Language Pedagogy from Memphis to Tokyo

Current Perspectives on Teaching Ancient and Modern Languages of Asia and Beyond

Cahiers du CLSL n°68, 2024

UNIL | Université de Lausanne

Language Pedagogy from Memphis to Tokyo

Current Perspectives on Teaching Ancient and Modern Languages of Asia and Beyond

Edited by Robin Meyer and Antonia Ruppel

Cahiers du CLSL, n^{o} 68, 2024

Ont déjà paru dans cette série :

Discours sur les langues et rêves identitaires (2009, n° 26)
Langue et littératures pour l'enseignement du français en Suisse romande : problèmes et perspectives (2010, n°27)
Barrières linguistiques en contexte médical (2010, n° 28)
Russie, linguistique et philosophie (2011, n° 29)
Plurilinguismes et construction des savoirs (2011, n° 30)
Langue(s). Langage(s). Histoire(s). (2011, n° 31)
Identités en confrontation dans les médias (2012, n° 32)
Humboldt en Russie (2013, n° 33)
L'analyse des discours de communication publique (2013, n° 34)
L'édification linguistique en URSS : thèmes et mythes (2013, n° 35)
Mélanges offerts en hommage à Remi Jolivet (2013, n° 36)
Histoire de la linguistique générale et slave : sciences et traditions (2013, n° 37)
Ireland and its Contacts/L'Irlande et ses contacts (2013, n° 38)
La linguistique urbaine en Union Soviétique (2014, n° 39)
La linguistique soviétique à la recherche de nouveaux paradigmes (2014, n° 40)
Le niveau méso-interactionnel : lieu d'articulation entre langage et activité (2014, n° 41)
L'expertise dans les discours de la santé. Du cabinet médical aux arènes publiques, (2015, n°42)
L'école phonologique de Leningrad : histoire et modernités, (2015, n°43)
Le malentendu dans tous ses états, (2016, n°44)
Nouvelles technologies et standards méthodologiques en linguistique, (2016, n°45)
Aleksandr Potebnja, langage, pensée, (2016, n°46)
Rozalija Šor (1894-1939) et son environnement académique et culturel, (2016, n°47)
Perspectives on English in Switzerland, (2016, n°48)
Cinquante nuances du temps et de l'espace dans les théories linguistiques, (2016, n°49)
Le palimpseste gotique de Bologne. Etudes philologiques et linguistiques, (2016, n°50)
Les communautés suisses de Crimée et de la mer Noire : Langues et traditions, (2017, n°51)
Historiographie & épistémologie des sciences du langage : du passé vers le présent (2018, n°52)
Linguistique et philosophie du langage, (2018, n°53)
Investigating journalism practices (2018, n°54)
La communication digitale 1 (2018, n°55)
Mélanges offerts en hommage à Marianne Kilani-Schoch (2018, n°56)
Le *Cours de linguistique générale :* réception, diffusion, traduction (2018, n°57)
La médiation des savoirs sur le langage (2019, n°58)
Se mettre en scène en ligne. La communication digitale 2 (2019, n°59)
Hommage à Rudolph Wachter (2019, n°60)
Interlinguistique et espérantologie (2019, n°61)
Méthodes et modèles de l'apprentissage des langues anciennes, vivantes et construites, hier et aujourd'hui (2020, n°62)
Langues agglutinantes (2021, n°63)
Les communautés en ligne (2021, n°64)
Histoire des sciences du langage : approche épistémologique (2021, n°65)
La traduction et son processus didactique (2022, n°66)
De la théorie des Matrices et des Etymons à la submorphologie motivée (2024, n°67)

www.cahiers-clsl.ch

Language Pedagogy from Memphis to Tokyo

Current Perspectives on Teaching Ancient and Modern Languages of Asia and Beyond

Edited by Robin Meyer and Antonia Ruppel

Cahiers du CLSL, n° 68, 2024

UNIL | Université de Lausanne

Les Cahiers du CLSL
(ISSN print 2674-1415)
(ISSN online 2813-0103)
Centre de Linguistique et des Sciences du Langage
Université de Lausanne (Suisse)
www.cahiers-clsl.ch

Centre de Linguistique et des Sciences
du Langage Quartier UNIL-Dorigny,
Bâtiment Anthropole
CH-1015 Lausanne

Table of Contents

TEACHING THE LANGUAGES OF ASIA. AN INTRODUCTION

Robin Meyer & Antonia Ruppel
Université de Lausanne; SOAS University of London
robin.meyer@unil.ch; antonia.ruppel@gmail.com

Learning and teaching languages, be they modern or ancient, presents a challenge to most if not all people involved. Beyond the matters of 'simply' learning vocabulary and grammar, students need to acquaint themselves with the culture, history and linguistic 'habits' of a language, that is the categories which it encodes grammatically – such as tense, aspect, evidentiality or politeness – and the ways in which it does so. Adding to this the language's history, literary references and idiomatic expressions that are synchronically no longer explicable, the learner in essence has to discover and internalise what Wittgenstein referred to as the 'mythology […] stored within our language'.[1]

The teacher, by contrast, is already familiar with the different worlds, both of the metalanguage used for instruction and the target language to be explored. They need to find ways of letting the two meet effectively so as to allow their students to shed the restraints of one language and familiarise themselves with the opportunities of the other, thus expanding the 'limits of [their] world', metaphorically speaking.[2] This they need to do in a manner that continuously engages their students, thus maintaining their motivation, and equally challenges them just enough to keep things interesting without demanding the impossible.

There can be no doubt that such an undertaking is never simple. It is made plainly difficult, however, in the context of languages no longer actively spoken. In them, the teacher has neither the advantage nor the intuition of the

[1] 'In unserer Sprache ist eine ganze Mythologie niedergelegt' from Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Frazer's* Golden Bough, 1967, reprinted in: James C. Klagge & Alfred Nordmann (eds) (1993) *Ludwig Wittgenstein. Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*. Cambridge: Hackett, 133.
[2] Playing on Ludwig Wittgenstein's dictum 'Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt' from the *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung*, §5.6.

native speaker, but is him- or herself a stranger in a strange land. Equally, they do not have recourse to native speakers with whom to enquire about this question or another; instead they must make do with the information that already exists, usually in texts clearly not composed for language learners to appreciate. Patently, however, these languages still need to be taught, even though, perhaps, they are past their prime as regards their active communicative function.

Our understanding of bygone cultures continues to rely almost exclusively on written documents. Only through them can we begin to understand the past – and thus, we need a working knowledge of the languages they employ, including their 'mythology'. Equally, we can comprehend even modern cultures only with sufficient command of the language or languages they use. The teaching of ancient and modern languages remains, therefore, a fundamental and necessary endeavour and, as the contributions in this volume argue, a worthwhile subject of study and debate.

Such teaching, at the very least for ancient, medieval and pre-modern languages – those, in short, that are no longer routinely spoken for communicative purposes – happens in most circumstances at university level, with the exception perhaps of Latin and, to a lesser extent, Ancient Greek and Biblical Hebrew, which are still sometimes taught in secondary education. At university, their teaching is frequently undertaken by researchers from various sub-disciplines with varying degrees of training in language pedagogy. Equally, of course, not all pedagogically trained teachers of modern languages or indeed native speakers are familiar to the same extent with the history of the language they teach and speak, be that at university or at school.

With these challenges in mind and on the occasion of the *Deutscher Orientalistentag*, which in 2022 took place at the Free University in Berlin, we convened a panel of teachers of modern and ancient languages of Asia for the purpose of fostering exchange between practitioners. Our aim was to talk about some of the theoretical underpinnings of teaching languages which, at least in the Western European context, are less commonly taught. To guide our discussions and foster debate, we posed the following questions:

- Which methodological approaches used in teaching spoken languages could be adapted for use in languages no longer spoken?

- How can we most effectively introduce students familiar with an ancient language to its modern daughter language – and vice versa?
- In what way can we actively use phylogenetic relationships to teach students with knowledge of one language a closely related one?
- How can we use knowledge of Latin or Greek which students retain from school in order to teach them other (ancient) Indo-European languages?
- What is the best way of teaching students languages which differ fundamentally in their structure from the student's mother tongue(s)?
- What technological advances and research projects are there which might be of interest for language teachers?

As the panel was successful and the ensuing discussions lively, it seemed only right that the occasion should give rise to a collected volume of some of the papers presented there, in particular as many if not all of the questions raised above were discussed to one extent or another. The eight papers in this volume, spanning more than 4,000 years in time – from teaching Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs to modern Farsi – and the entirety of Asia – from Japan via China, Tibet, India, Iran, and the Caucasus to its westernmost frontier – thus represent a current account of diverse perspectives and approaches to the teaching of ancient and modern languages of Asia and beyond. In this volume, the two first papers deal with questions of language teaching methodology and technology more broadly, without focussing on any one language; the contributions thereafter are arranged in approximate relative chronology, beginning with antiquity and leading up to our time.

In her paper, Antonia Ruppel uses the experience she gathered designing online Sanskrit courses in various formats to make a series of basic and general suggestions for setting up more such courses in other ancient languages. There are many reasons why one might want to do so; offering a systematic online supplement for a classroom-taught course, bare-bones provision for a course that cannot be taught 'on the books' for lack of student interest in a trad-ac setting or creating a thorough course complete with comprehensive learning environment for an alt-ac setting are just three of these.

One of the key aspects here, Ruppel argues, is to be clear on what one means by ‘language course’. What are the elements needed for good teaching, here especially for good ancient-language teaching, that I need to put in place for my students to be most likely to succeed? Also, what do I mean by ‘teaching a language’? Is my goal to let students read a very specific corpus or to access a wide variety of texts, possibly in variant forms of a language? Is my ultimate goal to have them read a core language freely, or, for a side language, to know which resources are available to let them decipher texts with the help of a grammar and a dictionary? What kind of student am I trying to reach? What prior knowledge can I likely expect in my target audience and thus make use of in the resources one provides? What resources do I have available to spend, and where can I intelligently save resources (be those time or money) by involving students who might benefit from the work and thought that goes into creating e.g. handouts, slides or electronic flash cards?

Also, as Ruppel suggests, having answered the questions of ‘what precisely are my goals?’ and ‘what do I need to reach those goals?’ is the best basis for selecting the right ones among the by now very numerous service providers (for flash cards, video production, website design and hosting, etc.).

Todd Krause, Hans C. Boas and Danny Law also discuss the internet as the locus of teaching, but from a different vantage point, where it does not just replace the traditional classroom, but the textbook as well. In the context of teaching ancient languages, which pose a distinct challenge as there are no native speakers to engage with in conversation when compared to their modern counterparts, the University of Texas at Austin’s Linguistics Research Center has developed the Early Indo-European Online (EIEOL) collection. This online resource offers educational lessons that immerse students in early languages through original, unaltered texts. With more than 20,000 monthly users, EIEOL is a widely-used platform and includes 18 languages such as Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, and Old Church Slavonic, along with lesser-studied languages like Hittite, Classical Armenian, Avestan and Tocharian.

Each language series within EIEOL features extensively annotated excerpts from ancient texts, supplemented with modules that explain the relevant grammar and cultural contexts. Adopting such a text-centric method and combining it with a user-definable interface allows learners of various skill levels to engage directly with the languages, reducing the need for

extensive preliminary grammatical knowledge and making the learning process more accessible. It supports a flexible theoretical framework that can adapt to various teaching approaches, descriptions of ancient grammatical structures, and purposes of language learning.

This approach is particularly beneficial for languages with a complex historical grammatical evolution or those lacking consensus in scholarly description, such as Tocharian. EIEOL accommodates not only Indo-European languages but is also expanding to include early Mesoamerican, Semitic, and Sino-Tibetan languages, demonstrating its versatility and broad applicability. As a result, EIEOL stands out as a comprehensive and adaptable educational platform for exploring a diverse array of ancient languages.

Turning to the pedagogy of individual languages, Maiken Mosleth King considers the challenges of teaching the Middle Egyptian language and Egyptian hieroglyphs, focussing particularly on adult anglophone learners beyond the traditional university. The absence of native speakers, the vast number of hieroglyphic signs to be learnt, the challenge of reconstructing pronunciation, and the scarcity of accessible intermediate learning tools like readers and textbooks are only some of the hurdles learners have to overcome.

Since, as with most ancient languages, developing reading proficiency is the main goal, Mosleth King advocates a pedagogical approach emphasising vocabulary as the cornerstone of learning, including recognising variant spellings. Her method involves reading words, sentences, and increasingly complex paragraphs to aid vocabulary memorisation, thereby building learner confidence. Grammar and syntax are gradually introduced within the context of practice sentences.

She goes on to highlight the importance of digitising ancient Egyptian texts using modern hieroglyphic fonts, which allows for the creation of standardised, legible practice texts for intermediate learners. This digitisation facilitates the use of pedagogical aids such as inserting spaces between words and adding signs omitted by ancient scribes.

To provide learners with the tools and context necessary to achieve reading competence in Middle Egyptian, she finally argues, the newly gained understanding of vocabulary and grammar must be further enhanced by

embedding it in a discussion of the broader semantic and cultural meanings of the ancient texts.

This contextualisation is imperative not only for Middle Egyptian, but also for other, particularly ancient languages, especially when groups of learners come to this language from diverse backgrounds and with particular interests. In his contribution, Robin Meyer contrasts the teaching of ancient languages at university level with approaches taken in secondary schools. While the latter typically offer a limited set of languages, such as Latin and Greek, they extensively incorporate material on the literature, culture and history associated with these languages – thus giving the learner a more comprehensive introduction than many university language courses do.

Meyer's paper advocates for a more contextualised approach to teaching less-commonly studied languages at the university level, too, arguing that this provides essential insights into the language and helps students from diverse academic backgrounds – such as theology, history and linguistics – and with varying skills and expectations to develop a similar holistic understanding of the newly learned language. He discusses the case of Classical Armenian as an example to illustrate this point. Without additional courses on Armenian history, literature, religion and culture, addressing the varied interests of students becomes challenging unless such context is integrated directly into the language learning process.

The paper therefore suggests that textbooks for such less-commonly studied languages should be conceived to reflect the composition of each likely interest group, thus including cultural, historical, literary and linguistic elements in balanced proportions and with the target audience in mind. The primary focus, however, should always remain on language acquisition. The proposed solution is to seamlessly integrate historical and cultural information within grammatical exercises and readings, as well as to include regular excursus on relevant topics, ensuring that these elements enhance rather than detract from the language learning experience.

In his contribution, Dirk Schmidt discusses quite a different pedagogical challenge, namely a scenario when a 'classical' language has not given way to its modern successor, but is retained as the formal or literary register – as is the case for Tibetan.

Learning Tibetan today is closely intertwined with the academic discipline of Tibetan Studies and Tibetology, and thus with their particular historical legacies and established practices. Schmidt reviews these existing methods and proposes an innovative approach for learning and translating Middle Tibetan, also known as 'Classical' Tibetan, emphasising a comprehensive, collaborative and community-focused strategy, which draws on applied linguistics, second language acquisition and translation studies.

In particular, he discusses the potential benefits of learning Modern Tibetan first, arguing that such an approach makes sense not only since the differences between the two varieties are not staggering, but also because it offers significant advantages for both academics and the Tibetan-speaking communities. These communities, he argues, possess crucial perspectives on textual interpretations, rooted in their living traditions, which are invaluable for authentic translations.

His key objective is to shift from viewing texts merely as sources for extracting translations to engaging with translation as a social practice that is constructive, inclusive and reciprocal. This approach aims to create a more interactive and beneficial relationship between translators and the broader Tibetan community, which would enhance both the understanding and appreciation of Tibetan texts.

A similar question of the relationship between older and modern forms of the same language arises for Vance Schaefer, whose contribution discusses how relevant elements of Classical Japanese can best be integrated in second-language acquisition. Classical Japanese elements significantly influence Modern Japanese, making both passive and active knowledge of the classical form necessary for speakers and learners of Japanese as an Additional Language (JAL). Schaefer promotes a proactive approach to incorporating Classical Japanese into JAL education. After outlining the characteristics, forms and applications of Classical Japanese within modern usage, he proposes a pedagogical framework with clear, attractive and measurable learning outcomes for students.

His teaching strategy includes Classical Japanese in its modern context through integrating extensive reading of learner-appropriate texts into contemporary Japanese courses, combined with a variety of support activities. These activities utilise a flipped or blended learning format and include

explicit instruction, focus-on-form exercises, and instances of the grammar-translation method. Schaefer's approach further leverages the cultural appeal of Japanese popular media by incorporating elements such as haiku, manga and anime, enhancing student engagement and motivation.

He argues that by exposing JAL learners to Classical Japanese in this way, students may be more inclined to pursue dedicated Classical Japanese courses at the appropriate time. This could increase enrolment in such courses and open doors for students to explore aspects of Japanese literature, history and culture in a more detailed manner.

In Maryam Pakzadian's contribution, historical languages no longer play a role in language education; instead, she proposes a particular framework – Pedagogical Construction Grammar – from which to approach the teaching of Farsi. Focussing on complex predicates, semantically light verbs combined with nominal, adjectival, prepositional and other phrases, she emphasises the importance of conceiving of these collocations as 'constructions', that is form–meaning pairs whose meanings transcend that of their individual components.

In her paper, Pakzadian highlights the usefulness of the notion of construction, both in pedagogical terms as well as regarding its descriptive accuracy; she illustrates these advantages at the example of peculiar grammatical behaviour of these complex predicates, which at times exhibit the same properties as single lexical items (e.g. in agent formation), at other times those of phrases (e.g. in auxiliary or clitic positioning).

After her discussion of the linguistic properties of complex predicates from a construction grammar perspective, Pakzadian proposes concrete pedagogical means, including exercises and elements of a lesson plan, with which to introduce this complex topic to learners of Farsi, thereby illustrating the importance of the research pedagogy interface.

In the final contribution to this volume, Emine Çakır and Hiroe Kaji turn from language teaching to language teachers and their role and treatment in a university setting. Their paper briefly outlines the story behind the teacher-led Language Teachers' Committee workshops that started in 2015 as an informal occasion for teachers of less-commonly taught languages at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) at the University of Oxford to find

out more about how colleagues teach their specific target language. Over time, they turned into a key means of Continuous Professional Development, allowing colleagues to share best practice and scholarship. This forum and the exchange opportunities that it provides proved particularly relevant at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when language teachers needed to adapt their methods and resources to a new setting essentially over night.

Next to the workshops themselves, Çakır and Kaji discuss questions of institutional politics and the value attributed to language teachers by the Faculty as a whole and their researcher colleagues individually. Detailing the process of engagement and discussion with the university administration, they review the 25-year-long process of raising the profile and the recognition of language teachers at the Faculty and the challenges involved therein. At the same time, they highlight the importance of this trifecta – due recognition and fair treatment, a reflective support structure, and opportunities for professional development – for the individual and institutional wellbeing of language teachers, especially at university level.

In most arts and humanities environments within traditional academia, the fact that language knowledge is the necessary basis of almost all our other work often leads to the erroneous assumption that language teaching is ‘basic’, i.e. that anyone in the field can teach these languages. We hope that this volume contributes to the demonstration that a lot of varied thought goes into teaching them *well*.

CREATING A COMPLETE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT FOR ANCIENT-LANGUAGE TEACHING*

Antonia Ruppel
SOAS University of London
antonia.ruppel@gmail.com

Abstract

There are many reasons for creating online resources both to supplement in-person teaching and to lay the basis for a course taught entirely online. This paper aims to give an overview of the questions we ought to ask ourselves so that we can design exactly the resources or the course we need.

Even an experienced classroom teacher may not be aware of all the elements that should be in place for an online and thus possibly more student-guided course to be successful. We thus begin by looking at very basic issues of learning space, time and patterns. Next, while 'teaching a language' or 'knowing a language' are precise-sounding aims, they unite a broad variety of activities and abilities. We thus suggest a series of questions that let instructors figure out what they mean by those terms, and then go through the various practical decisions that need to be made on that basis in order to set up exactly the course needed: we go through what course elements should be included, and the best ways of creating these given the academic services available electronically and online. Sometimes, more is better, but often, basic structures set up in a way possible even for time-strapped academics who are required to focus on publishing rather than teaching can go a long way.

Finally, we introduce the examples of two complete online alt-ac set-ups (for both language and 'content' classes) as potential models for future courses.

Keywords: teaching basics, online courses, pedagogical awareness, uses of ancient languages, alt-ac

1. Some Preliminary Thoughts

Scholarly writing on pedagogical topics always is a bit of a chimera: it is intended to address thoroughly non-theoretical issues, but it needs to be based on

* I thank the anonymous reviewers for the careful attention they gave this article and for their recommendations on further reading.

theoretical considerations. What follows is not the result of a scientific study, but is based on two decades of experience in teaching ancient languages in three countries, both online and in traditional classroom settings, both in secondary and in higher education. While my time spent teaching may give me a certain amount of objectivity, which is needed if my remarks are to be useful for others, teaching is an activity supremely dependent on the individual teacher: thus I do not attempt to claim neutrality, and will be using the first person throughout the following remarks.

Different individual points made here will seem trivial to people who have already spent time teaching and/or working on language pedagogy. Yet in my experience, even the most seasoned teachers regularly come across points we have not yet considered, or not considered from a specific perspective: and so this piece aims at being reasonably complete, and will include very basic as well as more advanced or specific considerations. Also, my aim is to provide impulses for a variety of courses and instructors. Maybe you work in traditional academia, are only rewarded for your research, not your teaching, and are thus looking for a few not overly time-consuming ways of making your teaching more appealing. Maybe you are someone in alt-ac creating a completely new course tailored perfectly to your and your students' needs. Maybe you are somewhere in between these two. I hope to offer something relevant for any of you.

I would like to begin by discussing the elements of ancient-language learning independently of the teaching medium, and then continue with the question of how one might best offer or move these individual elements online. I will also talk about why one might want to offer online learning opportunities – for ancient languages or anything else – in the first place. I will mention various websites and other existing online services; this has not been coordinated with any of them.[1]

Finally, I will operate on the assumption that the goal of learning an ancient language is to read texts in that language.[2] There are lively and productive movements promoting e.g. spoken Latin or Sanskrit, but those have their own dynamics and are thus not touched upon here.[3]

[1] I am not being paid to mention those that require a fee.
[2] On this point, see also Robin Meyer's paper in this volume.
[3] For a contrastive approach, see Dirk Schmidt's paper on Tibetan in this volume.

2. Ancient-Language Teaching: Content and Beyond

One can summarise the content elements of ancient-language learning quite easily. After an introduction to pronunciation conventions and writing system(s), we need to give an overview of word formation, introduce the syntactic rules for putting these word forms together to form sentences, whether regular or exceptional/idiomatic, and begin building up our students' vocabulary knowledge. At some point (and which point that is, is a matter of some discussion) we need to begin introducing our students to primary sources and give them the ability to read longer stretches of these in the original. I think of all the former elements as skills, and the latter, the ability to apply these skills in a systematic and sustained manner, as stamina.

Yet there is much beyond the mere contents, the tables of forms and lists of words, that is required for teaching. Time and space need to be made. The instructor needs to offer not just a sensible order for material to be presented (which is easy wherever good textbooks are already available), but also a helpful speed at which to proceed: fast enough to let students see they are making progress, not so fast that they are overwhelmed[4] by the daily or weekly requirements this course has of them.

Time and space are automatically set in any in-person degree course. Yet in any other situation – e.g. in courses that cannot be taught 'on the books' for lack of students, in independent studies, in courses aimed at learners not enrolled in a degree programme – you may well have to offer your students guidance on how to make time for the desired learning and what the right space for them might be. As for time, more is not always better! Consider encouraging your students not to go for the 'as long as it takes' method of completing tasks, which can easily lead to them feeling overwhelmed and thus giving up; instead suggest a specific period of time and ask them to do whatever tasks they can in that time. Whenever the aim is not to understand something, but to straightforwardly memorise, stress how much better they will learn when they aim for repeated short blocks of time (10 to 15 minutes at most, several times a week) rather than one long chunk on

[4] The importance of not overwhelming students – or better put, of ensuring student wellbeing – has long been recognised by teachers and pedagogical researchers; see e.g. Ashwin (2005) on Oxford tutorials; Blair *et al.* (2013) and Brinko (1993) on useful feedback, and Chen and Hoshower (2003) on evaluations.

one day.[5] When it comes to learning space, encourage them not to be prejudiced about what a 'good' learning environment is. Some need quiet, others need hubbub around them. Any learning environment that works for an individual is a good learning environment.[6]

A sensible order for introducing the material is easy to establish wherever a good textbook is already available. But maybe you are interested in creating (or required to create) your own materials. Whenever I made any comprehensive teaching resources, I first went low-tech. On small pieces of sturdy paper or cardboard (such as the back of a used-up writing pad), I wrote out all the formal language elements I needed my students to know about: sounds plus pronunciation and the various nominal and verbal paradigms, but also important syntactic rules and constructions, important exceptions/irregularities, sources of frequent confusion I wanted to address explicitly, or secondary elements such as guides to the most important reference literature. Then I asked myself what, in my experience, was needed most (always with an eye on which language elements would allow students to access original texts the soonest), what depended on what other prior knowledge, what was comparatively easy and could thus be introduced after something comparatively difficult, and so on. I arranged and re-arranged the scraps until a workable order emerged. Each time, the order I then wrote down only needed to undergo marginal changes.

But what level of detail do you want to go to? What do you want your students to have active knowledge of, what do you want them to just be able to look up? Do you want to properly explain everything right from the start, even the stuff so rare your students are likely to have forgotten all about it the first time they actually encounter it in a text? This makes sense if you will not have contact with your students after the initial introduction and thus need to send them off fully prepared for whatever study they may be engaging in in the future; and also if your students are interested more in the language itself rather than in reading specific texts. Or do you want to get them reading original texts as early as possible and know that you will be reading those texts with them, aware of what they know and what they do not know yet?[7] Then you might consider introducing just the basics, teaching your students the principles they need to transfer their knowledge to

[5] This is particularly useful if done just before sleeping; see e.g. Gais *et al.* (2006) or Backhaus *et al.* (2008).
[6] For more on such metacognitive considerations, see e.g. Vos and de Graaff (2004).
[7] On this question, see again Robin Meyer's paper in this volume.

other material (e.g. from understanding the processes that lead to the forms of one noun declension to those that lead to other, more complex ones), referring them to a grammar, and then presenting them with a text annotated by you in such a way that they can easily access all the information they need to read that text themselves.[8] This might be preferable and/or beneficial whenever your students are likely to come to you in order to read specific texts, rather than being primarily interested in the language and its structures.[9]

The nature of the resources you use or create for your course will depend greatly on the above questions. Do you primarily want to provide your students with a textbook, a resource from which to learn a language in the first place, or a grammar, a resource for looking up things you already have been introduced to, albeit cursorily? Many use these two terms interchangeably, and often grammars are used as textbooks, which usually is less than ideal for the learning process.[10]

Maybe you are like most people and have no interest in writing (or no time to write) a complete new textbook. In that case, writing a guide to an existing grammar, one that suggests an order in which to approach relevant material, together with a suggested amount of material to cover per week, may work very well. Writing exercises to help students internalise the material takes a fair amount of time; yet you might consider it, as it will be very helpful for your students. Depending on the set-up and the nature of your students, you can ask one student to work ahead each week and write the exercises for that week, for you to check and for the students to get credit for.[11]

In a degree-course setting, the speed at which we advance is often not determined by what is best for the learner, but by the number of weeks a semester has, and the number of hours a course is given every week. The former we as teachers never have control over; the latter may well have been decided on a

[8] As an example of this approach: with some minor variations, this is what *Reading the Buddha's Discourses in Pali* by Bhikkhu Bodhi does.

[9] And of course, no matter what you choose to aim at, you will want to avoid cognitive overload: guide your students through what at this point likely is a deluge of information available online. See e.g. Bawden and Robinson (2009) for a variety of thoughts on this, and Fani and Ghaemi (2011) on how this is relevant for teachers.

[10] As one prominent example of this, take Stenzler's Elementarbuch der Sanskrit-Sprache. First published in 1868, its 19th edition came out in 2003. It has long been the main Sanskrit 'textbook' in German academic environments, even though its main part is a straightforward reference grammar (that is complemented by a selection of sentences and readings with hardly any annotation, and a glossary).

[11] The same applies to the creation of flash cards: outsourcing this to students may be helpful for them, and save time for you.

general rather than a case-by-case basis, so that e.g. all introductory language courses are assigned the same number of contact hours. In an online environment, you may have the possibility of setting the pace that makes the most sense for the learner, rather than that which makes sense for an educational institution.[12] The goal in any truly student-oriented course is to set or suggest a speed that does show them they are making progress without overwhelming them with its demands.[13] Keep reminding them not to let perfect be the enemy of good: we only become truly familiar with language materials when we regularly apply them in a natural context (that is, when we start reading texts). My rule thus is that we aim for reasonable familiarity in the part of the course where the focus is on introducing new material; I suggest to students that they not worry about their knowledge having settled until we start reading texts and thus apply that formerly new material over and over and over. This is the more important the more freedom a specific course set-up gives students. Whenever students can easily diverge from the suggested speed/timeframe, there will be hesitation to continue on to the next unit/chapter until material has been properly mastered. But material can only be mastered after it has already been applied for a while, and so perfectionism may need to be gently reined in.

Whenever you have any freedom in deciding on any of the above factors, maybe the thoughts offered here will help you in making your decisions.

3. What's For Homework?

We learn by doing. We may think we know or understand something, but only when we are required to apply our knowledge – by doing grammar drills, translating practice sentences, trying our hand at understanding actual, original texts – do we discover where the gaps are.[14] For our students, regular written assignments thus are a crucial component in the process of learning something big and complex, such as a language.

[12] One of the goals of such an institution will certainly be to give students an education, but in systems where we try to offer this to as many as possible, the idea of 'fairness' often means that rules are the same for every person and every course, where certain courses might be much better taught differently, and sometimes accreditation – getting a degree – becomes as important as education.

[13] One could think of this as a temporal analogy to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development; see e.g. Zaretskii (2014) on the ZPD.

[14] This of course applies not just to doing exercises on given material, but also to teaching it to others.

But who has time to go through and correct all those assignments? I could make the time, but I do not want to. Instead, I do the following: I assign written homework. I tell my students the point is not to do it perfectly, but to show me they have given everything a good try. I give them the answer key, and then ask them to correct their own work, ideally in a different colour. This work they then hand in to me (in person or as a scan via whatever electronic system we use).

This has many advantages. Students go through several levels of learning: when they first hear about the material, when they then try their hand at the exercises, and when they go over their own work to find their mistakes and check what went wrong. They are constantly required to think actively, but there is no pressure to 'perform':[15] a reasonably complete assignment with various mistakes will not lower your grade. I need simply to look over each submitted assignment, rather than spending hours on going through everything in detail. In my classes, you pass just on regularly submitted homework; you only need to take the final exam if you want a good grade. Many students have told me this greatly helps them with their exam anxiety.

4. Testing, testing

Ask yourself if you want to administer tests, quizzes, exams or similar evaluative elements. On the one hand, exams can be a stress-producing evil necessitated by the requirement for degree courses to produce measurable, comparable, easily quantifiable results. On the other, if there is a gentle stream of assessments intended for students to see what they already know and identify gaps they can then focus on in their study, this may be a supportive rather than a stressor element of a course. From Alexander Angelov, Professor of Religion at the College of William and Mary, I learned the term 'celebration of learning'.[16]

[15] Research in this area commonly distinguishes between this kind of assessment (termed 'formative'), and the kind of 'summative' assessment consisting of end-of-semester or end-of-year exams, final projects etc.; on formative assessment, see e.g. Yorke (2003), Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) or Irons and Elkington (2008).

[16] Summative assessment typically exists not for the direct good of the students, but for that of the instructor working in a system that requires the production of a numerical grade (which can then be used to measure a student against their peers, make decisions on granting graduate funding, give an applicant a job etc.). Standard summative assessment is not designed to further learning. There are many ways of changing this, though; whichever of them one chooses, they should make the assessment have a point beyond just the determination of a grade, they should reduce pressure and encourage students

If you think of your assessments in that way, and especially if you create them in such a way that this is not just a label, your students may well start looking forward to them. And if you ever find that dread of the time needed to mark assessments is making you reluctant to set assessments in the first place: multiple-choice quizzes can be considerably more useful and interesting than the reputation that precedes them.[17]

5. Going Online

Let us say you have decided on what to offer your students. The question now is *how* best to do that. But as so often, much of the actual creation of the learning resources is likely to be fairly straightforward once you have thought about what it is that you want and/or need.

Face-to-face teaching often is seen as the gold standard of instruction at any level. In my experience, this only holds true for a part of what is involved in 'teaching'. Flip the classroom for all matters of straightforward **knowledge presentation**: that is, provide materials, whether just written or also with an audio or video component, that students are required to have gone through before they come to class; in class, you then answer their questions and guide them through all relevant exercises and activities. For you, this means needing much less time for your course in the long run: once you have prepared those materials, you just give them to each cohort of students. In my case, I sat down at some point and put all the formal contents of my introductory Sanskrit textbook into very simple videos in which I present the material the way I would if I stood at a board in front of my students. For these videos, one per chapter, I created very basic PowerPoint presentations and narrated the slides; PowerPoint lets you save such files in video format (I used mp4). Recording yourself gives you the chance to do several takes, which means there likely will be fewer *umms* and *aaahs* in your speech, and your explanations may end up being clearer. I ask my students to watch the relevant video before class, and even though the presentations are *very* low-tech and dry compared to instructional videos available on YouTube, TikTok or other social media, student feedback shows me they are greatly appreciated.

to experiment with what they know without fearing the automatic 'punishment' of a non-perfect grade. See e.g. Harlen *et al.* (2002) for further discussion.

[17] On this view, see e.g. Little *et al.* (2012) and also the literature quoted therein.

For your students, the availability of prepared/pre-recorded materials means they can access these whenever this is most convenient. Only some students work well in class at 8am or 6pm or right after lunch (or whenever a class may be scheduled). For online courses, not all students are necessarily in the same or in adjacent time zones. Outside full-time degree programs, many students fit their studies of interesting materials around jobs that are there to pay the bills. With prepared materials, they can read, listen or watch in one go or with breaks, with quick interruptions e.g. to look up background details, and with as much repetition as needed. Also, this allows you to use your actual time together with your students in much more interactive ways; more on that below.

For anything that needs to be memorised, you can provide your students with **electronic flash cards**. I personally use Quizlet (easy to gamify, structurally simple, free) and Brainscape (more 'serious' interface, offers spaced repetition, originally cost me a two-figure sum for a lifetime subscription, and is free for my students). A student at one point created Anki cards for all memorisable forms and words in my textbook.

Two elements need to be considered here: content and presentation. Think carefully about what information you want to convey that cannot be understood and that students shouldn't just know where to look up, but that they should have active command of: that is what needs to go onto your flash cards. Many different platforms for these have sprung up. Search for 'electronic flash cards' online and find one that is right for you: should it be free or do you have the budget to get an account? Should it be 'serious' or should its focus be on fun, lighthearted, gamified learning? Do you have students for whom this course is a priority, who would benefit from the work involved in creating those cards for themselves and their course mates? Then it will be useful if the platform allows for collaboration. Do you already have your material in e.g. an Excel spreadsheet? Then use a platform that lets you import that. If your student groups are likely to have unified learning needs, figure out what those are and focus your time and energy on creating materials on a platform that addresses those exact needs. If you have a diverse group of students, consider spreading your offerings across a variety of platforms.

As soon as you go beyond print materials, it is easy to create units of learning materials that foster the 'short and often' approach to memorisation. Even for, say, the learning vocabulary in one unit, consider creating several sets of flash

cards that can each be mastered within a quarter of an hour (and then add a cumulative set for each unit).

Finally, it may be a good idea to have some kind of VLE or **virtual learning environment** – a starting place from which all the resources you offer can be accessed. If you are employed at a college or university, they may already have one, such as Blackboard, Canvas or Moodle. There are commercial and open-source VLEs; if your goal is to make money with your course, the former may make things easier for you. Using your employer's VLE means only students at your institution can access what you put up. This is good when you need to share copyrighted material with a group; in most other situations, having something that is openly accessible may well be better. Especially if you teach something unlikely to make people rich, you will probably attract students from universities that have already cut your subject or have never offered it,[18] and also people who studied something that lets them pay the bills and who are now using their free time to learn what they have always wanted to learn.

But a VLE need not be something marketed as a VLE. A website also is a possibility. Go for a simple, clear layout and use the site to link to your flash cards, your videos, your audio, your live sessions, to anything not created by you that you nevertheless want to point your students to. Offering downloadable files of any format also is a possibility, but may require higher bandwidth and thus make the running costs of your site more expensive; so it may be better to host your files on one of the many sites where this can be done for free.[19]

Maybe the time and cost involved in having a website of your own is not appealing, and what you offer can be summed up in a small number of links and relatively small actual documents (that you can for whatever reason not make accessible on the internet but need to pass on individually, such as exercise keys)? Just having a standard, pre-formulated email that you forward to anyone interested in your materials can be plenty. Mention the existence of this summary email on your departmental profile, if you have one, or in your email signature; mention it on social media.

[18] On this point, see again Robin Meyer's paper in this volume.
[19] Pages like academia.edu, Researchgate, Github or also Google Sites are just a few among the many possibilities here.

6. Going Live

In my experience, these various online components *can* be used on their own; but for overall teaching provision to truly be good, they should to be accompanied by actual **contact time**. It does not matter so much whether the space you then share is physical or virtual. Having made the knowledge-presentation part asynchronous, use your time together to have your students ask all their questions about that week's material. Ask them questions about it to check they have understood the main points or tricky details. If the group size allows it, do exercises (drills, readings, etc.) together. Maybe consider giving a brief overview of the new material at the start so that those who were not able to prepare in a given week still can profit from (and are thus more likely to attend) the in-person class.

Yes, this may backfire: as much flak as 'traditional', frontal *ex cathedra* teaching may get, some students *want* to just come in and consume whatever you tell them. If your course is a requirement for a degree, depending on this kind of student involvement may not be ideal. Especially the less self-assured students may not want to have to answer questions in class; they have been taught that making mistakes in front of others, in front of *you*, is a sign of weakness. So, start celebrating mistakes. So often, a 'mistake' merely is a wrong turn after a lot of thinking that has gone in the right direction. Show your students what they got right, and where they went wrong, and why.[20] Is the mistake due to a train of thought gone astray, or due to a gap in knowledge? What similar or adjacent topic did they confuse the topic at hand with? What other kinds of knowledge (e.g. of another language) may have interfered? Is this a common mistake? If so, say that, and thank the student for 'taking one for the team', because many others likely would have made the same mistake. The classroom is not a space for performing, but for learning, and making mistakes is one of *the* best ways to learn.

Also, do not just give your students the right answer; show them how *they* can arrive at it. Normalise admitting to ignorance. I thank my students when they ask me something I do not know the answer to, because they are helping *me* learn;

[20] The ability to identify the origins of or reasons for mistakes is something a teacher acquires over time. They differ among the various constituent groups your students may come from. That this important skill can only be acquired over time and with practice is yet another reason why the internationally common practice of regularly giving introductory language teaching to graduate students, in order for them to gain their *first* teaching experience, is problematic.

and then I show them how I would go about finding the answer to that specific question. What can we know, and how? What counts as a source in our field, as 'data'? That is so important far beyond the reaches of any individual class.

So: if you are teaching in an environment where students are present because they do want to learn (and I think this usually is the case when the topic of study is an ancient language, knowledge that usually is neither societally prestigious nor likely to make you rich), flipping the classroom in all matters of knowledge transfer, as described above, may be just what you need.

7. Two Examples

To perhaps offer more inspiration, below are two concrete examples of successful online learning environments – one for profit, one not.

Yogic Studies (YS) is an alt-ac platform offering lecture classes, reading seminars and language courses on a variety of South Asian topics (going far beyond yoga at this point). YS offers a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning in its courses (an online "flipped classroom"), with combinations of both pre-recorded and live lectures and discussions. In the end, everything is recorded, to accommodate learners across time zones and hemispheres. It uses Kajabi as its overall VLE: each course offering has its dedicated page from which students can access everything they have subscribed to, and thus log on to the live sessions, watch provided recordings, download written materials, or follow links to all relevant materials provided externally, e.g. by the individual instructors. Kajabi also offers the possibility of automatically graded multiple-choice tests and exams, which instructors can use, or not, in whatever way they deem best. To allow students to communicate amongst themselves, YS uses Circle to provide a communication forum. Live sessions are recorded using Zoom and made available in perpetuity via the Kajabi course pages. This setup, adapted and improved over the course of several years, has allowed for the creation of a course programme that rivals that of top universities but can be offered at a fraction of the cost for the student.

I personally realised fairly soon after my Sanskrit textbook came out in 2017 that the majority of anglophones who learn Sanskrit do not do so within a formal learning environment or degree course. I thus set up a complete and free course for anyone to access from anywhere. To replace the knowledge presentation

component of a traditional class, I recorded simple videos (see above), which I made freely accessible on YouTube. To allow students to ask questions, I started a Facebook group.[21] For all components that need to be memorised, I created flash cards on Quizlet and Brainscape. As a unified starting point from which to link to all materials I provide (and others that I consider useful and that are freely available online), I had a website made. To offer a pathway through all these materials and suggest a suitable speed, I set up annual Google groups. Starting once a year, I send around simple weekly emails that a) specify the material to be covered that week, b) list and link to the videos, flash cards, etc. I created to help students with that material, and c) offer a simple quiz on the preceding week's material. Setting this up, and especially creating the videos, cost me a fair amount of time, but since this has been in place, I have not only had several hundred students go through the course, I also have the perfect learning environment to complement my in-person classes. Finally, I have a standard email with the key to the exercises in my textbook, a list of errata, and basic information on my courses (the free one just described and the fee-paying ones with contact time).

My introductory course makes up the core of my online offers; but incorporating the resources for my 2021 Sanskrit reader once that had come out was simple: I could simply add the flash cards for the learning vocab that forms part of the reader to my Brainscape account, without any further costs.[22]

8. That All Sounds Great, But Who Has Time For This?

Following the various steps I have outlined above probably takes much more time than anyone fully employed is likely to have. Academia does as a rule not value time and resources spent on developing and improving our teaching. Yet in a traditional academic environment, a full online set-up also is not required. You can create a very useful structure for an independent study course simply by

[21] This is not going well. The group has grown quite big over the years, and I suspect many feel hesitant to ask questions – and thus admit to ignorance – in front of a large anonymous audience. I am thus trying to identify an alternative forum that is (a) big enough so students can help each other, but not too big to have the effect just described, (b) free of charge, and (c) easy to moderate for me.

[22] The reader contains selections from six different Sanskrit texts, all with vocabulary and grammar annotations on the same page as the text they refer to. This central part is preceded by an overview of the main syntactic difficulties that intermediate students reading longer stretches of Sanskrit for the first time encounter, and followed by transliterations and a literal translation of all texts, as well as a 900-word learning vocabulary, split into basic and intermediate.

naming a good textbook and offering a timeline that students are suggested to follow. Then offer a Q&A hour maybe once every other week. If a course you teach requires memorisation of something, creating electronic flash cards in useful-sized batches is free on many platforms and does not take a lot of time. You can reduce that time even further by involving current or past students in the creation process. They learn how to think about teaching, and entering the material always helps in the memorisation process. Or maybe consider making a single, simple video on a subject you find yourself being asked about/coming back to repeatedly in class. Putting it on YouTube is free; you can decide whether the video is visible just to the people you give the link to, or to the internet as a whole. No need to make it fancy. And maybe at some other point you will do this again, and thus slowly build up something you may someday wish to make more systematic. Try it, it's fun! And if you make it publically available online, it may well serve as part of your institution's outreach.

9. And Finally, a Plea.

Most ancient languages are taught within small academic units in the Arts and Humanities. Especially when the economy is not that great, and especially in systems where tuition fees are steadily rising, these subjects lose students and are often forced to justify their continued existence.

This does not have to be like that. The treasures, wisdom, beauty, questions, ideas we have to offer, that we can give our students access to by teaching them the languages in which they are expressed, are an embarrassment of riches. Yes, learning a language is hard, because it requires commitment. Do not aim for this mystic concept of language 'mastery'. Languages are beautiful in themselves, of course, but for most disciplines, they mainly are a tool. What do your students want to use this tool for? Give them an overview of what they will need to know, break this down into its components, and show them where they can find the information they do not actively know yet. There is no need to already have mastered a language in order to start working with it intelligently and productively.

Over the past few years, I have been working in a system where the main purpose of a small arts or humanities subject is seen as training the next generation of researchers in that subject. I find this incredibly sad. Not only is it

the best way to make sure we become obsolete and are shut down sooner rather than later, it also means we are not good representatives of our disciplines. Yes, academic research in non-monetisable fields can only be done at certain institutions, and we need to make sure that these places remain academically rigorous, that they are involved in actual scholarship. But at the same time, if we limit engagement with our materials to 'the experts', we destroy the reason why those fields exist in the first place. Teaching an academic discipline means imparting certain knowledge; but it also means using this knowledge to give students information literacy. In a world flooded with information, we need information-literate citizens to keep liberal democracies working. In a world where everything is seen as new and unprecedented (and much is), the perspectives we can gain by studying ancient cultures and ancient thought are more valuable than ever. The view that 'anyone can teach (insert name of language basic to the study of your discipline)' is not only incorrect, it is dangerous, as it deprives our disciplines of their basis. By taking this attitude, we shirk our duties as good academic citizens.

Offering a language course online, to the broader world, in as much or as little detail as you have the time and money for, is one very good way of not just supporting your discipline, but also of properly honouring the knowledge that has been guarded and fostered by so many of us all these centuries.

Some links:

- cambridge-sanskrit.org (the website uniting the resources for my introductory language textbook)
- youtube.com/@study_sanskrit (my YouTube channel)
- yogicstudies.com (a platform offering university-level, student-friendly courses online)
- quizlet.com, brainscape.com, anki.com (providers of online flashcards)
- kajabi.com (a V(irtual) L(earning) E(nvironment))

References

Ashwin, P. (2005). Variation in students' experiences of the 'Oxford tutorial'. *Higher Education*, 50(4), 631–644.

Backhaus, J., Hoeckesfeld, R., Born, J., Hohagen, F., & Junghanns, K. (2008). Immediate as well as delayed post learning sleep but not wakefulness enhances declarative memory consolidation in children. *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*, 89(1), 76–80.

Bawden, D., & Robinson, L. (2009). The dark side of information: overload, anxiety and other paradoxes and pathologies. *Journal of Information Science*, 35(2), 180–191.

Bhikkhu Bodhi (2020) *Reading the Buddha's Discourses in Pali: A Practical Guide to the Language of the Ancient Buddhist Canon*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.

Blair, A., Curtis, S., Goodwin, M., & Shields, S. (2013). What feedback do students want?. *Politics*, 33(1), 66–79.

Brinko, K. T. (1993). The practice of giving feedback to improve teaching: What is effective?. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 64(5), 574–593.

Chen, Y., & Hoshower, L. B. (2003). Student evaluation of teaching effectiveness: An assessment of student perception and motivation. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28(1), 71–88.

Fani, T. and Ghaemi, F. (2011) Implications of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in Teacher Education: ZPTD and Self-scaffolding. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 1549–1554.

Gais, S., Lucas, B., & Born, J. (2006). Sleep after learning aids memory recall. *Learning & Memory*, 13(3), 259–262.

Harlen, W., Crick, R. D., Broadfoot, P., Daugherty, R., Gardner, J., James, M., & Stobart, G. (2002). *A systematic review of the impact of summative assessment and tests on students' motivation for learning* (Research Evidence in Education Library 1). London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.

Irons, A., & Elkington, S. (2021). *Enhancing learning through formative assessment and feedback*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Little, J. L., Bjork, E. L., Bjork, R. A., & Angello, G. (2012). Multiple-choice tests exonerated, at least of some charges: Fostering test-induced learning and avoiding test-induced forgetting. *Psychological Science*, 23(11), 1337–1344.

Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 199–218.

Vos, H., & de Graaff, E. (2004). Developing metacognition: a basis for active learning. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 29(4), 543–548.

Yorke, M. (2003). Formative assessment in higher education: Moves towards theory and the enhancement of pedagogic practice. *Higher education*, 45, 477–501.

Zaretskii, V. K. (2009). The zone of proximal development: What Vygotsky did not have time to write. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, 47(6), 70–93.

THE PEDAGOGICAL *TIPIṬAKA*: OER & THE THREE BASKETS OF ANCIENT LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Todd B. KRAUSE; Hans C. BOAS; Danny LAW
University of Texas at Austin
bobtodd@utexas.edu; hcb@mail.utexas.edu; dannylaw@austin.utexas.edu

Abstract:

Ancient languages present a unique teaching challenge: for spoken languages, common pedagogy recommends engaging students via dialogue; for ancient languages, no speakers survive with whom to practise. This paper highlights how the Linguistics Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin has approached this challenge by creating the Early Indo-European OnLine (EIEOL) collection, an online educational resource whose lesson series present early languages directly through original, unsimplified ancient texts. Currently accessed by over 20,000 users per month, EIEOL spans 18 languages, from Greek and Latin to Old Church Slavonic, Sanskrit, and other important languages of ancient Asia such as Hittite, Classical Armenian, Avestan, and Tocharian. Each series presents extensively annotated excerpts of original texts in the target language, with accompanying modules explaining grammar and context. The text-centred approach affords learners a direct path to understanding that suits a variety of experience levels and minimises the conceptual grammatical apparatus necessary to begin interpreting original texts. This format fosters theoretical flexibility, adaptable to different approaches and grammatical descriptions of ancient languages. It is also useful for languages whose grammatical structures have shifted dramatically over their history, like Tocharian, or remain hotly debated or under-described by experts. Finally, it facilitates applications to typologically diverse languages and language families, with early Mesoamerican, Semitic, and Sino-Tibetan language series already under development. The EIEOL infrastructure therefore provides a robust platform for free, text-centred, self-paced introductions to ancient languages from a variety of language families.

Keywords: Sanskrit, Tocharian, Chinese, Classical Chinese, Digital Humanities, Language Pedagogy, OER, MVC, Web Design, Historical Linguistics

1. Introduction

Open educational resources (OERs) for ancient language study, particularly in an online context, exhibit both a wealth of innovative pedagogical insights and a simultaneous lack of clarity as to purpose or goals. Online pedagogy for modern languages naturally shares a clarity of purpose, namely communication. The generally larger pool of students and available resources leads to a "more is more" approach – more texts, more audio, more video, more role-playing – that seeks to emulate an immersive linguistic and cultural experience as OERs blend with hybrid learning (cf. Blyth 2012). A similar approach for ancient language instruction, however, quickly runs up against barriers: adding "more" encounters obstacles in the form of limited corpora, and goals of faithfulness to "the original" often disincentivise creation of "new" ancient language material.[1] Moreover, communication no longer represents an obvious goal: some ancient languages enjoy large corpora and have maintained a traditional scholarly or liturgical role even as the spoken language has undergone language death,[2] while others possess more limited or fragmentary corpora that provide little clear guidance to the "conversational" patterns necessary to support an immersive, communicative approach. In such instances, goals can shift to accurate evaluation and detailed understanding of unaltered original documents. How then should OERs approach ancient languages to foster such detailed understanding?

Of course, the particular difficulties of ancient language pedagogy far predate online OERs. We should therefore ask: should online OERs for ancient languages simply recapitulate their offline forebears? If so, which methodologies should they recapitulate? Is there a one-size-fits-all solution to deciding on online presentation formats? Any answer to such questions must simultaneously address the issue of how to measure the success of any given online methodology; however, this caveat likewise remains valid, though unevenly or infrequently applied, for related offline methodologies.[3] Fundamental motivations for any particular online design should probably

[1] Cf., e.g., Köntges *et al.* (2017) for approaches to OERs in the context of Classical Latin and Greek, and Bird *et al.* (2022) for approaches to classical topics more broadly.
[2] For example, Latin has maintained a continuous, though restricted, spoken tradition over the centuries. With the advent of social media connecting disparate practitioners, this has seen a resurgence in recent years. The same holds true to varying degrees for Classical Greek and Sanskrit (Krause 2019).
[3] Cf. e.g. Sato & Loewen (2019) for efforts to improve evidentiary support for a variety of pedagogical techniques.

include some basic criteria, e.g. clarity of exposition, flexibility of deployment, adaptability to different learning styles, inclusivity and ease of access, among others.

The Linguistics Research Center (LRC)[4] at the University of Texas at Austin has been experimenting with how to present ancient languages online to a general audience since the early days of the Internet. Over the last two decades, the LRC has continued to expand the Early Indo-European OnLine (EIEOL)[5] collection of lesson series, providing introductions to ancient languages whose speakers spanned most of Europe as well as parts of the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. These lesson series chose a format derived from early studies of language acquisition carried out by researchers in linguistics and language pedagogy (Lehmann 2003).

This approach emerged in a period of early use of the Internet as an academic space. As web design frameworks have matured over the years, however, such design decisions have needed to be revisited. While EIEOL lesson series have retained the basic features of the original format, the last several years have seen upgrades to the underlying website production system that allow for more flexible deployment of the underlying content. Now incorporating the popular model-view-controller (MVC) architecture over an underlying relational database, the website architecture supports deployment for a range of site configurations and pedagogically oriented interfaces.[6] This increased flexibility allows us to revisit the question of what viable options exist for pedagogically oriented presentations of ancient languages in the context of online language resources, and whether those options can be adapted and optimised for particular languages and language learning traditions.

Below we investigate this question by outlining three 'baskets' (Pali: *tipiṭaka*, the term used for the traditional threefold division of early Buddhist liturgy) of pedagogical approaches to teaching ancient languages through written materials. We exemplify these approaches by considering three distinctive methods of

[4] https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/lrc/
[5] https://lrc.la.utexas.edu/eieol
[6] The change of infrastructure initially served to support lesson creation. Multiple authors can now collaborate simultaneously on a lesson series in a fully online environment similar to, though somewhat simpler than, Google Drive. Moreover, the lesson series can now be edited, updated, published, and maintained without explicit recompilation by the webmaster, ensuring users continually have access to the most up-to-date versions of the online materials. This same infrastructure now allows us to offer responsive design on the user side.

instruction that are common for three ancient languages of Asia, namely Sanskrit, Tocharian, and Chinese.

2. Pedagogical approaches

The three 'baskets' of common approaches to ancient language pedagogy that we explore here could be termed *theoretical*, *historical*, and *commentarial*. To make these classifications more concrete, we have chosen three exemplars, languages whose traditional pedagogies exemplify each of these three approaches: Sanskrit, Tocharian, and Classical Chinese. We discuss these exemplars, and the approaches they typify, in greater detail below with respect to 1) the corpus of primary texts available for study and 2) the common pedagogical approaches to the grammar of the language.

Certainly, any individual scholar or student may have a personal preference for the particular pedagogical approach they find most effective for teaching or learning a particular language, or languages in general. Careful studies of L2 acquisition might further support the validity of such preferences. But through consideration of the historical developments and cultural contexts in which certain languages have been studied, we can appreciate the origins of certain pedagogical approaches and their adequacy or appropriateness for the task of transmitting knowledge of particular languages at particular times. The description below aims to illuminate aspects of the origins of the respective pedagogical approaches, motivating a discussion of online resource design that seeks to preserve such approaches where traditional, and expand them where appropriate.

2.1 Sanskrit

2.1.1 Corpus

Sanskrit, an ancient language of India, comprises a vast textual corpus. This corpus includes numerous manuscripts which, due to the deleterious effects of harsh heat and humidity upon perishable palm-leaf and birch-bark pages, frequently date only to the middle of the second millennium. However, their contents often exhibit linguistic features that clearly predate the manuscripts by several centuries or even millennia. In the case of the Vedic literature, scholars

believe that portions of the text, preserved through a rigorous process of oral recitation and memorisation, date back to the latter part of the second millennium BCE (Jamison 2008a). During the period between this dawn of identifiable Vedic Sanskrit composition and the earliest Vedic manuscripts of roughly the 1100s CE (Witzel & Wu 2018), Sanskrit remained in continuous use, even though at some point, perhaps as early as the middle of the first millennium BCE with the compilation of Pāṇini's exhaustive Sanskrit grammar, the language itself underwent language death: the Vedic language ceased to be spoken as a native tongue and persisted primarily as a liturgical language, while the version of Sanskrit outlined by Pāṇini remained, not as a mother tongue, but as a scholarly *lingua franca*.

Nevertheless, this phase of scholarly and literary use of Sanskrit gave rise to a vast literature that spans a wide range of genres: epic poetry; dramatic plays; fables; mathematical, astrological, and astronomical treatises; grammatical explications; philosophical explorations; legal codes; and medical texts, to name but a few. While many of these genres serve a more academic or scholarly purpose, some aim to treat everyday topics. This is especially true of the works of drama and of the fables (cf., e.g. Johnson 1847; Kāle 1961). Though interspersed with poetic elements and artistic flourishes, these works on occasion also depict characters speaking plainly and in simple terms. That is, the Sanskrit corpus over the centuries shows a variety of registers that illustrate a language used by kings, courtiers, priests, and scholars that could also accommodate more colloquial needs. The dramas provide a particularly interesting venue for observing the sociolinguistic dynamics of the period: attendants of, and servants to, characters of a higher social stratum would themselves often not speak in Sanskrit, but in the so-called dramatic Prakrits, their own contemporaneous regional Middle Indic languages, which themselves developed into literary languages (Kāle 1961; Woolner 1917). Commentaries on these works then rendered these utterances *back* into Sanskrit for those unfamiliar with that particular popular language (Kāle 1961).

While we must not overlook the fact that these dramatic Prakrits represent "common speech" only as rendered through the lens of a courtly composer, the mix of languages in a given dramatic scene, and the re-rendering of common speech into the courtly medium of Sanskrit, testify to the wide range of everyday functions that Sanskrit aimed to serve. At the same time, such dramatic works

illustrate the linguistic milieu of Sanskrit within India during the Middle Indic period (Woolner 1917). Though these local popular languages can often trace their linguistic heritage to the language of the Vedic period and common parent of this period's scholarly Sanskrit, they had undergone such transformation over the intervening centuries that they are often practically unintelligible to a speaker only familiar with Sanskrit. Conversely, such a variety of languages across regions simultaneously supported the utility of Sanskrit as a courtly, administrative, and literary medium of communication for ministers, bureaucrats, and artists from different regions and backgrounds.

2.1.2 Pedagogy

Scholars occasionally argue that Pāṇini's codification of the grammatical system of the Vedic language effectively "froze" Sanskrit because, roughly speaking, the importance of the language in its religious function tended to support a perspective by which Pāṇini's originally descriptive grammar came to be viewed as prescriptive. While perhaps only a simplification of the actual processes involved, the subsequent period occasioned a divergence between a refined stratum of educated and liturgical Sanskrit and the more practical language by which speakers conducted matters of everyday life (Woolner 1917; Jamison 2008b). In this bifurcated or diglossic state, the scholarly stratum of Sanskrit nevertheless evolved, and its speakers remained attuned to its grammatical structure at each stage. Sanskrit maintains a long tradition of incisive commentary ranging over a variety of grammatical topics, though with particular acuity in matters of phonology and morphology. Such commentary dates back to the immediately post-Vedic period, contemporaneous and in conversation with a parallel scholarly and religious spoken tradition (Staal 1972).

As the understanding of Sanskrit made its way into the educated circles of Europe, at the end of the 1700s and the early decades of the 1800s, the native tradition of a top-down, theoretical approach to the language influenced the structure of instructional treatises on the language in Europe itself, where Latin and sometimes Greek had come to fill a similar role among the most formally educated stratum of the continent's population (Staal 1972). We see in initial works by Monier-Williams and Benfey in the early decades of the 1800s (over several editions of their treatises) the beginnings of the later trend to write a scientific descriptive grammar of the Sanskrit language, and then accompany this

with a chrestomathy or reader containing text selections by which to practise the principles learned and familiarise oneself with the range of genres encountered in Sanskrit literature (Monier-Williams 1864; Benfey 1852, 1853).

These works displayed an arrangement typical of the period: they begin with a treatment of the sound system, discuss sound rules in the context of internal and external sandhi, and from there move on to treating nominal and adjectival morphology, pronominal morphology, verbal morphology, and so on. That is, they break down the morphology of the language by word class and discuss one class at a time, in relative isolation from other word classes. These works relegate syntax to a fairly short chapter toward the end. Such placement and the general sparseness of the syntactic discussions were influenced on the one hand by Sanskrit's relatively ornate morphology and its expression of grammatical relationships, and on the other hand by the underlying assumption that Sanskrit syntax was less ornate, or more straightforward, than that of the Latin and Greek with which the authors themselves and their assumed readers were already familiar (cf., e.g. Delbrück 1976; Speijer 1886).

This same division of content also made its way across the Atlantic, finding perhaps its most canonical expression in Whitney's *Sanskrit Grammar* (Whitney 1889). This too served as what we might call a reference grammar: a thorough description of the overall grammar of the language, with discussion broken down into somewhat logically self-contained sections based on grammatical categories. This text, however, made no pretence of including reading selections, a task which ultimately fell to Charles Rockwell Lanman, whose Sanskrit reader forms the necessary pedagogical companion to Whitney's grammar (Lanman 1884). Lanman's reader begins with numerous text selections from a range of genres, parallel to the chrestomathies of Europe (e.g. Lassen 1865). It follows these selections with an erudite glossary, similar to Benfey's own, listing not only the individual words encountered in the readings, but frequently the associated etymological cognates from classical languages like Greek and Latin.

Shortly thereafter a different pedagogical approach emerged. Based on notes by Georg Bühler already in circulation in Europe by the early 1880s, Edward Delavan Perry issued his famous *A Sanskrit Primer*, which provides a helpful hand in walking students through Whitney's comprehensive grammar (Perry 1885). Rather than throwing students "into the deep end" with original texts and simple references to relevant paragraphs of Whitney's grammar, Perry adopts a

more supportive approach: he divides the grammar into lessons, each lesson centred on certain essential points of grammar (always referring back to Whitney) and accompanied by practice sentences or simplified passages with attendant vocabulary to gradually build up familiarity with grammatical constructs and foundational terminology. Such a trend was already underway in Europe by the 1870s, where terse summaries of the essentials of Sanskrit grammar, like Stenzler's, already included "lessons" or "practice examples" (*Übungsbeispiele*) at the end of the books; these consisted of a proposed list of paragraphs to consult in the grammar, coupled with some simple sentences for illustration (Stenzler & Pischel 2016). However, works like Perry's finally inverted this structure, making the lessons and exercises the essential backbone of the book. With this restructuring of pedagogical approaches, Perry's work positioned itself as a precursor to reading unsimplified texts like those in Lanman's reader, and to a more detailed study of the grammar through references like Whitney.

Perry's remains the common approach to Sanskrit study in the West to this day. Naturally, the education systems have changed around these works, as has student preparation. Perry could assume his students' familiarity with the grammar of Latin, and as a consequence his explanations of case functions and features like locative absolutes often appear as one or two terse lines calling students' attention to parallel features of Latin grammar. Contemporary treatments, such as Ruppel's, cannot assume the same student preparation and therefore devote more time to introducing and teaching the structures of the language (Ruppel 2017, 2021). Nevertheless, the basic lesson format, with grammar rules followed by vocabulary, exercises, and simplified excerpts to practise the newly acquired features, remains largely intact. Moreover, the aptness of this approach derives less from modern assessments of pedagogical methodology, and more from its clear lineage in a rules-based approach to understanding the language, codified first in an indigenous oral tradition and later transferred to written presentations allowing wider diffusion.

2.2 Tocharian

2.2.1 Corpus

Modern scholarly access to Tocharian differs radically from that of Sanskrit. The extant Tocharian corpus is relatively small (Pinault 1992; Malzahn 2007,

2017; Peyrot 2008). It consists chiefly of written fragments found in caves and monastic retreats scattered throughout the Tarim Basin on the northern arm of the Silk Road in the Xinjiang province of modern China. The documents encountered early in the history of Tocharian decipherment preserved almost exclusively Buddhist religious texts: these now contain both canonical literature, such as texts on monastic discipline and religious philosophy and metaphysics; as well as para-canonical texts including Buddhist styles of poetry, narrative, and drama. Beyond this religious core, technical genres include calendrical material, texts on magic and divination, grammatical treatises and word lists. More personal documents include confessions, donations, blessings, and a love poem. The corpus, however, comprises fewer than 15,000 small fragments often consisting of only a few lines each (Malzahn 2018). This complicates, though by no means precludes, scholars' ability to draw conclusions about the characteristics of extended narrative and dialogue beyond these written styles (Peyrot 2008, Malzahn 2017).

The Tocharian-speaking communities evidently formed a crucial link in the transmission of Buddhism from northern India to Central Asia and farther on to China and the rest of East Asia. This would help explain why the Tocharian documents frequently appear in monastic libraries near other Buddhist texts in a variety of regional languages. Some texts – mostly cave graffiti, monastic records, and receipts – contain remnants of writings composed originally in Tocharian. But the majority comprise Buddhist texts translated into Tocharian from neighbouring languages, most often Sanskrit. The fact that we often have versions of these same Buddhist texts preserved in a language other than Tocharian allows scholars to identify fragments as part of one or another Buddhist treatise, and to begin the painstaking process of ordering them into a patchwork representation of a presumably continuous Tocharian text. The Tocharian corpus is rounded out by a relatively small collection of border passes: documents written on wood and carried by merchants, denoting the wares transported in desert caravans traversing the contemporary regional powers of Central and East Asia.

2.2.2 Pedagogy

The early Tocharian finds harken back to European expeditions to Central Asia in the late 1800s (Pinault 1992). Written in a form of the Brahmi script in common use across a wide swathe of Central Asia, these texts revealed their

importance in the following years, as scholars sifting carefully through the fragments realised they recorded languages that were altogether different from the texts written in Middle Persian, Sogdian, Khotanese, and other Iranian languages.

Sieg and Siegling were among the first to systematise the study of the language itself and the translation of the early fragments (Sieg *et al.* 1931). Their initial grammar falls naturally in line with the method of engagement with the texts up to that point: the authors carefully described the sound system and morphology of the language as they encountered it, dividing the grammatical exposition into logical segments corresponding to the various principal parts of speech. This parallels the style of Monier-Williams, Benfey, and Whitney in describing the grammar of Sanskrit, i.e. a reference grammar. Over the course of this process, scholars came to realise that the fragments preserved two distinct but related languages, termed Tocharian A and B (Poucha 1955, 1956). Sieg and Siegling's early grammatical description and translations focused on Tocharian A, describing Tocharian B only in certain points of contrast. Soon, however, scholars such as Krause focused more closely on the description of specific features of Tocharian B (Krause 1952). After a short treatise on the structure of verbs in Tocharian B, Krause collaborated with Thomas on the production of the *Tocharisches Elementarbuch* (Krause & Thomas 1960, 1964). This two-volume work is reminiscent of Benfey's work on Sanskrit: the first volume comprised a reference grammar, the second a chrestomathy with unsimplified reading selections and a glossary. In one and the same work they treated the two languages simultaneously. But importantly, they also provided a historical derivation of the phonology and morphology, demonstrating the relationships to other languages of the Indo-European family. Inasmuch as the language was still in the process of being understood, so was its grammar, and to justify these new interpretations the scholars relied on comparisons to other Indo-European languages. In this way the mode of explication took on a slightly different character from many of the Sanskrit treatises discussed above, less explaining the language and more deriving it from its historical origins.

The *Elementarbuch* still remains the standard reference for Tocharian A and B. There have been notable pedagogical advancements beyond the historical reference grammar with chrestomathy, in particular with Pinault's *Chrestomathie tokharienne* (Pinault 2008). This work nevertheless begins with a historically

oriented reference grammar to introduce the workings of the language. But rather than following the exposition with text selections and a separate glossary, Pinault's introduction provides unsimplified text selections with word-by-word glosses, grammatical and historical notes, and a continuous translation. This greatly simplifies the student's work in correlating Tocharian structures with their meaning in translation, but it still physically and logically separates reading texts from learning the associated grammar.

Only recently has Tocharian benefitted from an introduction in the style of Perry's *Sanskrit Primer*: Michael Weiss's *Kuśiññe Kantwo: Elementary Lessons in Tocharian B, with Exercises, Vocabulary, and Notes on Historical Grammar* (2022). As the title suggests, the work builds up the grammar bit by bit for the student, providing examples and practice readings in each chapter. Thus the trajectory of introductions to the Tocharian languages seems to parallel that of Sanskrit, though it remains at a very different stage along the path. Moreover, Sanskrit grammatical exposition can trace a direct line back to a native tradition with which it has maintained contact. Tocharian does not draw on such a tradition, and the scholarly framework of viewing the language through its historical development and relation to other Indo-European languages remains accessible everywhere within Weiss's introduction. This historical mode of presentation is by no means necessary; but its use seems highly appropriate for teaching a language whose grammar scholars continue to elucidate and whose texts have traditionally been deciphered with reference to other languages in its historical and social environs.

2.3 Chinese

2.3.1 Corpus

As with Sanskrit, the Chinese corpus is quite extensive and encompasses a roughly similar span of time, from a millennium or more BCE to roughly the 14th or 15th century CE by a conservative estimate (Hartman 1998; Peyraube 1999). The texts exhibit a wide range of genres, including histories, poetry and song, military treatises, philosophical discourses, didactic materials, diplomatic and administrative documents, dramatic and fictional works, among others. The earliest remnants of writing appear as inscriptions on bones or bronze, but early

writing also appears in artwork, craftwork, and in literary and administrative contexts on varied and refined paper products.

As in India and elsewhere, the language tied to this extensive collection of texts largely served a highly educated stratum of society involved in, closely allied to, or supported by the functioning of government over successive dynasties (Hartman 1998). The writing system itself encapsulates the profound level of education needed to engage with this literature over its long history. Specifically, the system stands on a roughly logographic foundation that has expanded and adapted itself to new needs and contexts over centuries. Though it originally depicted words with small pictures, it later expanded by adapting existing pictures to represent homonyms, or near-homonyms, even of dramatically different meanings. Over time, as curves shifted to angled corners, the characters slowly became divorced from the original visual depictions of worldly objects to a more abstract, linguistically-attuned symbology. Mastery of this system became a major focus of education in and of itself, reinforcing the role of the classical language in serving a highly educated stratum of society (Wieger 1965; Qiu 2000; Dong 2020).

2.3.2 Pedagogy

While the Chinese corpus exhibits a vast concurrent tradition of linguistic commentary, its character differs quite substantially from the Indic tradition, largely by virtue of its focus on the specifics of the writing system (Qiu 2000). A central strain of this linguistic commentary lies in broadly lexicographical works compiled by numerous scholars as the Chinese corpus expanded and evolved (Yong & Peng 2008). Some early references suggest that dictionaries had already begun to appear by roughly 800 BCE (Hartman 1998; Mair 1998). These lexicographical works fall into three main categories.

Early dictionaries fall into the *xùngǔ* (訓詁, "exegesis" or "philology") category (Mair 1998). They principally ordered elements semantically, e.g. collecting terminology for kinship, architecture, geography, etc. Within categories, words were often grouped by synonyms. For example in the *Ěryǎ* (爾雅 "Approaching Elegance" or "Ready Guide") of the 3rd century BCE, initial sections contain commentary or exegesis on verbal phrases and particles in earlier classical texts, while later sections group further terms into 19 semantic categories (Mair 1998). This system requires the user to know or guess the rough meaning of a character before being able to look it up.

The *Shuōwèn Jièzì* (說文解字 "Explanation of Simple and Analysis of Compound Characters") from the 2nd century CE inaugurated the class of *wénzì* (文字, "script" or "grammatology") works, distinguishing two major character types: 文 (*wén*, a "simple figure"), in which a single drawing represents an object or idea; or 字 (*zì*, a "compound character"), which combines several symbols to assign meaning (Mair 1998). This work introduced a distinction among 形 (*xíng*, "shape" or "structure"), 音 (*yīn*, "sound"), and 義 (*yì*, "meaning"). The organisation centred on characters' graphical characteristics, using divisions based on 540 部首 (*bù shǒu*, "section headers"). Translated commonly as 'radicals', suggesting minimal or essential elements of character composition, the term was originally meant to be neither elemental nor exhaustive, but rather representative. Only in the early 17th century CE work *Zìhuì* (字彙 "Character Glossary") did the number of 'radicals' reduce to 214. The *Zìhuì* also introduced stroke counting: ordering characters within the radical groupings by the number of strokes added (Mair 1998).

The 7th century CE saw the introduction of rhyming dictionaries with the *Qiēyùn* (切韻 "Cutting [i.e. Writing] Rhymes"). This presented the first phonological ordering of elements, a result of "the enhanced phonological awareness that developed in China after the advent of Buddhism and the elaborate Indian linguistic science that came in its wake" (Mair 1998: 168). Users required a deep familiarity with rhymes to look up elements. Works organised according to this style belong to a grouping of the grammatical tradition known as *yīnyùn* (音韻, literally "sounds and rhymes", but in the sense of syllable initials and finals, or roughly "phonology"; Mair 1998).

These major and long-lived categories of linguistic writings focused on the lexicon and its interaction with the writing system, dedicating relatively little discussion to the morphological and syntactic aspects of the language. This derived in part from the bureaucratic and political function the language and literature came to fill. Though Chinese had many regional variants, the imperial administration required a common language to carry out its functions. To serve a growing bureaucratic class, education focused on ensuring the ability to produce well-formed and elegant administrative documents (Hartman 1998). Instruction within this system centred on memorizing the classical texts. Since the pronunciation of early texts changed over time and often differed from a student's own regional dialect, the bureaucratic "Mandarin" rose as a standard. Students learned to read and recite classical texts, also memorizing the relevant sections of commentary. Rules of grammar received little emphasis, since the grammatical

patterns were implicit in the memorised material, and the student merely had to produce compositions along the same lines (Hartman 1998).

In his five-volume *Cursus Litteraturae Sinicae Neo-Missionariis Accommodatus*, published in the late 1800s, the Italian Jesuit missionary P. Angelo Zottoli presents a primarily European audience with a synopsis of this traditional education, beginning with a text in traditional Chinese characters with accompanying transliteration in Roman letters, a word-by-word translation, and a character-by-character commentary in Latin (Zottoli 1879–1882). The commentary explains each character's pronunciation, meaning, and function, and includes more general commentary on literature, culture, and grammar. But the reader does not easily find broad statements on how certain classes of words function in the language. Rather, more general patterns arise inductively as the reader learns the details of a specific text.

Common contemporary introductions to the classical language follow an approach largely retaining this commentarial format. Moreover, many draw implicitly on a working knowledge of some modern Chinese language, like Mandarin or Cantonese, as a first introduction to both the language structures and writing of Classical Chinese. Only a minority of scholars espouse introductions without such prior knowledge (Van Norden 2019; Mair 2018). Textbooks by Shadick and by Dawson start, like Zottoli's, with original texts in traditional characters (Shadick & Ch'iao 1968; Dawson 1984). But a different section holds the notes to accompany each text, and a yet separate section contains a list of the vocabulary encountered. Other recent approaches, e.g. by Rouzer or by Lock and Linebarger, likewise begin with text excerpts, but they hew closer to Zottoli's presentation by listing vocabulary and commentary close to the individual readings (Rouzer 2007; Lock & Linebarger 2018; cf. also Fuller 2004; Van Norden 2019).

This pedagogical approach also provides a practical mode of addressing a writing system that omits many specifics of Chinese morphophonemics: e.g. 王 can represent either the noun *wáng* 'king' or the verb *wàng* 'be king', which differ in the modern standard language by tone, but (according to some reconstructions) were distinguished by derivational morphology – *wáng* < **waŋ* 'king' vs. *wàng* < **waŋh* 'is king' – in earlier stages of the language (Vogelsang 2021; cf. also Pulleyblank 2010, Baxter & Sagart 2014). The writing system leaves unclear what pronunciation to impute to the characters of early texts. Moreover, since many such distinctions have been lost in the modern language, the practice of pronouncing classical texts with the characters' modern pronunciations (in *any*

modern idiom, including Mandarin, Cantonese, or others) glosses over the problems posed by the script for earlier periods.

Given that many learners approach older periods of Chinese via a modern Chinese language, it seems unsurprising that many popular introductions to the modern language – e.g. Chao's or DeFrancis's as two linguistically incisive efforts, or even Giles's sparse, early textbook – likewise adhere to a similar commentarial approach: the learner memorises conversations, and the remainder of each lesson lists notes on the characters or words of the text (Giles 1922; Chao [1948] 2013; DeFrancis 1976). Finally, Mark Edward Lewis's course *Chinese Philosophical Texts* uses a roughly comparable format, conveniently illustrating the utility of a commentarial approach even within an online setting (Lewis 2014). Though nothing about the Classical Chinese language or writing system necessitates a commentarial approach, an understanding of the corpus and its historical context suggests why such an approach may have developed naturally within that setting and may remain useful today.

3. Considerations

Among the pedagogical approaches adopted for important early Asian languages, we find three major types: theoretical, as typified by introductions to Sanskrit; historical, as exhibited in approaches to Tocharian; and commentarial, as found in the long lineage of introductions to Chinese. In embarking on a new introduction to an early language, what pedagogical approach is preferable?

Naturally, this depends on the audience for the introduction. In particular, we must consider the learners' motivations. What are their relevant interests? They might wish to study comparative linguistics, or perhaps archaeology or anthropology, or even literature and history, to name but a few. In the context of Tocharian, the fact that the corpus consists almost exclusively of Buddhist texts serves as a bonanza to the student of Pali interested in religious transmission to Central and East Asia, yet it appears to be a tragedy to the Indo-Europeanist trying to reconstruct the earliest remnants of prehistoric Indo-European society and religious beliefs. Different students can come to early languages with different aims, and some pedagogical approaches may serve the interests of certain students better than others.

At the same time, we must consider the learners' background. Sanskrit, to speakers of modern Indo-European languages, can appear to be a straightforward expansion of features already present in what they know: a possessive *-s* ending, verbs marking person and number of the subject, nominal distinctions based on roles of subject or object of verbs, etc. By contrast, when introducing Tocharian, the grammatical explanations generally assume the students' familiarity with other Indo-European languages and their grammatical categories; but the readings tend to assume a high level of familiarity with Buddhist literature and terminology. The student who comes to Tocharian after studying the common Indo-European religious heritage through the lens of Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit texts may be familiar with the former and not the latter; the student coming to Tocharian from studies of Japanese, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhism might thrive in the latter and have no knowledge of the former. Moreover, the student coming to classical Chinese could be at ease if already familiar with the script and language structures from a modern Chinese language; but a student coming from outside that tradition might find the unmarked shifts from noun to verb off-putting, and the commentarial approach so skeletal that the grammar appears to be a patchwork of holes.

In addition, we must consider the constraints imposed by each context. Does the content itself determine the proper pedagogical approach? Perhaps a commentarial approach works best with analytic languages or logographic writing systems, whereas a theoretical approach to such material might quickly become too abstract for students to apply consciously in reading or speaking. Several other factors could influence the choice of a particular pedagogical approach: e.g. the literary or linguistic structure of the texts themselves, the processes of textual transmission, the cultural context and the intended audience, to name a few.

We should point out that the search for viable language pedagogy all plays out against the backdrop of pedagogy employed for learning spoken languages. But only rare instances present instructors with the support necessary to employ such pedagogy with early languages. For example, Sanskrit, like Latin in Europe, couples a phonetically attuned writing system with a long spoken tradition long after the language's grammar was "frozen", which thus provides a model for extending the early linguistic corpus to modern situations not originally contained in that corpus. There has in fact been no break in the spoken history of the

language, and this provides a continuity that fosters adaptation to new and current contexts. As a result, Sanskrit, like Latin, enjoys contexts in which a spoken language pedagogy can be and is fruitfully employed.[7]

Tocharian, by contrast, lacks a sufficiently coherent corpus for robust support of such pedagogy. Even the Classical Chinese corpus, despite its longevity and unbroken history, would have difficulty supporting such efforts in an analogous sense, because it has long since lost contact with the actual phonology of earlier eras. What one might hope to achieve would be the speaking of a modern Chinese language, but using a formalised and stylised grammatical apparatus modeled on the constructions still evidenced in the Classical Chinese corpus. In fact, this is akin to the approach often taken in learning the classical language.

4. OERs in the Online Context

In the early stages of academic forays into the Internet, online OERs generally sought to emulate print media. This followed naturally from a conception of online resources as little more, conceptually, than yet another print medium, a conception made clear in terminology as basic as *web page*. As books and other printed media could incorporate images, a web page was not essentially different in kind from the same material on a printed page, though perhaps the images could now move in the form of videos.

The subsequent evolution of the Internet and of frameworks for simplifying and standardizing web development has made the analogy less perfect, and websites now are less confined by the conventions of printed pages than they once were. More concretely, a book must choose a single, particular format (content layout) before it can be printed, and once printed, this format remains invariant. But this need not hold true for a web page in many modern development environments: the same content can be redeployed – in the context of another round of development, or even on the fly as users interact with it – many times over within the confines of a single web page.

This opens up new ways of thinking about creating online open resources, not only for modern languages (cf. Blyth & Thoms 2021), but for early languages as

[7] Cf., e.g., Avitus (2018) for a perspective on Latin. Cf. Mair (2016) for a personal perspective on spoken Sanskrit. Hastings (2003; 2008) add further context on the motivations and politics surrounding some aspects of modern movements for spoken Sanskrit.

well. As the discussion above has highlighted, the pedagogy of different ancient languages from across Asia has employed quite divergent approaches adapted to the varying contexts and histories of the languages and cultures involved. While many web pages dedicated to introducing readers to these languages employ similar styles of presentation, this need not be the case.

We might consider as an example one particular web development framework: Model-View-Controller (MVC; cf. de la Guardia 2016; Pinkham 2016). After roughly a decade of popular use, this framework has become mature and flexible. The MVC framework conceives of a website in three parts.

The Model refers to the actual content, the data, to be "served up" (given or transmitted) to the user. The nomenclature derives from the fact that the content must be stored somewhere, somehow: in a database. The "shape" or "structure" of this database encapsulates how the site designers conceive of, or "model", the site content: conceiving of the database as a big spreadsheet, the model describes what data columns the spreadsheet will have, whether that data might be spread across different "tabs" or "sheets" (data tables), and how data in one table can be cross-referenced with data in another.

The View, by contrast, refers to how the user "sees" the content. Showing the user a big spreadsheet might not provide the most engaging or understandable representation of the site's data. The designers might decide that revealing all the details of the data to users at once might be inefficient or unhelpful: for example, they might only show names of the items in the data, but not the numerical identifiers that the database actually uses for purposes of cross-referencing; or they might only show what they consider to be essential data, leaving many columns hidden. They might not display the data as spreadsheet data at all: what the user sees might be paragraphs, where only the programmer knows that certain names or details have been automatically inserted from the data stored in the database.

Finally, the Controller refers to the automated system that connects the View to the Model. Most importantly, this system is bidirectional. Not only does it automatically decide how to take the data from the Model and display this to the user in the View, but also, depending on the options permitted to the user, it can process user commands through the View and transmit those back to the Model. For example, the Controller might initially take from the Model the data from just a few spreadsheet columns and display those to the user on the initial page-load

of the View. But a well-designed View might let the user opt to display data from more columns: selecting further columns, the Controller will communicate these new selections back to the Model, gather the relevant data, and update the display in the View to include the data requested.

The MVC architecture thus represents a particular organizational scheme employed by standardised web frameworks to facilitate a dynamic user experience for web sites. In particular, it lets developers specify not just a particular display of particular data, but rather a range of ways in which the developers wish to allow users to experience, explore, and even update or correct the data on which the website itself is based. A straightforward and ubiquitous example of this type of framework appears in commercial websites including user reviews, such as Amazon, where the user searches for a product, sees the specifications, adds a review, and now this review becomes part of the data associated with the product and can be displayed to other users, changing the database and hence the website itself.

In the context of online OERs, this provides a novel reframing of the design problem. Whereas early online resources, like printed material, needed to choose a single format and stick to it, web frameworks like MVC loosen some of the strictures of language presentation. In particular, a website displayed initially to support a commentarial pedagogical style might be reformatted, depending on user input, to support a historical reference grammar style. Computationally speaking, the web development framework remains indifferent to the style of presentation and even to the need to readjust how information is presented.

Instead, the work lies with the OER developers themselves. Rather than making a decision on the most effective pedagogical style for presenting learning materials for an early language – or, just as often, choosing not to decide and merely falling back on how the developers learned it themselves – developers must instead imagine a range of different presentation styles and incorporate these into the range of the website's capabilities. For example, a commentarial presentation of excerpts of Confucius' *Analects* could be reconfigured into a presentation of points of historical phonology and morphology *illustrated* by snippets of Confucius' *Analects* (cf., e.g., Van Norden 2019). But what would this entail? On the View side, web developers would need to give the users adjustable parameters or selectors to decide which presentation they would prefer and how they would like aspects of it to display. On the Model side, developers

would need to have a database containing not only excerpts of the *Analects* with a standard commentary, but they would have to tag elements of that commentary as containing, or augment that commentary with, information describing what tidbits of historical linguistic information are on display in that particular excerpt. The Controller would encapsulate how developers envision the website as responding to users' wishes about what information to display and how to serve that information up from the database in an understandable and coherent fashion.

In essence, the online resource can only reproduce different pedagogies so long as the database contains sufficient information to support it, and so long as the user interface offers the option. As scholars develop such resources, this imposes quite a novel charge: as data is entered into the database, scholars must begin to conceive of various different methodologies through which the data could be accessed and make sure that the data is sufficiently granular and appropriately annotated to be able to support a variety of Views through which to access it. The Model should, in essence, contain a number of sub-Models which the Controller could potentially serve up to the View. And the Controller itself must envision how to communicate between the two.

The LRC, for its part, has embarked on just such a reimagining of its resources. The original EIEOL website chose a particular format that had proven effective in print: a series of lessons, with each lesson containing an introduction, a glossed text followed by a continuous translation, and a following discussion of several points of grammar. The originator of the collection, Winfred P. Lehmann, had already edited a short-lived book series on early Indo-European languages adhering to a similar format for the Modern Language Association (Lehmann & Lehmann 1975, Lehmann 2003). The LRC created a computational infrastructure to reproduce a similar format in a set of static web pages with great success. But with the advent of new web frameworks, the LRC has begun the process of reworking the infrastructure behind the scenes. While the visible user interface remains roughly the same as before, the underlying architecture has shifted to the MVC paradigm. What remains now is to re-envision the *range* of interface parameters and *amplify* the underlying database in such a way as to support a more dynamic and interactive variety of pedagogically sensitive user experiences.

This can be tricky and tedious work: it can involve steps as simple as tagging grammar sections according to the part of speech they focus on, or as fine-tuned as updating glosses character by character to decide which parts of a long string

exhibiting sandhi belong to one word and which to another. But as such work progresses, the LRC will eventually be able to offer users the ability to refine the EIEOL presentations in ways that more appropriately support their individual approaches to language learning or teaching. They might switch between theoretical, historical, and commentarial presentations; or they might reorder text excerpts in a lesson series by the number of words they have in common to maximise learners' gains from the vocabulary they've acquired; or they might isolate sentences from the glossed texts, order them by a measure of vocabulary frequency while minimizing the number of new words introduced from one sentence to the next, and then export these to common flash card programmes for learning by spaced repetition. We should no longer conceive of websites introducing early languages as a glorified book, but rather as a collection of books on a particular language, or something much more expansive altogether.

5. Conclusions

Over the preceding centuries instructors have employed a range of pedagogical frameworks through which to teach early languages. In the particular case of three selected ancient languages of Asia, three principal pedagogical 'baskets' have come to the fore: a theoretical approach, typified by Sanskrit pedagogy, whereby instruction centers on the accumulation of grammatical rules in sequence and accompanying text excerpts facilitate their practice; a historical approach, typified by Tocharian pedagogy, where instruction presents a compartmentalised discussion of different grammatical categories, each viewed in the context of its historical evolution from earlier stages of the language, and then passing from grammatical discussion to unsimplified text excerpts drawn straight from the corpus; and a commentarial approach, as typified by Chinese pedagogy, where instruction dives immediately into original texts, with notes commenting on the form and use of individual characters as they appear, but relegating the discussion of general grammatical tendencies to a background role. These pedagogical approaches have arisen rather naturally and make sense given the details of the corpora involved, the specific cultural contexts, and the aims of the particular educational traditions in which they function. But as language learning crosses borders, contexts and educational systems change, and student

interests, preparation, and goals shift, early language instruction may have to adopt a new pedagogy or mixture of pedagogical approaches.

In the print-centred legacy of traditional instruction on these languages, a given instructional text has had to choose one pedagogy and maintain it. As Open Educational Resources have moved online, they have likewise tended to adopt a similar, single-pedagogy approach. This too made sense in earlier epochs of academic forays into the Internet, where web development typically centred on creating similarly static resources, focusing more on a shift of accessibility and reach than on a rethinking of modes of presentation. But modern web frameworks have begun to redefine the way online users can and wish to interact with online resources, and online OERs must find ways to respond to, engage with, and stimulate these new conceptions of interaction and learning.

The Model-View-Controller paradigm encapsulates one way in which web developers can logically structure the possibilities inherent in online resources responsive to user input. As early language resources adapt to the online environment, they can use MVC or similar frameworks to plan user experiences that conceive of something beyond a straightforward print-like presentation or mere access to video tutorials. These frameworks can help developers create resources that can potentially shift between pedagogies, so that theoretical, historical, and commentarial approaches can be conceived simply as different views on the same data. To support this, however, developers and scholars must carefully craft the ways in which they gather and store data, and likewise go beyond their own personal or "traditional" trajectories of having learned a given language to provide users with a range of instructional interfaces attuned to a variety of possible learning styles and informational foci. With such attention to the careful construction of data and interface in early language online learning resources, we might finally begin to achieve

OER + MVC ≥ print('medium').

References

Avitus, A. G. (2018). Spoken Latin: Learning, Teaching, Lecturing and Research. *Journal of Classics Teaching, 19*(37), 46–52.

Baxter, W. H., & Sagart, L. (2014). *Old Chinese: A New Reconstruction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Benfey, T. (1852). *Handbuch der Sanskritsprache: Band I. Grammatik.* Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus.

Benfey, T. (1853). *Handbuch der Sanskritsprache: Band II. Chrestomathie.* Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus.

Bird, J., Blagburn, B., & Osborne, M. (2022). Reclaiming the Classics for a Diverse and Global World Through OER. *KULA, 6*(1), 1–11.

Blyth, C. S. (2012). Opening Up Foreign Language Education with Open Educational Resources: The Case of Français interactif. In *Hybrid Language Teaching and Learning: Exploring Theoretical, Pedagogical and Curricular Issues,* 196–218.

Blyth, C. S., & Thoms, J. J. (eds). (2021). *Open Education and Second Language Learning and Teaching: The Rise of a New Knowledge Ecology.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Chao, Y. R. ([1948] 2013). *Mandarin Primer: An Intensive Course in Spoken Chinese.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Dawson, R. S. (1984). *A New Introduction to Classical Chinese.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

de la Guardia, C. (2016). *Python Web Frameworks.* Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media.

DeFrancis, J. (1976). *Beginning Chinese.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Delbrück, B. (1976). *Altindische Syntax.* Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft [Max Niemeyer Verlag].

Dong, H. (2020). *A History of the Chinese Language.* London: Routledge.

Fuller, M. A. (2004). *An Introduction to Literary Chinese.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Giles, H. A. (1922). *Chinese Without a Teacher: Being a Collection of Easy and Useful Sentences in the Mandarin Dialect, with a Vocabulary.* Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh.

Hartman, C. (1998). Literary Chinese. In Nienhauser *et al.*, *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature: Volume 2*. Indiana University Press, 92–97.

Hastings, A. M. (2003). Simplifying Sanskrit. *Pragmatics, 13*(4), 499–513.

Hastings, A. M. (2008). Licked by the Mother Tongue: Imagining Everyday Sanskrit at Home and in the World. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 18*(1), 24–45.

Jamison, S. W. (2008a). Middle Indic. In Woodard, R. D. (ed.), *The Ancient Languages of Asia and the America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 33–49.

Jamison, S. W. (2008b). Sanskrit. In Woodard, R. D. (ed.), *The Ancient Languages of Asia and the Americas*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 6–32.

Johnson, F. (1847). *Hitopadeśa: The Sanskrit Text, with a Grammatical Analysis, Alphabetically Arranged.* London: Wm. H. Allen and Co.

Kāle, M. R. (1961). *The Abhijñānaśākuntalam of Kālidāsa: with the Commentary of Rāghavabhaṭṭa, Various Readings, Introduction, Literal Translation, Exhaustive Notes, and Appendices.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Köntges, T., Lesage, R., Robertson, B., Sellick, J., & Stylianopoulos, L. W. (2017). Open Greek and Latin: Digital Humanities in an Open Collaboration with Pedagogy. Presented at: IFLA WLIC 2019 – Athens, Greece – Libraries: dialogue for change. August 27.

Krause, T. B. (2019). IE5.com. Historical Linguistics pro populo. *Folia Linguistica Historica, 40*(2), 621–632.

Krause, W., & Thomas, W. (1960). *Tocharisches Elementarbuch. Band I: Grammatik.* Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

Krause, W., & Thomas, W. (1964). *Tocharisches Elementarbuch. Band II: Texte und Glossar.* Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

Lanman, C. R. (1884). *A Sanskrit Reader.* Boston: Ginn and Company.

Lassen, C., & Gildemeister, J. (1865). *Anthologia Sanscritica Glossario Instructa in Usum Scholarum.* Bonn: Adolphus Marcus.

Lehmann, R. P. M., & Lehmann, W. P. (1975). *An Introduction to Old Irish.* New York: Modern Language Association of America.

Lehmann, W. P. (2003). General Principles of the Series. Personal communication.

Lewis, M. E. (2014). *Chinese Philosophical Texts.* Stanford: Chinese Texts. Retrieved November 21, 2023, from https://history.stanford.edu/publications/chinese-philosophical-texts

Lock, G., & Linebarger, G. S. (2018). *Chinese Buddhist Texts: An Introductory Reader.* London: Routledge.

Mair, V. H. (1998). Tzu-shu 字書 or tzu-tien 字典 (dictionaries). In Nienhauser *et al.*, *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature: Volume 2*. Indiana University Press, 165–172.

Mair, V. H. (2016). Spoken Sanskrit. *Language Log.* Retrieved August 30, 2022, from https://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=23412

Mair, V. H. (2018). How to teach Literary Sinitic / Classical Chinese. *Language Log.* Retrieved August 30, 2022, from https://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=39905

Malzahn, M. (ed.). (2007). *Instrumenta Tocharica.* Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

Malzahn, M. (2017). Tocharian and Historical Sociolinguistics: Evidence from a Fragmentary Corpus. *Open Linguistics, 3*(1), 157–177.

Malzahn, M. (2018). A Contrastive Survey of Genres of Sanskrit and Tocharian Buddhist Texts. *Written Monuments of the Orient, 4*(1), 3–24.

Monier-Williams, M. (1864). *A Practical Grammar of the Sanskrit Language: Arranged with Reference to the Classical Languages of Europe, for the Use of English Students.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Nienhauser Jr., W. H., Hartman, C., Ma, Y. W., & West, S. H. (eds). (1986). *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature: Volume 1.* Indiana University Press.

Nienhauser Jr., W. H., Hartman, C., & Galer, S. W. (eds). (1998). *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature: Volume 2.* Indiana University Press.

Perry, E. D. (1885). *A Sanskrit Primer.* Boston: Ginn and Company.

Peyraube, A. (1999). Historical change in Chinese grammar. *Cahiers de Linguistique – Asie Orientale,* 177–226.

Peyrot, M. (2008). Variation and change in Tocharian B. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Pinault, G.-J. (1992). Introduction au Tokharien. *LALIES: Actes des sessions de linguistique et de littérature, 11,* 5–224.

Pinault, G.-J. (2008). *Chrestomathie Tokharienne.* Leuven: Peeters.

Pinkham, A. (2016). *Django Unleashed.* Indianapolis, Indiana: Pearson Education.

Poucha, P. (1955). *Thesaurus Linguae Tocharicae Dialecti A.* Prague: Czechoslovak Oriental Institute.

Poucha, P. (1956). *Chrestomathia Tocharica.* Prague: Czechoslovak Oriental Institute.

Pulleyblank, E. G. (2010). *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Qiu, X. (2000). *Chinese Writing.* Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley.

Rouzer, P. F. (2007). *A New Practical Primer of Literary Chinese.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ruppel, A. M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ruppel, A. M. (2021). *An Introductory Sanskrit Reader: Improving Reading Fluency.* Leiden: Brill.

Sato, M., & Loewen, S. (eds). (2019). *Evidence-Based Second Language Pedagogy: A Collection of Instructed Second Language Acquisition Studies.* London: Routledge.

Sieg, E., Siegling, W., & Schulze, W. (1931). *Tocharische Grammatik.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Shadick, H., & Ch'iao, C. 喬健. (1968). *A First Course in Literary Chinese.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Speijer, J. S. (1886). *Sanskrit Syntax.* Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Staal, J. F. (ed.). (1972). *A Reader on the Sanskrit Grammarians.* Boston: MIT Press.

Stenzler, A. F., & Pischel, R. (2016). *Elementarbuch der Sanskrit-Sprache: Grammatik, Texte, Wörterbuch.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.

Van Norden, B. W. (2019). *Classical Chinese for Everyone: A Guide for Absolute Beginners.* Indianapolis: Hackett.

Vogelsang, K. (2021). *Introduction to Classical Chinese.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weiss, M. (2022). *Kuśiññe Kantwo: Elementary Lessons in Tocharian B, with Exercises, Vocabulary, and Notes on Historical Grammar.* Ann Arbor: Beech Stave Press.

Whitney, W. D. (1889). *Sanskrit Grammar: Including both the Classical Language, and the Older Dialects, of Veda and Brahmana.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wieger, L. (1965). *Chinese Characters: Their Origin, Etymology, History, Classification and Signification. A Thorough Study from Chinese Documents.* New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corporation; Dover Publications.

Witzel, M., & Wu, Q. (2018). The Two Oldest Veda Manuscripts: Facsimile Edition of Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā 1–20 (Saṃhitā- and Padapāṭha) from Nepal and Western Tibet (c. 1150 CE). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Woodard, R. D. (ed.). (2008). *The Ancient Languages of Asia and the Americas.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Woolner, A. C. (1917). *Introduction to Prakrit.* Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press.

Yong, H., & Peng, J. (2008). *Chinese Lexicography: A History from 1046 BC to AD 1911.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zottoli, P. A. (1879–1882). *Cursus Litteraturae Sinicae Neo-Missionariis Accommodatus.* Chang-Hai: Typographia Missionis Catholicæ in orphanotrophio Tou-sè-wè (Tou-chan-wan).

TOWARDS A PEDAGOGY OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE AND HIEROGLYPHS

Maiken Mosleth King
University of Bristol
mm17686@bristol.ac.uk

Abstract:

This paper discusses the challenges of teaching the Middle Egyptian language and Egyptian hieroglyphs to adult anglophone learners outside university settings. These challenges include the lack of L1 speakers; the large volume of signs in the script; the difficulty in reconstructing pronunciation due to the paucity of written vowels; and the lack of accessible learning tools such as readers and textbooks for the intermediate stage. As spoken proficiency in this extinct language is not a feasible goal, it is argued here that teaching should revolve around achieving reading competence.

The paper advocates for a pedagogical approach that centres on using vocabulary, including variant spellings, as the fundamental building blocks of learning. This entails reading words, sentences and paragraphs of increasing complexity, which over time aids memorisation of vocabulary and builds confidence. Grammar and syntax can be gradually introduced and contextualised by reading practice sentences. It is also argued here that producing digitised versions of ancient Egyptian texts using hieroglyphic font software such as JSesh allows for the creation of practice texts in a standardised and legible format. This, in turn, makes it possible to use pedagogical aids such as adding spaces between words and adding signs omitted by the ancient scribes.

Finally, it is argued that learning vocabulary and grammar is enhanced by discussions of the wider semantic and cultural meaning(s) of the ancient text in question.

Keywords: Middle Egyptian, hieroglyphs, language pedagogy, vocabulary building

1. Introduction

The ancient Egyptian language occupies an unusual position with regards to language pedagogy, for several reasons. Firstly, the language, which belongs to

the Afroasiatic language family[1], consists of five distinct stages, and was written with several scripts: hieroglyphs, hieratic and Demotic. Hieratic likely evolved in Egypt during the early 3rd millennium BC from cursive hieroglyphs, and was favoured for documentary texts such as contracts and personal letters. Egyptian Demotic evolved much later in the 7th century BC as a cursive script used for a wide range of textual genres.[2] The most famous of the Egyptian scripts, however, is the hieroglyphic script, which is attested[3] up to AD 394 and remained undeciphered until 1822 following its obsolescence.[4] Egyptian hieroglyphs have at times been assumed to be a type of symbolic and non-phonetic 'code'.[5] As the spoken Egyptian language has been extinct for centuries,[6] no L1 speakers currently exist; furthermore, the hieroglyphic, hieratic and Demotic scripts all omit short vowels, leaving the pronunciation of many words uncertain.[7] These scripts do not operate with a punctuation system, and there is no gap between individual words. Pronunciation can, to a certain degree, be reconstructed based on other scripts such as Coptic, i.e. Egyptian written in a Greek-derived script, although such a method by necessity largely ignores the significant sound changes that the Egyptian language underwent over time.[8] Due to these factors, achieving conversational proficiency in the ancient Egyptian language is not feasible, and methods commonly employed in modern language teaching such as singing songs, taking dictation and practising conversation are not suitable.[9] The

[1] Cf. Allen (2014: 1).
[2] Cf. Vleeming (1981).
[3] Cf. Baines (2007: 140–2).
[4] Cf., for example, Parkinson (1999: 12–45). The script was deciphered by Jean-François Champollion and described in his monograph *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens égyptiens* published in 1824. The attempts by mediaeval Arabic-speaking scholars to decipher the script have been largely overlooked in modern scholarship; cf. El Daly (2005: 57–74).
[5] This idea can be traced back to ancient Greek and Roman authors such as Diodorus Siculus (*Bibliotheca Historia* III.4), who claimed that Egyptian hieroglyphs were figurative rather than phonetic in function. As these authors were neither conversationally neither proficient nor even literate in Egyptian, their explanations for how the hieroglyphic script works range from the improbable to the bizarre; cf. Assmann & Ebeling (2020: 23–8); Taylor Westerfeld (2019: 68–97).
[6] The latest stage of the Egyptian language, Coptic, is usually considered to have been replaced by Arabic as a spoken language by the 17th century AD; cf. Brankaer (2010: 2). However, anecdotes recorded by European travellers to Egypt suggest that L1 or L2 Coptic-speakers still existed well into the 19th century; cf. Vycichl & Worrell (1942). The validity of such anecdotes is not universally accepted; Layton (2011: 2), for instance, has dismissed the notion of Coptic-speakers in modern times as 'unsubstantiated and unlikely'.
[7] Cf. Allen (2014: 15).
[8] Cf. Junge (2005: 35–7).
[9] Hearing songs improves L2 listening skills, whilst singing songs facilitates the memorisation of correct pronunciation; cf. Toscano-Fuentes (2016).

pedagogy of teaching ancient Egyptian language and hieroglyphs should instead revolve around achieving reading proficiency and the ability to translate the ancient texts into idiomatic English.

The purpose of this article is to discuss some of the significant challenges in learning and teaching the ancient Egyptian language and the hieroglyphic script, with particular focus on anglophone learners, and to propose a foundation for the development of an applicable pedagogy for this language. This is important because no universal or standard pedagogical approach, defined broadly here as philosophy of language and language learning,[10] to teaching ancient Egyptian as a foreign language has ever been developed, and scholarship on the subject is scarce.[11] In a paper on the subject published in 2011, Jean Winand identified ignorance of Classical languages and grammatical terminology as a significant obstacle for students of the ancient Egyptian language; he also identified the existence of multiple competing theoretical models of Egyptian linguistics, rather than a standard and unified theory, as another significant barrier to learning.[12]

In this paper, I demonstrate that the hieroglyphic script and Egyptian grammar both present significant challenges to contemporary anglophone learners, which are exacerbated by a scarcity of accessible learning tools for the intermediate stage: the lexicon and grammatical system display many similarities to Semitic languages, which tend to be unfamiliar to English-speakers; the lack of standardised writing means that individual signs may be difficult to identify in practice; the translation process involves transliterating the phonetic values into a Latin-derived transliteration alphabet, which must be memorised; the phonetic values of a large corpus of hieroglyphic signs must also be memorised; and individual hieroglyphic signs may carry different phonetic values depending on how they are used.

In this article I advocate for a pedagogy of teaching ancient Egyptian language and hieroglyphs that revolves around using vocabulary and variation spellings of individual words as the basic building blocks of learning; grammatical rules and syntax should be gradually explained and contextualised by means of introducing practice sentences and passages of increasing

[10] Cf. Richards & Rodgers (2014: 22).
[11] The ongoing research project *The Pedagogy of Hieroglyphic Egyptian* at Macquarie University shows some promising potential in this regard; https://researchers.mq.edu.au/en/projects/the-pedagogy-of-hieroglyphic-egyptian-new-approaches-for-a-brave-; retrieved on 19/3/2023.
[12] The lack of a unified theory can make grammar hard to decipher; cf. Winand (2011).

complexity. The obstacles posed by the lack of standardised hieroglyphic writing can be overcome through the use of digital hieroglyphic fonts such as the open-source software JSesh, which facilitates the creation of sentences and texts in a standardised, legible font for teaching purposes; this software also shows much potential for future uses, e.g. the creation of intermediate-level textbooks and hieroglyphic text editions for pedagogical rather than scholarly uses.

2. Who wants to study Egyptian hieroglyphs? And why does it matter?

Having taught ancient Egyptian language and hieroglyphs to adult anglophone learners for six years,[13] usually through online Zoom-based classes, I have found that there is no average or typical student of the ancient Egyptian language. As the language is not taught at school level in any country, except for perhaps a brief introduction to the simple 'alphabet signs' consisting of a single phonetic value, many learners first encounter it as part of university studies in Egyptology, archaeology, ancient history and similar disciplines. Outside university contexts, the hieroglyphic script attracts large numbers of so-called 'Egyptophiles', i.e. enthusiasts of ancient Egypt and Egyptology, without formal degrees in the subject. The emergence of online teaching modes in recent years has made the subject much more accessible for non-academics. Due to its extinct status, the study of the ancient Egyptian language is rarely an end in itself; instead, learners may instead be motivated by factors such as their fascination for ancient Egyptian culture.[14]

Apart from Sumerian, Egyptian represents one of the oldest written languages in the world:[15] Egyptian hieroglyphs emerged as a medium of writing around 3300 BC, with the earliest surviving inscriptions representing short words such as personal names, toponyms and the names of commodities.[16] The script had evolved to record continuous language, and thus fully legible texts, by ca.

[13] The students include both L1 and L2 English-speakers; the majority are residents of anglophone countries.
[14] For scholarship on the cultural phenomenon of 'Egyptomania', cf. Humbert (1994); Moser (2015).
[15] Sumerian cuneiform writing emerged in Iraq during the latter half of the 4th millennium BC; cf. Krispijn (2012: 181).
[16] Some of the earliest known Egyptian writings come in the form of ivory labels from tomb U-j at Abydos, dating to ca. 3300 BC; cf. Wengrow (2006: 200–3).

2600 BC;[17]the enormous corpus of surviving texts from ancient Egypt includes religious texts such as the *Pyramid Texts* and the *Book of the Dead*, tomb 'autobiographies', literary narratives, didactic texts, myths, hymns, prayers, and discourses such as *The Dispute between a Man and His Soul*.[18] The hieroglyphic script gave rise to the proto-Canaanite alphabet in the early 2nd millennium BC, and is thus an ancestor of the Phoenician, Hebrew and Greek alphabets.[19] The ability to read the ancient Egyptian language provides us with access to an enormous corpus of literature that would otherwise be lost. Furthermore, reading the ancient texts allows us to understand ancient Egyptian culture on its own terms, rather than through the biased lenses of ancient Greek and Roman authors.[20] By making the subject more accessible to non-academics, we can ensure that knowledge about ancient Egypt becomes normalised as an important part of the global cultural heritage, instead of remaining the sole prerogative of a small group of specialist scholars or being exploited as a political tool.[21]

Making the subject more accessible can also contribute to decreasing the influence of the pseudo-archaeological discourse and conspiracy theories promoted by contemporary authors and media, which are often fuelled by Eurocentric narratives and anti-indigenous biases.[22] Erich von Däniken's influential pseudoscientific work *Chariots of the Gods* (1969), for example, centres on the notion of extraterrestrials having influenced ancient cultures, while Graham Hancock has published a number of books proposing an unknown, lost 'proto-civilisation' shaping all subsequent civilisations.[23] Ancient Egyptian monuments such as the temple of Seti at Abydos have also received much attention from proponents of pseudo-archaeology: a hieroglyphic inscription superimposed upon an existing inscription, i.e. a palimpsest, can be seen on one of the walls of the Seti temple, and some of the resulting signs have the unfortunate consequence of looking like spacecraft. A contrived conspiracy theory regarding the so-called 'Abydos Helicopter', which proposes that the

[17] Cf. Baines (2007: 59).
[18] Cf. Allen (2011: 137–60); Loprieno (1996); Parkinson (1997); Strudwick (2005: 209–400).
[19] Cf. Goldwasser (2012).
[20] Cf. Assmann & Ebeling (2020); Moyer (2011: 1–83).
[21] The modern discipline of Egyptology was born in an imperialist context, and Egypt's ancient past has been used to promote Western colonialist aims and notions of European/Caucasian superiority; cf. Colla (2007: 72–6); Rocha da Silva (2019: 127–8).
[22] Cf. Andersson (2012); Moshenska (2017).
[23] Cf. Anderson & Card (2016); Fagan (2006). The much-publicised Netflix series *Ancient Apocalypse* (2022) draws heavily on Hancock's ideas.

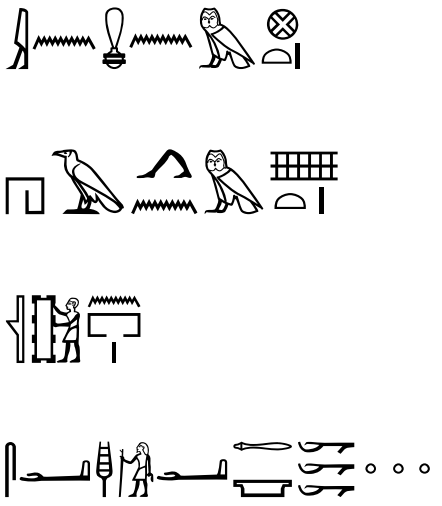
hieroglyphs depict extraterrestrial spaceships, has circulated online for at least two decades and been promoted by several books.[24] The study of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs serves to demystify the ancient script and provides insight into the ancient culture; in turn, a familiarity with the ancient Egyptians and their world can make pseudoscientific discourse less appealing. If the past is a foreign country,[25] knowledge about its languages is our passport.

3. The challenges of Egyptian hieroglyphs: the learning tools

The ancient Egyptian language consists of multiple chronological stages, and any prospective student must first choose the appropriate stage on which to focus their studies. The chronological stages, in their respective order, are labelled Old Egyptian, Middle Egyptian, Late Egyptian, Demotic and Coptic. The latter represents the last stage of the Egyptian language, with a large Greek lexicon,[26] written in a script derived from the Greek alphabet, with some Demotic-derived letters. Coptic remains in use together with Arabic as a liturgical language in the Coptic-Orthodox church.[27] Late Egyptian was predominantly written in the hieratic script; at the same time, scholars have long been in the habit of transcribing hieratic texts into hieroglyphs, and hieroglyphic versions of Late Egyptian texts are therefore available for learning purposes. However, Late Egyptian writing poses many orthographic challenges, such as the tendency to add superfluous signs.[28] By contrast, Middle Egyptian represents the 'classical' stage of the language, and was used for a variety of textual genres, such as documentary, religious, and literary texts from the early second millennium BC until the 4th century AD.[29] Hieroglyphic texts written in Middle Egyptian, particularly those produced during the Middle Kingdom, are typically neither overly abbreviated nor riddled with superfluous signs; for this reason, it

[24] Cf., for example, Grant Hutton (2014: 649–50); Lewis (2012: 46–7).
[25] Cf. Lowenthal (2015: 3).
[26] Cf., for example, the project *Database and Dictionary of Greek Loanwords in Coptic*; https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/ddglc/index.html.
[27] No L1 Coptic speakers currently exist, and contemporary Copts are typically L1 speakers of Arabic or English; cf. Wahba (2004: 990).
[28] This includes the tendency to add redundant and erroneous T-endings, which in Middle Egyptian grammar signify the feminine gender of nouns, to word stems. Such errors were due to scribal confusion resulting from the loss of the feminine T-ending in pronunciation; cf. Junge (2005: 33–45).
[29] Cf. Allen (2013: 3).

represents the ideal stage of the language for beginners, and published textbooks aimed at beginners focus on this stage. Finally, Old Egyptian is well attested in hieroglyphic writing, particularly through the religious corpus of *Pyramid Texts* used in royal funerary contexts.[30] At the same time, their orthography has a tendency to omit signs such as determinatives and the 1st singular suffix pronoun[31]; this renders Old Egyptian difficult to read for beginners. An illustrative example of the orthographic difficulties of Old Egyptian comes from the autobiography of the court official Harkhuf, carved into the walls of his tomb near Aswan ca. 2200 BC:[32]



This can be transliterated and translated as:

ỉỉ.n(=ỉ) mỉn m nỉwt(=ỉ)	‘(I) went out today from (my) city,
hɜ.n(=ỉ) m spɜt(=ỉ)	and (I) descended from (my) district,
ḳd.n(=ỉ) pr(=ỉ)	after (I) had built (my) house
sʿḥʿ(=ỉ) ʿɜw	and erected wooden doors.’

The orthography consistently omits the 1st person singular suffix pronoun  *ỉ*, which acts both as the subject of verbs and as a possessive marker in nouns. As

[30] Cf. Allen (2020: 59).
[31] Cf. Strudwick (2005: 22–3).
[32] Cf. Sethe (1933: 121).

such, the Old Egyptian orthography requires the reader to infer the missing suffix pronoun  , the determinative ⊙ in the word  *mỉn*, 'today'. For this reason, Old Egyptian is more suitable for students who already have a good grasp on vocabulary and grammar.

A seminal textbook for ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and Middle Egyptian grammar is Alan Gardiner's *Egyptian Grammar*, originally published in 1927, with a revised edition published in 1957. In this work, Gardiner presented a comprehensive overview of the grammatical system and assembled the corpus of hieroglyphic signs into distinct categories; this sign categorisation was adopted as standard across the discipline. From a pedagogical perspective, however, Gardiner's academic writing style, linguistic explanations and technical terminology are largely impenetrable to non-specialists and beginners; for this reason, this work is better suited for experienced learners with a firm grasp of linguistic terms and concepts. Gardiner's sign list was re-published by Bill Petty as a pocket edition in 2012, serving as a concise self-study tool for beginners. A more concise and digestible textbook, despite its heavy use of technical terminology, is James Allen's comprehensive work *Middle Egyptian*, published in 2000, with a third edition published in 2014. Raymond Faulkner's handwritten hieroglyphic dictionary *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, published in 1962, provides a representative vocabulary list.

There are several published textbooks aimed at anglophone beginners and designed for self-study. Barbara Watterson published *More About Egyptian Hieroglyphs* in 1985; in 1992, Karl-Theodor Zauzich published *Discovering Egyptian Hieroglyphs: A Practical Guide*; in 1995, Hilary Wilson published *Understanding Hieroglyphs: A Quick and Simple Guide*; in 1998, Mark Collier and Bill Manley published their textbook *How to Read Egyptian Hieroglyphs*, intended to be a self-study guide for non-specialists; Bill Manley published another beginner's textbook titled *Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs for Complete Beginners* in 2012; and in 2013**,** Daniel Selden published *Hieroglyphic Egyptian*. Watterson's book consists of brief chapters introducing basic grammatical concepts and paradigms, illustrated by hand-drawn hieroglyphic words and phrases. Zauzich's book is designed to allow non-specialists to read simple words, names and phrases from monumental inscriptions; he therefore primarily

focuses on vocabulary and only dedicates nine pages to grammar.[33] The two textbooks published by Collier and Manley are similarly designed to equip the student with the proficiency required to read simple monumental inscriptions. The first book introduces a basic overview of the grammatical system, illustrated by examples from monumental inscriptions; the second book, authored by Manley, avoids grammar explanations and technical terminology altogether, and instead focuses on introducing vocabulary as the basic building blocks of language acquisition. For students who wish to increase their level of proficiency to an intermediate stage and read more complex narrative texts, published intermediate-level textbooks are scarce. To a certain extent, Selden's textbook bridges this gap, and the book is structured around introducing learners to the vocabulary and grammar necessary to read the literary narrative *Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor*.[34] At the same time, Selden's hieroglyphic text edition of *Shipwrecked Sailor* is a word-for-word hieroglyphic transcription of the original hieratic script, and thus lacks pedagogical aids such as spaces between words and sentence division.

There is an overall scarcity of accessible text editions, including digital formats, with edited or abridged versions aimed at students and non-specialists. Published editions, e.g. Aylward Blackman's *Middle Egyptian Stories* (1972), are typically handwritten and aimed at specialists who already possess a high level of reading ability; such editions therefore do not employ pedagogical aids such as adding spaces between words, sentence division and accompanying vocabulary lists. Online dictionaries for translating Egyptian hieroglyphs into English do exist, although they are fairly limited in scope;[35] at the same time, their use of a standardised digital hieroglyphic font allows for a more user-friendly experience for beginners. By contrast, there are numerous published text editions aimed at students of ancient Greek and Latin, ranging from the beginner stage to advanced;[36] there is also a wide selection of digital resources such as

[33] Cf. Zauzich (1992: 35–43).
[34] The extant manuscript of this text is the unprovenanced and anonymously written Papyrus Hermitage 1115, dated on palaeographical grounds to ca. 2000–1900 BC; cf. Allen (2015: 9).
[35] http://hieroglyphs.net/cgi/pager.pl?p=01; retrieved on 22/3/2023. By contrast, *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* is an excellent online resource for German-speakers.
[36] Examples of this include the *Latin Cambridge Course* series; the *Oxford Latin Course* series; the *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata* series; the JACT *Reading Greek* series; and Bloomsbury's *Greek to GCSE* and *Latin to GCSE*.

dictionaries, grammatical aids and adapted texts in digital formats.[37] For ardent Latin-enthusiasts, reading practice is also available in the form of translations of modern texts into Latin, e.g. the *Asterix* comics and *Harry Potter* novels; the only comparable example of this for the Egyptian language is the hieroglyphic edition of Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit* (2005), intended primarily as a novelty gift for visitors to the British Museum rather than a pedagogical tool for students of the Egyptian language. As I will demonstrate below, the scarcity of available learning tools poses a pedagogical challenge, as both the ancient Egyptian language and the hieroglyphic script each present modern learners with significant obstacles.

4. The challenges of Egyptian hieroglyphs: The language and the script

As an Afroasiatic language and a 'sister branch' to the Semitic languages, Egyptian possesses grammatical features found both in African languages such as Berber and Cushitic, and in Semitic languages, e.g. Hebrew and Ugaritic.[38] Such languages rarely form part of the school curriculum in the anglophone world[39], and anglophone speakers therefore tend to lack experience with Semitic languages and their syntactical features such as the Verb-Subject-Object (VSO) word order found in Middle Egyptian, Biblical Hebrew and Classical Arabic.[40] The Egyptian language also operates with phonemes not found in English, such as the voiceless velar fricative /x/ and the voiceless uvular fricative /χ/[41]; this can render the pronunciation and memorisation of Egyptian words challenging for anglophone learners.

[37] Cf. for example Geoffrey Steadman's website, which provides students of Greek and Latin with adapted readings of ancient texts, with accompanying aids such as flashcards and vocabulary lists; https://geoffreysteadman.com/; retrieved on 21/3/2023.
[38] Cf. Allen (2014: 1).
[39] In the UK, Arabic holds the status of 'heritage language' and thus does not form part of the national school curriculum; cf. Bengsch *et al*. (2020). Biblical Hebrew is available in the UK as a Key Stage 4 exam, although student numbers are generally low, and only 562 exam entries were registered for the academic year 2021/22; https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/4a974abf-129f-49b7-9529-08db08498a11; retrieved on 22/3/2023.
[40] Cf. Loprieno (1995: 184). The VSO word order is hypothesised to be a feature of Proto-Semitic, an ancestor of the Egyptian language; cf. Tsarfaty (2014: 77).
[41] Cf. Allen (2020: 83–4).

The Middle Egyptian verbal system also poses a challenge to anglophone learners because it does not operate with tenses corresponding precisely to English tenses like the perfect, imperfect and the pluperfect. The verb construction *sḏm.n=f*, a type of suffix conjugation that expresses completed action, can be variously translated into English as a simple past tense ('he heard'), the perfect tense ('he has heard') or the pluperfect tense ('he had heard').[42] The subject-stative construction expresses a state resulting from a completed action, and acquires the passive voice when the verb is transitive; as this verb construction has no direct equivalent in English and is essentially tenseless, translation involves using judgement.[43] For example, the sentence

sꜣ=f ꜥḳ.w r ꜥḥ

carries the literal meaning 'his son is in the state of having entered the palace'; this can be translated into idiomatic English as 'his son entered the palace', 'his son has entered the palace' or 'his son had entered the palace' depending on context. The Middle Egyptian verbal system also operates with verb constructions that look identical or near-identical in writing, although such forms were presumably distinguished in pronunciation. Examples of this includes the suffix conjugation, also known as the *sḏm=f* construction, which can be used to express the past, present and future tenses;[44] the masculine singular participle and subject-stative can also look identical both in form and syntax when the characteristic stative endings are dropped due to the orthographic tendency of ancient scribes to omit grammatical markers.[45] The verbal form, and thus the correct tense in English translation, must frequently be inferred from context and by using judgement; this renders accurate translation challenging, and learning to identify the correct English tense in translation represents a significant element in the development of good reading comprehension and translation skills. As such, learning to correctly identify and parse verb forms based on word order and

[42] Cf. Allen (2014: 245–8).
[43] Cf. Allen 2014: 227.
[44] Cf. Allen 2014: (265–88).
[45] Cf. Allen (2014: 382–3). Coptic spellings of stative verbs, which survive as fossilised forms, suggest that they were distinguished in pronunciation by altering the vowel of the first syllable; cf. Brankaer (2010: 38–9).

context represents a learning challenge for students and a pedagogical challenge for the teacher.

Learning to read and translate ancient Egyptian texts into modern languages also involves transliterating the Egyptian signs into words written with a Latin-derived transliteration alphabet.[46] This requires students to familiarise themselves with this alphabet in addition to the hieroglyphic signs; the process also involves learning to recognise when a hieroglyphic sign carries a phonetic value that must be transliterated, as opposed to acting as a silent determinative or a phonetic complement silently 'reinforcing' the sound of a previous sign.[47] The hieroglyphic script is not an alphabet; only a small number of easily memorised hieroglyphs function as 'alphabet signs' that correspond to single letters or phonetic values, e.g.  *b* (Gardiner's D58), which represents the voiced bilabial plosive /b/.[48] Many hieroglyphic signs are so-called biliteral signs that represent two letters or sounds combined, e.g.  (F31) *ms*;[49] furthermore, hieroglyphic signs can also be triliteral and carry three sounds combined, e.g.  (F35) *nfr*.[50] Different types of signs can be put together to form complete words. As such, the Egyptian word for the noun 'life' can be written simply with the triliteral sign  (S34) *ʿnḫ*; it can also be written as a fuller form by adding the phonetic complements  (N35) *n* and  (AA1) *ḫ* as  .[51] It is also possible for hieroglyphic signs to act as logograms for entire words, e.g.  (E16) as a logogram for the theonym *ỉnpw*, Anubis.[52] Finally, hieroglyphic signs can also function as determinatives that have no phonetic value. They are placed at the end of words and serve to indicate the semantic category of the word, e.g.  for human beings and personal names,  for divine names and concepts, for

[46] Cf. Allen (2014: 15–7).
[47] Cf. Allen (2014: 32, 35).
[48] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 457).
[49] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 465).
[50] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 465); the vocalisation of this word is uncertain due to the omission of the vowels, and is typically rendered *nefer* in English.
[51] Cf. Faulkner (1962: 43). The choice to write the shorter or fuller forms was evidently entirely up to the individual scribe, but abbreviated forms were likely favoured when lack of space was an issue.
[52] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 459).

movement,  for toponyms, etc. Determinatives have the ability to change the meaning of the word because the Egyptian lexicon, as in Semitic languages, is structured around word stems, also called roots or bases.[53] Many such stems may look similar in transliteration, although they were presumably distinguished in pronunciation. As such, the words and  are both transliterated as *kꜣ* and thus appear at first glance to be identical; however, the first example denotes a person's vital essence and procreative power, which can be translated as 'soul' or simply as 'Ka', whilst the second example means 'bull'.[54] The words  and  , which are both transliterated as *sbi*, mean 'to travel' and 'to be faint', respectively;[55] only the determinatives make the distinction clear. Identical stems of this kind can mislead learners, particularly when the determinative is omitted by the ancient scribe, and result in erroneous translation.

The transliteration process is further complicated by the fact that some hieroglyphic signs can have different phonetic values depending on how they are used, e.g.  (F20) can act as a biliteral sign carrying the phonetic value *ns*, or as a logograms for the title *ỉmy-r*, 'overseer';[56]  (N14) is a triliteral sign carrying the phonetic values *sbꜣ* or *dwꜣ* depending on how it is used, e.g.  *dwꜣ* ('to worship') or *sbꜣ* ('to teach');[57] and  (Y1) can act as a determinative for abstract concepts or as a logogram for the noun *mḏꜣt*, 'papyrus scroll'.[58] Learning to identify the correct transliteration in such cases requires both memorisation of vocabulary and extensive reading practice, and the introduction of a wide range of words and variation spellings should therefore form the basis for any pedagogical approach to teaching ancient the Egyptian language and hieroglyphs.

The hieroglyphic script operates with a number of signs that can be difficult to distinguish from each other, particularly when the signs are written with ink and brush rather than carved. A notable example of this is Gardiner's sign

[53] Cf. Allen (2014: 43); Gray (2007: 34–5); Weninger (2011: 152–5).
[54] Cf. Faulkner (1962: 283).
[55] Cf. Faulkner (1962: 219).
[56] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 463).
[57] Cf. Faulkner (1962: 219, 310); Gardiner (1957: 487).
[58] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 533).

category G (birds):  (G1), transliterated as the long vowel *ɜ*, can often in practice look identical to  (G4), which carries the phonetic value *tỉw*;[59] both of these signs can also look very similar to  (G21), a biliteral sign carrying the phonetic value *nḥ*.[60] The sign  (G38) *gb*, can in practice look indistinguishable from  (G39) *sɜ*;[61] and  (G37), frequently used as a determinative in words denoting negative terms and concepts, can look identical to  (G36), which carries the phonetic value *wr*.[62] Some signs can also look similar when handwritten, particularly the category of small, round signs: (O50), which carries the phonetic value *sp*, can look indistinguishable from (AA1) *ḫ*, and  (N5); the latter can act as a biliteral sign carrying the phonetic value *rˁ*, or as a determinative in words relating to the sun and the passing of time.[63]

Learning to distinguish between similar-looking signs also requires ample reading practice and the extensive memorisation of vocabulary. To learn vocabulary, students must learn to recognise where a word ends and the next one begins; this can itself be challenging because the hieroglyphic script does not operate with spaces between words. Finally, an additional challenge comes from the lack of 'standardised' orthography: carved hieroglyphic signs can look very different from handwritten forms, which may be crude and simple, or ornate and detailed, depending on the individual scribe's hand; becoming accustomed to different orthographic styles requires significant reading practice. While these challenges are significant, they are not insurmountable obstacles from a pedagogical perspective. As I will demonstrate below, they can be overcome through a combination of patient instruction and level-appropriate study materials. The advent of digital resources also brings with it great potential for the creation of new pedagogical tools and self-study aids.

[59] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 467).
[60] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 469).
[61] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 471).
[62] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 471).
[63] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 485).

5. Towards a pedagogy of Egyptian language and hieroglyphs

Given the lack of any formal or standardised pedagogy for the ancient Egyptian language, individual teachers therefore vary in their approaches and methods. The approaches of Gardiner and Allen are centred around grammatical rules and paradigms, introduced in distinct chapters and illustrated by practice sentences; Allen also provides cultural contextualisation through essays on ancient Egyptian cultural concepts and ideas. Gardiner took the view that translating from English into Egyptian hieroglyphs forms an indispensable element in gaining reading proficiency;[64] however, this approach is predicated on the premise that the students are already familiar with grammatical concepts and intuitively know how to identify and translate elements such as nouns, prepositions and verbs. Keiko Koda has argued that L2 reading is inherently crosslinguistic and involves continuous interaction between the reader's native language and the second language, and that the transfer of competencies from the L1 languages is easily facilitated when the L2 language is similar in both structure and orthography.[65] There is a great linguistic distance between Middle Egyptian and Germanic languages such as English, both in terms of linguistic structure and orthography, which means that competencies from English are not readily transferred when reading hieroglyphs. Furthermore, in my experience, adult anglophone learners frequently only possess a rudimentary conscious understanding of English grammar and thus limited metalinguistic awareness, i.e. the ability to identify and reflect upon language forms and linguistic features;[66] for this reason, explaining, comparing and contrasting English with Middle Egyptian grammar has proven to be a more fruitful teaching method than translating from English into Egyptian. An example of this would be examining different combinations of the noun 'son', the pronoun 'he/his/him', and the verb 'to love':

---

[64] Cf. Gardiner (1957: xiii).
[65] Cf. Koda (2007: 1).
[66] Cf. Koda (2007: 2). The national curriculum for the UK was reformed in 2014, resulting in a renewed focus on English grammar after decades of neglect; https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study; retrieved on 22/3/2023. English grammar has not occupied any significant position in the US national curriculum since the 1960s; cf. Hancock & Kolln (2005).

 *mr=f s3=f* ‘He loves his son’

 *mr sw s3=f* ‘His son loves him’

 *s3=f mrr=f* ‘His son, whom he loves’

 *s3=f mr sw* ‘His son, who loves him’

Constructing such examples for comparison introduces the students to the grammatical concepts of verbs, nouns and pronouns; the examples also demonstrate how nouns and pronouns can be used as subjects and objects in sentences. The examples illustrate the importance of word order in both English and Middle Egyptian, and highlight some important differences between these languages.

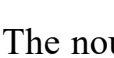
The first example employs the Egyptian verbal suffix conjugation with a so-called suffix pronoun acting as subject, and follows the Verb-Subject-Object word order; this stands in contrast to the Subject-Verb-Object word order found in English. This sentence also illustrates how Middle Egyptian produces the possessive meaning by attaching a suffix pronoun to a noun; by contrast, English produces the possessive meaning through the genitive pronoun *his*.[67] The second example also employs the Egyptian suffix conjugation; however, the word order in this example is Verb-Object-Subject because Middle Egyptian syntax requires pronouns to be placed before nouns.[68] The third example employs the so-called relative form of the suffix conjugation, which modifies the preceding noun clause ‘his son’; this form has no direct grammatical equivalent in English and therefore requires the insertion of a relative pronoun like ‘whom’ before the subject in the English translation. The final example employs the masculine present participle of the verb ‘to love’, with the Subject-Verb-Object word order, which like the

[67] Cf. Payne (2010: 124).
[68] Cf. Allen (2014: 184).

previous example has no direct English equivalent and requires the insertion of a relative pronoun like 'who' or 'which' before the verb in the English translation. Grammatical comparison of this kind also allows students to gradually become more comfortable with the grammatical and linguistic terms and concepts used in published textbooks. The approach of comparing and contrasting in this manner allows the students to make sense of their own use of English vocabulary and grammar, which over time increases their metalinguistic awareness and serves to improve their understanding and translation skills. This approach simultaneously introduces a number of different verb constructions, centred on the same blocks of vocabulary; by contrast, the textbooks published by Allen and Gardiner are designed around introducing verbal paradigms and sentence types separately in distinct chapters/sessions.

A core principle in my teaching philosophy is that anyone can learn another language given suitable learning tools, although the pace of language acquisition may vary significantly between individuals. My students are encouraged to join a Facebook group specifically dedicated to the discussion of Egyptian grammar and texts; this allows the students to help each other and feel like part of a learning community. Classroom learning should be an active process of discovery by the individual student; the primary role of the teacher is to encourage and facilitate learning through the provision of level-appropriate study materials and translation exercises.[69] My pedagogical approach for the beginner level is to focus on teaching vocabulary as a basic building block, with repeated exposure to individual words.[70] Rules for grammar and syntax are gradually introduced and contextualised through practice sentences, written in a legible and standardised font using digital hieroglyphic fonts such as the software JSesh;[71] we will return to this point below. Such practice sentences are read and discussed during the classroom sessions; contrary to Allen's approach, the focus remains on identifying distinct words rather than memorising and analysing grammatical paradigms. The students are provided with vocabulary lists for self-study and memorisation between sessions.

[69] Cf. Willis (1990: 131); Richards & Rodgers (2014: 222).
[70] A number of studies have demonstrated high correlations between knowledge of vocabulary and good reading comprehension, and that inefficient word recognition results in major obstacles for L2 readers; cf. Alderson & Urquhart (1985); Anderson & Freebody (1983); Carroll (1971: 97–156); Grabe & Yamashita (2022: 26); Koda (1988).
[71] https://jsesh.qenherkhopeshef.org/; retrieved on 22/3/2023.

Due to the pictorial nature of the hieroglyphic script, beginners tend to erroneously assume that there must always be a correlation between what the sign depicts and the phonetic sound/word it represents. For example, the sign  (D4) *ỉr* depicts a human eye, and it therefore seems logical to assume that it denotes the noun 'eye'; however, this word in fact denotes the verb 'to do/act/make/create'.[72] The noun 'eye' is instead written as  *ỉrt*, produced by adding a feminine T-ending onto the stem;[73] the vertical stroke acts as a determinative signifying ideogrammatic nouns.[74] Attempting to identify and memorise what each hieroglyphic sign depicts tends to be a common preoccupation for inexperienced learners; this, however, can be detrimental to the learning process as it takes focus away from learning vocabulary and familiarising oneself with variation spellings. As such, classroom-based teaching should ideally not involve any significant focus on what the hieroglyphs themselves depict; instead, students should be referred to Gardiner's sign categorisation as part of their self-study between sessions. Learning vocabulary through a combination of guided in-class translation exercises and homework between sessions helps to solidify the internal workings of the hieroglyphic script itself; it also tends to feel less intimidating for students than starting the learning process with grammatical rules and syntax. Rote memorisation of grammar rules and declensions does not form part of my pedagogical approach at any stage, as doing so would take the focus away from learning vocabulary;[75] furthermore, such mechanical grammar memorisation would not adequately prepare students for any variation spellings and abbreviated orthography they may encounter when reading ancient Egyptian texts.

As students progress from the beginner stage to the intermediate level, they face the abovementioned scarcity of accessible textbooks and text editions; to compensate for this, I have created a digital primer in PDF format with an array of grammatical examples and explanations written in jargon-free English, which the students can consult between sessions as a self-study tool. The in-class

[72] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 450).
[73] Cf. Faulkner (1962: 25).
[74] Cf. Gardiner (1957: 534–5).
[75] Such memorisation is frequently associated with the Grammar-Translation Method of the 19th and early 20th century, which involves mechanical translation of artificial practice sentences both from and into the target language; cf. Richards & Rodgers (2014: 5–6).

teaching for the intermediate level builds on my beginner-level approach of learning vocabulary through examining practice sentences and short text excerpts; in addition, my teaching at this level focuses more on reading longer segments of texts in order to solidify metalinguistic awareness and increase the students' confidence in their own ability to read independently. This is achieved by reading a mix of pre-selected text excerpts given to students as homework between sessions, and by reading unseen passages in class; the latter is an indispensable element in building confidence and translation skills. This in-class translation process should be a student-led and active process, during which students volunteer to read out loud their transliteration and translation; students are not required to produce output until they feel ready to do so. It is important during this activity for the teacher to be prepared to answer questions from students regarding any aspects of the grammar and text; the teacher should also be prepared to engage in error treatment. In my experience, the most effective forms of corrective feedback for Egyptian hieroglyphs at all levels are elicitation and metalinguistic comment;[76] this involves asking leading questions (e.g. 'How do we identify the infinitive form of the verb?') and explaining grammatical rules and paradigms without providing the student with the correct answer to their mistake. This approach allows the students to build on their existing knowledge to self-correct, and also serves to create a supportive environment in which mistakes are treated as paths to learning rather than 'sins' to be avoided.[77] Classroom teaching, which includes online classrooms, also provides an excellent opportunity to contextualise the vocabulary by discussing the wider cultural and historical setting of the text(s) in question. Students should be encouraged to evaluate their translation options and choices through comparison with both fellow students and published scholarly translations;[78] they should also be encouraged to consider and interpret the wider semantic and cultural meaning of the text and its vocabulary, which in turn may influence their translation decisions.

[76] The effectiveness of these methods is supported by the findings of Lyster & Ranta (1997).

[77] The 'affective filter hypothesis' treats negative emotional states such as anxiety and low confidence as blocks to second language learning, and confidence-building should therefore be a priority in the classroom; cf. Krashen (1985: 81). For teaching the intermediate stage, I have also found it fruitful to identify and discuss ancient scribal errors during class, as this has the effect of reducing the students' anxiety around their own errors.

[78] Evaluation forms an important part of so-called task involvement in L2 vocabulary learning, with a high degree of task involvement by the student resulting in more effective learning; cf. Hulstijn & Laufer (2001).

The text excerpts used in class and as homework, which represent a mix of handwritten scholarly editions and my own editions adapted with the JSesh software, provide a solid foundation for explaining and analysing vocabulary, grammar and syntax. The use of JSesh facilitates the adaptation of ancient Egyptian texts, including complex narrative texts, into beginner-friendly text passages with pedagogical aids such as spaces, sentence division and the addition of complementary phonetic signs, determinatives and grammatical markers omitted by the ancient scribes. In addition to being a highly valuable pedagogical tool for classroom-based teaching, the JSesh software also has the potential to be used for creating textbooks and text editions for the intermediate stage. It can also be used to re-publish Egyptian texts that are currently only published in handwritten format, and these texts can be edited and adapted as pedagogical reading editions aimed at non-specialists.

In addition to textbooks, the software can also be used to create fictional hieroglyphic texts designed specifically for pedagogy; we may take inspiration from the approach employed by the *Cambridge Latin Course* series, designed for self-study and accompanied by digital resources for enhanced learning.[79] This series of illustrated books, which is designed around reading chunks of texts of increasing complexity, follows the daily business of Roman characters living in Roman towns, with accompanying vocabulary lists, level-appropriate grammatical explanations and pages dedicated to contextualising the texts within Roman culture and history. The software JSesh has the potential to be used to create similar types of illustrated textbooks for Egyptian hieroglyphs, with fictional Egyptian characters living in Pharaonic Egypt, accompanied by pedagogical aids such as vocabulary lists and basic grammatical explanations. These aids could also be offered in digital formats. Such books would undoubtedly be beneficial from a pedagogical perspective, as they could be used for both classroom-based teaching and independent self-study; the students would also benefit from the cultural and historical contextualisation of the material.[80]

[79] https://www.clc.cambridgescp.com/; retrieved on 21/3/2023.
[80] Cf. Meyer, this volume.

6. Conclusion

As I have demonstrated in this article, learning to read Egyptian hieroglyphs comes with many challenges. As Egyptian is extinct as a spoken language, and its pronunciation is to a great extent uncertain, teaching and learning by necessity revolve around achieving reading competence rather than conversational proficiency. Some of the challenges in gaining reading proficiency are related to the learning tools available, e.g. textbooks, text editions for reading practice, and digital resources. Such resources are lamentably scarce for the intermediate level, which represents a stark contrast to the numerous resources available for the study of ancient Greek and Latin. This scarcity forms a significant obstacle for learners who wish to progress beyond the beginner stage, as it results in limited opportunities for reading more complex texts.

The grammatical system of Middle Egyptian, which represents the ideal stage of the Egyptian language for the beginner and intermediate levels, displays similarities to Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic. Anglophone learners tend to be unfamiliar with such languages and their syntactical features, such as the Verb-Subject-Object word order. The Middle Egyptian verbal system lacks tenses that correspond precisely to English tenses, and the correct English translation must often be inferred from context and by using nuanced judgement; furthermore, some Middle Egyptian verb constructions tend to look similar in writing and thus be difficult distinguish from each other. For these reasons, the correct identification and parsing of Egyptian verbs often represent significant barriers for anglophone learners.

The process of translating Egyptian hieroglyphs into modern languages also involves transliterating the signs into a Latin-derived transliteration alphabet; this process is not intuitive, and the alphabet must be memorised. This also involves learning the phonetic values of individual hieroglyphic signs, which may not correspond to a single letter; instead, signs can be biliteral or triliteral, carrying two or three phonetic values, respectively. Signs can also function as logograms for entire words, or act as silent determinatives expressing the semantic categories of the words to which they are attached. In addition, some signs may carry different phonetic values depending on how they are used; the matter is also complicated by the fact that some signs look similar and can thus be difficult to distinguish from each other. The lack of standardised writing results

in significant variations across different scribal hands and types of media; an inscription carved into a stone surface, for instance, may look vastly different from a handwritten text on papyrus.

The key factor in overcoming these challenges is the learning and memorising of vocabulary, including variant spellings; this is best achieved through reading practice, which can take place as a guided exercise in-class, and independently as self-study. Reading sentences and passages of increasing complexity allows the students to familiarise themselves with Egyptian vocabulary through exposure and repetition, which over time builds their confidence, and provides a good foundation for reading longer texts. The translation process should never be mechanical or rigid; instead, students should be encouraged to continuously evaluate their translation options and choices. Rather than inducing the students to engage in rote memorisation of grammatical rules, the teacher should gradually introduce and contextualise grammar and syntax through guided in-class reading practice; this process should also involve explaining English grammar for the purpose of comparison and contrast, which over time increases metalinguistic awareness. The classroom-based teaching must be supplemented by homework for self-study purposes, in the form of level-appropriate translation exercises and text excerpts. As students progress to the intermediate level and are able to read longer texts, the classroom-based teaching should be structured around reading more complex texts of different genres; this should also involve student-led discussion and analysis of the text's linguistic content and wider cultural context in order to deepen their comprehension of the vocabulary.

The open-source software JSesh is ideal for creating hieroglyphic practice sentences and text excerpts in a standardised, legible font; it also facilitates the use of pedagogical aids such as adding spaces between words, adding grammatical markers omitted by the ancient scribes, and adding determinatives to assist with the correct identification and translation of individual words. This type of software is also ideal for creating digital study materials such as vocabulary lists and grammar examples with accompanying explanations; it also has the potential to be used for creating intermediate-level textbooks, with level-appropriate examples, vocabulary lists and grammatical explanations. JSesh may also be used to re-publish Egyptian texts that are currently only available in handwritten format, and such texts can in this way be edited, formatted and abridged for use in both classroom-based teaching and independent self-study.

While the ability to read Egyptian hieroglyphs does not have wide practical application in today's world, it provides access to a vast body of literature produced by a remarkably long-lived ancient culture, whose language is the longest recorded in history.[81]

Understanding ancient Egypt increases our understanding of human history and how today's world came to be; for this reason, the ancient Egyptian texts should neither be dismissed as the curious relics of a lost world nor promoted as the mysterious remnants of intergalactic travellers in a remote and unknowable past. Ancient Egypt and its corpus of texts represent a legacy for all of humanity.

References

Alderson, J. C., & Urquhart, A. H. (1985). This test is unfair: I'm not an economist. In P. C. Carrell, J. Devine & D. E. Esky (eds), *Interactive approaches to second language reading.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 168-182.

Allen, J. P. (2014). *Middle Egyptian: An introduction to the language and culture of hieroglyphs* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Allen, J. P. (2011). *The debate between a man and his soul: A masterpiece of ancient Egyptian literature.* Leiden: Brill.

Allen, J. P. (2013). *The ancient Egyptian language: An historical study.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Allen, J. P. (2014). *Middle Egyptian literature: Eight literary works of the Middle Kingdom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Allen, J. P. (2020). *Ancient Egyptian phonology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Anderson, D. S., & Card, J. (2016). Alternatives and pseudosciences: A history of archaeological engagement with extraordinary claims. In J. Card & D. S. Anderson (eds), *Lost city, found pyramid: Understanding alternative*

[81] Cf. Winand (2011: 181) argues that the Egyptian language should form part of mainstream general linguistics because its long-recorded history allows it to contribute much to typologically-oriented studies.

archaeologies and pseudoscientific practices. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1-18.

Anderson, R. C., & Freebody, P. (1983). Reading comprehension and the assessment and acquisition of word knowledge. In B. Hutson (ed.), *Advances in reading/language research: A research annual.* Greenwich: JAI Press, 231-256.

Andersson, P. (2012). Alternative archaeology: Many pasts in our present. *Numen, 59,* 125-137.

Assmann, J., & Ebeling, F. (2020). The mnemohistory of Egypt: Approaches towards the understanding of Egypt in intellectual history. In M. J. Versluys (ed.), *Beyond Egyptomania: Objects, style, and agency.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 23-38.

Baines, J. (2007). *Visual and written culture in ancient Egypt.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bengsch, G., Davies, I., Said, F., & Szczepek Reed, B. (2020). Arabic complementary schools in England: Language and fundamental British values. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 33*(1), 50-65.

Brankaer, J. (2010). *Coptic: A learning grammar.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Carroll, J. B. (1971). Development of native language skills beyond the early years. In C. Reed (ed.), *The learning of language.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 231-256.

Champollion, J.-F. (1824). *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens égyptiens.* Paris: Imprimerie Royale.

Colla, E. (2007). *Conflicted antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian modernity.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Collier, M., & Manley, B. (1998). *How to read Egyptian hieroglyphs.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

El Daly, O. (2005). *Egyptology: The missing millennium. Ancient Egypt in medieval Arabic writings.* London: Routledge.

Fagan, G. (ed.). (2006). Diagnosing pseudoarchaeology. In G. Fagan (ed.), *Archaeological fantasies: How pseudoarchaeology misrepresents the past and misleads the public.* London: Routledge, 23-46.

Faulkner, R. O. (1962). *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian.* Oxford: Griffith Institute.

Gardiner, A. H. (1957). *Egyptian grammar: being an introduction to the study of hieroglyphs* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grabe, W., & Yamashita, J. (2022). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practise.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grant Hutton, M. (2014). *The Tutankhamen code.* Calwell: Inspiring Publishers.

Gray, L. (2007). *Introduction to Semitic comparative linguistics.* Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

Goldwasser, O. (2012). How the alphabet was born from hieroglyphs. *Biblical Archaeology Review, 36*(2), 40-53.

Hancock, C., & Kolln, M. (2005). The story of English grammar in United States schools. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 4*(3), 11-31.

Hulstijn, J. H., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning, 51*(3), 539-558.

Humbert, J. M. (1994). Egyptomania: A current concept from the Renaissance to postmodernism. In J. M. Humbert, M. Pantazzi & C. Ziegler (eds), *Egyptomania: Egypt in Western Art 1730–1930.* Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 21-26.

Junge, F. (2005). *Late Egyptian grammar: An introduction.* Translated by David Warburton. Oxford: Griffith Institute.

Koda, K. (1988). Cognitive process in second language learning: Transfer of L1 reading skills and strategies. *Second Language Research, 4,* 133-156.

Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language learning: Crosslinguistic constraints on second language reading development. *Language Learning, 57,* 1-44.

Krispijn, T. J. H. (2012). Writing Semitic with cuneiform script: The interaction of Sumerian and Akkadian orthography in the second half of the third

millennium BC. In A. de Voogt & J. F. Quack (eds), *The idea of writing.* Leiden: Brill, 181-218.

Layton, B. (2011). *A Coptic grammar with chrestomathy and glossary* (3rd ed.). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Lewis, B. (2012). *Angels, aliens and prophecy: The connection.* Bloomington: AuthorHouse.

Loprieno, A. (1995). *Ancient Egyptian: A linguistic introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Loprieno, A. (1996). Defining Egyptian literature: Ancient texts and modern theories. In A. Loprieno (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian literature: History and forms.* Leiden: Brill, 39-58.

Lowenthal, D. (2015). *The past is a foreign country – revisited.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19*(1), 37-66.

Manley, B. (2012). *Egyptian hieroglyphs for complete beginners.* London: Thames & Hudson.

Moshenska, G. (2017). Alternative archaeologies. In G. Moshenska (ed.), *Key concepts in public archaeology.* London: UCL Press, 122-137.

Moser, S. (2015). Reconstructing ancient worlds: Reception studies, archaeological representation and the interpretation of ancient Egypt. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory, 22*(4), 1263-1308.

Moyer, I. (2011). *Egypt and the limits of Hellenism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parkinson, R. B. (1997). *The tale of Sinuhe and other ancient Egyptian poems 1940–1640 BC.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Parkinson, R. B. (1999). *Cracking codes: The Rosetta stone and decipherment.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Payne, T. E. (2010). *Understanding English grammar: A linguistic introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Potter, B. (2005). *The tale of Peter Rabbit. Hieroglyphic edition* by Richard B. Parkinson. London: British Museum Press.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rocha da Silva, T. (2019). Brazilian Egyptology: Reassessing colonialism and exploring limits. In A. Bednarski, A. Dodson, T. L. Gertzen & H. Navratilova (eds), *Towards a history of Egyptology: Proceedings of the Egyptological Section of the 8th ESHS Conference in London 2018.* Münster: Zaphon, 127-146.

Selden, D. L. (2013). *Hieroglyphic Egyptian: An introduction to the language and literature of the Middle Kingdom.* Berkeley:

University of California Press.

Sethe, K. (1933). *Urkunden des Alten Reich: Erster Band.* Leipzig: J. C. Heinrich'sche Buchhandlung.

Strudwick, N. C. (2005). *Texts from the Pyramid Age.* Leiden: Brill.

Taylor Westerfeld, J. (2019). *Egyptian hieroglyphs in the late antique imagination.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Toscano-Fuentes, C. (2016). The relationship between musical aptitude and foreign language skills. In C. Fonseca-Mora & M. Gant (eds), *Melodies, rhythm and cognition in foreign language learning.* Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 48-56.

Tsarfaty, R. (2014). Syntax and parsing of Semitic languages. In I. Zitouni (ed.), *Natural language processing of Semitic languages.* Berlin: Springer, 67-128.

Vleeming, S. P. (1981). 'La phase initiale du démotique ancient. *Chronique d'Égypte, 56,* 31-48.

von Däniken, E. (1969). *Chariots of the Gods? Unsolved mysteries of the past.* Translated by Michael Heron. London: Souvenir Press.

Vycichl, W., & Worrell, W. H. (1942). Popular traditions of the Coptic language. In W. H. Worrell (ed.), *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 297-342.

Wahba, Z. Z. (2004). The life of the Coptic Church outside Egypt, with emphasis on the USA. In M. Immerzeel, J. van der Vliet, M. Kersten & C. van Zoest

(eds), *Coptic studies on the threshold of a new millennium: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden, August 27–2 September 2000.* Leuven: Peeters, 989-1000.

Watterson, B. (1985). *More about Egyptian hieroglyphs: A simplified grammar of Middle Egyptian.* Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Wengrow, D. (2006). *The archaeology of early Egypt: Social transformations in North-East Africa, 10,000 to 2650 BC.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weninger, S. (2011). Reconstructive morphology. In G. Khan, M. P. Streck, J. C. Watson & S. Weninger (eds), *The Semitic languages: An international handbook.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 151-178.

Willis, D. (1990). *The lexical syllabus: A new approach to language teaching.* London: Collins ELT.

Wilson, H. (1995). *Understanding hieroglyphs: A quick and simple guide.* London: Michael O'Mara Books.

Winand, J. (2011). Teaching ancient Egyptian: Between linguistics and philology. In B. Backes, C. Jones & A. Verbovsek (eds), *Methodik und Didaktik in der Ägyptologie.* Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 173-184.

Zauzich, K-T. (1992). *Discovering Egyptian hieroglyphs: A practical guide.* Translated by Ann Macy Roth. London: Thames & Hudson.

CONTEXTUALISING ANCIENT LANGUAGE TEACHING. THE CASE OF CLASSICAL ARMENIAN*

Robin Meyer
Université de Lausanne
robin.meyer@unil.ch

Abstract:

The teaching of ancient languages at university level is usually quite different from its counterpart in secondary schools: the latter will offer only a small number of such languages (e.g. Latin and Greek) as compared to the broader spectrum available at universities. At the same time, these secondary-school courses traditionally last longer and next to the introduction to the language include a basic education in its literature, culture, and history – which is not self-evidently the case at university level.

This paper argues that particularly for less-commonly studied languages, such contextualisation offers the learner much-needed insights into the workings of the language they are studying and facilitates the homogenisation of disparate learner groups. This claim is illustrated on the example of Classical Armenian: learners from different disciplines (theology, history, linguistics, etc.) take such a course, arriving with different abilities, background knowledge, expectations. Unless additional courses on Armenian history, etc. are provided, the learners' diverse interests can only be addressed as an integral part of language learning. This approach is advantageous for the maintenance of the learners' zeal and for a better understanding of literature. While the weighting of materials used should rely on the individual group's composition, a corresponding textbook should include them in roughly equal parts. Yet, all information should remain pertinent to the primary goal: language learning.

The solution proposed here is the seamless integration of such historical and cultural information in the grammatical exercises, readings, as well as the inclusion of regular excursus on relevant topics.

Keywords: language pedagogy, Classical Armenian, Latin, Ancient Greek, textbooks, university teaching, secondary education

1. Introduction

Learning and teaching foreign languages at any level, whether in primary or secondary school or indeed at university level, is a challenge for a variety of

reasons, not least because every learner is an individual with personal preferences, a different (linguistic) background, particular interests and motivations, and so on. For this reason, no single approach to teaching or learning a language fits all learners; at the same time, very few settings allow for all teaching practice and teaching materials to be adapted to an individual, or for a group to consist of sufficiently homogeneous learners.

For many widely-spoken (and thus widely-taught) modern languages, these difficulties are remedied at least to a certain extent by an abundance of teaching materials (textbooks, activity books, text editions, videos, interactive web applications, etc.). By contrast, the less widely a language is or was spoken, and the further back in time it was spoken, the fewer resources there are for any one language. For Latin and Ancient Greek, for instance, the number of existing resources resembles more that of modern languages than those available for Akkadian, Classical Armenian, or Tocharian.

Apart from this dearth of resources, these ‘smaller’ ancient languages differ from their ‘bigger sisters’ in not being taught outside a university setting. The resources available for such languages, often dated, make (implicit) assumptions about the academic and linguistic background or experience of the learner. These issues, together with other, more complex factors, have an impact on the kind and quality of teaching and learning that can be delivered in these languages.

The goal of this paper is to address these issues of quality in teaching materials, particularly in textbooks, and to suggest ways in which they can be improved. Two key improvements are suggested for the creation of future resources: (a) the closer imitation of secondary-level textbooks as far as number of exercises, simplicity of explanation, integration of extralinguistic information, and gamification, *inter alia*, are concerned; (b) the adoption of an integrative constituency-based approach, viz. tailoring presuppositions made, information provided, and texts chosen not to the ‘average’ learner, but to a number of frequent types of learners that engage with the language in question.

To give a more detailed overview of the situation, sections 2 and 3 outline the key commonalities and differences between secondary- and university-level textbooks in ancient languages, respectively, and correlate them to the different settings and circumstances they are used in. Section 4 contrasts the learning and teaching experience in ‘larger’ and ‘smaller’ languages at university level, taking into account teaching offers, constitutional diversity, and different motivations

for engaging with such languages. On the basis of these details, section 5 proposes specific guidelines for composing textbooks for such languages using the example of Classical Armenian.

2. Common features in ancient language textbooks

The key features shared by all language textbooks, whether for ancient or modern languages, is their purpose: to gradually increase the learner's competence and proficiency in the target language (TL). In order to do so, they all focus on the 'three EXs': *exposure* to a text and new grammatical feature(s) and lexical elements; *explanation* of said new feature(s) and elements; and *exercise*, that is the active repetition and training of the newly learned notions.

By necessity, there is limited variability in the order of these EXs: new content can either be introduced explicitly by exposition and then consolidated by reading and exercise (in whatever order), which constitutes a deductive approach to language learning; alternatively, the learner might be exposed to new content implicitly in a text, for the new elements then to be explained after reading and trained by exercises (in this order), which represents an inductive approach to learning.[1] In practice, both the learner and teacher can vary this imposed sequence; the choice is, however, indicative of the teachers' or textbook author's perspective on language learning and/or the expected audience.

The textual material used in textbooks commonly changes over the course of the book, with original texts, unadapted or with only limited adaptations, constituting the goal. Texts used at the very beginning of the learning journey are either composed by the author or so heavily adapted that they might as well have been; those books relying on unadapted texts from the beginning achieve this by abandoning the reading of coherent texts in favour of single (abridged) individual

[1] A third possibility consists in the separation of one or all of these elements from the others, e.g. in making reference to a standard (learners') grammar, or in producing texts, exercises, and grammatical explanation in different volumes. The latter approach can sometimes be found in secondary-level books where the availability of a teacher is structurally assured (e.g. for Latin, *Cursus Continuus*, Fink and Maier (1997); for Greek, *Hellas*, Maier (1997)); the former is more common at university-level books which foreground reading over grammatical comprehension. A final category are 'textbooks' that are effectively grammars accompanied by chrestomathies which often contain no exercises as such; cf. Meillet (1913) for Classical Armenian, Wegner (2007) for Hurrian, or Salvini and Wegner (2014) for Urartian.

sentences.[2] Where necessary, these texts are accompanied by an apparatus providing additional information, e.g. on cultural and historical background, lexical items beyond the core vocabulary, or syntactic aids; these allow for the early inclusion of material and constructions that the learner has not yet mastered. The choice of text depends on multiple factors, the most important of which in this context is the occurrence of the particular grammatical feature a chapter deals with;[3] in like fashion, composed texts seek to include these features, but do at the same time run the risk of over-representing them in the given passage.[4]

On the level of explanations, details about the formation of morphological paradigms and the syntax of particular constructions can be expected. Depending on the complexity of the language or the paradigm in question, morphological matters are commonly laid out in tabular form, with brief notes explaining matters like stem variation and the particularities of a specific inflectional class.[5] Questions of syntax are laid out differently, depending on their resemblance to metalanguage (ML) structures: where parallel constructions exist in target and metalanguage, they can be exploited and equated, limiting the need for additional description or explanation beyond the delineation of encoding differences.[6] Where this is not the case, new concepts are introduced with the necessary technical terminology for its description. In both cases, (simplified) target language examples are provided to illustrate the new construction and, where necessary, its varieties. To aid in the process of learning such constructions,

[2] Cf. for instance *Wheelock's Latin* (2011).
[3] Other factors include the time period or set of authors chosen for the textbook; the inclusion (or not) of texts of a particular genre, esp. poetry; and the content of the text in that more recognisable, interesting, or memorable texts are likely to be more effective than those fulfilling none of those criteria.
[4] A classic example of this is the emphasis and time devoted to the *ablativus absolutus* in Latin; owing to its particular and disproportional frequency in some authors which feature heavily on syllabi (e.g. Caesar, where it occurs ten times more frequently than in, e.g., Cicero; cf. Adams (2005, 75)), much more space is given to this construction than others.
[5] So, for instance, an introduction to Latin first-declension nouns in *-a* might note that their stems do not change due to inflection, and that, barring few exceptions, nouns in this class are grammatically feminine; by contrast, an exposition of third-declension nouns would have to underline that the stem is not entirely predictable on the basis of the nominative form, wherefore it needs to be learnt for each lexical item, that the same goes *mutatis mutandis* for its grammatical gender, and that a number of other factors like prosody contribute to the complexity of certain endings, such as the difference 'regular' and '*i*-stem' endings.
[6] Taking the example of the syntax of a simple clause, for instance, German and Latin encode subject and object similarly as nominative and accusative respectively; the key difference is the greater flexibility of Latin word order. In English, by contrast, further explanations of the case system will be required, as the learners' inherent understanding of a language with a CASE category cannot be leveraged.

auxiliary (viz. non-idiomatic) translations and mnemonics are at times employed.[7] Further explanations may be provided on the lexical level, so for instance as regards generalisable rules on word formation, or to caution against confusing near-homonyms or homographs and 'false friends'.[8]

The exercises, in turn, serve to consolidate and apply the new lexical, morphological, and syntactic information. They can take the shape of matching exercises between target and metalanguage forms or expressions, the production of grammatical forms on the basis of metalanguage equivalents or grammatical glosses (or, vice versa, the recognition and parsing of such forms), the filling of gaps in texts or example sentences with the appropriate form, or additional translations of texts or sentences. Among the exercises, the translation direction TL⇒ML is always present; simple production exercises ML⇒TL do also occur, but are often restricted in scope and may not include composition in the TL.[9] In contrast to modern languages, these exercises do not usually include interactive elements or try to relate to everyday situations as the learning goals in ancient languages and their historical context do not tend to focus on active and spontaneous communication.[10] In addition to target-specific exercises for each section or chapter, a number of textbooks include regular revision chapters in which a number of recent grammatical concepts are revised, thus further consolidating them and, through combining them, making it somewhat less predictable for the learner which competences are meant to be tested, simulating a setting closer to the 'real world' application of acquired skills.

---

[7] In Greek, for instance, synchronically irregular aorist imperatives with oxytone accent can be remembered by German learners with the mnemonic 'Labet eure Eltern in der Kneipe' (λαβέ *labé*, εὑρέ *heuré*, ἐλθέ *elt^{h}é*, ἰδέ *idé*, εἰπέ *eipé*); as for auxiliary translations, the Latin *ablative absolute*, e.g. in the phrase *his rebus cognitis*, is often translated literally to being with as 'with these things having been recognised' before a more idiomatic translation is achieved. On the efficacy of mnemonics for language learning, cf. Paivio and Desrochers (1981); for the potential of etymology-based explanations and memory aides, cf. Boers, Eyckmans, and Stengers (2007).

[8] Taking the example of Latin, these might include notes on suffixes like *-tio* for deverbal processual abstracts (e.g. *laudo* 'praise', *laudatio* 'commendation'), the difference between *mălus* 'bad' and *mālus* 'apple tree; mast', or the false equivalence between Latin *lego* 'read' and Greek λέγω 'say'.

[9] The sense or nonsense of 'prose composition' in ancient languages is a topic that has been debated for a while, with advocates and strong arguments in both camps; cf., e.g., Ball and Ellsworth (1989) against and Saunders (1993) in favour. This argument is picked up again briefly in section 5 below.

[10] That being said, books exist that take an immersive approach and use the target language as a metalanguage, too, as might be found in some modern language textbooks; cf., e.g., the series *Lingua latina per se illustrata* edited by Hans Ørberg (1991). Equally, 'Spoken Latin' and, to a lesser extent, 'Spoken Ancient Greek' approaches and courses do exist and have their advocates, although quantitative data on their effectiveness are not yet available; cf. Coffee (2012) ; Rasmussen (2015).

While much of the pedagogical aspect of language learning and teaching is, by necessity, related to the classroom or similar settings, textbooks by themselves also at least implicitly take into account certain elements of 'good practice'. The division into chapters which, as regards competences acquired and material discussed, build upon one another consequentially illustrates the notion of Vygotsky's *Zone of Proximal Development* in that new texts in a chapter, for instance, are just challenging enough that they would go beyond the learner's competences without further instruction from either an experienced practitioner (= teacher) or explanatory textbook notes.[11] In those books where structurally the new text appears before the explanations, the learner is further encouraged to engage in problem-based learning;[12] this inductive approach allows the learner to engage with the new material in a practical setting and to attempt to make sense of it on their own. This approach, taken together with the gradual build-up of competences and the presentation of new concepts and lexical items in digestible chunks, is conducive to deep-learning and thus both long-term retention of the relevant concepts and materials as well as a more thorough understanding of the language.

3. Differences in ancient language textbooks

Up to this point, textbooks targeted at secondary and university level are, within the boundaries of some free variation of order and pedagogical approach, similar. There are, however, a number of key differences on the pedagogical and linguistic level. The four most noteworthy are, in order of treatment below: the degree of gamification; the provision of extralinguistic information; the discussion of linguistic variety (diachronic and otherwise); and the degree of detail in grammatical descriptions.

Secondary-level textbooks, being targeted at a younger audience usually in their early teens, commonly contain more 'fun' elements that further language learning, e.g. word-search grids, riddles, jokes, or other game-like activities

[11] For a modern perspective on this concept, cf. Wass and Golding (2014).

[12] This approach mirrors the 'real-life' application of translation and analytical competences well in confronting the learner with new and unknown material ('the problem') that they need to understand; ideally, the material is chosen in such a way as to allow for comprehension of most parts except for the new elements, which can be decoded either contextually, by reference to notes, or with the help of an experienced language user. On this approach, cf. Duch, Groh, and Allen (2001).

which require and encourage active use of TL knowledge.[13] The purpose of such activities is both to keep the interest of the learner, who at this age and level may possess a less developed internal motivation for language learning than their older counterparts;[14] and to engage the learner's mind and TL skills beyond the normal remit of grammatical exercises and translations.[15] The inclusion of such game-like elements lends itself to the secondary-level context, since language learning here is commonly a much more extensive process, stretching over three to five years the grammatical material that is usually covered in (less than) one year in intensive university courses.

The second difference that is, at least in part, owed to the extensive nature of secondary-level teaching is the integration of extralinguistic material in the textbooks. This includes information about the literary, cultural, and religious history of the culture(s) most closely associated with the TL as well as its reception in various forms elsewhere. This can be achieved through information panels, combining text and images, exercises on grammar or lexicon related to particular aspects of the TL's culture, or even secondary texts, chosen less for their linguistic form and more for their content. At this level, the provision of such information is imperative to ensure that the learner acquires an adequate background knowledge and holistic understanding of the culture whose language they are studying; without this information, the goal of reading and comprehending original texts would be imperilled, since the understanding of literature requires competences beyond the decoding of the linguistic information in a text.[16]

By contrast, textbooks directed at university-level learners tend to include more information about linguistic variation, in terms of both diaphatic (≈ stylistic) differences in particular text types and diachronic changes.[17] This

[13] Fink and Maier (1997, 177, 185), for instance, uses comic strips translated into Latin for a light break, but equally includes original material like curse tablets for discussion and information. More recent suggestions, admittedly at university level, include the translation of popular music as a teaching tool; cf. Kershner (2019) and the example of Taylor Swift.

[14] Motivation can, of course, differ vastly in a cohort, especially in University settings where there are particular language requirements.

[15] This could include the integration of computer-assisted elements, which have proven effective in second-language learning; cf. Dehghanzadeh *et al.* (2021).

[16] Cp. the related discourse in modern language teaching which emphasises that the explicit connection of culture(s) and language (varieties) is best made while acquiring a foreign language; cf. Kramsch (1995); Kramsch, Cain, and Murphy-Lejeune (1996).

[17] That is not to say that such differences are not mentioned or explained in secondary-level books, but rather that they are treated less systematically there. References to variant forms such as Lat. *audīstī* vs

difference is, at least in part, owed to the different goals at secondary and university level: where secondary-level learners' attainment is measured against a particular canon of 'classical' texts, the overarching goal at university level is the acquisition of broader, less limited or predefined competences, even though the initial stages of learning and the canon of texts might be comparable. Secondly, intrinsically motivated learners at university level *might* show more interest in (and thus patience for) such particular differences than their younger counterparts, especially in the case of 'non-standard' or 'non-classical' forms.

Finally, the degree of detail in the description of various grammatical elements or structures will often vary according to the intended audience of the textbook.[18] Certain forms, for instance, might be foregone because they do not (or rarely) occur in the relevant canonical texts.[19] Similarly, forms that pertain to a defunct or archaic category such as the locative in Latin or instrumental in Greek, will be presented as lexical items rather than as systematic (if only sporadically used or attested) forms. At a different level, certain apparent irregularities in synchronic patterns may successfully be explained on the basis of relatively simple diachronic developments, thus saving the learner from having to learn by heart a set of irregular forms which could, instead, be regularly derived by means of an additional (diachronically informed) rule.[20] Conversely, there are constructions that are treated at greater length at secondary-level books (e.g. absolute constructions or deontic verbal adjectives), perhaps since they constitute (at least at surface level) TL structures that have no parallels in the ML. This treatment at greater length does not, however, necessarily equate to greater depth, but rather to a less steep learning curve and a more gradual introduction of new elements.

---

audīvistī (2SG.PF.IND.ACT) or *amāvēre* vs *amāvērunt* more commonly occur as footnotes or comments upon first encounter rather than as a part of paradigmatic instruction.

[18] This does not refer to differences in grammatical terminology (e.g. the so-called 'future passive participle' vs gerundive in the grammar of Latin), but rather to the level of analysis and inclusion (or not) of marginal forms.

[19] In the case of Latin, for instance, modern secondary-level textbooks commonly do not mention the 'future imperative forms' (type *ītō, ītōte, euntō* 'thou shalt/he shall/they shall go') as such forms are barely found in the 'core' authors.

[20] A straightforward example is the formation of the weak aorist in Ancient Greek, the stem of which is formed by adding -c- to the present stem (παιδευ- *paideu-* ⇒ παιδευc- *paideus-*); the exception are liquid- and nasal-stem verbs, after whose stem-final consonants the aorist marker -c- is lost in diachrony under compensatory lengthening of the stem vowel (ἡδυν- *hēdun-* ⇒ *ἡδυνc- **hēduns-* ⇒ ἡδῦν- *hēdūn-*). Learning this rule (and a small set of concomitant others), the learner escapes the rote learning of 'irregular' principal parts.

These differences are the result largely of different settings, exigencies, and goals at the two levels compared. This does not mean, however, that these different approaches cannot be usefully employed in the other setting, as section 5 suggests with reference to 'smaller' ancient languages, for which the textbook offer is less abundant and, at times, less pedagogically thought-through.

4. Learning and teaching 'smaller' ancient languages

While ancient languages have a number of things in common – their relative age, a limited (if often substantial) corpus of texts, and the fact that they are no longer spoken as native languages – two broad and internally diverse sets of these languages can be distinguished both on a practical and pedagogical level. This distinction is between the 'larger' and 'smaller' languages, where 'large' and 'small' refer not to the importance of the languages, but rather to the size of the scholarly community which traditionally is interested in them.

'Larger' languages, such as Latin, Ancient Greek, or Biblical Hebrew have been studied and taught consistently at universities and often also at schools since the advent of formal education. Their study forms a significant part of one or more degree courses at undergraduate level, where they are ideally taught by experienced and/or pedagogically qualified staff specialising in language learning.[21] Teaching materials, in the form of textbooks, graded readers, and text editions with extensive commentaries, abound in these languages and are being actively (re-)developed and expanded. These languages are studied usually in their own right, that is to access and work with the literature composed in them, or for closely associated purposes, such as engaging with the history, archaeology, culture, or theology associated with that language.[22] For this reason, degree courses in these subjects usually include an extensive programme of not only language classes, but also of lectures and seminars on the above-mentioned

[21] This role is taken on, for instance, by lectors, teaching-stream lecturers, or in the, German system (but increasingly rarely), *Lehrkräfte für besondere Aufgaben*, who spend a significant amount of time and effort in teaching ancient languages and are often actively researching ancient language pedagogy. For a historical overview of the German system, cf. Brüssel (2018).

[22] This sets them apart from those older languages like Old Church Slavonic, Old French, or Old High German which, at least most commonly, are studied as part of a degree in the modern variety of that language or as part of historical linguistics courses.

disciplines, which the learner is more or less free to choose from and to specialise in.

By contrast, 'smaller' ancient languages are taught and approached rather differently. For a variety of reasons,[23] their study often does not have the same time-depth and, at any rate, does not extend to secondary-school level.[24] When they are discovered by learners at universities where they are taught, this usually takes place in the context of an auxiliary or secondary subject – learners studying theology, for instance, and interested in the interactions between various manifestations of the Christian faith may need to study one of the languages of the Orthodox or Eastern Churches. Similar trajectories could be sketched out for students of history, linguistics, art history, literature, etc. Consequently, there is rarely an undergraduate degree associated immediately with these languages, as specialisation is reserved for Master's and doctoral level courses.[25] A corollary of this status as a non-primary subject (in the sense of undergraduate studies) is that teaching provisions are often less developed in breadth or depth and provided by a smaller number of staff who may well be teaching outside their immediate area of expertise and research. These limitations manifest themselves also in the smaller range of available teaching materials and their at times wanting pedagogical approach. Furthermore, many of these 'smaller' languages are further removed from the historical and cultural background of the learner than would be the case for the 'larger' languages; that is to say that many (or even most) students of Latin and Greek in Western Europe and North America, even if they have not acquired the language prior to commencing their university-level degree, will have been exposed to one extent or another to Greco-Roman culture,

[23] Three key reasons are later attestation, lack of an autochthonous grammatical tradition, and a later rise in scholarly interest. Classical Armenian, for instance, was attested in lapidary inscriptions more than a millennium after Latin; beyond a 'translation' of a Greek grammar and commentaries thereon (Lamberterie 2022; Meyer 2023), a historical grammatical tradition is absent; and modern interest in the language in the West did not arise until the end of the nineteenth century with the works of Heinrich Hübschmann (1875).

[24] There are, of course, exceptions. Sanskrit, for instance, is taught even before secondary level at St James Preparatory School in the UK. Biblical Hebrew is still taught at a small number of secondary schools in Germany; as with Latin and Ancient Greek, a federally recognised attestation of language competence (*Hebraicum*) exists, paralleling similar provisions for the other ancient languages (*Latinum*, *Graecum*).

[25] Certain courses in Ancient Middle Eastern Studies constitute exceptions to this rule, since learning Ancient Egyptian and/or other languages of the period is an integral part of such courses, e.g. at the University of Oxford. Whether the goals and emphases of such a course are better compared with those in Greek and Roman language and literature or rather with those in archaeology and ancient history is, perhaps, a matter for debate.

for instance, whether directly in secondary-level history classes or indirectly through the reception of Greco-Roman literature and myth in Western literature and art. For ancient languages and cultures other than these, at least in a Western European and North American context, a similar or comparable background knowledge cannot be expected.

In short, what sets learning and teaching these 'smaller' languages apart from the 'larger' ones is a combination of (at least) three factors: exoticity, constitutional diversity, and structural limitations. In other words: learners are less familiar with even the most basic aspects of the language and culture to be studied; they decide to learn this language for a variety of reasons, often coming with different backgrounds and particular goals in mind; they are faced with a more limited teaching offer and resources, and staff who need to be jacks-of-all-trades.

In the context of ancient-language teaching in general and the composition of textbooks in particular, the resolution of structural problems is, it goes without saying, out of scope; the diversity of the learners interested in such 'smaller' languages, by contrast, need not be changed but needs to be cherished. What a textbook can address, however, is the exoticity of these languages, namely by considering how the differences outlined above and the lack of background knowledge can or need to be dealt with in order to best serve the learner and teacher. With this in mind, and in view of the differences between secondary- and university-level textbooks outlined above, three guiding questions present themselves:

1. Given the structural differences between teaching 'smaller' and 'larger' languages, *how can textbooks be adapted to better compensate for them?*
2. Considering the similarities between secondary-level learners and those learning a 'smaller' language at university, *what lessons can be learnt from the make-up of secondary-level textbooks?*
3. In the light of a diverse learner constituency, *how can a textbook be conceptualised to best serve all learners?*

The next section addresses these questions on the basis of Classical Armenian, taking into account the types of learners interested in this language, the structural challenges arising where it is taught, and the issues with current textbooks.

5. The case of Classical Armenian

Armenian is an Indo-European language like Latin and Greek and shares a great number of grammatical concepts and principles with both of them.[26] At the same time, owing to (a) what Olsen (1999, v) calls the 'horror chamber of historical phonology', (b) extended contact with Iranian languages, and (c) word-final apocope in Proto-Armenian, the lexicon bears little to no surface resemblance to anything learners may be familiar with and does, therefore, require large amounts of memorisation.

The language was first committed to writing in the fifth century CE for the purpose of translating the Bible into Armenian. The earliest literature consists of a mixture of historiographical and hagiographical texts and translations of Greek religious or philosophical material.[27] It was used in more or less the same, so-called 'classical' form until at least the high Middle Ages. In this period, an extensive philosophical and poetic tradition develops, which is influenced both by (Byzantine) Greek, Iranian and Arabic thinking and imagery;[28] the ensuing Middle Armenian period sees greater diatopic, that is geographical, differentiation and further influences from other languages. These connections with other languages and cultures form one pathway leading learners to Classical Armenian.

Beyond its literature and philosophy, Armenian sources are of interest to historians of late antiquity and the Middle Ages for the role that Armenia(ns) played in the political and belligerent interactions between the great empires on which it either bordered or of which it formed part, at the intersection between Romans or Byzantines on the one hand and Arsacids, Sasanians, Rashiduns or Umayyads on the other.[29] As a result of the early Christianisation of the Armenian Kingdom at the beginning of the fourth century at the hands of Gregory the Illuminator, the autocephalous, non-Chalcedonian Armenian Apostolic Church

[26] All three are inflected languages, share a similar (but not identical) case system with parallel concepts (e.g. nominative subjects, direct objects in the accusative, etc.) and very flexible (but not unrestrictedly free) constituent order. For the question of the place of Armenian in the Indo-European language family, cf. Clackson (1994); Martirosyan (2013); for the secondary influence of Greek on Armenian translation literature and its technical vocabulary, cf. Muradyan (2012).
[27] For an overview of the Armenian (pre-)literary tradition, cf. Hacikyan *et al.* (2000).
[28] For an overview of the cross-cultural influences on Armenian art, cf. Maranci (2018); for linguistic aspects, cf. the contributions by Clackson, Meyer, and Morani in the forthcoming volume on Armenian linguistics in the series *Handbook of Oriental Studies* (Orengo, Tinti and Meyer in press).
[29] For an overview of the early history of Armenia, cf. Garsoïan (1997a, 1997c, 1997b, 1997d).

arose and has been the Armenian national church ever since; its differences with the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and other Oriental Orthodox churches in matters doctrinal and liturgical constitute a well-developed field of study. Both of these dimensions, historical and theological, represent two further pathways to learning Classical Armenian. The fact that Classical Armenian remains the liturgical language of the Armenian Apostolic Church further leads to a certain, at least passive familiarity with the language among observant (heritage) speakers of the modern varieties of Armenian.

A fourth trajectory besides literature, history and theology is historical or Indo-European comparative linguistics, as already alluded to initially. Serving so diverse a constituency – in terms of interests as well as backgrounds – is inevitably a challenge that each language teacher will have to address by themselves and in view of the particular and changing make-up of the groups they are teaching. A textbook can, however, provide considerable support in this undertaking in two particular ways. Firstly, by ensuring that, especially in later chapters, the choice of reading texts is sufficiently diverse as to interest and inform all constituencies, at least in turn. This could, for instance, be achieved most readily by including one primary reading passage, used also for the introduction of the chapter's grammatical feature(s), as well as a secondary one, in which said feature is reinforced and which can serve a different interest than the primary one.[30] Secondly, although Classical Armenian is taught only at university-level, textbooks for this language can benefit from an approach otherwise more commonly found in secondary-level books, as outlined above, namely by including pertinent extralinguistic material that corresponds to the needs of its typical learner groups. This could take the shape of info-boxes, graphically separate from the rest of the chapter (e.g. through background shading or marginal boxes). Their content is not necessary for learning the language, but provides further background or details to a text just read or a particular event or concept mentioned therein as well as making suggestions for further reading. In this way, the learner can expand their knowledge according to their interests and beyond the confines of the language alone without this being an integral part of the language learning programme.

[30] Assuming the four groups outlined above – literature, history, theology, and linguistics – only three need to be served *sensu stricto* since linguists learn the language for its own sake.

The inclusion of such materials has further benefits or, to put it differently, is essentially required for other, structural reasons. As outlined in section 4 above, one key difference in learning a 'smaller' ancient language such as Classical Armenian as compared to, e.g., Latin and Greek is the essentially complete absence of any background knowledge or cultural preconceptions in the learner – which even for the latter cannot be simply assumed anymore, it should be added. To ensure that they benefit most completely from the language learning experience and to give the necessary background to not only read and translate, but also understand the texts they are faced with, the provision of extralinguistic information is paramount. Especially learners outside a degree programme and thus potentially without support of an experienced teacher or language user will benefit from such an approach, which goes as far in substituting for additional lectures as a print medium with limited scope is able to. But even where Classical Armenian teaching is provided as part of a degree programme,[31] it is usually only one person who undertakes the language teaching and is, at the same time, responsible for all other elements of the curriculum, no matter whether they pertain to their research or teaching speciality.[32] In these circumstances, a textbook providing extralinguistic information can help guide the teacher in establishing the basics, in the expansion of the curriculum, or by allowing them to relegate non-linguistic instruction to the book.

The constitutional diversity of those learning Classical Armenian has another corollary, namely their different background in or experience with other ancient languages. Extant textbooks such as that of Thomson (1989) or Mondon (2012) presuppose implicitly that the learner be familiar with Latin and/or Ancient Greek, as they rely on references to similarities between those languages and Classical Armenian for the explanation of a particular phenomenon,[33] or at least

[31] Returning to the examples of Germany, the UK, and Switzerland, regular courses in Classical Armenian can only be found (or could be found until recently) at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Prof. Dr. Armenuhi Drost-Abgarjan) and at Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg (Prof. Dr. Daniel Kölligan); in the UK, it is only taught at Oxford (Prof. Dr. Theo Maarten van Lint); and in Switzerland only at the Université de Genève (Prof. Dr. Valentina Calzolari). In each case, the context in which courses are given varies widely, from a theological to a linguistic perspective.

[32] There are, of course, exceptions; in the Republic of Armenia and in areas with a significant diaspora community such as Paris (INALCO), Fresno, CA (California State University) or Los Angeles (UCLA), Armenian is studied in a broader context and with more staff.

[33] Thomson (1989, 37), for instance, introduces the five Armenian verbal classes or conjugations without an explicit explanation of what a 'conjugation' is. As for matters of voice or valency, he writes: 'Verbs in եմ [em] which are transitive have an intransitive and passive forms in իմ [im]. Thus սիրեմ [sirem] I love, սիրիմ [sirim] I am loved; or ժողովեմ [žołovem] I gather (transitive), ժողովիմ

assume general competence in traditional grammar.[34] Such knowledge cannot be assumed any longer, however, since not all learners will have the required background, and because it would make the book less usable to autodidacts who might have a background other than those described above. While this does not mean that no comparison to other ancient languages must be made, they cannot be relied upon for explanatory purposes; instead, an approach like that taken in Ruppel (2017), which gradually and clearly introduces and explains grammatical concepts and terminology, is needed.

Similarly, both textbooks just mentioned provide grammatical exercises to test the understanding of the morphology discussed in the chapter; Thomson (1989) abandons these quite quickly, however, in favour of simple translations into the TL, while Mondon (2012) does not employ the latter at all. In the later chapters of their books, both reduce the exercises to text-analytical tasks. While there are arguments for and against TL-directed exercises like composition, in small measure they aid in developing a bidirectional vocabulary and should be included in textbooks; their goal is not to ensure fluent active command of the TL, but rather to help develop analytical skills beyond the morphological level in raising questions concerning syntactic constructions and idiomatic expressions, better remembered through targeted active application than only by passive encounter. Morphosyntactic exercises must continue throughout the book for as long as new morphological and/or syntactic elements are introduced that the learner is required to have an active understanding of.[35] As concerns reading passages, both books start reading original or slightly adapted texts as early as possible, but restrict themselves to New Testament texts, which is both limiting as far as constituency is concerned as well as linguistically problematic.[36] As much as Classical Armenian grammar is, in many respects, less complex than that of Ancient Greek or Sanskrit, learners would nevertheless benefit from revision

[žołovim] I come together' (transliteration added). The notions of (in-)transitivity or active/passive voice are assumed to be familiar phenomena. Mondon (2012, 3) improves on these and produces serviceable definitions.

[34] Taking once more the case of Classical Armenian, while Mondon (2012) provides clearer definitions (or definitions at all) of some such terms, he still presupposes familiarity with terms such as 'conjugation' and 'adjective'. Given the absence of the former in English as a grammatical concept and the limited teaching of grammatical terms at secondary level outside of foreign language teaching, even such simple terms must be defined.

[35] See Ruppel's paper in this volume on the question of what learners need active and passive understanding of.

[36] On the idiosyncrasies of biblical Armenian, cf. Coulie (1994); Meyer (2018; in press).

chapters as well; these could also include more applied or gamified ways of testing the acquired skills, e.g. by presenting simple manuscript extracts or inscriptions for decipherment and translation, crossword puzzles, or word grids. All of these would engage the learner creatively in language-related problem-solving and use their skills outside the grammar-translation paradigm.

In sum, the measures proposed above represent an integrative, constituency-based tailoring of Armenian lexicon, grammar, texts and extragrammatical information to as diverse an audience as can be normally expected for this particular language. At the same time, the material should be presented in such a way that autodidacts and learners with different backgrounds can access the textbook equally well. On a more general, language-independent basis, the following procedure helps to identify the best approach for such tailoring:

1. Identify constituency groups
   (e.g. students in comparative literature, history, theology, linguistics, etc.)
2. Examine intersection of competencies
   (e.g. what, if any, other language learning background can be assumed)
3. Tailor the learning goals
   (e.g. which grammatical concepts and texts are core material, which more peripheral in view of the constituency)
4. Expand the frame of reference
   (e.g. by including secondary texts, extralinguistic information for individual groups)
5. Rinse and repeat
   (e.g. by including revision chapters, sufficient exercises of different types)

With the specific example of Classical Armenian and these general steps in mind, it turns out that the questions posed at the end of section 4 do not have individual answers, but one somewhat more complex one: ‘smaller’ ancient languages are learnt by students with a less developed background knowledge of the target culture, not dissimilar to learners at secondary-level; they come with different interests and pre-existing knowledge. Both of these differences can be addressed through the provision of well-chosen texts for reading and supplementary extralinguistic information, as would be the case in secondary-

level books. This approach equally compensates for the less amply developed staffing and teaching structure of such 'smaller' languages.

Likewise, these elements are useful from a pedagogical perspective. The inclusion of constituency-targeted extralinguistic material helps with the maintenance of motivation and self-regulation esp. of self-directed learners.[37] At the same time, the ensemble of information provided ensures that in perusing the textbook, the learner develops not only linguistic competences, but also acquires an extended set of relevant concepts and a pertinent vocabulary to successfully integrate into the relevant scholarly community and its discourse.[38] In doing so, this approach equally fosters deep-learning in coordinating the grammatical concepts and lexical material with texts pertinent to the various learner constituencies, thus making them more relevant, and in minimising rote learning in favour of rule-based understanding.[39] The perception of language learning as a relevant and indeed necessary skill is also showcased by the inclusion of such practical elements as learners might find useful in their academic or professional practice (e.g. as regards the reading of 'real-life' inscriptions); given the academic setting, the inclusion of references for further reading after the presentation of specific extralinguistic topics further underlines the relevance of the language and culture studied and thus may help in affirming the learners' resolve.[40] In short, this approach to language learning does its utmost to ensure that as wide an audience as possible is addressed in as compelling a fashion as possible to maintain or indeed increase learning motivation and create a subject-literate community of practice that can rely on the textbook as its primary source of information, even in the absence of a skilled practitioner.

[37] On the value of motivation and the benefits of self-regulated learning, cf. Cassidy (2011).
[38] On the creation of communities of practice and subject-specific literacy, cf. Wenger (1998). Regarding the importance of helping students to learn how to 'decode their discipline', cf. Middendorf and Pace (2004).
[39] On deep-learning in ancient languages, cf., e.,g., Houdt (2007) on teaching Latin. For the pedagogical potential of diachrony-based explanations, cf. Arteaga and Herschensohn (1995; 1998) on French and Lightfoot (2007) on German.
[40] On the advantages of coordinating teaching and research interests, cf. Griffiths (2004); Leston-Bandeira (2013); Fink (2013, 45).

6. Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to illustrate the differences between university- and secondary-level textbooks for ancient languages and those between 'smaller' and 'larger' ancient languages as regards their typical students and contexts. While the differences between textbook types came down largely to differing levels of details as regards the description and discussion of grammatical structures and the provision of extralinguistic material, the difference between learner groups and their backgrounds was more fundamental: for 'larger' ancient languages, access to text in the original language is the main goal (with language learning the necessary tool), while 'smaller' languages are often approached with more specific or practical goals by a more diverse group of learners, whose main interests may be more focused and for whom language learning is more of a tool.

A further difference consists in the structural provisions made at university level for 'smaller' languages, which less commonly constitute a degree course or major subject by themselves at undergraduate level and, in terms of staffing, are often taught in their entirety by a single post holder. This person is often in charge not only of teaching the language itself, but also a variety of associated other introductory courses, no matter their personal speciality. Such courses or equivalent provision of historical, literary, and cultural background is strictly necessary in the context of 'smaller' languages since learners are unlikely to be acquainted with the target language in a fashion comparable to the basic familiarity with, e.g., Latin or Greek culture as part of basic secondary schooling in the West.

To address these structural differences and deficiencies, this paper has argued that university-level textbooks for 'smaller' languages need to be modelled more closely on their secondary-level equivalents in providing a broader range of background information. This aids both the autonomous learner without access to supplementary lectures as well as university staff having to teach beyond their immediate expertise. The background information provided needs to be tailored to the core constituency of learners, viz. their purpose for learning the target language, both as regards the type of extralinguistic information introduced (historical, literary, theological, etc.) and the texts chosen for translation exercises. Likewise, other elements common to secondary-level textbooks such as plain-language, jargon-free explanations of grammatical features, revision

chapters, and copious (as well as partly gamified and/or applied) exercises need to be provided.

In the particular case of Classical Armenian discussed here, such a book remains a desideratum. While the textbooks currently in use are serviceable, they lack many of the above features. In the context of a limited offer of courses at few universities in Europe, such a textbook would significantly enhance the ability of learners to get acquainted with the language and its cultural background, thus potentially freeing up classroom time for more advanced topics and discussions. Additionally, a pedagogically more developed approach as presented here may be hoped to result in a better understanding and retention of the language by learners.

References

Adams, J. N. (2005). Neglected Evidence for Female Speech in Latin. *Classical Quarterly, 55*(2), 582–96.

Arteaga, D., & Herschensohn, J. (1995). Using Diachronic Linguistics in the Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal, 79*(2), 212–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05432.x

Arteaga, D., & Herschensohn, J. (1998). Diachronic Perspectives on the Teaching of New French. *The French Review, 71*(4), 607–20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/398855

Ball, R. J., & Ellsworth, J. D. (1989). Against Teaching Composition in Classical Languages. *The Classical Journal, 85*(1), 54–62. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3297487

Boers, F., Eyckmans, J., & Stengers, H. (2007). Presenting Figurative Idioms with a Touch of Etymology: More Than Mere Mnemonics? *Language Teaching Research, 11*(1), 43–62. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168806072460

Brüssel, M. (2018). *Altsprachliche Erwachsenendidaktik in Deutschland. Von den Anfängen bis zum Jahr 1945.* Heidelberg: Propylaeum.

Cassidy, S. (2011). Self-Regulated Learning in Higher Education: Identifying Key Component Processes. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(8), 989–1000.

Clackson, J. (1994). *The Linguistic Relationship Between Armenian and Greek.* Oxford: Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.2307/416105

Coffee, N. (2012). Active Latin: "Quo Tendimus?" *The Classical World, 105*(2), 255–69. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23264539

Coulie, B. (1994). Style et traduction: réflexions sur les versions arméniennes de textes grecs. *Revue des Études Arméniennes, 25,* 43–62.

Dehghanzadeh, H., Fardanesh, H., Hatami, J., Talaee, E., & Noroozi, O. (2021). Using Gamification to Support Learning English as a Second Language: A Systematic Review. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 34*(7), 934–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1648298

Duch, B. J., Groh, S. E., & Allen, D. E. (2001). *The Power of Problem-Based Learning: A Practical "How to" for Teaching Undergraduate Courses in Any Discipline.* Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Fink, G., & Maier, F., eds. (1997). *Cursus Continuus – Unterrichtswerk für Latin.* Bamberg: C. C. Buchner.

Fink, L. D. (2013). *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Garsoïan, N. G. (1997a). The Aršakuni Dynasty (a.d. 12–[180?]–428). In Hovannisian, R. G. (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Vol. 1: The Dynastic Periods, from Antiquity to the Fourteenth Century*. New York: St Martin's Press, 63–94.

Garsoïan, N. G. (1997b). The Emergence of Armenia. In Hovannisian, R. G. (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Vol. 1: The Dynastic Periods, from Antiquity to the Fourteenth Century*. New York: St Martin's Press, 37–62.

Garsoïan, N. G. (1997c). The Marzpanate. In Hovannisian, R. G. (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Vol. 1: The Dynastic Periods, from Antiquity to the Fourteenth Century*. New York: St Martin's Press, 95–116.

Garsoïan, N. G. (1997d). The Arab Invasions and the Rise of the Bagratuni (640–884). In Hovannisian, R. G. (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times, Vol. 1: The Dynastic Periods, from Antiquity to the Fourteenth Century*. New York: St Martin's Press, 117–142.

Griffiths, R. (2004). Knowledge Production and the Research–Teaching Nexus: The Case of the Built Environment Disciplines. *Studies in Higher Education, 29*(6), 709–26.

Hacikyan, A. J., Basmajian, G., Franchuk, E. S., & Ouzounian, N., eds. (2000). *The Heritage of Armenian Literature, Volume I: From the Oral Tradition to the Golden Age.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Houdt, T. van (2007). The Strategic Reading of Latin (and Greek) Texts: A Research-Based Approach. In Lister, B. (ed.), *Meeting the Challenge: International Perspectives on the Teaching of Latin*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 54–70.

Hübschmann, H. (1875). Ueber die stellung des armenischen im kreise der indogermanischen sprachen. *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen, 23*(1), 5–49.

Kershner, S. (2019). What Can Taylor Swift Do for Your Latin Prose Composition Students? Using Popular Music to Teach Latin Poetry Analysis Skills. *Teaching Classical Languages, 10*(2), 48–70.

Kramsch, C. (1995). The Cultural Component of Language Teaching. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 8*(2), 83–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908319509525192

Kramsch, C., Cain, A., & Murphy-Lejeune, E. (1996). Why Should Language Teachers Teach Culture? *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 9*(1), 99–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908319609525221

Lamberterie, C. de (2022). De la Grèce à l'Arménie, et d'Homère à la Bible: Transpositions culturelles dans la version arménienne de la grammaire de Denys de Thrace. In Alpi, F., Meyer, R., Tinti, I., & Zakarian, D. (eds), *Armenia Through the Lens of Time: Multidisciplinary Studies in Honour of Theo Maarten van Lint*. Leiden: Brill, 161–184. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004527607_009

Leston-Bandeira, C. (2013). Methods Teaching Through a Discipline Research-Oriented Approach. *Politics, 33*(3), 207–19.

Lightfoot, D. (2007). Language History for Teaching and Learning German. *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German, 40*(1), 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-1221.2007.tb00028.x

Maier, F., ed. (1997). *ΕΛΛΑΣ. HELLAS. Lehrgang des Griechischen.* Bamberg: C. C. Buchner.

Maranci, C. (2018). *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Martirosyan, H. (2013). The Place of Armenian in the Indo-European Language Family: The Relationship with Greek and Indo-Iranian. *Journal of Language Relationship, 10,* 85–137.

Meillet, A. (1913). *Altarmenisches Elementarbuch.* Heidelberg: C. Winter.

Meyer, R. (in press). (Un-)Bedingt Armenisch: Zur Unterdeterminiertheit der Altarmenischen Konditionalsätze. In Kovács, B., Koschmieder, U., & Pehlivanian, M. (eds), *Festschrift Armenuhi Drost-Abgarjan.* Halle-Wittenberg: Universitätsverlag.

Meyer, R. (2018). Syntactical Peculiarities of Relative Clauses in the Armenian New Testament. *Revue des Études Arméniennes, 38,* 35–83. https://doi.org/10.2143/REA.38.0.3285778

Meyer, R. (2023). The Armenian Version of the τέχνη γραμματική: A Linguistically Uncomfortable Compromise. In Bonfiglio, E., & Rapp, C. (eds), *Armenia & Byzantium without Borders*. Leiden: Brill, 39–61.

Middendorf, J., & Pace, D. (2004). Decoding the Disciplines: A Model for Helping Students Learn Disciplinary Ways of Thinking. In Middendorf, J. (ed.), *Decoding the Disciplines: Helping Students Learn Disciplinary Ways of Thinking*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1–12.

Mondon, J.-F. R. (2012). *GRABAR. ԳՐԱԲԱՐ. An Introduction to Classical Armenian.* Munich: LINCOM.

Muradyan, G. (2012). *Grecisms in Ancient Armenian.* Leuven: Peeters.

Olsen, B. A. (1999). *The Noun in Biblical Armenian. Origin and Word-Formation, with Special Emphasis on the Indo-European Heritage.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110801989

Ørberg, H., ed. (1991). *Lingua Latina Per Se Illustrata, Pars I: Familia Romana.* Viborg: Special-Trykkeriet.

Orengo, A.; Tinti, I., & Meyer, R., eds. (in press). *Armenian Linguistics, Vol. 23/2.* Handbook of Oriental Studies. Leiden: Brill.

Paivio, A., & Desrochers, A. (1981). Mnemonic Techniques in Second-Language Learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 73*(6), 780–95.

Rasmussen, S. T. (2015). Why Oral Latin? *Teaching Classical Languages, 6*(1), 37–45.

Ruppel, A. M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Salvini, M., & Wegner, I. (2014). *Einführung in die Urartäische Sprache.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Saunders, A. L. (1993). The Value of Latin Prose Composition. *The Classical Journal, 88*(4), 385–92. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3297586

Thomson, R. W. (1989). *An Introduction to Classical Armenian* (2nd ed.). Delmar, NY: Caravan Books.

Wass, R., & Golding, C. (2014). Sharpening a Tool for Teaching: The Zone of Proximal Development. *Teaching in Higher Education, 19*(6), 671–84.

Wegner, I. (2007). *Hurritisch. Eine Einführung* (Second revised edition). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wheelock, F. M., & LaFleur, R. A., eds. (2011). *Wheelock's Latin* (7th ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MIDDLE TIBETAN. DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION & TRANSLATION SKILLS FOR 'CLASSICAL' TEXTS BY SPEAKING TIBETAN*

Dirk Schmidt
University of Wisconsin–Madison
dschmidt27@wisc.edu

Abstract

Tibetan translation today is deeply tied to the academic field of Tibetan Studies and Tibetology. This entails a particular historical legacy, as well as a particular set of long-standing institutional and pedagogical practices – in both methods and materials – for teaching Tibetan. After exploring the background of these current practices, I put forward an alternative to learning and translating Middle Tibetan (or 'Classical Tibetan'). This comprehensive, collaborative, and community-centred approach is inspired by work in applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and translation studies; this article seeks to elaborate what we stand to gain from those fields, and how we can apply it to the Tibetan language-learning context. Within, I argue that adopting such an approach is not only justified; it also provides tangible benefits to both scholars and Tibetan speech communities, which still hold invaluable indigenous, living-tradition perspectives on textual meaning. In other words, rather than seeing the text-as-object from which we extract a translation-as-product, the aim within is to uncover a translation-as-social-practice that is constructive, inclusive, and reciprocal.

Keywords: Classical Tibetan, Colloquial Tibetan, Middle Tibetan, Modern Tibetan, translation, reading, speaking, integrated approach, applied linguistics, second language education, Tibetan Studies, SLA, second language acquisition

1. Introduction

In the field of 'Tibetan Studies' (or sometimes 'Tibetology'), there are texts and institutional practices aimed at 'learning', 'reading', and 'translating' a language called 'Classical Tibetan' as a second or foreign language. The methods and materials found in these high-prestige, official settings dominate the way

'Classical Tibetan' is taught, studied, and learned in both formal and informal spaces. This paper begins in Section 2 by asking *what* 'Classical Tibetan' is in the first place (2.1), and *where* it comes from and *who* uses it (2.2), before finally asking what those existing teaching practices are, and where *they* come from (2.3). After reviewing what the field practices, I then ask *why*? Why *these* practices, methods, and approaches? With this big 'why' question in mind, Section 3 proposes an alternative approach to learning 'Classical Tibetan', drawing on research from applied linguistics, second language acquisition (SLA), and translation studies. It is organised by the main benefits of this kind of approach, as I see them, in that this alternative is: (3.1) *comprehensive* in the language skills it seeks to develop, and their scope; (3.2) *collaborative* and cross-cultural; and (3.3) *community centred*, and bottom-up (rather than top-down). I conclude with some thoughts on how these ideas may shape our own scholarship and practices, and future directions Tibetan language learning may take.

2. Tibetan Studies: A brief history

2.1 What is 'classical' Tibetan?

2.1.1 A literary register of Middle Tibetan

> The classic[al] language of Tibet differs as much from the modern colloquial as does the English of Chaucer from the English spoken to-day; but whilst English literature has kept pace with the changes of speech that time induce, Tibetan literature has stood still for many centuries. (Henderson 1903:i)

Written Tibetan is not an ancient language. The earliest Tibetan writings date to its inception in the 7th century, at the behest of Emperor Srong-btsan sgam-po, for the administrative and religious[1] purposes of the Tibetan Empire (Hill 2010). In the following centuries, the government convened special councils for the purposes of language maintenance (Hill 2015).[2] The Middle Tibetan language

[1] See, for example, the *dKar chag 'phang thang ma*, the Tibetan imperial catalog listing translations of Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Tibetan (compiled in Central Tibet).

[2] The reforms primarily focused on orthography (updating spellings to reflect current pronunciations, e.g., removing consonant clusters that had undergone cluster reduction, example: *gnyis-bcu* to *nyi-shu* 'twenty') and vocabulary (e.g., removing Sanskrit loanwords in favor of nativised terms, or replacing outdated terms with new ones, example: *te-por* to *rab-tu* 'very'). They had the explicit goal of making text more comprehensible for the contemporary reader. For more details, refer to the second volume of the *Mahāvyutpatti* (Lo-ke-sh 1981); sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs's terminology handbook, the *Chos-kyi rnam-*

that they codified, and the literary production that came after – especially that of the 12th to 19th centuries – is what's often referred to as 'Classical' Tibetan (Tournadre 2003:27).[3] Modern Literary Tibetan, too, conserves the standards of that era, to the point that "a non-specialist can read texts going back as far as the 12th century and even earlier" (Tournadre 2003:27).

In other words, Modern Tibetan texts are written in a register that is heavily influenced by the 'classical' language. Standardised spellings are used; traditional vocabulary is preferred; and 'classical' grammar rules are followed. To this day, for example, school children still memorise the *legs-bshad ljon-dbang*, or "Wish-fulfilling Tree", an early 19th-century poem that acts as a mnemonic for the traditional *sum-cu-pa*, or "Thirty Verses", a grammar treatise held to have been written in the 7th century.[4] In this way, Tibetan is prototypically diglossic (Ferguson 1991), with distinct registers for common speech ('low', vernacular) and literature ('high', prestige). But the gap between speech and writing is not insurmountable. Since speakers of Modern Tibetan languages regularly become fluent readers and writers in this Middle-like Literary Tibetan register, it stands to reason that second-language learners can, too.

After all, with practice, educated speakers of Modern English are also able to access Middle English texts. Coming back to the opening quote for this section, in the preface to his "Tibetan Manual", Henderson (1903) writes that the "classic language of Tibet differs as much from the modern colloquial as does the English of Chaucer from the English spoken to-day; but whilst English literature has kept pace with the changes of speech that time induce, Tibetan literature has stood still for many centuries". It's a perfectly apt corollary, as the two – Middle English and Middle Tibetan – overlap quite neatly in time. The onset of each Middle Literature is the 11th century CE. Chaucer (1343–1400) would have been contemporaries with rJe Tsong-kha-ba (1357–1419), whose works helped define the influential dGe-lugs-pa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, while the Fifth Dalai Lama – himself a prolific writer – was born in 1617, the year following Shakespeare's death:

---

grangs-kyi brjed byang; the *dKar-chag 'phang-thang-ma*; and 'Jam-mgon kong-sprul's *Shes-bya kun-khyab* (p. 220).

[3] In this paper, I prefer the term "Middle Tibetan" to "Classical Tibetan", and the following section makes clear why.

[4] For example, it appears in the Tibetan Department of Education's middle school curriculum (cf. DOE 2017).

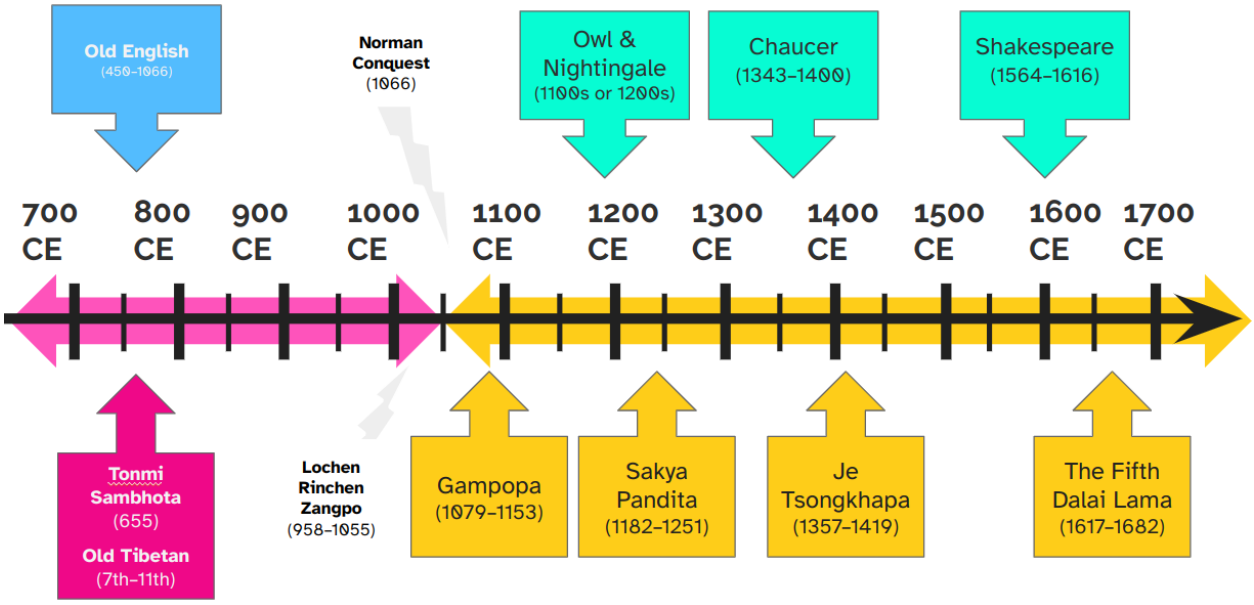
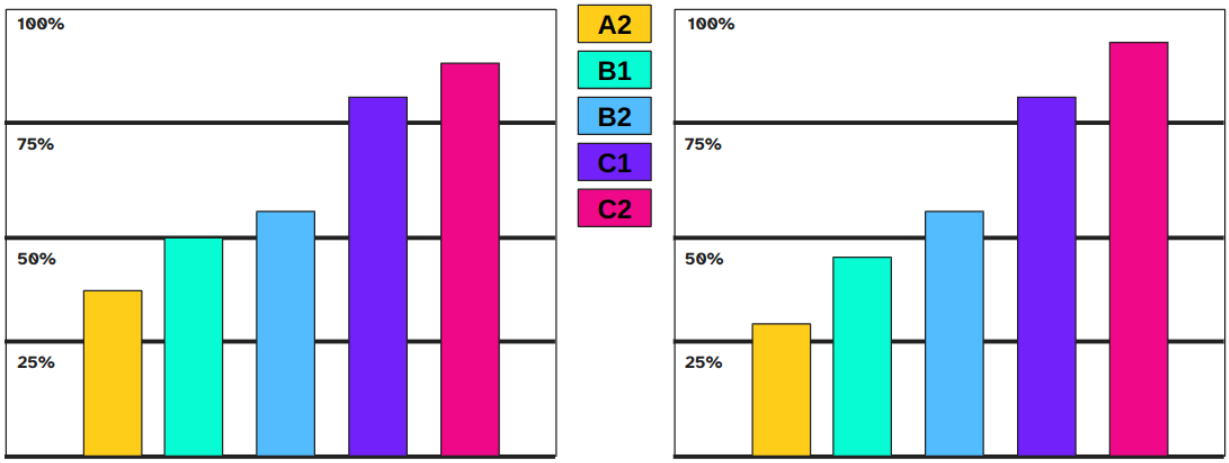


Figure 1: A timeline showing the overlap of 'classic' literature from Middle English (top, blue) and Middle Tibetan (bottom, yellow). The 11th century marks the onset of each Middle Literature's era, and the active literary production that followed into the Early-Modern period.

So while the comparison is often made that 'Classical Tibetan' is to 'Modern Tibetan' as 'Classical Sanskrit' is to 'Modern Hindi', Middle English is actually a *much* better corollary for this type of comparison. That's because 'Classical Tibetan' is, again, *not* an 'ancient' language. Instead, 'Classical Tibetan' is to 'Modern Tibetan' as 'Middle English' is to 'Modern English'. And a closer look at the specific vocabularies of these registers clearly supports this. For example, a student with a B2 level in Modern Tibetan speech will have a bit more than 55% coverage of the vocabulary found in Middle Tibetan texts (*blue, right plot below*). This is roughly comparable to the vocab coverage a B2 level English speaker has for the King James Bible, at around 60% (*blue, left plot below*).[5] By C1 level, a full 80% of vocabulary overlaps. This means that quite a lot of work a student does in modern, spoken Tibetan (or English) is directly applicable to reading comprehension of the earlier 'classical' literature:

[5] Defining B2 as the top 3,000 headwords found in everyday speech.



Figures 2, 3: Plotting Modern English coverage of Early Modern English texts (left) against Modern Tibetan coverage of Middle Tibetan texts (right). The plots show the percentage of the Literary variety's vocabulary that should be familiar given an A2-through-C2-level Modern vocabulary.[6]

There is no question that speaking Modern English, for example, helps me read a Modern English text written today. It also helps me read a text written yesterday; last year; last decade; or even last century. Yet there are also clearly diminishing returns: At some point in time, the text becomes difficult; then more difficult; then even more difficult. The question 'classical' language teachers and learners must wrestle with is, at what point in history is a text so old and incomprehensible to speakers of the Modern variety that learning it is not worth the effort? I will not seek to answer that question for every classical language in this paper. However, given the advantages of speech that I will outline below, I would personally err on the side of speaking rather than not. The potential returns are large enough, it seems, that some are motivated even to *revive* speech for some of the other classical and ancient languages. Lloyd (2021), for example, provides an invaluable resource for teachers and learners of languages like Latin and Ancient Greek who are interested in active, immersive, and communicative approaches.

For Tibetan in particular, however, I hope to show that we have not yet crossed that arbitrary line in history where Modern Tibetan is not useful for

[6] These calculations were performed using Esukhia's Nanhai corpus (Modern Tibetan) against the Kangyur (Middle Tibetan); and the Brown corpus (Modern English) against the King James Bible (Early Modern English). The Nanhai Corpus was transcribed and compiled by Esukhia in 2018, and the natural speech sections record diaspora speakers in India. While a corpus of later and more native-like writing would be a better representation of Middle Tibetan, the Kangyur was chosen as a corollary to the KJB because of its similarity in domain (as translated religious literature), and ease of access (it's a large, digitised corpus that is pre-compiled).

reading Middle Tibetan. As I've shown above, Middle Tibetan (a.k.a. 'Classical' Tibetan) is a thousand years or more *younger* than many other so-called 'classical' languages (that is, Middle Tibetan is *much* closer to us in time than the classical era of Sanskrit). So while both Tibetan and Sanskrit have 'Buddhist texts', their 'classical' time frames are significantly different (starting from 6th century BCE for Sanskrit versus the 11th or 12th century CE for Tibetan). While the literary register must be *learned*, even by native speakers, quite a lot of Modern Tibetan knowledge is transferable to that process. There is a high overlap in linguistic features of the varieties, such as spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. And rather than being a 'dead language', Tibetan texts exist within the context of a living tradition.

2.1.2 The Living Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism

From the earliest Tibetan writings until today, one of the primary institutions for engaging with Middle Tibetan texts has been the monastery. Some six thousand monasteries were built in Tibet between the 11th and 20th centuries (Jansen 2015:5); some of them are still active. Outside the PRC, in the North Indian state of Himachal Pradesh alone, there are more than 40 active Tibetan monasteries (Handa 1987), while South India is home to some of the largest, housing thousands of monastics, including branches of the 'great three' monasteries of Sera, Drepung, and Ganden. The knowledge contained in the 'classical' texts – especially those in the core curricula – are actively pursued in these living-tradition contexts: they are read, recited, and studied. Lectures, oral teachings, and modern commentaries are still given. It would be difficult to argue that Tibetan speakers themselves do not have anything of value to say about their own textual heritage, especially in places where lifetimes are spent studying the material.

Figure 4: Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims attend 'classical' teachings given by H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama in Ladakh, India, July 2014 (photo by author).

It would clearly be better for many of the learners who study Tibetan to speak a Tibetan language. It allows one to engage meaningfully with members of these kinds of Tibetan speech communities in a way that prioritises listening to Tibetan voices. This can be true even for those who are focused on 'classical' texts. Again, Middle Tibetan is not a 'dead language', but a living tradition that "intertwines oral and literary orientations" (Klein 1994:282). Within this living tradition, a clear, graduated path to literacy already exists – from speech skills, to literary-like oral teachings,[7] to reading comprehension. While this was actually the goal of some of the early textbook materials in the West (cf., for example, Sopa 1972), today, "speaking Tibetan" is not generally a requirement in university programmes for Tibetan Studies – particularly those focused on Buddhism – a structural component of the university programme that prioritises texts over voices.[8] So how did it come to be that studying Middle Tibetan would look so much more like the 'classical' languages than the 'modern' ones? The answer, I think, lies mainly in the prestige of Buddhist texts, and their Sanskrit-inherited pedagogy.

2.2 Tibetan Studies in the West

2.2.1 Foundational pedagogy & materials

The earliest "Tibetologists", whose works were foundational to the field, were first the missionaries on the ground in Tibet, and later the scholars who had the support of the British Empire in the colonised Western Himalaya. The earliest of these scholars included Francesco della Penna (1680–1745) and Ippolito Desideri (1684–1733), while Agostino Antonio Giorgi's (1711–1797) *Alphabetum Tibetanum* is perhaps one of the earliest influential works on Tibetan (cf. Jackson 2001). Later, the grammars and dictionaries of A. Csoma de Körös (1834), H. A. Jäschke (1881; 1883), and Chandra Das (1902) would also prove to be highly influential. The majority of these scholars spoke a Tibetan variety themselves, having lived and studied in Tibetan speech communities for many years. Their work was primarily descriptive rather than pedagogical. Yet the descriptive

[7] Cf. Tournadre (2003), where he notes that while literary Tibetan is not generally used for conversation, "some lamas or lay intellectuals use a form of expression which is virtually Literary Tibetan... there is therefore a real diglossia in their speech" (p. 27).

[8] This points to a larger discussion that is needed regarding the field's legacy, practices, goals, and impact (cf. Avalos 2020, for a start).

divisions found in those early works – of 'classical' and 'colloquial'[9] Tibetan – have become divisions that have defined language studies in the field ever since. And while many of the 'classical' grammars they produced would also become fixtures of Tibetology, those on 'colloquial' (like Sandberg, 1894; Amundsen, 1903; and Bell, 1919) do not seem to have been widely used.

The earliest of these university programmes had clear ties to Buddhist Studies, and Sanskrit in particular. In 1950, for example, David Snellgrove was invited to teach what was perhaps the earliest official course for Tibetan in the West at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London; and in 1961, Richard Robinson convinced the University of Wisconsin to start a dedicated doctoral programme in Buddhist Studies that included Tibetan (with both Snellgrove and Robinson having had a background in Sanskrit; cf. Agsar 2019). As the field branched out from there,[10] while *some* programmes incorporated native-speaking scholars and/or coursework in spoken Tibetan,[11] the clear focus of the field was textual, and specifically Buddhist, given that many works are retained in Tibetan that were lost in Sanskrit. Pedagogically, grammar translation has been dominant since the earliest days, with some of the more widely studied works on 'classical' Middle Tibetan grammar including: Lalou (1950) in French; Hahn (1984) in German; and Jäschke (1883) in English (Rachael Griffiths and Renee Ford, personal communication).

2.2.2 Pedagogy & materials today

> Contemporary texts for the teaching of foreign languages at the college level often reflect Grammar-Translation principles. These texts are frequently the product of people trained in literature rather than in language teaching or applied linguistics. Consequently, though it may be true to say that the Grammar-Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory. (Richards 2001:7)

[9] Look no further than the title of Hannah's 1912 work: *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial*. Many other works of the era explicitly cover one or the other of either the standard literary 'classical' or the standard vernacular 'colloquial'.

[10] For example, Jeffrey Hopkins, a student of Richard Robinson, arrived at the University of Virginia in 1973, and started the UVA Tibetan programme soon thereafter (cf. UVA Tibet Center).

[11] In the 1970s, the University of Wisconsin, for example, had Geshe Lhundup Sopa; Geshe Lobsang Dargyay at Vienna; and Geshe Gendün Lodrö at Hamburg (Rachael Griffiths and Renee Ford, personal communication). However, the vast majority of scholars of that era who learned to speak did so outside the official curriculum of the university.

The textbooks and coursework of today very much build on these foundational works. They are either 'classical' or 'colloquial', with 'classical' being the prestige variety, and 'colloquial' being optional (a "plus but not a must", as I've heard it put). Modern textbooks for 'Classical' Tibetan include: Bialek (2022); Hackett (2019); and Hodge (2021), among others. These are more detailed than the early works of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and are clearly more 'pedagogical' – with more "lessons" and "exercises" supplementing the descriptive text. Broadly speaking, however, they *are* descriptive in nature, and 'grammar translation' in pedagogy (for more on grammar translation as a pedagogy, cf. Richards 2001; Coady 1997; and Harmer 2007). The referential frame is grounded in English; vocabulary is memorised; the sentence is the basic unit of teaching and practice; and grammar is taught deductively through explicit presentation and study.[12] 'Reading' or 'translating' by decoding word-by-word, grammar-particle- by-grammar-particle – is the focus, with little to no speaking, listening, or writing.

While textbooks for Modern Tibetan often add 'listening' (in the form of audio files) and encourage 'speaking' (in the form of dialogues or exercises), 'writing' appears to be exceedingly rare. I would venture that this is perhaps because 'writing' would require bridging registers. These – like Tournadre's "Manual of Standard Tibetan" (2003) – also appear to be heavily influenced by grammar-translation methodology. They are heavily descriptive, containing translated vocabulary to memorise (or look up in the glossary), and sentence-level translation exercises. Others include Samuals (2015); Oertle (2019); Chonjore (2003); and the audio-lingual inspired Napper (2016), among others. The closest thing to an attempt at bridging registers – like Youne's "integrated approach" does for the similarly diglossic Arabic (2014) – may be Geshe Sopa's 1972 intermediate textbook for Tibetan. The vast majority of classes and textbooks, however, are either one or the other – 'reading' classical or 'speaking' modern – and not both.

Since the default mode of study and instruction is 'translation', supplementing these textbook grammars (and their internal glossaries) are a host

[12] Rockwell (1991), for example, admits in the preface to his primer that "the fundamental approach of [his] text is descriptive" and based on sentences removed from a larger context. Beyer (1992) similarly asserts on the first page of his introduction that his work is descriptive in nature, and explicitly states it is not his intention to address language production.

of translation dictionaries.[13] Das (1902) is still in use, while Jäschke's 1881 dictionary has been republished many times, perhaps most recently in 2003. For Modern Tibetan, Goldstein's 1984 dictionary has also been republished (Goldstein 2001). Perhaps more commonly used today are the online and app-based resources available, like Rangjung Yeshe's "Dharma Dictionary",[14] THL's "Translation Tool",[15] Duff's "Illuminator",[16] and Christian Steinhart's "Tibetan-English Dictionary",[17] where results from lookups can span multiple words, dictionaries, and/or include other resources. These act as important references for students in grammar-translation-led coursework where the professor chooses a text that isn't specific to an existing textbook, or during other 'translation' tasks.

3. The Alternative

The alternative I will put forth in the following pages is the ideal vision of the pedagogy and materials development philosophy followed by Esukhias[18] a non-profit organisation and network of teachers and researchers for Tibetan language education. That education philosophy is primarily an attempt to synthesise advances from a range of modern research areas like second language education, applied linguistics, and translation studies, and apply them to Tibetan. These resources were not available to early Tibetology, but they are available to us today – we believe that we should learn from them, and apply their lessons to our own field. Philological and text-centred programmes may not find these proposals feasible or applicable to their goals. To be clear, what is presented here is not a replacement for that work (which is important), but an alternative or a supplement – especially for those learners and programmes that are primarily interested in reading and translating Tibetan. Specifically, the approach we propose is:

Comprehensive: The method aims to be comprehensive in skills, especially foundational language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing;

[13] The examples listed show my English-speaking bias, and are notably *not at all* comprehensive. There are also resources in other European languages, such as the "Wörterbuch der tibetischen Schriftsprache" for German (http://wts-digital.badw.de/suche), and other Asian languages, such as Chinese and Japanese, among others.
[14] https://rywiki.tsadra.org/
[15] https://www.thlib.org/reference/dictionaries/tibetan-dictionary/translate.php
[16] https://pktc.org/tibetan-dictionaries/
[17] https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/#home
[18] https://esukhia.net/

Collaborative: Because learners have a comprehensive set of language skills, it allows for collaborative relationships with native Tibetan speakers; and

Community-centred: Collaborative relationships foster cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity to community goals, increasing the reach and impact of scholarship.

3.1 Comprehensive

3.1.1 Language skills

> Speech is as old as our species and is found in all human civilisations; reading and writing are newer and less widespread. These facts lead us to expect that readers would use the visual representations that are provided by print to recover the phonological and linguistic structure of the message. Supporting this view, readers often access phonology even when they are reading silently. (Treiman 2003:9)

The first and perhaps most important form of 'comprehensiveness' is that, for language study, this approach promotes skills in all four foundational language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. That's because we recognise that these skills are interdependent. The simplest way to put it is that letters represent sounds, and writing represents speech. I am, in a sense, *speaking* to you, the reader; and you are *listening* to what I have to say. If your mental processes are anything like mine, you probably even 'hear' a voice in your head as you read these words. That's because our mental lexicon is stored phonologically, even if it's accessed orthographically, and we rely on re-producing speech patterns to read (Richards 2001; Treiman 2003). Speech patterns – or prosody – are thus key to comprehension processes, like resolving ambiguity, and there is a lot of research linking speech skills to reading skills.

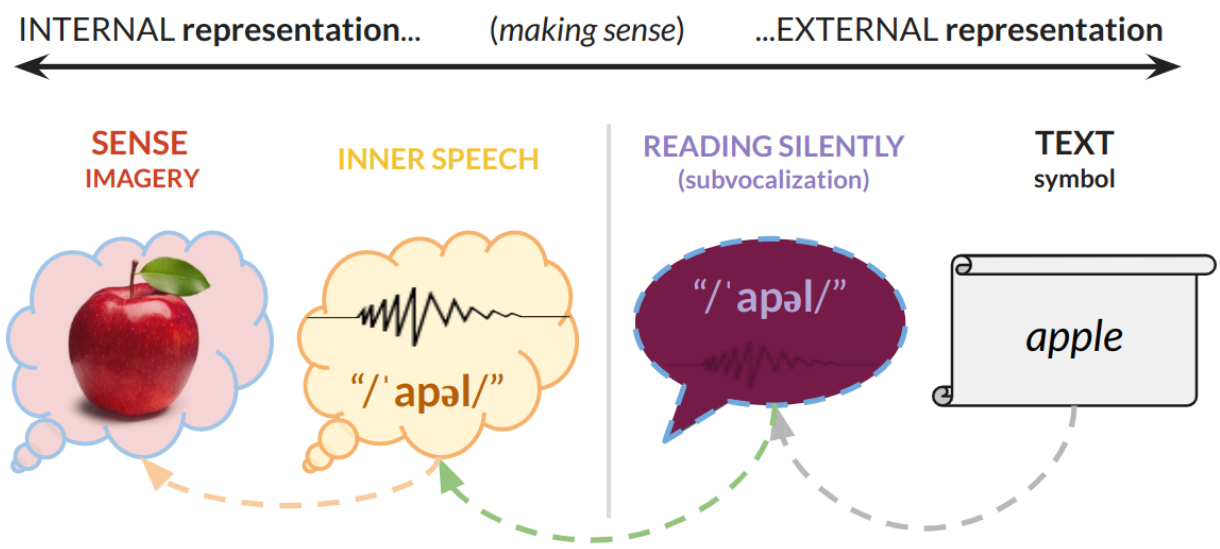


Figure 5: Text is decoded phonologically, even during silent reading. The sound of a word is linked to a mental lexicon of sense imagery. These sense-imagery associations – of feelings, experiences, and other words – are what make up 'meaning'. Thus the word "apple" brings to mind experiences of "apples". And a "crisp juicy apple" invokes a different experience than a "mushy wormy apple".

The consensus of psycholinguistic research on the matter has also concluded that the processes of production and comprehension are pervasive, cooperative, and carried out using the same representations (Treiman 2003; Macdonald 2013; Pickering 2013). That is, 'producing' language on the one hand, and 'comprehending' it on the other, are not distinct, separate mental processes. They are interdependent, even *simultaneous* processes – while listening, for example, we are constantly producing an internal speech model in order to understand what a speaker is saying, and predict what they'll say next (Pickering 2013). Learning to listen or read, then, supports our ability to speak or write; less obviously, however, speaking or writing *also* supports our ability to listen and read. If you get better at speaking Tibetan, in other words, you will also improve your reading. This is a key insight for learners aiming for reading comprehension of their target language.

3.1.2 Graduated path to Middle Literary Tibetan

As discussed above, a final goal of 'old' literature, or of 'high' literature does not necessarily imply the starting point needs to be old, high literature. Athletes train before competing; runners stretch before a race; and mountain climbers acclimate to higher altitudes before their final ascent. The preliminary work of learning to speak Modern Tibetan may not be the goal, but that doesn't mean it

can't be a really good first step on the path. Add to that that language learning is a marathon, not a sprint, and we can understand that a first step is one of many thousands of steps required to reach that final goal. For example, it takes thousands of hours of study to attain even the most modest level of proficiency in any language; for a language like Tibetan, even a five year PhD programme cannot provide all the learning hours needed to reach fluency:

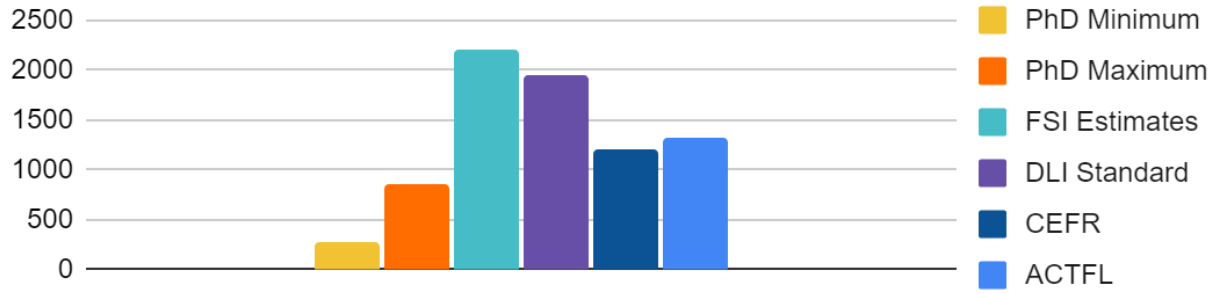
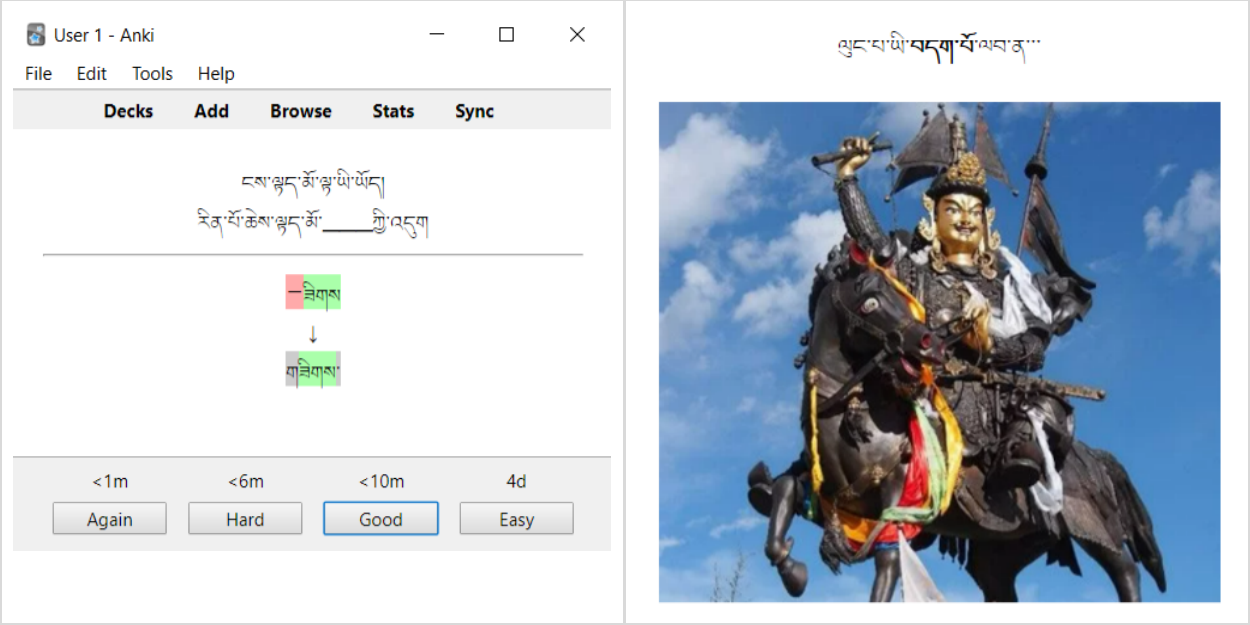


Figure 6: A chart comparing the minimum and maximum classroom hours of Tibetan language instruction possible for a Religious Studies PhD at UVA (as an example, in yellow and orange), alongside the class hours required for basic proficiency (B2 level), as suggested by a few international standards. This chart includes numbers from the US Department of State's Federal Service Institute (FSI, teal); the US Army's Defense Language Institute (DLI, purple); the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, dark blue); and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, royal blue).

A commonly repeated refrain for 'classical'-only study is that Modern Tibetan is a "waste of time" for someone who only wants to read Middle Literary texts. But if 1,000 classroom hours isn't enough for a Modern Language learner to reach fluency in reading Modern Literature, is it reasonable to expect it to be enough for fluency in Middle 'Classical' Literature? Given that language skills are interdependent, and that there is a very high overlap between Modern and Middle vocabulary and grammar (and a nearly 100% overlap in spelling), it seems to me that the best way to maximise each classroom hour is to *start* with speech as the foundation, recognising that a learner's language skills will require supplemental effort *no matter what* (see again plot above).

In a flipped-classroom inspired model, for example (for more on flipped classrooms, cf. Sams 2012; Scheg 2015), that supplemental effort might take the form of individual vocab study or level-appropriate reading. For that, we can use tools and techniques of corpus linguistics (cf. Schmidt 2016 and 2020 for more on applying corpus linguistics to Tibetan language learning). In the example flashcards below, we have used frequency data to help us identify level-

appropriate Literary vocab specific to the ‘classical’ text the learners were reading. Rather than providing a ‘translation’, we have written a level-appropriate definition in Tibetan – a definition that *only* uses words the learner already knows (*below, left*). Supplemental audio, pictures, or video can also provide additional context or meaning, standing in for mental imagery (*below, right*):



Figures 7, 8: Example flashcards show how we can move from Modern Tibetan to Middle Tibetan in a stepwise fashion, by introducing frequent literary vocab in fully-understandable contexts. Left: the literary gzigs, “to watch”; Right: a clue for “king” (rgyal-po).

For extensive level-appropriate reading, children’s stories can be adapted in multiple registers to give readers experience reading across registers. Below, rather than translation into English, the clickable text provides a ‘translation’ into Modern Tibetan. This not only bridges the gap between Modern and Middle Tibetan, but ensures the materials are accessible to any learner, no matter their mother tongue or second language knowledge. After all, Tibetan language learners aren’t exclusively English speakers; in fact, non-English speakers might even be the majority. There is worldwide interest in Tibetan learning materials, and a learner’s first language might be anything from Korean to Chinese to Vietnamese to Portuguese to Spanish to French to Swahili to literally any number of languages, standard and non-standardised, majority and minoritised. Another benefit of the comprehensive path is that it is *inclusive*:

Figures 9, 10: A sample children's story, written in a Middle Tibetan style. The interactive text (highlighted in green) provides a popup 'translation' into Modern Tibetan.[19]

Middle Tibetan vocabulary can be introduced from the earliest levels in these kinds of ways. By learning in this inclusive and comprehensive context from the start, learners are able to build up their sense of meaning in sociocultural contexts, exposed to the prosody of native speech, with a mental lexicon linked to mental imagery, with speaking, listening, reading, and writing all supporting one another. The method can be further supported by work done in other fields: There is no need to reinvent the wheel for standards in measuring vocabulary, proficiency, curriculum goals, or classroom hours needed. We may adapt the CEFR, for example, with an additional column (*below, "Vocab+"*) recognising the bridgework we need to do between registers of Middle and Modern:

Raw #	ILR	CEFR	Vocab	Vocab+	Vocab	Hours	Hours+	Total HRS	Year
5	**2+**	**B2**	**4,000**	**2,000**	6,000	**2,200**	**1,100**	**3,300**	**Year 5**
			3,500	1,750	5,250	**1,980**	990	**2,970**	
4	**2+**	**B1+**	**3,000**	**1,500**	4,500	**1,760**	**880**	**2,640**	**Year 4**
			2,500	1,250	3,750	1,540	770	**2,310**	
3	**2**	**B1**	**2,000**	**1,000**	3,000	**1,320**	**660**	**1,980**	**Year 3**

[19] Cf. https://esukhia.online/stories/L2-108172v2/p00 and https://esukhia.online/stories/L2-108172/p00

			1,600	800	2,400	1,100	550	**1,650**	
2	**1+**	**A2+**	**1,300**	**650**	1,950	**880**	**440**	**1,320**	**Year 2**
		A2	1,000	500	1,500	660	330	**990**	
1	**1**	**A1+**	**800**	**400**	1200	**440**	**220**	**660**	**Year 1**
	0+	A1	500	0	500	180	110	**290**	
	0	A0	200	0	200	40	0	**40**	

Figure 11: A chart showing the level progress, in terms of vocabulary acquisition, a student should be making through a sample 5-year study programme. Cf. Milton (2009) for vocab measures by level, and FSI (2020) for class hour estimates for a modern, Category IV language. As these estimates exist for modern languages, as we'll see below, we'll require extra hours to account for reaching older texts, which require further language skills.

3.2 Collaborative

3.2.1 Collaborative learning

To start with, language learning is, by its very nature, collaborative. Language is a social tool, and its primary function is communicative. To underline this point, recent research suggests that language is a function of the social brain, and that social interaction is essential to learning one (Kuhl 2007). The experiences, imagery, and messages that language conveys depend, inextricably, on a shared mode of discourse, on a lived experience of language that is socioculturally embedded (Bruner 1990; Lantolf 2000). Learning a spoken language in a living, sociocultural context provides this kind of background knowledge, along with the interpretive skills that are key to comprehension (cf. Grabe 1991). Further, the richer this backdrop is, the more resources can be shifted to other processes; thus, the richer the understanding of textual meaning can be.

Not only is language necessarily collaborative at the level of an individual person using it within a sociocultural context, it is also necessarily collaborative at the level of the individual *word* acting within a *textual* context. The comprehensive understanding of a text relies on many interpretive processes, like using prosody to parse or disambiguate; recognising figurative or idiomatic

language; or interpreting subtextual messages, associations, and connotations (Jones 2011). Meaning within a text may also rely on the broader cultural, sociopolitical, or historical contexts of which it is a part; the tenor, mode, or style in which it is written; and its textual components or discourse-level structure. These considerations are perhaps especially important for Tibetan, where "the classical language is characterised by its conciseness and by the corresponding importance of context and cultural background" (Tournadre 2003:395).

This backdrop of context and culture is best obtained through immersive language acquisition in living speech communities. And it is especially important for learners coming from cultures that are psychologically 'distant' from the texts they are hoping to understand. Simply put, the larger the culture gap is, the more important the comprehensive approach becomes. The cultural distance between Modern and Middle Tibetan is inarguably much smaller than the cultural distance between, for example, any Modern European language and either of those varieties (for more on cultural distance, cf. Hofstede 1980; Henrich 2020). Speaking Tibetan is a tool that helps bridge this gap by providing the learner with direct experiences of Tibetan culture and worldviews – but also opportunities for learning with, and from, Tibetan speakers who read and understand the same texts that they are hoping to access.

3.2.2 Collaborative reading & translation

> Literary translators must be able to grasp not only the basic informational meaning of texts, but also fine shades of meaning as expressed by subtle choices of words and expressions, as well as by their rhythm, music, and images – and be highly aware of cultural facts, norms, trends and atmospheres. (Gile 2009:8–9)

For Tibetan especially, there is no reason readers and translators shouldn't read collaboratively, alongside native-speaking experts. The speech skills provided by the comprehensive approach do not only help one to understand text directly by providing things like prosody, an active mental lexicon, a sociocultural background, and reading speed. It also allows the reader to discuss meaning, in depth and detail, in a common language with other readers of those same texts. Speaking Tibetan gives readers and translators access to *other* interpretations; voices; backgrounds; and experiences. Just as reading and discussing Chaucer with a native English speaker who has an expertise in Middle English texts provides depth, clarity, and understanding that wouldn't otherwise

be possible, reading Middle Tibetan texts with native-speaking scholars who understand them is an invaluable resource for the reader of Tibetan.

It is notable here that there are no undergraduate, graduate, or professional Tibetan language TTPs (Translation Training Programmes) in any universities at all in the West (Raine 2011). A modern TTP is training *above and beyond* language learning – in the context of translation, we may think of this kind of collaborative reading as using Modern Tibetan as a 'working language'. If we were to reimagine Tibetan in this context, with training specifically for translation, we might envision a curriculum something like what is laid out in the Figure 12. Here, language skills are supplemented by translation and intercultural communication; linguistics and technology; literary and text analysis; and domain-specific knowledge. In this model, 'translation' is a devoted skill to be developed *after* language skills are already in place, separately from the process of language acquisition (for more on modern Translation Studies, cf. Bassnett 2013; Bell 2016; and Gile 2009). Meanwhile, the expert translator collaborates with team members for textual expertise (that is, the model is highly inclusive of Tibetan voices):

Curriculum	Outcome
1. Language Skills – L2/SL Tibetan	Upper intermediate–Advanced level Tibetan in 3 registers (the working language plus source language, spanning oral & literary skills)
2. Language Skills – L1/TL Mother Tongue	Target language writing & literature expertise
3. Translation & Intercultural Communication	Expertise in multiple modalities for translation; skill in translation strategies; knowledge of theory and interpreting linguistic messages cross-culturally
4. Linguistics & Technology	Knowledge of language science; high-level proficiency in software tools & lang. technology
5. Literary & Text Analysis	Ability to analyze both source and target-language texts using a variety of frameworks
6. Domain-specific Knowledge (Buddhism)	Subject-matter expertise (Buddhism) in two languages

Figure 12: A sample modern translator-training curriculum for Tibetan, based on international frameworks and standards for translation (cf. Bassnett 2013; Bell 2016). While the table above (Figure 11) shows cumulative vocabulary in the second language (L2) across a five-year programme, this table attempts to give a sense of the breadth of study in modern translation training. Identified here are six domains relevant to the translator: The L2 (second language); the L1 (native language); Translation & Intercultural Communication; Linguistics & Technology; Literary & Text Analysis; and Domain-specific knowledge.

3.3 Community-centred

Finally, a comprehensive approach that values the input and collaboration of Tibetan speech communities in the learning, translating, and research processes is one that gives value back to those communities. It is able to provide direct, tangible benefits in the form of jobs, education, and professional training to speakers. It is also inclusive of voices that might otherwise go unheard, but who have valuable knowledge and experience in language and literature, such as ex-monastics. Before the covid-19 pandemic, for example, Esukhia was providing some 3,000 total hours of lessons per month, and employing around 40–50 Tibetan teachers full time. In summers, when students would attend en masse, those numbers doubled. Individual students, in other words, also value the opportunities this method provides.

However, without institutional structure and support (in the form of resources, like funding, or respect, like accreditation), these kinds of open, inclusive, collaborative endeavors often do not have the stability needed to become long-term or widespread solutions. On an individual level, what can we, the community of 'classical' language learners, do? As much as it is within our power, I think we should strive for the sorts of community-centred, comprehensive approaches in language education and curriculum within the institutions, organisations, and programmes we are involved with. That means at the level of programme requirements; of curriculum components; of syllabus contents; and of individual classes, we work to provide comprehensive and inclusive opportunities to our students. That might be as big as pushing for structural change, or as small as including writing exercises where students *produce* something original in the written language they are learning, or give an oral presentation (in the Source Language) about the content they are reading (cf. again Lloyd 2021 and Ørberg 2003).

Whether or not we are part of a formal institution, I think we also can be pushing for improvements by voting with our eyeballs, clicks, dollars, and feet. We can seek out and support other learners, resources, and programmes that share our values. We can build community-based resources, interactions, and activities that benefit the speakers and groups to whom our textual languages belong, and form symbiotic relationships with them. For Tibetan specifically, that means learning to speak a Tibetan variety, and engaging with Tibetan speech communities. Technology has broken some of the traditional barriers that earlier

generations of scholars faced. We are not constrained by geography: We can communicate via iTalki for language learning or Zoom for collaboration. We can educate the public online, too, or find and publish resources that are accessible worldwide. While our institutions hold the power and prestige of official language curriculums, I believe it's important to recognise, too, that they aren't the only sources of value on our language-learning journeys.

4. Conclusion

For the goals of reading and translating, a comprehensive approach to Middle Tibetan texts is both possible and preferable. Middle Tibetan is not a 'classical' language in the sense that it is a dead language of antiquity; it is, instead, a literary register akin to Middle English. Middle Tibetan shares a significant overlap in orthography, vocabulary, and grammar with the Modern Tibetan varieties. Beyond that, there is a living tradition within the speech communities of Modern Tibetan wherein the 'classical' texts in question are read; studied; and taught. While the founding texts of Tibetology in the West divide themselves into 'classical' and 'colloquial', it does not necessarily follow that division ought to be practiced as a language pedagogy for learners of the Tibetan languages. Instead, modern curriculums based on sound pedagogies and international standards, like the CEFR, can be applied directly to the Tibetan context.

Again, a graduated path to Middle Tibetan texts, with modern speech as a foundation, is possible. It provides opportunities for collaboration and community. This comprehensive path recognises that languages consist of *skills* we develop, not a set of knowledge that we can memorise. Language consists of complex layers of implicit and automatic mental processes that require acquisition, not exposition. These skills are primarily (and, I believe, unavoidably) social, cultural, and communicative; they require speech, inclusion, and interaction. The belief that 'reading' is a silent, individual activity is weird (Henrich 2020; Saenger 1997). Reviving the orality of Tibetan texts is necessary to provide prosody; cultural context; mental imagery; and a native-like, intuitive sense of meaning that is key to understanding what you read as you read it. This is the goal of the comprehensive and collaborative approach to reading and translating Middle Tibetan texts.

References

Agsar, W. B. (2019). The Most Important Scholar of Buddhism You've Never Heard Of. *Tricycle.* Retrieved from https://tricycle.org/magazine/richard-robinson-buddhism/

Al-Mamari, H. (2011). Arabic Diglossia and Arabic as a Foreign Language. *Capstone Collection Paper* (2437).

Amundsen, E. (1903). *Primer of Standard Tibetan.* India: Printed at the Scandinavian Alliance Tibetan Mission Press.

Avalos, N. (2020). w/ Matthew King; Nancy G. Lin; Dawa Lokyitsang; Karin Meyers; Annabella Pitkin; Sangseraima. Decolonial/Anti-Racist interventions in Tibetan/Buddhist Studies – AAR Roundtable, Colorado 2019. *Waxing Moon Journal of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, 1.*

Bassnett, S. (2013). *Translation Studies.* London: Routledge.

Bell, C. A. (1919). *Grammar of Colloquial Tibetan.* Calcutta.

Bell, R. T., & In Candlin, C. (2016). *Translation and Translation: Theory and Practice.* London and New York: Routledge.

Beyer, S. V. (1992). *The Classical Tibetan Language.* Albany: Suny Press.

Bialek, J. (2022). *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan.* Abgindon: Taylor & Francis.

Brown Corpus. (1961). Retrieved from http://www.sls.hawaii.edu/bley-vroman/brown_corpus.html

Coady, J., & Huckin, T. (1997). *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chonjore, T. (2003). *Colloquial Tibetan: A Textbook of the Lhasa Dialect.* Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Das, S. C. (1902). *A Tibetan-English Dictionary.* Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.

dKar-chag 'phang-thang-ma. (2003). *Par gzhi dang po, Vol. 1–1.* Mi rigs dpe skrun khang. Retrieved from http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW26008

DOE. (2017). Tibetan Education Policy for Middle Class Contents, 5.1. Retrieved June 2023, from https://bodyiglobjong.com/tibetan-eduction-policy-for-middle-class-content5-1/

Ferguson, C. (1991). Diglossia Revisited. *Southwest Journal of Linguistics, 10(*1), 214–234.

Foucaux, P.-É. (1858). *Grammaire de la langue tibétaine.* Paris: Imprimerie impériale.

FSI Foreign Service Institute. (2020). Foreign Language Training. US Department of State.

Gile, D. (2009). *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub. Co.

Goldstein, M. C. (2001). *The New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hackett, P. (2019). *Learning Classical Tibetan: A Reader for Translating Buddhist Texts.* Boulder: Shambhala.

Hannah, H. B. (1912). *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial.* India: Printed at the Baptist Mission Press.

Hahn, M. (1984). *Lehrbuch der klassischen tibetischen Schriftsprache.* M. Hahn.

Handa, O. C. (1987). *Buddhist Monasteries in Himachal Pradesh.* New Delhi: Indus Publishing Company.

Harmer, J. (2007). *How to Teach English.* Edinburgh Gate, England: Pearson Education.

Henrich, J. (2020). *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Henderson, V. C. (1903). *Tibetan Manual.* India: Inspector General of Chinese imperial maritime customs.

Hill, N. (2010). An Overview of Old Tibetan Synchronic Phonology. *Transactions of the Philological Society, 108(*2), 110–125.

Hill, N. (2015). Languages: Tibetan. In *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Volume One: Literature and Languages*. Leiden: Brill, 917–924.

Hodge, S. (2021). *Introduction to Classical Tibetan.* Thailand: Orchid Press.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences* (Vol. Sage). Beverly Hills, CA.

Jackson, D. (2001). A History of Tibetan Studies. Retrieved June 2023, from https://www.academia.edu/75011286/A_History_of_Tibetan_Studies_15_

'Jam-mgon kong-sprul blo-gros mtha'-yas. (1982). *Shes bya kun khyab (rDo rje rgyal po & gZan dkar thub bstan nyi ma, Eds.; Par gzhi dang po, Vol. 1–3).* Mi rigs dpe skrun khang. Retrieved from http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW1PD95787

Jansen, B. (2015). The Monastery Rules: Buddhist monastic organization in pre-modern Tibet. *Dissertation: Leiden University.*

Jäschke, H. A. (1883). *Tibetan Grammar.* London: Trübner & Co.

Jäschke, H. A. (1881). *Tibetan-English Dictionary.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Jaschke, H. A. (2003). *A Tibetan-English Dictionary.* Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.

Jones, F. R. (2011). *Poetry Translating as Expert Action.* Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Klein, A. C. (1994). Oral Genres and the Art of Reading in Tibet. *Oral Tradition, 9/2,* 281–314.

de Körös, A. C. (1834). *Grammar of the Tibetan Language.* Calcutta: Printed at the Baptist Mission Press.

Lalou, M. (1950). *Manuel élémentaire de tibétain classique (méthode empirique).* Paris: Adrien Maison-neuve.

Lantolf, J. P. (ed.). (2000). *Socio-cultural Theory and Second Language Acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lloyd, M. E., & Hunt, S. (eds). (2021). *Communicative Approaches for Ancient Languages.* India: Bloomsbury.

Lo-ke-sh tsandra (ed.). (1981). *Bye brag rtogs byed chen po (skad bzhi shan sbyar) (Vol. 1–1).* International Academy of Indian Culture. Retrieved from http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW30286

Macdonald, M. C. (2013). How language production shapes language form and comprehension. *Front. Psychol., 4,* 226. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00226

Milton, J., & Alexiou, T. (2009). Vocabulary size and the common European framework of reference for languages. doi: 10.1057/9780230242258.

Nanhai Corpus. (2020). Esukhia. Retrieved from https://github.com/Esukhia/Corpora

Napper, E. S., & Magee, W. A. (2016). *Fluent Tibetan.* Boulder: Shambhala.

Oertle, F. (2019). *The Heart of Tibetan Language: A Synthesis of Indigenous Grammar and Contemporary Learning Methodology. Exercise book.* India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Ørberg, H. H. (2003). *Lingua latina per se illustrata.* Spain: Domus Latina.

Pickering, M. J., & Garrod, S. (2013). How tightly are production and comprehension interwoven? *Front. Psychol., 4,* 238. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00238

Raine, R. (2011). Minority languages and translator training: What Tibetan programmes can tell us. *Journal of Specialised Translation (JoSTrans), No. 16,* 126–144.

Rockwell, J., Jr. (1991). *A Primer for Classical Literary Tibetan.*

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sams, A., & Bergmann, J. (2012). *Flip Your Classroom: Reach Every Student in Every Class Every Day.* Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education.

Samuels, J. (2015). *Colloquial Tibetan: The Complete Course for Beginners.* Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.

Saenger, P. (1997). *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading.* Standford: Stanford University Press.

Sandberg, G. (1894). *Hand-book of Colloquial Tibetan: A Practical Guide to the Language of Central Tibet.* India: Thacker, Spink and Company.

Scheg, A. G. (ed.). (2015). *Implementation and Critical Assessment of the Flipped Classroom Experience.* Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Schmidt, D. (2016). Practical applications for corpora: The role of research-based linguistics in literacy and education for the Tibetan language. *Himalayan Linguistics, 15(*1), 167–185. University of California.

Schmidt, D. (2020). Grading Tibetan Children's Literature: A test-case using the NLP Readability Tool Dakje. In Hill, N. *et al.* (ed.) *Asian and Low-Resource Language Information Processing (TALLIP)*. New York: New York.

sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs. (1994–2008). *Chos kyi rnam grangs kyi brjed byang.* In bsTan 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma) (Par gzhi dang po, Vol. 116). Krung go'i bod rig pa'i dpe skrun khang, 641–796. Retrieved from http://purl.bdrc.io/resource/MW1PD95844_3606

Sopa, G. L. (1972). *Lectures on Tibetan religious culture: an intermediate textbook of Tibetan.* University of Wisconsin.

Tournadre, N. (2003). *Manual of Standard Tibetan (MST).* Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.

Tournadre, N. (2010). The Classical Tibetan cases and their transcategoriality: From sacred grammar to modern linguistics. *Himalayan Linguistics, 9(*2), 87–125.

Treiman, R., Clifton Jr., C., Meyer, A. S., & Wurm, L. H. (2003). Language Comprehension and Production. In A. F. Healy & R. W. Proctor (eds), *Comprehensive Handbook of Psychology, Volume 4: Experimental Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 527–548.

Younes, M. (2014). *The Integrated Approach to Arabic Instruction.* Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.

FROG IN A WELL. TEACHING CLASSICAL JAPANESE TO ENHANCE THE LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE AND CULTURAL PROFICIENCY OF LEARNERS OF MODERN JAPANESE AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE*

Vance Schaefer
University of Mississippi
schaefer@olemiss.edu

Abstract:

Elements of Classical Japanese and other older forms of Japanese infuse Modern Japanese. As such, speakers of Japanese, including learners of Japanese as an additional language (JAL), generally require passive and in some cases active knowledge of Classical Japanese as part of their linguistic repertoire and overall language proficiency. In response, this article advocates a more proactive approach to teaching Classical Japanese elements to JAL learners. The article describes the features, forms, and usage of Classical Japanese in modern Japanese and then, maps out a pedagogical framework shaped by measurable student learning outcomes. Extensive reading is integrated into modern Japanese language courses supported by scaffolding activities such as explicit instruction, focus-on-form exercises, grammar-translation, and more in a flipped/blended format. Activities harness the soft power of Japanese popular culture through incorporating cultural artifacts such as haiku, manga, and anime, further motivating learners. Moreover, introducing elements of Classical Japanese to JAL learners may encourage them to take full-on Classical Japanese language courses, boosting enrolment and serving as a gateway to courses on Classical Japanese literature, history, culture, and more.

Keywords: Classical Japanese, extensive reading, explicit instruction, blended/flipped classroom

1. Introduction

Classical Japanese permeates modern Japanese. Classical Chinese through the lens of Classical Japanese (e.g. *kanbun*) also colors modern Japanese as

evidenced in the 4-character saying of *onkochishin* (温故知新), taken from the Analects of Confucius. In the spirit of *onkochishin* (*furuki o atatamete, atarashiki o shiru* "to know something new by studying the past"), the current paper takes something old and applies it to learning something new. Namely, this paper advocates the teaching of Classical Japanese forms, although not necessarily a full-on Classical Japanese course, to help learners of modern Japanese as an additional language to enhance their linguistic repertoire and, thereby, their language and cultural proficiency. Specifically, the paper explores a possible pedagogical framework to teach Classical Japanese elements: extensive reading and scaffolding activities such as explicit instruction, cultural artifacts (e.g. *iroha karuta,*[1] *haiku*, *manga, anime*), and form-focused exercises in a blended and/or flipped classroom format.

In order to promote and support the teaching of Classical Japanese to learners of modern Japanese, the current paper first provides a basic overview of Classical Japanese and its usage in modern Japanese; then describes Classical Japanese verbal inflections, verbal morphemes, orthographic conventions, and other features; and finally recommends a possible pedagogical framework to teach elements of Classical Japanese in modern Japanese to learners of Japanese as an additional language.

2. Background

A speaker may use many codes (languages) and styles (varieties of a language). They deploy these codes and styles in their linguistic repertoire triggered by numerous social cues and/or for varying effects. A speaker's linguistic repertoire may consist of (im)politeness registers, regional dialects, and sociolects of gender, LGBTQIA+ sexuality, socioeconomic class, generation, and more. One style may also be a type of academic or literary language which may be imbued with classical or older linguistic forms.

[1] *Iroha karuta* or "hiragana script playing cards" are used to teach the hiragana script and/or Japanese proverbs. There are 94 or 96 cards in total depending on the version: 47 cards featuring each of the 47 hiragana symbols (plus 京 *kyō* in some versions and minus the nasal symbol of ん [ŋ]) and 47 cards featuring a proverb starting with one of 47 hiragana symbols (and 京 *kyō*). *I-ro-ha* are the first three symbols in the traditional ordering similar to A-B-C for many European languages (cf. Table 2 below). The proverb cards are read aloud and players grab the hiragana symbol card that the proverb begins with from among all the hiragana symbol cards spread out on the floor or table.

Classical Japanese or the form of the Japanese language used during Japan's golden era of literature during the Heian Period (794–1185; cf. Carter 1925) continued to be emulated in writing from the 12th century to the early 20th century as a fossilised written norm (Frellesvig 2010: 2). In fact, Classical Japanese forms along with other older forms of Japanese are still commonly featured in modern Japanese genres, particularly in literary and academic works. Indeed, these classical forms survive in every nook and cranny of modern Japanese. For example, the Classical Japanese *-zu* verbal morpheme indicating a negative meaning abounds in both spoken and written modern Japanese as a grammatical form (*tabe**zu** ni nemashita* "(I) slept without eating"), frozen words (*aikawara**zu*** "as usual"), set phrases (*X ni mo kakawara**zu*** "despite X"), or common sayings such as *hara hachibunme ni isha ira**zu*** "Eating until your stomach is eight-tenths full keeps the doctor away".[2] As such, a knowledge of Classical Japanese is required to not only read older texts such as historical documents and literature but also to understand and appreciate instances still encountered in the modern Japanese language and culture of the 21st century.

Consequently, native speakers as well as learners of Japanese as an additional or second language require at least a passive knowledge of certain elements of Classical Japanese to fully understand its rich nuance of expression as noted by scholars of Japanese language and culture. Kinsui (2006) notes that "Classical and literary expressions occupy a defined position in modern Japanese, and without them a full understanding of modern Japanese is not possible" (slide 28). Shirane elaborates on the importance of possessing an understanding of Classical Japanese for speakers of modern Japanese:

> Classical Japanese – *kobun* or *bungo*, as it is referred to in modern Japanese – is one of the principal keys to understanding Japanese culture and literature. All forms of writing from the seventh century through World War II are based on classical Japanese, and it continues to be an important part of the Japanese language, especially in proverbs, *haiku*, *tanka*, and grammatical forms like *beshi*. Accordingly, classical Japanese is an indispensable tool for those studying Japanese history, literature, religion, art history, and culture through the Meiji period. Equally important, classical Japanese provides an invaluable background to modern Japanese, offering clues to how it is constructed and used and how it acquired its current forms. Because students learn classical Japanese structurally, based on its grammar, they learn the structure of the language better than

[2] Japanese transcriptions in this paper generally use modified Hepburn romanization (*rōmaji*).

they would through the proficiency-based approach to modern Japanese that emphasizes speaking (Shirane 2007: vii).

2.1 Classical Japanese in modern Japanese

To highlight the ubiquitous nature of Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese, this section presents Classical Japanese and other older forms of Japanese commonly encountered as seen in Table 1. Vestiges of Classical Japanese, as noted, remain in traditional culture such as poetry, sayings, folk songs, religious texts, and more as well as in the dialogue of period pieces or in older titles of movies and books. Classical Japanese forms are also common in everyday phrases for *thank you*, *congratulations*, and more. Such phrases or forms can become even more prevalent in formal, academic, and literary language. The effect of Classical Japanese in writing is described by Kinsui (2006) as imbuing the following qualities:

- Conciseness (*kanketsu-sei*);
- Solemnity, gravity (i.e. seriousness), authoritativeness, pedantry (*genshuku-sa sōchō-sa, ken'i-sei, gengaku-sei*);
- Classical beauty, elegance, dignity (*koten-bi, yūga-sa, kakuchō no taka-sa*);
- Majesty, nobleness (*yūsō-sa*, literally, "bravery, courage, heroism").

Many frozen forms and productive grammatical phrases preserving Classical Japanese forms are also quite commonly used in informal language. Lastly, some dialects may still retain some similarities with Classical Japanese in their modern grammar.

Table 1. Classical Japanese or other older forms of Japanese in modern Japanese (boldface indicates Classical Japanese morphemes)

Forms or areas	Samples
Formulaic expressions	*arigat**ō** gozaimasu* "thank you", *o-hay**ō** gozaimasu* "good morning", *omedet**ō** gozaimasu* "congratulations" (cf. *u-onbin* phonological rule: *arigataku* → *arigatau* → *arigatō, ureshiku* → *ureshiu* → *ures**hū**)*
Respectful language (in business)	*taihen ures**hū** gozaimasu* "(I) am extremely delighted", *(o-)tak**ō** gozaimasu* "(It) is

	expensive/high" (cf. *u-onbin*)
Frozen forms	*aikawara**zu*** "as usual", *nominara**zu*** "not only", *hokanara**nu*** "nothing but", *omowazu* "unintentionally", *yamu o e**zu*** "unavoidably", *furu**ki** yo**ki*** (*jidai*) "good old (days)", *yo**kare** ashi**kare*** "for better or worse", *ika**naru*** "any kind of", *medeta**shi** medeta**shi*** "And they lived happily ever after" (ending of folk tales), *wa**ga**kuni* "our country, i.e. Japan", *wa**ga**ya* "our home"
Productive grammatical phrases	*X se**zu** ni* "without doing X", *X ni mo kakawara**zu*** "despite X", X ***subeki*** "should do X", *X wa/nara iza shira**zu*** "(I) don't know about X, but…", *X goto**ki**/goto**shi** "like, the same as X", ~**zaru** o enai* "have no choice but to do", X *a**ri**/na**shi*** "X exist/not exist"
Traditional culture (poetry such as haiku, tanka, waka, etc.)	*Furuike ya / **kawazu** tobikomu / mizu no oto* "Old pond / frog jumps in / sound of water" (Matsuo Basho); *Kaki kueba / kane ga naru **nari**/ Hōryūji* "As (I) eat a persimmon / the bell begins to resound / Horyuji Temple" (Masaoka Shiki)
Common sayings, including 4-character phrases from Classical Chinese	*mi**zaru** kika**zaru** iwa**zaru*** "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil", *anzuru yori umu ga yasa**shi*** "it is easier to give birth than worrying about it", *nito o ou mono wa itto o mo e**zu*** "the person who chases two rabbits, catches not even one"
Titles of old movies, books, songs, etc.	*Kaze to tomo ni sari**nu*** "Gone with the wind", *Subarashi**ki** kana, jinse*i "It's a wonderful life"
Period pieces such as TV shows (e.g. period dramas *jidaigeki,* historical saga *taiga dorama*), movies, manga (comics), anime (cartoons), computer games, etc.	samurai language such as ***sessha** X **de gozaru*** "I am X", ***tassha de gozaru** ka/go-kigen ikaga **degozaru** ka?* "how are you?", ***katajikenai** "*thank you".[3]
Other cultural genres and areas	religious texts (e.g. Buddhist sutras, Christian bible), national anthem (*kimi**ga**yo*), folk songs (*minyō*), children's songs (*warabe uta*), legal documents, headings in newspapers/magazines, place names, people's names
Recognizable older words	*bareisho* "potato", *shashinki* "camera"

[3] These older forms of Japanese are sometimes also used as role language (*yakuwarigo*), i.e. language styles based on linguistic stereotypes to portray fictional characters (Kinsui 2003).

Dialects	***yō*** *yū wa* "How dare you say that!" ***kō****ta* "bought", *tabete* ***mō****ta* "ate up" (cf. u-onbin, Kansai dialect)[4]

Among the many cultural artifacts in modern Japanese culture that use Classical Japanese, sayings are likely one of the most prevalent. For example, *hatarakaz**aru** mono kuu **bekarazu*** "he who does not work, neither shall he eat" is a well-known saying derived from the Bible (2 Thessalonians 3:10), which incidentally is also the title of an album and song from the anime *Shonen maid*. Additionally, popular *karuta* or cards such as *hyakunin isshu* "100 poets, 100 poems" or *iroha karuta "kana* cards*"* feature well-known poems and sayings. *Iroha* cards are used to learn *hiragana* (one of the two *kana* scripts used to write Japanese phonetically) through featuring sayings starting with the first letter of a particular *hiragana*. *I-ro-ha* are the first three letters in the traditional recitation of Japanese *kana* as presented in the well-known pangrammatic or holoalphabetic poem where each *kana* is recited once as seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Iroha poem (middle to late Heian Period: 794–1185, Shirane 2005: 22)

Japanese original in *hiragana* (i.e. *iroha*) only	*kanji* (Chinese characters) + *hiragana* version
いろはにほへと　ちりぬるを わかよたれそ　つねならむ うゐのおくやま　けふこえて あさきゆめみし　ゑひもせす	色は匂へど　散りぬるを 我が世誰ぞ　常ならむ 有為の奥山　今日越えて 浅き夢見じ　酔ひもせず
Classical Japanese transcription	Modern Japanese pronunciation
Iroha nihoheto　Chirinuru wo *Wakayo tareso　Tsune naramu* *Uwi no okuyama　Kefu koete* *Asaki yume mishi　ehi mo sesu*	*Iro wa nioedo　Chirinuru o* *Wa ga yo tare zo　Tsune naran* *Ui no okuyama　Kyō koete* *Asaki yume miji　Ei mo sezu*
Translation	
Colors are fragrant, but they fade away. In this world of ours none lasts forever. Today cross the high mountain of life's illusions [i.e. rise above this physical world], and there will be no more	

[4] The Kansai dialect is a major Japanese dialect spoken by approximately 20 million Japanese in the historical and cultural center of Japan, Kyoto, and the nearby cities of Osaka, Kobe, Nara and surrounding areas.

shallow dreaming, no more drunkenness [i.e. there will be no more uneasiness, no more temptations] (Nelson 1974: 1014)

Some of the *iroha karuta* sayings retain older Classical Japanese forms as shown in the samples in Table 3 although they are sometimes translated into modern Japanese (e.g. verb forms, modern spelling). Regional variation exists in *iroha karuta* as well.

Table 3. Sample of iroha karuta and their Classical Japanese features

Iroha letter	Saying in *hiragana script* only	Saying in *hiragana* script and *kanji* (Chinese characters)	Transcription	Approximate meaning	Classical Japanese features
わ (wa)	わらふかどには ふくきたる	笑う門には福来たる	*warau kado ni wa fuku ki**taru***	Fortune comes to a smiling (happy) home.	Spelling: wara***hu*** → *warau* Verb form: *ki**taru***
れ(re)	れうやくはくちに にがし	良薬は口に苦し	*ryōyaku wa kuchi ni niga**shi***	Good (effective) medicine tastes bitter.	Spelling: ***reu**yaku* → ***ryō**yaku* Adjective form: *niga**shi***
ら (ra)	らく あれば くあり	楽あれば苦あり	*raku areba ku **ari***	There is pleasure and (then) there is pain.	Verb form: ***ari***
あ (a)	あたまかくして しりかくさず	頭隠して尻隠さず	*atama kakushite shiri kakusa**zu***	Hiding your head, but not your bottom.	Verb form: *kakusa**zu***
し (shi)	しらぬがほとけ	知らぬが仏	*shira**nu** ga hotoke*	Ignorance is bliss.	Verb form: *shira**nu***
ひ (hi)	びんばふひま なし	貧乏暇なし	*binbō hima na**shi***	No money, no time.	Spelling: *bin**bahu*** → *binbō* Adjective form: *na**shi***

Additionally, other sayings include four-character sayings *yo(nmo)jijukugo* (四(文)字熟語) such as *onkochishin* (温故知新) noted above which may also be quoted in their Classical Japanese forms. Such sayings can play a large role in communication as they can concisely convey cultural knowledge or pragmatics and so, along with other cultural references, are a necessary part of the communicative and cultural competence of highly proficient speakers of Japanese as promoted by both the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) and the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).

2.2 Basic linguistic features of Classical Japanese

Discussion now turns to the linguistic differences between Classical and modern Japanese. Classical Japanese and modern Japanese share much linguistically: vocabulary, grammatical concepts, word order, and more. However, these two Japanese varieties can vary greatly in their verbal morphemes, verbal conjugation, lexicon, and orthographic conventions among other features. The following excerpt from the opening of the *Taketori Monogatari* (Woodcutter's Tale, ascribed to 810–823, 909, or 940–956 CE; Shirane 2007: 33) demonstrates the possible (dis)similarities between Classical Japanese and modern Japanese forms that developed over roughly a thousand years.

「かぐや姫の生ひ立ち」

今は昔、竹取の**翁**と**いふ**もの有り**けり**。野山に**まじりて**竹を取りつつ、よろづの事に使**ひけ**り。名をば、さかきの造となむいひける。その竹の中に、もと光る竹なむ一筋ありける。あやしがりて寄りて見るに、筒の中光り**たり**。それを見れば、三寸ばかり**なる**人、**いとうつくしうてゐたり**。翁**いふやう**、「我あさごと夕ごとに見る竹の中におはするにて、知り**ぬ**。子になり給ふべき人なめり」とて、手にうち入れて家へ**持ちて**来ぬ。妻の**女**にあづけて養はす。**うつくしき**事かぎり**なし**。**いと**をさなければ籠に入れて養ふ。

(Shirane 2007: 34)

Looking at this edited excerpt, a speaker of modern Japanese can recognise and understand much of the language although this text, commonly taught as an introduction to Classical Japanese, is likely one of the easier classical texts to understand. What follows is a sample of some types of differences between Classical Japanese and modern Japanese as seen in the text above.[5]

Verbal conjugations: *majirite* まじりて (middle line 1), *mochite* 持(も)ちて (middle line 5)

Adjective conjugations: *utsukushiki* うつくしき (end line 5), *nashi* なし (beginning line 6)

Verbal morphology: *-keri* けり (middle line 1, end line 1/beginning line 2), *-tari* たり (middle line 3, beginning line 4), *-nu* ぬ (middle line 5)

Orthography: ゐ (obsolete kana script at end line 3)

Spelling: *tsuka**h**ikeri* 使(つか)ひけり (end line 1), *utsukush**iu**te* うつくしうて (end line 3), *i**h**u* いふ (beginning lines 1 and 4), ***yau*** やう (beginning line 4), ***wou**na* 女(をうな) (middle line 5)

Lexicon: *okina* 翁(おきな) (beginning line 1), *naru* なる (end line 3), *ito* いと (end line 3)

We now explain these linguistic differences between Classical Japanese and modern Japanese in more detail. First, there are some points to consider concerning verbal morphology when introducing Classical Japanese into modern Japanese courses. The conjugation of verbs and adjectives are likely the most important and difficult task to master in order to understand Classical Japanese. Japanese is an agglutinative language where a single verb can consist of several morphemes.

[5] These examples are bolded in the text above, but not every difference is noted.

Modern Japanese:	**Classical Japanese:**
tabe-sase-rare-mas(hi)-ta	*nari-ni-keri*
eat-CAUS-PASS-POLITE-PST	become-PFV-PST
"(someone) was allowed or made to eat (something)"	"(someone, something) completely became (something, quality)"

Morphemes connect in a lego-block-like manner to the appropriate form of the preceding or following morpheme. Furthermore, subjects and objects are often elided as seen in the two example sentences above, being retrieved through verbal forms (e.g. respectful or humble forms), discourse, context, and more. As such, entire strings of text and conversation can consist of (almost) only verbs, resulting in agglutinative verbs and adjectives playing an outsized role in Classical Japanese that is larger than in Modern Japanese (Seidensticker 1980). Thus, "(v)erbs are *the* key to classical Japanese" (Wixted 2006: 24) along with adjectives which act and conjugate as verbs do (2006: 54).

Learning Classical Japanese involves mastering the complex conjugation paradigm of verbal and adjectival inflected stems and morphemes. As seen in Table 4, each verbal stem has six different inflected forms: imperfective (*mizenkei*), continuative (*ren'yōkei*), final (*shūshikei*), attributive (*rentaikei*), perfective (*izenkei*), and imperative (*meirei*) forms. Verbs and adjectives are further identified by verb conjugation types designating the inflected forms of the verb stem (e.g. 4-grade verb, lower 2-grade verb). That is, the name of the conjugation type reflects the modern order of the five vowels when reciting the Japanese *kana* by rows, i.e. (consonant) + vowel: [a]-[i]-[ɯ]-[e]-[o], [ka]-[ki]-[kɯ]-[ke]-[ko], etc.[6] In Table 4 we see that [kaku] "to write" is a 4-grade verb as its inflected stems use the first four vowels in the recited vowel order (i.e. [a], [i], [u], [e]) when adding verbal morphemes while [uku] "to receive" is a lower 2-grade verb as its inflected stems use only the last two (i.e. lower) vowels among the first four vowels of the recited vowel order (i.e. [u], [e]) and so on. Furthermore, verbal and adjectival morphemes are added to these verb/adjective stems. These morphemes also have inflected forms following the six different conjugation forms as seen in the perfective verbal morpheme *-tari* in Table 4. In turn, *-tari* is added to the *ren'yōkei* form of the verbal stem. However, other

[6] i.e. *gojūonzu*, the order of 50 *kana/sounds*; hereafter [ɯ] is rendered as [u] by convention and for convenience.

morphemes may be added to a different inflected form of verbal and adjectival stems. For example, the negative *-zu* is added to the *mizenkei* form of the verbal stem as noted in Table 4. As a result, we have *kaki-tari* "(s/he) wrote" and *kaka-zu* "(s/he) does not write/ will not write."

Table 4. Sample of verb and verbal morpheme conjugation of inflected forms

Verb conjugation type or morpheme / Verb inflected form	[kaku] "to write" 4-grade verb	[uku] "to receive" lower 2-grade verb	[tari] perfective verbal morpheme, i.e. completed action. Added to *ren'yōkei* form	[zu] negative verbal morpheme (alternative forms in parentheses). Added to *mizenkei* form
imperfective *mizenkei*	*kaka*	*uke*	*tara*	*zu (zara)*
continuative *ren'yōkei*	*kaki*	*uke*	*tari*	*zu (zari)*
final *shūshikei*	*kaku*	*uku*	*tari*	*zu*
attributive *rentaikei*	*kaku*	*uku(ru)*	*taru*	*nu (zaru)*
perfective *izenkei*	*kake*	*uku(re)*	*tare*	*ne (zare)*
imperative *meireikei*	*kake*	*uke(yo)*	*tare*	*zare*

For a receptive (or passive) knowledge of Classical Japanese, a casual familiarity with the six verbal stem forms is likely sufficient. However, sometimes the verb or more often the morpheme becomes unrecognizable to readers in their inflection, requiring students to understand conjugated forms. For example, some morphemes have a morphological doppelgänger (i.e. homonym) with a different meaning that can only be discerned by following context or knowing the appropriate form of the verb stem connected to that particular morpheme. We see this in the *-nu* perfective (*shūshikei* form after *ren'yōkei* verbal ending) versus *-nu* form of the *-zu* negative morpheme (*rentaikei* form after *mizenkei* verbal ending; cf. Shirane 2005: 79). For example, the verb in the movie title of *Gone with the Wind* is rendered into Classical Japanese form as *kaze to tomo ni sarinu* "wind-with-together-gone" and should not be interpreted as *Not Go(ne) with the Wind*; adding the *-nu* negative verbal morpheme to the

verb *saru* “to go, to depart” would create *saranu* “doesn’t go” or “will not go” which also would modify a noun (cf. Table 4 above).

Another point to keep in mind is that some grammatical morphemes are more frequent and productive than others. For example, *-zu* (negative verbal ending) is used often by modern speakers and is easy to use in meaning and form. Speakers simply add *-zu* to the verb stem, thereby creating new instances they may not have heard or seen before and not merely parroting frozen forms. By contrast, other less-often-used morphemes are accordingly less productive, perhaps because their precise meaning and conjugation are somewhat difficult to understand. As such, focus might be placed on the more productive morphemes when teaching learners of Japanese as an additional language, although there are likely cases where less productive morphemes may be parts of common productive frozen forms and/or sayings, thereby needing to be taught.

2.3 Orthography

The orthography of Classical Japanese varies from that of modern Japanese and, therefore, some aspects of the obsolete and/or differing forms of Classical Japanese orthography might need to be taught as well. The older forms of the moraic (i.e. syllable or smaller) *kana* scripts (*hiragana, katakana*), developed from cursive forms or parts of Chinese characters (*kanji*), feature a few extra characters (e.g. ゐ [wi], ゑ [we]) or variant forms of *hiragana* (*hentaigana*) which appear in older texts and sometimes in modern materials. Spelling-to-pronunciation reading conventions may also differ between older (*rekishiteki kanazukai or kyū kanazukai*) and modern forms (*gendai kanazukai* or *shin kanazukai*):

- lost distinctions:ぢ-じ, づ-ず – both *kana* characters in each pair are pronounced the same in modern Japanese [dʒi] and [dzu], respectively;
- medial /h/ becoming [w]: [kaha] → [kawa] “river” or more commonly deleted: [warahu] → [warau] “laugh”;
- other sound changes: [hayau] → [hayoo] “early”, [kehu] → [kyoo] “today”, etc.

  (Komai & Rohlich 1991: 8–11)

Additionally, there are distorted characters (*kuzushiji, gyōsho*) for both *kana* and *kanji*. *Hiragana* can also be connected in vertical writing (*tsuzukeji, rensen*), blurring their forms. Moreover, *kanji* feature a wide range of calligraphic styles such as the *sōsho* cursive style. Additionally, certain calligraphic *kanji* forms are associated to particular genres: *kabuki* theatre signage employs the *kanteiryū* lettering style developed during the Edo Period (1603–1868; cf. Richie 1992). Consequently, to help learners decipher these oftentimes-difficult-to-read forms, it is important to emphasise the stroke number, shape, and order of the *kana* and *kanji* characters.

Moreover, the orthography of Classical Japanese and modern Japanese can vary in other ways. First, Chinese characters have undergone many developments in their orthographic usage in Japanese. They were used to generally represent the sounds of Japanese and not necessarily the meaning of the Chinese characters, also known as *manyōgana* in Japanese, alongside using *kana* (800–1600; cf. Frellesvig 2010: 14). While *manyōgana* are likely not necessary to teach given that they are primarily used in ancient, historical texts, the similar system of *ateji* (phonetic transcription using Chinese characters) used in modern Japanese as a form of abbreviation should likely be taught to some extent: 亜米利加 *a-me-ri-ka* "United States", 独逸 *do-itsu* "Germany", 仏蘭西 *fu-ran-su* "France", resulting in 米国*beikoku* "United States" and abbreviations such as 独 or 仏 to indicate "Germany" or "France", respectively. In addition, *kanji* in Japan post-World War II were streamlined by the Japanese government in both form and number designated as *kanji* for general use (*tōyō kanji*; cf. Nelson 1974: 9). For example, newer (*shinjitai*) and older forms (*kyūjitai*) can differ as follows with the older forms in parentheses: 台 (臺), 湾 (灣), 亜 (亞), 国 (國), 対 (對), 党 (黨), 売 (賣). Some of the older *kanji* forms are easily recognised and connected to their newer forms while others are less so, requiring exposure to read fluently (incidentally older forms enable reading modern Chinese in Taiwan, Hong Kong). Second, another orthographic development is that pre-war texts were oftentimes written in *katakana* or a mix of *kanji* and *katakana* rather than in *hiragana* or a mix of *kanji* and *hiragana* as is generally done in modern Japanese: legal documents (Orlotani 2018: 460), children's language textbooks (e.g. *saita, saita, sakura ga saita* "Cherry blossoms have bloomed"), and some literary works such as Kenji Miyazawa's poem *ame ni mo makezu* (1934). Consequently,

learners of Japanese as an additional language may require explicit instruction, exposure, and some form of practice with these different orthographic forms.

Additionally, Classical Chinese texts often rendered into Classical Japanese (*kanbun*) are part of students' classical language education in Japan. Classical Chinese has long played a role in Japanese culture, impacting both classical and modern Japanese language and culture. Traditionally, *kanbun* texts written in Chinese characters (*kanji*) with Chinese grammar are manipulated to be read in Classical Japanese called *kanbun kundoku* rather than in an approximation of the original Chinese (Komai & Rohlich 1988). To illustrate this, many four-character sayings *yo(nmo)jijukugo* (四(文)字熟語) which are prevalent in modern Japanese are derived or completely borrowed from Chinese culture, such as *onkochishin* (温故知新) from the *Analects of Confucius*, noted above. *Onkochishin* is rendered into Classical Japanese from the original Chinese as shown in Table 5. The syntactic order of the Chinese original is rearranged into Classical Japanese syntactic order by marking this new order with diacritics. Then, Japanese grammatical morphology (written in the *kana* syllabic script, i.e. *okurigana*) is added to nouns, verb stems, and adjectival stems.

Table 5. Rendering Classical Chinese into Classical Japanese (Source of rendering: NPO Hōjin eboard 2019)

Classical Chinese original	子曰:“温故而知新，可以爲師矣。”
Classical Chinese with diacritics to transform the syntax	子曰、「温レ故而知レ新。可二以爲一レ師矣。」 Note: Normally the Classical Chinese and Classical Japanese would be presented vertically; as such, the diacritics for reading the order may seem unaligned.
Numbers inserted to show the new order that the diacritics indicate for the two phrases in the quote.	2 1X 4 3。4 1 3 2 X。 (X=not read in Japanese)
Classical Japanese reading	子曰はく、「故きを温めて新しきを知る。以て師と為るべし。」と。
Transcription of the Classical Japanese reading [using modified Hepburn romanization (*rōmaji*)]	*shi iwaku, furuki o atatamete atarashiki o shiru. motte shi to naru beshi. to.*

Rough English gloss of Classical Japanese reading	master (Confucius) – says/according to – something old – object marker – study/review – something new – object marker – know. By (this) means/therefore – teacher – particle – become – shall/should – quotative particle
Translation	"The Master said, 'If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others.' " (Legge 2010: 14).

In this manner, an analytic isolating language like Classical Chinese is completely transformed into a synthetic agglutinative language like Classical Japanese. As such, "(t)he vast majority of Japanese *kanbun* should be recognised as the written representation of the (Classical) Japanese language in the *kundoku* style, and not as a variation of the Chinese language written by Japanese" (Komai & Rohlich 1988: 2).

In sum, informed by these differences between Classical and modern Japanese which are seen in modern usages of Classical Japanese, teaching may target the following features (not an exhaustive list) to meet the needs of second language learners.

1. Common grammatical morphemes added to the stems of verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.
2. Conjugation of the inflected forms of verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc. that allow adding morphemes.
3. Nouns present in Classical Japanese but obsolete in modern Japanese.
4. Older forms of *kanji* (Chinese) characters, including *ateji* usage, i.e. the usage of the sound of a *kanji* character and not its meaning to write words.
5. Obsolete or unconventional *kana* letters, i.e. moraic scripts.
6. Spelling and reading conventions of *kana* script.
7. Various forms of *kanji* and *kana*: calligraphic styles, connected scripts written vertically (*tsuzukeji*), etc., including an emphasis on teaching the form, order, and number of strokes and radicals to better decipher calligraphic forms.
8. Traditional Japanese conjugation paradigm of Classical Japanese verbs and adjectives, based on moras/*kana* rather than on segments (vowels, consonants), cf. modern Japanese verbal conjugation comparing *u*-verb and *ru*-verb conjugations taught to learners of Japanese as an additional

language. [e.g. *kaer-u/kaer-imasu* “to return (home)” vs *kae-ru/kae-masu* “to change (something)*”*].

9. Traditional Japanese method for reading Classical Chinese or *kanbun*, i.e. *kanbun kundoku.*

3. Pedagogical Framework

3.1 Teaching Classical Japanese elements to support students’ learning objectives

The pervasiveness of Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese thus requires speakers of Japanese to have some knowledge of Classical Japanese. Indeed, Classical Japanese is also a part of every student’s education in Japan: Students learn some Classical Japanese in elementary school and then start a more thorough, formal study from middle school through high school (Suzuki 2014).

As suggested by Ito and Matsuda (2018), the teaching of Classical Japanese supports the primary reasons for learning Japanese as stated by learners of Japanese as an additional language. The current paper cites the newer 2018 Japan Foundation report (rather than the 2012 report in Ito and Matsuda 2018) stating the top five reasons for learning Japanese:

1. Objectives of Japanese-language learning (all educational stages) (in 2018 report)
2. Interest in anime, manga, J-Pop, fashion, etc. (66%)
3. Interest in Japanese language (61.4%)
4. Interest in history, literature, arts, etc. (52.4%)
5. Study in Japan (46.7%)
6. Sightseeing in Japan (41.1%)

(The Japan Foundation 2020: 24)

The first three reasons clearly align with the following learners’ needs to understand and potentially use elements of Classical Japanese and/or some other older forms of Japanese:

1. Classical Japanese or older Japanese forms as language used in anime and manga taking place in historical Japanese eras or in role/character language (i.e. stylised language used to indicate a character’s background) in media along with common cultural references and artifacts;

2. Classical Japanese as part of the (modern) Japanese language;
3. Reading Classical Japanese as an integral skill needed to understand Japanese history, literature, art, etc.

In short, the soft power of Japanese culture and language greatly motivates learners of Japanese as an additional language and, in turn, should motivate such learners to wish to gain some knowledge of elements of Classical Japanese and other older forms of Japanese.

The fourth and fifth reasons may seem to connect less to a need for Classical Japanese. However, studying in Japan requires a thorough knowledge of Japanese including Classical Japanese elements, whereas sightseeing likely entails visiting many traditional locations such as shrines and temples which are adorned with Classical Japanese and/or *kanbun* markings or feature works using such language (e.g. calligraphic art).

In short, the prevalence of Classical Japanese forms in modern Japanese intrinsically motivates the teaching of basic Classical Japanese elements (morphemes, lexicon, phrases, grammar, and orthography) to support learners of Japanese as an additional language in their quest to not only gain knowledge about the Japanese language and enhance their overall modern language proficiency but also in their practical needs as well.

3.2 Course or lesson formats and student learning outcomes

We now turn to a discussion of possible course or lesson formats to teach Classical Japanese and other older Japanese forms. Traditional methods for teaching classical languages could be characterised as focusing on decoding authentic texts and/or teaching grammar points through reciting verb conjugations or model sentences containing the targeted language feature. Classical Japanese courses also seem to dive into well-known classical works and/or may involve exercises such as conjugating verb forms, translating Classical Japanese passages of sentences of authentic materials and/or made-up sentences, memorizing the first lines of famous works (e.g. *Hōjōki, An account of a ten-foot-square hut*), etc. In the case of Classical Japanese, it is generally expected that learners already know modern Japanese and can access reference

works or translated versions when reading Classical Japanese works.[7] However, in order to understand the Classical Japanese forms permeating modern Japanese, learners of Japanese as an additional language generally have no recourse other than to take a Classical Japanese course or study on their own.

In response, the current paper advocates the teaching of 1) Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese language courses; 2) a supplemental course on Classical Japanese influences in modern Japanese; or 3) a language course on language variation in Japanese, including Classical Japanese elements. Moreover, while three years or approximately 350 hours of modern Japanese are recommended before teaching students Classical Japanese (Komai & Rohlich 1991), introducing elements of Classical Japanese into the teaching of modern Japanese can be done somewhat earlier, such as in third-year Japanese and for some elements perhaps even earlier. Indeed, some textbooks for learners of modern Japanese as an additional language introduce some Classical Japanese elements (e.g. verbal negative morpheme *-zu*, its *rentaikei* form of *-nu,* or in a phrase such as *~ni mo kakawarazu* in advanced third-year textbook *Tobira*, Oka *et al.* 2009, or a practical guide for scholarly reading used parallel to third-year Japanese language courses/textbooks, Nazakian, Ono, & Tatsumi 2023).

First of all, instructors must decide whether to implement either a gradual introduction through introducing one or two elements into lessons in the form of one saying or *haiku* at the beginning of class or through integration of one or two lengthier concentrated lessons on Classical Japanese into modern Japanese courses. Next, to guide both instructors in designing exercises, activities, and lessons and learners in knowing what is expected of them, instructors should set measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs). Instructors might reference Bloom's taxonomy which despite criticisms of its hierarchical structure among other issues can still provide tangible, clear objectives for instructors and learners with its concrete, measurable verbs (e.g. *identify*, *describe*) versus less clear, vague verbs (e.g. *understand, improve*). The following sample of some possible SLOs might guide instructors:

[7] For a short discussion of teaching/learning Classical Japanese at the university level by learners of Japanese as an additional language, cf. Komai & Rohlich (1991: preface).

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- Identify Classical Japanese grammatical morphemes for verbs and adjectives and state their meanings.
- Express the meaning of Classical Japanese lexicon.
- Pronounce Classical Japanese spelling conventions in an appropriate manner.
- Recognise older *kanji* forms and relate them to their modern forms and meanings.
- Describe the effect of using Classical Japanese (e.g. academic, literary, role language, etc.) on modern language usage.

Once SLOs have been defined in measurable, concrete terms, instructors create exercises, activities, and lessons to facilitate learning in line with these SLOs. Furthermore, exposure is key and so, supported by teaching methods from both Classical Japanese and modern Japanese, extensive reading is advocated as a means to teach Classical Japanese elements. Moreover, it is recommended that extensive reading be supported with explicit instruction (e.g. rules, model sentences, comparisons with modern Japanese), scaffolding exercises (e.g. translation, intensive reading, grammar exercises, intensive listening), cultural artifacts (e.g. poetry, traditional card games), and extensive listening for reinforcement.

Additionally, as materials are limited, instructors employ a do-it-yourself (DIY) approach by creating lessons from scratch or modifying available lessons. For example, instructors adopt and adapt materials where they might tweak graded readers by adding targeted Classical Japanese grammatical morphemes, words, phrases, sayings, and possibly orthography. Instructors might consult various online materials such as *Resources for Teaching and Learning Classical Japanese* (AATJ 2022) which lists works covering vocabulary, grammar, and orthography of Classical Japanese. Instructors might mine samples of Classical Japanese in modern Japanese from entertainment media: movies, TV shows, *anime*, *manga*, video games, etc. from various genres such as historical dramas, fantasy, science fiction, etc. Again, instructors may use cultural artifacts: sayings, traditional poetry (*haiku, tanka, waka*), *karuta* (*iroha, hyakunin isshu*), pre-World War II materials (government documents; titles of books, movies; older school textbooks), business letters, Kansai dialect dialogues, and more.

To optimise time and create more flexibility in creating activities that meet student needs, classes can be flipped and/or blended. In flipping, homework traditionally assigned to be done outside of class might be done in class rather than as homework, or typical in-class activities (e.g. lectures, explanations, exercises, etc.) might be assigned as homework. This approach creates more time in class for language usage or more meaningful interaction in the language. Classes can be blended where instructors synthesise face-to-face interaction with online technology to optimise the advantages of both teaching modes (learning styles, time schedule, etc.). Instructors might create exercises or quizzes that can be done online as outside work or used in class to test the entire class anonymously by tallying group answers for particular questions or exercises using online websites (e.g. *Kahoot!*)[8]. Online exercises may include Classical Japanese grammar exercises, reading older *kanji*, verb conjugations, vocabulary, orthography (e.g. spelling-to-pronunciation conventions), etc., using fill-in-the-blank exercises, multiple choice, model sentences, matching Classical Japanese and modern Japanese words/grammar, short translations between modern and Classical Japanese, intensive reading, intensive listening, explanations (handouts, short videos), extensive reading, extensive listening, and more.

Furthermore, when flipping and blending a course, the focus should likely be placed on the objectives of the activities (i.e. SLOs) where technology serves as a tool (basic tools include pencil, paper, blackboard in addition to digital online tools) to boost the efficacy of these activities and thereby, learning. As such, the usage of technology should be evaluated and applied in terms of how it might enhance language learning. To do so, instructors might reference the SAMR Model (Puentedura 2006).[9] This model might be employed to conceptualise, optimise, and evaluate the efficacy of technology-aided activities.

[8] *Kahoot!* is a fun learning platform that allows instructors to create trivia quizzes or games for their courses. For trivia quizzes, questions appear on the classroom computer screen and students have a few seconds to select the correct answer (if multiple choice) using their phones or computers and an alias, if they wish. The correct answer is then revealed along with the number of students who selected each of the choices. The top scorers are also continuously displayed, creating an exciting competitive but anonymous atmosphere.

[9] The model is divided into two stages of enhancement and transformation. Enhancement is further divided into substitution and augmentation whereas transformation is divided into modification and redefinition. Substitution allows technology to replace traditional language activities without any improvement, i.e. "no functional change." Augmentation allows technology to replace traditional language activities with improvement. Modification enables language learning activities to be greatly re-conceptualised and re-designed. Redefinition is where technology enables new types of language learning activities to be conceptualised and created.

In light of these considerations, we now discuss the pedagogical underpinnings and guidelines behind extensive reading and suggested scaffolding activities in teaching classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese.

3.3 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading is an active process where learners read fluently for extended periods of time with high levels of comprehension. That is, learners should be processing the forms and functions of language for meaning. Extensive reading of comprehensible input automatises reading skills (Grabe 2009). The focus of extensive reading tends to be on vocabulary. Learners expand their vocabulary by understanding new words through context while reading, i.e. incidental learning, or through vocabulary lessons taught before doing extensive reading which in turn increases exposure (frequency, context, etc.) and thereby recycles and reinforces vocabulary learning (Nation & Waring 2019). Extensive reading through frequent exposure in various contexts also creates opportunities for incidental learning and reinforced learning of targeted grammatical features as well (Aka 2020). Lastly, extensive reading positively impacts language production such as writing (e.g. vocabulary size, accuracy of expression; cf. Tudor & Hafiz 1989) and speaking/listening (e.g. grammatical accuracy, confidence; cf. Cho & Krashen 1994). As such, extensive reading seems to be one ideal method for increasing receptive exposure to Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese.

Extensive reading is characterised as follows. It widely uses "graded readers", that is, readers graded in levels of difficulty. Text is aligned with what is being taught or targeted in a language course in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and other language skills while building on previously learned language knowledge and proficiencies. According to the Extensive Reading Foundation (2011), vocabulary is limited to high-frequency words and basic grammar for beginner levels and gradually includes less frequent words and more complex grammar for advanced learners. Learners should understand approximately 98% of words and read at about 150–200 words per minute or lower (in the case of English) for beginners. Understanding less than 90% of words impedes comprehension of the content resulting in lower learning efficacy and likely decreased motivation. Learners should not use any aids such as a dictionary while reading. Reading one book per week is recommended (Day & Bamford 2002). To ensure that learners

are indeed reading texts, some low-stakes type of accountability should be implemented: simple summaries, basic questions and answers, discussions, presentations, a log of learners' impression of reading proficiency with a few sentences about the story, followed up with instructor feedback, etc.[10] Additionally, instructors may need to explain the objectives of extensive reading to guide learners and convince them of the efficacy of extensively reading what they may consider to be somewhat simple texts in order to eventually read authentic texts with fluency (Tabata-Sandbom 2013). Extensive reading can be further modified as read-along aloud or listening along while reading. Extensive listening by itself as shaped by extensive reading criteria can also be utilised.

As noted, instructors need to control the frequency of words and difficulty of grammar when creating, modifying, or using extensive readers. Knowing the 3,000 most frequent words in a language appears to cover most spoken and written materials (Robles-García 2022) while knowing the 5,000 most frequent words allows a learner to attain CEFR C1 level (advanced proficient user) or ACTFL Superior or ILR 3+ professional proficiency (Tschirmer, Hacking, & Rubio 2018). To determine the frequency of vocabulary, *kanji* characters, and the difficulty level of grammatical structures in Japanese, instructors might use J-Lex, which is a lexical analyzer for Japanese language (Matsushita, n.d.). The main site, *Matsushita Laboratory for Language Learning*, specifically addresses the use of J-Lex in creating Japanese-language graded readers. The site also features the *Yasa-Nichi Checker Text Diagnosis Version* which "evaluates the difficulty of sentences from the five viewpoints of vocabulary, *kanji*, formality, length, and grammar". In the case of introducing Classical Japanese elements, however, determining the level of frequency and difficulty may not be so straightforward, requiring pre-reading explicit instructions and/or focused exercises and clearer contextual clues within the extensive reading text.

In addition, to help parse syntactic phrases and sentences, learners need to perceive and understand the prosody of sentences when reading (e.g. by subvocalization) and listening. To help learners better understand the lexically-contrastive pitch accent of Japanese words and thereby basic prosody of sentences in standard Japanese, instructors and learners might access the *Prosody Tutor Suzuki-kun* on the *Online Japanese Accent Dictionary* (OJAD, Minematsu Laboratory & Hirose Laboratory, n.d.). *Prosody Tutor Suzuki-kun* generates a

[10] For a detailed discussion, cf. Extensive Reading Foundation (2011).

visual image of the prosody of words, phrases, and sentences which can help learners perceive, produce, and learn the pitch accent and overall prosodic patterns and, thereby, parse the syntax. Such a prosodic aid is perhaps particularly crucial for listen-along extensive reading and extensive listening.

Finally, in the case of Japanese, there are potential issues to explore in language usage in extensive readers. The intersection of orthography, meaning, and pronunciation likely requires consideration when creating extensive readers. In Japanese, Chinese characters (i.e. *kanji*) have a visual impact and provide little indication of pronunciation; however, the reading process appears to involve subvocalization to allow readers to access meaning in the mental lexicon and, thereby, understand what they are reading. These Chinese characters can in Japanese add a pronunciation rubric (i.e. *furigana* or *rubi*) above the character when reading horizontally or to the right of the character when reading vertically from right to left. Additionally, the academic or literary tone of Classical Japanese lexicon and/or grammar may require some creativity in integrating them into extensive readers as comprehensible input with sufficient frequency while avoiding a potential dissonance between genre or register.

3.4 Activities to support Extensive Reading

Extensive reading can and should be supported by various types of scaffolding activities to enhance the efficacy of teaching Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese. First, explicit instruction can be used to help students to understand various linguistic elements that are part of any text: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, pragmatics, and more, by going over these elements in some manner before extensive reading. Explicit instruction helps learners to notice (Schmidt 1990) and gain an awareness and understanding of features which may facilitate learning (e.g. Classical Japanese expressions; cf. Obata 1974) and acquisition (Ellis & Shintani 2015). Model sentences can be introduced to demonstrate the target grammar points and to act as a reference point; instructors may repeat the sentence to remind learners of target language points or to reference the features. Comparisons between similar or contrasting features can facilitate understanding and allow learners to make connections among common linguistic features shared by modern Japanese and Classical Japanese (Suzuki 2014): verbal inflections, verbal morphemes, lexicon, orthographic conventions, and more. Using the analytical skills adults possess to

enhance language learning (Snow & Hoefnagel-Hoehl 1982), instructors might apply either inductive (analyzing forms to create rules) or deductive learning (e.g. learning general rules and then applying these rules to forms). In the case of Classical Japanese, explicit instruction should likely focus on verbs and other inflected forms which present the most difficulty in mastering Classical Japanese (Komai & Rohlich 1991).

Instructors can adopt a focus-on-form approach as part of explicit instruction to heighten awareness of grammatical features. Larsen-Freeman (2014) summarises such an approach as follows: (a) Instructors can enhance input through changing font styles, coloring, etc. (Sharwood Smith 1993); (b) Instructors can flood learner input with the targeted language feature(s) which can also promote incidental learning through context; (c) Instructors can draw attention to targeted language features through having learners use them in a meaningful manner in an activity (i.e. input processing; cf. VanPatten 1996) within a communicative and meaning-based approach, e.g. task-based, content-based language learning (Long 1991).[11] These three types of focus-on-form techniques can be applied in extensive reading with its focus on meaningful understanding and enjoyment. Explicit instruction and focus-on-form activities can be further reinforced by intensive reading, intensive listening, traditional grammar or vocabulary exercises (both in or out of class, e.g. by blending or flipping), and more.

Extensive reading can also be supported or reinforced with a modified form of the archetypal grammar-translation method of language pedagogy. Translation activities as scaffolding can indeed facilitate language learning. Both extensive reading and intensive reading with translation (written form) positively impact grammar knowledge, i,e., general grammar and specific grammatical features (Lee, Schallert, & Kim 2015). Translation creates opportunities for noticing grammar through language production/comprehensible output (cf. Krashen 1981) and/or explicit, intentional learning with instructor feedback and/or discussion. Interpretation (oral mode of translation) has also been shown to help learners to notice grammatical features through processing language when producing language as learners negotiate meaning (Ellis 1995).[12] The resulting focus on targeted Classical Japanese elements prompted by translation also allows learners

[11] For a detailed discussion, cf. Larsen-Freeman (2014: 263).
[12] For a detailed discussion, cf. Lee *et al.* (2015).

to not only focus on grammatical form and meaning but also on the register or effect of using particular Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese.

Another possible scaffolding activity includes using cultural artifacts. For example, *iroha karuta* can be used to teach *hiragana* and some basic vocabulary and then be brought back at a later time when students have advanced in proficiency to teach basic Classical Japanese verbal morphemes, common grammatical forms, and other rudimentary elements discussed in section 2 above. Additionally, *haiku*, other poetic forms, and sayings might be used to introduce one or two Classical Japanese grammar points, lexicon, spelling conventions, etc., along with pronunciation issues (e.g. mora timing, pitch accent; Schaefer & Ochiai 2022). Instructors might create a few concentrated lessons on Classical Japanese using cultural artifacts, or they might introduce two to three sayings or haiku per week for only a few minutes to highlight a targeted grammar point of Classical Japanese as a small part of a lesson.

In sum, the learning of Classical Japanese elements in modern Japanese can be effectively supported by implementing a combination of traditional and modern approaches and methods of foreign language instruction such as explicit instruction, extensive reading, and scaffolding activities as informed by measurable SLOs and optimised through blending and flipping in an ideal or preferred format (i.e. gradual introduction integrated into modern Japanese lessons/courses versus stand-alone Classical Japanese lessons/courses, online versus face-to-face classroom activities or a combination of both).

4. Conclusion

Classical Japanese forms continue to play a role in modern Japanese, serving as a part of speakers' linguistic repertoire. As such, a receptive, if not productive, knowledge of Classical Japanese forms would benefit learners of Japanese as an additional or second language in enhancing their linguistic repertoire and thereby, their overall Japanese language proficiency as well as their understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture. Teaching Classical Japanese elements to learners of modern Japanese can also support graduate students and scholars in Japanese studies or other learners who may desire or require knowledge of classical or older forms in order to read older texts and/or academic or literary texts.

Additionally, the methods suggested in this paper can be applied to teaching an entire full-on course on Classical Japanese or other classical languages or to teaching residual elements of classical language in other modern languages to second language learners. Lastly, introducing Classical Japanese forms into modern Japanese courses may serve as a gateway to learning Classical Japanese and recruiting students into Classical Japanese language courses by spurring student interest in Classical Japanese and/or Classical Japanese literature and, thereby, boosting needed student numbers in such courses at the university.

However, more work is required to develop the most effective means to proactively integrate Classical Japanese into modern Japanese courses. To that effect, the current paper suggests that instructors of modern Japanese reflect more on their teaching of Classical Japanese elements and, if possible, carry out empirical studies in the classroom on the teaching and understanding of Classical Japanese and other variants in order to test and develop effective pedagogical approaches, methods, and techniques.

Nevertheless, teaching Classical Japanese to learners of modern Japanese as an additional language is necessary given the prevalence of Classical Japanese in modern Japanese language and culture. Learners would boost their language skills and access new avenues of communication, information, and learning through the development of their linguistic repertoire (e.g. language used in literary, academic, popular culture, and more). In short, learners would widen their worldview beyond the limitations of a restricted linguistic form to a richer form of modern Japanese. In this way, as the saying by the Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi adopted into Japanese notes, learners of Japanese as an additional language can transform themselves from "a frog in a well who does not know of the big ocean" (井底之蛙（不知大海） *i no naka no kawazu, taikai o shirazu)* to one that knows the depths and breadths of a greater sea of linguistic knowledge and communicative competence.

References

Aka, N. (2020). Incidental learning of a grammatical feature from reading by Japanese learners of English as a foreign language. *System, 91*, 102250.

American Association for Teaching Japanese. (2022). *Resources for teaching and learning Classical Japanese.* Retrieved from https://www.aatj.org/resources/sig/bungo/ClassicalJapaneseResources2022.pdf

Carter, J. (1925, July 26). Japan's classic of the golden age. *The New York Times Book Review*. Retrieved from https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1925/07/26/101674625.html

Cho, K-S., & Krashen, S. D. (1994). Acquisition of vocabulary from the Sweet Valley Kids series. *Journal of Reading, 37*(8), 662–677.

Confucius. (2010). *The Analects of Confucius* (J. Legge, Trans.). Auckland, NZ: The Floating Press.

Day, R. R., & Bamford, J. (2002). Top ten principles for teaching extensive reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 14*(2).

Ellis, R. (1995). Interpretation tasks for grammar teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 28*, 87–105.

Ellis, R., & Shintani, N. (2015). *Exploring language pedagogy through second language acquisition research*. New York: Routledge.

Extensive Reading Foundation. (2011). *Guide to Extensive Reading.* Retrieved from https://erfoundation.org/guide/ERF_Guide.pdf

Frellesvig, B. (2010). *A history of the Japanese language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practise.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Japan Foundation. (2020). *Survey report on Japanese-language education abroad 2018.* Tokyo: The Japan Foundation.

Ito, A., & Matsuda, M. (2018). The significance and expected possibilities of learning Classical Japanese for non-native learners: Proposals for grammar and character education. [Nihongo gakushūni koten o toriireru igi to kanōsei: bumpō moji kyōiku no kokoromi]. *Tokyo University of Foreign Studies*

Bulletin of Japanese Language Center for International Students, 44, 147–162.

Kinsui, S. (2003). *Virtual Japanese: Mystery of yakuwarigo* [Vācharu nihongo, yakuwarigo no nazo]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.

Kinsui, S. (2006, August 5). *Classical Japanese (living) in modern times* [Gendai ni ikiru koten nihongo] [PowerPoint slides/Conference presentation]. 2006 International Conference on Japanese Language Education (ICJLE) Columbia University. New York, NY, United States. Retrieved from http://skinsui.cocolog-nifty.com/linguistics/files/CIJLE2006slide.pdf

Komai, A., & Rohlich, T. H. (1988). *An introduction to Japanese Kanbun*. Nagoya: The University of Nagoya Press.

Komai, A., & Rohlich, T. H. (1991). *An introduction to Classical Japanese*. Tokyo: Bonjinsha.

Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2014). Teaching Grammar. In M. Celce-Murcia, D. M. Brinton, & M. A. Snow (eds), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Boston, MA: National Geographic Learning, 256–270.

Lee, J., Schallert, D. L., & Kim, E. (2015). Effects of extensive reading and translation activities on grammar knowledge and attitudes for EFL adolescents, *System, 52*, 38–50.

Long, M. H. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. de Bot, R. B. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (eds), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 39–52.

Matsushita, T. (n.d.). *Matsushita Laboratory for Language Learning.* Retrieved from http://www17408ui.sakura.ne.jp/tatsum/english/webtoolsE.html

Minematsu Laboratory & Hirose Laboratory. (n.d.). *Online Japanese Accent Dictionary (OJAD).* Retrieved from https://www.gavo.t.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ojad/

Nation, I. S. P., & Waring, R. (2019). *Teaching Extensive Reading in another language*. New York: Routledge.

Nazakian, F., Ono, K., & Tatsumi, N. (2023). *A practical guide for scholarly reading in Japanese.* New York: Routledge.

Nelson, A. N. (1974). *The modern reader's Japanese-English character dictionary* (2nd ed.). Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company.

NPO hōjin eboard. (2019, March 28). *Analects: How to read "WeiZheng 11"* [Rongo: furuki o atatamete atarashiki o shiru – yomi]. [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zmQ24aX7bE

Obata, E. (1974). The instructional value of classical expressions. *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese, 9*(1), 35–49.

Oka, M., Tsutsui, M., Kondo, J., Emori, S., Hanai, Y., & Ishikawa, S. (2009). *Tobira: Gateway to advanced Japanese learning through content and multimedia.* Tokyo: Kurosio.

Orlotani, A. (2018). The many languages of Japanese legal language. In J. Visconti (ed.), *Handbook of communication in the legal sphere*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 450–478.

Puentedura, R. (2006, August 8). *Transformation, technology, and education* [powerpoint presentation]. Strengthening your district through technology workshops, Maine, USA. Retrieved from http://hippasus.com/resources/tte/

Richie, D. (1992). *A lateral view: Essays on culture and style in contemporary Japan* (reprint edition). Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press.

Robles-García, P. (2022). Receptive vocabulary knowledge in L2 learners of Spanish: The role of high-frequency words. *Foreign Language Annals, 55*(4), 963–984.

Schaefer, V., & Ochiai, K. (2022). Using haiku as mini pronunciation lessons to enhance mora timing and special moras in Japanese as a second language. In J. Levis & A. Guskaroska (eds), *Proceedings of the 12th Annual Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference* (June 2021 virtually), Brock University, St. Catharines, ON, Canada. https://doi.org/10.31274/psllt.13360

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11*(2), 129–158.

Seidensticker, E. (1980). Chiefly on translating the Genji. *Journal of Japanese Studies, 6*(1), 16–47.

Sharwoord Smith, M. (1993). Input enhancement in instructed SLA: Theoretical bases. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*(2), 165–179.

Shirane, H. (2005). *Classical Japanese: A grammar*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Shirane, H. (2007). *Classical Japanese reader and essential dictionary.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Snow, C., & Hoefnagel-Hoehle, M. (1982). The critical period for language acquisition: Evidence from second language learning. In S Krashen, R. Scarcella, & M. Long (eds), *Child-adult differences in second language acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 93–111.

Suzuki, K. (2014). How should we consider teaching Classical Japanese grammar in junior high school [Chūgakkō de no koten bunpō no shidō o, dono yō ni kangaeru ka]. *Nihongogaku, 33*(13), 4–15.

Tabata-Sandbom, M. (2013). The reader-text-writer interaction: L2 Japanese learners' response toward graded readers. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 25*(2), 264–282.

Tschirner, E., Hacking, J. F., & Rubio, F. (2018). Reading proficiency and vocabulary size: An empirical investigation. In P. Ecke & S. Rott (eds), *AAUSC 2018 Volume – Issues in language program direction: Understanding vocabulary learning and teaching: Implications for language program development*. Boston, MA: Cengage, 58–77.

Tudor, I., & Hafiz, F. (1989). Extensive reading as a means of input to L2 learning. *Journal of Research in Reading, 12*(2), 164–178.

VanPatten, B. (1996). *Input processing and grammar instruction in second language acquisition.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Wixted, J. T. (2010). *A handbook to Classical Japanese.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

TEACHING PERSIAN COMPLEX PREDICATES FROM A PEDAGOGICAL CONSTRUCTION GRAMMAR STANCE

Maryam Pakzadian
Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg
maryam.pakzadian@fau.de

Abstract

This paper addresses Persian Complex Predicates (CPs) from an Applied/Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG) stance. PCxG is an approach to foreign language pedagogy that emphasises the importance of constructions (form-meaning pairings), which are patterns of words and grammatical structures that have meaning beyond the sum of their individual parts. According to Goldberg (2006: 3), it is 'an attempt to describe language in a way that is both descriptively accurate and pedagogically useful'. Persian CPs are multi-word predicates comprised of twenty so-called light verbs and a non-verbal element (noun, adjective, adverb, preposition, verbal particle, complex noun, noun plus adverb) forming a single conceptual unit (e.g. pakhsh kardan, lit. scattered$_{ADJ}$ do, 'to spread'; and charkh zadan, lit. wheel$_{N}$ hit, 'to stroll'). Persian CPs present a compelling challenge to linguistics due to their lexical and phrasal properties. For example, they can undergo derivational processes, but they are also syntactically separable by the negation prefix, future auxiliary, or the direct object clitics. In this study, I argue that for teaching Persian CPs to English speakers a PCxG approach can be construed as a multidisciplinary effort aiming to elicit those aspects of Construction Grammar (CxG) that can be tied in more explicitly with Applied Linguistics, teacher education, and foreign language pedagogy.

Keywords: Construction Grammar, Applied Construction Grammar, Pedagogical Construction Grammar, Persian Complex Predicates

1. Introduction

The study of Complex Predicates (CPs)[1] is an important aspect of Persian language teaching, and a topic of interest to scholars in the fields of linguistics and language education. Persian CPs are constructions that involve light verbs[2] and pre-verbal elements, and they are among the most controversial areas of Persian grammar due to exhibiting both word-like (lexical) and phrasal properties. These constructions are particularly challenging for language learners, as they require an understanding of the complex relationships between light verbs and other elements that make up the predicate. In recent years, there has been growing interest in the use of Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG) as an approach to teaching grammatical constructions such as Complex Predicates.

PCxG is a linguistic framework that emphasises the importance of learning *constructions* as a means of acquiring language. In this context, a construction is an abstract representation of a pattern of language use, which includes not only the words involved but also the syntactic and semantic relationships between them.[3] By learning constructions, language learners can develop a deeper understanding of the underlying patterns of language use, which can help them to use the language more effectively and flexibly.

Herbst (2016) argues that this approach offers several advantages for language learners. For example, by focusing on constructions rather than individual words, learners can develop a more robust understanding of the underlying patterns of language use, which can help them to use the language more creatively. Given that foreign language learners are typically exposed to

[1] The following abbreviations are used in this article: 1 = first person; 2 = second person; 3 = third person; ADJ = adjective; ADV = adverb; AG = agent; AGR = agreement; CL = clitic; CNP = complex noun phrase; Cx = construction; DO = direct object; FUT = future; INF = infinitive; N = noun; NEG = negative; PL = plural; POSS = possessive; PP = prepositional phrase; PROG = progressive; PRS = present; PST = past; PTCL = particle; SG = singular.

[2] Light verbs are semantically empty verbs that denote the grammatical meanings in sentences. These are verbs such as *zadan* 'hit', *kardan* 'do', *shodan* 'become', and *dâdan* 'give' in Persian.

[3] Adele E. Goldberg (1995) defines a construction as a form-meaning pair such that some aspect of its form or meaning/function is not strictly predictable from its component parts or from other previously established constructions. Additionally, "patterns are stored as constructions even if they are fully predictable as long as they occur with sufficient frequency" (Goldberg 2006: 5). Constructions include words (e.g. *apple*), morphemes (e.g. *-ing*), fixed expressions and idioms (*As a matter of fact*, *pull X's leg*), and abstract grammatical rules such as the passive voice (*The letter was sent by me*) or the ditransitive (*Mary gave me a rose*).

significantly less language input than native speakers, it is essential that they be provided with construction-based explanations to arrive at generalizations about language patterns.

There is a large body of studies on Persian CPs (e.g. Barjasteh 1983; Folli, Harley, & Karimi 2005; Goldberg 1996, 2003; Karimi-Doostan 1997; Karimi 2003; Megerdoomian 2001, 2012; Vahedi-Langrudi 1996), but there are no studies that focus on teaching them to speakers of other languages using principles of PCxG to the best of the author's knowledge. As the field of PCxG is an emerging domain of research, few studies have been done in this framework. Those that have been done so far are reported in Boas (2022) and De Knop & Gilquin (2016).

In this paper, I contribute to the growing body of PCxG-based research by exploring the use of PCxG for teaching Persian CPs. I begin by introducing PCxG and its main tenets (section 2.1), followed by providing a constructionist overview of Persian CPs, including the main features of Persian CPs (section 2.2). In tandem, I discuss the issue of separability of Persian CPs that makes learning them challenging (section 3). Then, I describe my approach to teaching Persian CPs using PCxG, which involves explicitly teaching learners to recognise and use Persian CP constructions as abstract patterns of language use (section 4). I also suggest a lesson plan, examples of classroom activities and tasks that I have developed to support this approach (section 5).

2. Literature review

2.1 Teaching constructions using Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG)

The application of linguistic theory to language education has always been a concern in identifying and exploiting pedagogical opportunities. Innovative approaches inspired by Construction Grammar (CxG) offer a holistic and cognitive perspective on language learning (Boas 2022). CxG assumes that a

network of constructions, referred to as *constructicon*,[4] captures the totality of our knowledge of language.

Despite changing our perception of Second Language Acquisition, Holme (2010) suggests that the impact of constructions on language instruction has been muted. However, he proposes deriving a psychologically plausible approach to teaching grammar based on CxG. Grammatical forms should be considered symbols[5], and their teaching should be indispensable to pedagogy while being inextricably linked with the mastery of text-type and lexis.

Several researchers (e.g. De Knop & De Rycker 2008; Eddington & Ruiz de Mendoza 2010; Gries & Wulff 2005; Herbst 2016; Littlemore 2009), adopted Ellis' (2001) proposal that second-language learning is construction learning. *Applied Construction Grammar* (De Knop & Gilquin 2016) and *Pedagogical Construction Grammar* (Herbst 2016) are two concrete versions of applying constructional approaches to language pedagogy. They rely on Cognitive Linguistics and CxG, combining cognitive, usage-based, constructionist, and corpus-based approaches to offer simpler and more plausible linguistic descriptions in the classroom.

Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG) addresses important issues in foreign-language pedagogy that were previously peripheral in the Chomskyan generative framework, such as collocations and valency[6]. The constructionist approach to language views grammar as a structured network of conventionalised form-meaning pairings, or constructions, summarised by Goldberg's (2003: 223) catchphrase: "It's constructions all the way down!"

While it remains to be seen if all linguistic knowledge should be explained from the standpoint of constructions, usage-based approaches suggest that learning occurs through generalizing from language experience. However, the extent to which insights from first-language acquisition can be applied to second/foreign-language learning remains an open question (Ellis 2003).

---

[4] In constructionist theory, a *constructicon* is an inventory of constructions making up the full set of linguistic units in a language. In applied practice, it is a set of construction descriptions – a "dictionary of constructions".

[5] Symbol is synonymous with construction in Construction Grammar theories. Constructions are symbolic units or signs, that is a pairing of form and meaning (Goldberg 1995).

[6] In linguistics, valency or valence is the number and type of arguments governed by a predicate (for discussions on Valency Theory, cf. Herbst 2014; Herbst *et al.* 2004).

Input, output, and feedback are key factors in foreign language learning,[7] but the relatively small amount of input in foreign language contexts makes it more difficult to arrive at linguistic generalizations. An important issue is that learners may find it easier to arrive at certain generalizations if they have similar generalizations in their native language (Herbst 2016). Despite being exposed to much less input in the foreign language compared to their L1, foreign language learners can still arrive at linguistic generalizations that lend themselves to construction-based explanations (Gries & Wulff 2005: 190–191).

The application of CxG in language education can significantly contribute to teaching and learning in two ways. Firstly, it can help identify the linguistic items included in curricula, teaching materials, and dictionaries, and secondly, it can propose appropriate techniques and strategies for presenting and teaching these items (Herbst 2016). Although learners' dictionaries such as the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE), *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, and the *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary* are compatible with CxG principles, electronic corpora that offer access to authentic data, frequency patterns, and search mechanisms can provide more comprehensive solutions.

The PCxG methodology is mainly inspired by Herbst's (2016: 40–44) seven principles of PCxG:

- Principle 1: "it's constructions all the way down" (Goldberg 2006: 18);
- Principle 2: Present constructions as form-meaning pairings;
- Principle 3: One sense at a time;
- Principle 4: Indicate chunks;[8]

[7] Input refers to the language exposure learners receive. It encompasses all the linguistic material that learners encounter, such as listening to native speakers, reading texts, watching videos, or participating in conversations (Krashen 1985). Output refers to the language production by learners. It involves using the language actively through speaking or writing (Swain 1985). Feedback is information provided to learners about their language performance. It can come from various sources, including teachers, peers, or self-assessment (Ellis 2003).

[8] A 'chunk' refers to a fixed or semi-fixed sequence of words or phrases that functions as a single unit of meaning or serves a specific communicative purpose. Chunks are often taught and learned as prefabricated language units because they are commonly used together in natural language contexts. Examples of chunks include collocations ('take a break', 'make a decision'); idiomatic expressions ('hit the hay', 'kick the bucket'); formulaic sequences ('How are you?', 'Nice to meet you.'); grammatical patterns ('If I were you', 'I'm looking forward to...').

- Principle 5: Show valency constructions;
- Principle 6: Moderate and meaningful use of grammatical terminology;
- Principle 7: Consider authenticity.[9]

Among the seven principles taken from Herbst, principles three, four, and five are related to textbooks. Language teachers have no control over the sensitivity of the textbooks to the CxG and PCxG; however, these principles can be adapted well for developing supplementary teaching materials, activities, and tasks.

In section 2.2, I present my constructionist overview of Persian CPs drawing upon Goldberg (1995, 1996, 2006). These constructionist explanations can be beneficial for linguists/teachers to have a better understanding of the idiosyncratic features of Persian CPs when developing supplementary teaching materials, activities, and tasks for teaching them.

2.2 A constructionist overview of Persian Complex Predicates

Persian Complex Predicates (CPs) are multi-word verbal constructions consisting of a preverbal element (host) and a light verb (LV) which is semantically empty. According to Folli, Harley and Karimi (2003), preverbal elements in a Persian CP may be a noun, adjective, adverb, verbal particle, prepositional phrase, or a complex noun. Examples include:

- Noun + LV, e.g. *dust dâshtan* (lit. like having) ‘to like/love’;
- Adjective + LV, e.g. *narahat kardan/shodan* (lit. sad doing/becoming) ‘to upset’;
- Adverb + LV, e.g. *kenar keshidan* (lit. side pulling) ‘to withdraw’;
- Verbal Particles + LV, e.g. *fara gereftan* (lit. over/beyond taking) ‘to grasp’;
- Prepositional phrase + LV, e.g. *be xâter(yâd) dashtan* (lit. to memory having) ‘to remember’;

[9] The principle of authenticity suggests that teaching materials should be based on the analysis of corpora or on reference works based on corpus analysis and the frequency of constructions should be reflected in the design of teaching materials (Herbst 2016: 44).

- Complex noun + LV, e.g. *in pâ un pâ kardan* (lit. this foot that foot doing) 'to procrastinate';
- Noun(object) + adverb + LV, e.g. *pâ dar miâni kardan* (lit. foot in the middle doing) 'to mediate'.

Simin Karimi (1997) argues that Persian CPs can have either compositional (*fekr kardan* 'to think', lit. thought doing) or idiomatic meaning (*chune zadan* 'to negotiate', chin hitting). Folli, Harley and Karimi (2003) and Megerdoomian (2001) discuss that LVs in Persian CPs can determine whether the CP is agentive vs. non-agentive (*shekast dâdan* 'to deafeat', lit. defeat giving, vs. *shekast xordan* 'to defeat', lit. defeat colliding), static vs. eventive (*be yad dashtan* 'to remember', lit. in memory having, vs. *be yad âvardan* 'to remember', lit. to memory bringing), or durative vs. non-durative (*dast keshidan* 'to touch', lit. hand pulling, vs. *dast zadan* 'to touch', lit. hand hitting).

In finite sentences including simple verbs, the main verb receives primary stress,[10] but in finite sentences including CPs, it is the preverbal element (the host) which is stressed instead (Goldberg 2003). Persian CP constructions exhibit both lexical and phrasal characteristics, manifested by the presence of a preverbal element (PV) that serves as the overarching host of the entire CP and a light verb (LV) that occupies a zero level status (in the terms of Optimality Theory; Goldberg 1996). The host may take the form of a noun, an adjective, an adverb, verbal particles, a prepositional phrase, a complex noun phrase, or a noun (object) preceded by an adverb that bears primary stress. However, certain syntactic constituents may intervene and create discontinuous constructions, resulting in a non-adjacent relationship between the host and the LV.

(1) *Ali* *RAFT* (simple verb)
Ali go.PST.3SG
'Ali went.'

(2) *Ali* *AZ* *DAST* *raft*. (Complex Predicate)
Ali from hand go.PST.3SG
'Ali is lost.'

[10] See section 3.1 in this study in which I explain that in finite sentences including a non-specific direct object, the primary stress falls on the direct object.

A representation of the internal structure of Persian CP construction is presented in Figure 1.

Persian Complex Predicate Cx
PV [N, ADJ, ADV, PTCL, PP, CNP, N+ADV] + LV[V0]

Figure 1. Representation of the Persian CP construction

Persian is a language that exhibits a relatively flexible word order, allowing for the combination of arguments with the verb in various orders. In this paper, I propose an account of this permutability of Persian CPs in terms of competing constructions. The notion that there are generalizations in languages that may be violated due to competing motivations has been previously discussed within the Competition Model Framework[11]. This model posits that 'decisions in sentence interpretation are made by evaluating the relative weights of the cues present in the stimulus' (Bates *et al.* 1984: 344; MacWhinney 1982, 1987). In the following example, different competing constructions are presented, all conveying the same meaning, function, and constituents, yet exhibiting distinct word orders in Persian.

(3) *be man harf=e=to bezan*
to me word=EZ=2SG hit
'tell me your words'
harfeto be man bezan
be man harfeto bezan
bezan harfeto be man
harfeto bezan be man
be man bezan harfeto

Construction Grammar (CxG) has embraced the notion that constructions can engage in competition if they share similar meanings and functions. This view

[11] Examples includes expressions of the future in English, namely the *will*-construction and the *going-to*- construction (*I will go to the party tomorrow* vs. *I am going to go to the party tomorrow*). These two constructions are in competition with each other for expressing futurity. The usage of one construction over the other can be influenced by various factors such as the speaker's intentions, the context, the level of certainty, and the speaker's preferences.

posits that two or more competing constructions can emerge as distinct nodes within a constructional network, having undergone the process of constructionalization, as defined by Traugott and Trousdale (2013). These constructions share aspects of their form or functional profiles, which establish connections between them. Each competing construction represents an alternation, akin to the generative syntax concept, and instantiates the same underlying structure. For example, active and passive voices represent competing constructions for expressing the same semantic content.

CxG posits that human language is comprised of a network of form-meaning pairs, with competing constructions representing connected nodes within this network. Competition arises when there are multiple possible forms for conveying a specific meaning, and speakers of a language select from among these competing constructions, based on the strength of the link between the intended meaning and one of the associated forms. The selection of a particular construction activates a feedback mechanism, with successful usage in a given context leading to a preference for future usage and the strengthening of the associated construction relative to other competing constructions. This competition between constructions, according to Smet, D'hoedt, Fonteyn, and Goethem (2018), results in the survival of the strongest construction (substitution) or a unique usage of a certain construction (differentiation).[12]

Croft (2001) argued that the primary driving force behind constructional competition is functional pressure, as speakers strive to express given ideas and explore innovative ways or altered replicates of linguistic forms. In addition to functional motivations, social factors must also be considered when studying constructional competition, as people may prefer one alternation over other competing constructions through the process of propagation to identify with a particular social group.

[12] *Substitution* occurs when one construction is replaced or substituted by another construction that serves a similar communicative function but with different linguistic elements. For instance, for the phrase *I have a car* we could substitute *I own a car*. In this example, the construction "have " is substituted by the synonym "own " , maintaining the same basic meaning while using a different lexical item. *Differentiation*, by contrast, involves the emergence of a unique usage or form within a particular construction, setting it apart from other similar constructions. In the original construction *He hit the ball*, the verb *hit* refers to a physical impact; by contrast, the differentiated form *He hit the mark* uses the verb hit in a metaphorical sense.

The simplest forms among Persian CPs are those in which the elements of the CP appear adjacent to each other, as in the following example:

(4) *be* *xâter* *âvardan*
to memory bring.INF
'to remember'

(5) *fekr* *kardan*
thought do.INF
'to think'

(6) *be* *donya* *âvardan / âmadan*
to world bring.INF / come.INF
'to give birth/to be born'

(7) *az* *donya* *raftan*
from world depart.INF
'to pass away'

(8) *be* *dast* *âvardan*
to hand bring.INF
'to obtain'

Examples (4) to (8) exhibit Persian CPs that are separable but not flexibly extendible. It is worth noting that all Persian CPs are amenable to separation by certain intervening elements, such as imperfective, negation, subjunctive prefixes, future auxiliary, or DO clitic. Nevertheless, an intriguing phenomenon in Persian grammar is that some CPs exhibit resistance to internal extension, such as the insertion of an adverb.

3. Separability of Persian CPs

The separability of Persian CPs is a phenomenon that arises frequently when the preverbal element (host) and light verb do not manifest as an atomic lexical unit, but rather as constituents of a phrasal structure. In Persian, the CP may be subject to intervention by various elements, such as the future auxiliary, imperfective, negation, subjunctive prefixes, and direct object (DO) clitic.

3.1 Separation by future auxiliary

Persian, with its standard subject-object-verb (SOV) word order, is known for allowing movement of different sentence elements for topic and focus purposes (Karimi 2005), resulting in variations such as SVO, OVS and OSV, particularly in spoken or literary forms. In the simple future tense, the inflected future auxiliary, *xâstan*, appears before the main verb, which takes the past stem as in (9). Within Persian CPs, the inflected form of the future auxiliary (*xâstan*) agrees with its subject, which is also the subject of the entire CP, and occurs immediately between the preverbal element (host) and the light verb, as exemplified in (10). The semantic tense of the event is conveyed by the future auxiliary, and its adjacency to the light verb follows the general tendency of semantically related items to appear close to each other in the syntactic string (Goldberg 2003).

(9) *Ali* *xâhad* *RAFT.* (Simple verb)
Ali FUT.3SG go.PST
'Ali will go'.

(10) *Zaman* *AZ* *DAST* *xâhad* *RAFT.* (CP)
time from hand FUT.3SG go.PST
'Time will be lost.'

In Persian the future auxiliary cannot appear before the entire CP:

(11) **Zaman* *xâhad* *AZ* *DAST* *RAFT.* (CP)
time FUT.3SG from hand go.PST
'Time will from hand be lost.'

This future CP construction is limited to formal written discourse, where the word order is maintained as S-O-FUT-LV. In spoken Persian, the present progressive tense is commonly used to express future time reference instead. The graphical representation of the future CP construction is presented in Figure 2.

Future Persian CP Cx
PV +*xâstan*-AGR + V0 [PST]

Figure 2: the Future Auxiliary Construction

3.2 Separation by imperfective, negation and subjunctive prefixes

In Persian, the imperfective prefix (*mi-*), negative prefix (*na-*), and subjunctive prefix (*be-*) are directly attached to the main verb in simple predicates and to the present stem of the light verb in CPs, creating an intervening structure between the preverbal element (host) and light verb. These prefixes do not attach to the host element. According to Goldberg's (2003) default inheritance hierarchy, highly frequent forms such as *mi-kardan* and *na-kardan* are stored in the lexicon, even when they are entirely regular, as shown by psycholinguistic research (Losiewicz 1992; Bybee 1995). Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the internal structure of the aforementioned affixes in Persian.

Imperfective Cx in Persian CPs
PV+ *mi/n/be*-LV [PRS-AGR][V0]

Figure 3: Representation of the imperfective prefix (mi/n/be) in Persian CPs

3.3 Separation by Direct object (DO) clitic

In the case of simple predicates, DO clitic appears directly after the verb, as in (12):

(12)*ferestad-am=ash*

send.PST-1SG=3SG.CL

'I send it'.

In the case of CPs, the DO clitic normally appears directly after the preverbal element (host) intervening between host and the light verb as in (13):

(13)*xarab=ash kard*

spoil=3SG.CL do.PST.3SG

'S/He spoiled it'.

Goldberg (2003) posits that pronominal elements cannot be situated within single zero-level categories. Thus, the direct object (DO) clitic in Persian CPs cannot be placed between syllables within a polysyllabic single word, even when following a stressed morpheme boundary. This suggests that the preverbal element (host) and light verb should be analyzed as two separate words in sentence (13). Goldberg considers CP_{V0} to be the unmarked form of Persian CPs and views other separable CPs as marked deviations from this default base form. Furthermore, she argues against a strict division between single words and

phrasal elements within the *constructicon*, and posits that the same stored CP can be realised as either a zero-level word or a phrasal entity depending on neighboring constructions. However, her analysis supports a more lexical account of CPs. Figure 4 illustrates the clitic position in Persian CPs competing constructions.

Clitic position in competing Persian CP Cxs
a. PV+ DO CL+ LV[V0]
b. PV+ LV[V0] + DO CL

Figure 4: Representation of DO Clitic position in competing Persian CP constructions

The construction depicted in Figure 6.a predicts that the clitic should be attached to the host, intervening between the host and light verb as shown in (6a); however, it can also appear after the light verb as seen in (6.b). As such, native speakers have access to two competing constructions: (a) PV + DO clitic+ LV Cx, and (b) PV+LV + DO clitic Cx, which are dependent on context, dialect, and genre. Example (14) illustrates that in Persian, the direct object clitic (*-ash*) can be attached to the stressed constituent (*negah*) as in (14a) or to the light verb (*kard*) as in (14b).

(14) (a) *negah=ash* *kard*
look=3.SG.CL do.PST.3SG
'S/he looked at him/her'.

(b) *negah* *kard=ash*
look do.PST.3.SG=3SG.CL
'S/he looked at him/her.'

Persian CPs can be nominalised in various ways, including (a) attaching the present stem of the light verb to the host followed by the suffix *-i*, as seen in examples (15) and (16); (b) adding the suffix *-ande* to the light verb, as in examples (17) and (18); and (c) forming an agent noun by adding the suffix *-gar* to the host, as in examples (19) and (20).

(15) *fada* *kardan*
devote do.INF
'to devote/ to sacrifice' ➔ *fada-kar-i* 'devotion'

(16) *gonah* *kardan*
guilt/sin do.INF
'to sin' ➔ *gonah-kar-i* 'sinfulness'

(17) *davit* *kardan*
invitation do.INF
'to invite' ➔ *davit-kon*[13]*-ande* (invitation-do-AG) 'host/hostess'

(18) *paziraee* *kardan*
entertainment do.INF
'to entertain' ➔ *paziraee-kon-ande* (entertainment-do-AG) 'entertainer'

(19) *tamasha* *kardan*
watching do.INF
'to watch' ➔ *tamasha-gar* 'spectator'

(20) *gozaresh* *kardan*
report do.INF
'to report' ➔ *gozaresh-gar* 'reporter'

Figure 5 represents the internal structure of nominalised CPs.

Nominalised Persian CP Cxs
a. PV+ LV [PRS]+AFFIX -*i*
b. PV+ LV [PRS]+ AFFIX -*ande*
c. PV + AFFIX - *gar*[14]

Figure 5: Representation of nominalised Persian CPs

[13] *kon* is the present stem of *kardan.* Verbs in modern Persian have two simple stems (PRS and PST). The past stem is used to conjugate verbs in the past tense, and the present stem is used to conjugate verbs in the present tense.
[14] The affix -*gar* is based on the present stem of the LV *kardan* (*kar*- in Old Persian).

According to Vahedi-Langrudi (1996: 6, 202–203, 211) and Karimi Doostan (1997: 198), the process of derivation in many light verbs is not possible without the presence of a preverb, as demonstrated in example (21).

(21) (a) *davat-kon-ande*
invitation-do-AG
'host'
(b) **kon-ande*
do-AG

In sum, considering their unique properties, Persian CPs can be located somewhere on the continuum between lexicon and syntax, and a suitable analysis would require a morphosyntactical approach that does not rely solely on either a lexical or phrasal perspective. Within Construction Grammar (CxG), which does not enforce a strict distinction between lexical and phrasal elements, Persian CPs are formed and stored in the constructicon. Competing constructions in Persian CPs can be accounted for by the Competition Model Framework (Bates *et al.* 1984; MacWhinney 1982, 1987) within CxG, which avoids the need for syntactic movement or transformation. This approach allows for a consideration of both the semantic and syntactic properties of Persian CPs as form-meaning pairings. While some have suggested that simulating movement or transformations are necessary for analyzing free constituent order languages such as Persian, this view can be challenged within the CxG framework. Having presented my constructionist description of Persian CPs, I will take a PCxG stance to suggest my proposal for teaching Persian CPs to English speakers in the following sections.

4. Teaching Persian Complex Predicates

The study of CPs in Persian is a topic of great interest to scholars in the fields of linguistics and language education.

Traditional methods of teaching Persian CPs, particularly in classroom settings, often relied on a combination of rote memorisation, grammar drills, and teacher-led explanations to teach complex predicates. Students would memorise

the various verb forms and conjugations of Persian verbs, including those used in complex predicates. Moreover, students would engage in translation exercises where they would translate sentences containing complex predicates from Persian to their native language and vice versa.

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the use of Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG) as an approach to teaching grammatical structures. PCxG can be an effective approach to teaching Persian CPs. By focusing on constructions rather than individual words, learners can develop a more holistic understanding of the underlying patterns of Persian grammar, which can help them use the language more effectively. Additionally, providing explicit instruction on CP constructions can help learners to develop a more systematic and structured approach to language learning. However, there is still a need for more research on the effectiveness of PCxG for teaching different types of constructions, and for learners at different proficiency levels.

The first point to consider in teaching Persian CPs is what criteria to use in selecting these verbs. Various studies have proposed different criteria for selecting standard vocabulary, among which two principles have been more successful than others. These are: (1) frequency based on the usage of the word by native speakers; and (2) learnability. It should be noted that these two principles do not necessarily have a direct relationship with each other (Ziahosseini,1999).

According to Ziahosseini (1999: 118), the usage of CPs in Persian is more prevalent than simple verbs, so it is necessary to pay special attention to teaching them. Among Persian CPs, some examples can be found that are widely used in Persian corpora; this series of verbs can be considered as high-frequency CPs in Persian. His suggestion is to teach these types of verbs to Persian learners at the beginner level. CPs with lower frequency or those selected only for the purpose of expanding language knowledge can be taught at intermediate and advanced levels.

In this study, CPs are divided into two categories based on the number of arguments: single-argument and multi-argument. In beginner level instruction of Persian CPs, starting with single-argument verbs has the advantage of allowing the learner to comprehend and produce sentences with the minimum number of words. Among the single-argument CPs, compound verbs that are formed by combining an adjective and an auxiliary verb, especially the verbs *budan* ‘to be’

and *shodan* ‘to become’ in the present tense, are more important for Persian language instruction at this level due to the openness of the lexical category. These are verbs such as *bad budan* ‘to be bad’, *khub budan* ‘to be good’, *dorost budan* ‘to be right’, *tabiee budan* ‘to be natural’, *jaleb budan* ‘to be interesting’, *movaffagh budan* ‘to be successful’, *movâfegh budan* ‘to agree’ (lit. to be agreeable), *khaste budan* ‘to be tired’, *mofid budan* ‘to be useful’, *asabâni budan* ‘to get angry’ (lit. to be angry), *sard/garm shodan* ‘to get cold/warm’) and *khoshk shodan* ‘to (become) dry’ that can be considered as single-argument CPs.

Of course, with the expansion of the learner's linguistic ability and language proficiency, instruction can be extended to include multi-argument CPs. Although in Persian, depending on the contextual conditions and the level of emphasis on a particular topic, a single or multiple arguments are often reflected vaguely, attention to the arguments of CPs is necessary for proper instruction.

So far, two fundamental points in teaching Persian CPs, namely frequency and the number of arguments, have been mentioned. However, there are other points that need to be considered in teaching CPs. For example, CPs that have certain semantic and structural differences in different contexts, such as *tashvigh kardan* ‘to encourage’ (lit. to do encouragement) in the following examples:

(22) *hazer-ân* *sokhanrân* *ra* *tashvigh* *kard-and*.
audience-PL speaker-PL OBJ applause do.PST-3PL
‘the audience applauded the speaker’

(23) *dust-ân=e* *nâbâh* *u* *râ* *be* *sigâr* *keshidan* *tashvigh* *kard-and*
friend-PL=EZ evil 3.SG OBJ to cigarette smoke encouragement do.PST-3.PL
‘Evil friends made him smoke cigarettes’

In sentence (22), *tashvigh kardan* means ‘to encourage; to agree; to give positive feedback’, while in sentence (23), *tashvigh kardan* means ‘to abet; to distract; to compel’. According to Craik & Tulving (1975), if words are related in terms of semantics, phonology, and subject, they are better remembered. Therefore, CPs that fall within a semantic category can also be taught using this method in a lesson plan. Examples of such verb groups include:

(A) *negâh kardan* ‘to look at’ (lit. look do), *tamâshâ kardan* ‘to watch’ (lit. watch do), *zol zadan* ‘to stare at somebody/something’ (lit. stare do), *khire shodan* ‘to stare at a scene/somebody’ (lit. dazzled become);

(B) labkhand zadan ‘to smile’ (lit. smile hit), *tabassom kardan* ‘to smile’ (lit. smile do), *ghahghahe zadan* ‘to roar with laughter/ guffaw’ (lit. guffaw hit);

(C) *ghosse khordan* ‘to feel blue’ (lit. sadness hit), *afsus khordan* ‘to regret’ (lit. regret hit), *nârahat shodan* ‘to get upset’, *gerye kardan* ‘to cry’ (lit. cry do), *âh keshidan* ‘to sigh’ (lit. sigh pull), *nâle kardan* ‘to moan’ (lit. moan do);

(D) *sohbat kardan* ‘to talk’ (lit. talk do), *pech pech kardan* ‘to whisper’ (lit. whisper do), *goftegu kardan* ‘to converse’ (lit. conversation do), *harf zadan* ‘to talk’ (lit. talk hit), *sokhan goftan* ‘to speak’ (lit. speech tell).

Another point to consider in teaching Persian CPs is incorporation. That is, for each incorporating verb, there is a corresponding non-incorporating form that has the same meaning. However, the incorporating form is not always have semantically transparent and we may also encounter a change in meaning in this group of CPs.

(24) *Ali zahr RA be Hossein dâd.*
Ali poison OBJ to Hossein give.3SG.PST
‘Ali gave the poison to Hossein’.

(25) *Ali be Hossein zahr dâd.*
Ali to Hossein poison give.3SG.PST
‘Ali poisoned Hossein’.

In sentence (24), the simple verb *dâdan* ‘to give’ is used and the exchange of *zahr* ‘poison’ between Ali and Hossein is described. However, in sentence (25), we are faced with a CP in the infinitive form, where *zahr dâdan* means ‘to poison’ and not just a simple exchange. Therefore, it is recommended to teach CPs with their non-incorporating forms in order to fully comprehend the meaning of the Persian CP.

5. Suggestions on designing lesson plans for teaching Persian CPs using PCxG

As mentioned in 2.2, PCxG is an approach to language teaching that emphasises the importance of teaching language as a system of constructions rather than just a collection of isolated words and rules. In teaching Persian CPs, teachers can draw on principles of PCxG (Herbst 2016; Pakzadian 2023) to help students understand the underlying structures of these constructions and how they are used in context. One way to do this is to provide explicit instruction on the various components that make up a CP, such as the light verb, adjective, or the noun. By breaking down the construction into its component parts, teachers can help students understand the meaning and function of each part and how they work together to create the whole.

A key principle of PCxG is the importance of providing ample input and opportunities for practice. Teachers can accomplish this by using a variety of authentic materials that feature Persian CPs, such as news articles, movies, and television shows. They can also design activities that require students to use CPs in context, such as role-playing exercises, discussions, and writing assignments. By exposing students to a wide range of CPs and providing opportunities for practice, teachers can help them develop a better understanding of these constructions and how they are used in real-world communication. In their classes, teachers may consider following this step-by-step guide:

- Introduce learners to Persian CP constructions and their structure.
- Teach verb-argument constructions (VACs): Introduce VACs and provide examples. Explain that VACs are a type of complex predicate that consist of a verb and its associated arguments.
- Drawing upon Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG), emphasise the importance of learning language in meaningful chunks, rather than isolated words or structures.
- Focus on frequent CPs in Persian, such as *gerye kardan* ‘to cry’, *zang zadan* ‘to call’, *narahat shodan* ‘to get upset’, etc. Provide examples and explain the meanings of each construction.

- Once learners have mastered the basic construction of a CP, scaffold to more complex constructions. This can include constructions with multiple arguments, or constructions that require specific word order.
- Write a sample Persian sentence containing a CP on the board, such as (26) *Man dâr-am be dust-am telephon mi-zan-am*.
  1SG be.PRS-1SG to friend-1SG.POSS telephone PROG-hit-1SG
  'I am calling my friend.'
- Analyze the construction of the CP and break it down into its component parts. Explain the role of each word or particle in the construction and how they work together to convey meaning. For example, explain the structure of (26) in the sentence, including the verb *zadan* 'to hit' (*telephon zadan* 'to call'), the preposition *be* 'to', and the noun *dust* 'friend'.
- Provide more examples of Persian CPs and explain the different types of additional elements that can be added to the verb to form a CP (see 2.2).
- Hand out worksheets or handouts with exercises on forming and using Persian CPs.
- Provide practice activities to help learners recognise and produce the construction. These can include gap-filling exercises, sentence completion tasks, and translation exercises.
- Provide feedback on learners' production of the construction, focusing on accuracy and fluency.
- Provide practice activities that contextualise the use of CPs in real-world situations. This can include role-plays, dialogues, and simulations.
- Use video or audio materials to provide examples of CPs in context and to give learners a chance to hear and see the structures being used in real-life situations.
- Review the main points of the lesson, including the structure and types of Persian CPs.
- Ask learners to provide feedback on the lesson, including what they found challenging, what they enjoyed, and what they would like to learn more about in future lessons.

- Provide additional resources or support to learners who need extra help with the material.
- Summarise the lesson and thank the learners for their participation.
- Encourage learners to be creative and use CPs in their own writing and speaking and daily activities. Provide opportunities for learners to share their own examples and receive feedback from the teacher and peers.

5.1 Sample tasks to practise Persian CPs

5.1.1 Task 1: Match the CPs with their corresponding meanings

Objective: To develop understanding and recognition of Persian CPs and their corresponding meanings.

Instructions:

(1) The instructor provides a list of Persian CPs and their corresponding meanings. The list should include a variety of CPs, with different verbs and noun/adjective complements.

(2) The students are asked to match the CP with their corresponding meanings. The matching can be done in pairs or small groups.

(3) Once the matching is done, the instructor can provide feedback and lead a discussion about the meaning of each CP.

Example list of CPs and their meanings:

(a) *dast dâdan* = ‘to shake hands’ (lit. hand give)

(b) *dast keshidan* ‘to give up’ (lit. hand pull)

(c) *pa feshâri kardan* ‘to insist on’ (lit. foot pressure do)

(d) *seda zadan* ‘to call’ (lit. sound hit)

Variation: To make the task more challenging, the instructor can provide only the verbs or noun/adjective complements and ask the students to match them with the appropriate CPs and meanings.

5.1.2 Task 2: Identifying and analysing Persian CPs in authentic texts

Objective: To identify and analyse CPs in authentic Persian texts and develop a deeper understanding of the constructional patterns and meaning-making potential of these constructions.

Materials: Authentic Persian texts (e.g. news articles, short stories, etc.) with examples of CPs, worksheets or handouts with guiding questions, and CxG-based dictionaries or other resources for checking the vocabulary.

Procedure:

(1) Introduce Persian CPs, and provide examples of the structures, their components, and their meaning-making potential.

(2) Divide the class into groups and provide each group with an authentic Persian text that contains examples of CPs.

(3) Instruct the groups to read the text, identify the CPs, and analyse their structure and meaning. Encourage them to discuss their findings and interpretations with each other.

(4) Provide worksheets or handouts with guiding questions to help students analyse the CPs, such as:

   a. What are the components of the CP?

   b. How do the components contribute to the overall meaning of the predicate?

   c. What other words or constructions in the sentence or text interact with the CP to create meaning?

(5) Ask each group to present their findings and interpretations to the class and encourage discussion and debate about the different interpretations and CP constructions.

(6) Summarise the key points and insights that emerge from the discussion and encourage students to reflect on their own language use and how they might incorporate CPs into their own Persian production.

Assessment: Students can be assessed on their ability to identify and analyse CPs in the texts provided, their participation in group discussions and class

debates, and their ability to apply what they have learned to their own language production.

5.1.3 Task 3: Identifying CPs in Persian Corpora

Objective: To recognise and analyse CPs in Persian texts/dialogues using corpus-based techniques.

Materials:

- Access to a corpus of Persian texts such as *TalkBank Persian Corpus* (Rasooli, Kouhestani & Moloodi 2013) on Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff, Rychlý, Smrž & Tugwell 2014).
- Worksheets with examples of CPs in Persian, such as *dust dashtan* 'to like/love' (lit. friend have)
- Annotation tools, such as AntConc or Sketch Engine.

Figure 6: Screenshot of Sketch Engine CQL search for dust dashtan in the TalkBank Persian Corpus

Procedure:

(1) Introduce Persian CPs and provide examples using the worksheet.

(2) Divide the class into small groups and provide them access to the corpus of Persian texts/talks.

(3) Instruct each group to search the corpus for examples of CPs and to record their findings in a shared document or spreadsheet.

(4) Ask each group to identify the most common CP they found in the corpus and to provide examples of its usage in context.

(5) Instruct each group to use an annotation tool to analyse the usage of the CPs they found, looking for patterns in their grammatical structure and collocational patterns with other words.

(6) After the groups have completed their analysis, reconvene as a class and ask each group to present their findings, highlighting the most interesting or surprising results.

(7) Discuss the patterns and structures found in the CPs and how they relate to the meaning conveyed by the predicate.

(8) Ask students to create their own examples of CPs using the patterns and structures they have identified and share them with the class.

Assessment: Students' comprehension and ability to recognise CPs can be assessed through their participation in the group work and their ability to present and analyse their findings. Students' ability to create their own examples of CPs can also be assessed as an individual task.

6. Conclusion

This paper advocates for the great potential of Pedagogical Construction Grammar (PCxG) in teaching Persian Complex Predicates (CPs). It provides practical recommendations for applying PCxG principles in the design of lesson plans, supplementary teaching materials, activities, and tasks. PCxG represents a confluence of Cognitive Grammar (CxG), second language acquisition, applied linguistics, and corpus linguistics, combining the strengths of each in language pedagogy.

Despite increasing interest in PCxG for language teaching and learning, several questions remain unanswered. For instance, it is unclear how effective PCxG is in teaching different types of constructions or at different proficiency

levels. Additionally, more empirical studies are required to investigate the effectiveness of PCxG in real-world language classrooms.

Future research could help incorporate constructional research outcomes into foreign/second language learning. This could involve situating CxG-based syntax theories in an applied linguistics context to enhance learners' use of language.

A pedagogical approach to teaching Persian CPs may be of interest to Persian linguists and teachers who have been seeking diverse methods and strategies to enhance learners' knowledge of CPs and improve foreign language learning outcomes. Nonetheless, much remains to be learned in this regard.

As a final remark, it is essential to note that the PCxG-based instructional ideas presented here are recommendations, and the efficacy of the approach needs to be validated in further experimental studies.

References

Barjasteh, D. (1983). *Morphology, syntax and semantics of Persian compound verbs: A lexicalist approach*. PhD thesis. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Bates, E., MacWhinney, B., Caseli, C., Devescovi, A., Natale, F., & Venza, V. (1984). A crosslinguistic study of the development of sentence interpretation strategies. *Child development*, *55*, 341–354.

Boas, H. (2022). From Construction Grammar(s) to Pedagogical Construction Grammar. In H. Boas (ed.), *Directions for Pedagogical Construction Grammar: Learning and Teaching (with) Constructions*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 3–44.

Craik, F. I., & Tulving, E. (1975). Depth of processing and the retention of words in episodic memory. *Journal of experimental psychology: General*, *104*(3), 268–294.

Croft, W. (2001). *Radical construction grammar: Syntactic theory in typological perspective.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Knop, S., & Gilquin, G. (2016). *Applied construction grammar*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

De Knop, S. & De Rycker, T. (2008). *Cognitive Approaches to Pedagogical Grammar: A Volume in Honour of René Dirven*. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton.

Eddington, D. & Ruiz de Mendoza, F. (2010). Argument constructions and language processing: Evidence from a priming Experiment and pedagogical implications. In S. De Knop, F. Boers & A. De Rycker (eds), *Fostering Language Teaching Efficiency through Cognitive Linguistics*. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 213–238.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, N. (2003). Constructions, chunking, and connectionism: The emergence of second language structure. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (eds), *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Malden, Oxford & Carlton: Blackwell, 63–103.

Ellis, N. (2001). Memory for language. In R. Robinson (ed.), *Cognition and Second Language Instruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 33–68.

Folli, R., Harley, H., & Karimi, S. (2005). Determinants of event type in Persian complex predicates. *Lingua*, *115*, 1365–1401.

Goldberg, A.E. (2006). *Constructions at work: The nature of generalization in language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Goldberg. Adele E. (2003). Words by default: the Persian Complex Predicate construction. In E. Francis & L. Michaelis (eds) *Mismatch: Form-Function Incongruity and the Architecture of Grammar*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications, 83–112.

Goldberg, Adele E. (1996). Words by default: Optimizing constraints and the Persian Complex Predicate. *Berkeley Linguistic Society*, *22*(1), 132–146.

Goldberg, Adele E. (1995). *Constructions: A Construction Grammar approach to argument structure*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gries, S. T., & Wulff, S. (2005). Do foreign language learners also have constructions? *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, *3*, 82–200.

Herbst, T. (2016). Foreign language learning is construction learning: Principles of pedagogic construction grammar. In S. De Knop & G. Gilquin (eds), *Applied construction grammar*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 21–52.

Herbst, Thomas. (2014). The valency approach to argument structure constructions. In T. Herbst, H.J. Schmid, & S. Faulhaber (eds), *Constructions – collocations – patterns*. Mouton de Gruyter, 167–216.

Herbst, T., Heath, D., & Roe, I. F. (2004). *A Valency Dictionary of English: A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Complementation Patterns of English Verbs, Nouns and Adjectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Holme, R. (2010). A construction grammar for the classroom. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 48*(4), 355–377.

Karimi-Doostan, G. (1997). *Light Verb Constructions in Persian*. PhD thesis. University of Essex.

Karimi, S. (2003). On object positions, specificity, and scrambling in Persian. In S. Karimi (ed.), *Word order and scrambling*. Oxford: Blackwell, 91–124.

Karimi, S. (1997). Persian complex verbs: Idiomatic or compositional? *Lexicology*, *3*(1), 273–318.

Kilgarriff, A., Rychlý, P., Smrž, P., & Tugwell, D. (2014). The Sketch Engine: Ten years on. *Lexicography*, *1*, 7–36.

Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. London: Longman.

Littlemore, J. (2009). *Applying Cognitive Linguistics to Second Language Learning and Teaching*. Palgrave Macmillan.

MacWhinney, B. (1987). The competition model. In B. MacWhinney, (ed.), *Mechanisms of language acquisition*. New Jersey: Erlbaum, 249–308.

MacWhinney, B. (1982). Functionalist approaches to grammar. In E. Wanner & L. Gleitman (eds), *Language acquisition: The state of art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 173–217.

Megerdoomian, K. (2012). The status of the nominal in Persian complex predicates. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*, *30*(1), 179–216.

Megerdoomian. K. (2001). Event structure and complex predicates in Persian. *Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, *46*(1/2), 97–125.

Pakzadian. M. (2023). Applied Construction Grammar: The case of Collocations and Collostructions in Foreign Language Instruction. *AILA Review*, *36* (1), 90–118.

Rasooli, Mohammad S., Kouhestani,M., & Moloodi, A. S. (2013). Development of a Persian syntactic dependency treebank. In L. Vanderwende, H. Daumé III, & K. Kirchhoff (Eds) *Proceedings of the 2013 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies*. Atlanta, GA: Association for Computational Linguistics, 306–314.

Smet, H., D'hoedt, F., Fonteyn, L., & Goethem, K. V. (2018). The changing functions of competing forms: Attraction and differentiation. *Cognitive Linguistics*, *29*(2), 197–234.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative Competence: Some Roles of Comprehensible Input and Comprehensible Output in Its Development. In S. M. Gass & C. G. Madden (eds), *Input in Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 235–253.

Traugott, E. C., & Trousdale, G. (2013). *Constructionalization and constructional changes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vahedi-Langrudi, M. M. (1996). *The syntax, semantics and argument structure of complex predicates in modern Farsi*. PhD thesis. University of Ottawa.

Ziahosseini, M. S. (1999). *Principles and theories of language teaching*. Tehran: Allameh Tabataba'i University.

THE LANGUAGE TEACHERS' COMMITTEE WORKSHOPS: AN OXFORD CASE STUDY

Emine Çakır; Hiroe Kaji
University of Oxford
emine.cakir@ames.ox.ac.uk; hiroe.kaji@ames.ox.ac.uk

Abstract

This study briefly recounts the journey of the teacher-led Language Teachers' Committee (LTC) workshops that started in 2015 as a simple space for the language teachers of less commonly taught languages at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES), University of Oxford, to find out more about how individual teachers teach their specific target language, but that later developed into a platform for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to share best practice and scholarship, and even went beyond these.

During the LTC workshops, teachers discovered resources they already had while reflecting on, appreciating, embracing, and enriching them; this had a positive impact on teachers' wellbeing, future actions, and crucial joint professional decisions. The platform was not only important to overcome or ease challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic when language teachers had to switch to online teaching overnight, but it also led to more sustainable kinds of impact, such as raising awareness to the fundamental rights of language teachers as part of their wellbeing.

Thus, this paper aims to give a chronological outline of and insights into the last twenty-five years of an HE institution in the UK that has been shaping/affecting the wellbeing of its language teachers. It endeavours to set an example and to raise awareness of the importance of language teaching and to rethink the position of language teachers in the academic world.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Development, teacher wellbeing, institutional wellbeing, less widely taught languages, collegial collaboration

1. Introduction and Literature Review

In the UK, despite efforts to promote languages, language teaching in further and higher education (HE) has been suffering considerably for nearly two decades due to a fall in recruitment and uptake (Mann *et al.*, 2022). It is generally believed

that the UK government policy of scrapping modern languages from the compulsory General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) subjects in 2004 is a significant contributor to the current fall of uptake in HE. However, data from Ofsted (2021) says that entries for GCSE French exams saw a steep fall even before 2004. Teachers and students felt that the curriculum had little to do with real life application and that the language papers tended to be marked more harshly than other subjects. The fact that English has become one of the most widely spoken language in the world does not seem to help. The Education Policy Institute (2022) also points out that language learning is now statutory in primary schools, yet there are no clear guidelines for teaching languages at this level. It proposes that this is an additional factor in discouraging pupils from taking languages for GCSE in secondary school. Language, although it is not compulsory, is one of the five subjects of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) which serves as a performance measure for schools in England as introduced in 2010. However, the Education Policy Institute continues to report that only 40% of pupils take all five subjects and many of the around 50% of pupils that take four subjects do so by dropping the language option.

Further to the ongoing developments mentioned above, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic also changed the architecture of language teaching. The fact that they had to switch to online teaching overnight while revisiting many personal and professional survival strategies was challenging for each and every teacher. It was a stressful period that added to already existing typical workloads, time pressures and difficulties juggling different roles (MacInyre *et al.*, 2019). Even before the pandemic, Hiver & Dörnyei (2017) had already described language teaching as ‘a profession in crisis’, highlighting the underlying fact that teachers are opposed to change as a defence mechanism against uncommonly high levels of stress in their work, leading to teacher burnout and decline in teacher recruitment.

It is generally believed that a deeper understanding of teachers and the circumstances they work in can help to identify what support language teachers need to flourish in their profession, both for their own benefit as well as that of their students. Recently, a growing number of researchers have started to explore language teacher wellbeing specifically (e.g. Wieczorek 2016; Mercer and Kostoulas 2018; MacIntyre *et al.* 2019; MacIntyre, Gregersen & Mercer 2020; Sulis *et al.* 2023). Mercer and Kostoulas (2018), for example, attempted to

establish an overall understanding of the issues facing language education professionals all over the world, both individually and as a community. A useful mindset to study teacher wellbeing and its theoretical grounding is through positive psychology (MacIntyre, Gregersen & Mercer 2019), which proposes the PERMA model of wellbeing (Seligman 2011): **P**ositive Emotions, **E**ngagement, Positive **R**elationships, **M**eaning and **A**ccomplishment. More research tools based on the PERMA model continue being designed to gain a better understanding of the complex dimensions of wellbeing in various contexts.

To better understand and appreciate the unique context with its resources and challenges to wellbeing for the language teachers at the centre of this study, we take up the following definition by Sulis *et al.* (2023:23):

> …we conceptualise wellbeing as multifaceted and dynamic emerging from the interplay between psychological and sociocontextual factors changing across settings but also time… when striving to understand wellbeing, it is vital that scholarship examines the individual embedded in their holistic personal and professional lives and understands how their wellbeing resources and needs can change over time.

As regards the various factors that can affect and/or shape teacher wellbeing, Sulis *et al.* summarises them as follows:

> …multiple layers of sociocontextual factors affect teacher wellbeing, stretching from the macro-level of society and government policy to the level of family and community, further down to micro-level of the school and each individual classroom. As such, teacher wellbeing must be understood as emerging from the interaction between an individual and the multiple levels of context in their personal ecologies. (Sulis *et al.* 2023:29)

The context/institution a teacher works in forms a crucial part of their wellbeing; thus, it is not only the teacher's individual responsibility but, as Mercer and Gregersen (2020:33) put it, 'a shared responsibility – for individuals and institutions as well as for wider educational and cultural systems'.

Usually, teachers are expected to develop their best practice by themselves as part of their job, to adapt to new teaching environments, and to cope with any challenges not only on a daily basis but also in extreme situations such as the pandemic. Slimani-Rolls and Kiely (2019) argue that CPD should also take into consideration the needs of the workplace within a broader institutional and national framework meeting the educational expectation. Thus, availability and accessibility of CPD activities, both individually and collectively, are crucial parts of language teachers' professional lives which should be supported by the

institution they work at, respecting teachers' capacity and possible contribution to CPD activities.

Reflecting on the complexity of the professional development of language teachers, Guan and Huang point out the following specific details:

> Language teachers' professional development emerges from a process of refreshing and reshaping teachers existing knowledge, beliefs and morals, and practises and reflections rather than just simply imposing fresh language teaching theories, methodologies and teaching materials on teachers. Thus, language teachers' professional learning is a complex process which requires knowledge in varied disciplined fields of psychology, sociology, methodology, etc. Besides, teachers' cognitive and emotional involvement individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine teachers' professional convictions and beliefs, and the strong eagerness for professional improvement and change are all needed in the process of language teachers' professional development. (Guan & Huang 2013:211)

In the UK, at least in England where our institution is located, it seems that language study is both less popular and undervalued throughout the education system. Besides, language teachers are overwhelmed with the workload and different supplemental roles that they have to fulfil. The teachers' wellbeing must be examined in order to understand and support them in various aspects: their personal lives, professional roles, psychology, and social and cultural factors. CPD is considered essential to support the language teachers' professional lives both individually and collectively.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study is as follows:

- to shed light on how contextual factors affect teacher wellbeing at different phases of their teaching career;
- to discuss the contextual and institutional factors in an HE institution that have affected language teachers' wellbeing for over a quarter of a century;
- to show how a collegial platform not only helped to overcome or ease challenging times but also had a more sustainable impact on rediscovering integrity, respect for each other, and what it means to be language teachers that believe in CPD.

The study is based around the following questions:

- What opportunities are there for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for language teachers of less widely taught languages?
- Can there be a more sustainable and collegial route to language teachers' CPD within an institution?
- Are institutions really supporting their teachers' wellbeing? If so, how?
- What are the contextual and institutional factors that positively (or negatively) affect teacher wellbeing?

As the authors of this article are members of the LTC (Language Teachers' Committee), occasionally a subjective tone (using the pronoun 'we') will be used.

3. Method

The method adopted for this study is narrative inquiry and narrative thinking, without reference to an individual formal interview. Meetings, workshops, gatherings and conversations in the corridors over the past 25 years have provided plenty of material: anecdotes, opinions and feelings, of which some are new, while others are repetitions which have been passed down from previous colleagues. Clandinin and Connelly (2000:18) emphasise the importance of studying experiences narratively as 'a key form of experience and a key way of writing and thinking about it'. It is a way of presenting and understanding one's experience, whether individual, social, past, present, ongoing, or discontinued. Kim (2016:156) defines narrative thinking as 'an attempt to create a fit between a situation and a story schema about some experience or event that consists of who, what, how, and why'. Over the last 25 years, the language teachers at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) at the University of Oxford have experienced landmark events as well as gradual and sudden changes in their working environments and career trajectories. These include additional or discontinued duties and courses, and working with new colleagues in a different environment and in different spaces, besides pursuing their professional development.

Furthermore, Lindsay and Schwind (2016:18) state that narrative inquiry is 'educative and transformative'. Narratives can show how each individual

interacts with, and contributes to, the ecology they are in, from which we can learn and make reference to. In the introduction to her dynamic approach to narrative inquiry, Daiute (2014:4) illustrates 'narrating mediates experience, knowledge, learning and social change'. What the narratives *do* can be examined as well as what they *say*. In this case study, the authors have been at the heart of every stage of the narrative events both as listeners and participants as well as CPD workshop leaders. Thus, this paper aims to give a chronological outline of and insights into the last 25 years of an HE institution in the UK that has been trying to shape and positively affect the wellbeing of its language teachers.

4. Background and findings

Universities in the UK are structured differently from one another in terms of language provision and there is not a sector-wide consensus on role responsibilities and grades that inform job descriptions in contracts. Some relevant details can be found in the public domain or on university websites, some are only available when the job is advertised publicly.

Academic contracts at many UK universities are categorised into either research and teaching or pure teaching contracts. Most of the language teachers are employed on teaching-only contracts but in both cases, there is a career path, and submission of research to the Research Excellence Framework (REF), which is the UK's system for assessing the excellence of research in UK higher education, is encouraged.

On the other hand, there are still a few HE institutions in the UK where language teachers are employed on 'academic-related' contracts and are expected to provide teaching only. These institutions encourage professional scholarship for language teachers to develop, keep up to date and share best practice; however, teachers neither have a career path, nor are they eligible for submission to REF. Such differentiation is not healthy for the sector and puts any attempts to professionalise language teaching at a disadvantage as it implies that language teaching (and/or applied linguistics) is not perceived as an academic field.

Ambler *et al.* (2022) collected data on university teachers from three subjects across fifty-seven universities in the UK; this did not include language teachers. They report, however, that the traditional academic role which has three duties – research, teaching, and administration – is changing. Teaching-only positions

began to be created and especially the most prestigious universities have started to benefit from these: the post-holders can take over teaching duties from their research-active colleagues. They further reported that universities have started to develop a career path and reward schemes for them, although the job descriptions of teaching-only members of staff vary among the HE institutions.

The so-called Russell Group represents twenty-four leading UK universities that aim to work with the government and with research funders to make the case for quality teaching to be funded more sustainably and thus to maintain academic excellence. These universities have histories varying from 50 years to nearly 1,000, but the Russell Group itself is a newer body and first met in 1994. Set up as a professional incorporated organisation in 2007, its aim is to help ensure that universities in the UK have the optimum conditions in which to flourish and continue to make a social, economic, and cultural impact through world-leading research and teaching.[1] Russell Group institutions have adopted and adapted the criteria and guidance drawn up for the National Library of Academic Role Profiles, which were produced in 2004 by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES 2004).

It was promising to see that many universities shifted towards teaching structures compliant with the national profiling of roles, with the principle of Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, and with the 2010 Equality Act and its provision for 'protected interests', to create a meaningful improvement for staff in terms of employment who are responsible for the delivery of approximately 50% of the degrees that they serve.

Teaching contracts have been revisited in the light of nationally agreed criteria for the sector, implementing the national framework and guidelines for teaching and scholarship, and any grading has since been assessed by HERA (Higher Education Role Analysis Scheme) supported by the institution.

4.1 The Oxford Case Study

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES), formerly called Faculty of Oriental Studies, at the University of Oxford is home to a range of languages and subjects that cover an enormous geographical area, from Morocco

[1] More information on the Russell Group, its aims, and constituent members are available from its website: https://russellgroup.ac.uk/about/ (accessed 13/05/2024).

in the west to Japan in the east, and a long-time span from the earliest civilisations, c. 3'500 BCE, to the present day. Courses offered at undergraduate and graduate levels entail a wide range of topics including history, literature, material culture and religion, but in all cases are built around the teaching of languages.

Twenty-six languages are currently taught at the Faculty, almost all of them less commonly taught languages in the UK. The term 'Less Commonly Taught Language' (LCTL) refers to a nation's current educational policy and political situation that are used as the basis for this classification (Gor & Vatz 2009). Thus, it is important to bear in mind that it does not refer to the number of speakers of a specific target language, but rather to the provision and availability of these languages in comparison to more commonly taught languages, as determined by educational policies. Furthermore, LCTLs are usually genetically, typologically, and culturally distant from the learners' native language, which can affect their learnability and make it difficult for learners to achieve functional proficiency without a significant time investment and often an extended immersion experience (Brecht & Walton 2000).

The languages at AMES are predominantly taught by the language teachers, which makes the teachers a crucial part of the degrees. Throughout this present study, the term language 'teacher' will be used interchangeably with the term language 'lecturer', as the title of the language teachers at the Faculty changed after long debates from 'language instructor' to 'language lecturer' in 2021.

For some subjects at the Faculty, there is only one language teacher, while for others there might be three to four, depending on the student intake and the size of the department. For example, in Japanese Studies there are currently four, in Arabic Studies five, and only one language lecturer in each of Hebrew, Tibetan, Turkish, and Korean Studies. However, what all the language teachers at the faculty share is the fact that they have a common goal: teaching a less commonly taught language for various academic purposes.

In terms of demographic background, most of the language teachers at AMES were born, grew up, and finished higher education in the countries of the languages they teach, often in a country where the target language is widely spoken and they are defined as 'native speaker' teachers. The majority are women who originally came to the UK as young adults for work or further study.

In fact, in the past, the role of the language instructors at the faculty was very similar to that of modern language assistants in the UK,[2] typically at secondary schools but also in higher education. These language assistants were not required to have any teaching qualifications or experience in teaching the target language. They only had to be 'fluent' in the language and their main duty was to foster students' linguistic and cross-cultural speaking skills.

Until 1999, each post was for an initial term of up to five years; since the employment policy of the university did not permit posts to be renewable, the holder had to leave at the end of their service. This meant that with this length of contract, they could not apply for 'indefinite leave to remain' settlement status in the UK. In one anecdote it was indicated that in those days, another common belief was that native speakers who stayed in the UK for too long would become less authentic users of the target language and hence would turn into 'non-native' speakers. One of the pre-1999 language instructors referred to themselves as a 'disposable cloth', referring to the fact that they were dismissed after having completed a fixed term contract and describing a feeling of being undervalued and used or exploited. In other words, they would be disposed once they were no longer usable by completing the fixed-term contracts and having turned into 'non-native speakers'. Such a negative and pessimistic metaphor was not encouraging to a new generation of teachers. It transmitted a feeling of disappointment, but on the other hand gave them the power of resistance and fostered their intention to make changes: a mission to improve the landscape and to be seen as professional language teachers in their own right.

It was only in 2003 that language instructorship positions were finally made permanent appointments. The majority of the teachers at AMES are now on full-time, permanent contracts, but there are still a few teachers who are on 25% to 70% FTE contracts. Most of the current full-time, permanent language teachers were on limited terms and even zero-hours contracts for many years. Most of them had to re-apply for their own posts. Working conditions have improved for the language teachers at AMES in the past 25 years to some extent. This is the result of tremendous efforts made by both the language teachers and other faculty members, including professors and administrative staff.

[2] The role and profile of these language assistants is usefully defined by on the British Council website: https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/in-uk/teach-language-uk (accessed 13/05/2024).

Some colleagues recalled that they were confused upon seeing their contract for the first time and did not sign it for a couple of months after realising that the salary was not sufficient to make a living, the working hours were too high, and that there was no career path. Some colleagues were informally told to leave if they were not happy, and to seek employment somewhere else. Clearly, these situations were not positive experiences for the wellbeing of the language teachers.

Furthermore, research was not included in the instructors' contracts, and their work was seen as less academic not only by the institution in terms of grading and salary scale but also overall on daily basis by their colleagues. As indicated above, language instructors, now called language lecturers, are still categorised as 'academic-related' members of staff. The relationship between former lecturers (now called associate professors and professors) and language instructors used to be much more formal, and there was a sense of division. Some colleagues requested to be called and/or referred to by their titles. Some 'academic' colleagues used expressions such as 'language studies' and 'content studies' in order to differentiate what they believed was taught in terms of importance, referring to language teaching as less academic and easier compared to the lecture type of lessons focusing on a specific topic, which implied again a hierarchy of work and position. Several language teachers indicated that they did not feel they belonged to the academic community and felt less valued.

Professors have been teaching language classes, too, but usually of a certain type: translation from the target language into English and reading set texts, which most language lecturers are rarely required to teach. Moreover, expressions such as 'top-down', 'glass-ceiling', 'second-class citizen' and 'teaching robot' were often used among teachers to reflect on their feelings. Teachers did not feel that they had autonomy, despite the fact that they had been fairly free to choose how and what to teach, and were highly regarded by their students in questionnaire feedback. Neither did they feel they were respected, and this feeling of disrespect also came through experiences that had nothing or little to do with their duties, i.e. not being welcomed on the first day of work, not being

given certain roles or responsibilities, individual office spaces or a college affiliation.[3]

There are forty-four colleges and halls at Oxford, and having no affiliation with a college could cause the members of the University to feel excluded. Colleges are independent employers within the collegiate University community and have different arrangements for their college fellows/tutors. Some language teachers with a college affiliation pointed out that they felt as part of the academic and social community because of this affiliation.

Other reasons for feeling excluded from the academic community were not being invited to certain meetings or informal gatherings, not receiving congratulation cards for personal events such as weddings, when they themselves had signed and contributed to others' countless times. Language teachers reported that they felt part neither of the academic nor the admin staff. They felt isolated and left alone. It was only when the LTC was established within the faculty that they had a community that they belonged to and that could act together.

The days when people believed that any native speaker could teach the target language have long gone. As an appointment criterion, UK universities typically advertise the position of language teachers as asking for them to have (a) 'native' or 'near-native' fluency in the language, (b) experience in teaching the target language as a foreign language, and (c) 'ideally' having a postgraduate degree in a relevant field. Some language teachers in the past have felt that having a PhD would over-qualify them as language instructors. However, in recent years applicants with such a qualification have regularly applied for the post and been hired, despite the fact that the advertisement remains the same and with the contract not specifying research as a necessary qualification. It is not possible to ascertain whether candidates with a PhD or similar qualification were considered more employable than those without; however, it is undeniable that a higher degree matters to HE.

Furthermore, institutional needs also have become more demanding, and the structure and system of the faculty much more complex. Student profiles have changed too; students now have easy access to language learning tools. The current trend is having self-taught students who learn the language as a hobby

[3] For an explanation of the Oxford college system and the role they can play for research and teaching staff, see the following website: https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/colleges/introducing-colleges (accessed 13/05/2024).

online before starting their degrees or even take up a language qualification including GCSE and A levels.

Meanwhile, some UK universities have begun to acknowledge that the role of language teachers is a category of its own and that language teachers are professionals in their own rights. Some universities have already created a career path for language teachers, similar to those of professors, and the job titles have been changed to reflect this. The instructors voluntarily decided or were asked to take up more and wider tasks, and the division between the two began to be less obvious. As a matter of fact, a single instructor who was alone in the department inevitably worked more closely with their lecturer/professor colleagues and shared more duties and responsibilities with them. As a result, instructors began to question the long hours set out in their teaching contracts, and to voice their views that the importance of their work should be officially recognised. They wanted to feel respected as colleagues equal to everyone else in the Faculty and to eventually open the path for career progression.

4.2 Language Teachers' Committee (LTC)

In 2006, a Language Teachers' Committee (LTC) was established at the suggestion of the language teachers and chaired by the most senior language instructor at the Oriental Institute (as the Faculty was known at that time). Its purpose was to help the spread of techniques geared towards good practice of language instruction throughout the Faculty, to identify issues and concerns about teaching, and to make recommendations to the Faculty Board. The committee met and still meets once a term, and an agenda is sent out beforehand. Attendees in recent years have been 20 language lecturers, five colleagues with other teaching responsibilities within the faculty, the Chair of the Faculty Board, Faculty/University IT specialists and a faculty administrator to take the minutes.

The LTC has given language teachers autonomy, time, and space to share ideas with other colleagues whom they would perhaps seldom see on a regular basis. It has transformed the outlook of the individual, giving them a wider perspective and reminding them of the greater structure or community to which they belonged. It also has made them more aware of how unique and diverse the various language teaching programmes were.

The LTC has also encouraged language teachers to meet informally outside the faculty, which gave them the opportunity to discuss their concerns and wishes among themselves on a regular basis.

Meanwhile, in 2005, the Athena Swan Charter, a framework which is used chiefly in the UK to support and transform gender equality within higher education and research, and which aims to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in various fields, was established.[4] Oxford University was a founding member and has held an institutional Athena Swan award since 2006. As mentioned before, the population of female language teachers at AMES is still higher, although the gender gap has recently narrowed to some extent.

In 2007, with support from senior members of the faculty, the senior language instructorship position was introduced, and all the language instructors were invited to apply. This was a significant step and the first sign of a career path. However, unfortunately, after the appointment of a few language instructors for senior instructorship, the position was discontinued in the following year without any official justification and the possibility of a career path for other colleagues was ended.

In 2009, language teachers finally made a request to the faculty to revisit existing contracts, including a re-interpretation of the contact hours, and a reconsideration of the way the language instructors could feel included and respected in the faculty and gain equal opportunities to a career path alongside lecturers, who by this time were being referred to by their new titles: associate professor. This request involved the Division – that is the organisational unit comprising all faculties in the Humanities – and the University and College Union. As a result of these negotiations, the Faculty agreed to reduce the contact hours of language instructors from twenty hours to sixteen per week at least de facto, as an unwritten rule, after coming to a joint agreement that a strict interpretation of the existing contracts, which stated 'up to twenty hours', were contrary to national norms.

No significant development followed in the next six years.

[4] More information on the principles and tenets of the Athena SWAN Charter can be found on its website: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/transformed-uk-athena-swan-charter (accessed 13/05/2024).

In 2015, the faculty started an internal review of language teaching. Unfortunately, no language instructors were invited. A year later, the faculty again set up a Working Party for the Review of Language Teaching, which this time included three language instructors, three students and one external professor, together with three professors from the faculty.

Because of these developments, language teachers began to feel that they needed their own arena in which they could discuss language pedagogy and exchange good practice in a less formal context compared to the LTC meetings, but more structured than occasional tea parties. As a result, LTC workshops were set up, beginning in Spring 2016.

4.3 LTC workshops

LTC workshops are organised termly, three times per academic year. There are in-house speakers, who may hold language taster sessions that act as a useful preparation for Open Day and outreach events. Some colleagues present their latest research, or guest speakers from other institutions give talks on applied linguistics. We use the same platform to conduct surveys for institutional needs, such as a survey on self-generated language learning preferences, to find out more about our students. During the pandemic, for example, the LTC workshops gave language teachers an opportunity to (virtually) get together and learn IT skills needed for online teaching. Typically, someone would attend an IT workshop (e.g. on Microsoft Teams), and then pass on the acquired know-how to their colleagues. Language teachers had created their own support bubble. It was necessary to communicate closely with each other in order to discuss what was possible, practical and sustainable. Moreover, they began to appreciate the good ideas they already had and started to think of new ways of helping each other and acting with integrity.

It is the expectation of the faculty that staff will participate in the mission and activities of the LTC to share and develop best practice. Any kind of research, scholarship, data gathering and analysis, and publications are relevant to language teachers' practice and understanding, particularly to their lessons and tutorials where skills like discourse analysis, deep reading, translation, text analysis, new teaching strategies, etc., are a crucial part of the success of not only the individual teacher but the institution itself.

Here are some of the contents covered in the LTC workshops:

- Textbook analysis
- Various taster sessions
- Learning styles and learners' strategies
- Teaching speaking skills
- Self-generated study and learning outside the classroom
- Learning languages in the twenty-first century (Book discussion)
- Digital Civics
- Teaching dyslexic learners
- How to support incoming students upon their return from the Year Abroad
- How to use TEAMs and Canvas in our context
- Language learning and teaching during the Pandemic
- Ideology in the translation of political discourse during the Syrian Conflict
- Corpora and the study of Arabic vocabulary
- Virtually hands on – Digital life and language teaching
- The pandemic and language teaching
- Disability and Language Learning/Teaching: university policy
- Peer Observation for CPD

Two surveys:

- Student Reflection on Language Learning
- Language Teaching Survey

In April 2019, following the internal review of language teaching norms at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, which lasted for two years, the then Chair of the Faculty made a representation to the Division suggesting that a cross-faculty review be conducted, which would harmonise the terms and conditions of language teaching against the sector. The Division set up a Working Group (WG1) for the Review of Language Instruction Provision, which excluded any

representation by language teachers on grounds of 'conflict of interest'. WG1 created a report indicating that they had sought input and feedback from language instruction staff via a series of meetings and had produced a proposed framework comprising generic role descriptions for language instruction staff across the Division and a document mapping duties and skills for reference. This report misrepresented some of the terms of employment at other universities; language teachers from AMES therefore produced data showing that Oxford had fallen behind in pay, and that some universities allowed (varying degrees of) career progression for language teachers. WG1 subsequently recommended that in light of the additional information gathered during the development of the framework and via meetings with language instruction staff, the grading for language instruction posts be reviewed in liaison with Personnel Services.

A new Working Group (WG2) was established, along with a consultative forum, and an independent benchmarking study was commissioned. These were very welcome steps that the language teachers hoped would bring clarity and transparency to the review process.

The first forum was held with representatives from the Humanities Division and the language instructors of AMES, Modern Languages and Classics. The negotiation of titles, salaries, and career paths began. In 2020, an independent benchmarking study on language instruction provision in UK higher education was developed to examine how the grading and role responsibilities for language instruction staff compares to that in other universities. Fourteen other universities were included in the study.

After weeks of back-and-forth responses to the benchmarking report, asking for clarification and highlighting the parts that had let to misinterpretations and misunderstandings, the university decided to go forward on the basis of the report's main conclusions and recommendations.

In those years, besides the LTC workshops with CPD purposes, language teachers at AMES also regularly came together to discuss and follow the developments at their institution which were crucial for their wellbeing in terms of both their personal and professional lives. This process was tiresome. Many language lecturers indicated that there was, for the first time, some hope for a possible change, but others were less hopeful and gave examples of their own disappointing past experiences that they had had to endure for years. Some teachers found these conversations stressful and difficult to listen to; however,

the collegial platform made it possible to create a supportive environment where colleagues were able to openly speak up and collectively fight for their rights.

In 2021, as a first success, the language teachers' titles changed, and language teachers at the Faculty of Modern Languages and AMES all became language lecturers. Overall, language teachers believed that there should not be a question of enforcing or restricting titles in such a way as to perpetuate the 'othering' of language teachers, rather than embracing them as equal partners engaged in research-informed teaching. The norm should have been for titles to follow those of research staff, only with 'Language', or 'Teaching', or 'Education' appended.

Contracts were also upgraded to salary scale grade 7, which was a step in the right direction. Two Teaching Officers, one chosen from among the language lecturers and another from the academic staff, have been appointed. They will act as a point of contact for any issues related to language teaching across the faculty and will facilitate communication between language teaching staff and academics.

5. Conclusions

Some UK HE institutions are not in line with sector norms and differ substantially from comparable institutions with regard to:

- matching skills/responsibilities to grade and salary;
- creating dedicated teaching and scholarship tracks to facilitate career progression according to the legal definition of 'equal pay for equal work';
- allocating titles in the spirit of that equality;
- recognising language teachers for degree courses as 'academic' staff.

Ambler *et al.* report in their study that, 'promotion prospects for Teaching-only staff remain poor... Teaching-only teaching loads are much higher than their full-time counterparts'. They continue:

> If the UK is to maintain its position in international league tables that primarily measure research and if student learning is not to suffer, Teaching-only contracts cannot be perceived to be 'second class'. If ambitious and talented academics are to choose this career path, the reward structure must change. (Ambler et al. 2022:18)

There is an urgent need to establish some form of dedicated teaching path for language teachers within the foreseeable future, ideally as part of a strategic plan.

Some UK universities have implemented a formal designated teaching career track or pathway, or are planning to produce one within the coming years. This will give language teachers the possibility to progress to far higher points on the salary scale – all fully the result of the imperative felt by these institutions to comply with the 2010 Equality Act and with the Athena Swan Charter. However, some universities' avoidance of applying these standards to specialist language-teaching staff shows a marked disregard for their relative value and a divergence from the practice of comparable institutions.

The current Oxford Grade Descriptions, for example, offer no criteria for 'Teaching' roles, but only for roles in 'Research', 'Administrative/Professional', 'IT/Technical', and 'Operational Services'. Several universities in the UK have never implemented the nationally agreed criteria for these roles that are set forth in the National Library of Academic Role Profiles mentioned earlier. They have therefore never evaluated their language teachers on the basis of the criteria and norms adopted elsewhere in the sector according to the nationally agreed profiles. Thus, any fair re-evaluation of jobs and grades should proceed after establishing suitable criteria in line with national norms with the base of the sector. [5]

As the teaching track career pathway is evolving, university practices in terms of progression and promotion within that pathway are evolving, too. At present, several universities have clear promotion pathways from Teaching Fellow through to Full Professor based on teaching alone. Others restrict progression within a particular grade band, with other practices in between. Promotion is usually dependent on demonstrable quality of scholarship, assumed line management responsibilities, and assumption of key administrative functions, again varying by institution with no established practice.

Research and scholarship should be part of current and projected essential criteria for language teaching jobs to show evidence of continuous professional development in language teaching, and to show familiarity and interest/engagement in language pedagogy.

[5] These data are available from the relevant University website: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-evaluation and https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/grade-and-category-descriptions (both accessed 13/05/2024).

As language teaching evolves in most HE institutions, it is hoped that categorisations such as 'academic' or 'other than academic' will change and that there will continue to be the flexibility that allows contracts for staff producing 'research' of the type and quality that may be submitted in the Research Excellence exercises to exist alongside others that imply pedagogical 'scholarship' of the type which many language teachers, in any case, undertake as a matter of course. Some universities have various mechanisms for overlap and accommodation of both types of contract – with 'research' and 'scholarship' being criteria for progression.

We hope that our story shows to some extent how much individual teacher wellbeing is intertwined with contextual and institutional wellbeing, and how it is directly affected by institutional culture. Establishing the Language Teachers' Committee within the Faculty was the first step to make our existence visible and our voices heard. The LTC workshops became an important platform not only for professional development purposes but also for personal development. We have witnessed that these gatherings have brought people together and created the environment and trust between teachers not only to be present for each other but also to tackle and resolve difficult long-standing matters which involve fundamental rights of language teachers regarding their profession, salary, and psychological wellbeing.

We always believed good practice and our compassion would eventually have a positive impact. We are still negotiating for a career path and higher pay-scale grades for language teachers in line with comparable universities that have already started to acknowledge the need for change and have begun to move forward. However, as Mercer and Gregersen (2020:10) put it, 'institutional-level values must be actively cultivated through practical, concrete, recognisable actions and structures, beyond simple lip service'.

What is still essential?

- positive collegial relationships and a working environment that supports individual teacher wellbeing together with institutional (collective) wellbeing;
- a sustainable and encouraging platform for CPD activities not only during unexpected times (like the pandemic) but throughout teachers' careers as

preparation for sharing daily best practice as well as readiness for challenging time;

- better and more sustainable career paths for language teachers supported institutionally and nationally whilst recognising this profession as an academic field and addressing vital issues such as low pay, burnout, stress, teacher wellbeing, CPD, and job prestige and satisfaction;
- starting with individual teacher wellbeing but encouraging institutional wellbeing to support teacher wellbeing;
- organising CPD activities with contributions from colleagues not only for professional but also personal development purposes in a less formal, collegial platform;
- institutional support for creating a collegial platform for a diverse working context while respecting the personal and cultural differences of the teachers;
- an intellectually rich working environment that is equitable for all members of staff and provides a sense of belonging in order to thrive, flourish and reach their potentials within a collegial and sustainable community full of understanding respect and mutual support.

Note: Since starting to write this case study, Oxford University has commissioned an independent analysis of all aspects of pay and conditions for University staff, and colleagues on joint appointments between the University and Colleges in 2023. The purpose of the Pay & Conditions project is to conduct a comprehensive review of the total reward and benefits offer across all staff groups, and to report to the Vice-Chancellor and University Council on its findings and recommendations. Further information about the scope and objectives of the review can be found here: https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/pay-and-conditions-review-objectives

References

Ambler, R., Huxley, G. & Peacey, M. W. (2022). Teaching at University. *Education Economics, 31*(5), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/09645292.2022.2104812

Brecht, R. D. & Walton, A. R. (2000). System III: The future of language learning in the United States. In R. Lambert & E. Shohamy (eds), *Language policy and pedagogy: Essays in honor of A. Ronald Walton*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin, 111–27.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Daiute, C. (2014). *Narrative Inquiry: A Dynamic Approach*. 1st ed. Thousand Oaks ,CA: SAGE. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781544365442

Education Policy Institute (2022). *Language learning in England: Why curriculum reform will not reverse the decline or narrow the gaps*. Accessed 13/05/2024: https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/15043/

Guan, L., & Huang, Y. (2013). Ways to achieve language teachers' professional development. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3*(11), 2112–2116.

Gor, K. & Vatz, K. (2009). Less Commonly Taught Languages: Issues in Learning and Teaching. In M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty (Eds), *The Handbook of Language Teaching*. Chichester: Blackwell. DOI:10.1002/9781444315783.ch14

Hiver, P., & Dörnyei, Z. (2017). Language teacher immunity: A double-edged sword. *Applied Linguistics*, *38*(3), 405–423. DOI:10.1093/applin/amv034

JNCHES (2004). *Role Analysis and Job Evaluation Guidance for Higher Education Institutions.* Accessed 13/05/2024: https://uceastorage.blob.core.windows.net/ucea/download.cfm/docid/jnches_role_analysis_and_job_evaluation_guidance.pdf

Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Lindsay, G.M. & Schwind, J. K. (2016). Narrative Inquiry: Experience Matters. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, *48* (1):14–20.

MacIntyre, P.D., Ross, J. Talbot, K., Gregersen, T., Mercer, S. & Banga, C.A. (2019). Stressors, Personality and Wellbeing Among Language Teachers. *System*, 82, 26-38. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.013

MacIntyre, P.D., Gregersen, T., Mercer, S. (2019). Setting and Agenda for Positive Psychology in SLA: Theory, Practice, and Research. *Mod. Lang. J.,* 103, 262-274. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12544

Mann, L., Kiaer, J. & Çakır, E. (2022) *Online Language Learning: Tips for Teachers.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mercer, S. & Kostoulas, A. (eds) (2018) *Language teacher psychology.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Mercer, S., & Gregersen, T. (2020). *Teacher wellbeing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ofsted (2021) *Research review series: Languages*. Accessed 13/05/2024: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-research-review-series-languages/curriculum-research-review-series-languages

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Slimani-Rolls, A., & Kiely, R. (2019). *Exploratory Practice for continuing professional development: An innovative approach for language teachers*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sulis, G., S. Mercer, S. Babic, & A. Mairitsch. (2023). *Language Teacher Wellbeing across the Career Span*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Wieczorek, A.L. (2016). High Inhibitions and Low Self-esteem as Factors Contributing to Foreign Language Teacher Stress. In D. Gabryś-Barker & D. Gałajda (Eds) *Positive Psychology Perspectives on Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. Second Language Learning and Teaching*. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-32954-3_13

RÉSUMÉS

Antonia RUPPEL: *Créer un environnement en ligne complet pour l'enseignement des langues anciennes.*

Il existe de nombreuses raisons de créer des ressources en ligne; à la fois pour compléter l'enseignement en présentiel et pour poser les bases d'un cours enseigné entièrement en ligne. Cet article entend donner une vue d'ensemble des questions à se poser pour concevoir les ressources ou le cours dont les enseignants ont besoin. En effet, même un enseignant expérimenté peut ne pas connaitre tous les éléments qui devraient être mis en place pour qu'un cours en ligne, potentiellement davantage guidé par l'étudiant, soit une réussite.

Dans cet article, on considère en premier lieu les questions de bases relatives à l'apprentissage de l'espace, du temps, et des structures. Ensuite, alors que "enseigner une langue" ou "connaitre une langue" sont des objectifs précis, ils englobent une vaste diversité d'activités et de compétences. On suggère ainsi une série de questions qui permettent aux enseignants de déterminer ce qu'ils entendent par ces termes, et on passe ensuite en revue les différentes décisions pratiques qui doivent être prises sur cette base pour mettre en place le cours: on considère quels éléments du cours devraient être inclus, et sur cette base, quelle est meilleure façon de créer un service académique disponible en ligne.

Si parfois, le plus est aussi le mieux, il n'empêche que souvent, des structures de base mises en place d'une façon abordable aussi pour les enseignants-chercheurs, qui sont tenus de se concentrer davantage sur les publications que sur les enseignements, peuvent faire leur chemin.

Enfin, on présente les exemples de deux configurations complètes d'alt-ac en ligne (pour les cours de langue et de 'contenu') comme des modèles potentiels pour de futurs cours.

Mots-clés: *éléments d'enseignement; cours en ligne, conscience pédagogique, utilisation des langues anciennes, alt-ac.*

Todd B. KRAUSE, Hans C. BOAS et Danny LAW: *Le* TIPIṬAKA *pédagogique: REL et les trois corbeilles de l'enseignement des langues anciennes.*

Les langues anciennes présentent un défi unique pour l'enseignement: pour les langues parlées, la pédagogie recommande communément d'impliquer les étudiants par le dialogue; pour les langues anciennes, aucun locuteur avec lequel s'entraîner n'a survécu. Cet article met en lumière la façon dont le Centre de linguistique de l'Université du Texas à Austin a approché ce défi en créant la collection *Early Indo-European OnLine* (EIEOL), une ressource éducative en ligne dont les séries de leçons présentent les langues anciennes directement à travers des textes anciens originaux et non simplifiés. Actuellement visité par plus de 20'000 utilisateurs par mois, EIEOL couvre dix-huit langues, du grec et latin à l'ancien slavon d'église, au sanskrit et autres langues importantes de l'Asie ancienne tels que le hittite, l'arménien classique, l' avestique et les langues tokhariennes. Chaque série présente des extraits de textes originaux soigneusement annotés dans la langue cible, et accompagnés de modules d'explication de la grammaire et du contexte. L'approche centrée sur le texte offre à l'apprenant un chemin direct vers la compréhension. Il convient à différents niveaux d'expérience et réduit l'appareil grammatical conceptuel nécessaire pour commencer à interpréter des textes originaux. Ce format favorise la flexibilité théorique, adaptable à différentes approches et descriptions grammaticales de langues anciennes. Il est également utile pour les langues dont la structure grammaticale a drastiquement changé au cours de leur histoire, à l'exemple des langues tokhariennes, ou pour celles hautement débattues ou peu décrites par les experts. Finalement, cela facilite l'application, actuellement en cours, à des langues et familles de langues typologiquement diverses, telles que l'ancien mésoaméricain, le sémitique, et les langues sino-tibétaines. L'infrastructure EIEOL fournit ainsi une plateforme robuste pour une introduction gratuite, centrée sur le texte et autonome aux langues anciennes issues d'une diversité de famille de langues.

Mots-clés: *sanskrit, tokharien, chinois, chinois classique, humanités digitales, didactique des langues, OER, MVC, conception web, linguistique historique.*

Maiken MOSLETH KING: ***Vers une pédagogie de la langue et des hiéroglyphes de l'ancien égyptien.***

Cet article présente et discute les défis de l'enseignement du moyen égyptien et des hiéroglyphes égyptiens à des adultes anglophones en dehors du milieu académique. Ces défis incluent le manque de locuteurs L1; le large volume de signes dans le scripte; la difficulté à reconstruire la prononciation en raison de l'absence de voyelles écrites; et le manque de moyens d'enseignement accessibles tels que les manuels et livres pour le niveau intermédiaire. La maitrise de l'oral dans cette langue éteinte n'étant pas un objectif atteignable, nous avançons ici que l'enseignement devrait graviter autour de l'acquisition de compétences de lecture.

L'article défend une approche pédagogique qui se concentre sur l'utilisation du vocabulaire, y compris ses différentes orthographes, comme pierre angulaire de l'apprentissage. Cela comprend la lecture de mots, phrases et paragraphes de complexité croissante, qui, progressivement, aident à la mémorisation du vocabulaire et au renforcement de la confiance. La grammaire et la syntaxe peuvent être graduellement introduites et contextualisées par la lecture de phrases d'entraînement. On défend également ici que la production de versions numérisées de textes en égyptien ancien au moyen de logiciels de polices tels que JSesh pour les hiéroglyphes permet la création de textes d'entraînement dans un format standard et lisible. En retour, cela permet d'utiliser des aides pédagogiques telles que l'addition d'espaces entre les mots, et l'addition de signes omis par les scribes anciens.

Finalement, on avance que l'apprentissage du vocabulaire et de la grammaire est amélioré par la discussion de la dimension sémantique et culturelle plus large des textes anciens en question.

Mots-clés: *moyen égyptien, hiéroglyphes, pédagogie des langues, construction du vocabulaire*

Robin MEYER: ***Contextualiser l'enseignement des langues anciennes. Le cas de l'arménien classique.***

L'enseignement des langues anciennes au niveau universitaire est généralement très différent de celui dispensé dans les écoles secondaires: ces dernières ne proposent qu'un petit nombre de ces langues (par exemple le latin et le grec), alors

que l'éventail est plus large à l'université. En même temps, ces cours de l'école secondaire durent traditionnellement plus longtemps et comprennent, outre l'introduction à la langue, un enseignement de base de la littérature, de la culture et de l'histoire de cette langue, ce qui n'est pas forcément le cas au niveau universitaire.

Cet article soutient que, en particulier pour les langues moins communément étudiées, une telle contextualisation offre à l'apprenant des informations indispensables sur le fonctionnement de la langue qu'il étudie et facilite l'homogénéisation de groupes d'apprenants disparates. Cette affirmation est illustrée par l'exemple de l'arménien classique: des apprenants de différentes disciplines (théologie, histoire, linguistique, etc.) suivent un tel cours et arrivent avec des compétences, des connaissances de base et des attentes différentes. À moins que des cours supplémentaires sur l'histoire de l'Arménie, etc. ne soient proposés, les divers intérêts des apprenants ne peuvent être abordés que dans le cadre de l'apprentissage de la langue. Cette approche est avantageuse pour maintenir l'enthousiasme des apprenants et pour une meilleure compréhension de la littérature. Bien que la pondération du matériel utilisé doive dépendre de la composition de chaque groupe, un manuel correspondant doit les inclure à parts à peu près égales. Cependant, toutes les informations doivent rester pertinentes par rapport à l'objectif principal, l'apprentissage de la langue.

La solution proposée ici est l'intégration fluide de ces informations historiques et culturelles dans les exercices grammaticaux, les lectures, ainsi que l'inclusion d'excursions régulières sur des sujets pertinents.

Mots-clés: *pédagogie de langue, arménien classique, latin, grec ancien, manuels, enseignement universitaire, enseignement secondaire*

Dirk SCHMIDT: *Une approche englobante du moyen tibétain. Développer une compréhension écrite et des compétences de traduction pour des textes "classiques", grâce à la pratique orale du tibétain.*

La traduction tibétaine est de nos jours profondément liée au champ académique des études tibétaines et de la tibétologie. Cela relève d'un héritage historique spécifique, et d'une disposition particulière de pratiques institutionnelles et pédagogiques de longue date, aussi bien dans les méthodes que le matériel, pour l'enseignement du tibétain. Après avoir exploré l'arrière-plan des pratiques en

place, j'avance une alternative pour l'apprentissage et la traduction du moyen tibétain (ou tibétain classique). Cette approche englobante, collaborative et centrée sur la communauté est inspirée de travaux en linguistique appliquée, acquisition des langues secondes et traductologie; cet article entend préciser ce que l'on peut apprendre de ces champs, et comment on peut appliquer leurs méthodes au contexte de l'apprentissage de la langue tibétaine. Partant, je défends qu'adopter une telle approche ne se justifie pas seulement; cela fournit également des bénéfices tangibles non seulement aux chercheurs, mais également à la communauté linguistique tibétaine, qui détient encore une perspective native et vivante sur les significations des textes. En d'autres termes, au lieu de voir le texte-comme-object duquel on extrait une traduction-comme-produit, l'objectif est de mettre à jour une traduction-comme-pratique-sociale qui est constructive, inclusive et réciproque.

Mots-clés: *tibétain classique, tibétain familier, moyen tibétain, tibétain moderne, traduction, écriture, oralité, approche intégrée, linguistique appliquée, éducation langue seconde, études tibétaines, approche sociolinguistique, acquisition de la langue seconde.*

Vance SCHAEFER: 'Une grenouille dans un puits'. *Enseigner le japonais classique pour améliorer le répertoire linguistique et les compétences culturelles des apprenants du japonais moderne comme langue additionnelle.*

Des éléments du japonais classique et d'autres formes anciennes du japonais imprègnent le japonais moderne. Partant, les locuteurs du japonais, y compris les apprenants du japonais comme langue additionnelle (JAL), ont généralement besoin de connaissances passives, et dans certains cas, actives, du japonais classique dans leur répertoire linguistique et leur compétences générales en langue. En réponse, cet article défend une approche plus proactive pour l'enseignement d'éléments de japonais classique aux apprenants JAL. L'article décrit les caractéristiques, les formes et les usages du japonais classique dans le japonais moderne, puis planifie un cadre pédagogique sur la base des résultats d'apprentissage mesurables des étudiants. Des lectures approfondies sont intégrées dans les cours de langue japonaise, appuyées par des activités telles que l'enseignement explicite, des exercices sur les formes, des traductions grammaticales, et d'autres formats mixtes ou inversés. Les activités exploitent le

pouvoir de la culture japonaise populaire en intégrant des éléments culturels tels que les haikus, manga, animés, qui motivent davantage les apprenants. De plus, proposer des éléments du japonais classique aux apprenants JAL pourrait les encourager à suivre des cours complets de japonais classique, augmentant le nombre d'inscriptions, et offrant une porte d'entrée aux cours de japonais classiques dédiés à la littérature, à l'histoire, à la culture.

Mots-clés: *japonais classique, lecture approfondie, enseignement explicite, méthodes mixtes et inversées en classe.*

Maryam PAKZADIAN: L'enseignement de prédicats complexes perses dans la perspective de la grammaire de construction pédagogique.

Cet article porte sur les prédicats complexes perses (CPs) du point de vue de la grammaire de construction appliquée/pédagogique (PCxG). PCxG est une approche de la pédagogie des langues étrangères qui met l'accent sur les constructions (appariement des formes et significations) qui sont des modèles de mots et de structures grammaticales qui ont une signification au-delà de la somme de leurs parties. Selon Golderg (2006:3), c'est "une tentative de décrire le langage d'une façon qui est à la fois exacte et pédagogiquement utile" . Les CPs perses sont des prédicats à plusieurs mots composés de vingt dénommés verbes légers et d'un élément non verbal (nom, adjectif, adverbe, préposition, particule verbale, nom complexe, nom plus adverbe), qui forment une seule unité conceptuelle (par exemple *pakhsh kardan*, lit.dispersé ADJ faire, "répandre" ; et *charkh zadan*, lit.roueN frapper, "flâner"). Les CPs perses présentent un défi de taille à la linguistique en raison de leurs propriétés lexicales et phraséologiques. Par exemple, elles peuvent subir des processus dérivatifs, mais elles sont aussi syntaxiquement séparables par le préfix de négation, les auxiliaires du futur, ou le pronom clitique d'objet direct. Dans cette étude, j'avance que pour l'enseignement des CP perses à des locuteurs anglophones, une approche PCxG peut être construite comme un effort multidisciplinaire qui vise à éliciter ces aspects de la grammaire de construction (CxG) et peut être liée plus explicitement à la linguistique appliquée, la formation des enseignants et la pédagogie des langues étrangères.

Mots-clés: *grammaire de construction, grammaire de construction appliquée, grammaire de construction pédagogique, prédicats complexes perses*

E. ÇAKIR & H.KAJI : L'atelier du comité des enseignants de langues: une étude de cas à Oxford.

Cet article retrace brièvement le parcours de l'atelier du comité des enseignants de langues (LTC), conduit par des enseignants et initié en 2015 comme un simple espace pour les enseignants de langues moins communes enseignées à la Faculté d'études asiatiques et moyen-orientales (AMES), de l'Université d'Oxford. Il rend compte de la façon dont cette plateforme, initialement conçue pour discuter des enseignements dispensés par chaque enseignant individuellement dans la langue cible, a évolué en un espace pour la formation professionnelle continue (CPD), où sont partagées les bonnes pratiques et connaissances.

Lors des ateliers LTC, les enseignants ont redécouvert les ressources qu'ils connaissaient déjà, tout en portant un regard réflexif sur celles-ci, en les évaluant, en les adoptant et en les enrichissant; ceci a un impact positif sur le bien-être des enseignants, leurs actions futures et les décisions professionnelles conjointes à venir. La plateforme n'a pas été uniquement importante pour surmonter ou simplifier les périodes difficiles comme la pandémie du COVID-19, lorsque les enseignants de langue ont dû passer à l'enseignement en ligne du jour au lendemain, mais elle a aussi eu des impacts plus durables, tels que la sensibilisation aux droits fondamentaux des enseignants de langue, en termes de bien-être notamment.

Ainsi, cet article entend donner un aperçu chronologique et un éclairage des vingt-cinq dernières années d'une institution académique au Royaume-Uni qui a façonné/affecté le bien-être des enseignants de langue. Il s'efforce de montrer l'exemple et de repenser la place des enseignants de langues dans le monde académique.

Mots-clés: *formation professionnelle continue, bien-être des enseignants, bien-être institutionnel, langues moins enseignées, collaboration.*

Les Cahiers du CLSL peuvent s'obtenir auprès
du Centre de linguistique et des sciences du langage (CLSL)
au prix de CHF 20.- par numéro
www.cahiers-clsl.ch

Faculté des Lettres
Bâtiment Anthropole
Université de Lausanne
1015-Lausanne, Suisse

ISBN 978-2-940607-20-4