

*“Mother languages & multilingualism in Education”
International Symposium (Feb. 21st, 2024)*

**What should an educator know to
promote multilingualism in early
childhood education?**



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INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF MULTILINGUALISM

MULTILINGUALISM (European Commission, 2002, 2003)

- **Multilingualism** is a distinctive feature of our society (Missaglia, 2010; Schwartz, 2022)
- “**1+2 Strategy**” encouraged by the European Union since early 21st century
- **Data from the European Commission**
 - 88% Europeans consider necessary to learn additional languages
 - 98% relevant for their children’s future career
 - 67% English as the most useful language
- Learning programmes: **CLIL, ELL, Erasmus+...**





INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF ECEC

Benefits of ECEC on the later academic achievement, as well as its key role in the holistic development of the child (Council of Europe, 2019; European Commission, 2011; Peeters, Sharmahd, & Budginaité, 2016; UNESCO, 2016; Van Laere, 2021)

INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF ECEC

“these first years are decisive because **the child is simply that, a child** in the process of maturing, developing, and not a little person” (Castillejo, 1989, p.16)



INTRODUCTION

MULTILINGUALISM

(European Commission, 2002, 2003)

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) (European Commission, 2009, 2019; UNESCO, 2016)

VERY EARLY
FOREIGN
LANGUAGE
LEARNING



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INTRODUCTION

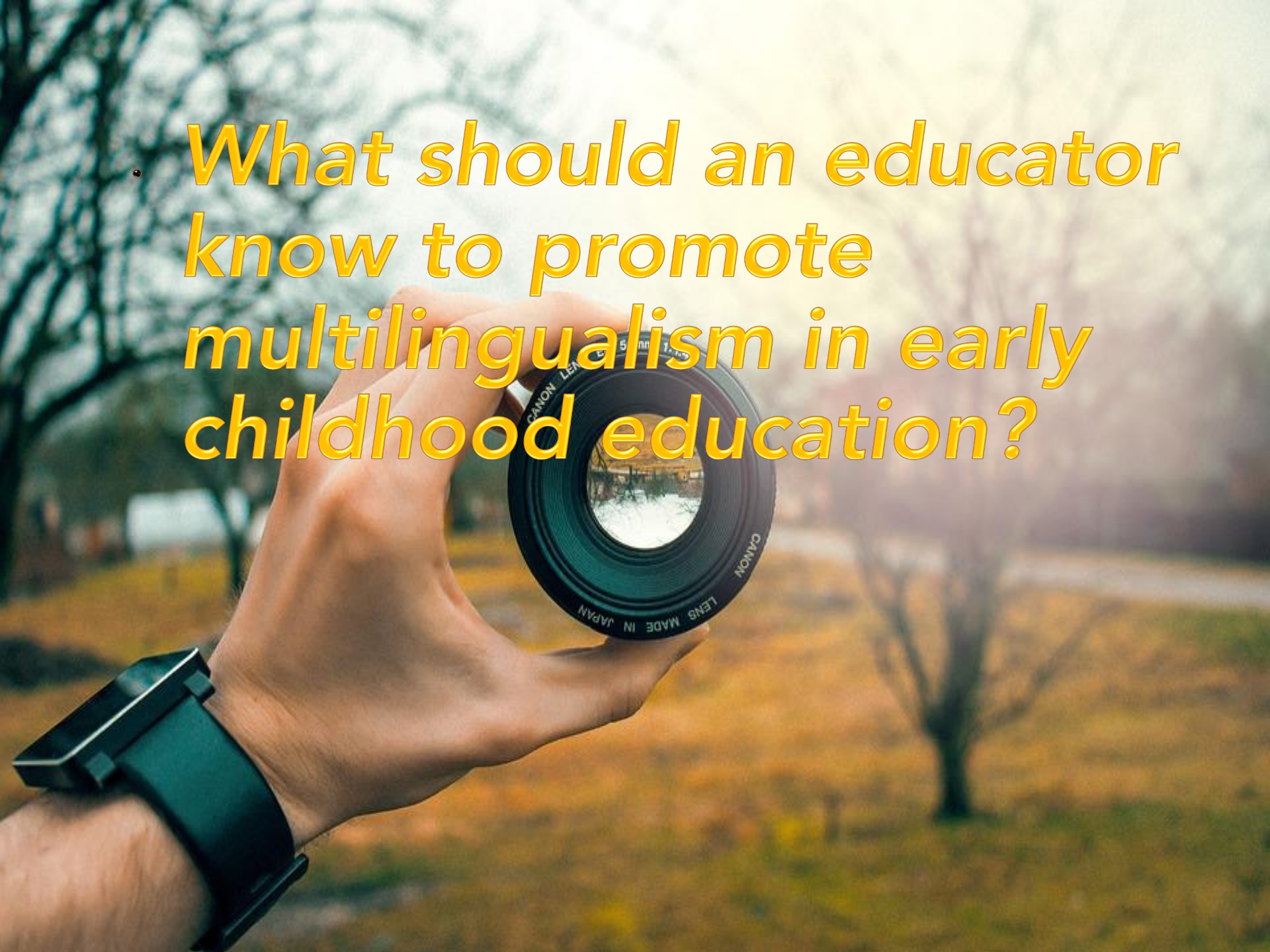
IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)

The provision of **qualified educators** specialised for this age group has become an **emerging priority** for most governments (European Commission, 2019)

teachers are the linchpin of successful ECEC (Council of Europe, 2019; Lazzari, 2017; Urban et al., 2012).



What should an educator know to promote multilingualism in early childhood education?





R&D Project “Learning foreign and additional languages in Early Childhood”

<http://proyectoleyla.eu/>

(Ref. PID2021-123055NB-I00) funded by MCIN/AEI/ 10.13039/501100011033 and by “ERDF
A way of making Europe”



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INTRODUCTION

2 MAIN PROFILES

EFL specialist

- Elementary school teacher (6-12 y.o.)
- Language proficiency
- Domain-specific teacher skills

ECEC educator

- Pre-elementary educator (0-6/3-6)
- Low FL proficiency
- General teachers skills

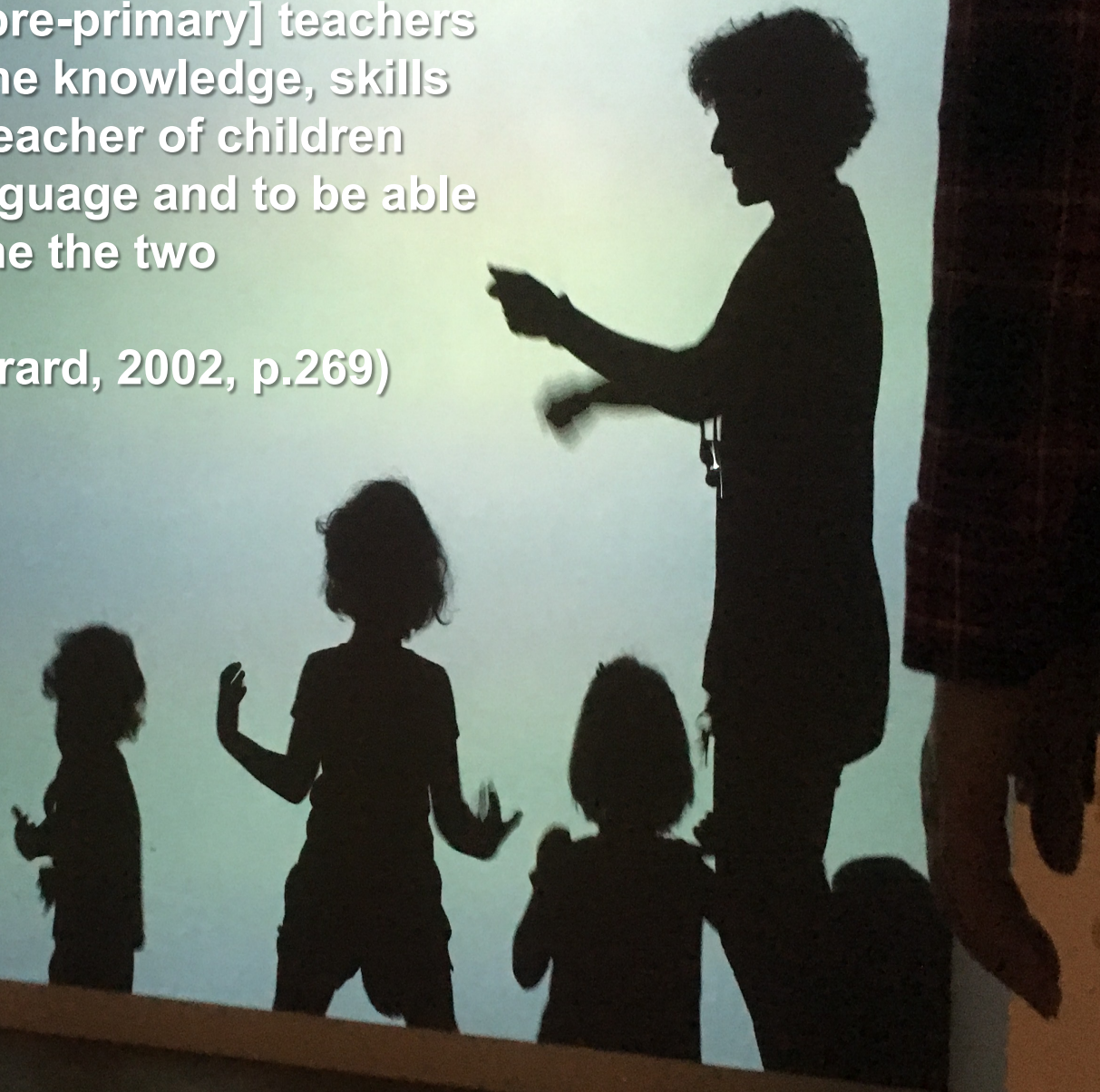
Andúgar, Cortina-Pérez and Tornel (2019); Mourao (2019)



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**The challenge for all [pre-primary] teachers of English is to have the knowledge, skills and sensitivities of a teacher of children and of a teacher of language and to be able to balance and combine the two successfully
(Brewster, Ellis and Girard, 2002, p.269)**





How to keep balanced?

An early childhood – Foreign language educator



An early childhood – Foreign language educator



An early childhood – Foreign language educator



An early childhood – Foreign language educator



TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE (TBK)



What does
Angela know that
makes her such a
good English
teacher in
ECEC?



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TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE (TBK)

Shulman (1986)

- Content knowledge
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- Curricular knowledge

Shulman (1987)

- Content knowledge
- General pedagogical knowledge
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- Knowledge about learners
- Knowledge about ends, purposes, values and theoretical grounds
- Knowledge of educational context
- Curriculum Knowledge

Grossman (1990)

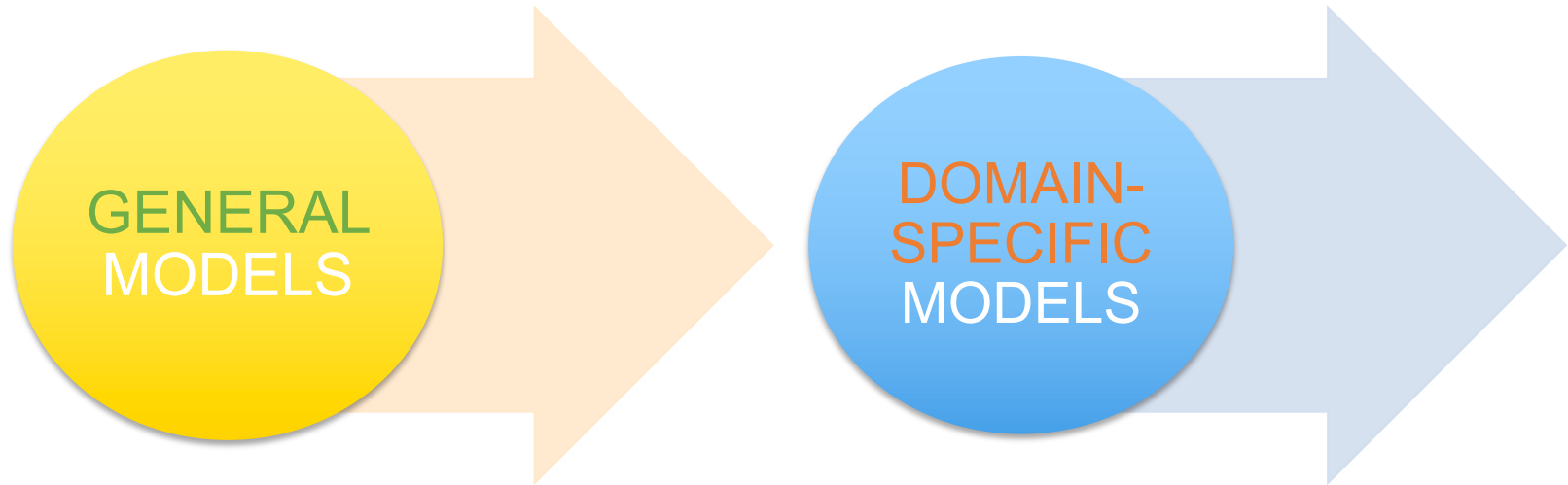
- *Subject matter knowledge* (substantive and syntactic structures of content)
- **General pedagogical knowledge** (learners and learning, classroom management, curriculum and instruction...)
- **Pedagogical content knowledge** (Knowledge of students understanding, curricular knowledge, knowledge of instructional strategies)
- **Knowledge of context** (knowing about the community, the school, the student...)



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TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE L2/FL TEACHER



COMPLEXITY

language is not only the subject matter but also the main teaching resource (Faez, 2011)



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TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE L2/FL TEACHER

“neither fixed nor stable, but instead emergent, dynamic, and contingent on teachers’ knowledge of particular students, in particular contexts, who are learning particular content, for particular purposes” (Johnson, 2015, p.519)



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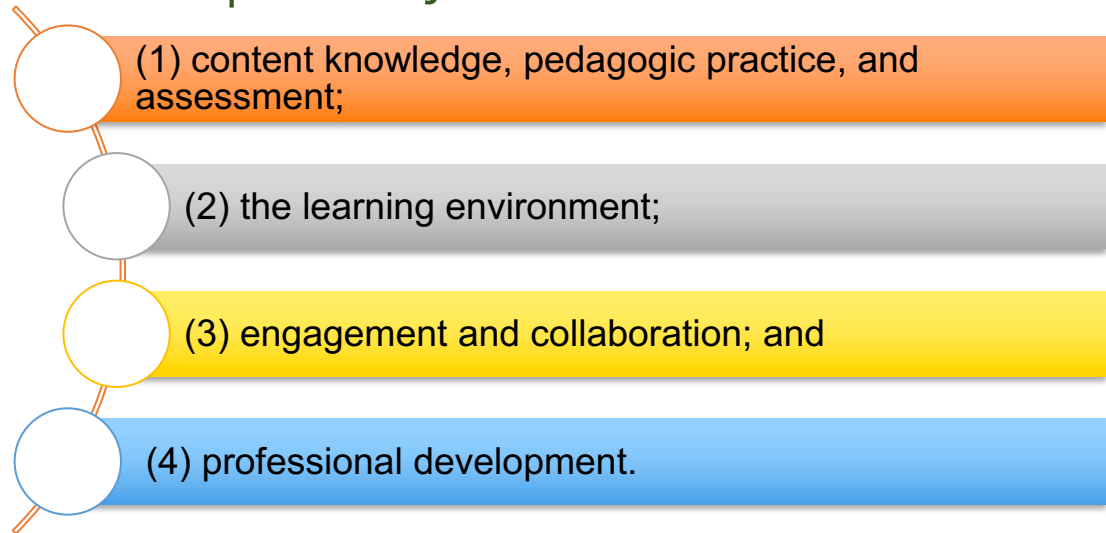


TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE

ECEC EDUCATOR

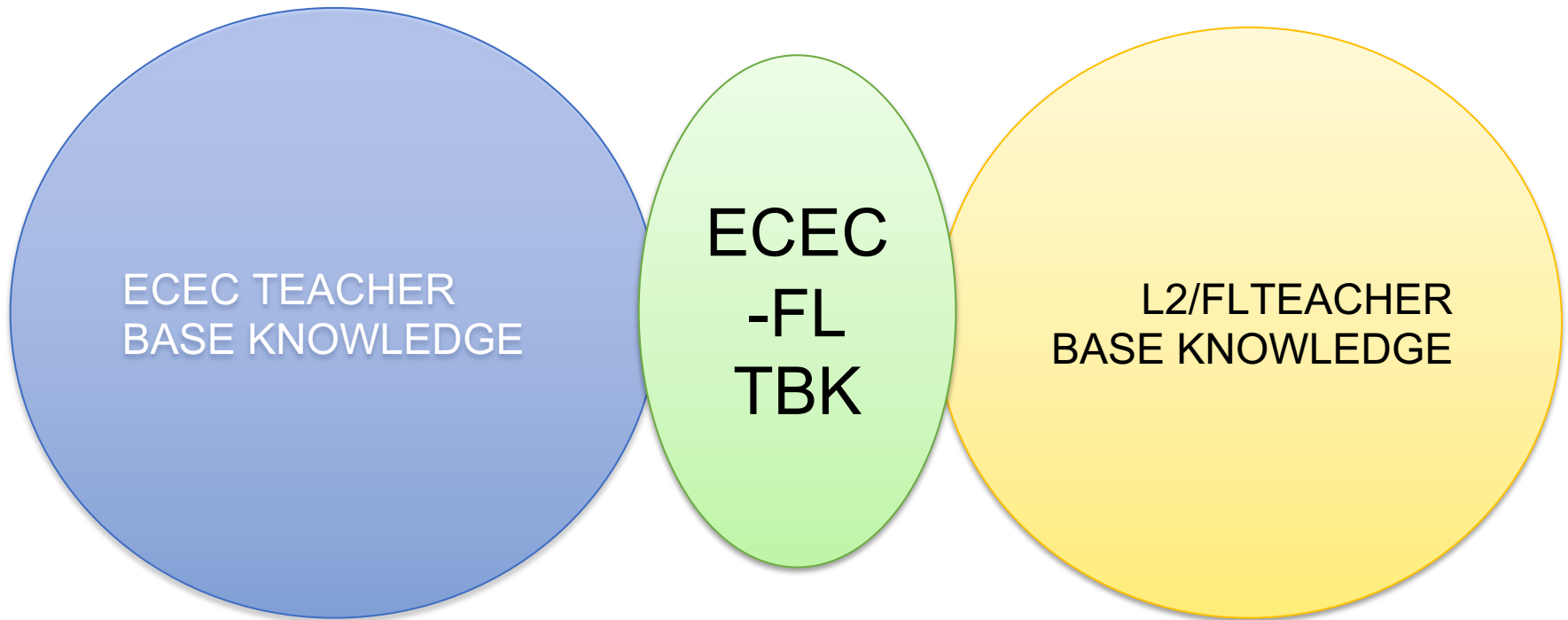


- Emerging field
- Working on professionalising the ECEC workforce
- UNESCO (2018) – ECEC teacher competency framework:



TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE

ECEC-FL TEACHER

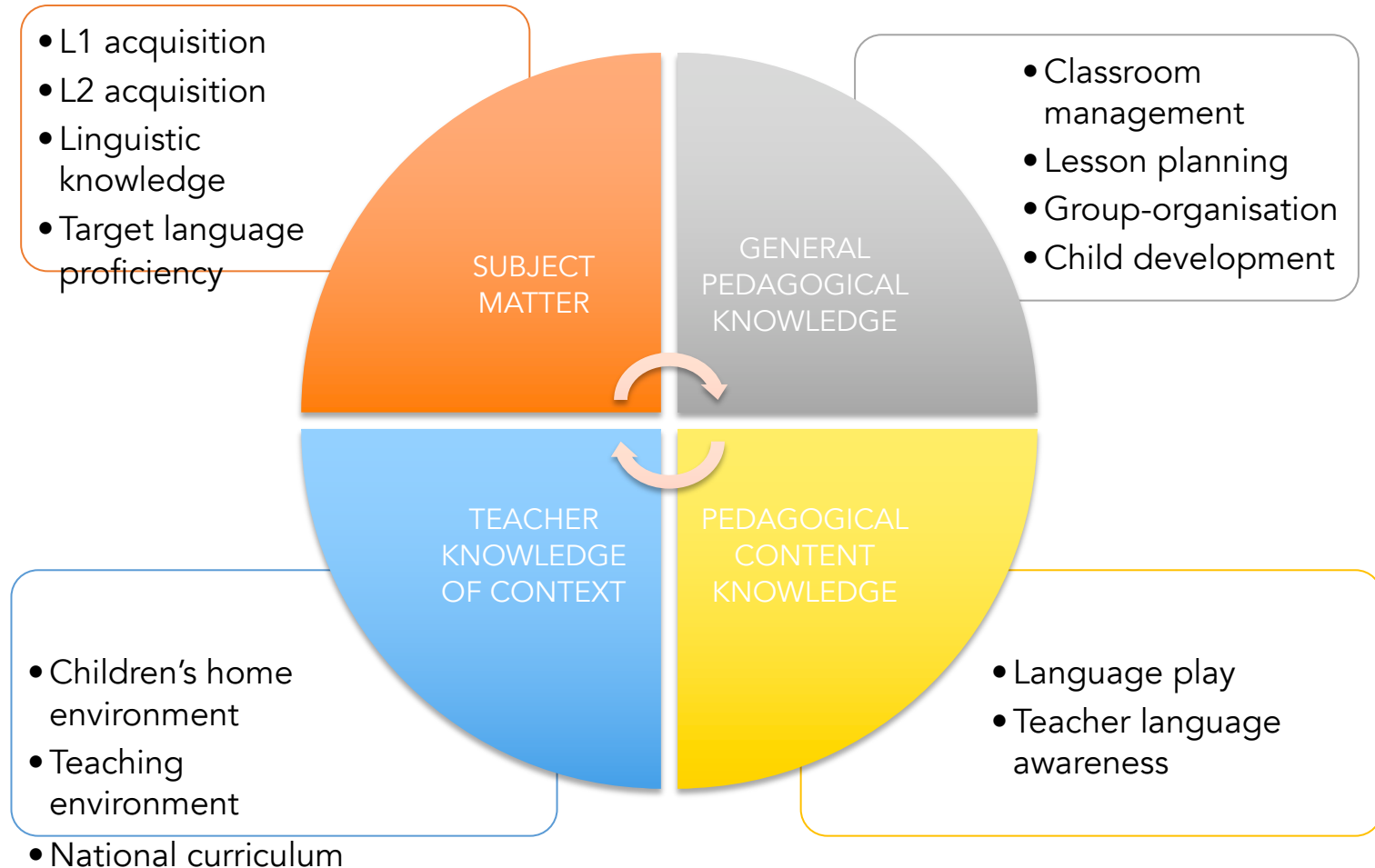


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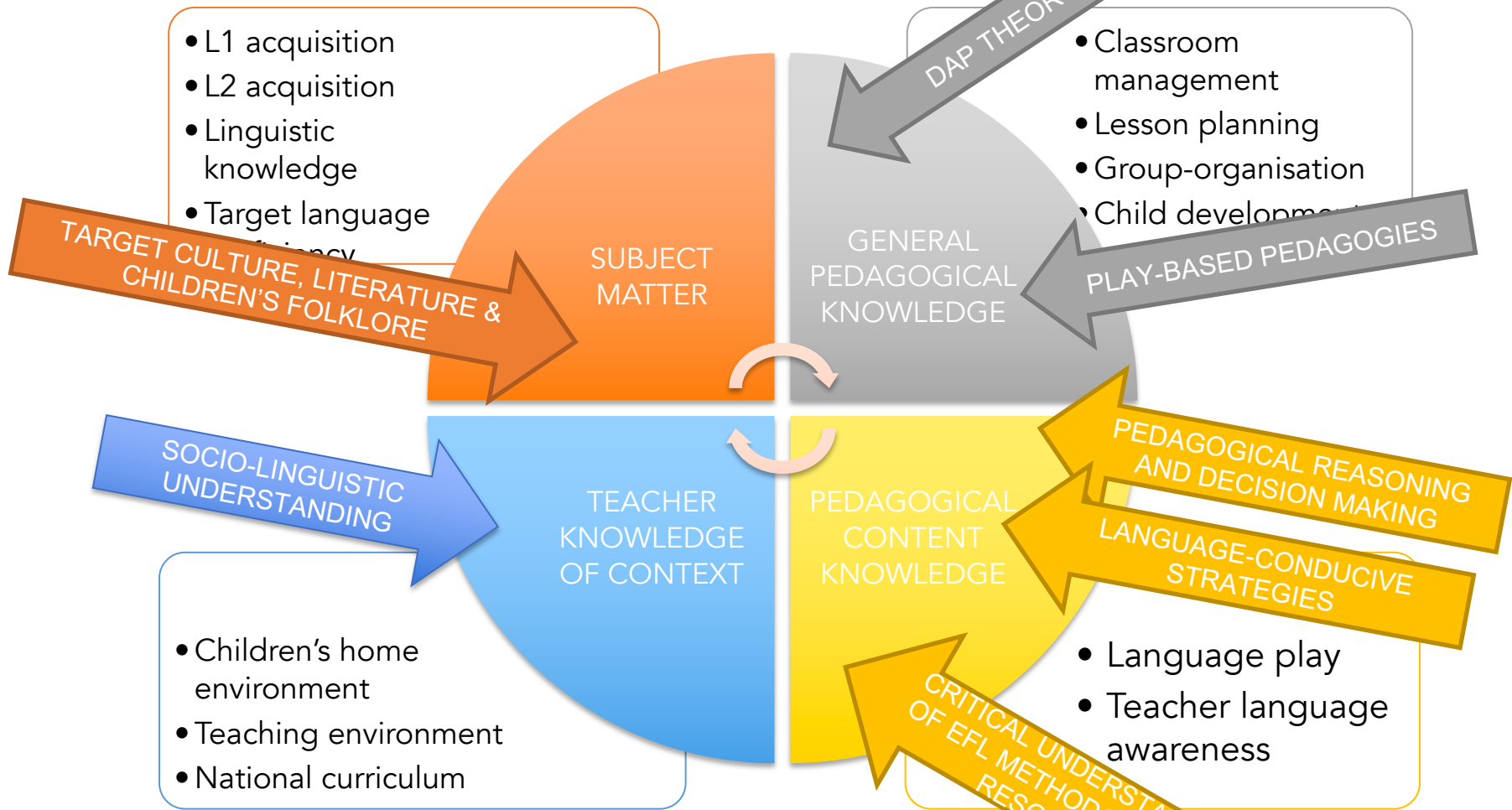
TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE

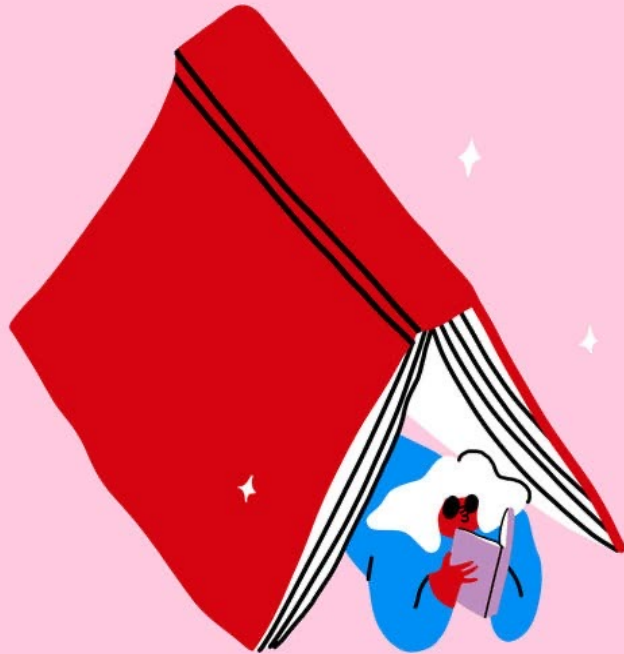
Kim's (2013, 2015) ECEC-L2/FL TBK



TEACHER BASE KNOWLEDGE

LExEI PROJECT + Kim's model (2013, 2015)





Cortina-Pérez, Beatriz (2024). Rethinking teacher knowledge base (TKB) for early childhood additional language teachers. In N. Martínez-León et al. (Eds.), *Multilingual Pedagogies for Early Years. Theoretical Insights and Innovative Approaches*. Peter Lang.



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The logo for 'ellme net' features the word 'ellme' in lowercase letters with a color gradient from green to blue, followed by 'net' in black. To the right is a colorful icon of a hand with fingers spread, each finger a different color.

FINAL REMARK



All children perform to their potential and that their success depends on the commitment of the teachers (McElwee, 2015), and on the education they (teachers) receive.



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