A Dialogic Critique of Michael Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence Model: Proposal for a Dialogic Pedagogy

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Abstract

This paper extends a previous critique (Matsuo, 2012a) of Michael Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competence, or ICC, model (1997; 2009) through a more elaborated and sustained use of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic theory of human life and language. The principal aim is to use the critique to propose a foreign language education pedagogical framework based on dialogue, where the principle and use of dialogue organically and ethically builds active and deep communicative capacities and intercultural competence. I am proposing that dialogic pedagogy replace Communicative Language Teaching, or CLT, in Japan, because CLT's structural linguistic basis means it cannot be taught communicatively and therefore develops only passive understanding of English in Japanese learners. Throughout this paper, my priority is to try to do what Bakhtin urged, which is to bring theory into communion with lived experience. Thus, as I lay out the theoretical and practical framework, I strive to keep in the forefront a teacher's experience of practical reasoning in a classroom of fellow autonomous speaking subjects. In this paper, I am thinking as a teacher: I use dialogic theory because Bakhtin's writings provide a hermeneutics (Pellizzi, 2011) and create an exigence for intensely merging thought and theory into the performed, ethical, participative act of teaching (Matsuo, 2012b).

1 Introduction

1.1 Michael Byram's ICC Model: Recent developments in theory and practice

Increased consciousness of globalization has prompted governments, institutions and teachers to recognize the inadequacies of foreign language education's goal of communicative competence for communication in a global age. Intercultural competence, IC, or what Michael Byram's (1997; 2009) model calls Intercultural Communicative Competence, or ICC, looks increasingly likely to replace or at least supplement communicative competence. A number of ICC frameworks have been produced recently (see Byram, 2012a; 2012b), which draw on a combination of existing frameworks including Claire Kramsch's (2006) symbolic competence and Byram's ICC, but Byram's (1997) monograph, which includes his model, continues to be the most widely known.

Byram's model has the advantage of clarity. Byram readily acknowledges that this clarity comes at the price of reduction of complexities, so he directs critics to the "comprehensive and rich description" of the components in the original monograph where the model was published (Byram, 1997, p. 5). The extra "C" of Byram's ICC model in a field more usually

called IC, specifies its foreign language teaching heritage which traces to Hymes's (1972) communicative competence model, although the model was actually based on van Ek's (1986) framework for the Council of Europe. For teachers, another advantage of the model is its connection through Byram to the Common European Framework of Reference or CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), which is also rapidly globalizing, including its increasing use in Japan (see Byram and Parmenter, 2012).

Byram (2012a) reiterates the distinction between ICC and IC thusly: IC refers to encounters where culture is noticed but language is not, while ICC refers to encounters where both culture and language are "noticed." (The rub will lie, of course, in how the innocent-seeming verb "notice" is instantiated in pedagogy.) Byram (ibid.) extends the model's goal of Intercultural Speaker, or IS, to apply not just to learners but also to teachers. This move promotes parity of speakers when a teacher is acting in her capacity as IS during classroom activities, and it highlights that there are no intercultural "natives." Everyone's ICC can regress, or stagnate, as well as develop, teachers' ICC included.

Byram (ibid.) introduces what for me is a new term, iCLT, which is an acronym currently being used in Australia and New Zealand. Although the New Zealand government document (Ministry of Education, 2010) talks about fusing the language and intercultural aspects of language teaching and learning, my reading of the term using Byram (ibid.) is that iCLT in effect requires two types of pedagogy. CLT is to continue to be used for the language-based components but teaching for the cognitively defined *savoirs* is not primarily a linguistic endeavour. The "i" pedagogy is a matter of designing and implementing situations where "learners are encouraged if not *obliged* [italics added] to become curious, etc." (Byram, 2012a), in teaching for the *savoir être*, or attitudes component, for example. Teachers must find ways to "teach curiosity" and presumably, *oblige* students to exhibit curiosity and openness so that these attitudes can be assessed. Byram (2012b) says that language teacher training will have to be thoroughly revised to train teachers as to how to teach for the IC competence elements.

Finally, in the nearly two decades since the original publication of the model, Byram has made it progressively clearer that the model explicitly, intentionally and deliberately advocates a political objective for foreign language education. The central importance of IC's critical cultural awareness is indicated symbolically in the 2009 version of the model by its relocation to the centre of the model. It is crucial for teachers to understand that critical cultural awareness is the most important element of the model and the paramount goal of foreign language teaching as far as Michael Byram is concerned.

Increasingly, Byram states that his critical cultural awareness is similar to the criticality assumed by Kramsch's symbolic competence, but Kramsch's competence goal is not necessarily one of political activism, although she uses postcolonial theory in her work. As for me, I claim that dialogic pedagogy, with its relentless focus on language as speech communication in dialogue, will develop a deep and active understanding of language (both L1 and L2, i.e. "language"/ "national language") that is very similar to Kramsch's competence but as will be clear, my work is based almost entirely on Bakhtin's dialogic theory of language which I believe is more amenable to being turned into pedagogy than Kramsch's work. Kramsch has not developed a didactics while dialogic theory provides a comprehensive and integrated pedagogy of language, communication, and ethics.

2 Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic theory of human existence and language: A short summary and introductory critique of Byram's ICC model

2.1 The advantages of a dialogic pedagogy over CLT

This necessarily brief summary of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic theory will concentrate on those elements of Bakhtin's theory which create significant points of difference with various aspects of Byram's model. I will use those differences and my critique of the model to clarify the set of terms I am using to build a dialogic pedagogical framework.

I claim a dialogic pedagogy's advantages over CLT are as follows:
- A dialogic pedagogy is truly communicative and so promotes greater acquisition;
- A dialogic pedagogy integrates ethics into the pedagogy
  - ➤ through the dialogic utterance and its patterns of the self-other relations that are possible in dialogue; and
  - ➤ through its non-normative ethics where ethics depends on all particulars of the unique, unrepeatable dialogic speech situation;
- A dialogic pedagogy's approach to knowledge as collective, provisional and constantly developing creates
  - ➤ greater language acquisition,
  - ➤ greater understanding of the processes that create knowledge,
  - ➤ wider, deeper, more active participation
  - ➤ and the development of the self through internally persuasive discourse;
- A dialogic pedagogy develops active understanding of English, which means that Japanese learners can contribute to the global conversation in English, or what Bakhtin called the world symposium (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 293).

2.2 Mikhail Bakhtin's opposition to Saussure's structural linguistics; the structural linguistic basis of CLT

Bakhtin (1895-1975) was a Russian (and Soviet) philosopher of language. A near contemporary of Ferdinand de Saussure, he opposed Saussure's structural linguistics and used that opposition to Saussure to create a dialogic theory of language that had its own linguistics of discourse, which Bakhtin called a metalinguistics (Bakhtin 1981; 1984; 1986; see Ivanov, 2008). For Bakhtin, Saussure's basic unit was the sentence, or even more basic, and for Bakhtin even more ridiculous, the single sign in isolation. For Bakhtin, single signs in isolation hardly ever occur and they are too abstracted. Language as it really exists is as speech communication in dialogue. The basic unit of language in speech communication is the dialogic utterance.

I wish to contrast this understanding of language as it really exists as *speech communication in dialogue*, with the structural linguistic basis of CLT, which Byram's model uses for instruction. The notion of competence in CLT is based on a structural theory of language that can be traced to Chomsky (see Howatt, 2009) who in turn traces to Saussure. All models like Byram's that trace to Hymes de facto base linguistic competence on a structural theory of language (Matsuo, 2011; see also below), and this is notwithstanding the use of van Ek's framework as the basis for Byram's model.

CLT is built on a contradiction: a structural theory of language is incapable of being taught communicatively. The unity of the system is a creation of the mind which pleases the

mind. CLT's default basic unit is the structural unit of the sentence, but in the sentence, words function as signals, technical means for indicating this or that object. Teachers, when teaching grammar, will be orienting to, and orienting *students* to, signals. In contrast, dialogic pedagogy is based on the communicative unit of the utterance, where words, through their "ideological impletion," are signs (Voloshinov, 1973). The dialogic utterance needs to use the "anonymous and social aspects of language" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272), i.e. the forces that create "grammar" (see centripetal forces, below), but it is always and simultaneously "filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance" (Bakhtin, ibid.). It is the teacher's job to draw attention to these different kinds of language, but mostly, she has to progressively and continually put signs in play in sustained and vivid, versatile ways.

2.3 Mikhail Bakhtin's opposition to Western European rationalism and its consolidation of monolithic (monologic) thought

For Bakhtin, Saussure's language as system is yet another symptom of Western European rationalism, which has brought about the consolidation of monolithic thought—what Bakhtin calls *monologic* thought, or *abstract theoreticism*. Monologism affirms the unity of existence which is further abstracted into the unity of the consciousness (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 80). The world becomes a unitary truth perceived through a single consciousness. I argue this principle of unitary truth through a single consciousness is latent in Byram's model. It makes its influence felt in the model's de facto location of competence within the individual; in the way that individual is depicted, which is historically contingent and culturally particular, i.e. rational, conscious, intentional; and it has the monologic "single-toned quality" (Bakhtin, ibid.) in how it orients to knowledge and ethics.

2.4 Using Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of outsidedness to turn theory to account

Bakhtin's term of *outsidedness* is useful because it affords me a "particular corner…in apperception" from which I can see something in terms of the categories which fix it in space and time (Holquist, 2002, p. 30). Outsidedness allows us to see Byram's model as a cultural artifact. However, it is not enough to use outsidedness to fix something in space and time. Outsidedness should prompt us to turn monologic knowledge *to account* by asking new questions of the answers it has considered as settled.

2.5 Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic utterance as the basis for a dialogic foreign language pedagogy

Mikhail Bakhtin did not actually deal with pedagogy, and certainly referred hardly at all to foreign language pedagogy except to note in passing the need for accuracy. But his dialogic theory can be used to build a language pedagogy because it places language at the centre of life and focuses relentlessly on language as it really exists. What Holquist (2002) called Bakhtin's "masterstroke" was to recognize that human existence, action, knowledge and ethics is *linguistic*, that is to say, not merely expressed in language, but determined by the nature and concrete existence of language as speech communication in dialogue, which is based on the dialogic utterance.

The dialogic utterance is a response to the world and to other persons. I argue that if human action, knowledge and ethics is linguistic and can be modeled on the principle of dialogue, then dialogue—language—is not only obviously indispensable in foreign language education, but it constitutes a more organic way to teach for the IC component, the elements of which in Byram's model are *non*-linguistic and cognitive and do not make linguistic concerns primary in teaching them. I argue that the "i" in iCLT creates an unnecessary barrier between the goal and the means for achieving it and that it directs teachers' attention away from the paramount consideration of the utterance and the communicative act.

In dialogic theory, the principle of dialogue entails the presence of the other so it creates a pedagogy that *integrates* language, communication and ethics in its methodology. Ethics inheres in the types or patterns of self-other relations that are possible in discourse. The dialogic utterance is constituted on the basis of "addressivity," i.e. it is constructed as a *response* to someone and in order to *be responded to*. Ethics inheres in utterances because our response, which includes the very language forms that comprise the dialogic utterance, its emotional-volitional tone, and whether it addresses an other as a voiceless, faceless object (using monologic discourse) or as a fellow autonomous subject (dialogic discourse)—our response is our respons*ibility*. I am responsible for my responses because I author them. The teacher's understanding of the emotion in utterances, and the attention she draws to it when explaining the utterance, means affect is built into the basic unit of instruction, unlike CLT which until relatively recently hardly addressed affect in language teaching, which is again a function of its rational view of communication and because there is no emotion in a language as system.

2.6 Mikhail Bakhtin's non-normative view of ethics and Byram's rights and rationality program for critical cultural awareness

Ethics in dialogic theory is not normative, unlike the ethics which is espoused in Byram's model's IC component's rights and rationality program.[1] In dialogic theory, ethics is not systematizable even *within* a culture because the application of a set of rules and general principles to a situation constitutes monologic action; that is to say, the mechanical application of abstract (monologic) rules actually removes an individual's responsibility for their actions in life, or what Bakhtin called the unique event of moral co-being. (Russian allows Bakhtin to play on words when he calls existence the event of co-being: s*obytie sobytiya*/ событие события in Russian.)[2] Dialogic ethics inheres in the particular concrete aspects of life/eventness in the moment (the event of co-being); as Morson and Emerson note (1990), dialogic ethics is fundamentally located in all the particulars or as many of them as it is possible to take account of, of particular situations.

If ethics is not systemizable even within a culture, then a unitary program of ethics will certainly be problematic in intercultural ethics. Different cultures perceive, recognize and resolve situations differently, and they have different language for resolving these situations, i.e. the social combinations of language—the speech genres—are constituted differently. Social situations *are* combinations of speech genres and discourse *IS* all the situations in a

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[1] Bakhtin was not a relativist because for him, relativism is a more pernicious form of monlogism because it simply offers an infinity of monologizations (see Morson and Emerson, 1990, p. 59).

[2] Holquist (2002) explains that the normal Russian word for event is *sobytie*. The root—*bytie*—is the word for being, but the prefix—*so*—means sharedness or togetherness. Holquist claims: "'Being' for Bakhtin…is not just an event, but an event that is shared. Being is simultaneity; it is always *co*-being" (p. 25, original emphasis).

culture. The linguistic dimension of situations and their ethics need to be brought to attention and discussed, for cross-cultural generalizability and particularity. Direct and continuous experience of communicative acts and processes will help students understand how the meaning of what is observed depends on the place from which it is observed.

A dialogic pedagogy prioritizes communicative events and acts; a pedagogy based on direct experience of intercultural situations, and augmented by intercultural discussions of the dimensions and understanding of situations and possible resolutions of conflict, builds a more thoroughgoing-because-embodied IC than having students increase their knowledge of countries. To an extent, Byram's model allows for this through the replacement of the native-speaker with the Intercultural Speaker and the focus on the need to mediate between cultures, but the single-toned quality of the explanation of knowledge and ethics and their location within the single individual put the emphasis on the monologic expression of the knowledge and ethics. It is hard not to read Byram's rights and rationality program as normative ethics: a matter of applying a general set of culturally particular principles (the Kantian and modern German politische bildung rights and rationality program) as a universal standard for resolving misunderstandings or conflicts.

2.7 Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic theory of knowledge and monologic, stable, settled knowledge in Byram's model

The dialogic understanding of knowledge is never unitary, never static and if an answer does not give rise to a new question it falls out of the dialogue (Bakhtin, 1986). Our growing consciousness of globalization and experiences in online chat rooms allow us to see in action what Bakhtin understood almost a century ago. Knowledge is constantly shifting through tiny, imperceptible changes in the status quo. We act on those tiny changes by making tiny alterations to the speech we use to act on them (Medvedev, 1978). Now the internet captures everyone's utterances so we can see for ourselves what was ever thus: the polyphony of unmerged voices that contribute to knowledge, ensuring that knowledge is never finalized; we can see how knowledge changes in response to new events and new information, and the new words or phrasings that are brought to bear on them. We can see for ourselves how, just as Bakhtin said, everyone's utterances enter the unbroken ideological chain of what he called the world symposium (Bakhtin, 1984).

Again, dialogue is the overarching principle that explains a Bakhtinian understanding of knowledge: in knowledge, there is always more than one actor, more than one consciousness (see Holquist, ibid.), and if an answer stops the dialogue, then this is the forced synthesis of dialectic and it is a mistake because in trying to finalize knowledge, it hits the bottom like a fish knocking the bottom of an aquarium (Bakhtin, 1986).

Although Byram's understanding of cultures has continued to place greater emphasis on its processual features (Byram, 2012b), the body of knowledge that students should learn about and integrate is traditionally depicted, i.e. it imagines that there is a stable body of knowledge that is capable of providing finalized answers about countries. While it is true that facts and figures can be found, these do not stay fixed in students' or teachers' memories. In practice in the classroom, it is much better for language acquisition, for the task of understanding cultures as processes, and for teaching students to work collaboratively, to adopt a dialogic stance to knowledge as collective (it welcomes everyone's contribution) and provisional (it must be destabilized and constructed afresh if it is to be responsive to events in the world). The dialogic view of knowledge is truer to the infinitely varied, polyphonic nature

of the world, and it allows learners to understand these selfsame processes of destabilization, readjustment, and re-construction that have brought them to their present, stable-for-now understanding.

A dialogic pedagogy view of knowledge is more representative of what happens to knowledge in intercultural situations when people orient to each other from their different worldviews and express knowledge differently, i.e. using the language forms that express their cultural perspective. These processes experienced in dialogic learning may help students do more than "tolerate" ambiguity (see Kramsch's 2006 symbolic competence), and instead see it as a natural stage in communicative processes, and a way to expand one's understandings of words. Polyphony of speaking subjects in unique unrepeatable moments where subjects express and embody their ethics is crucial for creating internally persuasive discourse (see below).

2.8 Mikhail Bakhtin's outsidedness for manipulating/orchestrating discourse

In dialogic pedagogy discourse is crucial, but most of our familiar pedagogic theory takes it for granted and talks about it in the most general terms. Yet it is discourse that determines a class's trajectory and forms its deep currents. So here I return to a second use of Bakhtin's outsidedness. As well as affording teachers an outside perspective on historical phenomena such as one's own discipline, and CLT, it also prompts teachers to "move" outside themselves during teaching—to author themselves and the classroom. Outsidedness allows a way of reflecting on practice during practice, manipulating—or orchestrating, if you prefer— monologic (authoritative) discourse, which students respond to in cognition; and dialogic discourse, where speakers relate to each other as fellow autonomous subjects and students and teachers respond in integral understanding.

Dialogic pedagogy makes use of these different modes of address to help teachers specify the types of attention, understanding and response they will elicit in their learners; whether the learners will be acquiring language through dialogic utterances, or committing linguistic knowledge, i.e. words-as-signals, to memory; the orientations of students to knowledge in the L2; and the kinds of relations between persons. The intelligent use of discourse is crucial to develop ethical persons' intercultural competence.

2.9 Mikhail Bakhtin's subject to subject mode of address and dialogic polyphony for the evolution of the self and capacities for empathy

Dialogue's preferred mode of address of one self to an other is subject to subject. The equation of a person's words with their personhood and worldview means dialogue is a more relational understanding of communication. The relational view of communication is not only a more common one around the globe but is simply truer to the nature of communication than the de facto rational view of communication espoused by the ICC model as a function of its model type, which, as noted, locates competence in a rational, intentional, conscious individual. Indeed, a relational view of communication challenges the utility and suitability of the very idea of "competence" (see Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009; see also Deardorff, 2009, for perspectives on intercultural competence from several locations around the world including Africa, Latin America, and the Arab world).

In a classroom where everyone is addressed as fellow autonomous subjects, knowledge is created by those subjects together in *dialogic polyphony*—unmerged voices where people talk

with each other, not *at* each other. Dialogic polyphony creates what Bakhtin calls *internally persuasive discourse* (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345), where each person acknowledges and assimilates the words/worldviews of others (see also Matsuo, 2013). As learners' discourse develops over a cycle of lessons, the teacher encourages learners to experiment with words and ideas and learners become increasingly discriminating about the words and worldviews they absorb.

Internally persuasive discourse occurs because the utterance is always half someone else's: as noted, it is constituted linguistically and emotionally as a response and to be responded to. "Each and every word [in an utterance] expresses the 'one' in relation to the 'other.' I give myself verbal shape from the other's point of view, ultimately, from the point of view of the community to which I belong" (Voloshinov, 1973, p. 86). Here we can see how the teacher can nurture and guide learners' utterances to bring forth the ideological (here, concerning ideas, not politics) and emotional evolution of the individual consciousness, which will be intercultural precisely because of the presence of unmerged voices in dialogic polyphony, where there is not chaos but everyone's words are held together through the dialogic relations of the classroom.

The above description of the dialogic classroom is redolent of Kramsch's (1993; 1999) notion of *thirdness*, a notion which is also important in Bakhtin (1986). The intercultural speaker teacher, who possesses more than one language and higher ICC than the learners, creates a classroom where "a social, linguistic reality that is born from the L1 speech environment of the learners and the social environment of the L2 native-speaker…[creates] a third culture in its own right (Kramsch, 1993, p. 9) Furthermore, the explanation in the preceding paragraph of dialogic polyphony, orchestrated by the teacher, gives practical guidance to how teachers can employ discourse in practical reasoning (see also below) so that learners will attain what in Kramsch's terms are "symbolic goals," and what for dialogic pedagogy are goals of word/discourse.

Kramsch's goals are expressed as: the production of complexity, tolerance of ambiguity and form as meaning. I see meaningful parallels between Kramsch's poststructuralist expression of symbolic competence and Bakhtin's word/discourse goals for an ethical person: "An independent, responsible and active discourse is *the* fundamental indicator of an ethical, legal and political human being" (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 349-350).

3 Extending the dialogic critique of the model's instructional approach of Communicative Language Teaching, or CLT; and iCLT

CLT is the global default approach to teaching English and so Byram's model uses CLT as the instructional approach for its language-related components (linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competences). If we investigate CLT's history and the present situation, it is hard to imagine how an approach with so many difficulties and contradictions could have become so successful.

CLT has become the global default approach *despite* its disputed historical and theoretical origins (see Byram and Mendez Garcia, 2009; Howatt, 2009); *despite* theoretical incompatibilities in those (disputed) founding *L1* theories of Hymes (i.e. also Chomsky; see Howatt, ibid.) and Halliday (Widdowson, 1989; 2007); *despite* conflicting positional descriptions, e.g. strong and weak versions (Whitley, 1993, cited in Burns, 2007); *despite* reductive teacher practices (Byrnes, 2006); and *despite* the cultural issues of exporting a Western-origin pedagogy around the globe (Holliday, 1994). CLT's history has been one of

retrofitting theory into it while practice races on ahead as it must; see Byram and Mendez Garcia (ibid.) for all the theories and pedagogic approaches that are supposed to inform CLT. A recent retrofit/recalibration is from CLT pioneer, Christopher Candlin (2013), who downplays Halliday and Hymes and emphasizes social-constructivist theory.

From a dialogic standpoint, the present dysfunctional situation of CLT— classrooms that are hybrids of grammar-translation and "communicative" activities that generate only sporadic genuine communication—was a foregone conclusion, the inevitable result of the fatal contradiction between a structural linguistic theory of English L2 which cannot break out of itself and the attempt to teach that system communicatively. Even sociolinguistic theory such as speech act theory or Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, SFL, cannot bridge this chasm because they capitulate to Western theory's erroneous love of system. Halliday, for instance, includes the social dimensions of language in his SFL theory but he gives the social *primacy*, mapping social structures *onto* language (Freadman, 1994). For dialogic thinkers, this constitutes an error because we use language to *resolve* situations, not to mirror them (Voloshinov, 1976, p. 100).

Halliday's SFL is a system which is a semantic *record* of previous pragmatic use (Widdowson, 1989; 2007), so in the sense that it is a system, it is not qualitatively different from other systems such as Chomsky's because no language as system can break out into the world. Halliday's theory has the advantage that it can explain word choice and discourse structure, but as it is a record it is not dynamic and cannot break into the world of practical reasoning. SFL grammar leads language teachers up essentially the same cul-de-sac as Chomsky's generative grammar.

3.1 Dialogic critique of intercultural communicative language teaching, or iCLT

iCLT is being used in Australia and New Zealand to teach for the IC component of Byram's model (Ministry of Education, 2010). The "i" pedagogy is conceived not primarily as a linguistic pedagogy but as one of designing situations that encourage or even oblige, say, learners to exhibit dimensions of the savoirs that comprise IC (Byram, 2012a). This "i" pedagogy follows the logic of Byram's model's conceptual division between the non-linguistic, cognitively defined components and the language components but as yet it has derived no principled basis for teaching the savoirs. For those who define intercultural competence as cognitive, presumably the advantage of iCLT is that it ensures that intercultural knowledge and skills are taught separately, rather than mixed in with language concerns where they might be neglected.

From a dialogic viewpoint, the separation is unnecessary and counterproductive because knowledge and even consciousness are linguistic. In pedagogic practice, language is the indispensable medium and the means of instruction, and it is speech/the dialogic utterance that comprises and deepens understanding and emotional intelligence, and intercultural competence, and the foreign language classroom is already an intercultural space.

In this respect, from a dialogic viewpoint, Kramsch's notion of symbolic competence is preferable to Byram's ICC because both goal and the methods to achieve the goal are linguistic. As noted above, Kramsch's poststructuralist ideas are also to be found in Bakhtin; e.g. thirdness, and (see below) borderzones, and ecological language. For me as a teacher, Bakhtin's dialogic theory is preferable because the theory is founded on the principle of dialogue, so that on the basis of the dialogic utterance, the theory can be seamlessly worked into a pedagogy that integrates communicative processes and ethics.

4 Proposal of a dialogic pedagogy for foreign language education in Japan

4.1 A dialogic theory of language to replace CLT's structural linguistics

In dialogic theory a natural or national language is not a hermetic system but an aggregate of speech genres, i.e. recurring social combinations of words, such as "Can I help you?" or "What can I do for you?" or "What seems to be the problem?" (Bakhtin, 1986). Discourse is the relationships between these speech genres which are always adjusting imperceptibly because the world, which seems stable in the status quo, is actually undergoing tiny, tiny alterations, and the words/utterances that act on these changes are also adjusting and altering (see above regarding knowledge; see Medvedev, 1978).

Words in speech genres are subject to unifying, stabilizing, or what Bakhtin calls *centripetal* forces such as language teachers (!), canonical literature, and national media, but also *centrifugal* forces, such as teenagers' online chats or the utterances of speakers of English as a lingua franca. Whether it is a native-speaker's or a non-native-speaker's, "[e]very utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centripetal and centrifugal forces are brought to bear" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272). These forces account for language's dynamism and change; change is happening all the time to English and other languages. Teachers and the general public need to understand that there is nothing that can be done to stop these forces, and that neither the centripetal forces nor the centrifugal forces will win outright victory.

If we are to move beyond CLT's present impasse of its structural linguistic basis which cannot be taught communicatively, we need a theory that moves beyond language as a closed system with its own logic (Kramsch, 2002 cited in Kramsch, 2012). Kramsch (1993) was among the first of our intercultural competence theorists to reject the notion of native-speaker competence on the basis of power asymmetry and also for the very good reason that the ideal native-speaker does not actually exist! Kramsch (1998) predicted that intercultural speakers would need to operate on borderzones between language and language varieties and so calls for an ecological view of language (Kramsch, 2002, cited in Kramsch, 2012).

In Bakhtin's dialogic theory, the notion of borderzones is also crucial. Persons and cultures are seen as operating essentially on their borderzones (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 294; see also below the critique of culture in Byram's model). Dialogic theory already provides an ecological theory of language through Bakhtin's notions of *polyglossia* (the presence of more than one natural or national languages in a person); and *heteroglossia* (the simultaneous co-existence and cohabitation within a national or natural language of various epochs, and languages of social groups; i.e. Kramsch's ecological view of language). For his explanations of how languages intersect and co-habit, see Bakhtin (1981; 1984; 1986) and also Ivanov (2008).

Although we talk of eco*systems*, ecosystems are not hermetically sealed but undergoing tiny, tiny alterations. Bakhtin does not make a system of his ecological view of language, but says that what monologic theory calls systems are actually *forces* that strive to unify (i.e. the centripetal and centrifugal forces noted above). These forces can only achieve relative unity because language is always changing, going through tiny, tiny alterations.

4.2 A dialogic pedagogy for English acquisition and active understanding for Japanese students

In 2020, the English exam of Japan's National Center Test for University Admissions will no longer exist. Instead, university admission will depend on students' scores on various commercial, government-approved English language tests such as the Step Test, TOEIC or IELTS tests. It seems reasonable to assume that teachers of English in Japanese high schools will finally implement CLT to teach for these tests, although CLT cannot be a communicative pedagogy because of its view of language as a system of interlocking parts. It is also possible, given the *global jinzai* project of Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, or MEXT, that MEXT may follow other governments such as those of Australia and New Zealand, or influential Asian institutions such as the National University of Singapore (see Chen, 2013), and supplement or replace communicative competence with intercultural competence as a learner goal.

Burns's (2007) research has shown that hybrid grammar-translation and communicative practices are not only widespread, but that teachers in those classrooms consider their practices compatible with CLT. The "communicative" in CLT, then, has become largely symbolic, meaning what anyone wants it to mean (Matsuo, 2013). If teachers think that adopting CLT will finally improve language education in Japan, they are making a mistake.

CLT's basic unit is the sentence because of its structural linguistic basis. The words in sentences are semantically fixed. In dialogic terms, the words in sentences that are taught *as* sentences or used in communicative activities that do not create genuine communication are functioning as *signals*—each signal signals to another for a certain preposition or a certain verb ending, for instance. Signals are technical means for indicating this or that object (Voloshinov, 1973, p. 68); they can be learned or memorized but not acquired. In a dialogic approach it is certainly necessary for the teacher to explain the signals (because we language teachers constitute some of the centripetal forces acting on language) but the teacher should make it absolutely plain to the students that she is explaining grammar and that this portion of the lesson is for committing to memory. The teacher must explain why grammar is to be learned, why signals are not the same as signs and why students should try to use the words in English actively as signs. She needs to explain these processes in order to give students a sense of theory and control over their learning.

A dialogic pedagogy understands language is an aggregate of speech genres: a native speaker of a language has not acquired a system but an aggregate of speech genres. We need English language academics in Japan to create an English language syllabus for learners based on how words live in genres and discourse. It will be language teachers' jobs to turn L2 English signals into signs—to have words become communicative, to get words to really mean, so that the word "stone," for example, becomes an image of natural inertia—and in having ideological impletion, is available to be put in play in active understanding for acquisition (see Voloshinov, 1973).

A structural view of language means that words in sentences are semantically fixed and can be understood only passively, by what Bakhtin calls recognition in cognition. Passive understanding is all we can expect from grammar-translation and/or CLT practices, which is not good enough for communication in a globalizing world. Passive understanding is no understanding at all:

> A passive understanding…constitutes nothing new to the word under consideration, only mirroring it, seeking, at its most ambitious, merely the full reproduction of that

which is already given in the word—even such an understanding never goes beyond the boundaries of the word's context and in no way enriches the word. Therefore, insofar as the speaker operates with such a passive understanding, nothing new can be introduced into his discourse (p. 281)

The key point for Japanese classrooms is that for too many students, i.e. the majority of Japanese young persons who do not go abroad to study English, the words in English rarely get to live an active life, they rarely develop beyond a signals status. Or, if they do, a word is seen as being equivalent to such and such a Japanese word. If words stay as signals or as mere equivalents of L1 counterparts, then Japanese students can contribute nothing new to the words.

If we keep teaching English for passive understanding in Japan, then Japanese students will be prevented from contributing anything new to the global discourse. They will not be able to explain Japan effectively, as MEXT, wants them to do in its *global jinzai* project. Questions of nationality and government policy aside, Japanese young people will not be able to use another language to express their personhood or stamp their mark on discourse as all humans want to do.

I am arguing for a dialogic pedagogy because the subject-subject relations it creates generate genuine communication. Texts in the classroom become mere pretexts: they introduce words teachers will progressively endow with deeper meaning throughout the course of the syllabus. The teacher wants students to enrich English words through contributing to them from their own unique worldview, thereby entering the words into the world symposium in English, and expanding words' capacities to mean.

4.3 Proposal of a dialogic pedagogical framework for English language education in Japan

Here is my proposal for a dialogic foreign language pedagogy. It adapts Bakhtin's (1986) methodology of the human sciences for a pedagogy of word/discourse:

1. The teacher gets students to perceive L2 words, look at their shapes, listen to and make their sounds;
2. The L2 words appear regularly and progressively in subsequent lessons where students recognize words as familiar/unfamiliar;
3. Students progressively understand the significance of the words in various contexts, i.e. their significance in a particular text; a word's "friends" that it often hangs out with; students begin to glimpse words' infinite contextual possibilities;
4. The teacher introduces various genres and elicits students' active dialogic understanding—agreeing with words, or disagreeing—the evaluative aspect of understanding (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 159);
5. Teachers create cycles where words that have "reached" stages three and four are applied to new material, new conditions, new genres; words progressively enter into inter-animating relationships with new contexts (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345-346). Teachers deepen the evaluative aspect of understanding (Bakhin, 1986, p. 59).

Language teachers manipulate or orchestrate the discourse because we know the syllabus—the words that must be understood, placed in new relationships with other words,

and evaluated in active dialogic understanding. But once the utterance creates further unique events in the classroom, the teacher's "manipulation" is overtaken by the reciprocal relationships arising in the new situation's own dynamic. We will all forget that there has been manipulation, and the "acts merge inseparably into a unified process" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 159).

5 Dialogic critique of the model type

5.1 Byram's model as individual-oriented list-type model: Theoretical and pedagogical limitations due to model type

Michael Byram's ICC model is becoming more influential because of intensifying globalization and also because the model makes a clear visual impact. Byram acknowledges that clarity comes at the price of reductions in complexities. I have addressed the impact of those reductions elsewhere (Matsuo, 2012a): i.e. the theoretical and pedagogical limitations caused by the theoretical weakness of the model type itself. To recap briefly here, the model is an individual-oriented list-type model. Because it is only a list, the model cannot explain the relations between its components. The model can identify only a threshold level of competence, but cannot predict its development. Its pedagogical application is likewise limited to identifying the scope of the components, specifying teaching objectives and guiding evaluation of learner outcomes.

5.2 Changes to the model: 1997 and 2009 versions

It is important to notice the significant changes that have been made to the 2009 version of the model. The bi-directional arrows between the components have been removed, removing the concept of the interrelation of components. Crucially, critical cultural awareness has been moved to the centre of the model in 2009. The move is both literal and figurative: there should be no doubt that critical cultural awareness is the paramount goal of Byram's ICC pedagogy. Byram uses French and German political education theory to demonstrate clearly that foreign language education should have political activist objectives. These French and German notions are to remain as guidelines for action even with the globalization of the model: Byram (2008) stipulates that language teaching for intercultural citizenship involves action in the world.

5.3 Using Bakhtin's outsidedness to reveal the historically contingent and culturally particular assumptions of the model

Given that the model is a prescriptive one with a deliberate political cast, teachers need to probe beyond Byram's own explanations for his choice of the model's specific components and their respective elements. Using Bakhtin's outsidedness allows teachers to approach the model as a cultural artifact, which reveals its historically contingent, culturally particular assumptions.

Byram's model is ethnocentric because, like the majority of Western/Anglo origin IC models, it is individual-oriented, and thus typical of a Western worldview that places the

single individual at the centre of the world and of thought about the world. The model de facto locates competence within the individual. The descriptions of the model's competences are written in a way that reflect the outlook of the single individual, including the language-related competences, which are unified using perspectives from autonomous linguistics, and therefore remain essentially *intra*-individual. Byram (1997) discusses the importance of communication but presumably, a specifically *extra*-individual competence disturbs the model's logic, and so Byram does not include a specifically communication focused competence even though one was available to him through van Ek's (1986) strategic competence. The individual-oriented model creates a tension between the intrapersonal location of competence and the goal of ICC itself, which is the interpersonal, intercultural goal of becoming a person who can repeatedly *relate* to people from other countries (where countries does seem to mean cultures). The decision to make a list model that is focused on a single individual's outlook, as opposed, say, to a co-orientational model, means there is no conceptualization of the communicative acts which develop competence, and thus the whole complex of extra-individual phenomena in which crucial elements of competence also inhere disappears from consideration.

From a dialogic perspective, locating competence in the individual means that the central importance of the utterance for co-orientation and relation in communication is pushed to the periphery. If the utterance becomes peripheral, then situation also drops from focal attention. This is a fatal oversight because the social situation is the central arena where ICC develops, where ethics are displayed, *in which* ethics inhere, and through which students will communicate in real situations in life. Culture, especially in the foreign language classroom, is discourse.

In Byram's model, the rights and rationality program provides the moral outlook for dealing with difficulties, but, as I have argued above, ethics are not systematizable within a culture let alone across cultures. The individual focus of Byram's model is not merely myopic in locating competence within the individual; the culturally particular rules and principles the model mandates for that individual to apply to situations are similarly culturally biased and normative. Kantian principles are not universal and cultures are particular. Thus, it is far from certain that the moral principles stipulated by Byram can actually be used to resolve conflicts because the crucial point is that cultures to a great extent *are* discourses. Cultures perceive, recognize and resolve situations differently and so they realize them differently using different speech genres: i.e. this is Malinowski's insight that a culture is linguistically realized through the sum of its genres. The model highlights the relations between language and culture but the relationship between communication and culture receives less prominence.

The model displays ethnocentrism in its depiction of the individual as (too) conscious, (too) rational, and (too) intentional (again, see Spitzberg and Changnon, ibid.). This view of the individual is informed by the Enlightenment of the 18th century, transposed into the Western-dominated discourse of universal human rights that followed World War II. Students schooled in Western Europe and North America will recognize this discourse more readily than students in many other parts of the world, since residues of Enlightenment discourses remain in the regions' languages and worldview. However, even in the West, this discourse coexists with, and may have been superseded by, more recent discursively created identities, such as sociological and postmodern identities (Hall, 1995).

For teachers and students in other parts of the world, the problem becomes more complex because even assuming a teacher wishes to implement the model, the historical background behind the rationality of the Intercultural Speaker may not be transparent or familiar. Even in countries which have interacted with the Enlightenment such as Japan, the import of

Enlightenment ideas occurred at a later stage in history and these ideas flowed along very different lines of traffic, intermingling with quite different native or other already established highly assimilated discourses, so Enlightenment ideas will not have been universally interpreted in the same way. It may not be that the values and ethics Byram mandates are incompatible with Japanese values and ethics but the problem for the teacher is that Byram stipulates that what are aspirational goals should be the basis for political action. Furthermore, it is still not yet absolutely clear that the "human rights morality" Byram proposes (Byram, 2009, p. 324) is universally accepted or always everywhere applicable. Moreover, it is not a simple matter for teachers to find the discursive junctures to use to relate the Western European and Japanese worldviews: English attributes and their Japanese translations are not always "equivalent."

Finally, while in the abstract, it is difficult to argue against the virtues of a speaker who is conscious, rational and intentional, not only is the rational view of communication a minority view around the globe but it is arguable whether it is even applicable to most speakers anywhere.

6 Culture in the model

6.1 Dialogic critique of national culture in Byram's model

Michael Byram did not define culture in his original monograph, but because of the context in which the model was created, i.e. the Council of Europe in the 1990s, which was engaged in forging closer links and mutual understanding among its members, by default the model's view of culture was culture as national culture, tied to the idea of territorial and political borders and the nation-state. Byram's recent thinking focuses less on the territorial, static idea of national culture and more on cultures as processes (Byram, 2012b), but it should also be noted that even in 1997, he discussed the importance of understanding cultures as processual.

The notion of national culture has generated numerous critiques on the grounds that it presents nations as being more homogenous than they are (Kramsch, 1998; 1999); and as if their borders are hermetically sealed (Belz, 2007; Matsuo, 2012a; 2012b) with clear lines of demarcation. Byram has countered with the justification of: 1) the context of the model's time and place, as noted above; 2) his need to negotiate between the optimum level of abstraction of the model and the need to use specific examples: i.e. Byram (1997) noted that he could also have referred to communities rather than countries; 3) the need to explain to learners how elites use power to dominate the discourse of national culture. Byram also argues that arguments can be made that national cultures do in fact exist: e.g. he notes the existence of grammars of national culture (see Fox, 2004, cited in Byram, 2009; see also Hymes, 1972, who adduced Kenneth Burke's theory of a cultural grammar).

In a dialogic perspective, any metaphor of sovereign territory and boundaries is faulty for understanding persons and cultures because although countries and persons of necessity occupy a specific physical space, they are never spatial wholes. A culture and an individual person's psyche exist on their boundaries.

A cultural domain has no inner territory. It is located entirely upon boundaries...Every cultural act lives essentially on the boundaries and it derives its seriousness and significance from this fact. Separated by abstraction from these boundaries, it loses the ground of its being and becomes vacuous, arrogant, it degenerates and dies (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 274).

The above quotation shows how Bakhtin's writing captures "the sheer quality of happening" (Holquist, 1993, p. x). Here, we can recognize the feeling of what it is like, moment by moment, to be living in a hyper-connected, multipolar/multilateral world. This "all liminal," "all threshold" understanding of persons and cultures is so fluid that it can be hard to hold onto conceptually—it has the unformed-ness of the absolute present. It is easily dislodged from cognition by our long-held, taught-about, default understanding of territory and notions of space or place, which, again, are cognitively "easier" because stable and familiar.

Unfortunately, and no doubt particularly in the Cartesian West, we tend to lapse back into these stably-held-in-cognition notions and the result is binaries of internal/external; them/us; and understanding cultures as "containers." Understanding cultures as containers gives rise to notions of cultures as separate impenetrable wholes that may collide (see Morson and Emerson, 1990), and the unfortunate metaphors about culture that dominate many of the stories we read and see in the news today: e.g. culture as the clash of civilizations; culture as the new fault line of conflict (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). (At the same time, however, there is also a growing awareness in the more thoughtful mass media of the negative effects of this discourse and its inadequacy for solving problems.)

6.2 A dialogic perspective on teaching culture

Bakhtin focuses relentlessly on the two ways that humans are active in cognitive activity and the critical differences between them, which I will extend here to inform teaching for intercultural competence. There is: "Thought about the world and thought in the world" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 162). In the former, a person or a culture become objects of knowledge, "perceived and cognized as a thing" (Bakhtin, ibid. p. 161); they are only a voiceless thing. Thought *in* the world, in stark contrast, is creative understanding on the boundaries by a subject, who, as a subject, is never an objectified thing, never voiceless; this type of cognition is active, responsive, creative, "emotional-volitional"—*dialogic*. Both ways of thinking are inevitable so it is crucial that teachers are aware of the mode of thought they are using and the type of teacher discourse each mode is likely to induce.

If we are going to "teach" culture (and of course learners are not clean slates; they already have their own knowledge and attitudes about cultures), national culture, or indeed any social group we care to name, is already an abstraction; it is stable and held easily in cognition. When abstraction is allowed to stand in for the real thing, i.e. the world-as-event where cultures and persons exist on their boundaries, then that abstraction makes those cultures and persons "vacuous."

To contemplate a thing lends itself to expounding upon the thing using monologic discourse, which brings forth its corresponding type of reception: students will recognize the culture, the *thing*, only in cognition. That is to say, what is said will be understood more or less passively as making some kind of sense, conveying some kind of information. This kind of knowledge is monologic: it requires no response, no entry into the world-as-event, into

culture-as-event, from either teacher or learners. This kind of knowledge does not generate creative understanding and therefore may develop a veneer of knowledge of objective facts about a culture but it certainly does not seamlessly translate into the ability to relate to a fellow autonomous subject from another culture. It does not necessarily follow that learning about cultures that results in stable knowledge about them will develop into attitudes of curiosity, or feelings of respect, and Byram knows and acknowledges this.

Teachers need to remember that abstraction, unless it is understood and specifically explained for what it is, i.e. abstraction drained of living sensation, severely limits usefulness and may even be detrimental to our goal of nurturing mutual understanding (Matsuo, 2012b). Worse, as Bakhtin and other cultural scholars such as hooks (1992) have shown, when abstraction creates distance, it can easily lead to a degenerate form of representation: the stereotype.

The task for teacher and learners, then, "consists in forcing the *thinglike* environment…to begin to speak" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 164). The teacher has to turn reification (thought about culture) into personification: embodied, authentic intercultural interaction *in* the moment, moment *by* moment, in the *eventness* of the classroom. Instead of the activity of the one who acknowledges a voiceless thing, teacher and learners must create and participate in the activity of the one who acknowledges another subject

The teacher must continually seek ways to relate and merge, to the extent that it is possible, "thought about" culture-as-conceptual-product into the "world as event" through the performed act of teaching. Theory cannot break into the world but my performed act can and does: it enters into life through "the mediation of an answerable consciousness in an actual deed," i.e. my involved, engaged, *participative* teaching, which makes the "once-occurrent event of Being…no longer something that is thought of, but something that *is*, something that is being actually and inescapably accomplished through me and others" (Bakhtin, 1993, pp. 12-13). My consciousness and the learners' consciousness become answerable—responsible, ethical—in the actual deed.

The teacher has to collapse the distance that students might feel towards other cultures and try to induce responsive, creative understanding through our interactions as intercultural speakers: I have to create what Bakhtin calls "dialogic cognition" (1986, p. 161). As a foreign language teacher, I make use of my own intercultural identity, which I embody, and/or which I should always be seeking to acquire or develop. I have to use this identity of Intercultural Speaker to create intercultural situations. I must use my utterances to create eventness in the classroom, and comment on it when appropriate, so that the intercultural environment gets noticed, and engaged with, by the learners (Matsuo, 2013).

7 Conclusion

ICC is an important concept that is increasingly capturing the imagination of teachers, and the attention of governments and companies. Byram's ICC model theorizes intercultural competence in cognitive terms as knowledge, behaviours, attitudes and skills, and the new term of iCLT makes it clear that linguistic concerns are not primary for teaching it. In contrast, dialogic theory conceptualizes knowledge and action linguistically so I argue that teaching for ICC is best done through dialogue because culture **is** discourse.

Only the concept of dialogue insists that we orient to and talk with each other as fellow autonomous subjects. The use of dialogue in pedagogy progressively and continually endows words with infinite contextual meanings, allowing active and rich understanding not just of

words but of how those words, filled with meaning and emotion-volition, and created as a response and to be responded to, deepen understanding and develop empathy.

I argue that Byram's framework's language, which expresses a culturally particular worldview, values and ethics, creates significant difficulties for pedagogical implementation in Japan. It is not that these values and ethics are incompatible with the values and ethics of Japanese persons so much as a problem of finding the most suitable language with which to communicate and negotiate between these values and ethics with learners whose identities and outlook have been discursively created in ways that are different to the historically, culturally particular identity and moral outlook that Byram ascribes to the model's Intercultural Speaker. Further discussion should address whether indeed we can or should oblige learners to affirm the values and ethics of the model, and whether it is desirable to place a politically defined critical cultural awareness at the centre of the interactions of cultures and the complex hybrid subjects in the foreign language classroom.

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