History of Language Learning and Teaching: Perspectives on Innovation

Symposium of the AILA Research Network on History of Language Learning and Teaching (HoLLT.net), AILA Congress, Rio de Janeiro, 25 July 2017

Chaired by Richard Smith (University of Warwick) and Giovanni Iamartino (University of Milan), HoLLT.net co-convenors

Session 1 (10:15–12:15)

10:15–10:20 Introduction by the convenors

10:20–10:30 Welcoming words - Francisco Gomes de Matos (Professor Emeritus, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil / ABA Global Education)

10:30–10:50 Monuments in the landscape: the state of history of language learning and teaching in Brazil - José Carlos P. Almeida Filho (University of Brasilia, Brazil)

10:50–11:10 *Modern Portuguese*: opting for the language of Brazil in the USA, from a historiographical perspective - José Marcelo Freitas de Luna (University of Vale do Itajaí, Brazil)

11:10–11:20 Discussion

[5 minute break]

11:25–11:45 Applied linguistics versus *linguistique appliquée*: innovation in language learning/teaching research in France (1964-2013) - Shona Whyte (Université Côte d'Azur, France)

11:45–12:05 The British Council on the global stage: a history of innovation in English language testing
Barry O'Sullivan (British Council)

12:05–12:15 Discussion

Lunch (12:15–13:30)

Session 2 (13:30–16:30)

13:30–13:50 Tart–scriblita–torta–torte–torta–tortilha: a piece of cake! Acquiring lexis in John Andree's (1725) *Vocabulary in Six Languages* - Giovanni Iamartino and Lucia Berti (University of Milan, Italy)

13:50–14:10 Teaching/learning phraseology in the nineteenth century: the role of bilingual dictionaries - Stefania Nuccorini (Roma Tre University, Italy)

14:10–14:20 Discussion

[5 minute break]

14:25–14:45 Literature textbooks in the Israeli EFL context: the interaction of innovation and washback - Amos Paran (UCL Institute of Education, University of London, UK)

14:45–15:05 Beyond written texts: history told by the objects of two schools - Marta Banducci Rahe (Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil)

15:05– 15:15 Discussion

[15 minute break]

15:30–15:50 Innovation in Chinese as a foreign language teaching and learning: the late Qing period - Mariarosaria Gianninoto (Université Grenoble-Alpes, France)

15:50–16:10 Imitation et innovation dans les méthodes pour l'auto-apprentissage de l'italien dans le monde lusophone (1870-1920) - Monica Lupetti (Università di Pisa, Italy)

16:10–16:20 Discussion

16:20–17:00 Coffee and business meeting

Session 3 (17:00–19:00)

17:00–17:20 The history of Tandem Language Learning - Tim Lewis (Open University, UK)

17:20–17:40 Learner autonomy in English language curricula of Chinese universities, 1978-2007: an intentionalist analysis - Shi Pu (Beijing Foreign Studies University, China)

17:40–17:50 Discussion

17:50–18:10 Change without innovation? Language teaching in shifting political contexts - Sabine Doff & Tim Giesler (University of Bremen, Germany)

18:10–18:30 How does History of Language Learning and Teaching (HoLLT) advance our understanding of innovation? - Richard Smith (University of Warwick, UK)

18:30–18:40 Discussion

End / Apéritif

Abstracts

Introduction

This is the first symposium at an AILA Congress to be organized by HoLLT.net (http://www.hollt.net), a Research Network of AILA founded in 2015 to stimulate research into the history of language learning, teaching and assessment within applied linguistics internationally. Work within HoLLT.net is helping to further understanding of worldwide historical developments and thereby furnish necessary historical perspectives for professional reflection on how language learning, education and assessment are or should be carried out today.

The title of the symposium, 'History of Language Learning and Teaching: Perspectives on Innovation' corresponds with the overall conference theme of 'Innovation and epistemological challenges in applied linguistics'. Of the 23 proposals submitted, 17 were selected for inclusion, according to criteria of quality of historical research and relevance to the symposium theme, and of these 14 have been confirmed for presentation.

The symposium will be introduced by Brazil's most eminent applied linguist, Prof. Francisco Gomes de Matos, who has been a keen supporter of HoLLT.net since its inception, and the first session will also feature papers by two leading Brazilian historians of language teaching, while one of the papers in the second session will be on the British Council's history of English language testing. We are very grateful to ABA Global Education for sponsoring the participation of Professor Gomes de Matos, and to British Council Assessment Research & Development for their generous sponsorship of the symposium overall. Other papers will be given by specialists in various areas of history of language learning and teaching, with a focus mainly on historical developments in Europe, but also in Brazil and China.

The symposium is chaired by Richard Smith (University of Warwick) and Giovanni Iamartino (University of Milan), who – together with Nicola McLelland (University of Nottingham) and Friederike Klippel (Ludwig-Maximilians University, Munich) – founded and co-convene the research network.

Session 1
Welcoming words - Francisco Gomes de Matos (Professor Emeritus, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil / ABA Global Education)

Monuments in the landscape: the state of History of Language Learning and Teaching in Brazil
José Carlos P. Almeida Filho (University of Brasilia, Brazil)

The New World, as the Europeans called the Americas, has a history of 500 years and a little longer. The history of other-language acquisition is part and parcel of this history, particularly in the colonial period stretching over three hundred years. Awareness of this history is much more recent, with the first publications with a historical theme dating from the 1950s. The first published books on the theory of language teaching and learning in Brazil date from the mid-1930s. When Brazil celebrated the 500th anniversary of its foundation in the year 2000,

a book was published by the Catholic University of São Paulo on the teaching of languages in the 19th century, and a special discipline called Teaching Languages in Brazil was offered in the postgraduate programme of Applied Linguistics at the University of Campinas, State of São Paulo. This pioneering trail matured into a regular discipline in the postgraduate Applied Linguistics programme at the University of Brasilia in 2006. In that year, the HELB website (http://www.helb.org.br) was opened to the wider public and with it came a historical timeline for the five centuries of language teaching history in the country, a journal of history of language teaching in Brazil, a bibliographical bank containing relevant historical sources and a wealth of digital links to relevant material of historical interest. In this paper an overview of the present state of history of learning and teaching in Brazil is offered with the help of the HELB website and a historiography of published contributions is attempted as part of an analysis of the evolution of a discipline that has found fertile soil in this part of the world.

Modern Portuguese: opting for the language of Brazil in the USA, from a historiographical perspective
José Marcelo Freitas de Luna (University of Vale do Itajaí, Brazil)

This paper derives from historiographical research into the teaching of Portuguese as a foreign language in the United States during the period 1915 through 1975. Following Koerner (1995), in particular his advocacy of the principle of contextualization, and using, as primary sources, books, periodicals and newspapers of the time found in the libraries of several American universities, we describe the relationship between the Army Specialized Training Program, known for the Army Method, and the development of Applied Linguistics for the teaching of foreign languages in the United States. Particularly, we describe the climate of opinion which informed the development of *Modern Portuguese: A Project of the Modern Language Association* (1966/1971), co-authored by applied linguists from the U.S. and Brazil. This description allows us to interpret the climate of opinion of the decades in question as favorable to Brazil and to the selection, promotion and continued growth of the Brazilian variety for the teaching of Portuguese in the United States. Examples will be given of the influence of Applied Linguistics in the production of that pioneering textbook, showing how: (1) applied linguists' focus on describing language usage impacted pedagogical explanations of grammar; (2) the centrality of the principle of linguistic variation, especially of a sociolinguistic nature, influenced classroom activities aimed at helping learners communicate appropriately along the formal–informal continuum; and (3) an emerging computational linguistics had an impact on textbook vocabulary selection.

'Applied linguistics versus *linguistique appliquée*: innovation in language learning/teaching research in France (1964-2013)' - Shona Whyte (Université Côte d'Azur, France)

In exploring developments in their field which pre-date modern conceptions of applied linguistics and second language research, historians of language learning and teaching have shown that the translation equivalents "applied linguistics" and "*linguistique*

appliquée" do not refer to exactly the same constructs, theories, or disciplines. In recent years, second/foreign language teaching research in France has been conducted under the banner of language didactics ("*didactique des langues étrangères*, *didactique des langues-cultures"),* a field defined (a) in opposition to a narrow conception of applied linguistics and (b) as a praxeological discipline separate from both language teaching methodology and second language acquisition (SLA). French language didactics focuses on theoretical models for language teaching, recognising neither applied linguistics nor SLA as parent disciplines, as shown in recent research conducted from a historical viewpoint (Léon, 2015; Linn, 2008, 2011; Smith, 2015), from a contrastive perspective (Berthet, 2011; Liddicoat, 2009; Véronique, 2009), and from an epistemological standpoint (Carter & McCarthy, 2015; Véronique, 2009, 2010; Widdowson, 1980, 2000). This paper interprets this research into the history of second/foreign language teaching and learning in the French context, showing the influence of innovations ranging from the cognitive revolution heralded by Chomsky's attack on behaviourist views of language acquisition (Corder's seminal work on learner errors), to developments in linguistic theory (Culioli's theory of enunciative operations), and education theory (Galisson's language didactology) in France. It considers the differential development of research in English- and French-speaking contexts and evaluates the utility of an umbrella discipline for this work within applied linguistics.

The British Council on the global stage: a history of innovation in English language testing
Barry O'Sullivan (British Council)

This paper presents an overview of the British Council's engagement with English language testing over the past 75 years. The story begins with the signing of an agreement between the British Council and the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) in 1941 and ends with an outline of the organisation's current activities in the area.

The paper, based on a three-year project in which the research team had access to the British Council and other key archives, traces the work of the British Council in language testing from the 1940s through to the present day, highlighting the quest for innovation and quality. Among the highlights are the conceptualisation and development of the English Language Testing Services (ELTS) test in the late 1970s. New information which emerged from the archives calls into question current understanding of the origins of this revolutionary and innovative precursor to the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Also highlighted are the organisation's later involvement with IELTS, and its move back into test research and development in the first decades of the new century.

In addition to focusing on the ways in which the British Council's emphasis on innovation contributed to the exploration of alternative approaches to language testing, the paper will also emphasise the importance to an organisation such as the British Council of knowing and appreciating its own history, as well as the importance of a formally researched and objectively told history to the field of applied linguistics in general.

Session 2

'Tart–scriblita–torta–torte–torta–tortilha: a piece of cake! Acquiring lexis in John Andree's (1725) *Vocabulary in Six Languages*'
Giovanni Iamartino and Lucia Berti (University of Milan, Italy)

Not much is known about R. J. Andree; very clear are, however, his ideas on languages, their learning and teaching. Language allows us to communicate and to convey knowledge, but the variety of languages can hinder communication and the exchange of information between different countries. Andree thus wants to promote the study of Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese by publishing his *Vocabulary in Six Languages* in London in 1725.

The book stands out among other multilingual dictionaries of the time in that it is based on a new and original method to ease the acquisition of vocabulary in the four languages. Latin, which was widespread among the educated, is in fact inserted in the dictionary with the aim of showing the reader how Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese are related to the former and are thus similar to each other. As a result, by viewing and repeating a given word in the five languages the learner should memorise it more easily. English, the sixth language, provides translation equivalents. Andree's innovative ideas and approach, and the addition of reading material, make the *Vocabulary in Six Languages* a stimulating and entertaining learning book rather than a mere reference tool. Yet languages change over time, and the loss, creation, and semantic shift of words make the practical realisation of Andree's work not that simple.

Our purpose is to investigate the *Vocabulary in Six Languages* as an innovative example of joint cooperation between multilingual lexicography and foreign language teaching. The strategies adopted by the author to overcome lexicographic and language learning difficulties will also be examined.

Teaching/learning phraseology in the nineteenth century: the role of bilingual dictionaries
Stefania Nuccorini (Roma Tre University, Italy)

Phraseology has long been associated with lexicography (Knappe 2004), especially with bilingual dictionaries, which have traditionally had a didactic perspective (Moon, 2000). The analysis of some nineteenth-century bilingual dictionaries, among which Duverger's *Comparison between the Idioms, Genius and Phraseology of the French and English Languages* (1810), and Santagnello's *Dictionary of the Peculiarities of the Italian Language* (1820), shows that phraseology, especially in the sense of word combinations rather than proverbs and idioms, was then considered a fundamental issue in learning a foreign language. The *Royal Phraseological English-French, French-English Dictionary* (Tarver, 1845–1849) stands out for its lexicological and lexicographical approaches, and for its pedagogical aim. Its author, a teacher of French at Eton, is well aware of the profile and the needs of foreign-language learners. In order "to enable an Englishman to translate his own language into grammatical, idiomatical, written, and colloquial French, and to enable a Frenchman to do the

same in English" (1845: 9), he reports in his dictionary "an extensive phraseology to illustrate the proper manner of using the words" (1845: 6), with a great number of examples. His dictionary includes no list of equivalents, but fixed phrases and combinations in which the headword is used according to its different «acceptations» (i.e. sense discriminators, given in parentheses); combinations are presented in sub-entries and arranged according to explicit labels such as noun+verb, noun+adjective, noun+preposition. The paper will show that this dictionary is quite innovative: it adds to previous, comparable lexicographical works, and it foreshadows later, especially twentieth-century, approaches to the inclusion and treatment of word combinations in dictionaries designed for foreign learners of English.

Literature textbooks in the Israeli EFL context: the interaction of innovation and washback
Amos Paran (University College London Institute of Education, UK)

This paper looks at the way in which the teaching of literature in EFL has developed in Israel in the past 70 years through examining the EFL literature course books and the testing of literature. Three main areas are examined: the choice of works to be taught; the support materials that are provided for the teacher (in the form of a Teachers' Book, or as a clearly structured unit that effectively constitutes a lesson plan); and the support explicitly provided for the learner (eg glosses, background information in the student book, etc.). I identify a number of trends: a move from anthology-like collections of literary works with little or no support for the teacher, to highly explicit lesson plans; a move of the locus of control from governmental and academic bodies to publishers; a strong washback effect; a change in geographical spread, with a move from a British bias to a US bias; the noticeable persistence of a core of a number of literary works, which effectively form a canon, albeit with a slightly more changing "periphery" of literary works; and the effective removal of non-fiction from the curriculum. I attempt to understand these changes through examining the ways in which innovatory moves interact with the curricular heritages extant in the country and with the washback from the exam.

Beyond written texts: history told by the objects of two schools
Marta Banducci Rahe (Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil)

The archeological remains of the school, such as objects, texts and images enable the researcher to ask questions about education in the past. Since they are the empirical testimony of the thoughts, practices and the senses of a period, they carry signs and leave traces of the internal logic of the school. This research aimed to analyse the didactic objects and artifacts used in the foreign language classes of two Secondary Schools, in Campo Grande, a Brazilian city, from 1931 to 1961, and to compare them with the official sources, such as government policies and new methodological approaches, trying to examine whether and how they helped to shape teachers' daily practices. In Brazil, these years are considered the period of modernization, industrialization, urbanization, and

when new concepts and objectives of education emerged. Although textbooks are the main sources for researching foreign language teach ing in Brazilian schools, the documents found in the archives of the schools pointed to the purchase of records, record players, tapes and flashcards, showing that there was an attempt to follow the successive reforms proposed by the Ministry of Education and Health. These artefacts and the field of Material Culture are, therefore, a new kind of source to disclose traces of the culture and the symbolic meanings of foreign language classes and a new perspective to be considered within Applied Linguistic Historiography.

Innovation in Chinese as a foreign language teaching and learning: the late Qing period
Mariarosaria Gianninoto (Université Grenoble-Alpes, France)

While the first pedagogical tools of Chinese as a foreign language aimed at European learners were compiled in the 17th century, it was during the 18th and 19th centuries that a rich production of language learning materials (pedagogical grammars, language textbooks, and phrasebooks) appeared, due to the presence of an increasing number of foreigners in China as well as to the rise of sinological studies in Europe.

The authors generally adopted the linguistic as well as the pedagogical approaches they were used to, adapting Western paradigms to the Chinese context. Nevertheless, being confronted with the epistemological challenge of analyzing and describing a distant language, they also forged new categories and elaborated innovative devices.

Hence, these pedagogical works can be considered innovative for their adaptation of Western linguistic and didactic traditions to Chinese (particularly for introducing grammatical description to Chinese language learning), as well as for the new approaches (e.g. corpus based lists of Chinese characters) adopted to face the challenges of presenting and teaching Chinese to Westerners. Furthermore, different works made use of native didactic methodologies, and merged them with Western ones.

In this paper we aim to describe these different approaches chosen for the pedagogical tools of Chinese as a foreign language compiled in the late Qing dynasty period, underlining their importance in the subsequent development of Chinese language pedagogy.

Imitation et innovation dans les méthodes pour l'auto-apprentissage de l'italien dans le monde lusophone (1870-1920)
Monica Lupetti (Università di Pisa, Italy)

Une des nouveautés dans le domaine de l'enseignement des langues dans la deuxième moitié du 19e siècle est l'apparition des "méthodes" pour l'auto-apprentissage des langues étrangères. Ces méthodes sont des manuels généralement d'origine allemande, traduits et adaptés dans d'autres langues par des grammairiens autochtones, comme les méthodes *Ahn, Ollendorff* et *Gaspey-Otto-Sauer*. Ces manuels promettent un apprentissage facile et rapide, basé sur une même séquence d'explications, exercices et traductions.

Notre but est d'étudier de façon comparative et contrastive, les méthodes pour l'apprentissage de l'italien publiées au Portugal et au Brésil dans la période 1870-1920. On comparera les textes luso-brésiliens avec leurs modèles allemands pour vérifier s'ils intègrent les aspects plus novateurs de ces derniers, ou bien s'ils s'appuient sur la tradition grammaticographique nationale (dans le traitement des parties du discours, les glossaires, les dialogues, les proverbes, etc.). En réalité, au delà des aspects plus techniques liés à l'organisation de l'apprentissage, ces textes font toujours partie de "méthode traditionnelle", joignant l'étude de la composante grammaticale à la pratique de la traduction. Un autre enjeu de notre recherche est celui d'évaluer jusqu'à quel point on peut définir les textes de notre corpus comme des méthodes d'auto-apprentissage, ou bien s'ils présupposent l'interaction enseignant-éléve. Le fait que ces textes aient été choisis comme livres de texte pour les cours de niveau élémentaire dans les lycées, surtout au Brésil, montre que leur véritable aspect novateur a été leur capacité de s'adapter aux besoins de l'apprentissage scolaire, devenant des outils pour l'enseignement institutionnel.

Session 3

The history of Tandem Language Learning
Tim Lewis (The Open University, UK)

Tandem language learning draws on a tradition of peer learning and teaching which has its origins in the Madras Military Orphans Asylum of the late C18th. Its key principles are autonomy and reciprocity.   It continues to evolve in ways that repeatedly enable new kinds of learners to benefit from working in partnership.

Tandem learning was first – and still is - practised on a wide scale in face-to-face Franco-German exchanges organized by the *Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk/Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse* in the years after WW2. Here it assumed an intercultural dimension, since it brought together in a spirit of reconciliation young people from two former enemies.   An intercultural focus is also evident in the Tandem exchanges organized in the 1970s between German social workers and members of the Turkish *Gastarbeiter* community.

Tandem Learning went online in the early 1990s with the EU-funded *International Email Tandem Network*, led by Helmut Brammerts of *Ruhr Universität Bochum*. More recently it has been reinvented as *Teletandem* by Joao Telles in Sao Paolo Brazil, where online videoconferencing provides a platform for exchanges. In Europe, its latest incarnation is in the *L3Task* project, led by *Friedrich Schiller Universität Jena*. Here e-Tandem exchanges are used as a means of enabling partners to learn and maintain third languages. This paper examines successive applications of Tandem learning and considers how it has proved so versatile and explores how effectively its core principles and practices - including 50/50 dual language use and error correction by partners - have been operationalized in its successive incarnations.

Learner autonomy in English language curricula of Chinese universities 1978–2007: an intentionalist analysis
Shi Pu (Beijing Foreign Studies University, China)

This study investigated the concept of learner autonomy according to a series of English language curricula implemented for Chinese universities from 1978 to 2007. The methodological framework was Quentin Skinner's intentionalist approach, which was originally derived from Austin's speech act theory. The analysis involved two steps. Firstly, the concept of learner autonomy in the curriculum was interpreted according to the way it was represented linguistically in English language education in China. The purpose was to understand the meaning of learner autonomy as shaped by the Chinese context. Secondly, the concept of learner autonomy was understood in terms of how it addressed major issues in English language education in China during the selected historical period. The purpose was to reveal the 'intentionality' (i.e. speech act) of promoting this concept. In this study, these two steps of analysis also revealed an additional consequence of promoting this concept in China.

The presentation will explain the methodological innovation of this study based on the findings. The findings revealed that learner autonomy in the Chinese context referred to students' ability to work hard on their own outside the classroom. It was different from its Western origin, which involved a political focus on individuals' rights and responsibilities to determine their own purpose of learning. That political sense, however, was brought into the Chinese context by the excessive use of the term learner autonomy. It increased the popularity of the learner-centred approach and imposed unjustified requirements on English language teachers.

Change without innovation? Language teaching in shifting political contexts
Sabine Doff & Tim Giesler (University of Bremen, Germany)

The northern German city of Bremen has had its individual school legislation for the last two centuries. Traditionally, the merchant influence in the harbour town was strong and had a noticeable impact on language teaching. Trade connections with the USA demanded English language competence in a 'marketplace tradition' (McArthur 1991).

The language teaching method used there seems 'innovative' at first glance, as it resembles what later would be called 'direct' methods: oral fluency was at its centre, grammar had a 'serving' function and, in the higher grades, geography and history were taught in English. On closer inspection, however, these methods were not 'new' but taken from the repertoire of late 18th century merchant schools.

When Bremen joined the North German Federation (1867), gradually most of the 'innovative' teaching methods were discarded and more 'traditional' Prussian grammar-translation methods were introduced in Bremen schools.

After the Second World War, Bremen came under US occupation. This occupation built on the long trade connections between the city and its transatlantic partner. The main educational goal was to 're-educate' the Germans

after the Nazi dictatorship. In Bremen, that partly meant picking up on the liberal and progressive school system before 1933.

The Bremen *Sonderweg* (lit. 'special path') gradually ended in the 1960s, when the US influence weakened and the city had grown into one of many German federal states. In education this led to the introduction of a more 'traditional' German school system with its specific methodological repercussions.

So, starting from the Bremen example, we would like to question the concept of 'innovation' in language teaching in general, and suggest a view of change in education which is based on long-term developments and which takes the context as well as the agents of change into account.

How does History of Language Learning and Teaching (HoLLT) advance our understanding of innovation?
Richard Smith (University of Warwick, UK)

As an emerging interdisciplinary, plurilingual and intercultural field, the History of Language Learning and Teaching can be expected to provide useful perspectives on current practical concerns, including on the main theme of this Congress – *innovation*: how, when and why to attempt it and how to sustain it, but also, from a relatively philosophical perspective, how to define and assess it. Innovation, after all, is an activity, or a construct, which is inextricably bound up with views of the past, whether mythical or well-researched. Researching the past can, indeed, give rise to considerations of whether – or, if so, why – innovation is occurring, or is required at all.

In this concluding paper I draw together some of the threads and themes which have emerged in the Symposium overall but also offer some further perspectives of my own, based both on research into the 19th and 20th century 'global' history of the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and consideration of some important issues currently confronting the TESOL profession. Although clichés like 'there's nothing new under the sun' certainly need to be avoided, and anachronism is an ever-present danger, some apparent innovations can turn out, from a historical perspective, to be little more than turns of a wheel or swings of a pendulum, or, indeed, far less beneficial than was intended at the time; on the other hand, forgotten or disparaged approaches, methods, materials or *means* of change from the past can sometimes take on a modern demeanour and emerge as potentially useful in relation to current concerns. Ultimately, I shall argue, what is *genuinely* innovative, and beneficially so, cannot be identified or appreciated without the kinds of historical perspective offered by the Research Network (HoLLT.net) and the Symposium as a whole.