

Editorial

We are pleased to present this special bilingual issue of *Babel*. It includes three keynote addresses presented at the National French Teachers' Conference in Sydney 2018, by visiting international scholars. Each paper is presented in French and English, to encourage engagement by the broad community of languages educators. We commend the key ideas presented within the articles to teachers of all languages, and to educators of language teachers, for their relevance and significance to additional languages classrooms and teacher preparation and self-reflection.

The articles bring together some diverse perspectives on content, pedagogical approaches and classroom dynamics. All three address a common and increasingly important theme around the nature of our learners and their learning needs. They question how we can teach in a way that engages, motivates, and importantly goes beyond the common utilitarian goals of learning an additional language, in order to participate in the global workplace. The authors argue for language learning as a means of developing individual students' sense of self as global citizens, prepared and capable of living and working together with others in our increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

Boiron's paper reflects on the importance of motivation for successful language learning, arguing we need to understand learning as a collaborative pedagogical activity which involves cooperation, involvement and engagement. He identifies some basic human needs and desires such as a sense of belonging, self esteem and meaningfulness in activity, suggesting teachers need to add emotion (highlight the human factor in situations) and increase interaction to create opportunities for learners to be active, emotionally involved learners. He argues for a pedagogy of motivation and success in which teachers strive to make learning visible and conscious for learners, and to build a sense of belonging to a community of learners based on relationships of mutual trust in the classroom. In order to achieve the best for learners he suggests we learn to challenge learners (seek their best), work collaboratively with them, and find ways to excite their interest in language learning and in communicating more generally.

De Fays also explores the teacher's task of motivating learners in the classroom, arguing the language teacher's role is to transmit both knowledge and a passion for language learning, as well as a desire to learn and to take risks in order to do so. He questions the way the purpose of language learning is being represented in these utilitarian times, suggesting that curricula tend to focus on learners' employability and functional competencies in language rather than the more humanistic needs of the individual and society. He argues that the language teacher's role needs to extend beyond instrumentality to focus more on being an intercultural mediator, building skills in learning to live together. He argues further the need to overcome notions that languages (French in particular) are difficult and useless and somewhat elitist, if we are to engage with the diversity of learners we meet in our classrooms, and recognise

the importance of ownership, the chance for creativity, and a sense of pleasure in the task of language learning, in order to impact positively on learners views of the Other.

Olivier proposes that if we are to enhance learner experience we need a more socio-interactive approach to teaching and learning languages in which learners engage in more real life, situational, interactional tasks which develop a greater sense of authenticity, and consequently have the potential to build learners' motivation towards language learning and use. He argues much of what we see represents 'the absurd' or runs counter to the notion of authenticity, such as when teachers ask questions of learners based on comprehension of a text only, which may lead to understanding of the language but does not build skills in communicating through the language. Such an approach fails to respect 'the communicative contract of the classroom', in engaging learners in little more than manipulating the language in order to learn it, while not developing their real-life interactional skills. Using theatrical practices as an example, he proposes an approach using tasks that 'make sense and are close to real life', with clear intention and outcome, in which learners are aware of the communicative intent and engage in social interaction which is as authentic as possible, requiring the co-construction of meanings by all involved.

Each of these articles displays a commitment and enthusiasm to French teaching and learning, and is a call to explore and understand ways in which we can enrich our teaching and connect with learners. Each asks teachers to seek ways to challenge and motivate learners to see language learning as an important aspect of building their sense of self, both as an individual and as part of a broader and more diverse global community. Increasingly, these goals will depend on collaboration and mutual understanding, if we are to overcome some of the pressing and urgent issues we face as a global community.

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