

## Language Acts and Worldmaking Debates



### Traversing Traditions, Opening Opportunities

The *Language Acts and Worldmaking* round-table *Debates Series* has been conceived by Cristina Ros i Solé (Goldsmiths, University of London) for *Language Acts and Worldmaking*, an Arts and Humanities Research Council Open World Research Initiative project, to foster a dialogue on the connections, divergences and identities of well-established traditions in Modern Languages and Language Education. As a major element of the *Language Transitions* strand led by Debra Kelly (Westminster) and Ana de Medeiros (King's College London), the series focuses in particular on the synergies and fissures between Language Education across educational sectors and the humanities, as well as seeking to investigate new openings and possibilities for the future. This is a three-year programme of debates beginning in the academic year 2017/18, culminating in a collective publication, and takes place at King's College Modern Language Centre and at other *Language Acts and Worldmaking* partner and collaborating institutions.

We have defined these 'Language Transitions' as 'border zones of learning' between stages that often become more of an hindrance than a stepping stone for so many language learners, whatever their level. The aim in the *Debates* is therefore to establish connections and create new directions for existing provision and for educational sectors in order to discuss how to foster dialogue, create smoother transitions and re-energise the field by examining current concerns and pedagogies in the field. Each *Debate* will address a different aspect of these transitions and will emphasise the benefits and challenges of traversing educational terrains and traditions to enrich and widen the experience of Modern, Community and World Languages.

Each *Debate* consists of position papers and responses to these papers from prominent experts, policy makers, academics and teachers.

All papers and responses are recorded and posted on-line on the *Language Acts and Worldmaking* website and blog: [www.languageacts.org](http://www.languageacts.org). This is the virtual home for posting information on the latest news and developments in the Debates Series, and the place where all the information about this series is archived.

#### **There are 5 debates this academic year 2017/2018:**

**Debate 1:** 4 Oct 17, Language Education Activism (King's College London)

**Debate 2:** 15 Nov 17, Modern Languages—A Discipline (still) in Search of an Identity? (University of Westminster)

**Debate 3:** 14 Feb 18, Should second language acquisition and language teaching be aligned and how? (King's College London)

**Debate 4:** 21 Mar 18, Has the digital world revolutionised language pedagogy? (King's College London)

**Debate 5:** 25 Apr 18, Emotions & Subjectivity in Modern Language Education (King's College London)

## *Language Acts and Worldmaking Debates*



### **Debate 4: Has the digital world revolutionised language pedagogy?**

**21 March 2018, 6–7.30pm, Bush House (Room NE 0.01), King’s College London, Bush House, 30 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4BG**

**Chairs: Dr Ana Maria Sousa Aguiar de Medeiros and Dr Cristina Ros i Solé**

The use of technology and the digital world in language pedagogy is often seen as a challenge: a brave new world (Blake 2018) that urges teachers and learners to come out of their comfort zone to keep up with ‘digital natives’ (Prensky 2001) and learn a whole new set of literacies (Pegrum 2009). Whether this is true of virtual environments, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), or the convenience, ubiquity and wearability of mobile technology, digital learning has undoubtedly changed the way we experience languages.

Despite the magnitude and pace at which technology advances, teachers and learners are enthusiastically embracing this new brave digital world. Whether it is through the creativity and authorship that the use of editing software affords, the power of concordancing software to dissect and make discoveries about language and its use, we are beginning to see new ways to approach the world of Modern Language learning. On the other hand, the availability of a wide array of commercial language learning applications that combine different aspects of social media, gaming, GPS technology, traditional grammar references, self-assessment, and tracking devices, to mention just a few, are still keeping to the pedagogical principles in off-line environments.

Beyond the ‘wow’ factor (Bax 2011), we need to wonder whether the digital world is really that radical. In other words;

- Is digital language learning teaching us something new about language teaching and learning?
- Have the roles of language learners and teachers changed?
- Have digital natives’ needs changed?

Are we witnessing a pedagogical revolution?

**Speakers:** Mirjam Hauck (Senior Lecturer, Department of Languages, Open University) & Antonio Martínez-Arboleda (Principal Teaching Fellow in Spanish, University of Leeds)

**Discussants:** Sibylle Nalezinski (IT and Multimedia Support Officer, UCL), King’s College Language Centre/Lambeth Alliance (TBC)

A drinks reception will take place in Bush House room NE -1.01 (basement) from 7:30–8pm

Sign up for this event here: <https://digitalworldlanguagepedagogy.eventbrite.co.uk>