the English modality system could then become a byproduct of students' and scholars' efforts at expressing their academic voice.

Thus, in disagreement with the view of my former graduate colleague at an intensive English program, "content" does *crucially* matter in language pedagogy. Following Lobok (2011), I see the language teacher as ideally a "person of culture" who is genuinely interested in ideas in multiple fields of study and can work to direct students and scholars toward inquiries and dilemmas of significance to society. As Lobok indicates, a "person of culture" need not know everything there is to know about a subject but is skilled in directing students and scholars toward sources of support in the university and in one's community to delve further into valued issues and concerns. If students, for example, really were interested in the production of SUVs in the US and Japan, what would be the voices that would be participating in dialogue on this issue, and what would they be concerned about? One voice could, of course, include the car manufacturers who make more money selling bigger SUVs over smaller traditional sedans. But other voices could include traffic safety advocates concerned with the rise of pedestrian fatalities caused by the greater presence of heavier, high-profile vehicles in cities, or even advocates for decreasing the imprint that vehicles have in cities, who are concerned about the flow of transportation and the space given to vehicles in the cityscape. For the latter interest group, the fact that there are fewer SUVs in Japan may well be because of sensible street planning that gives less space over to providing parking spaces for large vehicles. The point is that a dialogue can emerge from many interest groups in this issue, which is ignored by a focus on seeing the

investigation of this issue as a component of a generic "sales report" task, where any meaning seems to be subsumed under the need for a carrier for a "target" language form or a "target" genre task (Long, 2015).

The focus on dialogic authorial language teaching is on the sociodiscursive function of language rather than individual student production in pre-set generic tasks like "argument papers" or "sales reports." The diverse dilemmas and multiple dialogic responses that one encounters regarding SUV sales figures in the US and Japan are prioritized; the form in which one responds to this dialogue depends on whom (and to what) one is addressing. A discussion on a cultural dilemma in a language classroom should engage students in the diverse perspectives of others on the issue. The form of the argument is then a byproduct of addressivity to the concerns of others. While task-based language teaching focuses attention on the language forms and genres themselves, the content being a carrier for the forms, meaningful dialogic discourse is characterized by the *invisibility* of form. When the form *becomes visible* because of intelligibility or comprehension issues, or a pragmatic concern such as modality, the instructor can assist in providing support as needed to assist the development of ideas, problems, concerns, and questions that are emerging in the discourse. Instructors can recast how they understand the problems or concerns and offer guidance (including helpful language forms) to sufficiently address the multiplicity of voices which are lying underneath these concerns. When the voices of oneself and others are prioritized, genre is a secondary concern and focusing too much on it can distract one from participation in dialogue.

Re-envisioning academic language pedagogy through a focus on stylistics

There is also a role for dialogue on language forms in the language classroom to learn to appreciate others' voices and to refine one's own voice. Rather than focus students on "intertextual" comparisons with authoritative models, instructors can begin to develop students' dialogic awareness of language forms through communal comparison and reflection on language forms in the writing of others. To this end, Bakhtin (2004) calls on grammatical forms to be seen not as lifeless entities taught for their own sake but as "stylistic" choices which help to express voice. Bakhtin himself was a literature teacher in a secondary school in Saransk for over 15 years (Matusov, 2004), and he wrote about his own pedagogical initiatives in an essay translated in English as "Dialogic Origins of Grammar" (Bakhtin, 2004). In his courses, Bakhtin compared the prose of master Russian writers with alternative (and more typical) syntactical forms, and students engaged in comparing the forms, dialoguing upon which of the forms best expressed the writer's voice. He gives a simple example of a dialogic provocation in which he gives the students the following short sentences,

1. *Sad am I: no friend beside me* (Pushkin).
2. *He'd start to laugh—they'd all guffaw* (Pushkin).
3. *He awoke: five stations had already fled past in the opposite direction* (Gogol) (Bakhtin, 2004, p. 16).

In the dialogue on the first sentence, for example, Bakhtin reports that his students recognized how creative Pushkin was in breaking the typical form of including a coordinating conjunction to express dramatic emotion. Students also focused on the expressiveness of the sentence, dramatizing it by reading it and acting out scenes with it (focusing on syntax, word order, intonational structure of a clause, syllable length, etc.). Discussion also emerged on how the author constructed the sentence and how adding a conjunction limits the expressiveness in the sentence, a phenomenon of which good novelists are commonly aware (Bakhtin, 2004). A discussion on the stylistics of grammar is more than a psychologically "reactive" pedagogical approach to form produced in the carrying out of pedagogical tasks (cf. Long, 2015, p. 27-28). Instead, grammar is given ontological significance for voice development and grammatical forms can become interesting in themselves for that purpose. Forms become alive, something which tends to be elusive when students switch from the widely used syntax of conversation to that of formal writing (Bakhtin,

2004). One could imagine a similar stylistic comparison of other generic forms – such as the types outlined earlier in the work of Swales & Feak (2012) – to appreciate the expressive power behind their use for developing voice. Students could learn about these genres through an effort at creatively deconstructing and reconstructing the forms in a similar way as Bakhtin did with Russian prose.

Attention to stylistics can help to articulate the importance of form in developing voice and call attention to it without overtaking a focus on authorship in the language. However, if the forms being provoked to discuss in the stylistics lesson are prescribed, as they could easily become even in Bakhtin's lesson, the lesson may be quite instrumental, manipulating students' ontology to a prescribed endpoint to discuss forms, a caution raised by Bakhtinian educator Tara Ratnam in her published remarks on a reprint of Bakhtin's (2004) manuscript on his grammar teaching (see Matusov, Marjanovic-Shane, & Gradovski, 2019).

A role for improvisational, "strategic" dramatic events in language teaching

Authorial academic language learning also calls for a role for dramatic improvisational scenarios in the language curriculum that prioritize dialogue within surprising and ambiguous eventful situations. One interesting curricular approach in this regard is Di Pietro's little-known work on "strategic interaction" in language teaching (Di Pietro, 1987).[4] Di Pietro (1987) created a language curriculum focused on students' rehearsal of, enactment of, and debriefing on open-ended role-based scenarios. Students engage in carrying out roles in which partners do not have sufficient information or clear understanding of the intention or perspective of the other partners (p. 39). Di Pietro (1987) intended these open-ended scenarios and the development of students' authorship and voice therein to become the curriculum of the language course, eschewing pre-set syllabi focused on functions, notions, or language forms. In groups, students rehearse their specific roles in the scenarios together, carefully avoiding becoming prematurely aware of the instructions given to the other group or groups. After the scenarios are carried out by at least one selected member of the group, the class then debriefs on the scenario together with the instructor, the students' questions and reflections becoming the focus of discussion. In one example of a scenario that could be rehearsed, one group could play the role of a husband or wife who cannot wait to tell his/her partner the exciting news that he/she has been offered a new job which will finally provide enough income to pay the family bills. The job is overseas and will require living in another country for two years. Unfortunately, for the first six months of the job, he/she will not be able to bring any partner with him/her. The group playing the role of the other partner could be told to tell the husband/wife the exciting news that, after years of trying to conceive, she is now two-months pregnant (Scott Stevens, personal communication, 2016). Di Pietro (1987) emphasizes how these scenarios require the need to negotiate ambiguity and competing intentions. We could add here, from Bakhtin (1999), that these scenarios can lead to dramatic "dialogic events" that require partners to become responsible to the sensibilities, concerns, circumstances, and replies of others, sometimes multiple dialogic partners who may or may not be represented directly in the scenario.[5] There is a need for reply, as the dialogic partners continually surprise one another and may express competing desires. Strategic interaction scenarios like these give students an opportunity to engage in eventful dialogue with partners with divergent interested stakes in the outcome of the dialogue (Di Pietro, 1987). The students can experience the breakdown in communication that comes from uncertainty of how to proceed and a need to repair miscommunication with diverse types of discourse strategies, all the while

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[4] While Di Pietro's (1987) work has the same title as the well-known work by sociologist Erving Goffman (1969), the author does not reference Goffman's work in his 1987 book.

[5] Because of the strength of the narrative in the scenarios, however, instructors may take a cue from Bakhtinian educator Charles Bisley, who recommends – before students review a plot or script (or in this case, a scenario) –instructors to ask students questions loosely related to the theme (Matusov et al., 2019). In this way, the instructor prioritizes students' development of their own ideas on the themes of the drama emerging from their own situated contexts, which furthers respect and nurturing of student voice (Matusov et al., 2019).

being focused on the meaning of the surprising utterances of the other. There would be no curricular endpoint to the dialogue, and intelligibility, fluency, and accuracy of form become byproducts of one's participation in the dialogue. We can imagine a more academic focused curriculum also designed through scenarios that focus on dialoguing with the voices of multiple stakeholders to a concern of cultural importance, such as the concerns expressed earlier about large vehicle use in crowded cities. In such dialogue, it would be important to collect relevant evidence and to speak with appropriate ethos, among other concerns. It is important to ensure that the students' own voice and authorship in interpreting and carrying out the diverse roles lead the curriculum rather than the teachers' instrumental efforts at promoting a particular language form, lexicon, notion, or function (Di Pietro, 1987). The teacher's authority in the curriculum is based on the power he or she has to generate interest and awareness of the stakes of the participants in the scenarios and to assist students to effectively carry out the scenario in the language of instruction (Di Pietro, 1987).

When dramatic scenes like strategic interaction scenarios are played out in dialogical authorial language classes, "polyphony" is prioritized, characterized by a strong sense of dialogism and appreciation for dialogue among the students (Matusov, 2009; Matusov et al., 2019). A "classroom culture" develops which focuses on developing and supporting students' "personal judgments on a wide range of human concerns" (Di Pietro, 1987, p. 99). Dramatic scenarios like these can also serve as dialogic provocations for collective analysis and evaluation of the stylistics of form and genre in the discourse of the scenarios and the degree to which the student-produced discourse is intelligible and effective for communicating intention. Bakhtinian language educator Iryna Starygina notes the importance of language instructors paying attention to Bakhtin's (1986) insight that good dramatic acting practice requires the actor not only to express his or her internal feelings but also to view one's production from the perspective of the other (Matusov et al., 2019). To this end, the rehearsal and debriefing sessions offer multiple opportunities for students to receive feedback on their performance and to address questions they have on the degree to which they were able to succeed in communicating their intentions. Throughout the scenario activity and in debriefing afterwards, the teacher continually ensures that language learning is led by students' own questions and perplexities, simulating Socrates' dialogues with free people rather than slaves (Matusov, 2009). As Di Pietro (1987) writes, "the writing of scenarios requires the utilization of one's imagination about life in general" (p. 67). Thus, effective curriculum and guidance in scenario-based language teaching requires the teacher to be a "person of culture" who can connect students to dilemmas of tension in the culture that lead to never-ending dialogue (Lobok, 2011). Participation in dialogue becomes an end in itself in the language classroom.

Conclusion

Dialogic authorial language learning can indeed become a method for language study in universities, and it is intriguing to think of it being offered as an alternative to traditional study for those who wish to participate in it. Rather than focusing on the teaching of abstract forms and pattern recognition for the purpose of socialization and training in academic discourse, as is common in genre pedagogy, Bakhtinian dialogic authorial language learning emphasizes students' unfinalizable questioning and problematizing of questions of academic import within the language of instruction. Any focus on language forms, text organization, and stylistics, among other elements of discourse, are in the service of developing students' authorship in the dialogue which emerges on these questions and dilemmas. From the perspective of dialogic authorship, a focus on pattern recognition and pattern production is considered to be a training objective rather than an educational one. Genuine education emerges when students have questions, and these questions are generated when students' voices are being developed. Education for dialogic authorship insists that training objectives not overtake meaningful authorship, as the need for

training and socialization of academic discourse emerges from the desire of students and scholars to communicate their interested ideas effectively, clearly, and persuasively with others.

The notion of dialogic authorship raises a set of novel concerns for academic language preparation within academic writing and language preparation settings. It challenges language pedagogues to rethink the degree to which they (and their students) genuinely value student inquiry, uncertainty, and puzzlement within dialogue in composition and other language courses. Another concern is under what conditions the authority of the writing or communication instructor develops. Educators who value dialogic authorship may best develop their authority as a "person of culture," a person who can provoke and further students' ongoing dialogue on concerns within multiple disciplines (Bibler, 2009). From a dialogic authorial approach, the success of academic education is the degree to which it supports and develops dialogue in particular fields of study (or on important societal issues) rather than the degree to which it socializes students in generic forms. From this perspective, education should *focus on voice/authorship* before any "focus on form" (cf. Long, 1991, 2015).

This paper raises the question of whether most language classrooms are effectively sites of socialization and training rather than education. If we wish education to play a central role in the language classroom, an intriguing path that deserves much more study is how much of what is explicitly taught on pattern recognition of language forms can be learned through self-study and in collaborative peer laboratory work. For instance, there is evidence that much pattern recognition in language can be learned without much teacher intervention in freely organized heterogenous groups. Sugata Mitra's studies show how children from Indian "slums" and "shantytowns," whose literacy skills in English are highly basic or non-existent, can learn the forms and patterns of how to use a Windows computer set up in English with no intervention from adults (Mitra, 2006). Importantly, the children interfaced with the computer in heterogeneous groups in open spaces in the community (the computer was set up in an ATM-like box on the streets and anyone could approach it at any time). In the assessment of his work with these and other similar "minimally invasive" self-organized systems in India and the UK (Mitra, 2010), Mitra encourages educators to imagine freeing up instructional time from learning form and patterns in order for groups of language learners to explore more critical issues of interest to society with their instructors, developing their voice on these issues in the process. In turn, learning additional forms and patterns in the language – beyond what is done in self-study and peer groups – could become a byproduct of participation in meaningful discourse. Attention in the language course could focus on developing voice and stylistics of form over the direct instruction of language forms in the classroom setting. The role of self-organized learning systems to develop proficiency with pattern recognition in language and to support dialogic pedagogy in the classroom is worth further study, with the caveat that particular academic language forms and patterns may be difficult for students to learn without direct instructional support (Long, 2015).

It should also be noted that dialogic authorial instruction may require summative assessment of language proficiency to be separated from language instruction (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2017). This would allow for the "existential need" for students' authorship and freedom of "activism" in their education to come to the fore in the language curriculum over pre-set demands of university proficiency requirements (Matusov & Marjanovic-Shane, 2017, p. E1). Further discussion of the perils of summative assessment in language pedagogy for authorial language learning is warranted.

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