

Introduction

A Vision for Critical Dialogic Education

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As scholars and teacher educators whose careers have been driven by a commitment to linguistically minoritized multilingual children and youth, we have spent thousands of hours in classrooms trying to understand the conditions that support their success, and the ways in which we can help teachers learn to create such conditions in their classrooms. We recognize very clearly the ways in which inequitable and discriminatory ideologies, institutional structures, and social practices tend to exclude linguistically minoritized youth from the classroom experiences that would genuinely empower them; however, we are also unwavering in our belief that classrooms are the very spaces in which radical and transformative change can occur. Dialogic educational practices, while not the only means of achieving such goals, are those that we discuss in this volume. We do so because language is at the heart of learning—it is both a means of development and the evidence for it. For linguistically minoritized students, critical and dialogic pedagogies can create conditions through which students can simultaneously gain communicative and interactional expertise¹ and challenge the linguistic and racialized norms and expectations that often limit their opportunities.

This edited volume brings together scholars in language diversity and education to critically examine notions of classroom participation and learning. We agree with arguments that dialogic environments support students' academic, linguistic, and intellectual development, but we extend such ideas to argue that critical perspectives on dialogic education, both for researchers and practitioners, must be our starting point. This includes an emphasis on preparing students for the active civic engagement essential to the cultivation and sustenance of democracy, but it goes further to aggressively challenge the implicit and explicit ways that schools fit minoritized students into singular or monolithic forms of behavior, thinking, and, perhaps most importantly for this volume, discourse. In the following chapters, we present innovative research on classroom practices that work to realize a vision of *critical dialogic education*: equity-focused classroom pedagogies that are dialogic, critical, and inclusive. Both researchers and practitioners need new opportunities to “see” how such practices are enacted and envision how they might be accomplished in classrooms, including the complexities

involved in such work. Such data is vital to advance both theory and practice in relation to equitable dialogic classroom practices. So, we explore the realizations, affordances, and tensions related to these pedagogies in order to provide examples of successful efforts to enact critical dialogic education (CDE) without shying away from the challenges of this work.

In this introductory chapter, we provide a summary of previous and more general discussions of classroom talk before we offer our vision for CDE. We then provide an overview of the chapters in this volume and the ways in which they embody the potential of CDE to redefine the roles of curriculum, pedagogy, and students and teachers themselves in contemporary classrooms in the United States.

Understanding the Role of Talk in Dialogic Classrooms

Any discussion of critical dialogue must be situated in the rich and ongoing conversations regarding dialogic education more generally, particularly as it has been envisioned by scholars concerned with the role of talk in classrooms. Defining dialogic teaching and learning is decidedly tricky business—which we discuss further on in this chapter—but it is typically contrasted with recitation or transmission models of education, which have been described as traditional pedagogies (Dewey, 1916) and the “banking model” (Freire, 1973). Contemporary scholars of classroom discourse have contended that these models are realized through formal curricula that present knowledge as fixed rather than dynamic, and through teaching practices that treat students as consumers of that curriculum with fixed knowledge and intelligence, rather than as critical thinkers who have their own expertise, which can expand over time (Alexander, 2015; Resnick & Shantz, 2015; Wells & Mejia Arauz, 2006). Traditional models value authority over inquiry (Lin & Lo, 2017) with a “hidden curriculum of compliance” (Alexander, 2015, p. 431). Windschitl (2019) argued that these models reflect normative patterns of behavior in classrooms, such that teachers and students tend to implicitly understand “doing school” as “rote and shallow learning performances” (p. 8) that reflect and reinforce an emphasis on teachers controlling discourse and covering curriculum, as well as students consuming knowledge and learning as individuals. In these performances, talk is rare and predictable.

Such an approach stands in contrast to dialogic perspectives on classroom discourse. Bloome and Clark (2006) noted that the origins of this field can be found in the work of Bakhtin (e.g., 1935/1981) and scholars in the ethnography of communication (e.g., Hymes, 1974); these antecedents remain highly relevant in contemporary studies of dialogic practices (e.g., Caughlan et al., 2013; Segal et al., 2017). Related perspectives focused specifically on education can be traced to Dewey’s (1916) emphasis on inquiry and Freire’s (1973, 2005) discussion of problem-posing pedagogies, concepts which Reznitskaya et al. (2009) noted continue to have resonance with scholars

today. Dialogic perspectives also rely on a range of learning theories—predominantly sociocultural theory (e.g., Haneda et al., 2017; Mercer et al., 2019; Snell & Lefstein, 2018) and socially distributed cognition (e.g., Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010)—that emphasize the role of interaction. Challenging these perspectives, Sfard (2015) argued that the aforementioned theories do not go far enough in acknowledging the inseparability of language and learning/development. In explaining that “communication, rather than playing a secondary role as the means for learning, is in fact the centerpiece of the story—the very object of learning” (p. 250), Sfard (2015) echoes ideas proposed several years before by van Lier (2004) regarding the role of dialogue in learning.

When considering the role of dialogic teaching and learning in American classrooms today, scholars have tended to focus on two seemingly contradictory realities. On one hand, there is growing empirical support for the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach in supporting language development (e.g., Philp et al., 2013; Sato & Ballinger, 2016) as well as academic achievement, longer-term retention of knowledge, and application across multiple subjects and settings (e.g., Resnick et al., 2015). On the other, however, researchers tend to find that dialogic classrooms remain rare: typical interactions continue to be recitation-oriented, and dialogic professional development initiatives often encounter challenges with implementing and sustaining change (Haneda, 2017; Howe & Mercer, 2017; Segal et al., 2017; Wilkinson et al., 2017). Scholars have hypothesized many reasons why dialogic approaches are difficult to enact, ranging from structural complexities to demands on teachers’ expertise to the influence of teacher and student beliefs or ideologies about themselves and others (Ardasheva et al., 2016; Shea, 2018; Snell & Lefstein, 2018).

Defining dialogue, however, remains elusive, a fact that Howe and Mercer (2017) saw as hampering efforts to synthesize knowledge generated by researchers who focus on it. Since early work on classroom discourse in the 1970s (Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), classroom talk has been defined in many different ways, and Haneda (2017) and Snell and Lefstein (2018), among others, have catalogued some of the terms and related pedagogical concepts currently in use, including: *academically productive talk* (Resnick et al., 2015), *accountable talk* (Michaels et al., 2008), *collaborative reasoning* (Reznitskaya et al., 2009), *dialogic teaching* (Alexander, 2008b, 2017), *dialogically organized instruction* (Juzwik et al., 2012), *dialogic inquiry* (Wells & Mejia Arauz, 2006), and *exploratory talk* (Barnes & Todd, 1977; Mercer & Littleton, 2007), among others.

There are, however, some commonalities among widely varying definitions of dialogic teaching and learning, and we hazard a few generalizations here with the knowledge that exceptions undoubtedly exist. First, there is recognition that learning is undertaken jointly with others, a process through which knowledge is co-constructed over time by teachers and students as ideas are developed, challenged, and built upon (Alexander, 2017; Haneda,

2017; Mercer et al., 2019). Second, there appears to be agreement that while dialogic teaching is often identified through discourse structures, it is actually the purpose of classroom talk that distinguishes it as truly dialogic. One important consideration is that the overall purpose of a lesson can be dialogic even as the teacher alternates between more authoritative and dialogic interactional moves (Scott et al., 2006; see also Park et al., Chapter 4 in this volume). Alexander (2008a, as cited in Reznitskaya et al., 2009) also noted, for example, that open questions posed by the teacher without adequate challenge or focus are better described as “pseudo-inquiry” than dialogic teaching. Relatedly, Segal et al. (2017) argued that lively classroom talk that simply aligns with teacher views and official curricula is better described as “exuberant, voiceless participation” (p. 7) than as truly dialogic interaction that engages with multiple perspectives and voices. Third, while there is ample instructional guidance for teachers, there seems to be agreement that there is no singular “best practice” to describe how dialogic instruction should be implemented. Instead, scholars focus on how practices should be shaped around local contexts (Lefstein & Snell, 2014) and on teachers’ adoption of a dialogic stance, implying the importance of a mindset or outlook rather than simply the ability to use a set of instructional moves (Wells & Mejia Arauz, 2006). Fourth, although no singular pedagogical prescription is necessary, it is recognized that dialogic teaching and learning requires a level of support and respect among members of a classroom community, including both student peers and teachers (Alexander, 2017; Haneda, 2017). Fifth, scholars have noted that dialogue is inseparable from the sociocultural and historical contexts in which it is used (Bloomer & Clark, 2006): discourse is influenced by the individuals participating and the material circumstances of the setting, which increasingly include digital resources (Mercer et al., 2019). Sixth, there is a largely unspoken assumption among most scholars that patterns of classroom talk are to some extent malleable: given the “right” teacher professional development opportunities and curricula, both teachers and students can learn to engage in increasingly dialogic practices in the classroom.

Scholars’ multiple understandings of dialogic teaching and learning likely exist, at least in part, because they have envisioned different goals or purposes for its use. For many, dialogic education is a tool for “student engagement, learning, and cognitive advancement” (Alexander, 2015), and even for cultivating intelligence (Resnick et al., 2015). In studies of second language acquisition and multilingualism, language development through interaction is viewed as a primary goal (e.g., Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010; van Lier, 2004). In such frameworks, larger societal goals for equity may be considered an added benefit, although not a primary purpose. For example, Resnick et al. (2015) described dialogic teaching as having an “embedded social mission” that can challenge low expectations and achievement for students who are traditionally underserved by formal schooling (p. 3). Alexander (2015) likewise argued that individual gains can build toward “social cohesion, cultural

engagement and democratic vitality” (p. 429). In contrast, other researchers have prioritized the moral and social purposes of dialogic education more explicitly, pointing out how it can help both teachers and students see the limitations of their own views, self-reflect and critically question their assumptions, gain new perspectives, and even develop humility and empathy (English, 2016). Still other scholars have foregrounded the contributions of dialogic education to support students’ civic participation in “deliberative democracy” (Segal et al., 2017; p. 21) through development of reasoning and argumentation skills, among other means (Reznitskaya et al., 2009: see also Alexander, 2008b).

Redefining the Role of Talk: Moving Toward CDE

Critical perspectives on discourse are far from new, and we find it useful to frame a critical approach to dialogic education in broader traditions that take discourse as a “point of entry for social critique” (Fairclough, 2013, p. 48), one that allows both teachers and researchers to explore how discourse and power are related. This perspective emphasizes the ways in which discourse can reflect inequitable circumstances but also seeks to use such critiques as a basis for social action. In what follows, we draw upon our own thinking as well as work already being undertaken by other scholars in efforts to synthesize these arguments and generate a clear and comprehensive vision of CDE.

Dialogic teaching and learning typically center on the importance of classroom talk (and at times other modalities of communication), but a critical perspective does not assume that such interactions are beneficial in any form. As described in the previous section, this means that to be truly dialogic, talk must be co-constructed, intellectually purposeful, adaptive, respectful, and responsive to context, among other commonly cited features. However, a critical perspective goes further, both to explore factors that may exclude particular learners from participation, and to set explicit goals for pedagogical practice that aim to disrupt inequitable power dynamics and their impacts on underserved student populations. In this sense, we contend that there are at least two key components of pedagogies that enact (and of researchers who study) CDE: a critical dialogic perspective that is firmly grounded in a questioning of the “necessary good” of classroom talk, and a proactive vision that seeks to give voice to students and disrupt inequitable power dynamics inside and beyond classrooms. These elements of CDE are described next.

Questioning the Power Dynamics of Classroom Dialogue

In describing inequitable power dynamics that exclude learners, scholars of discourse have focused their attention on student and teacher identities and beliefs, as well as discourse itself, all with a recognition of larger hegemonic structural influences. In relation to students, there is a recognition that the

structures and practices of schooling that typically marginalize students in educational contexts more generally can also transfer to dialogic spaces. Dialogic pedagogies may actually serve to silence some students: as English (2016) noted, “the use of a particular language itself can have a dominating and in turn silencing effect on students who may not desire to use, or feel capable of using, the language in the same way as the teacher” (pp. 166–167). Similarly, O’Connor and Michaels (2015) cautioned that “socio-symbolic dimensions,” rather than language itself, “stand as the greatest obstacle to full participation for all students in the practices that characterize academic institutions at all levels” (p. 305). Although these authors’ focus was on the role of so-called “academic language” rather than classroom dialogue alone, their point is relevant to dialogic educational practices. They argued that even though some students may genuinely be excluded by dialogic pedagogies that do not adequately attend to the meaning-making resources students need to participate (a point we think is perhaps underplayed in this argument), students must also feel comfortable positioning themselves as legitimate contributors to discussions. In relation to such positioning, Clarke (2015) noted that if students believe classroom dialogue is a place to display knowledge rather than to build it, those who do not already have “correct” answers may not feel that they have “the right to speak or be heard” (p. 178).

Further, classroom interactions create “school identities” (Wortham, 2005, p. 110) that can be more or less productive for students and can influence the learning opportunities available to them. Both student and teacher beliefs about who “merits” a voice in classroom discussions and who is capable of participating may exclude students without privileged school identities and, in some instances, may create marginalizing identities for them. For example, Snell and Lefstein (2018) found that inviting students to share their thinking aloud can actually expose them to potentially negative assessments from teachers, who may find fault in either the content of their ideas or the ways in which they are expressed. In this sense, students’ thinking would have remained “hidden” by using more recitation-based teaching, a situation that would have protected their in-progress ideas and speech from judgment. Relatedly, Handsfield and Crumpler (2013) cautioned that the openings dialogic pedagogies may create for student voice can also “[open] the door to the reinscription of standardized and autonomous ideologies of language and literacy learning” (p. 128), requiring teachers to deftly negotiate interactions to avoid social and identity positionings that further marginalize students. Even an explicitly critical dialogic approach is problematic in certain terms, in that traditions of critique may be less culturally familiar and comfortable for some students than for others (Kettle & Luke, 2012).

A second way in which scholars examine inequities that may arise from dialogic practices is through critical consideration of discourse itself. When discourse is seen in prescriptive terms—in order to accomplish task A, particular discourse features are necessary—the positioning of such forms as

powerful and prestigious becomes normalized, creating a “dividing” line between individuals who use those ways of communicating and those who do not (Bloome & Clark, 2006, p. 238). This dividing line often coincides with other inequitable divisions in society, including those that occur by race, social class, geographic region, national origin, and immigration status, among other identities. Recent scholarship calls into question the roles that researchers themselves have played in re-inscribing Whiteness and inequitable power dynamics through their studies of language use and development (Motha, 2020). Critical perspectives also make clear the imperative facing researchers and practitioners to better understand the ways in which ideologies about race are inextricable from those related to language (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017). The intersectionalities that exist among racialized and other identities influence patterns of privilege and oppression both inside and outside of the classroom (Pavlenko & Piller, 2008) and also complicate simplistic notions about how any singular identity category might influence learners or their learning in dialogic settings, including the varieties of a language they may or may not desire to develop through classroom dialogue (Anya, 2017).

Such considerations remind us that dialogic practices in the classroom can serve purposes of cultural reproduction rather than transformation (Lin & Lo, 2017), and norms for classroom talk may further silence marginalized students. A key issue then becomes “how to both cultivate communicative norms for rational deliberation and include marginalized student voices that deviate from those norms” (Segal et al., 2017, p. 8). Many scholars have argued that students can engage in intellectually rich classroom dialogue “regardless of whether they are framed in ‘proper’ speech” (Resnick et al., 2015, p. 3; see also Metz, 2020). Prescribing particular forms, structures, or communicative norms can, intentionally or not, reify them as the best or only means of participating in dialogic activities. This reification is further complicated when considering that the “appropriateness” of a student’s speech often depends upon how the student themselves is viewed (and by whom) according to non-linguistic identities such as race—an issue that is relevant to speakers of different varieties of English (Charity Hudley et al., Chapter 6 in this volume) as well as multiple languages (Anya, 2017). Teachers must therefore balance tensions that exist among: (a) ensuring students have opportunities to hear, learn, and use language that reflects particular school-based or subject-specific ways of speaking; (b) inviting students to appreciate and use their multifaceted linguistic (Orellana et al., 2010) and communicative (Rymes, 2010) repertoires of practice to engage in intellectual work; and (c) challenging the norms for classroom talk that position some students’ existing ways of speaking as less useful or valuable to academic development. For scholars and teachers working with students who are bureaucratically classified as English Learners, the first of these three mandates is many times seen as the primary goal of instruction and measure of success. The problem arises when there is insufficient attention

to the ways in which restricting other ways of meaning-making or accepting norms that marginalize students' ways of speaking can actually undermine students' development of the communicative and interactional expertise that is valued in school settings and school disciplines.

Bringing Equitable Pedagogies to Life Through Practice and Research

The critiques already presented are an invaluable aspect of CDE, but we argue that enacting CDE *also* requires a proactive vision for what more equitable dialogic pedagogies (and related research efforts) might entail. First and foremost, dialogic teaching and learning must consider equity for marginalized populations as a primary goal, rather than an “embedded” (Resnick et al., 2015, p. 3) or secondary one. We do not intend to imply that academic and linguistic development are less important in considering students' educational opportunities. Rather, we argue that a critically oriented purpose for dialogue provides a vitally important foundation for learning; approaches to dialogic education that foreground academic and linguistic development without adequate concern for equity are unlikely to meet either of those goals. Further, some common features of dialogic pedagogies described earlier—including co-construction, intellectual purpose, and community support and respect—can be redefined through a CDE approach. Lefstein and Snell (2014) have offered a model for some of these shifts in thinking: co-construction requires active and agentic roles for students in talking about authentic and relevant questions; the intellectual purpose of dialogue focuses on eliciting multiple voices and perspectives through critical stances toward knowledge; and community norms are not only respectful and supportive but also inclusive and reciprocal (p. 42).

CDE also entails an attention to communities' development and growth. In other words, critical and dialogic classroom practices are understood to have the potential to collectively broaden and transform current traditions of civic participation and democratic deliberation (Segal et al., 2017) to make them more inclusive and equitable. In this sense, there is an explicit moral dimension (English, 2016) to CDE, as well as a democratic vision that prioritizes marginalized youth's voices and participation (Segal et al., 2017). Incredibly important to this vision are researchers' and practitioners' imagining and implementation of decolonized and antiracist classroom practices (Motha, 2020). We acknowledge that many critical perspectives, and particularly those we explore here, are deeply embedded in Western thought (Kettle & Luke, 2012): our efforts here are not to valorize those worldviews above others or ignore different perspectives, but to acknowledge that the particular focus of this volume (and our work) is to facilitate the success of linguistically minoritized students in American classrooms and society. In this context, the important question is how to structure and enact dialogic pedagogies aimed at supporting democratic participation in ways that allow for students' multiple ways of being in a classroom.

These aspects of CDE allow teachers and researchers to transform other common features of dialogic teaching, such as adaptation, contextual responsiveness, and ongoing learning and development. Teachers' adaptation of dialogic teaching, for example, is grounded in their knowledge of the power dynamics in (and beyond) their classroom communities and their students' positioning in these hierarchies, as well as a firm belief that all students can participate in dialogic learning. The notion that discourse is responsive to and inextricable from its contexts of use is also shifted in CDE, in this case toward a recognition that any context necessarily privileges some students as it marginalizes others: no settings are neutral. Finally, a CDE perspective on the notion that both teachers and students can learn to engage in increasingly dialogic practices is one that carefully considers at least two issues: (a) the extent to which classroom settings are truly inclusive and supportive of this learning; and (b) the ways in which teachers' and students' growing expertise furthers the goal of developing a more equitable environment inside the classroom and possibly beyond. In this way, our vision of CDE is optimistic in nature—guided by the Freirian invitation for students to read the “world” as well as the “word” (Freire & Macedo, 1987)—but tempered by a constant questioning of ongoing practice and its implications. In this sense, it works to avoid the naïve belief that critical approaches will necessarily lead to “epiphanic ‘empowerment’” (Kettle & Luke, 2012, p. 120), in which critical awareness necessarily has a transformative impact and/or leads to fundamental changes, individually or collectively.

In this volume, our chapters embody these characteristics of CDE in several different ways. First, the pedagogies and research approaches described are designed to serve various minoritized populations, using these students' strengths and needs as a starting point for this work, rather than creating a generalized intervention in which they are seen as “exceptions” that require adaptation or modification. Second, the authors in this volume conceptualize minoritized identities—especially multilingual, racialized, and immigrant identities—as sources of strength and topics of study in dialogic education, rather than as deficits to be remedied or issues to be elided. In other words, the diversity of student voices and their positionings within various power structures are necessary components for engagement in CDE. Third, they attend critically to the role of power in both the design and enactment of pedagogies as well as in the research process itself. We now provide overviews of the individual chapters comprising this volume.

Chapter Overviews

Following this introduction, the volume is comprised of six studies of critical and dialogic educational practices, followed by a conclusion that synthesizes this work and proposes new directions for CDE as a field of inquiry. Here we provide an overview of those six studies.

With a particular focus on students who have been learning in and through English for many years but still carry the bureaucratic “English Learner” label, Glick and Walqui (“Affordances in the Development of Student Voice and Agency: The Case of Bureaucratically Labeled Long-term English Learners,” chapter 1) demonstrate how dialogic curricula can be built especially for these students in ways that embrace their experiences—which have often led to disillusionment with school itself—and reject the “remedial” cures often suggested for this population. Through a unit called “Power, Protest, and Change” taught in Glick’s continuation high school classroom, they analyze how these students successfully engage in “consequential talk” about the important roles that youth have in social justice movements. Through a curriculum that emphasizes carefully designed and implemented scaffolding to facilitate students’ engagement in conversations about bias, discrimination, and social action, they describe key semiotic resources that are relevant to understanding how and why linguistically marginalized students can come to participate in critical dialogue.

Lee et al. (chapter 2) also explore the nuances of dialogic interactions that take place with youth as they engage with topics related to bias and discrimination, in this case with a focus on language itself as an object of critique. In “School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society: Growing Pains in Creating Dialogic Learning Opportunities,” the authors challenge “traditional” approaches to the teaching of multilingual students bureaucratically classified as English Learners by exploring the implementation of a program based in principles of sociolinguistic justice (Bucholtz et al., 2014). They examine how the curriculum can be implemented in ways that create affordances for students who are relatively new to English to engage with linguistically and cognitively complex ideas from a critical perspective. Through analysis of small-group dialogue about language practices and policies that have direct relevance to students’ daily lives, the authors reflect on the ways in which personalized learning experiences that valorize students’ expertise can provide possibilities for language development while also posing challenges for instructors (including two of the chapter authors) in creating truly dialogic learning spaces.

In “English Learners as Agents: Collaborative Sense-making to Support Science and Language Development” (chapter 3), Alvarez et al. (2020) closely examine interactions during inquiry-based dialogic science instruction in linguistically diverse 5th grade classrooms, using a curriculum that was explicitly designed to create opportunities for language development for students who are both new and more experienced users of English.² They contend that small-group dialogue can be a crucial means of fostering more equitable classroom environments, in that it provides conditions for students to engage in scientific sense-making, develops competence with disciplinary science practices, and expands their linguistic repertoires. Through their analysis of students’ interactions, the authors demonstrate the multidimensional nature of what “productive” peer interactions entail, emphasizing the importance of having peers, teachers, and researchers who view linguistically minoritized students as agents who can engage with and build on one another’s ideas to

engage in scientific sense-making. The authors suggest that without such positioning—alongside thoughtfully designed learning activities—critical and dialogic intentions are unlikely to lead to the development of students’ scientific practices or linguistic repertoires.

In “Translating Words and Worlds in Poetry Inside Out: Intergenerational Research with Multilingual Youth on Productive Group Talk” (chapter 4), Park et al. explore a dialogic curriculum, Poetry Inside Out (PIO), in which students collaboratively translate poems from multiple languages and geographic origins into English, compare and discuss their various translation choices, and jointly develop deeper understandings of the text, the language they use, and the social and cultural contexts of the poem and their own lives. Their analysis is unique in that it was enacted through participatory action research by youth, a teacher, and university-based researchers. The research team jointly analyzed classroom interactions and interviews that youth conducted with peers in the mixed-grade high school ESL course—a class designed for students assessed to be at intermediate levels of English proficiency—where PIO took place. The chapter highlights their research process as well as their findings, which present a unique perspective grounded in student voice on what productive talk is, what motivates and sustains it, and how it has influenced students in this class and the youth researchers themselves.

Moving away from the study of singular curricula or classrooms, Kleyn and López (chapter 5) use a comparative case study approach to explore differences in how teachers enact dialogic pedagogies in “Teaching Current Immigration Issues to Secondary Immigrant and U.S.-born Students: Interdisciplinary Dialogic Learning for Critical Understandings.” The chapter describes dialogic teaching and learning during interdisciplinary immigration units taught in two New York City high schools, one serving U.S.-born students and other serving immigrant students. The authors draw upon ideas found in Freirean pedagogy and Bakhtinian dialogical perspectives to explore the institutional contexts in which units were created and the instructional decisions that supported teachers’ critical and dialogic approaches. These decisions highlight the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, the use of multimodal resources to show divergent perspectives, and the teaching moves that served to transcend students’ individual experiences with immigration. The authors suggest that students’ views on immigration were powerfully shaped by teachers’ instructional emphases on having students view contentious issues from multiple points of view, voice their ideas, and act upon them.

Lastly, Charity Hudley and colleagues (chapter 6) articulate the ways in which ideologies of language and race influence the experiences of African-American college students and offer examples of university coursework that engages them as students and researchers of sociolinguistics in ways that support their navigation of higher education. In their chapter, “Empowering African-American Student Voices in College,” the authors draw upon interview data to demonstrate how the racialized linguistic bias faced by African-American students is both deeply embedded in higher education and visible in classroom interactions in ways that can silence, minimize, and delegitimize their

participation. Against this reality, the authors describe innovative and critically oriented university coursework they have designed and implemented that engage African-American and other students in viewing linguistic and cultural practices from their various communities as legitimate and valued subjects for academic learning and research.

Redefining Teaching and Learning in CDE

As these overviews suggest, CDE provides multiple opportunities to redefine several elements of teaching and learning, including the roles played by curricular materials, pedagogy, students, and teachers. We now explore these opportunities for redefinition in the context of the chapters in this volume.

Redefining Curricular Materials in CDE

A key issue in approaches to CDE is the curricular materials that teachers utilize. The work in this volume indicates that there are multiple contexts in which it is possible to question and problematize official curricula (Segal et al., 2017). Our chapters highlight several innovative curricula that were taught in the context of existing required K-12 courses—high school English language development (Glick & Walqui, this volume; Lee et al., this volume; Park et al., this volume), high school English/social studies (Kleyn & López, this volume) and elementary school science (Alvarez et al., this volume)—but through an approach that fundamentally re-envisioned rather than simply adapted existing materials. In four of these five cases, there was significant freedom at the classroom level to make such changes while still working within the guidelines of content standards. Still other curricula were implemented outside of required settings entirely, including after-school youth research sessions (Park et al., this volume) and university coursework (Charity Hudley et al., this volume) that allowed authors to design learning experiences with even greater autonomy. Kleyn and López (this volume) highlight the importance of this freedom: the existence of standardized testing requirements for a given K-12 grade level notably restricted their teachers' efforts to implement CDE in teaching about the topic of immigration.

Connecting learners to key global issues that reflect and impact their daily lives provides fertile ground for dialogic engagement and an ambitious starting point for learning. The chapters in this volume demonstrate multiple ways in which curricula may conceptualize the particular (or personal) and the global. For example, in Lee et al. (this volume) and Glick and Walqui (this volume), students studied instances of protests against discrimination based upon the understanding that these adolescents, as members of linguistically minoritized and racialized groups, had experienced these phenomena, and the curricula explicitly encouraged them to make these

connections part of the classroom learning. In PIO (Park et al., this volume), however, particularity was seen differently: students created interpretations of poetry from many different languages and cultures in ways that foregrounded the creation and discussion of students' own unique translations without comparison to an authoritative "correct" answer, and in ways that allowed them to connect participatory action research of their own site to larger ideas of classroom dialogue and learning. In yet another perspective on the relationship between the global and the particular, the elementary science-based SISL curriculum described by Alvarez et al. (this volume) used features of the physical world familiar to everyone, such as the stars overhead, and created opportunities for students to engage in hands-on exploration and development of their own interpretations of these broad scientific phenomena, encouraging students to develop unique understandings together based on evidence rather than simply locating and reporting on established answers to the questions posed. The global issue of immigration was the larger context for teachers in Kleyn and López (this volume), but they engaged students from a range of transnational backgrounds in making personal connections to these issues while also exploring different perspectives that arose in diverse and interdisciplinary multimedia sources and peer contributions. Finally, Charity Hudley et al. (this volume) used a CDE perspective through curricula that legitimized African-American English (and its speakers) by making it an "official" subject of study, and that foregrounded local language practices as worthy of research and exploration. These approaches allowed students to see a deeply personal aspect of themselves validated in the very academic institutions that have typically marginalized those practices.

A challenge of this CDE work, however, is designing curricula that sufficiently guide students into and through these moments of learning. The instructional materials described in this volume provided space for students to use their personal and lived experiences, as well as their existing linguistic and cultural assets, as a means of entering new and complex topics. However, critical and dialogic curricula must address unique challenges when they rely heavily upon language as an object of critique—such as Lee et al.'s exploration of language ideologies through memes and other approaches to humor—and are used with students who are new users of English. How can instructors best provide learning experiences that provide access without sacrificing the very conceptual and linguistic complexity that students find so compelling?

Redefining Language Pedagogies in CDE

Many of the chapters in our volume attend to students who have come under scrutiny in their schools because they speak home and community languages other than or in addition to English, or stigmatized varieties of English. Pedagogies aligned with CDE may prioritize language development to a greater

or lesser extent as an instructional goal. However, the critical and dialogic approaches taken by authors in this book provide several new opportunities to question traditions and assumptions common in language teaching.

For example, PIO (Park et al., this volume) represents an approach to translation that is strikingly different from traditional grammar-translation methods in language teaching. The latter was an early form-focused approach that emphasized the use of grammar rules and lists of vocabulary with a goal of producing grammatically “accurate” translations of classical texts. While PIO also includes some of the same resources to assist students, the goal is for students to engage in dialogic conversation as they explore and weigh options, and as they defend and explain their choices to others. This interactive process, rather than the resulting written text, becomes the means of developing communicative and interactional expertise and serves as the evidence for it. PIO also employs a promising inquiry-based pedagogy in ways that are relatively rare in language teaching and learning; participatory action research undertaken with both students and teachers provides a valuable dialogic context and explicitly critical goals for developing language through use.

Another way in which language pedagogies face a reckoning in CDE is the extent to which they can help students participate with peers and teachers to explore complex topics. Planned scaffolding is needed to anticipate the key resources students will need to understand complex topics well enough to talk about them. Further, contingent scaffolding is critical in the moment as teachers respond to ongoing dialogue and the ideas and language students produce. Alvarez et al. (this volume), Glick and Walqui (this volume), Lee et al. (this volume), and Park et al. (this volume) investigate the ways in which dialogic interactions—which are conceptualized as opportunities for language development—depend on the careful development and use of both types of scaffolding, which can be challenging to enact even in the context of carefully planned curricula.

The unpredictable and dynamic nature of critical dialogic teaching means that language pedagogies cannot foreground accuracy, repetition, and simplicity: the pedagogies described in this volume instead prioritize fluency, exploration, and complexity. Instructional emphasis must be placed on the relevance and richness of the phenomena, ideas, and questions students and teachers will discuss, rather than just the particular language forms that should be used in their interactions. In this sense, linguistic and conceptual approximations are welcomed and viewed as necessary and meaningful steps in curricula that provide multiple opportunities to explore ideas with others (e.g., Alvarez et al., this volume; Glick & Walqui, this volume; Lee et al., this volume). Further, these invitations for students are built upon the tools that students already have—their existing linguistic and cultural practices, and their knowledge of the world around them—both of which are needed to truly read the “word” and the “world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987). Pedagogically, students’ use of these existing resources implies an important role

for peers as mediators of learning, as well as an approach to translanguaging pedagogies that give voice to students and support language-in-use.

Additionally, unpredictable and dynamic dialogic spaces mean that language pedagogies must be responsive to the ongoing flow of classroom talk. While instruction should be carefully planned to provide students with experiences and ideas they are eager to talk about with others, reliance on “pre-teaching” vocabulary and explicitly teaching language forms has relatively limited value because the direction of dialogue is constantly co-constructed by teachers and students. As a result, dialogic classroom talk cannot be anticipated in ways that merit extensive explicit teaching outside the context of dialogue itself.

As teachers and curriculum developers make instructional decisions, they “curricularize” language (Valdés, 2015)—too often focusing on ordering and sequencing forms and structures—based upon (often implicit) theories of language development. As educators “attend” to language in various ways in classrooms, these actions imply particular theoretical commitments, whether they are explicit or not. The approaches to CDE taken in this volume make evident a relatively consistent set of conceptualizations regarding theories of additional language development. They align clearly with usage-based theories of language development, which emphasize that language structure emerges from use, rather than preceding it (Tomasello, 2003). In other words, it is learners’ exposure to and use of language in real-life settings that is the key mechanism for development (Ellis & Wulff, 2015), not the careful sequencing of language forms or the breaking down of language into smaller bits and pieces (Valdés, 2018). In fact, usage-based theories argue that language outside of its “use” actually loses its meaning (Tomasello, 2003), suggesting that linear or atomistic language teaching does not contribute to development. Instead, students’ development of a language “system” is the result of language use, not the necessary precursor for it. We cannot overemphasize the fundamental difference this suggests in approaches to teaching students who are new users of English.

Finally, language teaching approaches that do not include attention to critical perspectives are called out in CDE as insufficient. For example, pedagogies that take for granted a unitary notion of “correctness” or “appropriateness” disregard the importance of examining the inequitable circumstances that assign power and prestige to certain forms or varieties of language, the multiple audiences and purposes students may have for their uses of language, and the ways in which students’ linguistic prestige and privilege intersect with cultural, socioeconomic, gendered, and racialized student identities and practices. Two of our chapters—Lee et al. and Charity Hudley et al.—make these issues the focus of study, supporting the notion that sociolinguistics can be a source of learning and engagement and a tool to promote equity. For example, Charity Hudley et al. demonstrate ways in which student contributions in typical university classrooms can be minimized or dismissed, regardless of what is being said, by teacher perceptions

of correctness. Equipping students with knowledge about sociolinguistics will not necessarily change all the teachers whom students might encounter, but it hints at what institutions and students themselves can do.

Critical perspectives on language pedagogy also acknowledge that students' unique language repertoires are influenced by their age, social and cultural communities, educational experiences, and learning opportunities, among other factors. CDE pedagogies are shaped around this diversity and recognize that instructional strategies touted as "good for ELs" or "helpful for AAE students" (or any other diverse group) grossly oversimplify students and the instruction that will support their language development. In our volume, authors attend to this complexity by instead exploring and building upon students' communicative and interactional expertise, often across multiple languages and language varieties. In Charity Hudley et al., for example, students are seen as actively navigating and contesting classroom expectations about both language and race through skillful use of multiple different varieties of English. In relation to multilingual students, authors attend to differences in dialogic pedagogy that are necessary for students who are new users of English as compared to those who are more experienced users of English but still bureaucratically classified as English Learners. Finally, authors recognize and problematize the various socio-institutional mechanisms that create and maintain labels for learners in ways that may further the interests of institutions rather than students themselves (Kibler & Valdés, 2016).

Redefining Student Roles in CDE

Dialogic approaches often include opportunities for students to jointly participate, co-construct ideas, and engage with multiple perspectives and people with self-awareness and respect; critical approaches expect them to question received knowledge and inequitable circumstances with a view toward social changes. The chapters in this volume provide ample evidence that those students who are often marginalized and underestimated in formal schooling should instead be seen as agentive linguistic and cultural experts and successful negotiators of complex and diverse classroom discourse spaces, given the instructional circumstances that support them.

One way in which authors accomplish this is through careful attention to the nature of the classroom communities in which learners participate and the identities they can create in those spaces. For example, Kleyn and López (this volume) use comparative case studies to understand the contextual school- and student-level factors influencing the ways in which students are able to participate in and learn from dialogic opportunities. Additionally, Alvarez et al. (this volume) describe small groups that have been designed to maximize possibilities for productive interactions but also note that the positioning of EL-classified students by peers and teachers as "worthy" conversation partners is critical in facilitating their participation in dialogic interactions. Park et al. (this volume) demonstrate that students' curiosity and

“willingness to play with the puzzle” are key to critical dialogue as well, and their investment and expertise can extend to analyzing dialogue itself. Similarly, efforts to develop students’ sociolinguistic expertise (Charity Hudley et al., this volume; Lee et al., this volume) support meaningful interactions in the classroom but also create opportunities for students to become activists in their schools and communities.

When students are positioned as knowers and researchers, they can build and challenge existing knowledge through their work. In a Frierean sense, it is therefore essential in CDE for students to bring in their knowledge of the “world”—and all of the challenges and inequities it entails—to problematize the “words” they are learning. Such efforts require that teachers not simply respond to students’ out-of-school experiences and expertise: dialogic teaching must be driven by those very experiences and areas of expertise in order to help students gain new and critical insights into the school curriculum and their own lives.

Redefining Teacher Roles in CDE

This volume’s authors played various roles in the work described in this volume: at times they were designers of instruction implemented by others (Alvarez et al.), curriculum designers and teachers (Charity Hudley et al.; Glick & Walqui; Lee et al.; Park et al.), or observers of others’ naturalistic teaching practice (Kleyn & López). Regardless of these different circumstances, the authors argue convincingly that educators can play key roles in co-creating classroom environments that: (a) offer challenging opportunities for critical engagement; (b) make students’ existing resources and expertise central to the dialogues in which they are participating; and (c) provide students with means of communicating what is important to them in increasingly powerful ways inside and outside of the classroom.

To accomplish these goals, teachers must employ a critical stance toward the curriculum they receive, the instruction they provide, and the ways in which they view students (English, 2016; Haneda et al., 2017), which can in turn provide new frameworks for student participation (O’Connor & Michaels, 2015). For example, the teachers in Kleyn and López (this volume) made proactive decisions, when possible in their school contexts, to revise and integrate their curriculum across disciplines to engage students in critically oriented learning. Teachers also modeled respect for linguistically minoritized students as worthy conversation partners (Alvarez et al., this volume). Additionally, the chapters suggest the value of overlapping the roles of teachers and researchers (Charity Hudley et al., this volume; Glick & Walqui, this volume; Lee et al., this volume; Park et al., this volume): their articulation of the reasons behind instructional choices and self-reflection on the challenges of implementing critical and dialogic teaching provide evidence of their own learning through this process, as well as valuable guidance for those hoping to implement CDE in their own classrooms.

Conclusion

We as scholars and educators must be more aggressive in challenging assumptions about the role of education as it is realized through classroom talk in today's schools, and the implicit and explicit ways that schools fit minoritized students into singular or monolithic molds through one-way "socializing" into predetermined forms of behavior, thinking, and discourse. Instead of this unidirectional assimilation, there must be reciprocal change enacted among researchers, educators, and the students and communities with whom they work. We hope that the vision of CDE presented in this chapter and volume serve to further the important efforts underway to address this pressing need.

Notes

1. It is relevant to note that we use the term "communicative and interactional expertise" very purposefully, in efforts to redefine language in CDE. First, we choose to employ the terms "communicative and interactional" rather than "linguistic" because of the need to focus on language-in-use as the means and goal of learning, rather than language as an abstract system or object. We contend that this type of expertise requires both "communication"—expressing and interpreting messages in varied contexts and to differing audiences—as well as "interaction"—the contingent shaping of communication in response to others. Second, we use the term "expertise" instead of other similar terms, such as "competence," which brings connotations of a performance/competence dichotomy (Chomsky, 1965) that is inconsistent with usage-based notions of language development, which we will discuss further. We also prefer "expertise" to "proficiency," the latter of which is associated with static notions of language and artificial endpoints (as described by Larsen-Freeman, 2015), particularly as they are operationalized in language testing.
2. We (and the authors of the chapter described here) choose to employ the term multicompetent "users" (Cook, 2002) to emphasize the usage-based perspectives from which the work in this volume operates, in which language use is both the means and the result of development.

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