Locus of enunciation: insights for intercultural language teaching

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Abstract

Recent articles on the problems of 'locus of enunciation' have focused on research and publication as well as on theoretical development of the concept. It is an issue in teaching and learning too, and this is the focus of this article which argues that to reject teaching approaches in 'the South' because they come from 'the North' is, first, counter to the principles of academic freedom upheld as much in the South as the North, second, prevents learners from having access to important knowledge, and third, ignores the ways in which learners in 'the South' can 're-enunciate' what they have learned from 'the North'. Our argument has its origins in our own experience of censorship in the name of 'locus of enunciation'. As language teachers, we demonstrate that internationalist and pluralist ways of thinking can and should lead to cultural intellectual humility and that this is a better basis for making judgements than a preference for 'our' locus of enunciation over 'theirs'. We illustrate our argument with the pedagogic project that gave rise to the use of 'locus of enunciation' as the basis for rejection of our teaching, to show how the project can be read 'otherwise'.

Key words: locus of enunciation, Southern theory, decoloniality, intellectual humility, intercultural dialogue, critical re-design

Introduction

The concept of 'locus of enunciation' is defined by Grosfoguel (2011: 5) as 'the geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks' and Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez (2019: 2) extend this to say it comprises 'the geographical, historical, bodily, and ideological context from which one is speaking'. It was initially developed by Mignolo (1999) and it is central in decolonial and Southern theories where it is hotly debated (see for example the section Critical Dialogues in *Postcolonial Studies*, Volume 23 Issue 4, 2020). The concept is also discussed in applied linguistics. For instance, in recent articles in *Applied Linguistics* (Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez 2019; Kubota 2019; Sugiharto 2020) the emphasis has been on how researchers can resist the hegemony of 'the Global North'. Pennycook and

Makoni (2020) contribute a vision of what they call 'Southern applied linguistics' that goes beyond the addition of perspectives from the South, to include the incorporation of particular geographical areas or topics not addressed by Global Northern applied linguistics, and the inclusion of usually excluded people. Their vision also moves towards the inclusion of varied ontologies and epistemologies, and challenges extant modes of knowledge production and disciplinary traditions and concepts.

All this work is focused on research, publication and theory development, but in this contribution to the discussion, we want to shift the emphasis in two ways: from research, publication and theory, to teaching, and from a focus on resistance by 'Southern' scholars to 'the North', to examining control by those who determine education within the 'South'. We focus on the use and misuse of the locus of enunciation argument to control what is taught and learnt in particular contexts. We shall argue that in principle this is misguided and then present an example from a teaching project which supports our argument by demonstrating how learners benefit from an inclusive approach which neither excludes a 'northern' perspective nor accepts it uncritically. The example is taken from our work in language teaching and intercultural communication where plurality and intercultural dialogue are the basis for understanding other epistemologies and creating mutual enrichment in pedagogy.

Unlike the easily accessible and now well-known issues in research and publication, there is to our knowledge little or no public discussion of issues in teaching. We begin therefore with our own experience as a means of setting the scene and showing the need for analysis. One of us (Author 1) is an Argentinian heterosexual woman, middle-aged, white and Latina, descendent from Spanish immigrants, middle-class, living and working in the capital city of the most important province in the country. She carried out postgraduate studies in a British university, and is a professor and researcher in a prestigious national public university. Her experience was that she was explicitly forbidden to continue a pedagogic project in which she drew upon theory and practice located in Europe and was told one of the reasons was its 'locus of enunciation'. She also had the experience of having institutional support for a grant to finance a professional development workshop for language teachers withheld unless reference to European models (e.g. the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*) and Author 2's work were cut, and 'local' models and references used instead, despite the same documents and ideas being used elsewhere in the university. Author 2 is an old heterosexual male of English descendance, middle class, retired from a prestigious British university and working freelance. He worked with Author 1

in the planning stage of the project, which was based on theoretical perspectives developed by him. The experience motivated their exploration of locus of enunciation and the writing of this article.

What do experiences like this of exclusionary forces in universities tell us about teaching? Author 1's experiences relate to pedagogic practices with an immediate impact on students as well as professional development opportunities with an immediate impact on teachers. They happened in a university whose statutes include the statement that:

> La enseñanza universitaria (…) [E]stará fundada (…) en la discusión y crítica de teorías o doctrinas, en la más completa libertad académica, sin discriminaciones, limitaciones o imposiciones de carácter político, ideológico, religioso, racial, social, económico o de cualquier otro tipo.

> University teaching (…) will be based (…) on the discussion and critique of theories or doctrines, with the widest academic freedom, without discrimination, limitations or impositions of a political, ideological, religious, racial, social, economic or any other kind. (our translation).

Academic freedom can be interpreted in many ways (Reichman 2019; Williams 2016) and is often used without precision, but in this case the university has made its definition explicit, i.e. that there should be no limitations. Geographical origins are not mentioned but are included in the phrase 'any other kind'. 'Critique' is a crucial element of academic freedom and would have been included in Author 1's use of the European models.

These experiences demonstrate how pedagogic work can be censored because it is supported by theories produced 'there', in another place, in another country or continent, particularly in Europe. It is an example of how the phrase 'locus of enunciation' can be used to argue for rejecting what comes from elsewhere. It is not possible to know if the prohibition of use of ideas from Europe was motivated by a rejection of its colonial past and the past and present role of European countries in Argentina. However, the views of 'Southern' theorists seem to coincide with the position taken by those who forbade Author 1 to use European research. For instance, Connell asks the rhetorical question: 'What would be the curriculum in a higher education system dedicated to supporting, rather than preventing, Southern projects of knowledge?' (2017: 10), and argues that these projects, based on 'alternative knowledge frameworks (…) do not necessarily imply epistemological pluralism. Rather they require a rationality that is grounded outside Eurocentric traditions' (2017:12). It is here,

particularly in the apparent rejection of pluralism, where our problem begins and we make this concern the focus of our article.

Our purpose in this article is therefore to analyse the use and misuse of the notion of 'locus of enunciation' in the context of teaching and academic freedom. We shall begin with the term itself and then discuss the pedagogical perspectives and dilemmas raised by its being used to forbid a particular approach to teaching. We shall also argue that language teaching which focuses on developing students' intercultural competence provides a perspective which counters the reductionist use of 'locus of enunciation' and yet, ironically, it was just such teaching which was forbidden. In the final section, we shall therefore describe and analyse how the project which was forbidden involves a complexity which corresponds to the need to go beyond such misuse and reductionism, and to draw upon the concept of intellectual humility (Whitcomb, Battaly, Baehr & Howard-Snyder, 2017) in doing so.

Use and misuse of 'locus of enunciation'

The experiences described above illustrate the use of 'locus of enunciation', understood in geographical terms, as the grounds for rejection, but the literature has shown geography is an unsatisfactory basis for such action (Andreotti and de Souza 2012; Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez 2019; Grosfoguel 2011; Guilherme 2014; Guilherme and Menezes de Souza 2019; Pennycook and Makoni 2020; Quijano 2000; Teodoro and Guilherme 2014; Santos 2010; Sugiharto 2020, among many others). Diniz de Figueiredo and Martinez (2019) illustrate the point by saying that Brazil is an example of a peripheral southern country but that within the country they themselves belong to a local elite group. They explain that 'locus' comprises not only the geographical but also the historical, cultural, bodily, ideological and other dimensions from which one speaks and from which one produces knowledge. Menezes de Souza (2019: 29) argues that 'this location need not be *geographical* or *literal*; it may be *metaphoric*, but it is *always epistemic*' (his emphasis). Furthermore, according to Mignolo (1999: 238), '[L]oci of enunciation are constituted at the intersection of epistemology and the politics of location.' Locus is therefore not singular but plural, not fixed but dynamic, in permanent development, and criss-crossed by issues of power, inequality and domination as the phrase 'politics of location' indicates. The usual expression 'the/a locus' in the singular fails to capture the dynamism, evolving nature and complexity of an actual locus, and blurs the power issues. The enunciation is coloured by the particular intersection and salient identity at a given moment. Furthermore, in the current context of mobility and migration,

face-to-face and virtual exchanges - recently much increased by Covid19 - and our simultaneous participation in multiple networks at personal, family, leisure, professional, academic and other levels, geography becomes even less significant and loci of enunciation are complex and elusive. As Kramsch and Zhu Hua (2020) state

> [I]ntercultural communication is no longer communication across national borders, but participation in fluctuating networks of individual experiences, memories, and fantasies, multiple allegiances and legitimations, that are expressed and shared mostly, though not exclusively, through language. (p.1)

Our experiences also show a reductive association of locus of enunciation in geographical terms with perceived knowledge systems and ideologies, and an essentialising assumption that an individual is limited by their place of origin and/or education, in our cases Britain and Europe. It is on the basis of this logic that Author 1 was told to find a Brazilian partner for her project instead of a British one and to resort to Southern theories and frameworks, in other words, to base her work on 'Southern projects of knowledge' (Connell 2017:10).

Yet, as Canagarajah explains when interviewed by Author 1, to argue that the centre (Western, Eurocentric and so on) is always evil, colonialist and powerful and that the periphery (Southern, Eastern and so on) is always passive, dependent, oppressed, ignorant, and poor, is reductionist. We should think, teach and research from our social positionality and we should be committed to social practices rather than particular ideas or theories:

> I am committed to certain places and people and communities, but not committed to theories (…) I am grounded in certain social positions. This explains my 'locus of enunciation.' That is: Where do we speak from? What is the ground on which we stand as we speak? I am always conscious of coming from Sri Lanka, a geopolitical periphery. From that position, I start looking at dominant theories and pedagogies, and I see a lot of reductive and unfair things about them. What I am saying is we all start thinking or teaching from our social positionality. However, it is also informed by an appreciation of other parties in the conversation. We should be open to negotiation. In this sense, negotiation is the other term that is important for me. It is not difficult to be grounded in one's positionality and also negotiate with others. This is possible if we are not committed to ideas but practices. (Interview article, Author 1: 9)

There is a striking contrast between Canagarajah's words and the demand that teaching practices should be embedded within one particular knowledge system, where the argument depends on a binary analysis of the world and on dichotomies: North and South, West and East, global and local, European and Asian, European and Latin/South American, Christian and Muslim, and more. The risks of dichotomous analysis are critiqued in the decolonial literature as fundamentalism, whether hegemonic (Northern) or marginal (Southern) (Grosfoguel and Castro- Gómez 2007). Grosfoguel (2011) makes a distinction between speaking *of* the South and *from* the South on the one hand, and speaking *epistemically* from the South on the other (Grosfoguel 2011, our emphasis; also Grosfoguel 2019). The latter involves engaging critically and reflexively with alternative rationalities and knowledge frameworks (Pennycook, 2021), but it does not mean total de-linking from Western thought (Mignolo 2010; Pennycook and Makoni 2020). On the contrary, speaking epistemically from the South necessitates deep knowledge of the frameworks to which it wishes to become an alternative:

> the obligation [is] (…) not only to argue for the importance of the alternative frameworks but also to provide nuanced descriptions of the frameworks from the Global North to which they are seeking to constitute alternatives (Makoni and Pennycook, 2020: 123).

Pedagogical perspectives

The debate about locus of enunciation is important in pedagogy and language teachers and others concerned with teaching intercultural communication can draw on the concept of intercultural dialogue to challenge epistemological fundamentalism. Intercultural dialogue requires 'the capacity to see "difference within difference" (Luke and Luke 1999), the complex heterogeneity, multiple subjectivity and intersectionality' (Luke 2018: 21) behind the singularity and completeness of particular categories such as 'southness'. This power resides in the 'enabling epistemic stance', which is not 'necessarily binary, but enabling of third and fourth and fifth spaces that come from the juxtaposition of multiple worldviews' (Luke 2018: 7), the reference to third and more spaces echoing work on interculturality and the teaching and learning of intercultural competences in language teaching initiated by Kramsch (1993). In decolonial terms, this is the critical strategy of 'border-thinking', which Menezes de Souza defines as:

first, taking stock of one's epistemic locus and the multiple discourses that constitute it and, second, working through the limitations of each of these discourses in order to transform them into something more productive (2019: 31).

According to Grosfoguel (2011: 4), '[B]order thinking (…) is precisely a critical response to both hegemonic and marginal fundamentalisms.' It acknowledges that within 'the North' as much as within 'the South' there is complexity and subaltern frameworks too (Pennycook and Makoni 2020), and is complemented by the strategy of 'post-abyssal thinking', i.e. thinking beyond binaries, thinking beyond the divide, moving towards an 'ecology of knowledges' that - combing the insights of several authors - expands familiar knowledge frameworks with new ones through:

- being self-consciously aware of one's epistemic location;
- unmasking one's loci of enunciation and those of others;
- provincializing the (apparently) universal;
- troubling the singularity of the narrative (one sole episteme);
- changing the 'terms of the conversation' by engaging 'artisanal knowledges', i.e. 'practical, empirical, popular knowledges, vernacular knowledges' (Santos 2018: 43);
- cultivating pluriversal (rather than universal) imaginaries and decolonial imagination (Lobo 2020; Mignolo 2007; Pennycook and Makoni 2020; Santos 2010).

Furthermore, the limitations of fundamentalist perspectives are also revealed in the 'access paradox' (Janks 2000). Janks argues that:

 if we provide students with access to dominant forms [and knowledge], this contributes to maintaining their dominance. If, on the other hand, we deny students access, we perpetuate their marginalisation in a society that continues to recognise the value and importance of these forms (2000: 176).

Others have taken this view too. For example, Luke (2018, 2019) and Moje (2007) in the field of literacy, and Kress (2000a,b) and Stein (2000) in TESOL, argue that denying access to dominant knowledges, literacies, languages and more, is not defensible, and Pennycook and Makoni (2020) locate this within Southern theory. They argue that 'Southern Theory should not depend only on ideas from or about the South' (p.16) and conclude that '[T]he decolonial counterpart of the southern epistemologies perspectives also perhaps tries to go too far in its total delinking from all Western thinking' (p.123).

The implications for education are significant. Educationists should not be concerned with fostering 'Southern' or 'Northern' projects - or any other binary characterisation - but rather with the ways in which educators in schools and universities can work with children and young people to prepare them to address both the challenges particular to them and also those they share with others in other geographical, economic, historical, cultural, intellectual and other loci. In doing so, students improve their own inequitable situatedness, and engage in the transformation of their present and futures on the basis of their local knowledge and conditions, experimentation, innovation, imagination and creativity. Janks (2014) calls this 'critical re-design.' There are several stages:

1) students identify and name a problem (theme) and link it to their lives by discussing it with others;

2) they access relevant information by engaging research and inquiry skills;

3) they analyse, interrogate and challenge local practices and beliefs through discussion with others and self-reflection (considering the historical, social, cultural, economic and other root causes of the problem or theme);

4) they evaluate the social effects of their habits and customs and those of others; and

5) they imagine possibilities for making a positive difference in their social milieu and/or the world.

This is in essence the position of the critical scholars in literacy education, for instance in work by The New London Group (1996), and others beyond this group such as Crookes (2021) in L2. Critical pedagogies and approaches foster the skills of observation, discovery, analysis, comparison and contrast, perspective-taking, imagination, reflection and evaluation, which are also central skills in Barnett's (1997) notion of criticality in education. He emphasises the significance of criticising intellectual traditions as well as critical reflection and action on self-development and the society in which we live. His view also articulates with critical pedagogies originating in work by Freire (1972a, b; 1973) in Brazil in which a significant characteristic (and duty) of education is the element of individual and social transformation for liberation and the building of ethical relations with others (human and non-human) based on care, solidarity and empathy (see Luke, 2018, 2019). The resemblances with the critical strategies of border and post-abyssal thinking of decolonial pedagogies are evident. The articulation of these different strands in scholarship has been

noted before but can be used in education as the basis for a productive dialogue in an ecology of knowledges that Menezes de Souza (2019), Pennycook and Makoni (2020), Pennycook (2021), and others are calling for, drawing on Santos (2007):

> the ecology of knowledges (…) is an ecology because it is based on the recognition of the plurality of heterogeneous knowledges (…) and on the sustained and dynamic interconnections between them without compromising their autonomy. The ecology of knowledges is founded on the idea that knowledge is interknowledge (Santos 2007: 66).

Students can and should draw on a critical understanding of theories, models and perspectives whatever their original loci of enunciation, in the spirit of academic freedom cited above. They thus 're-enunciate' those theories, models and perspectives, adapting but also enriching them, as the loci of enunciation change. They appropriate what they see for themselves and for their own purposes, and reflect these enrichments back to the loci of origin. In this process, as 'we always speak from a particular location in the power structures' (Grosgoguel 2011: 5), there is no assumption of a 'zero point' from which one can speak which is unchallengeable - 'la hybris del punto cero' (Castro- Gomez 2005). It instead leads to the articulation and understanding of varied social, cultural, and ideological standpoints.

From this perspective, understanding is founded in pluralism, *pace* Connell cited above, for there are at least two dangers in the position taken by Connell and others. One is that an 'overly developed epistemological sensitivity to the local' (Luke 2019: 142) narrows and confines the mind to one-sided perspectives or one-dimensional thinking (Marcuse 1964) resulting in a 'monocular and myopic stance' (Luke 2018: 7). This risk is acknowledged by decolonial and Southern thinkers who warn against total de-linking from Western/Northern thought (Mignolo 2010; Pennycook and Makoni 2020). The other is cognitive or alethic relativism and the belief that all constructions of reality, whether social reality or other, are equally valid (Westacott, n.d.; Baghramian and Carter 2020), a position which is at the very least debatable (Hacking 1999).

A pluralist approach which starts from the view that we can, through talk and imagination, enter into other ways of thinking is consistent with interculturalism, and becomes a better position than to cut oneself off from others because of their geographical, historical and other positions as is argued in extreme forms of Southern positions using locus of

enunciation as illustrated earlier. In Berlin's words, which resonate with Lobo's (2020) decolonial imaginaries and Pennycook and Makoni's (2020) decolonial imagination, 'by the force of imaginative insight' (Berlin 1990: 10) it is possible to engage with other people's ways of being and seeing the world. It is possible to learn to 'live into' other epistemologies using one's linguistic competence to understand the structure and coherence of another epistemology and 'terms of conversation' (Mignolo 2007) enriched by the intercultural skills of perspective taking and empathetic understanding, to imagine other worlds. The process is difficult and the difficulty must not be under-estimated. We must seek to critically understand, to examine the context, the history and other relevant factors. This is much more demanding work, and does not allow us to dismiss 'the North', 'the South' or any other essentialised and sometimes caricatured position as irrelevant to 'us'.

Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that 'our world has constructed sharp separations and suspicions that make any encounter [with the other] difficult' (Nussbaum 2006: 391). People see the world in terms of the known and the unknown, the familiar and the strange and it is hard to identify with those we do not know. Often the strange other tends to be stigmatised as 'animal, smelly, contaminated, contaminating' (Nussbaum 2010: 38). The key to resolving such difficulties resides in the cultivation of the 'capacity for compassionate concern', i.e. the 'ability to feel concern and to respond with sympathy and imaginative perspective' (Nussbaum 2010: 36). This capacity, Nussbaum explains, can be fostered by the humanities and the arts, with a particular role given to foreign language learning. The reason is that learning a foreign language encourages students to see how others cut the world differently and this realisation 'gives a young person a lesson in cultural humility' (Nussbaum 2010: 59). Such cultural and, we would add, intellectual humility involves awareness of the limitations of one's knowledge and culture, and the appreciation of others' backgrounds and intellectual strengths (De Brasi 2020; Wagner, Cardetti and Byram 2018; Whitcomb, Battaly, Baehr and Howard-Snyder 2017). It is cultivated precisely by the contact with other languages and worldviews that invites students to respect somebody else's intellectual position and background not only by attempting to grasp cognitively the material conditions of life that generated that particular position but also by imaginatively placing themselves in that person's shoes so as to feel their feelings, and aspirations, whilst not abandoning a critical evaluation of them.

Our alternative in foreign language pedagogy

In this section we show how the pedagogic project which triggered Author 1's experience of the locus of enunciation argument as the basis for rejection, and which was designed using a theoretical framework originated in Europe, can in fact overcome the limitations arising from a misuse of the locus of enunciation argument in geographical terms that we have discussed. This is possible when the project is considered from a pluralist perspective that encourages students to enter into other ways of thinking through talk and imagination, i.e. an intercultural dialogue grounded in interculturalism. We do not aim to provide a thorough description of the empirical case as this is available elsewhere (Authors) but focus instead on the pedagogic perspectives and alternatives to evaluation by locus of enunciation. We do this by describing the project using Janks' (2014) five-step proposal for critical re-design described before.

The project, carried out in 2012 over 10 months, addressed a controversial topic, the Malvinas war, fought between Argentina and Britain in 1982 over the Malvinas islands in The South Atlantic at the time of a military dictatorship in Argentina. Both the Argentinian military junta and British Prime Minister Thatcher used the war to boost their political aspirations in complex local conditions in both countries. Britain won the war in two months and the defeat was one of the favourable factors which led to the return to democracy in Argentina in 1983. Since then the question of sovereignty over the islands has been a heated matter of diplomatic controversy with international impact. Importantly too, Britain has been and still is associated with discourses of imperialism and neo-colonialism by some sectors of Argentinian society (Borón 2009).

The project put Argentinian and British language undergraduates in contact to address the theme using the foreign languages they were learning at the university (English in Argentina and Spanish in Britain). There were 120 Argentine students and 30 British students, all aged 18-21, with a B2/C1 level in their foreign languages, who worked in their classrooms with their foreign language teachers and also worked collaboratively among themselves using a wiki, Skype, email, Facebook and other social media. Data comprise responses to a baseline survey collecting students' opinions and attitudes toward the conflict and each other's countries and peoples, final written reflection logs, recorded Skype conversations and student productions (posters and PPTs summarising students' perspectives and their research on the conflict; posters and leaflets for peace). The project had linguistic and intercultural aims, familiar to language teachers, such as appreciating linguistic diversity,

developing language awareness and vocabulary related to the topic, analysing critically (audio) visual media images, texts and practices, engaging in intercultural dialogue using English and Spanish as foreign languages, and producing texts critically. It also had less familiar aims drawn from citizenship education, for instance developing values such as respect, mutual understanding, social awareness and openness, avoiding hostility and confrontation, and engaging in civic participation locally, regionally or globally. The underlying pedagogical framework was termed 'Intercultural Citizenship' (Author 2; Alred et al., 2006). We are aware that it might be argued that this framework is itself a product of 'northern' thinking and is imposed on students, but the foundation in criticality (Barnett 1997) and in a conscious teacher-positioning which encourages challenge by students (Author 2 and Author 1), ensure in practice that 'imposition' is reduced as far as possible.

The combination of linguistic, intercultural and citizenship aims is to be noted, in particular when the project liaised students from two countries, Argentina in the South and Britain in the North, both still currently in dispute over the islands. This project took place in 2012 when the 30th anniversary of the conflict was being noted in newspapers in both countries, the islands being known in Argentina as 'las Malvinas' and in Britain as 'the Falklands'. The magnitude of the dispute is not to be underestimated as it involves past, present and future consequences in military, political, economic, social, cultural, diplomatic and ideological terms. In Argentina, the war is part of kindergarten, primary and secondary education *Efemérides*, that is, the significant historical events taught in schools, intended to create and shape 'the Argentine identity', aimed at transmitting the message that 'Las Malvinas son Argentinas'. April 2nd, the day Argentinian forces landed on the islands and war began, is a national remembrance day in honour of the soldiers who fought the war, which gathers all Argentinians alike in a strong feeling of bonding and communion, contributing to social cohesion. In Britain, the war is not taught in history classrooms and is not part of any national commemoration; there is no sentiment of national belonging associated with the conflict. One group of Argentinian students said: 'We believe that this conflict was just one more in their [British people] account of wars. For this reason, we do not think that Falklands is as present in their memories as it is in Argentinian people' (PPT presentation).

Clearly, the symbolic dimension of the intercultural (Kramsch 2011) is particularly significant in the Malvinas conflict, starting with the issue of how the islands should be named and what resonances and power issues are invoked accordingly. What do 'the

Malvinas' and 'the Falklands' encompass and trigger beyond their denotation? The theme was therefore controversial to say the least and it was precisely the naming issue with the associated symbolic power attached to it (Kramsch and Zhu 2021) that lit the spark. During the project many Argentinian students began to refer to the conflict both orally and in writing as 'the Malvinas/Falklands war' and this was one of the factors which led to the condemnation of the project by the Language Department at the Argentine university.

After this background - frther details are available in (Author 1 and Auithor 2, 2015), we draw on the project to illustrate our pedagogic approach based on Janks' (2014) five-step proposal for critical re-design, using quotes mainly from the Argentinian students, though the comparative perspective was present throughout the project, and parallel quotes from British students were present in the data. First, the students identified and named the problem (step one in Janks' critical re-design) in connection with the Malvinas war. For them it involved the need for reconciliation between both countries and their peoples, which became the theme of the project, as the conflict brings about stereotyping, suspicion of the other and hatred. For instance, every April 2nd protesters around Argentina associated with particular political parties burn British flags in street demonstrations. With reference to this, in their reflection logs, one group of Argentine students stated that 'thirty years have gone by and the feeling of grudge and hatred is slightly fading away, especially with those from Great Britain'. They concluded that 'we by no means believe that violence is the means to solve a conflict. A diplomatic solution should be found.' Another group said 'it is for peace-making (…) we should stand for the end of the conflict.'

Then, the students related the theme to their lives by discussing it with others (also part of Janks' step one). They reflected on, analysed and discussed their preconceptions, stereotyped views and actions, and their feelings with respect to the conflict, Britain and the British (Argentinian students) or Argentina and the Argentinians (British students). For instance, in the baseline survey, one Argentinian student expressed that 'we also have a feeling of rage towards British people', and a British student realised that 'we judge each other because of this conflict' and attributed a role to prejudice by saying 'the war has created this boundary between our nations due to prejudice'. Yet another Argentine student said that 'a lot of the older people have preconceptions of the British people' and asked herself: 'if the war happened 30 years ago, why is there still so much resentment?'

After this preparatory stage, in their foreign language classrooms, not interacting with each other yet, the Argentinian and British students accessed relevant information by engaging research and inquiry skills (Janks' step two). They collected and examined a variety of texts from Argentina and Britain (documentaries, interviews, videos and newspapers, in Spanish, English and other languages); they also analysed the media coverage of the war in both countries at the time of the conflict and subsequent to the conflict, including at the time the project was conducted, which coincided with the 30th anniversary of the war as already mentioned. They created bilingual posters about their discoveries using gloster, prezi and mural.ly. Furthermore, the Argentinian students interviewed an Argentinian war veteran in Spanish and the British learners interviewed a British veteran in English. Both interviews were recorded and shared in the wiki. In this way, students approached the theme from multiple and varied perspectives and positions, imagined these alternative perspectives and on this basis, they questioned tradition, custom and habit of mind. For example, one Argentinian student identified the burning of British flags during remembrance days every April 2nd as 'offensive displays against Britain (…) to show loyalty' [to Argentina]. Another one discarded some views as 'invalid' when inconsistent and lacking justification: 'I understand that people from my country have the right to claim sovereignty over the Islands, but I do not think that insulting England is the way to do so. Saying that your country is better than the other one just because is not a valid argument.' Furthermore, this step engaged students emotionally as they expressed in reflection logs: 'I felt very miserable (…) depression, anger, melancholy, unhappiness'; 'I felt extremely annoyed. And also sad, so sad (…) Disgust for the government of the time, and shame. Also annoyance.' Their capacity for compassionate concern needed to overcome suspicion according to Nussbaum (2010) emerged: 'I felt rather uneasy realizing that there were prisoners inside the ship'; 'It made me feel sadness and compassion because he [Argentinian soldier] was injured and probably alone in the enemy's hands but hope at the same time because it shows a different side of the war'.

Then came the intercultural dialogue phase during which the students in both countries communicated online synchronously using Skype. In mixed nationality groups, they analysed, interrogated and challenged local practises (such as the burning of British flags) through discussion with their peers and self-reflection, considering the historical, social, cultural, economic and other root causes of the war (Janks' step three). For instance, in the Skype conversations one group of students concluded that 'the majority of Argentinian

people think that this conflict was mainly caused by political reasons, [and] by the lust of a dictator.' Another student examined the origins of traditions and beliefs concerning the conflict and related them to the school ('the role of the school has been vital to develop our opinions'), local media ('there's no doubt that we are influenced by the same media') as well as the family and the local community ('we're also influenced by our families which have taught us about the matter and share the same opinion with the Argentinian community'). One group stated that 'the media had always referred to Britain as an imperialistic country whose only purpose was to occupy/ invade the islands.' During this process of critical analysis and reflection facilitated by intercultural dialogue, students evaluated the social effects of the war on themselves and others (Janks' step four). One student concluded that the harsh feelings of the Argentinian people toward the British have been influenced by the media ('the hatred we developed thanks to the media coverage of the war and the stereotypes they create'). In a poster they designed, another group clarified that this influence of the media operated in both countries:

Finally, still in their mixed nationality groups, they imagined possibilities for making a positive difference in their social milieu (Janks' step five) by creating bilingual leaflets for peace intended to bring peace and reconciliation between both nations and their peoples. In one of such leaflets the message was: 'Argentina and Britain should be mature enough so as to reach an honest and respectful agreement on Falklands/Malvinas.' The Argentinian students went beyond the level of imagination and planned and implemented specific community engagement actions, something their British peers did not do due to restrictions at their university. For instance, some of them taught lessons about the war in language schools, universities and community centres. Others distributed their awareness raising posters about peace to passers-by in strategic places in their city (Main Square, downtown). Others participated in a radio program and used a video they had produced during the project as a trigger for discussion with the audience. Several students created blogs and Facebook pages where they shared the outcomes of the project (posters, photos, videos, interviews and other material) and gathered the reactions and views about the conflict from people around the world.

This description illustrates how the project, grounded in a theory located in Europe, engaged students in the South and in the North in intercultural dialogue to overcome the sharp separations and suspicion of the other (Nussbaum 2006, 2010) brought about by the war. It fostered reciprocity, self-critique, respect, cooperation, pluralism, imaginative understanding and cultural intellectual humility, which are the foundation of our alternative to locus of enunciation in geographical terms as the basis for rejection of what comes from 'there'. The project is an example of critical education aiming at 'teaching learners to understand and manage the relationship between language and power' (Janks, 2000: 176) as a first step toward individual and social transformation. According to Janks (2000), this relationship can foreground one of four dimensions: dominance, access, diversity and design, and in so doing different ways of enacting such transformations emerge. Figure 1 maps these dimensions and connects them with the aims and tasks of the project.

[Figure 1 about here]

In terms of domination, language is considered a tool that maintains and reproduces relations of domination. This dimension was particularly significant as the Argentinian students were learning English, a powerful and dominant language, and they were doing so in Argentina, the periphery, to become language professionals (English teachers or translators). Moreover, the conflict was controversial as it evoked arguments linked to imperialism and neocolonialism. In this respect, the project fostered critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness (see Author 1) to help learners deconstruct issues of power and ideology in language use (Fairclough, 1989, 1992).

The access paradox discussed above was evident in the project: access to dominant languages, knowledge and so on perpetuates their dominance while the denial of such access perpetuates marginalisation. In the project, genre, multimodal and arts-based pedagogies were used to address the paradox. For example, the students created bilingual and multimodal posters and leaflets (including videos, images, audios, drawings, creative use of technology) as their civic contribution in their here and now activities to promote peace and reconciliation. These pedagogies allowed student flexibility and the expression of identity by encouraging meaning making using the forms, mediums and resources valued by the university, associated in general with the verbal, but also others that were particular choices of each student located socially, culturally and historically, such as the visual, digital, performative, auditory and artistic.

The concepts of diversity and design refer to the importance of valuing linguistic, cultural and other kinds of diversity and helping learners use this diversity creatively with a variety of semiotic resources to make their own meanings and in this case, to challenge and change dominant discourses about the conflict, Argentina and Britain, the Argentinians and the British.

This approach thus demonstrates that the interrelation among dominance, access, diversity and design can be critically reflected upon by teachers, and enacted in classrooms, to overcome the limitations of the kind of unidimensional and narrow-minded thinking which stimulated us to write this article. The project implemented what Janks calls for:

> Critical literacy has to take seriously the ways in which meaning systems are implicated in reproducing domination and it has to provide access to dominant languages, literacies and genres while simultaneously using diversity as a productive resource for redesigning social futures and for changing the horizon of possibility (2000, p.178).

Conclusion

In this article we have critiqued the exclusionary force of a crude form of the 'locus of enunciation' argument when it is constructed in geographical, historical, contextual and ideological terms as the phenomenon of not paying attention to what is said and thought in other places and by people with different positions. We started with a personal experience of how the locus of enunciation was used as a cover for censorship and how it led to discrimination. Our response in this article goes beyond a frequent response from the South i.e. opposition and resistance, the explicit declaration of our loci, and the embracing of Southern, or non-Western, projects of knowledge. We leave aside varied ways of 'answering back' and 'fighting back' and propose instead a perspective based on interculturalism that foregrounds the need for reciprocity, mutuality and self-critique, epistemological pluralism and cultural intellectual humility. We do not take the view that 'tout comprendre est tout pardonner' but rather the cultivation of an interculturalist criticality involving a mindset of equality, respect and cooperation. Our focus on pedagogy and language pedagogy in particular, has the potential to enrich attention to research and scholarship in the locus of enunciation debate. It adds a new angle in the face of complex and evolving economic, social, cultural and geopolitical landscapes where simplistic binaries in terms of South and North,

East and West, poor and rich, oppressed and oppressors, among many others, need to be overcome.

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