

THE GOVERNANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

**PROCEEDINGS OF A SYMPOSIUM
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FOREWORD

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As one of its primary goals the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning seeks to identify major issues in foreign language education, to pose new questions about those issues, and to seek realistic and practicable solutions to problems. On October 9-11, 1987, the Consortium conducted a symposium on the governance of foreign language programs in private research universities as the first of its annual conferences. The topic of governance embraces a broad series of administrative and intellectual concerns, ranging from the training and continuing professional development of foreign language faculty to the integration of research into the foreign language classroom. Governance is the name that we have attached to problems in the foreign language education, problems that many will acknowledge but that few have explored.

The papers collected in this volume are intended to be practical guides for further reflection, discussion, and action. Models of governance will vary widely from university to university and within universities from department to department. We hope that these papers will be useful to our colleagues in considering the issues of organization and management of their foreign language programs.

I owe my gratitude to many individuals for their contributions to the symposium and the publication. Foremost, I wish to thank James Noblitt of Cornell University for identifying the issues with noteworthy clarity and pursuing this effort with uncommon diligence. Catherine LeGouis provided more assistance than I can cite throughout the symposium and in the preparation of this volume. Brian Carter's editing skills were invaluable. Finally, I wish to thank the participants in the symposium; their thoughtful and candid observations enriched the discussions.

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OVERVIEW OF THE 1987 SYMPOSIUM ON THE GOVERNANCE
OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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When the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning decided to hold a symposium on the governance of foreign language programs in private research universities, even some of the members of the Consortium wondered at the ambiguity of the notion of governance. This sensitivity, if not to a neologism, at least to a novel application of the word, was not unexpected: the term "governance" itself is not one that is applied familiarly to the consideration of foreign language programs. Governance moves us away from the customary debates about methodology (how the language is taught) and curriculum (what is taught) and leads us to the territory where administrative concerns and scholarly questions come together. That conjunction is the teacher (who teaches the language).

In admitting at the outset that there is no single definition of governance, I am not suggesting that the speakers and participants at the symposium failed in their joint task. Instead, any lexical imprecision is due, I think, to the fact that this term is being used increasingly in discussions of foreign language education. It is also due to the fact that many different issues come into play in governance. One such issue is metadisciplinary: what constitutes the "field" of foreign languages? Which disciplines inform the research? Which disciplines inform the teaching? Metadisciplinary questions have immediate import in the university setting. In which departments does the responsibility for the various aspects of research and teaching lie? Who has responsibility for research and teaching? How do decisions about research and teaching affect administrative and financial decisions? One can easily envision the long list of pertinent questions: questions about faculty development, the training of graduate assistants, the place of the teaching and training in the graduate program. In brief, governance can be conceived of as the organization and management of academic programs, in other words, the way in which programs are put together and in which they work in the context of some educational mission. We can proceed to posit governance as a system or a process, as a method or a structure. The different analogies have their advantages and disadvantages. To examine governance is to ask: how are we set up to do our business? How can we organize ourselves in order to do a better job?

This symposium has its origins in the early period of the formation of the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning. Over a period of three years, the eleven universities of the Consortium conducted discussions about the possible agenda for this organization. Many issues of common

interest emerged: for example, the need for increased attention to teacher training, the need for the study and adoption of technology, and the need for curricular materials at the advanced levels in many languages. There was a consensus that something needed to be done to enhance the teaching of foreign languages and that the enterprise required a kind of sustained and cooperative effort that it had never before received. James Noblitt of Cornell University proposed to the pioneers of the Consortium that they investigate something that he then called "governance." He introduced the unusual term ex partibus infidelium, from the foreign land of administration and educational philosophy, not to bring the weight of jargon to our effort, but rather to highlight a problem that was in search of a name. Howard Lamar, then Dean of Yale College and one of the founding fathers of the Consortium, provided the funds to permit Noblitt to undertake a study of governance of foreign language programs. The issue simmered, sometimes arousing puzzlement, sometimes provoking the fear that a revolution was afoot, and sometimes eliciting nods of recognition that Noblitt might be on to something.

In October of 1986, Cornell University hosted a planning meeting for the symposium on governance with funds generously provided by the then Dean of Arts and Sciences Alain Sezec. The planning proved useful in defining issues and problems. The differences among the universities sometimes made it difficult to contrast and compare the models of governance. That very difficulty affirmed the need to rise above the particulars of any given local situation to generic statements of common problems.

That planning meeting was also the occasion to review the preliminary results of an informal survey of language courses in Chinese, French, German, and Russian that the Consortium conducted in its eleven member universities. That survey solicited numbers: the number of teaching assistants, the number of nonresearch positions, the number of junior and senior faculty teaching language courses at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels. Like most surveys, this survey produced a mixture of truths and half-truths. It confirmed several presuppositions and taught us many things. We discovered that we shared no common definition of what constituted "a language course," courses in the language, courses about the language, courses about literature or culture taught in the language or in English.

The survey taught us that no one had examined the question of personnel in quite this way; indeed, the information was not readily available from all departments or deans' offices. It taught us that we had a lexical problem: the very definition of terms had yet to be achieved -- teaching assistants, teaching fellows, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, were but a sampling of the titles given to foreign language faculty who were not part of the formal tenure-track system in private research universities. The taxonomy of positions was all the more complicated by the fact that some of these positions outside the normal ranks of tenured

or tenurable positions enjoyed de facto, if not de jure, tenure, often called an appointment without term. The variety of titles underscores the lack of consensus about the credentials of foreign language teachers. The survey taught us that these terms had different meanings not only in our different institutions but even among different departments in our institutions. While standardization need not be a worthwhile goal, equity remains so. We learned, and were surprised at the extent of the finding, that graduate assistants and nonresearch faculty are responsible for teaching a significant majority of language courses, a curious example of political chiasmus, where those who teach the largest numbers of students in a department have little or no authority and those who have the lightest teaching loads and the smallest numbers of students have the most authority. The lexical inventiveness evident in the different titles confirms the central problem of governance: a two-tiered system of teachers. These are delicate and demanding issues, and no one at the planning meeting hesitated to recognize their complexity and the intensity of feelings that they provoke. But I should state that our concern was not the redressing of political power, but the empowerment of teachers to maintain the continuity and rigor of language programs. The unanimous concern was the quality of language teaching and learning. 10-20-71

The enrollments in language courses, be they a measure of a foreign language requirement or of the popularity of certain languages, and the need for small classes create another problem of governance. Foreign language courses are taught by teachers of all levels of experience and inexperience: graduate assistants, who are usually doctoral candidates in literary studies; native speakers, who may or may not have training in pedagogy; adjunct faculty, who are often untenured; and only occasionally by tenured senior faculty. In foreign language courses, the combination of the quantity of teaching and the necessarily small size of classes has created the demand for an unusually large corps of teachers. The profession has accommodated itself to this fact without sufficient attention to costs, training, continuity, and morale. why?

It is incontrovertible fact that graduate students perform a substantial part of the foreign language teaching in many research universities. Indeed, it is commonly assumed in many departments that the positions of graduate teaching assistants exist as an entitlement, a subvention for graduate research. Graduate students are socialized early on to acknowledge the value of research and to rank teaching low in the gradum ad Parnassum. There are, unfortunately, all too few programs where the teaching and training of graduate students are conceived of as an integral part of the doctoral program. Unfortunately, this omission is not even enlightened self-interest. We are, after all, preparing future teachers, and we are preparing future administrators who will make decisions about foreign language programs. Moreover, the majority of graduate students will not end up in major research universities; they will be hired by colleges, where they will have the joint responsibility to teach and to //

pursue research, where they will not have graduate students to assume their teaching responsibilities.

Foreign language programs in research universities are also dependent on large numbers of part-time laborers, whose status in departments is nebulous, whose contribution is undervalued, and whose professional development haphazard or left to individual initiative. It is widely recognized that native speakers provide unusual services in foreign language programs. Without professional training and development, however, the effectiveness of this large corps of teachers is limited.

Despite the size of language programs and the extent of the resources that they require, it comes as a major discovery and surprise that there is no such thing as the field of "foreign languages," no field like other academic fields where training, teaching, research, publication, and administration are readily and clearly identifiable and related. There is no intellectually coherent field of "foreign languages": linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and literature, as well as their pure and applied subfields, all contribute in very different ways to the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Consequently, there is no single professional association that represents the foreign language profession. Increasingly, new fields like cognitive studies and computer science are contributing to -- and complicating -- the uneasy alliance. The hybrid, interdisciplinary nature of a putative field of foreign languages is the intellectual origin of the problems of governance. That is, the administrative structures that have evolved in research universities to support faculty activities no longer provide for the aspirations in research and teaching in foreign languages.

There is thus an administrative cause of the problems of governance of foreign language programs. Foreign language instruction is dispersed in a variety of departments: departments of cognate languages and literatures, where literary scholarship prevails (e.g., Romance Languages and Literatures); departments of linguistics, where often exotic languages are taught, because these languages present features of interest to linguists but are unavailable elsewhere in the university; programs in area studies, which maintain languages for use in research and teaching in different fields; and occasionally departments of anthropology, where students are prepared for field research or for the study of sociolinguistics. Publication in the field of foreign languages -- be it the results of applied research, textbooks, or other curricular materials -- is variously recognized; indeed, the assessment of curricular materials and the value that a department places on them are all the more uncertain, because, unlike the study of a major poet or the production of a generative grammar of a language, curricular materials are by nature ephemera that require regular updating and renewal. Because the field itself does not have an administrative existence, these contributions to the field meet with less easy acceptance in promotion and tenure decisions. Finally, it is rare that any university centralizes the development, oversight, and evaluation

of foreign language education, despite the size and cost of the extensive effort. Departments are their own guardians and wards. No one appears to be responsible for foreign languages as a whole.

Indeed, the teaching and learning of foreign languages is not perceived as a unified effort. That the teaching of foreign languages is not unified in one massive, powerful department, however, is not the issue; the study of governance is not an oblique effort to redraw the sectors of power in our universities. The solution to the problems of governance is not necessarily the creation of new hybrid administrative structures. The history of programs in interdisciplinary studies offers a useful analogy: unstable line items or low budgets, insufficient support from existing departments, uncertain research agenda, and an existence subject to changes in fashion and ideology led to the termination of many interdisciplinary programs. The creation of new departments may not necessarily be the solution.

There is widespread agreement about these facts, but little agreement in the interpretation of the facts, except that urgent action is necessary. It has been estimated that in the next ten years there will be an almost 50% turnover of faculty. The problem is particularly acute in foreign languages, where the generation of teachers and scholars trained during and immediately after the Second World War will retire from the programs in the uncommonly taught languages, programs that this generation often established. Who will replace these teachers? What kind of teachers will replace them? The opportunity and the necessity for foreign language programs to participate in institutional long-term planning is here now. To examine the models of governance of foreign language programs in a university is to confront a demographic issue that will have a decisive influence on the future of teaching and learning.

Today there is much talk about the system of foreign language education in this country, but we must recognize the great conceptual and practical problems that ensue from this kind of abstraction. The notion of a system might be useful in allowing an overview of practices and policies, but that term posits a false unity on the varied enterprise in the more than three thousand institutions of higher education in the United States. It blurs the essential differences between undergraduate and graduate education, by failing to distinguish between language learning as an integral aspect of undergraduate liberal arts education and language learning as a form of professional development of graduate students. If there is a system of foreign language education in this country, it is a complex--some might say chaotic -- amalgam drawn together by the notion of foreign language, a notion that is at the same time precise and vague.

Furthermore, to speak of a system of foreign language education denies the structural reality of foreign language programs. There is no system apart from the individuals who make up the whole. Departments are not machines; they are rather fragile organisms dependent upon expertise, experience, goodwill, and cooperation. Foreign language programs are not

mere assemblages of equipment, textbooks, curricula, and schedules. They are the collaborative effort of individuals and are wholly dependent for their quality and continuity on individuals. This observation is not a plea for the human over the abstract; it simply recognizes that programs rise and fall with the individuals who constitute them. The metaphor of the system implies that external solutions will remedy internal problems. A long-term solution must be internal, and it must be adapted to a given set of local circumstances: the configuration of individuals, resources, student needs, facilities. It does little to tinker with curriculum, to import methodologies, to introduce new methods of testing and placement without realizing the development of teachers at all levels in those changes. In colleges and universities where we see strong foreign language programs, we see strong and talented individuals. Foreign language programs do not exist apart from the faculty and administrators who make them work.

In the course of the symposium on governance, the participants returned again and again to what came to be called "the telling questions." These questions are readily grasped by all who teach and administer. The questions, which seek to determine the nature of the status quo of language programs in our universities, require a joint response from faculty and administration alike. A sound model of governance calls for administration and faculty working together to accomplish their educational goals, and it can never pit the two groups as competing factions. If a description of the status quo appears to be an indictment of institutional practices and policies, then that reaction suggests that the model of governance is no longer a covenant that is recognized and mutually accepted by faculty members and administrators alike. I include a list of those questions here. The list is provisional, because it is susceptible to amplification and refinement.

What is the teaching load for each faculty rank?

What is the correlation of teaching load by rank to the number of students?

What percentage of students is taught by faculty at the different ranks?

What is the class size by level of instruction?

Who coordinates the language courses?

What percentage of the coordinators teach the course(s) they direct?

What is the nature of the training that course coordinators have received?

Who is responsible for training language teachers?

Is training required?

In what does training consist? (pre-service? in-service?)

Who is responsible for the evaluation of language teachers?

Are the criteria standard or ad hoc?

Who developed the criteria of evaluation?

Are analogous criteria used in different departments? for different languages within the same department?

How are language teachers evaluated?

What are the results of evaluation?

Is teaching a required part of the graduate program?

What are the terms of a teaching assistant's contract?

Is teaching viewed only as a means of financial support?

Who is responsible for the hiring of nonresearch (i.e., adjunct, nontenure-track) faculty?

What are the terms of the contracts of nonresearch faculty?

What is the status of language faculty in the language department?

What training do they receive?

Is there a program of professional development available?

What formal departmental resources (clerical support, travel funds, acquisition of materials, etc.) are available to language faculty?

Are there discretionary departmental resources available? On what basis?

How are college or university resources available to language faculty?

Are different resources available for training, teaching, and research?

This list can be useful, because it clearly lays out concerns that often go unrecognized and unaddressed. The list also establishes a context for the papers presented at the symposium.

The essays in this volume present a range of commentary on different issues of governance. They were not solicited to give specific solutions to problems, but rather to explore the range of issues in the context of different research universities. Some of the papers are descriptive; by providing details about a single institution, they succeeded in generating a considerable exchange of information about practices and policies in the different institutions represented at the symposium. Other papers point to alternative models of governance.

it were? lots of Latin earlier, & lots of recondite verbs & prepositions in phrases, but now this is

The first group of essays were intended to provide introductions to various problems of governance. In broadly addressing governance issues in higher education, James Noblitt's paper extends the discussion of governance, which he initiated, so that the process of governance can be seen in terms of the strategic planning and broader mission of a university. In his keynote address, Wilfred Lehmann reminds us that the current models of governance, which sometimes appear to be cast in triple brass, are historical accidents quite different from the models reigning two or three decades ago. His historical reminder makes clear that change is both possible and desirable. James Redfield's essay, which was not delivered at the symposium but was circulated to the participants, deals with the institutionalization of problems of governance as a direct result of the foreign language requirement.

easy style

ouch!

The second group of papers offered case studies of individual situations in order to generate the discussion of common issues. James Wrenn's description of the model of governance at Brown University presents a particular case, many features of which are generalizable: the small university offers many of the advantages associated with a four-year liberal arts college along with the breadth of a graduate institution. Moreover, it can exercise a degree of flexibility in its policies and practices that many larger institutions might envy. Wrenn's paper also raises the issue of a foreign language center, a phenomenon that we are seeing more and more on campuses as an attempt to consolidate activities in foreign language teaching and research and to forge a new sense of community among foreign language faculty across different languages. While describing one particular model of governance in a single department at Yale University, Nicolas Shumway confronts the perennial problem of the divorce of literary study from language teaching and proposes the basis for a new alliance that has the advantage of corresponding to the structural reality of departments of language and literature. Barbara Freed presents a case study of an administrative position at the University of Pennsylvania and suggests how such a position seeks to remedy the problems of large and complex language programs by providing a central locus for the discussion and examination of issues across languages and depart-

ments. Gerard Ervin's detailed description of the model of governance at a large public research institution like the Ohio State University highlights the significant differences in practices, policies, and problems encountered in public and private research universities. Albert Valdman's and Cathy Pons's paper moves from a restatement of problems that are by now well recognized to a solution to those problems in the form of post-graduate training of foreign language teachers.

The final group of presentations looked to alternatives to the existing models of governance in research universities. Ward Dennis's paper reminds us that not all institutions of higher education have problems of governance and that responsibility for solutions lies directly in the hands of those who lead departments: the senior faculty. Perhaps we hear in this suggestion a distant echo of the Chicago sage who many years ago observed that only senior faculty had the experience and skills to teach elementary courses. James Marchand's essay reminds us that developments in technology will pose new demands for teacher training and for ever closer collaboration among teachers. In presenting an account of developments in Germany, Claire Kramsch offers a vision of where foreign language teaching and research must move if they are to capture intellectual validity and vitality in our research universities.

twisted

*(i.e., we must
still import
our models)*

The urgency for the examination of the problems of governance of foreign language programs in research universities is not to be underestimated. We are facing new challenges and new demands on our resources. Developments in a field like foreign language acquisition research will make new claims and demands for what can be achieved -- and what cannot be achieved in the university classroom. Technology will be the boon or bane of language teachers, either granting them greater flexibility and creativity or burdening them with new responsibilities for which they will receive little or no support and few or no rewards. Demands for accountability in the foreign language profession have reawakened concerns about student achievement and are linked to demands for professional competency in the use of foreign languages. But we should not forget that calls for renewal come with a price, and someone will have to reckon with costs.

*generally
pointless*

Many programs -- research in science and medicine -- live hungrily off federal and foundation funds. But the fields of the humanities, apart from sabbaticals and fellowships for research, have not tended to require external support for curricular maintenance and innovation. Perhaps this situation must change. What will be the impulse for change and improvement in foreign language instruction? Will it come from deans, from departments, from language coordinators, or from individuals? Whatever the source, the change will require close consideration of financial implications. Additional funding -- or, more likely, the redistribution of existing resources -- will require understanding and close cooperation between faculty and administration. The need for internal education-- for administrators to educate faculty and for faculty to educate admin-

filler

istrators -- is acute. One present and future issue of governance will be the manner in which an institution responds to initiative and to change. It remains to be seen whether that response best remains internal to the institution or whether the solution should be external, that is, in the hands of the government or private foundations.

Historically the role of foundations and public agencies in foreign language education has been considerable; indeed, I would suggest that not only in recent years but for at least thirty years, government agencies and philanthropic foundations have played a major role in the development of foreign language programs. Their role in the so-called commonly taught languages has been relatively small, because the needs of French, German, Italian, and Spanish have been met, more or less, by the commercial market. The uncommonly taught languages, however, present an entirely different picture, where the needs of the government have forged a marriage of convenience.

The marriage of convenience between the uncommonly taught languages and various funding sources like the federal government and private foundations has in all probability meant the survival of instruction of languages like Tagalog and Urdu and has been vital in the maintenance of Arabic, Chinese, and Russian. That marriage has also had the curious effect of establishing two cultures in foreign language education: one dependent on external funding and allied largely to the needs of the social sciences, one dependent on internal support and allied largely to the teaching of the humanities. This split, which I wish neither to exaggerate nor to minimize, remains with us and lies at the heart of much confusion and debate in foreign language developments today. Some have wanted to see the split as a difference between easy, cognate, Western languages and difficult, exotic, non-Western languages, but I doubt that such a simplistic dualism is felicitous. We have de facto two systems of governance of foreign language programs with many consequences: those consequences vary from the lack of adequate authentic materials at advanced levels in exotic languages to different uses of native speakers, from vastly different expectations in what can be accomplished in a one-year college course to significantly different structures of graduate programs in the different languages.

The disciplinary alliances that I have mentioned, common languages with the humanities and uncommon languages with the social sciences, are by no means absolute. The federal agencies, however, have largely constructed their programs along disciplinary lines of teaching or research. For example, the National Science Foundation has provided generous support for many projects in neuroscience and cognitive psychology as they relate to language acquisition or perception, in various computer applications to linguistics, and in other "scientific" areas of language analysis. The National Endowment for the Humanities has, in the area of research, been the primary source of funds for most of this country's distinguished lexicographical projects; in the area of teaching, the En-

We felt the difference between an internal and external way of doing things

dowment supported the creation of individualized language instruction materials in several languages, computer-assisted instruction, and numerous summer institutes for high school and college teachers. The case of the Department of Education has been considerably more complicated. That agency has, for several administrations, labored under the disadvantage of budgetary uncertainty. In its administration of Title VI funds, the Department of Education has often demonstrated a partiality for the social sciences, for the primary disciplines that constitute language and area centers, and for what is generally called international studies. For the graduate fellowships in several language areas, there have been incentives for linking the study of a critical language with professional studies like business, law, or journalism, and disincentives for the study of history and literature.

Two developments, one long-term and one more recent, merit brief mention in examining how external support affects governance within the university. First, because there is federal support for research and teaching in something called "area studies," area studies is a consecrated field. Yet like the field of foreign languages, area studies is not a discipline; indeed, it is not even a coherent mixture of disciplines. It is an ad hoc convenience that groups scholars around a geographical area because of the availability of federal funds. Were there no federal support for area centers, one might well inquire what form they would take. One might even ask if certain languages with small enrollments would appear in the curriculum.

The second development is proficiency-based testing. This is not the occasion to go into the pro's and con's of the so-called proficiency movement. It is clear that the ILR/ETS/ACTFL guidelines are wielding an enormous influence on the field. Although the guidelines are still very much a matter of debate, they have already received a kind of federal imprimatur. The latest formulation of the priorities of Title VI funding encourages -- or does it require? -- proficiency testing in line with the ACTFL guidelines. In other words, there is a de facto external determination of how foreign language programs will be run. Who will pay for the corps of testers and trainers, certification and recertification? The provisions for proficiency testing, or for that matter of any other new external development, cost money that is not part of routine departmental or program budgets. Moreover, the travel and professional expenses that are entailed in training testers and trainers will, in many cases, have to be earmarked for the same nonresearch foreign language faculty who in general do not have access to travel funds. Proficiency testing places on departments economic demands that must be acknowledged and weighed. *or maybe they should realize where the action is.*

*for me
its
incurral*

The private foundations have had, perhaps, a slightly different role in their influence on the governance of foreign languages. In the past two years, we have seen at least two major initiatives supported exclusively by private foundations: the National Foreign Language Center in Wash-

ington, D.C., and the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning. These two organizations came into being, I believe, not simply because foreign languages are fashionable once again, but because the private foundations saw both organizations, in their different ways, as presenting new alternatives to the way in which work in foreign language education has proceeded. Both the NFLC and the Consortium are, effectively, new experimental models of governance. The important feature is that the foundations have perceived that the business of foreign languages can or should be conducted differently.

The symposium on the governance of foreign language programs was intended to be a guide for the perplexed and the concerned, and this collection of essays is offered in the hope that it will provide a basis and focus for additional discussion and planning. In the end, once all the possibilities have been identified, clarified, and evaluated, the central issue is responsibility. Who will accept the responsibility for maintaining quality? Who will exercise leadership?

If we do not address these issues now, then we will have relinquished the decision to others.

*Others are already doing the job.
Good night forward*