Areas of Pedagogical Convergence between Holocaust Education and Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Reflections on Teaching Geographies of the Holocaust in an L2 Writing Class

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Introduction

Since the postwar reluctance among academics to address the Holocaust began to give way in the 1960s, with international coverage of the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem playing a crucial role in bringing the horrors of Nazism into the public imagination (see Arendt 1994; Novick 1999; cf. Rothberg 2007), the Holocaust has gradually emerged as a legitimate field of study and education (Ben-Bassat 2000; Stone 2010). The success of *Schindler's List* and subsequent growth of Holocaust cinema (Hirsch 2004), the establishment of Holocaust museums and memorials in major cities and significant historical sites across the world (Cole 2004; Young 1993), and the explosion of testimonial works and academic interest in the Holocaust since the 1980s (Wieviorka 2006; Eaglestone 2004) have further ensured the legitimacy of Holocaust education into the 21st century (Gallant and Hartman 2001).

Despite the ongoing expansion of Holocaust education (see Totten et al 2004), teaching the Holocaust remains an unavoidably controversial endeavour. Such shocking material as the systematic mass murder of millions of people will always retain the potential to upset and disturb students (Brenner 1999), and provoke reactions that are difficult to predict (Baum 1996; Lindquist 2011; Short 1994). Perhaps less obvious than the possibility of adverse student reactions, Andrew Charlesworth refers to the 'visible revulsion' of university colleagues at the prospect of taking students on a field trip to Auschwitz (1996, p. 184), with David Lindquist noting related departmental concerns about the

possibility of alienating particular student demographics or imposing personal biases upon students (2006; see also Carrier 2012). Even the simple act of planning a Holocaust class is fraught with politically-charged decision-making: every decision to include or omit a particular topic within the finite framework of a school or university syllabus brings with it the possible charge of providing an incomplete or, worse, deliberately misleading impression of this incredibly sensitive passage of history (see Friedlander 1980; LaCapra 1992).

It seems natural to assume that such issues would be exacerbated within the context of a second-language class. Ulrich Wannagat (2007, p. 679) suggests that the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) curriculum allows for the use of L1 when dealing with 'highly emotional topics', but this does not seem a feasible option in a class based around the Holocaust where every topic has the potential to become highly emotional. As such, it might be expected that the potential for miscommunication might hamper understanding of the complex history of the Holocaust, leaving students ill-equipped to respond to disturbing material, both intellectually and emotionally. Stephen Haynes' early survey of Holocaust education in the United States (1998) suggests, however, that the situation may be more complicated, given the relative prominence of foreign language departments in offering Holocaust courses at university level at that time. In this paper, I argue that there are important areas of pedagogical convergence between CLIL and Holocaust education, which have the potential to make for a mutually beneficial relationship. I construct this argument with reference to literature in both areas, as well as my own experiences of planning and teaching an English writing class themed around the study of the Holocaust.

Context of the class: Holocaust geographies, CLIL and Holocaust education

The ideas in this paper were initially inspired by a semester-length academic English writing class that I taught for senior division students at The University of Tokyo, the content of which was based on the fast-growing and dynamic sub-discipline of Holocaust geographies (see Giaccaria and Minca 2016;

Knowles et al 2014). Reflecting the diversity of human geography (see Cloke et al 2013), Holocaust geographies seek to intervene in the essential spatiality of the Holocaust in multiple ways, from the presence of geographical imaginaries such as place, community and belonging in Nazi ideology (Clarke et al 1996) and the role of geographers and quasi-scientific ideas in the legitimation of racist laws and discrimination (Elden 2006; Herwig 1999), to the material spatiality of sites of killing (Carter-White 2013; Charlesworth 2004; Giaccaria and Minca 2011) and political and testimonial spatialities of memory and representation (Charlesworth 1994; Cooke 2000; Harrison 2010). As such, my main aim with regards to the content of the class was to draw out some key geographical features of the history of the Holocaust as a means of helping the students to understand the historical context of the genocide and its ongoing memory and legacy. However, the fact that this was also an academic writing class in which the study of non-language content was undertaken in the students' L2 means that it fits under the broad category of CLIL, in that the class 'adopted an integrated approach, where both language and content are conceptualized on a continuum without an implied preference for either' (Coyle 2007, p. 543). Some interesting parallels can be identified in the recent development of CLIL and Holocaust education, which were influential on the design of the class.

Recent decades have witnessed a growth in the use of English to teach non-language subjects (de Graaff et al 2007), with CLIL in particular expanding from its European origins (Lorenzo et al 2009) into Asia, Africa and South America (Brown 2014; Lee and Chang 2008). Initial doubts about the effect of L2 instruction upon the study of content notwithstanding (Lorenzo et al 2009), there is evidence to suggest that the meaningful language use inherent to CLIL approaches (Dalton-Puffer and Nikula 2006; Lasagabaster 2011) provide benefits for language acquisition (Várkuti 2012) with particular improvements observed in linguistic awareness and spontaneity, independent study skills and motivation (Coyle 2007). However, despite this emerging consensus about the benefits of the naturalistic setting for language acquisition offered by CLIL, the lack of a coherent CLIL pedagogy (ibid) – unsurprising, given the sheer diversity of subjects and settings covered under this umbrella term (Cenoz et al 2014)

– means there remains a need for classroom-based research (Dalton-Puffer and Nikula 2006; Lee and Chang 2008; Lasagabaster 2011).

After an analogous period of growth since the 1980s (Fallace 2008; Libowitz 1990; Riley and Totten 2002), research on the many diverse approaches to Holocaust education currently finds itself at a similar situation to research on CLIL. Although the future of the Holocaust within higher education seems assured, concerns remain over the ongoing absence of a coherent Holocaust pedagogy (Gray 2014; Haynes 1998), the lack of research on teaching the Holocaust to students from diverse backgrounds (van Driel 2003), and a general absence of research on teaching the history of Nazism and the Holocaust at the level of classroom interaction and practice (Meseth and Proske 2010). The elective class that I taught therefore offered the opportunity to make a tentative and extremely modest contribution towards gaps identified in research on CLIL and Holocaust education. In the course of designing and teaching the class, and over subsequent reflection, I have identified two areas of pedagogical convergence that may offer useful commentary for the incorporation of challenging subject matter into CLIL classes and for ongoing refinements of Holocaust education pedagogy: an orientation towards multiculturalism, and the benefits of an active learning-based teaching philosophy. It is to these points of convergence that the paper will now turn.

Area of convergence 1: an orientation towards multiculturalism

> Ideally, education is training in human potential and responsibility (Berger 1982, quoted in Brenner 1999, p. 2)

According to David Lasagabaster (2011), one of the core objectives of CLIL is to prepare students for an increasingly internationalised society and labour market (see also Lee and Chang 2008). In addition to linguistic advantages, an implicit assumption here is that studying a non-language subject in a second language provides a more realistic preparation for a professional life that may involve the practical use of two or more languages (see Mehisto and Marsh 2011). Whether or not the dominance of

English in this process might in fact entail a form of monolingualism in higher education (see Coleman 2006), for Francisco Lorenzo, Sonia Casal and Pat Moore 'CLIL may well have a significant contribution to make' to 'the propagation of plurilingual competences and multicultural values' (2009, p. 436). This principle seems particularly relevant in the context of Japanese higher education, with recent calls for the internationalisation of Japanese universities (Brown 2014) and the development of such large-scale, compulsory, content-based English language initiatives as the ALESS and ALESA programs at The University of Tokyo (see Gally 2011; Middleton 2012; Mishina 2015).

If CLIL is, by its very nature, oriented to some extent towards preparing students for life in a diverse and plural society, Holocaust education is commonly understood as being similarly and even more explicitly predisposed. Studying the Holocaust necessarily entails investigating the human potential for evil under the right social and political circumstances (Bernstein 2002; Browning 2001; Schulz 1998), the capacity of individuals to resist genocidal regimes under extraordinary circumstances and risk (Marrus 1995; Rohrlich 1998), and the dreadful consequences of state-sponsored racism and prejudice brought to its extreme under conditions of modernity (Bauman 2000). For Lindquist, a key component of Holocaust education is therefore to help students perceive their own capacity to accept or reject evil throughout their lives, through personal stories from the event that highlight the consequences of individual action and the interconnectedness of suffering in society (2011; see also Eckmann 2010). Barry van Driel goes further in drawing out several connections between Holocaust education and intercultural education, including the exploration of such concepts as prejudice, racism, ethnic hatred, responsibility and obedience to authority; developing an awareness of the power of seemingly mundane prejudices; and developing greater sensitivity towards the value of diversity, pluralism and tolerance (2003, p. 127–8; see also Short 2010). For Macgilchrist and Christophe (2011), contemporary Holocaust education is increasingly seen not only as conducive towards a more cosmopolitan mindset but as itself the product of globalisation, both in terms of the emergence of shared trends in representation among key global Holocaust institutions such as Yad Vashem and the United States Holocaust Memorial

Museum (and ensuing effects upon teaching practice and pedagogy), and also in terms of the heightened capacity of globalised student subjects to empathise with distant suffering (Macgilchrist and Christophe 2011). While the latter notion in particular is contentious to say the least (see Höijer 2004), the subjectivating dimension of Holocaust education – the idea that 'the distinctive contribution of Holocaust education to the undergraduate experience lies in its capacity to *humanize* students' (Haynes 1998, p. 303, emphasis in original) – is a prominent part of its pedagogy.

Some observations from my class can help to further illustrate this common ground and suggest a productive path forward. Although one of the students on the course had previously visited Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum as part of a European trip, none were specialists in European history or otherwise planning to study the Holocaust in any great depth as part of their degree program or in the future. Rather, according to a discussion that I initiated in our first week together, the main appeal of the class was to gain experience of, as the students perceived it, an 'American-style content class' that would heavily involve in-class discussion and English-language essay writing strategies and practice. What the students did have in common, however, was an academic interest in cultures outside of Japan, particularly via Latin American studies and British studies. This, combined with the concrete plans of several students to study abroad, is perhaps indicative of the cosmopolitan mindset previously referred to as a core aspect of the CLIL framework, something that comes to the fore in the students' choices of essay topics.

Evaluation for the class was based on several short assignments during the semester, the extent of students' active participation in the class, and a final, 3,000-word essay. The students had almost complete freedom over the choice of topic for their individual essay, so as to more realistically replicate the process of researching and writing an original academic paper, with the only limitation being that the essay topic had to be meaningfully related to a geographical dimension of the Holocaust. While designing the course and in the first few weeks of teaching I anticipated that likely essay topics would include the relationship between modernity and the Holocaust, the spatial organisa-

tion of the extermination camp system, or the use of geographical imagery in Nazi propaganda – all topics that we had studied in detail and discussed in class, and in which the group had appeared to show a great deal of interest. It was to my surprise, then, that all but one of the students chose a topic that in some way involved situating the Holocaust outside of its historical context, in some kind of act of comparison – whether to other historical instances of genocide, or as a commentary on the unfolding of contemporary violent conflicts, or through a study of the incorporation of Holocaust memory into present-day geopolitics.

This trend could be dismissed on the basis that a comparison-themed topic generally provides for a simple essay structure and therefore an easier essay task. However, in the context of a CLIL class, I feel there is a more optimistic interpretation to be made. Although comparative approaches to the Holocaust remain a subject of controversy to many experts in the field, for whom the act of comparison trivialises the magnitude and uniqueness of the Nazi genocide (see Rosenfeld 1999), in this case it is significant that the students, as a group and without explicit instructor guidance, perceived this essay task as an opportunity to explore some of the universal principles at stake in the Holocaust – principles that would allow them to make sense of other historical instances and contexts of oppression, prejudice and discrimination, and thus potentially the relevance of these concepts to their own existence as autonomous, decision-making agents (see Carrington and Short 1997).

The point I wish to make here is that if there is an implicit orientation towards ideas of multiculturalism, pluralism and tolerance within the basic framework of CLIL, then there is a logic to developing CLIL classes based around academic content that deals explicitly with these ideas. The beginning of this paper referred to the risk inherent in teaching a subject as sensitive as the Holocaust in an L2 class, and while that risk should not be ignored it would be unfortunate to pass on the opportunity to fully capitalise on the motivation of students who actively embrace the ethical and moral questions raised by the very existence of a pedagogy such as CLIL. Based on the common ground between CLIL and Holocaust education identified in this section and the zeal with which these students interpreted the academic

content of the class in line with their own ethical and political concerns (Haas 1988, cited in Schulz 1998, p. 138), there seems to be value in experimenting further with the sensitive incorporation of challenging material – and naturally, this need not be restricted to the specific context of the Holocaust – into L2 teaching. The latter point does raise the question, however, of exactly how to incorporate potentially upsetting and disturbing material into L2 teaching in a sensitive and responsible way, and it is here that the restrictions of a CLIL setting have a positive contribution to make to the ongoing development of Holocaust education pedagogy.

Area of convergence 2: pedagogy and active learning

1. Issues of passive learning in Holocaust education

> There is probably no subject matter better suited [than the Holocaust] to challenging students' ingrained tendency to master knowledge passively (Haynes 1998, p. 303)

Rachel Feldhay Brenner (1999) provides a useful summary of some of the main pedagogical approaches to have emerged within Holocaust education. One of the major divisions she describes is between a 'factual' understanding of the Holocaust, where a rigorous understanding of the historical and ideological elements of the past will enable a better understanding of the present and the prevention of such horrors from happening again, and a more ethics-based approach which focuses on the moral issues and dilemmas raised by Holocaust study and how these might illuminate contemporary injustice. As Brenner continues, others approach this enormously complicated series of events at a more personal scale through the teaching of testimony, but again this can go from one extreme of teaching stories of individual survival as 'liberating and life-enhancing texts' (ibid, p. 8), to the other of seeking to immerse students in the absolute horror of dehumanisation and victimisation as the foundation upon which any further lessons from the Holocaust must be based (see Langer 1995).

The lack of a coherent pedagogy of Holocaust education is in part an inevitable consequence of the interdisciplinarity of

Holocaust studies, and perhaps it is more appropriate to regard this lack positively if it is reflective of a vibrant and self-critical academic discipline (see Gray 2014). Yet in spite of the absence of a unified approach to teaching the Holocaust, there is an increasing recognition that traditional pedagogies based on passive student learning – the memorisation and recollection of knowledge, as Haynes (1998) characterises it – are inappropriate and ineffective for attending to the moral dimension of Holocaust education. After describing the problem of passive pedagogies in more detail, in this section I want to suggest that the framework of CLIL provides an alternative way forward for Holocaust education.

Wolfgang Meseth and Matthias Proske provide the example of 'over-moralisation' in teaching on the history of National Socialism (2010). For Meseth and Proske, historical pedagogy on this subject is caught in a paradox: teachers are required to respect the self-development of students and the process through which they reach their own independent judgements about the morality of Nazi ideology, but at the same time it is the responsibility of historical education to ensure that students reach 'socially expected conclusions' (207) at the end of that process. The best and indeed most likely scenario is that the two coincide and that, through careful exposure to the crimes of Nazism, students will reach their own point of moral condemnation. But when this scenario fails to unfold and students reach moral conclusions that are not expected within the design of the class or that are deemed socially unacceptable, the temptation for instructors to adopt a mode of address that diminishes the agency of the students – for example, in the form of moralising lectures that determine without ambiguity the moral lessons that the students must internalise – is one that threatens the very viability of the class, such is the paradox of 'forcing' a moral position upon autonomous subjects (ibid).

This 'over-moralising' approach is strongly connected with Felicitas Macgilchrist and Barbara Christophe's (2011) remarks on Holocaust pedagogies that are based on immersing students in horror. Such approaches, which might involve exposing students to shocking imagery or particularly graphic testimonial passages, are predicated on the assumed necessity of producing certainty in Holocaust education – about right and wrong, victim

and perpetrator, and completely unambiguous moral lessons. Again, this assumption comes back to the problem of managing the 'risk' of such a sensitive topic, in this case the risk that students fail to heed socially acceptable moral lessons or react unpredictably in the face of challenging material. Yet in attempting to manage this risk, the exposure of students to images of brutality brings with it many other problems – for example, the historical distortion of wartime landscapes, the iconographic function of such images, the dehumanising effect of representing the Nazis' victims as a mass of dead bodies, and the moral dilemma of adopting images that were produced by the perpetrators as sources of historical knowledge (ibid).

In addition to these general problems, passive teaching philosophies could potentially be inappropriate for a Holocaust-based CLIL class for two reasons. Firstly, to put a 'shock pedagogy' (Heyl 2004, cited in Macgilchrist and Christophe 2004, p. 154) into practice in a sensitive and ethical way would require a level of contextualization, explanation and subsequent discussion that could not be guaranteed in an immersive L2 writing class, given the possibility of miscommunication and consequent difficulties of working with the intellectual and emotional responses of the students to such material. Secondly, such pedagogical approaches typically lend themselves to a lecture format, through which disturbing material can be given an historical and moral context, which perhaps helps explain the preponderance of passive pedagogies observed by Haynes amongst Holocaust instructors (1998). Adopting such a passive, lectured-based approach would be contrary to the core CLIL principle that students should be using their L2 in an active way in the study of academic content (Coyle 2007; Lasagabaster 2011). As such, my class was designed with the intention of placing as much emphasis as possible on student activity rather than lecturing. This pedagogical restriction, emerging directly from the CLIL context of my class, was enormously beneficial in developing an approach to teaching the Holocaust based upon active learning.

2. A pedagogy of interpretation, uncertainty and ambivalence

Three guiding principles informed my initial planning of the class. The first principle was that it would be extremely difficult

to provide the students with a comprehensive understanding of the historical context of the Holocaust within the time-frame of a 13-week course, given the complexity of that historical context, the various themes that I considered necessary to visit in order to render a distinctively geographical approach to this subject, and the time necessary to dedicate to academic writing features and strategies. Secondly, and relatedly, the lecture format that would likely be necessary to convey such a wealth of information would be contrary to the active learning approach that I consider complementary to the goals of CLIL, and potentially inappropriate considering the varied English-language listening proficiency of the students. Thirdly, however, I felt that an essential outcome of this class was to at least make the students aware of the importance of historical context for understanding the unfolding of the Holocaust and any ethical debates that might arise from our study of it. These three principles coalesced in something approximating what Macgilchrist and Christophe describe as a pedagogy of interpretation, uncertainty and ambivalence (2011, 155).

For Macgilchrist and Christophe (ibid), the myriad problematic aspects of developing Holocaust pedagogy around shocking imagery have helped motivate a shift in discursive approach. If shock pedagogy offers the certainty (albeit a potentially numbing one) of naked violence (Bernstein 2004), by contrast Macgilchrist and Christophe identify a movement in Holocaust education towards approaches that 'destabilize' the certainty of students' historical understanding (2011, p. 155) and trust students with teaching material that exposes them to ambivalent situations, dilemmas and contradictions that may be beyond resolution but that provide for more nuanced discussions of the historical and ethical realities of the Holocaust. Similarly, Meseth and Proske (2010) argue in favour of using historical sources, such as biographical stories, that are effective in engaging students' empathy and consequently 'creat[ing] a pedagogical *setting* that is wide open to independent student interpretations' (p. 209, emphasis in original). Further, they argue that trusting students with more ambivalent material that can be interpreted in a variety of different ways results in a more contingent classroom setting where the spontaneity of student discussion is able to contribute meaningfully to the direction of the class – pre-

cisely the type of active learning that a CLIL approach encourages.

While I was unfamiliar with this movement in Holocaust education at the time of planning the class, the pedagogical restriction that I internalised on the basis of trying to design a CLIL-inspired class – specifically, avoiding a lecture format wherever possible – resulted in a learning environment that bears marked similarities to the pedagogy of uncertainty, ambivalence and open interpretation described above. The tone was set in one of the first activities of the class, the intention of which was to introduce the students to some core themes and facts about the Holocaust, so as to provide an equal basis from which to begin the class among a group of students with varying levels of prior historical knowledge. One possible way to do this, which I considered, would have been to deliver a lecture introducing those fundamental themes and facts, but while this approach would offer benefits in terms of precision and clarity, I had concerns about the length of time required to deliver even a basic introductory lecture when dealing with such complex events, and – more pertinently – the passive format of such an activity, particularly when setting the tone in the first session of a course. So instead – and again, it is important to emphasise that this decision was driven by the principles of CLIL, *not* by any specific Holocaust pedagogy – I designed a worksheet featuring a series of questions for the students to discuss in pairs:

- What was the Holocaust?
- Who were the victims?
- When did the Holocaust take place?
- How were the victims of the Holocaust murdered?

These questions were chosen on the basis that they touch upon some key elements of the history of the Holocaust, and are broad and (seemingly) basic enough to generate discussion among students who may lack confidence about their knowledge of this subject matter; the list is, of course, not exhaustive. After an allotted period of time for pair discussion, we then talked about these questions as a group. In each case, as I anticipated, the students initially arrived at an accurate but oversimplified answer: the Holocaust was a genocide; the victims were Jews; it took

place during the Second World War; the victims were killed in gas chambers. With my prompting, the students reached increasingly complex iterations of these responses, occasionally offering ideas that I had not anticipated and which temporarily diverted the course of discussion. Only at the end of this process did I provide something akin to an 'answer', in which I described the essential complexity of each question. The point of this exercise, and particularly my intervention at the end, was not to resolve these questions through the *addition* of a series of facts to the students' understanding of the event, since I emphasised that even my answer was a simplification that could be complicated or problematised in a series of ways; rather, it was to *subtract* the expectation of total and complete knowledge from the students' apprehension of the Holocaust. This was not to denigrate the value of historical understanding – a further objective of this exercise was to underscore that the class would be founded upon historical research – but to acknowledge that we would be studying an historical event that is fundamentally characterised by complexity, uncertainty, and ambivalence (Blanchot 1995; Eaglestone 2004).

The imperative of providing Holocaust education within a CLIL-appropriate, active learning framework continued into the first week's homework and again converged with the emerging shift towards a Holocaust pedagogy of ambivalence and interpretation. If the initial in-class activities had focused on drawing out the withheld complexity of ostensibly basic facts about the Holocaust, my intention with the homework was to achieve something similar with geographies of the Holocaust. In order to do so, I provided a worksheet featuring three images: a map of Europe showing the location of major Nazi concentration and extermination camps in January 1944; a black-and-white photograph of people being led into the back of a truck, with various onlookers standing on the side of the street; and a colour photograph of a plaster model of Crematoria II of Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp, which features a cross-sectional view of people in the passageway into and within the gas chamber. Beneath each photograph I provided space for the students to describe what they could see in the image, and to explain how the image could be considered 'geographical', and this would provide material for discussion at the beginning of the next

class.

Again, the purpose of this exercise was not for students to arrive at the 'correct answer', given the multitude of possible interpretations afforded by each image, but instead to explore an open interpretive setting. Although I did have a loose plan in mind for the subsequent in-class discussion that would ensure we touched upon key areas of historical investigation – for example, the significance of the location of extermination camps in Poland, the close proximity of victims and bystanders of the Holocaust, and the use of particular spatial dynamics in the organisation of the killing process – the students would also have the capacity to drive the discussion in line with their own idiosyncratic interpretations of the images, in ways that would be entirely contingent on the spontaneous unfolding of the class. Even more so than the in-class activity, the pedagogical core of this homework exercise was to place the students in an ambivalent and open-ended encounter with the Holocaust. By establishing a distance between the students and the past, a separation based on the uncertainty of the images' meanings, the students were forced to use both their existing historical knowledge and their empathetic faculties to create an interpretation.

This idea of forging a more meaningful emotional and intellectual connection between students and the Holocaust by first creating a sense of distance and uncertainty, one that avoids collapsing into a problematic sense of over-identification with Holocaust victims, has been raised by Brenner (1999) as a particular quality of testimony (see also Carter-White 2012). But as implied throughout this section, I want to suggest that other teaching materials, used appropriately, and particularly within a CLIL approach, are capable of a similar effect. This can be illustrated with reference to one final class exercise.

Approximately halfway through the semester, I planned an exercise that would help the students to understand the Nazis' use of extermination camps within the context of modernity, one of the core themes of the class. In preparation for the exercise I began by giving a brief description of one of the main methods of mass killing used by the Nazis prior to the extermination camps: mass shootings across Eastern Europe by mobile paramilitary units, known as the *Einsatzgruppen* (Hilberg 2003). I then distributed two maps to the students: one, of 1942 Poland, which

highlighted the location of the extermination camps Treblinka, Sobibor and Majdanek, the network of railway lines connecting them, and the number and direction of people transported along these lines; and another, illustrating the railway routes by which people were transported across Europe to the extermination camps of Poland. I then asked the students to study the maps and, in pairs, identify any patterns and discuss how these patterns might explain the decision by the Nazi leadership to change from the *Einsatzgruppen* method of mass killing to the extermination camp method.

The main point of this exercise was for the students to grasp the idea that the extermination camp system operated according to a principle of centralisation and rationalisation (see Bauman 2000), compared to the localised killing of the *Einsatzgruppen*, and as such that the greater efficiency afforded by this system provides one possible explanation as to why the Nazis adopted it, as well as providing a concrete example of the modern, 'industrial' character of the Holocaust. The students reached this conclusion through their pair-based analysis of the maps, and so the point of historical understanding that I had planned for the class was successfully achieved. The post-exercise discussion, however, extended far beyond this. By asking the students to consider the logic of the concentration camp system, I had effectively asked them to make the difficult empathetic leap of imagining the decision-making processes of the perpetrators – an exercise for which geographical materials are particularly effective (Charlesworth 1996), and which is fundamentally necessary in order to retain a perception of the Holocaust as a recognisably human event, and not the action of inhuman monsters inhabiting an alien world (see Carter-White 2013). In the course of exploring this open interpretive setting, the students embarked on an unexpected excursion as they began to discuss the extreme length of train journeys from Western Europe to Poland, a feature of the maps that appeared to contradict the principle of efficiency that we had previously attributed to the camp system. In order to find a rationale for transporting people such long distances in order to be killed, it was necessary for the students to make another empathetic leap, this time towards the suffering of the victims. The students reached one possible interpretation: the length of these journeys in crowded train carriages helped to

weaken the victims, so that it was easier to murder them at a centralised location.

The students' initial analysis of the maps and subsequent empathetic connections had already carried the discussion further than I had anticipated, before one final step. Towards the end of the discussion, an individual student directly questioned me about the extermination camp railway system. The fact that this act of questioning occurred without any prompting or solicitation on the teacher's part constitutes the type of overturning of traditional pedagogical hierarchy attributed by Dalton-Puffer and Nikula (2006) to CLIL approaches, and given the student's difficulty in phrasing the question in English and perseverance in doing so, it seemed born of a highly motivated and empathetic connection with the material. The student wanted to know what happened to people who died en route to the camps: whether they were removed from the trains, or if they were kept on the trains all the way to the camp destination. I answered that, in general, bodies were kept on the trains, so they could be disposed of under conditions of secrecy at the centralised killing site. The student responded with two words – 'how awful'[1] – which were indicative of the student's moral connection with this material. In response to this student-driven exchange and the group's obvious motivation and emotional engagement with this theme, and to allow for further discussion, I changed my plans for subsequent exercises to focus on relevant themes of dehumanisation and resistance in the context of the Holocaust.

The significance of this last exercise is that, rather than trying to shock students into a moral connection with victims of violence through graphic imagery, the CLIL framework of my class forced me to design a more open pedagogical setting based around seemingly mundane visual materials in which the students' empathetic faculties and historical knowledge came together to lead them to an understanding of the *process* – not just the horrific outcome – of genocide. Crucially, this came about through the students' own active disposition in the learning process, in which meaningful language use led organically to an ethical and historical insight that had not been scripted into the class, and which provided the motor for subsequent historical topics of analysis. It is due to instances such as this that I consider a Holocaust pedagogy of open interpretation and ambiva-

lence to be a natural fit with the active learning approach of CLIL, and the latter to be potentially beneficial for the development of the former.

Conclusion

If the Holocaust is a potentially risky choice of subject matter for a second language class, then I hope in this paper to have provided grounds for optimism that, with further classroom-based pedagogical research, these risks can be both managed and justified. My interpretation of literature related to CLIL and Holocaust pedagogies, and my own experience of teaching a language class based around the Holocaust, suggest that the recent movement in Holocaust education towards active learning can gain a great deal of insight from approaches developed in L2 teaching, and that the Holocaust provides a deeply motivating subject matter for CLIL classes. This builds further upon the values of multiculturalism, tolerance and diversity that I consider to be implicit in both areas.

The optimistic findings of this paper should, however, be tempered by the various limits to its generalisability, not least the relatively small number and generally high English proficiency of the students. There is also a question as to the generalisability of this approach outside of the specific context of the Holocaust. Given the degree of academic and popular attention dedicated to the Holocaust compared to comparable events of state-organised mass murder (Lawson 2014), the likelihood of students having less familiarity with other modern genocides may have important effects both on their ability to comprehend and discuss the subject matter on an intellectual level and to empathise with and process disturbing concepts and events on an emotional level. Future research along these lines would be beneficial for expanding the remit of CLIL classes and genocide education in general, and could feasibly feed back into education on less familiar events of Holocaust history.

Notes

1. This exchange is reproduced here with the consent of the student.

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