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Editorial

We open this volume with two papers (Ladegaard & Cheng, Vessey) which set out the fine-grained degrees of cultural separation that can challenge the communication, mutual understanding and sociality which is the aim and hope of our field. Dervin then considers what discursive pragmatics can offer our understanding of online communication. The second half of the issue goes on to offer papers that describe creative (Tran & Truong) and courageous (Porto) approaches to raising intercultural awareness and mutual understanding, as well as an overview of the state of the field in Colombia from Alvarez.

Within the context of an ‘internationalised’ university in Hong Kong, Ladegaard & Cheng explore how participants from diverse cultural groups discursively construct ‘self’ and ‘other’ within informal group discussions that take place between local students, students from the Chinese Mainland and ‘overseas’ students who attend the university for shorter periods of time from European and American universities. Drawing on discursive psychology, the paper considers how these students use communicative resources to make sense of their social behaviours. In particular, research in this area has investigated the ways in which members of particular social groups mobilise distinctive discursive practices to create, maintain and transmit easily replicable mental concepts such as stereotypes to make sense of members of the different social groups they encounter. The authors’ findings confirm much of the previous discursive psychological research in as much as members of the three student groups not only perceived each other as occupying a mutually agreed social hierarchy which seemed to reproduce the values of an earlier era of colonisation but they also appeared to progress in their talk from constituting members of the out-group positively to presenting them in a negative light. However, the students’ construction of stereotypes about each other, based on their own notions of in-group normality, appeared to be context dependent, since accounts given in questionnaires differed from their oral accounts.

Ladegaard and Cheng conclude by challenging universities to take a more proactive approach to developing intercultural competence on campus. Their research has significance, not only for the positioning of Hong Kong both with respect to the Chinese Mainland and its connection with Europe and America, but also for the increasingly global spread of student mobility around the world, concerns about which are often referred to in these pages. Indeed, most of us will recognise the challenges documented by this paper in our own pedagogic contexts, and there is little doubt this continues to be one of the major challenges for our field. The paper concludes by advocating a recognition of 'otherisation' on the international campus, and the initiation of more direct strategies for engaging with this phenomenon within the internationalised campus.

If Ladegaard & Cheng explore how otherization is achieved through the discursive construction of 'abnormalisation', social hierarchy and illusory positives within the pedagogic discourse that circulates within the university classrooms in Hong Kong, Vessey considers how otherization is created, maintained and reproduced within the public sphere through investigating the bias of translation strategies in two popular newspapers in Canada. Her paper explores the issue of dual indexicality by examining two pairs of particularly evocative words which are borrowed across French and English in two popular Canadian newspapers: 'national' vs. 'nationale' and 'Canadian' vs. 'Canadien'. In so doing she draws on the notion of 'mock language' first conceived of by Hill (1993), and more recently by Callahan in these pages (2010). While the use of large scale corpora has become quite commonplace in publications which specialise in discourse analysis, the bilingual corpus assisted discourse analysis which Vessey pulls off here remains quite innovative, and highly pertinent to this journal. Findings from the English corpus suggests that the French 'nationale' is used differently to 'national' in English, not least to indirectly index and negatively evaluate French-speaking nationalism in Quebec; similarly findings from the

French corpus suggest that the English terms ‘Canadian’ and ‘Canadians’ are used to indirectly index the Anglophone part of the country and signify its separateness from French-speaking Quebec. Rather like Ladegaard and Cheng, Vessey includes a plea for greater understanding of the nuanced and possibly biased meanings that can be invoked by signifiers that float across languages in politically and (inter)culturally charged contexts.

If Ladegaard & Cheng and Vessey consider how reciprocity of cultural meaning can sometimes elude members of different cultural groups, Dervin looks at how the ‘intercultural’ is constituted in a telecollaboration project which takes place between international students specializing in intercultural communication in Finland and Latvia. As an assessment task, the students from each group were required to engage in two chat discussions about Russia, which both led to the construction of each other’s identities as well as the identity of a shared ‘Other’, Russia. In his approach to this, Dervin argues for a paradigm shift away from modernist notions of cultural boundedness based on the nation state, to a conceptualisation of the ‘intercultural’ constituted by multiple participants through representation and *evaporation* (after Laing, 1967). As a theoretical framework, the paper posits a version of discourse pragmatics which entails *énonciation* and dialogism. Analysis of chat illustrates not only how these students mobilised many different discourse pragmatic elements cautiously and provisionally in order to construct, negotiate and ‘define’ their identities, but also how their discussion of Russia enabled them to work through a dialogic process of self-identification in relation to a shared Other. The paper concludes by suggesting that discourse pragmatics might be one viable way forward for exploring various lines of enquiry relating both to intercultural communication and intercultural education.

Here we reach the ‘turnaround’, and in the second half of this issue we feature two papers which seem to address some of the issues relating to intercultural understanding raised by Ladegaard and Cheng, and Vessey. Vietnam has changed immensely in the past

decade and arguably – in keeping with the issues raised at the beginning of this editorial - university students need to develop their command of English in order to enable their internationalisation and global employability. Yet, according to Le Bach Truong and Ly Thi Tran, English is still taught in a relatively decontextualised fashion. Truong & Tran embrace the current pedagogical trend towards the contextualisation of language teaching by employing film - not only to provide sociocultural information about the target culture - but also to convey rich, culturally specific ideological and even sensory impressions. While *Million Dollar Baby* might not be every reader's idea of a good night out, the authors provide a considered and culturally sensitive justification of its use in their classroom – in particular it enables their students to respond critically to the issues which the film highlights within contemporary American society. Using a combination of video-ed lessons and journal entries from students, evidence from the study suggests that this use of film – innovative in this particular pedagogic context – precisely counters some of the issues raised at the beginning of this issue. Breaking cultural stereotypes, enhancing knowledge about cultural differences and engaging in cross-cultural comparison were all desirable goals of the internationalised campus raised by Ladegaard & Cheng; while integrated language learning which involves an authentic learning experience and living in the world of the 'other' culture have regularly been seen as possible outcomes of intercultural learning (e.g. Liddicoat and Sacriano, 2013).

I am privileged to count myself along with - I imagine - most readers as a member of a global elite who have the resources to travel from country to country, conference to conference. Yet it is always welcome to hear of the state of our field in a country which has perhaps been under-represented in these pages. From Columbia, Alvarez Valencia shares with us a review of the development and the evolution of intercultural studies – mainly within the context of the different sectors of language education. Drawing on six Colombian-based journals relating to applied linguistics and language education, Alvarez Valencia explores

over thirty articles for the specific ways in which they position themselves vis-a-vis the relationship between language and culture. One intriguing aspect of this study is its diachronic perspective, which enables its author to analyse both the trajectory and the velocity of the incorporation of intercultural studies into Colombian foreign language teaching. For him, while the move towards cultural contextualisation of language education perhaps started somewhat later than in Europe and in the US, its take-up was faster in Colombia. While this reflects the increasing speed that new technologies bring to the flow of knowledge and pedagogies from the 'Inner Circle' to the 'Expanding Circle' (after Kachru, 1985), it does not yet alter what Alvarez Valencia calls the 'consumptionist' relationship between the North and the South. While the paper affirms the preponderance and diversity of qualitative methodologies in intercultural research, Alvarez Valencia is somewhat critical of the 'erroneous' uptake of intercultural approaches to pedagogy by Colombian language teachers. However, I suspect most readers would want to reassure him that we still often feel this is the case whether one is teaching in Bogotá or Boston, Brasilia or Berlin. Globally, our project still has a long way to run. Alvarez Valencia concludes with a plea for a better balance to be struck in intercultural education in Columbia across the different education sectors to include primary and secondary levels as well as tertiary – again a phenomenon that many of us still recognise interculturally.

While still positioned in the tertiary sector, in an uplifting conclusion to this issue from Argentina, Porto reports on a courageous project in intercultural understanding. In what also seems to be a second response to the pleas of Ladegaard & Cheng and Vessey, this also reminds me of recent work carried out by Mike Berry and colleagues in Finland (Berry et al, 2009). Building on wide-ranging accounts of intercultural citizenship education which will be well-known to our readers, Porto employs action research to describe an online intercultural citizenship project carried out in an English language classroom in an

Argentinean university and by English students studying Spanish at an English university. It was based on the Malvinas/Falklands war fought between Argentina and the UK in 1982. The project featured online communication between the Argentinean and English students in both languages, and reflection on this historical event, all of which led to the generation of a variety of civic actions on the part of the Argentinean students as well as an event showcasing the Malvinas/Falklands project at an anniversary event by the English students. This project was innovative in as much as the classroom interventions were carried out simultaneously in both countries. Not only did it create a sense of intercultural identification amongst the Argentinean and the English students in an intercultural project that both groups owned, but it also challenged the 'common sense' of each national group within the international project, and led to new ways of thinking and acting as the participants engaged with their local communities.

This issue, then, seems to showcase some of the concerns which confront intercultural communication in both the North and the South – and yet also offers some redress by looking at relatively innovative educational projects which can tackle, and to some extent, transform these challenges. Being reminded of the Association's recent successful conference in Hong Kong, it also gives a sense once again of the very global scope of our shared intercultural project. Despite the modest position adopted by Alvarez Valencia in his paper, one feels in engaging with the dynamism of Tran & Truong and Porto's pedagogic initiatives that we are reaching the time when the seemingly unstoppable flow of capital – cultural, pedagogic and technological - from the 'inner' to the 'expanding' circle might be at last at a point of equilibrium, if not reversal.

Valete

The last issue saw the departure from these pages of my co-editor for the past three years, John O'Regan. I just want to take the opportunity here to record my thanks for his companionship, intellectual rigour and criticality. While we remain firm friends and colleagues within the Association, the editor's chair feels a lonelier place without him.

Malcolm N. MacDonald, *University of Warwick*

Chairs' Notes

Much of the work published in *Language and Intercultural Communication* was first presented at its affiliated association, the *International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication* (IALIC). Now in its fifteenth year, IALIC supports a thriving community of interdisciplinary scholars—e.g., in languages, intercultural communication, critical studies, tourism and management, health, intercultural pedagogy—who critically and reflexively interrogate and examine (inter)cultural communication theory, methodology, pedagogy and practice.

IALIC's last meeting, from the 29th November to the 2nd December at Hong Kong Baptist University, had as its theme “language and intercultural communication in the workplace: critical approaches to theory and practice”, investigating how workplace cultures, particularly the ways in which working in highly interconnected and multicultural societies, shape language and intercultural communication. The first issue of this volume, the special issue entitled “Intercultural dialogue: Current approaches, future challenges” (LAIC 14.1) emerged from papers presented at the IALIC conference at Durham University in 2012. More about

the IALIC community and how to join it can be found the IALIC website <http://ialic.net/> or by contacting the IALIC Chair, Prue Holmes p.m.holmes@durham.ac.uk

The next IALIC conference will be held at the University of Aveiro, **Aveiro, Portugal, 27th-30th November, 2014**. The conference theme will showcase papers on language and multilingual/intercultural repertoires in intercultural communication. Further details of the conference theme and call will be available soon on the IALIC website. Or you may contact the conference organisers, Maria Helena Araújo e Sá and Mónica Bastos at ialic2014@ua.pt.

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