

Apart, Together

Letter from the Chair

By **KEN LEVINSON**

Congratulations to the Research Committee for producing this engaging inaugural newsletter. It is inspiring to see what colleagues have been publishing and it shows how unique and focused our department is because so much of what we do is directly connected to student learning. Whether you work in philosophy, linguistics, developmental education or some combination of those fields and others, your work shows our mutual interest in learning and language, in academic and disciplinary literacy, language acquisition, in pedagogical practice and policy, and underlying it all, the fundamental questions of inquiry into what makes humans human.

In these last 13 plus months the challenges not only to learning but to maintaining our personal sense of meaning have been formidable. From my zoom and email perch I've been fascinated to observe the relocation, whether temporary or permanent, of so many of you, to new neighborhoods, out of the city, out of state. I've been deeply saddened by the losses and hardships you faced when your loved ones fell ill. And consequentially, partly due to the pandemic but also enrollment and remedial policy changes, we've let go of a large percentage of our part-time staff and have been frozen in our hiring of new full-timers. With the passing of our beloved colleague Mary Sepp, and



the retirements of Ed Bostick and Yeghia Aslanian, we are at five vacancies that in the past we would have filled quickly. So we are a smaller department.

I know this was a hard time to get research and writing done; you had to cope with the demands of on-line learning and the reconfiguration of working from home often with partners and children in the same space. As someone who has written a lot – literally volumes – but published very little, I'm humbled by your bringing your work into print and "print." I'm pleased to say for myself that my own writing has been more productive; in the summer of 2019 I began working on something in the genre of auto-fiction (for want of a better term), observations of the world that combined my socio-anthropological interests with my literary interests. At first I avoided recounting my personal life stories. And then events both personal and global shifted my perspective – my own experience with serious illness directly preceded the onset of the Covid pandemic; the political, economic and social justice crises in the States accelerated; and all at once, memory took on a different kind of urgency. I found different parts of my past compelling to examine from this new perspective of life's tenuousness and what at times seemed apocalyptic – my prior conceptions of the past seemed naive. But now, the acute crisis could be fading as spring has fully arrived, fingers crossed. Not surprisingly, I have been far more productive in the intersessions than in the middle of the semester – the demands of the academic year do get in the way of writing!

When we are fully reunited, it will be in the context of having shared, while

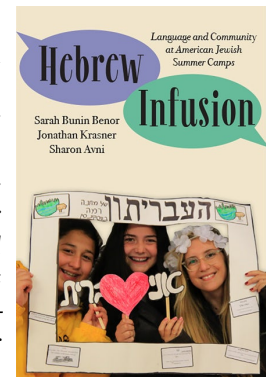
apart, a period of time that has profoundly affected us. Reentry will have its own challenges, but I hope that our shared experience will bond us closer, more attuned to what is precious. Life does, indeed, go on. New and old students will be there to spur us on.

Thanks for this newsletter! I'm looking forward to issue 2!

Achievements

Recent Books by ALL Faculty

The past year has seen several books published by ALL faculty. In their *Hebrew Infusion: Language and Community at American Jewish Summer Camps*, Rutgers (2020), our colleague **Sharon Avni** and her co-authors investigate how Hebrew has been deployed at Jewish summer camps to construct local, national, and transnational understandings of American Jewishness, and presents a unique case for examining the interrelationships between language, community, and religion. Sharon and her co-authors have completed ethnographic fieldwork at over 35 camps across the United States over four years, and conducted hundreds of interviews with campers, staff members, and camp leadership. Their book won the



2020 National Jewish Book Award in Education and Jewish Identity. It was funded by CASJE (Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education), The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University, PSC-CUNY, and HUC-JIR.

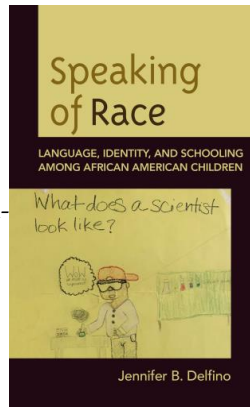
Although we all have intuitive conceptions of what we mean when we talk about students' "participation" and "engagement," understanding how little we know about these in practice is a crucial step toward better pedagogy. Drawing on over 75 hours of video recorded classroom interaction, **Christine Jacknick's** *Multimodal Participation and Engagement: Social Interaction in the Classroom*, Edinburgh University Press (2021), shows how students are often engaged and participating when we think they are not, and likewise, students can appear to be engaged and participating, when in fact, careful analysis of their actions shows they are not. In either case, teachers may find themselves encouraging what Prof. Jacknick calls "studenting" — the performance of being-a-student rather than actual engaged participation. The book reconceptualizes participation in terms of student alignment (with the instructor, the lesson, each other), and students' close monitoring of the interaction as evidence of their engagement. It argues that teachers and researchers need to recognize (1) the multimodal complexity of student (non-)participation and (dis)engagement, and (2) how much of students' participation and engagement is essentially unknowable to us. Our methods for measuring participation are imperfect, and as we move into new kinds of instructed-learning contexts, it is more important than ever for us to realize these basic facts.



Studies in Social Interaction
Multimodal Participation and Engagement
Social Interaction in the Classroom

Christine M. Jacknick

In her *Speaking of Race: Language, Identity, and Schooling Among African American Children*, Lexington Books (2020), **Jennifer Delfino** explores the linguistic practices of African American children in an after school program in Washington, DC. The book advances a "raciolinguistic perspective," which shifts focus from what students do and don't do to how they are seen and heard from an institutional perspective. This shift is important because it is a neglected aspect in assessing language proficiency and academic achievement. The issue is that even well-intended educators who seek to validate cultural and linguistic difference end up applying raciolinguistic ideologies that see and hear racialized minorities as problem students using ideas such as appropriateness and academic language. This leads them to advance assimilationist perspectives rather than pluralism. Prof. Delfino's book is based on her dissertation research, and included a 9 month ethnographic study of 9-13 year-olds in Washington, D.C. The book was endorsed by three experts in the field: H. Samy Alim, Angela Reyes, and Arthur Spears. In addition to publishing the book, Prof. Delfino also co-edited a special edition of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, Volume 2020, Issue 265, focused on Racialization, Voicing, and Resemiotization in Raciolinguistic Perspective.



Achievements More ALL Faculty Publications

Many of our faculty members managed to do research, despite the pan-

demic. Here's some of what they published in the past year:

- **Avni, S.** & Menken, K. (2021) Hebrew Dual Language Bilingual Education: The Intersection of Race, Language and Religion. In N. Flores, A. Tseng & N. Subtirelu (eds), *Bilingualism for All? Raciolinguistic Perspectives on Dual Language Education in the United States* (pp. 156-176) Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Benor, S., Krasner, J. & **Avni, S.** (2020) *Hebrew infusion: Language and community at North American Jewish Summer Camps*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- **Comeau-Kirschner, C.** (2020) Critical Thinking During a Pandemic. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 9(1), 24. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 38(1), 5-29.
- **Delfino, J. B.** (2020) *Speaking of Race: Language, Identity, and Schooling Among African American Children*. Lanham, MD: Lexington.
- **Delfino, J. B.** (2020) Talking 'Like a Race': Gender, Authority, and Articulate Speech in African American Children's Marking Speech Acts. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 265: 57-79.
- **Delfino, J. B.** and Kosse, M. (2020) Racialization and the National Body: (Re)defining Selves and Others in Changing Contexts of Liberal Democratic Governance. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 265: 1-7.
- Duran, D. & **Jacknick, C.M.** (2020) Teacher Response Pursuits in Whole Class Post-task Discussions. *Linguistics and Education*, 56.
- **Finn, H.** & **Avni, S.** (2021) Combining Developmental Writing and First Year Composition

Classes: Faculty Perspectives on What Co-requisite Teaching Means for Curriculum and Pedagogy. In M. Siegal & E. Gilliland (eds.), *First Year Composition at the Community College: Empowering the Teacher*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- **Flink, P.** (2019) Person-first & Identity-first Language: Supporting Students with Disabilities on Campus. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. 45(2), 79-85.
- **Flink, P. J.** (2019) Second Life and Virtual Learning: An Educational Alternative for Neurodiverse Students in College. *College Student Journal*, 53(1).
- **Gokcora, D.** (2021) Benefits of Collaborative Online International Learning Projects. *Academia Letters*, Article 202.
- **Jacknick, C.M.** & Duran, D. (2021) Transforming Student Contributions Into subject-Specific Expression. *System*, (98).
- **Johnson, K.** (Fall 2020) “I Will Try my Best”: Imparting Western-style Argumentation to Students in China. *Inquirer*, (27).
- **Leonard, T., & Flink, P. J.** (2020) Integrating Service-learning Pedagogy into Community College Coursework: A Phenomenological Study. *International Journal of Innovative Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 1(1), 25-36.
- **Leonard, T., & Flink, P. J.** (2019) Challenging Heteronormativity: Contextualizing the Need for Queer Studies in Academia. *Journal of Education and Social Development*, 3(2), 10-13.
- **Matarese, M.** (2020) Discursive Mindfulness Among Practitioners Analyzing Social Work

Communication. In L. Grujicic-Alatraste (ed.) *Language Research in Multilingual Settings: Doing Research Knowledge Dissemination at the Sites of Practice*. Palgrave MacMillan.

- **Park, H.-R., Kim, D., & Vorobel, O.** (2020) International Students’ Reading Digital Texts on Tablets: Experiences and Strategies. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 32, 476–504.
- **Robb, E., Gregoire, M., & Landau, N.** (2020) The Effects of a Peer Teaching Approach on Urban Community College Students’ Vocabulary Development Using Vocabulary Theatre. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 8, (10), 29 – 46.
- **Sarajlic, E.** (2020) Children, Culture, and Body Modification. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, 30 (2), 167-190.
- **Singh, D.** (2021) Reflection and Emotional Well-Being in Nietzsche and Zhuang Zi. *Comparative Philosophy*, 12 (1), 111-124.
- **Vorobel, O., Kim, D., & Park, H.-R.** (2020) An Adolescent English Learner’s Expression of Self and Identity Through Multiliteracy Practices. *Journal of Educational Research*, 113(5), 327-334.
- **Vorobel, O., & Smith, B.** (2020) Publishing on CALL products: Guidelines for Authors and Developers. *CALICO Journal*, 37(3), i-ix.

Faculty in Focus John Beaumont

By JENNIFER DELFINO



Adjusting to the rigors and stresses of teaching remotely during the Coronavirus pandemic has not been an easy task, but Professor **John Beaumont**, an ALL veteran faculty member who was the recipient of the Distinguished Teaching Award in 2016, has helped to make it a bit easier.

In the midst of the transition to distance learning, Professor Beaumont has started Resilient Teaching, a series of synchronous and asynchronous workshops aimed at supporting faculty in the transition to remote teaching by focusing on trauma-informed, culturally sustaining, and other asset-based pedagogies and matching teaching goals with appropriate tools. Since June 2020, more than 600 BMCC faculty members have participated in Resilient Teaching. The next cohort starts at the end of May 2021. The Community Care and Share, Online Teaching Exchange and Hallway Hangout events are also meant to support faculty in related ways. He has formed these workshops in collaboration with Gina Cherry, Director of CETLS, and Jean Amaral, Associate Professor and Open Knowledge Librarian.

Professor Beaumont has noted the urgency of shifting teaching and communication towards a culture of care given the challenges facing both faculty and students. In a brief conversation about his experiences with teaching during the pandemic, he explained how important it is to think about teaching as care, drawing from recent pedagogical models such as culturally sustaining, asset, and trauma-based pedagogies. “I’ve learned so much. . . it has been ex-

hausting but also invigorating. After 30 plus years, I'm seeing teaching in a new way," Professor Beaumont expressed to me. He noted that he is excited to learn about how other faculty are adapting to the challenges of teaching online. Professor Beaumont's enthusiasm for continuing to improve and adapt teaching has influenced over 600 participants in the online teaching exchange that took place in summer 2020. When I asked Professor Beaumont what he thinks faculty need most, he replied, "A clear sense of community at and between all levels, shared purpose, and more culturally sustaining pedagogies." On the topic of culturally sustaining pedagogies, he noted, "How we teach should respect who students are now and take them to where they want to go."

Professor Beaumont is an enthusiastic and dedicated instructor who sees ongoing improvement and learning as essential to teaching, and he has done a remarkable job leading faculty development since the transition to online instruction.

Student Highlights

Their Success is Our Success

One of the best measures of our success as a department is the success of our students. Here are some examples of ALL students who went above and beyond in their academic journey:

Maya Wong is a linguistics major who is graduating this spring. She

is interested in the intersections of race and linguistic appropriation and completed her LIN150 honors project *Judging By the Color of My Language*, with Professor Delfino's mentorship. Maya's project was chosen by the BMCC Honors Committee to represent the college at the Beacon Conference, which is a regional event that celebrates students at two-year colleges in the mid-Atlantic region. In the coming fall, Maya hopes to continue her studies at Hunter College or Columbia University.

Giulia Michieli, a student in LIN100.6 Language and Culture spring 2019, is graduating from the School for Professional Studies (SPS) CUNY in May 2021 and will begin a master's at the School of International Public Affairs Columbia University in September 2021. In LIN100, Ms. Michieli's personal and professional interests in bilingualism resulted in a project exploring the bilingual experience, a project she presented at the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL) annual conference in White Plains, NY, in November 2019.

A Studio Art alum from BMCC CUNY and current undergrad student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, **Fernanda Carvalho** has explored her interest in linguistics in the creation of an artificial language Aovrit Mahogick, which she presented at an international conference ANUPI-COPEI in 2021. Ms. Carvalho also co-presented on her experience in the co-requisite Language and Culture (LIN100.6) as well as the value of ePortfolios in language education at the NYS TESOL 49th Annual Conference. Ms. Carvalho co-presented on ePortfolios with Dr. Cyn-

thia S Wiseman at ANUPI-COPEI in 2019 and they co-authored *ePortfolios: Tapping into the Imagination to Motivate Learning*.

Melissa Sabal and **Ann Gold**, students of LIN100 – Language and Culture, from Spring 2019, had their research papers accepted in the Language, Society, and Culture Conference (CUNY LSC-5th Biennial Conference) to be held at Kingsborough Community College in May 2021. Their topic is *Genderlect Discussion Based on TV Commercials and Text Message Emojis*.

Almog Badash, A.A., BMCC, just graduated from Hunter College in the CUNY BA program, focusing on Neuropsychology in the Pre-Med track. It was a mere six years ago that Mr. Badash moved to New York and navigated the difficult road to college since English was new to him. Two years later, he enrolled in BMCC, where the first semester he took ESL94. Through dedication and hard work, Mr. Badash mastered written academic English and tested into English 101, well on his way to the medical degree that he aspires to. Congrats to Mr. Badash!

Cynthia Ridyard, BMCC Class of May 2021, is majoring in Literacy and Linguistics. In fall 2021, Ms. Ridyard will transfer to Brooklyn College to continue her studies in linguistics. She also plans to enroll in an intensive certification program at Cambridge University to earn CELTA certification, the credentials required or accepted by many international schools to teach English as a Second/Foreign language.

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