

Are Global, International, and Foreign Language Studies Connected?

Johanna Watzinger-Tharp

Abstract Many U.S. universities tout internationalization as central to their educational mission and often invest heavily in international education not only at home, but also abroad. One would expect foreign language study to play a central role in the internationalization of today's students' higher education experience. Yet, paradoxically, the rise of international education at U.S. universities and colleges has coincided with reductions or even eliminations of secondary and post-secondary language programs. This chapter argues that discontinuous discourses and practices in foreign language departments have helped marginalize them at the very moment when they should operate front and center, and have separated them from natural allies: international and global studies. The analysis concludes with proposals for curricular collaborations and innovations that can reposition language departments as an indispensable partner in higher education internationalization.

Keywords Curriculum · Collaboration · Global studies · International studies · Foreign language · Proficiency · Study abroad

Internationalization of U.S. colleges and universities encompasses a wide range of individual and institutional activities, including student and faculty exchanges, study and work abroad, internationally focused graduation requirements, and internationally focused degrees in area and global studies. A number of universities have also built partnerships with institutions abroad to offer dual or joint degrees, or, in some cases, established branch campuses abroad, for example Carnegie Mellon University in Australia, Georgia Institute of Technology in France, and Texas A&M University at Qatar (ACE 2008). Yet despite the considerable scope of academic and fiscal investment in internationalization, one component is often strikingly absent from international initiatives: foreign language capacity as a core feature of international education.

Many would of course maintain that foreign language proficiency is foundational to global competence and global citizenship, two constructs that are central to internationalization discourse. However, the role of foreign language study

J. Watzinger-Tharp (✉)

Department of Languages & Literature/Department of Linguistics,
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, USA

e-mail: j.tharp@utah.edu

embodies the paradoxical nature of internationalization discourse and practices, as has been pointed out by a number of scholars (Byrnes 2009; Kubota 2009; Warner 2011). The demands of business and government leaders for educating a global workforce with professional language proficiency coincide with recent moves to eliminate foreign language requirements, or even entire foreign language programs, at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Concomitantly, many universities have established global studies degrees with little involvement of language department faculty. Moreover, universities which tout American students' global competence often fail to capitalize on their most immediate resource at hand: international students from around the world who populate their classrooms as representative global citizens across their host university's curriculum.

This chapter first provides a brief overview of international education in institutions of higher learning and then addresses the role of language departments in internationalization. The section that follows assesses the extent to which international and global studies degrees,¹ often considered a hallmark of internationalized campuses, interact with language departments and address foreign language study in their programs.² I will argue that foreign language programs' discourse and practices conspire to marginalize language departments in internationalization, an arena in which they should play a central role. After a brief study of parallel discourses, I will examine the discontinuous discourses of foreign language study and study abroad, which, along with common policies and practices, result in a separation of international degrees and language departments. The article will conclude with proposals for curricular collaborations between the two.

1 International Education and Global Studies

In recent years, U.S. colleges and universities have increasingly established global education of their students as a core mission. International degrees and programs are, however, not new to U.S. higher education. International relations, typically affiliated with political science departments, originally focused on the interaction between nation states, but have evolved to include international and transnational issues such as immigration, health, and the environment. Since the 1960s, a number of universities have received federal Title VI funding to establish National Resource, and National Language Resource Centers (NRC's and NLRC's) that promote the study of regions and their languages, for example Pan or East Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. As Peter Stearns points out in *Educate-*

¹ Area studies programs focus on a particular region such as Asia or Latin America. International or global studies typically encompass a variety of regions of the world, although courses of study are often organized thematically rather than geographically. For the sake of brevity, I will use the term "global" when referring to programs that are designated as international or global studies.

² I am using *language department* to refer to academic departments that offer degrees in a single foreign language, or in many.

ing *Global Citizens in Colleges and Universities* (2009), both types of programs, international relations and area studies, have traditionally taken the nation state, and inter-state relations in a region, as their starting point (14). In contrast, more recently established international degrees are emphatically global, and more likely to focus on global themes and issues. Although students may select one region to explore in greater depth, global studies are decidedly interdisciplinary, drawing on a wide range of academic units within and across colleges and schools.

Such broadly interdisciplinary curricula inherently grant students greater flexibility in selecting their coursework, which, in turn, facilitates combining an international or global studies degree with another undergraduate major. In 2005, about one quarter of all graduating students, most commonly in humanities and social sciences, completed their studies with two majors (Del Rossi and Hersch 2008, p. 375). As students' desire for double majors continues to increase, institutions are responding to this trend with degrees that are explicitly marketed as complementary to another major. For example, both the Global Studies certificate and the Bachelor of Philosophy in international and area studies at the University of Pittsburgh are explicitly designed to complement disciplinary majors (Brustein 2012, p. 385).

It is abundantly clear that global studies degrees greatly appeal to students. The 2012 edition of *Mapping Internationalization on US Campuses* reports that 64% of the 1041 institutions that responded to the 2011 survey offer some type of undergraduate global degree, track, or certificate. Many institutions, including my own, the University of Utah, which graduates about 120–140 international studies majors each year, attract large numbers of students. The popularity of these programs has prompted concerns about their threat to more conventional department-based majors and some skepticism about their (disciplinary) rigor in light of their enormous popularity. More importantly, and counter to a frequent assumption, language departments don't necessarily benefit from internationalization of their institution, or from global studies degrees. Even though area and global studies degrees typically require foreign language coursework, those requirements often operate as pro forma rather than vital components of the degree program. If foreign language capacity is not essential to their degree, students will be less inclined to continue beyond a few required courses or to pursue a foreign language major. Under such unfavorable circumstances, language departments not only fail to gain from global studies degrees, but they may well draw a direct line between the rise of global studies and their own decline of language majors.

When students are voting with their feet in favor of broadly interdisciplinary degrees, language departments wonder how to attract students to their discipline-based, and typically much less flexible majors. In *ADFL Bulletin*, Jane Hacking (2013) advises language faculty who might feel besieged by the popularity of non-disciplinary degrees to present an articulated and goal-oriented course of study as an attractive alternative to an array of choices that can overwhelm students (3). She also suggests that language faculty capitalize on research that connects foreign language study and the pedagogical practices associated with it to enhanced analytical reasoning and critical thinking skills (4). Similarly, Chantelle Warner affirms

foreign language studies as “legitimate areas of academic inquiry” (2011, p 2) that engage and hone students’ intellectual skills.

This volume precisely addresses the need for language departments to face critical curricular issues and to address the image of language departments within and without their institutions. In addition, concerns of stakeholders, particular those outside the institution, extend beyond curriculum design and in-house perceptions to the actual impact of what students learn. For a two-year foreign language requirement to matter it has to be properly coordinated with the subject matter and regional emphasis of the global studies degree courses. Such an integrated approach would encourage double majors in a language program that expands on the themes and practices introduced in the first 2 years, because the motivational and empowerment tools have been established as coordinates of their interdisciplinary global studies coursework.

As the director of a popular International Studies major, and also a member of a languages and literature department, I appreciate the strengths and (real or perceived) weaknesses of both, an interdisciplinary degree with a broad menu of course choices, possibly at the expense of focus and cohesion; and a disciplinary degree with a prescribed sequence, possibly discouraging students who seek some latitude to chart their own course of study. However, nimble global studies degrees that respond to institutional and societal needs also accentuate the stagnant nature of the foreign language major. Many language departments continue to be mired in the tradition of a bifurcated “first language, then content” curriculum even though they experiment at the margins with culture as represented in certain themes or genres. Acknowledging global studies as a curricular partner and as an ideal segue on which to map a reconfiguration that reflects current learning theories, including pragmatic uses of foreign languages and theme-based courses that rely on multiple genres, and the judicious use of English to aid comprehension in FL classes, might chart a course toward fundamental transformation. In short, while asserting (or redefining) their disciplinary legitimacy and promoting benefits of a foreign language degree, language departments must also overcome their skepticism about global studies degrees. They must recognize that these relatively new degrees present an opportunity for reflection on the purpose and value of the foreign language major in an age of interdisciplinarity; on the value of long-standing, but perhaps counterproductive practices such as seat-time foreign language requirements; and on the competencies that both global studies and foreign language degrees claim to develop. Put differently, global studies programs can provide the impetus for language departments to reconfigure their role in an academy, a role that increasingly focuses on interdisciplinarity and internationalization.

2 Internationalization and the Role of Language Departments

Ironically, at a time when internationalization figures prominently in the mission statements of many U.S. institutions of higher education, language departments have experienced an unprecedented decline in their status in the academy. Their

marginalization has been manifested in the elimination of language requirements, languages and programs within departments, and even entire language departments. The elimination of specific languages has also contributed to the perception of a zero-sum game—a struggle that pits languages against one another and undermines a vision of promoting many voices and many languages. The resulting narrative views the exponential growth of Chinese at the secondary and postsecondary levels, stimulated in part by substantial funding from the Chinese government, as responsible for decline or stagnation of student numbers in languages with a long academic tradition such as German and French. And, in fact, the addition of strategic languages to the curriculum, perhaps welcomed under different, less budget-driven circumstances, can come at the expense of more established languages, because established languages are less likely to attract funding than those now considered critical to U. S. economic growth and national security.

Unfortunately, even merely perceived threats tend to produce a defensive stance that may diminish participation in university-wide initiatives. The marginalization of language departments in the project of internationalization may be partially self-inflicted when they turn inward—protective of the status quo and without willingness to reconceive their role within their institutions. A resulting effort to withstand potential program cuts and reductions, while understandable, is counterproductive. The insistence on preserving stand-alone language majors in spite of compelling evidence that students prefer to integrate their language study with other areas is likely to push departments further to the periphery of curricular developments in many postsecondary schools. Ample evidence suggests that embracing broader curricular visions can expand enrollments. The results speak for themselves.

Language departments that have successfully forged linkages—for example, the double degree at Rhode Island in International Engineering and Chinese, French, German or Spanish—boast robust enrollment and major numbers. A similar response has been experienced by the School of Modern Languages at Georgia Tech University after offering joint and applied language degrees such as International Affairs or Global Economics and Modern Languages. Featuring Georgia Tech's international plan, NAFSA reports in its 2007 *Internationalizing the Campus* publication that language study at Georgia Tech doubled between 2002 and 2007, in the absence of not only a stand-alone language major, but also a university language requirement (2007, p 37). These examples are, regrettably, the exception rather than the rule. Despite the recognition of professional organizations regarding the central role that culture and transcultural components need to have in the FL curriculum (Maxim in the present volume; MLA 2007), language departments as a whole have failed to respond to such calls by exploring ways to work together with international and global studies programs in their institutions. Thus, in her introduction to the *Modern Language Journal's* Perspectives issue on “The Role of Foreign Language Departments in Internationalizing the Curriculum,” Byrnes asserts a lack of certainty about the contributions that foreign language departments make to the “project of internationalization” (2009, p. 607). The title deliberately leaves open “whether FL departments already *have* a firmly established role or must first *assert* such a role” (608), or, one might add, whether they even desire one.

For whatever reasons, the tenor of the contributions to Byrnes' Perspectives column signals that language departments seldom function as key participants in internationalization efforts at their institutions, and often are not even seated at the internationalization table. James Gelhar (2009) proposes various ways in which members of language departments can and should insert themselves into efforts that are directly connected to internationalization, but also activities that expand their reach across the University more generally. He suggests that to support internationalization, foreign language faculty should devise courses for non-language majors such in Business and Engineering (Gelhar 2009, p. 617). Accessing academic content in and through second languages is of course the premise of the Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum (or CLAC) model, which originated in the 1980's as Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC), and then became LAC (Languages Across the Curriculum) in the 90's. With the increasing emphasis on culture, LAC evolved to CLAC, which is the designation most commonly used today. Original implementers of the LAC model such as Binghamton University, St. Olaf's College and the University of Rhode Island still have strong programs today, and are also part of a national consortium of universities and colleges with successful CLAC programs.³

Gelhar also encourages language faculty to connect with University administrators to explore opportunities for contributing to internationalization and, once plugged in and engaged to join institution-wide committees and task forces that are working toward curricular internationalization (2009, p. 618). He concludes with the warning that language departments which ignore the opportunity to contribute, in particular to internationalizing curricula across departments, do so "at their own peril" (2009, p. 618).

Ironically, some of the most vocal advocates for the study of foreign languages are not scholars who are affiliated with language departments. In *Journal of Studies in International Education*, William Brustein takes a critical look at international degrees, claiming that students "too often complete these programs without any competency in a foreign language" (2012, p. 383). Similarly, Allan Goodman places foreign language study front and center in internationalization, highlighting opportunities for U.S. students to achieve high levels of proficiency, in particular in languages of strategic importance. Goodman cites federally funded programs such as the Boren scholarships, which provide funding for intensive language study abroad, and the Language Flagship, which aims at students achieving superior language proficiency through the integration of foreign language into their academic major and a year of study and work abroad (2009, p. 611). Models for curricular adaptations to global studies already exist. Unfortunately, they illustrate the history of the failure of FL departments to embrace fundamental changes in their curriculum. The in-house difficulties in implementing recommended changes are rarely appreciated by advocates for change who reside outside language departments. As scholars from other disciplines, they often underestimate the departmentally internal challenges connected with creating linkages and cross-disciplinary connections.

³ See <http://clacconsortium.org/about/more-on-clac/> (accessed July 24, 2013).

As noted above, a case in point is the Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum (CLAC) model, which is often cited as making language study more meaningful and practical for students who pursue professional majors such as Business, Engineering and Health.

Even though language departments and institutions-at-large acknowledge the value of integrating foreign language into professional degrees, the CLAC model has been notoriously difficult to sustain over time once outside funding ceases. Many Languages Across the Curriculum (LAC) programs that were implemented in the 1990s had to reduce their offerings or were eliminated altogether (Klee 2009, p. 618). In the wake of internationalization, Klee points to a renewed interest in LAC, or CLAC, both within and outside the modern language discipline, but also identifies a high bar for CLAC programs to succeed. They require ongoing training and professional development for instructors and faculty, a suitable intellectual and administrative home such as a Title VI Center, and program requirements that match students' language proficiency (Klee 2009, p. 620).

Beyond institutional and budgetary constraints it is often philosophical differences that bog down language departments internalization efforts. Faculty who identify with certain values related to the study of foreign languages, literatures, and cultures frequently find themselves apprehensive about signing on to a project that has decidedly political, perhaps even jingoistic overtones. Internationalization, especially if connected to the study of strategic languages, emphasizes national security. Understanding such languages and cultures is critical to the nation's ability to anticipate and respond to threats from other countries. In this light, critical language funding at the federal level, for example from the Department of Defense and the National Security Agency, can be viewed as a challenge to intellectual autonomy and ethical principles.

Faculty who interact with international students might also question the sincerity of internationalization when international students on their campus often do not receive the institutional support that they need. Although according to the 2012 edition of *Mapping Internationalization* services to such students have increased, the same report cautions that institutions should examine whether they provide "appropriate support structures in place to help international students transition and succeed on U.S. campuses" (ACE 2012, p. 19). Academic support most significantly includes ESL programs, which even after an increase in recent years are still lower at 4-year and graduate degree-granting institutions than at community colleges. According to Kubota, the insufficient attention to English language support stems from the false assumption that international students possess the proficiency necessary to study at an American university (2009, p. 614), typically measured with a language test such as the TOEFL. However, even students who were admitted with a required minimum score need on-going language support to advance their English skills within an academic discipline. Kubota points out the paradox of emphasizing on-going content-based language development for American students to achieve high levels of competence, while failing to provide the same kind of support to international students, who urgently need it to succeed in their academic study. When high-level foreign language skills of American students are considered a distinguishing feature

of internationalized institutions, but the achievement of academic levels of English by international students is not, cynical faculty might conclude that the recruitment of international students has more to do with the resources they bring than a genuine interest in international education.

As universities contend with conflicting agendas in the internationalization arena, they are well advised to consult with and listen to the critical voices of their faculty. If they don't, they run the risk of excluding those who can most profoundly engage students in internationalization both at home and abroad. The recent, and very public controversy surrounding New York University's global campus in Abu Dhabi illustrates the failure of administrators to secure faculty buy-in into a predictably contentious international venture. Its justification must go beyond the importance of an institution's global footprint and enhanced international profile, and the promise of new revenue streams. To convince faculty, global enterprises of this sort must align with intellectual values and an institution's core educational mission. It seems particularly important to do so when the global campus in question resides in a country with tremendous capital and resources, but also a different understanding of academic freedom and discourse.

Such reflections are not made to suggest an institution should abandon global activities and initiatives that prompt skepticism. Rather, they point out the need for University leadership to recognize and respond to ethical concerns with thoughtful dialog. In turn, faculty, in particular members in language departments, must approach their concerns about specific aspects of their institutions' proposals for internationalization as truly active and equal partners in all its programs' ramifications. The expertise and input of language faculty are vital to internationalization efforts if language and culture study is to play a central role. Moreover, unless language faculty engage in conversations across units about the purpose and goals of learning languages, they will be unable to transform their own departments and their curricula in ways that serve internationalization objectives.

It is to these conversations, or discourses of global and foreign language studies, to which I now turn. I will briefly analyze four interrelated areas, which are embedded in similar ways in both global studies and foreign language study in order to argue for the need to change currently discontinuous discourses related to foreign language study and study abroad.

3 Parallel Discourses

Current discourses around global and foreign language studies share four interconnected areas or constructs: competence, study abroad, real-world relevance, and interdisciplinarity. International education in general, and global studies programs in particular, commonly depict global competence as a desired outcome of the degree. Though not necessarily well defined or operationalized, the construct of global competency represents a shift away from mere participation in international activities to linking global citizenship to measurable learning outcomes.

Another disjuncture in current discourses is attributable to the evolving discourses about the objectives of FL instruction. A major focus in textbooks and classrooms in the past 40 years has been on communicative competence, a concept that originated as a native speaker construct in the early 1970s (Hymes 1972). Expanding on the FL research of Canale and Swain (1980), theoretical and pedagogical applications of communicative emphases in the L2 classroom continue to serve as the central paradigm for defining goal and objectives of foreign language study. In both global and foreign language studies, these frequently invoked concepts have sparked critical inquiry and the exploration of alternate terminology: such notions as intercultural communicative, transcultural and translanguingual, and symbolic competence to move beyond *communicative competence* (Byram 1997; Byrnes 2006; Kramsch 2006); and, similarly, international competence, multicompetence, and cross-cultural and intercultural competence to be used alternatively, or concurrently with *global competence* (Bennett 1993; Deardorff 2006).

These discourses align in their scrutiny of essential constructs and their implementations. In statements proposing a shift in emphasis, FL theorists have begun to critique communicative curricula as too narrowly focused on oral, self-referential and transactional activities (Byrnes 2006, p. 244). Their pedagogies, according to Swaffar, focus on beginning and intermediate learners using language in generic and isolated contexts (Swaffar 2006, p. 248). Ironically, a similar critique of insularity has arisen with regard to international studies. Global competence is often defined with a limited set of activities and experiences such as study and work abroad, and focused on the content of coursework rather than comprehensive assessment of knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions in broader international contexts.

Nonetheless, both fields share underlying premises. Both global and foreign language studies point to a study abroad experience as vital for students who seek these degrees. Global studies programs promote study and work abroad as the most effective means for gaining cultural and linguistic competence in another language; more generally, they advocate experiences abroad as a path toward cultural understanding and sensitivity as key features of global citizenship, often a stated goal of a global studies degree. Foreign language programs encourage students' participation in an immersion experience abroad to increase their prospects of reaching advanced levels of proficiency, seldom achieved through a classroom experience in high school or at the university alone. Immersion experiences have been shown to lead to greater fluency (Dubiner et al. 2006) and increased use of pragmatically appropriate features (Magnan and Back 2006), both considered crucial to moving beyond intermediate proficiency levels.

These mutual advantages for students in global and FL studies are augmented with pragmatic benefits. Real-world applications increasingly serve to validate degree programs, including foreign language and global studies. Global studies programs equip students with the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in an interconnected world. In addition to emphasizing the importance of understanding and navigating different cultures as well as one's own, foreign language programs foster development of critical thinking and analytic skills through the comparative study of other languages. The demand for increased capacity in

critical languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Persian has also afforded the opportunity to connect academic programs to real-world needs in business, economics and national security.

The very premise of global studies, as discussed earlier, is interdisciplinarity precisely because it grants students a flexible degree plan that draws on multiple disciplines. Foreign language studies, though representing a single academic discipline at the university, are adopting components of interdisciplinarity, manifested in curricular models such as Content-Based Instruction and Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum, and, more recently, the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, which include Connections as one of the 5 C's. The connections standard promotes interdisciplinarity through the study of academic subject matter *in and through* another language, which is, of course, the foundation of immersion and content-based education.

In sum, despite institutional barriers between global studies degrees on the one hand and language departments that grant foreign language degrees on the other, both disciplines share important discursive features in the areas of competence, study abroad, real-world relevance and interdisciplinarity. On the other hand, both fields also have discourses in two areas that are marked by glaring discontinuities.

4 Discourse Discontinuities: Foreign Language Study and Global Studies

Most global studies degrees combine a menu of course choices within a theme or a geographical area with a set of required core courses and some level of foreign language study. In addition, many degrees strongly recommend or require experience abroad. Not merely foreign language *study*, but the achievement and demonstration of competence have been part and parcel of the internationalization discourse. For example, the Commission on International Education of the American Council on Education (1995) proposes that universities encourage understanding of at least one other culture and that they require competence in at least one foreign language for all graduates. Yet despite requirements and recommendations, a status report on the internationalization of U.S. higher education 5 years later (ACE 2000) assesses foreign language competence of such programs' university students as largely inadequate. Not only had many never enrolled in any foreign languages at all, but the report also found that "the highest level of instruction for more than 40% of those who took courses in foreign languages was the elementary level" (11).

The report also alludes to the even greater challenge of assessing students' language competence by means other than seat time. It is precisely this issue that foreign language departments have, by and large, failed to address. No foreign language model or movement, whether proficiency guidelines, national standards, or CLAC, nor the MLA 2007 report, has managed to shift the dominant paradigm of completing coursework toward establishing and assessing proficiency or competency goals. At secondary levels, students typically complete a sequence of courses

to fulfill a language requirement, and then add another set of courses for advanced or college preparatory work toward a major. In postsecondary institutions the same criteria apply: passing courses or placement tests are the sole qualification to continue on to complete a major. Even the 2007 MLA report, *Foreign Language and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World*, seems reluctant to establish competence as the unequivocal goal of foreign language study. The section on *Strengthening the Demand for Language Competence within the University* proposes to “establish language requirements (or *levels of competence*) for undergraduate students” (8) across all academic disciplines and professional degrees. This particular recommendation, and others in this section fail to specify, however, what kinds of requirements or levels of competence should be established. Moreover, the parenthetical reference to levels of competence implies equivalence with language requirements, which are typically measured by seat-time rather than proficiency. It is hard to escape the irony of retreat to a language requirement in a document that places competence, more specifically translingual/transcultural competence, at the forefront of its recommendations for “new structures for a changed world.”

The reluctance to replace seat time with proficiency or competency targets presents a vexing problem across all levels of foreign language instruction in the U.S. On the surface, the assortment of language requirements, for high school graduation and University entry, and for BA, Master’s and PhD degrees, appear to highlight foreign language study at the secondary and post-secondary levels at least to some degree. However, a limited seat-time requirement is likely to suggest to students that its fulfillment is *all* that is expected in a particular area, which may keep them from even contemplating language study beyond the requirement and as an academic major. More importantly, given the common practice of not including lower division courses in the major, students may not be able to complete the required coursework for a foreign language major unless they decide on it relatively early in their undergraduate career. Significantly, the common FL department practice of excluding lower level courses from the major or, put differently, the division of lower level language and upper level literature and culture courses, reinforces the widely discussed bifurcation of language departments and degree programs.⁴

The relatively small demand for foreign language study beyond the required elementary level can severely impact the health of language departments, especially at a time when enrollments and degrees awarded determine budget allocations. Even language programs with robust lower division enrollment, as well as those with a well-articulated course of study typically experience severe attrition above the required language sequence.

Non-language majors, and in particular global studies degrees, duplicate the seat-time requirement set by the University and by language departments. An examination of a dozen well-established global studies programs revealed a nearly identical pattern of their foreign language requirements. Rather than assessing com-

⁴ The lower and upper level division is not true across all types of higher education institutions, as pointed out by various responses to the 2007 MLA report (Hock 2009; Levine et al.2008; Melin 2009).

petence or proficiency, most global studies degrees settle for the completion of two upper-division courses in addition to a lower division requirement, or just the lower division course sequence with four semesters of a foreign language.⁵

The majority of global studies program present the fulfillment of a course, or seat-time based foreign language requirement as equal to demonstration of proficiency or competency. For example, the International Relations and Global Studies Major at the University of Texas at Austin, established in 2009, validates its 6-hour upper division foreign language requirement: “competency in a foreign language is a critical foundation for understanding global issues beyond one’s own perspective.” At the University of Oregon, global studies majors must achieve proficiency in a second language at a level *associated with 3 full years of study* to fulfill the language requirement.

Yet confounding the completion of coursework and competency not only perpetuates a fundamental misunderstanding of language proficiency as more than mastery of a discrete body of evidence, but also raises the expectations about students’ abilities to unrealistic levels among those who comment on global studies as mainstays of higher education internationalization. Stearns, in his preview of the UT Austin global studies degree, asserts that a two-course requirement equips students with the ability, or *competence*, to conduct research or to complete an internship using the foreign language (Stearns 2009, p. 55). Foreign language specialists of course know that students with just two third-year courses under their belt will hardly be able to write research papers or work as interns. It is in fact widely documented that language majors who complete significantly more than two upper division courses may only reach intermediate levels of proficiency, especially in critical languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Russian (Carroll 1967; Magnan and Back 1986; Rifkin 2005). Moreover, even if the courses are structured to somehow guarantee an advanced intermediate goal gauged in terms of language proficiency, there is no guarantee that the pragmatics of interpersonal relationships or the disciplinary or nation-specific research skills necessary to succeed in an internship have been assessed at all (if, in fact, they were ever taught explicitly as part of achieving cultural competencies to go along with linguistics ones).

The foreign language requirement thus exposes a rather stark discontinuity in global studies programs between discourse centered on students’ linguistic and cultural competencies on the one hand, and the practice of requiring seat-time to demonstrate them on the other. However, rather than being a unique feature arising in these more recently created programs, such discontinuities mirror the long-familiar division between lower and upper division in language departments, and the separation of an institutional one- or two-year requirement from a departmental major. The persistence of older problems in new forms is hardly surprising. Persistent institutional structures and practices are unlikely to change without some kind of compelling or urgent impetus, often in a crisis situation that encourages patching

⁵ For example, the global studies major at the University of Minnesota requires the same number of courses as the Liberal Arts second language requirement. The global studies program does not reference the language proficiency exam, even though it can satisfy the second language requirement in the College of Liberal Arts.

rather than rebuilding foundations of requirements. Moreover, stakeholders with the greatest investment in a certain structure are more likely to resist change than those who are farther removed—verbal agreement that “changes are needed” does not guarantee participation by the entire program staff.

5 Discontinuities: Study Abroad

The final issue connecting foreign language study to institutional configurations that I wish to comment on here is study abroad itself, presumed to be critical in fostering cultural literacy for the U.S. student body. These assumptions are so pervasive that, in addition to students’ foreign language capacity, institutions measure the success of their internationalization efforts by student mobility, and in particular by the extent to which students participate in experiences abroad. Institutions that make study abroad a centerpiece of their educational mission, and especially smaller private colleges, achieve impressive participation rates. For example, 90% of the 2011 graduating class at Kalamazoo College studied abroad for 11 weeks or more (Palmer 2012).

Study abroad participation nationally, tallied by institutions as a whole and individual college students, however, paints a different picture. The Open Doors report, issued annually by the Institute of International Education (IIE), identifies only modest 1.3% growth in 2012 over the year before, with the total number of U.S. students participating in study abroad at roughly 273,000, or about 1.4% of the student population in the higher education system (IIE 2012). More significantly, 42% of U.S. colleges and universities that responded to a 2011 survey had no study abroad activity among students who graduated in 2011 (ACE 2012, p. 42). The vision to “send one million students to study abroad in one decade,” articulated as “well within the nation’s reach” by the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program in 2005 thus no longer seems viable (Commission 2005, p. v). It is not only improbable that study abroad participation will grow to the extent anticipated by the Lincoln Commission. More importantly, the nature of today’s study abroad also makes the gains that students and other stakeholders typically expect equally unlikely.

Here again, old assumptions prevail about what study abroad is intended to do for learners. Much of the study abroad discourse centers around enhancing students’ sensitivity to other cultures, which may be defined as intercultural competence (Deardorff 2006, p. 86), and in particular, around how time abroad advances language proficiency to levels that are unattainable through classroom learning alone (Goodman 2009). The Lincoln Commission characterizes study abroad as the “major means of producing foreign language speakers and enhancing foreign language learning” (Commission 2005, p. vi), supported by research that shows regular use of another language by students who went abroad. Similarly, Goodman points to federally financed study abroad programs as the key strategy for achieving advanced levels of proficiency, especially in languages of strategic importance to the U.S. (2009, p. 611).

The discourse of language fluency and proficiency conflicts with the realities of contemporary study abroad. Financial constraints and the changing profiles of today's University students have transformed the traditional junior year abroad into a menu of short-term study abroad experiences that are unlikely to advance students' competencies significantly. Students who work and who seek multiple major and minor degrees are much less inclined to spend a year or even a semester abroad. 60% of the students going abroad during 2010/2011 took part in summer programs that lasted eight weeks or less (IIE 2012), which can also include programs as short as one week over Spring break or in "winter sessions."

In addition to the insufficient length of exposure to the target culture, the structure of study abroad programs often undermines students' engagement with the target culture or immersion in the second language. It is not unusual for American students abroad to be housed and taught together as a cohort, and separate from the local culture, in particular in geographic locations where security may be of concern. As Warner points out, cultural and linguistic immersion is less likely a goal for students whose primary motivation is not the acquisition of another language (2011, p. 5). Her observations align with data that show foreign language study in 6th place among about a dozen fields of study abroad—it is not foreign language students who use these study abroad programs, it is students in other majors. While Social Sciences and Business are represented with around 20% each of the total participants in study abroad, only 5.5% of students abroad claimed foreign language as their discipline (IIE 2012). Students in other fields may of course be formally or informally learning another language while abroad. However, that so few students appear to make language study the focus of their experiences abroad can at least partially account for the preponderance of short-term stays, which have been found to be insufficient especially for the acquisition of more abstract linguistic features that mark advanced levels of proficiency (Isabelli 2004). More importantly, as Warner reports, research indicates that study abroad is unlikely to enhance students' intercultural awareness or competence unless they formulate and act on deliberate strategies for making gains in this area (2011, p. 5).

In institutional calculations, therefore, "internationalization" and "foreign language study" remain conflated in ways that occlude what educational experiences are actually being offered. Few would argue against the fundamental value of a study or work experience abroad, especially if institutions can offer such opportunities to students who have traditionally not participated in study abroad, or who would otherwise not be able to spend time abroad. However, we must also face the reality that study abroad will not remedy the lack of foreign language capacity in the U.S. Foreign language professionals must shift the discourse from study abroad as the panacea for foreign language deficits to stress instead what research has identified as the most successful, if not only, route to high levels of competence in another language: articulated language study across all levels of education that starts with immersion at the elementary level, continues throughout formal education and is understood as life-long learning.⁶

⁶ A number of states, including California, Delaware, Georgia and Utah have implemented dual language immersion, beginning in elementary school, and promote it as the most effective type

6 Conclusion: The Need for Collaboration

The examination of discourses that surround global studies degrees, foreign language competencies and study abroad within many U.S. educational contexts, along with common institutional practices such as foreign language requirements, points to an urgent need for dialog and collaboration between internationally focused area- and global-studies degrees, and language departments. Equally invested in students' cultural and linguistic competencies, they must join forces to address the discontinuities and paradoxes discussed in this article within their units and departments, and beyond, and to try to specify what learning outcomes might be achievable or fostered within their respective environment. Not only global studies and area studies programs, but also universities as a whole, which now routinely align themselves with a global education agenda, must question foreign language seat-time requirements that operate in lieu of assessing students' foreign language capacities and proficiency. In addition, institutions must closely examine the claims they make about the benefits of study abroad for advancing cultural and intercultural competencies of their students more generally, and language proficiency more specifically.

Such typical institutional parallel discourses on communicative, intercultural, and global competencies have so far exposed an equally parallel inability of programs, departments, and major curricula to operationalize these constructs for the classroom and for assessment. Faculty in language departments possess the expertise to specify vague claims into specific forms of student achievement that are attainable and assessable, and they must also accept the responsibility to initiate meaningful conversations about the goals of global education, typically anchored in notions of global citizenship and global competencies, rather than in terms of language acquisition alone. Only through such collaboration can the perspectives of language faculty become vital to internationalization discourse that often relies on lofty terminology rather than critical analysis of constructs, goals and premises. Insisting that global and international studies programs adopt the kinds of outcomes expected (but rarely achieved) for foreign language majors rather than taking a more comprehensive view of language- and culture-based pragmatics as the object of study will only hurt the credibility of language study, not preserve it.

Such realignments of interest are indeed possible. At my own institution, we have begun collaborative efforts to assess the foreign language competencies of area and international studies majors, whose "language proficiency" requirements, much like they do across the country, translate into the completion of coursework. Asian and Latin American Studies, in collaboration with language department faculty, recently piloted proficiency assessments of their majors in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese, which will be expanded to Middle East and International Studies. Concurrently, the language department has been defining learning outcomes for its majors that will combine proficiency assessments with

of instruction to lead to high levels of bilingualism and biculturalism. In Utah, legislative funding supported the creation of dual language immersion in 2008, with the number of schools with an immersion program reaching over 100 in 2013.

measures of cultural and literary competencies specifying pragmatic and higher-order management skills that need to be added to traditional ideas about correctness and fluency. These assessment projects have initiated a dialog that will mutually benefit, and ultimately deepen, the relationship between degrees with different orientations and structures, but a common foundation in the study of languages and cultures.

Study abroad programs have long afforded an opportunity to bring together global studies and foreign language students, who, as we have seen, are most likely experiencing international education in different ways. Students in global or international studies programs examine issues through multi-disciplinary lenses, but predominantly in their own language, while language students access, process and navigate information in and through another language. For the past two years, the University of Utah has offered a joint study abroad program for international/European studies majors and students of German that consciously exploits these different groups' goals to enhance learning. In advance of the program, the program director discusses the rationale and desired outcomes of the joint program to the two groups of participants, emphasizing the benefits of different sets of knowledge and skills that they bring to their international experiences. Once on-site, the international studies participants take part in a "Survival German" course in addition to their international studies coursework, but, more importantly, they also directly benefit from the German students' ability to communicate in the target language. In turn, the German students appreciate the international studies majors' deeper knowledge of current German and European politics as the two groups together analyze and discuss the political and societal structures of Germany and the European Union, and the role of international organizations in Europe in comparison with the U.S.

During field trips and excursions, for example, the two groups rely on each other's expertise to complete worksheets that require interviewing Germans in the street as well as content knowledge in history and political science. In another scenario, which also requires collaboration between the two groups, the Survival German class meets up with the German students to complete tasks around the city that require comprehension of plaques, signs, inscriptions and the like. Their shared experiences in a study abroad setting encourage students in each group to think about the value and goals of their degree and their ability to engage meaningfully with another culture. Each group not only draws on its particular strengths, but, more importantly, students share their knowledge and skills to complement and support each other as they face the challenge of navigating another culture.

Another effort to align international and language studies, this time with a focus on curriculum design, involves the CLAC model, and draws on the expertise of language department faculty for the creation of target language courses for both area and global studies, and for disciplinary degrees. Supported by a grant from the Department of Education,⁷ our Latin American Studies program has invited fac-

⁷ The grant was awarded through the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program (UISFL) in 2012: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-awards-more-15-million-strengthen-and-improve-undergradu>

ulty from a range of departments, including language, to workshops on designing courses in their areas of expertise to be taught in Spanish and Portuguese. In the workshop setting and beyond, language and non-language faculty have engaged in fruitful dialogs about scaffolding historical, literary, and scientific texts for students who are learning disciplinary content in and through the second language. Over the next two years, we will establish courses in art & art history, business, history, political science and sociology with trailers in a second language, as well as some non-language department courses that will be taught entirely in the target language.

These collaborative interventions have inspired, or perhaps uncovered deep interest in language and culture study across a wide variety of academic units and disciplines. More importantly, they have the potential to lead to mutually agreed upon, data-based adjustments to courses and to curricula that will improve learning outcomes for students across all degrees that involve language study. The proficiency data, which show students' abilities after two and three years of language study, will help us ascertain to what extent required courses are designed to advance students' linguistic competencies, and the implications of proficiency-based assessment for measures along the lines of trans- or intercultural competences on the other. Similarly, the CLAC project has served as the impetus for a dialog about the role of language study in non-language disciplines and ways in which double majors might be promoted and facilitated. The joint study abroad program represents a microcosm of cooperation between students whose degrees situate them differently in international education perhaps exemplifies the possibilities of dialog and collaboration across units such as global studies and language departments in the enterprise of higher education internationalization. This kind of collaboration, I believe, will help foreign language study to join the mainstream in setting learning agendas and assessment norms for the institution as a whole—as an integral and integrative partner, instead of an entity unto itself.

References

- American Council on Education (ACE). 1995. *Educating Americans for a World in Flux: Ten Ground Rules for Internationalizing Higher Education*. Washington, DC: ACE.
- American Council on Education (ACE). 2000. *Internationalization of U.S. Higher Education*. Washington, DC: ACE.
- American Council on Education (ACE). 2008. *On the ground overseas: U.S. degree programs and branch campuses abroad*. Washington, DC: ACE.
- American Council on Education (ACE). 2012. Mapping internationalization on U.S. campuses. <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Mapping-Full-Report.aspx>. Accessed 15 March 2013.
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). 1996. National standards for foreign language learning. http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/StandardsforFLLexec-summ_rev.pdf. Accessed 1 April 2013.
- Bennett, Milton J. 1993. Cultural marginality: Identity issues in intercultural training. In *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, ed. R. Michael Paige, 109–135. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.
- Brustein, William I. 2012. The global campus: Challenges and opportunities for higher education in North America. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 11 (3-4): 382–391.

- Byram, Michael. 1997. *Teaching and assessing intercultural competence*. London: Multilingual Matters.
- Byrnes, Heidi. 2006. Perspectives: Interrogating communicative competence as a framework for collegiate foreign language study. *Modern Language Journal* 90 (2): 244–246.
- Byrnes, Heidi. 2009. The role of foreign language departments in internationalizing the curriculum. *Modern Language Journal* 93 (4): 607–609.
- Canale, Michael, and Merrill Swain. 1980. Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching. *Applied Linguistics* 1 (1): 1–47.
- Carroll, John B. 1967. Foreign language proficiency levels attained by language majors near graduation from college. *Foreign Language Annals* 1 (2): 131–151.
- Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities). 2005. Global competence and national needs: One million Americans studying abroad. www.aplu.org/document.doc?id=190. Accessed 1 April 2013.
- Deardorff, Darla K. 2006. A model of intercultural competence and its implications for the foreign language classroom. In *Insights from study abroad for language programs*, ed. Sharon Wilkinson, 86–98. Boston: Heinle Heinle.
- Del Rossi, Alison F., and Joni Hersch. 2008. Double your major, double your return? *Economics of Education Review* 27 (4): 375–386.
- Dubiner, Deborah, Barbara F. Freed, and Norman Segalowitz. 2006. Native speakers' perceptions of fluency acquired by study abroad students and their implications for the classroom at home. In *Insights from study abroad for language programs*, ed. Sharon Wilkinson, 2–21. Boston: Heinle Heinle.
- Gelhar, James N. 2009. Of course they want us at the curriculum internationalization table. *Modern Language Journal* 93 (4): 616–618.
- Goodman, Allan. 2009. Language learning and study abroad: The path to global citizenship. *Modern Language Journal* 93 (4): 610–612.
- Hacking, Jane. 2013. Global studies and departmental structures. *ADFL Bulletin* 42 (2): 1–5.
- Hock, Lisbeth. 2009. The MLA report and the urban, public institution. *Neues Curriculum* 1 (1): 4–11.
- Hymes, Dell H. 1972. On communicative competence. In *Sociolinguistics: Selected readings*, eds. J. B. Pride and Janet Holmes, 269–293. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Institute for International Education. 2012. Open doors 2012: Fast facts. <http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors>. Accessed February 5: 2013.
- Internationalizing the Campus. 2007. *Profiles of success at colleges and universities. 2007*. Washington, DC: NAFSA: Association of International Educators.
- Isabelli, Casilde A. 2004. Study abroad for advanced foreign language majors: Optimal duration for developing complex structures. In *Advanced foreign language learners: A challenge to college programs (AAUSC Series)*, eds. Heidi Byrnes and Hiram H. Maxim, 114–130. Boston: Heinle Heinle.
- Klee, Carol. 2009. Internationalization and foreign languages: The resurgence of interest in languages across the curriculum. *Modern Language Journal* 93 (4): 618–621.
- Kramsch, Claire. 2006. From communicative competence to symbolic competence. *Modern Language Journal* 90 (2): 249–252.
- Kubota, Ryuko. 2009. Internationalization of universities: Paradoxes and responsibilities. *Modern Language Journal* 93 (4): 612–616.
- Levine, Glenn, Charlotte Melin, Corrine Crane, Monica Chavez, and Tom Lovik. 2008. The language program director in curricular and departmental reform. *Profession* 2008: 240–254.
- Magnan, Sally Sieloff, and Michelle Back. 1986. Assessing speaking proficiency in the undergraduate curriculum: Data from French. *Foreign Language Annals* 19 (5): 429–438.
- Magnan, Sally Sieloff, and Michelle Back. 2006. Requesting help in French: Developing pragmatic features during study abroad. In *Sharon Wilkinson, 22–44*, ed. Insights from study abroad for language programs. Boston: Heinle Heinle.
- Melin, Charlotte. 2009. Teaching graduate students about teaching: Beyond the MLA report. *Neues Curriculum* 1 (1): 12–18.

- MLA ad hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. 2007. Foreign languages and higher education: New structures for a changed world. *Profession* 2007:234–245.
- Palmer, Jeff. 2012. K again rates high for study abroad. <http://www.kzoo.edu/news/k-again-rates-high-for-study-abroad/>. Accessed 24 July 2013.
- Rifkin, Benjamin. 2005. A ceiling effect in traditional classroom foreign language instruction in Russian. *Modern Language Journal* 89 (1): 3–18.
- Stearns, Peter N. 2009. *Educating global citizens in colleges and universities: Challenges and opportunities*. New York: Routledge.
- Swaffar, Janet. 2006. Some caveats about communicative competence. *Modern Language Journal* 90 (2): 246–249.
- Warner, Chantelle. 2011. Rethinking the role of language study in internationalizing higher education. *L2 Journal* 3 (1): 1–21.