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UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTING THE CLT (COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING) PARADIGM*

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ABSTRACT

The call to change seems to be a constant in education. In second language education, a constellation of changes have been proposed and, to some extent, implemented. This constellation of interconnected changes can perhaps best be termed a paradigm shift, with this paradigm fitting under the general umbrella of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The concept of paradigm shift usefully offers one means of making such connections between the changes linked to CLT. The article attempts to put the CLT paradigm shift into perspective as an element of larger shifts from positivism to post-positivism and from behaviorism to cognitivism. This article describes eight changes that fit with the CLT paradigm shift in second language education. These eight changes are: learner autonomy, the social nature of learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment, and teachers as co-learners. The authors argue that in second language education, although the CLT paradigm shift was initiated many years ago, it still has been only partially implemented. Two reasons for this partial implementation are: (1) by trying to understand each change separately, second language educators have weakened their understanding by missing the larger picture; and (2) by trying to implement each change separately, second language educators have made the difficult task of change even more challenging.

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Introduction

In the physical sciences, Kuhn's (1970) pioneering work on the process of paradigm change or shift has suggested that change in a scientific field does not occur as a step-by-step, cumulative process. Rather, he argued that new paradigms emerge as the result of tradition-shattering revolutions in the thinking of a particular professional community. These shifts involve the adoption of a new outlook on the part of researchers and others in that community. Well-known examples of paradigm shifts in the physical sciences include from Ptolemeian to Copernican astronomy and from Newtonian to quantum physics. Paradigm shifts have also occurred in the social sciences (e.g. sociology) and the humanities (e.g. art).

In the field of education, since the early 1980s, the term 'paradigm shift' has been used as a means of thinking about change in education. We begin this article by briefly explaining the concept of paradigm and paradigm shift and discussing paradigm shifts of the past century. Next, we examine eight aspects of the paradigm shift in second language education perhaps most popularly known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). We describe each of these eight aspects, connect it to the overall shift in our field and highlight implications for second language education. Our objective in writing the article is to argue that this shift has not been implemented as widely or as successfully as it might have been because educators and other stakeholders have tried to understand and implement the shift in a piecemeal rather than a holistic manner.

Paradigm Shift

The term 'paradigm' is another word for pattern. Pattern forming is part of the way we attempt to make meaning from our experiences (Ausubel 1968). We use these patterns to understand situations, raise questions, build links and generate predictions. The human brain is designed to generate, discern and recognize patterns in the world around us. We resist the notion that no pattern exists.

When a paradigm shift takes place, we see things from a different perspective as we focus on different aspects of the phenomena in our lives. Twentieth-century paradigm shifts across a wide variety of fields can be seen as part of a larger shift from positivism to post-positivism (Berman 1981; Capra 1983; Merchant 1992; Wheatley 1999). Awareness of this broader shift helps make clearer the shifts that take place in any one

particular field. Table 1 provides a brief look at some contrasts between positivism and post-positivism.

Positivism	*Post-Positivism*
Emphasis on parts and decontextualization	Emphasis on whole and contextualization
Emphasis on separation	Emphasis on integration
Emphasis on the general	Emphasis on the specific
Consideration only of the objective and the quantifiable	Consideration also of the subjective and the non-quantifiable
Reliance on experts and outsider knowledge—researcher as external	Consideration also of the 'average' participant and insider knowledge—researcher as internal
Focus on control	Focus on understanding
Top-down	Bottom-up
Attempt to standardize	Appreciation of diversity
Focus on the product	Focus on the process as well

Table 1. *Contrasts between positivism and post-positivism*

The goal of this article is not to label people and ideas in the positivist paradigm of education as bad, reactionary, or any other derogatory term. After all, we (the authors of this article) have held some of the ideas that we assign to the traditional paradigm. As Einstein, who was a leader in the shift from Newtonian to quantum physics, stated (quoted in Zukav 2001: 19):

> Creating a new theory is not like destroying an old barn and erecting a sky-scraper in its place. It is rather like climbing a mountain, gaining new and wider views, discovering unexpected connections between our starting point and its rich environment. But the point from which we started out still exists and can be seen, although it appears smaller and forms a tiny part of our broad view gained by the mastery of the obstacles on our adventurous way up.

Wheatley (1999: 23) expresses a similar sentiment, 'Just as in the timeless image of yin and yang, we are dealing with complementarities that only look like polarities.'

The CLT Paradigm Shift in Second Language Education

In second language education, the CLT paradigm shift over the past 40 years, which Long (1997) likens to a revolution, flows from the positivism

to post-positivism shift and involves a move away from the tenets of behaviorist psychology and structural linguistics and toward cognitive, and later, socio-cognitive psychology and more contextualized, meaning-based views of language. Key components of this shift concern:

1. Focusing greater attention on the role of learners rather than the external stimuli learners are receiving from their environment. Thus, the center of attention shifts from the teacher to the student. This shift is generally known as the move from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered or learning-centered instruction.
2. Focusing greater attention on the learning process rather than on the products that learners produce. This shift is known as a move from product-oriented instruction to process-oriented instruction.
3. Focusing greater attention on the social nature of learning rather than on students as separate, decontextualized individuals.
4. Focusing greater attention on diversity among learners and viewing these differences not as impediments to learning but as resources to be recognized, catered to and appreciated. This shift is known as the study of individual differences.
5. In research and theory-building, focusing greater attention on the views of those internal to the classroom rather than solely valuing the views of those who come from outside to study classrooms, investigate and evaluate what goes on there, and engage in theorizing about it. This shift is associated with such innovations as qualitative research, which highlights the subjective and affective, the participants' insider views and the uniqueness of each context.
6. Along with this emphasis on context comes the idea of connecting the school with the world beyond as a means of promoting holistic learning.
7. Helping students to understand the purpose of learning and develop their own purposes.
8. A whole-to-part orientation instead of a part-to-whole approach. This involves such approaches as beginning with meaningful whole texts and then helping students understand the various features that enable to texts to function, for example, the choice of words and the text's organizational structure.
9. An emphasis on the importance of meaning rather than drills and other forms of rote learning.
10. A view of learning as a lifelong process rather than something done to prepare for an exam.

As mentioned earlier, the CLT paradigm shift in second language education is part of a larger shift that affected many other fields. (See Voght [2000] for a discussion of parallels between paradigm shifts in foreign language education at US universities and paradigm shifts in education programs in business and other professions). Oprandy (1999) links trends in second language education with those in the field of city planning. He likens behaviorism's top-down, one-size-fits-all approach to education to a similar trend in city planning in which outside experts designed for uniformity and attempted to do away with diversity. In response, a new paradigm arose in city planning, a bottom-up one that sought to zone for diversity. Describing the current paradigm in second language education, Oprandy writes:

> The communicative approach requires a complexity in terms of planning and a tolerance for messiness and ambiguity as teachers analyze students' needs and design meaningful tasks to meet those needs. The pat solutions and deductive stances of audiolingual materials and pedagogy, like the grammar-translation texts and syllabi preceding them, are no longer seen as sensitive to students' needs and interests. Nor are they viewed as respectful of students' intelligence to figure things out inductively through engaging problem-solving and communicative tasks (1999: 44).

Another parallel that Oprandy draws between new ideas in city planning and new ideas in second language education has to do with the role of the subjective. In city planning, attention began to focus on people's need for a sense of security and belonging in people-centered cities. These concerns, as Oprandy suggests, are matched in second language education by the desire to facilitate an atmosphere in which students are willing to take risks, to admit mistakes and to help one another.

Eight Changes as Part of the Paradigm Shift in Second Language Education

The CLT paradigm shift in second language education outlined above has led to many suggested changes in how second language teaching is conducted and conceived (Richards and Rodgers 2001). In this section, we consider eight major changes associated with this shift. We selected these eight because of the impact they already have had on our field and for the potential impact they could have if they were used in a more integrated fashion. First, we briefly explain each change, explore links between the change and the larger paradigm shift and look at various second language classroom implications. These eight changes are:

1. Learner autonomy
2. Social nature of learning
3. Curricular integration
4. Focus on meaning
5. Diversity
6. Thinking skills
7. Alternative assessment
8. Teachers as co-learners.

Figure 1 provides an illustration of the interdependence of these eight changes of the paradigm shift in second language education. The circular nature of the figure emphasizes that all the changes are parts of a whole and that the successful implementation of one is dependent on the successful implementation of others.

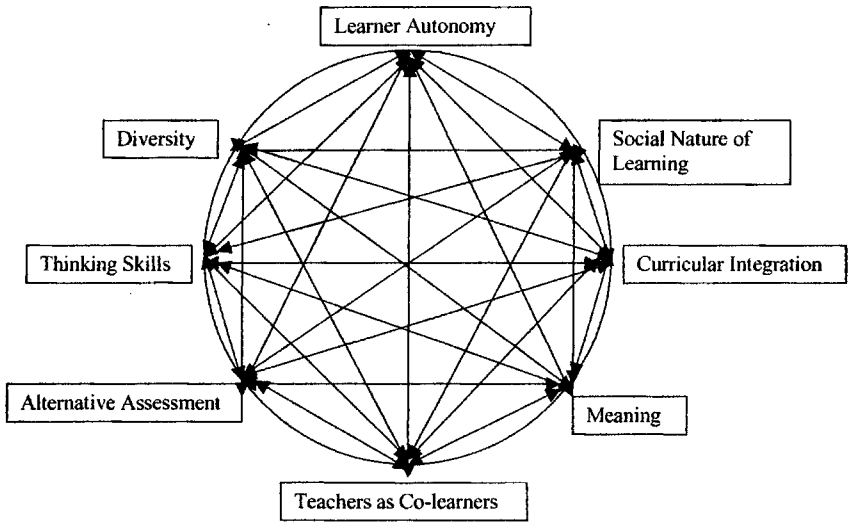

Figure 1. *Eight Changes in Second Language Teaching*

Learner Autonomy

What it is. Learner autonomy is linked to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of self-regulation and Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) work on flow. To be autonomous, learners need to be able to have some choice as to the what and how of the curriculum and, at the same time, they should feel responsible for their own learning and for the learning of those with whom they interact. Learner autonomy involves learners being aware of their own ways of

learning, so as to utilize their strengths and work on their weaknesses (van Lier 1996). Intrinsic motivation plays a central role in learner autonomy. The teacher no longer shoulders the entire burden of running the classroom. A form of democratization takes place with students taking on more rights and responsibilities for their own learning.

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. The concept of learner autonomy fits with the overall CLT paradigm shift because it emphasizes the role of the learner rather than the role of the teacher (Oller and Richards 1973), which was paramount in such approaches as audiolingual language teaching. CLT focuses more on the process rather than the product and encourages students to develop their own purposes for learning and to see learning as a lifelong process.

Classroom implications. Many implications for second language education flow from the concept of learner autonomy. For example, the use of small groups—including pairs—represents one means of enhancing learner autonomy (Harris and Noyau 1990; Macaro 1997). Learner autonomy is sometimes misunderstood as referring only to learners being able to work alone. By collaborating with their peers, learners move away from dependence on the teacher. Group activities help students harness that power and by doing so they build their pool of learning resources because they can receive assistance from peers, not just from the teacher.

Extensive reading (http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/information/er/; Day and Bamford 1998; Krashen 1993) offers another means of implementing learner autonomy in second language education. Here, students choose reading material that matches their own interests and proficiency level. If students begin a book or a magazine and it does not seem the right one for them, they can switch to another. The hope is that extensive reading will assist students in developing an appreciation for the enjoyment and knowledge to be gained via reading in their second language (as well as their first), thus encouraging them to make reading a lifelong habit.

Self-assessment provides yet another way for second language students to develop their autonomy (Lee 1998; Rothschild and Klingenberg 1990). The idea is for learners to develop their own internal criteria for the quality of their work, rather than being dependent on external evaluation, often by the teacher, as the sole judge of their strengths and weakness. Developing these internal criteria enables learners to make informed decisions about how to move their learning forward. With self-assessment, no longer do

students have to wait for the teacher to tell them how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Yes, the teacher remains generally the more knowledgeable and experienced person in the classroom, but the goal is for students to move toward and perhaps even beyond, the teacher's level of competence. Placing value on learners' knowledge helps them feel more capable of playing a larger role in their own learning.

The Social Nature of Learning

What it is. Knowledge and ideas do not come to us as individuals. Instead, in a way similar to that in which no subatomic particle exists without interacting with other particles, students learn via interacting with their environment, and the key features of that environment are the people with whom they come into contact. These people include not just those such as teachers who are generally more knowledgeable about course content. Students can also learn from peers, as well as by teaching those who know less than they do. Indeed, students learn from and teach others all the time, even when they are not in formal teaching settings (Breen 2001). As Richards and Rodgers (2001) note, in CLT it is expected that students will interact with their classmates in speech and writing.

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. Seeing learning as a social activity relates to several other aspects of the paradigm shift. As with learner autonomy, learning from and with others places students at the center of attention, offering them one means of taking on more rights and responsibilities in their own learning. Process is also emphasized, as students do not just show each other their answers; they explain to one another how they arrived at the answers (Slavin, 1995). Additionally, a social perspective on learning acknowledges the place of affect in education, highlighting the importance of positive interdependence, the feeling among the members of a group that the group sinks or swims together (Johnson and Johnson 1994). Positive interdependence helps students feel support and belonging at the same time that they are motivated to try hard to assist the group in reaching its goals (Kagan 1994).

Classroom implications. Group activities have become more common in second language education (Liang, Mohan and Early 1998; Oxford 1997). Cooperative learning, also known as collaborative learning, offers many ideas for addressing various issues that arise when students work in groups (Jacobs, Power and Loh 2002; Kagan, 1994). One of these issues is the

teaching of collaborative skills, such as disagreeing politely, asking for help and giving examples and explanations (Bejarano *et al.* 1997). Many students may be unaccustomed to working with others on academic tasks. Thus, they may need to focus explicit attention on collaborative skills if they are to develop and deploy such skills. These skills are also vital language skills, skills that will serve students well in their future academic careers and in other aspects of their lives where they collaborate with others.

Another means of promoting collaboration is to foster an atmosphere in which cooperation acts not just as a methodology for second language learning but also as a topic for learning and a value embraced in learning activities (Sapon-Shevin 1999). Examples of cooperation as a topic for learning would be students writing compositions about the times that they or people whom they interview had collaborated with others, or focusing on some of the many examples in history or science that show collaboration in action.

To establish cooperation as a value, the class can look at what processes in the school, such as norm-referenced evaluation, and in society, such as contests with only one winner, promote competition as a value. The class can also think about how to establish a better balance between competition and cooperation, for example, by students working in groups to do service learning projects in their communities (Kinsley and McPherson 1995).

Indeed, project work (Ribe and Vidal 1993) and task-based language teaching (Long and Crookes 1992), both of which normally have an important group component, have become increasing common in second language education. Projects such as those involving service learning, offer students an opportunity to break down the artificial walls that often separate students from the wider world (Freire 1970). These service learning activities also provide opportunities for students to learn together for a purpose other than to get a high score on an exam.

Curricular Integration

What it is. Curricular integration serves to overcome the phenomenon in which students study one subject in one period, close their textbook and go to another class, open another textbook and study another subject. When various subject areas are taught jointly, learners have more opportunities to see the links between subject areas. By appreciating these links, students develop a stronger grasp of subject matter, a deeper purpose for learning and a greater ability to analyze situations in a holistic manner

(Brinton, Snow and Wesche 1989). Curricular integration is just one of the many aspects of the CLT paradigm that overlaps with a more recent trend in second language education, the standards movement. Examples of standards are those developed by the TESOL organization for the teaching of Pre-K-12 students (http://www.tesol.org/assoc/k12standards/it/01.html).

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. A key link between curricular integration and the CLT paradigm shift lies in the concept of going from whole to part rather than from part to whole. For instance, under the traditional education model, students study a given historical period (e.g. the nineteenth century) in an atomistic way. In history class, they study key events, people and movements. In science class, in another year or term they discuss notable scientific discoveries. In first or second language class, in yet another year or term they read literature from the period. Or, even if the nineteenth century is simultaneously dealt with in multiple classes, little or no effort is made to build learning links. Thus, students miss valuable opportunities for understanding context.

In second language class, students might read about one topic, listen to conversations about a different topic and write about a third topic, or they might read or listen to a text in one text type and write a text in a different text type. Thus, not only are connections missing between language class and the other subjects students might be studying or the careers they might be pursuing or planning to pursue, but connections are not even made across different aspects of the language curriculum.

Classroom implications. The concept of language across the curriculum offers one route for implementing a curricular integration (Chamot and O'Malley 1994). The idea is that language competence is necessary for learning in all subject areas. Students cannot understand their textbooks if they have weak reading skills. Further, asking students to write, even in mathematics class, about what they understand, what they are unclear about and how they can apply what they have learned offers a powerful means of deepening students' competence in a subject area. In second language education, the concept of content-based instruction represents a prime manner in which curricular integration is implemented (Crandall 1987; Shrum and Glisan 2000).

Project work, mentioned in the previous section, is yet another method of implementing curricular integration in that projects are often multidisciplinary (Ribe and Vidal 1993). For instance, an environmental project, for

example, on water pollution, could involve scientific knowledge about how to analyze water samples, mathematics knowledge to do calculations based on the sample, social studies knowledge about the role of governmental, private and civic sectors in cleaning up water pollution and language knowledge to write letters and prepare presentations based on the project's findings. This is in line with ideas from the area of critical pedagogy, which seeks to encourage a view of learning as a process in which students actively take part in transformation of themselves and their world, not as a process in which students passively take part in transmission of information from their teachers and textbooks to themselves (Crookes and Lehner 1998; Vandrick 1999).

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) (Robinson 1980) provides an additional path toward curricular integration. For example, a group of hotel employees studying Japanese focus on the Japanese they need in their work and learn other information relevant to their work via the medium of the Japanese language. For instance, the conversations they listen to and practice involve exchanges between hotel guests and staff, and the material they read include hotel brochures and other travel industry literature.

Focus on Meaning

What it is. Research from cognitive psychology tells us that we learn best when we connect and store information in meaningful chunks. While rote drills and memorization might be of benefit for short-term learning, long-term learning and the extension of that learning require that students focus on the meaning of the language they are using. In second language, 'meaning' should be understood in terms of the meaning of individual words and whole texts, as well as the meaning that particular topics and events have in students' lives (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999). As Richards and Rodgers highlight, CLT derives from the view that 'Language is a system for the expression of meaning' (2001: 161).

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. Behaviorist psychology emphasizes that one size fits all for learning. Thus, if one-celled organisms can learn without access to meaning, why shouldn't that also be the best means for learning in humans? In contrast, socio-cognitive psychology stresses that people learn by chunking new information with existing knowledge and that meaning plays a key role in forming those chunks. Meaning provides a purpose for learning and enables deeper thinking to take place.

Classroom implications. We see many examples in second language education of this shift toward emphasizing meaning, the projects and tasks discussed earlier being just one. Projects are a means of implementing communicative language teaching. In communicative language teaching, the focus lies in using language, not in language usage (Breen and Candlin 1980; Widdowson 1978). Thus, fluency rather than accuracy alone, is prioritized. For example, when teachers interact with students or when students interact with each other, rather than making immediate corrections of errors, interlocutors are encouraged to focus on the meaning and only to interrupt if that is imperiled by students' errors. Feedback on usage remains important, but is not always the first priority (Richards and Rodgers 2001).

As in projects, task-based language teaching (Long and Crookes 1992) emphasizes meaning by stressing that students are using language to achieve a purpose. Even though recent years have seen a greater role for explicit grammar instruction, this explicit instruction still takes place within the context of whole texts—beginning with an understanding of the text and its communicative intent, then looking at how the grammar aids the accomplishment of that intent within the specific context from which that intent derived (Long 1991). Long (1997) emphasizes that tasks should be authentic. Authenticity represents another marker of the CLT paradigm's attention to purposeful, meaningful communication, rather than rote drill.

Journal writing is another example of how second language students can focus on meaning. It provides students opportunities to explore within themselves as well as with peers and teachers the particular meaning that a given classroom event or aspect of the curriculum had for them (Kreeft Peyton and Reed 1990; Shuy 1987). Often students' journals are read and responded to by teachers and peers. Additionally, groups can keep journals to be shared with other groups and their teachers, and teachers can keep journals to share with students. In this way, students and teachers have the opportunity to consider what a particular lesson or unit means to different members of their class.

Diversity

What it is. Diversity has different meanings. One meaning lies in the fact that different students attach different connotations to the same event or information (Brown 1994). Another aspect of diversity in second language learning involves the mix of students we have in our classrooms in terms of backgrounds, ethnic, religious, social class and first language, sex,

achievement levels, learning styles, intelligences and learning strategies. Taking advantage of this diversity can be challenging.

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. A key tenet of learner-centered instruction is that each learner is different and that effective teaching needs to take these differences into account. In contrast, the old paradigm attempted to fit all students into a one-size-fits-all learning environment, with diversity viewed as an obstacle to be removed. In the current paradigm, diversity among students is not seen as an obstacle, but as a strength.

Classroom implications. The concept of multiple intelligences as applied to second language education highlights one form of diversity among students (Christison 1996). Intelligence is no longer viewed as a unidimensional construct (Gardner 1999). Instead, intelligence takes many forms and even within a particular intelligence, differing facets exist. The implication of this is not that students should be given new multiple intelligences IQ tests and placed in separate classes based on their intelligences profiles. The implication is that instruction must be differentiated so that in a particular unit at different times each student gets a match with the intelligences in which they are most developed. Each student gets a stretch by working with intelligences in which they are less developed and students come to appreciate the value of working with people of varied intelligence profiles.

Work in the area of second language learners' styles and strategies represents another way that the current paradigm is being applied (Oxford 1990). For instance, students are helped to become aware of their current learning strategies, analyze them to determine which are most useful in various situations and then develop new strategies or refine present ones, so as to become better learners. This type of strategy awareness helps students to become effective lifelong learners.

Hymes's (1972) work on communicative competence, a key facet of CLT's foundation, included the role of culture. Another area of difference involves the impact of culture and social class on communication style (Heath 1983). Language teachers and students interpret classroom activities through their own frames of reference (Barnes 1976), which are sometimes different. In second language education, students already face the difficulty of communicating in a new language. This difficulty is compounded when students' learned ways of talking and other forms of language use do not conform to the patterns of communication expected in

classrooms and may, therefore, be misunderstood and unappreciated. Second language educators need to be aware of this and attempt to come to understand and appreciate their students' frames of reference.

Thinking Skills

What it is. The previous section mentioned learner strategies as an example of diversity among students. Among the strategies that learners need to acquire and use are those that involve going beyond the information given and utilizing and building their higher-order thinking skills, also known as critical and creative thinking skills (Paul 1995). Various typologies of these skills exist. One well-known list focuses on the skills of applying information to other contexts, analyzing the features of a given phenomenon, synthesizing information to create something new and evaluating information and ideas (Bloom 1956). Today, thinking skills are seen as an essential part of education, because information is easily obtained, so the essential task is now to use that information wisely.

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. The concept of thinking skills flows from the CLT paradigm in a few senses. First, thinking is a process and the emphasis lies in the quality of that process rather than solely on the quality of the product resulting from that process. Additionally, diversity comes into play, as many valid routes may exist toward thinking about a particular situation or performing a particular task. Another connection between thinking skills and the current paradigm is that learner autonomy is promoted by encouraging students to connect the language learning they do in school with the world beyond. This attempt promotes the idea that learning is not a collection of lower-order facts to be remembered and then regurgitated for exams, but that the aim of school learning is to apply our knowledge toward making a better world.

Classroom implications. Many attempts are being made to integrate thinking across the curriculum and a large amount of materials exists for doing so (Halpern 1997). Also, stand-alone materials for teaching higher-order thinking are being utilized. Group activities provide a useful venue for second language students to gain and utilize thinking skills, as they need to teach peers, to provide each other with constructive criticism, to challenge each other's views and to formulate plans for their group (Ayaduray and Jacobs 1997).

One aspect of implementing thinking skills in second language education involves a move away from sole reliance on forms of assessment involving lower-order thinking alone. Now, more assessment instruments require the use of higher-order thinking, with questions that have more than one possible correct answer. Also, projects and other complex tasks are being used for assessment purposes. These alternative assessment instruments are the focus of the next change to be discussed.

Connecting education to the wider world in order to improve that world means that students—along with their teachers—need to analyze existing situations, synthesize new ideas and evaluate proposed alternatives (Freire 1970). Certainly, a great deal of higher-order thinking is needed here. For example, if students are studying the water pollution problem mentioned above, they will encounter the kind of tangled thicket of variables that make it so difficult to implement solutions to the mess that humans have made of our planet's environment. Indeed, communicating about global issues, such as environment, peace, human rights and development, requires students to develop and employ their thinking skills (Cates 1990). A trend in this direction can be witnessed by the fact that many organizations of language educators have subgroups devoted to global issues; for example, the Global Issues Special Interest Group in IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) (www.countryschool.com/gisig.htm).

Alternative Assessment

What it is. Just as the CLT paradigm has expanded expectations for what students need to learn to include fluency, social appropriacy and thinking, and not just accuracy, CLT has also advanced means of assessing student learning. Toward this end, new assessment instruments have been developed to compliment or replace traditional instruments that use multiple choice, true–false and fill-in-the-blank items and that focus on accuracy, grammar, and lower-order thinking (Goodman, Goodman and Hood 1989; Stiggins 1997; Wiggins 1998). These assessment instruments attempt to mirror more closely real-life conditions and involve thinking skills. Although these instruments are often more time-consuming and costly, as well as less reliable in terms of consistency of scoring, they are gaining prominence due to dissatisfaction with traditional modes of assessment, which are faulted for not capturing vital information about students' competence in their second language. Even when students have to take large-scale standardized tests, alternative assessment can help them prepare for

these (Wiggins 1998) because the goal of alternative assessment is not just assessing; the goal is also to teach.

The standards movement, mentioned previously, also impacts assessment (Philips 1999). Standards encompass two areas of learning. Content standards describe what students need to know and be able to do, while performance standards describe how well students should be able to do something. Philips links standards to learner-centered instruction: 'The major shift inherent in the standards requires teachers to focus more on what students are learning than on what they are teaching—making output what counts rather than input' (1999: 3). In this way, standards can be viewed as an attempt to structure for the implementation of the CLT paradigm.

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. The new paradigm informs this change in several ways. First, an emphasis on meaning rather than form underlies many of the new assessment instruments. Second, many alternative assessment methods, such as think aloud protocols, seek to investigate process. Third, the understanding of the social nature of learning has led to the inclusion of peer assessment and to the use of group tasks in assessment. Fourth, in keeping with notions of learner autonomy, students are more involved, understanding how they will be assessed and even participating in that assessment.

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Competency-based Language Teaching (Auerbach 1986; Hagan 1994) has attempted to link assessment with aspects of CLT, for example, making assessment an open process promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to understand and have input into how they are assessed; and focusing assessment on life skills and functioning in society makes instruction more purposeful and assessment more meaningful. Performance and task-based assessment represents another alternative form that competency-based assessment takes. In performance and tasked-based assessment, students show 'that they can do certain things or that they can create products that meet certain standards of quality' (Stiggins 1997: 177). For example, students

might give a speech. Criteria for what constitutes a good speech would previously have been demonstrated, taught and practiced. The teacher and peers, as well as the student giving the speech use these criteria to assess the performance.

Another front on which alternative assessment has developed in second language education involves the teaching of writing. In the process approach to writing, students go through multiple drafts as they develop a piece of writing (Raimes 1992). Rather than only evaluating the final draft, teachers now look at earlier drafts as well to gain a better understanding of the process students went through as they worked toward their final draft. Peer assessment (Cheng and Warren 1996) is an alternative form particularly prominent in the teaching of writing. This form of assessment is intended to enhance, not replace, self- and teacher assessment. By critiquing the writing of fellow students, learners better understand and internalize criteria for successful writing.

Portfolios offer a complementary means of looking at students' writing processes (Fusco, Quinn and Hauck 1994). With portfolio assessment, students keep the writing they have done over the course of a term or more, including early drafts. Then, they analyze their writing to understand the progress they have made. Next, they select from among their pieces of writing to compile a collection that demonstrates the path of their writing journey and prepare an introduction to the portfolio in which they present their findings.

Teachers as Co-learners

What it is. The concept of teachers as co-learners involves teachers learning along with students. This relates to what was mentioned in a previous section about asking questions that have more than one good answer and doing complex real-world tasks. Because the world is complex and constantly changing, lifelong learning is necessary. Teachers must take part in this never-ending quest and, indeed, model this process for their students. Teachers learn more about their subject areas as they teach. They also learn more about how to teach (Bailey and Nunan 1996; Freeman and Richards 1996). This is another way that the standards movement intersects with the CLT paradigm. Phillips believes that standards can help to further professionalize second language teaching:

> To effectively make the myriad instructional decisions that standards-focused programs demand, teachers have to understand the premises and processes upon which the acquisition of linguistic, cultural, interdisciplinary, and comparative competencies lie' (1999: 3).

Connections to the larger paradigm shift. Under the 'old' paradigm, teachers are workers who need to be supervised by 'experts', usually from the university and relevant government agencies, in order to make sure that goals are being met and students are performing according to prescribed schemes. Teaching is seen as a skill that can be learned in discrete items from lesson planning to how to ask questions. When these skills have been learned, the teacher is qualified to teach. In second language teacher education this approach is seen as 'training' (Freeman 1989). However, the current paradigm sees teaching and learning as social processes where the students are active co-constructors of knowledge with their teachers. The teacher is more of a facilitator and fellow learner alongside the students.

In the previous paradigm, second language teachers' opinions and experiences were more often than not excluded. Instead, the 'experts' in the universities did the research and administrators did the assessment. Their pronouncements were then handed down to practitioners. In the current paradigm, the notions of qualitative, ethnographic research by and with teachers and self and peer assessment of teachers has unfolded (Fanselow 1988).

Classroom implications. Second language teachers as fellow participants in learning takes many forms. For instance, when students are doing extensive reading, teachers do not patrol the classroom or use the time to catch up on paperwork. Instead, they do their own reading and share with students what ideas and feeling this reading sparked. Similarly, when students are writing, teachers can write in the same genre and then give feedback to and receive feedback from students.

Along with empirical formats and objective findings, more field-based methods of teacher research and assessment have been put forward. Second language teachers as researchers employ methods such as conversations, interviews, case studies and these are written in narrative form (Gebhard and Oprandy 1999). Assessment of second language teachers goes beyond what the teacher is doing and investigates what teachers are thinking from the teachers' perspective (Farrell 1999).

Just as students assessment can involve portfolios, teachers can also use portfolios as a tool for self-assessing their teaching (Green and Smyzer 1996). A teacher portfolio can include artifacts that showcase their knowledge of subject matter, teaching methods, lesson planning and delivery, assessment, collegial interchange, and reading and writing of profes-

sional literature. These artifacts might include lesson plans, student work, class handouts, a list of professional literature read, and evaluations by students, peers and administrators.

Paradigm Shift: Fusion

Figure 1 suggests that the eight changes discussed in this article are related and connected to one another. Considering one change and its connections with the other seven best illustrates this idea. Cooperative learning connects with learner autonomy because group activities help second language students become less dependent on teachers. Curriculum integration is facilitated by cooperative learning because second language students can pool their energies and knowledge to take on cross-curricular projects. Cooperative learning fits with an emphasis on meaning, as groups provide an excellent forum for students to engage in meaningful communication in their second language. Diversity is highlighted in cooperative learning when students form heterogeneous groups and use collaborative skills to bring out and value the ideas and experiences of all the group members.

Thinking skills are needed in groups as second language students attempt to explain concepts and procedures to their groupmates, as groupmates give each other feedback and as they debate the proper course of action. Alternative assessment is fostered in several ways by the use of cooperative learning. For instance, cooperative learning provides scope for peer assessment and an emphasis on the development of collaborative skills calls for different methods to assess these skills. Cooperative learning encourages teachers to be co-learners for at least two reasons. First, teachers often work with colleagues to learn more about education, for example, by conducting research and otherwise discussing their classes. By collaborating with fellow teachers, teachers model collaboration for their students and convince themselves of its benefits. Second, because cooperative learning means that teachers talk less, it allows teachers to get off the stage some of the time and spend more time facilitating student learning. One of the techniques for facilitating is to take part along with students, thus encouraging teachers to learn more.

Has the Shift Actually Taken Place?

Have the eight changes and the overall paradigm shift from which they flow become prominent in second language classrooms? It is conceivable

that the effects of the paradigm shift are still only partly being felt. Additionally, there seems to be a great deal of variation between countries, institutions within the same country and even classrooms within the same institution. Thus, in second language education, and contrary to what Kuhn put forth about rapid, revolutionary, far-reaching paradigm shifts in the physical sciences, the paradigm shift seems to be gradual, evolutionary and piecemeal.

There are several reasons for this slow evolution of the new paradigm within education. One reason may be that changing beliefs and behaviors takes time in education and elsewhere (Fullan, Bennett and Rolheiser-Bennett 1990). Lack of change may also be a result of the difficulty of translating theory into practical application. That is, new ideas need a great deal of work by practicing teachers for these ideas to be translated into everyday teaching routines.

Another possible explanation for the lack of implementation of this paradigm shift stems from the fact that it has often been presented in a piecemeal fashion, rather than as a whole. The point of this article has been to argue that many of the changes we hear about in education in general and second language education in particular are all part of one overall paradigm shift. This holistic perspective has two implications. First, these are not unrelated changes to be grasped one by one. Attempting to learn about these changes in such an isolating fashion impedes understanding because it flies in the face of the interconnections that exist and it violates a fundamental concept of human cognition—we learn best by perceiving patterns and forming chunks. Second, when we attempt to implement these changes, if we do so in a piecemeal fashion, selecting changes as if they were items on an à la carte menu, we lessen the chances of success. These innovations fit together, like the pieces in a pattern cut to make a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece supports the others, and each builds on the others.

Conclusion

In this article, we have urged our fellow second language educators to take a big-picture approach to the changes in our profession. We have argued that many of these changes stem from an underlying paradigm shift toward CLT. By examining this shift and looking for connections between various changes in our field, these changes can be better understood.

Most importantly, by attempting to implement change in a holistic way, the chances of success greatly increase. This point has been made countless

times in works on systems theory by Senge (2000), Wheatley (1999) and others. However, it is much easier to state in theory than to implement in practice. Perhaps the best-known and most painful example of the failure to implement holistic change in second language education is that in many cases while teaching methodology has become more communicative, testing remains within the traditional paradigm, consisting of discrete items, lower-order thinking and a focus on form rather than meaning (Brown 1994). This creates a backwash effect that tends to pull teaching back toward the traditional paradigm, even when teachers and others are striving to go toward the new paradigm.

Second language education plays an ever more important world as globalization, for better or worse, marches forward. For instance, in Southeast Asia, second language instruction is being introduced at primary school level in Indonesia and Thailand, and Malaysia is moving to increase the number of curriculum hours devoted to second languages. Therefore, improving second language education is important despite many difficulties attendant to implementing change. Perhaps this is where the eighth change we discussed, teachers as co-learners, plays the crucial role. Many people are drawn to work in second language education because they enjoy learning and want to share this joy with others. All the changes that have taken place in our field challenge us to continue learning about our profession and to share what we learn with others, including our colleagues, so that we can continue to help our field develop.

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