Article

The Changing Landscape of English Teaching

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Abstract
The field of TESOL has seen paradigmatic shifts related to how language and language proficiency are conceptualized as well as how we approach teaching English as an additional language (EAL). Embedding the teaching of English within the world of multilingualism is a third shift. Given the importance of multilingualism for the 21st century and a globalized and technology-enhanced world, viewing EAL teaching as integral to becoming bi/multilingual is imperative. Rather than seeing EAL as separate from students' home language practices, this article argues that, even in foreign language contexts, teachers can accelerate English language learning by extending and building on students' entire linguistic repertoire.

1 Introduction

In my keynote address at the TESOL International Association/China Daily Assembly (https://tesol. i21st.cn/2020/26110.html?fbclid=IwAR02l_eFLHqyKSvQW6lJK3idop3nGqgMpj4y_21Sa6Z- a7KjHO7z__3plZ0), I talked about three shifts related to the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) acronym. First, we have changed how we view what we teach, i.e., our notions about language in general and the English language in particular. Our understandings have moved away from seeing language as a discrete system of isolated skills to viewing language as a communicative tool, constructed in social practice. The latter view recognizes the multiplicity within and across English varieties. Rather than thinking of "the" English language, linguists have noted that the label reflects multiple genres and specific ways of using the English language. Thus, developing proficiency in English is not simply learning a system of discrete sounds, words, and sentences. Rather, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are considered in relationship to specific ways that English is used in real- life contexts. Distinctions between social and academic uses of English in K-12 settings, for example, have become more prominent, or the use of English for specific purposes for adult learners (e.g., for business, for science, for medical field). The multiplicity of the English language stresses that linguistic features vary by sociolinguistic contexts of use (e.g., class, geography). Varieties beyond "standard" or "mainstream English" and the ways English is being used outside English-dominant societies are

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identified and valued. Terms like "World Englishes" and "English as an International Language" are examples of efforts to better reflect this multiplicity (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018).

Aligned with the shift in our understanding of language and further fueled by advances in technology, our view of teaching has also changed. Communicative approaches are favored over pedagogical practices that exclusively focus on learning grammar rules without regard to the context in which language is or will be used. Moreover, where technology and the knowledge economy have broadened access to information beyond the individual classroom teacher, distributed knowledge and expertise models are increasingly becoming the norm. Under these circumstances, teachers' roles include the facilitation of learning as well as scaffolding students to become lifelong learners and problem solvers.

Both shifts can be said to relate to the "T" and "E" in TESOL. They are fundamental to the field and are significant in shaping research, policy, and practice. They encourage scholars and educators around the world to conceive of English language and English language teaching as dynamic, complex, multidimensional, and highly contextualized. For the purpose of this article, however, I would like to turn my attention to the third shift, the one that relates to the "SOL" of TESOL. As English language teachers, we are not simply teaching English, but we are teaching English to speakers of other languages. Bringing the SOL into focus implies considering teaching English in the broader context of multilingualism. To address this shift, this article will first re-iterate the importance of multilingualism in general, and then examines implications for multilingualism in teaching English as an additional language in different contexts. Given the limited space, this article is not intended to provide an in-depth review of the literature but rather aims to invite a conversation and dialogue about ELT within a world where multilingualism is the norm.

2 Conceptualizing English in Multilingualism

Research has shown the benefits of bilingualism for the individual and for society (LoBianco, 2001). It is well beyond the scope of this article to provide an in-depth discussion of these cultural, educational, cognitive, and economic benefits. Generally speaking, home language maintenance and bi/multilingualism plays a crucial role in students' cultural and linguistic identity development, acculturation and integration (Cummins & Early, 2011), and in sustaining healthy families and intergenerational communication (Fillmore, 1991). Although the relationship between language and cognition is complex, bilingualism has been linked to cognitive advantages in young children as well as delaying cognitive impairment in elderly individuals (Adesope, Lavin, Thomspon, & Ungerlaeider, 2010; Bialystok, 2011). Studies have confirmed the positive impact of bi/multilingualism on high school graduation, college attendance, job prospects as well as income (Callahan & Gándara, 2014). Today, companies are increasingly seeking and hiring multilingual workers, recognizing the positive impact on revenue and product reach and distribution (Hogan-Brun, 2017; New American Economy, 2017). Finally, scholars have noted that multilingualism contributes to enhanced ability to empathize with others and taking perspective at a young age (Fan, Liberman, Keysar & Kinzler, 2015; Goetz, 2003; Wright & Tropp, 2005).

In addition to these cultural, cognitive, educational, and economic benefits, it is worth noting that, in the process of becoming bi/multilingual, individuals and groups acquire the problem solving, critical thinking, the interpersonal and collaborative, competence and communication skills identified as the so-called 21st century's skills. Learning and using multiple linguistic resources and the ability to successfully engage in and negotiate intercultural relationships support the development of these skills, needed for the global knowledge economy. Clearly then, there is a mandate for developing bi/multilingual competence for all learners (Council of Europe, 2001).

Learning English as an additional language takes a unique position within this broader framework of the importance of bi/multilingualism for all learners. While certainly not the only important international

language, the reach of English around the world is indeed unique (Graddol, 2006). Noting the extensive use of English worldwide, many school systems in non-English dominant countries select English as the first additional language to be introduced (Figure 1). English learning has thus become integral in many countries' bi/multilingual development.
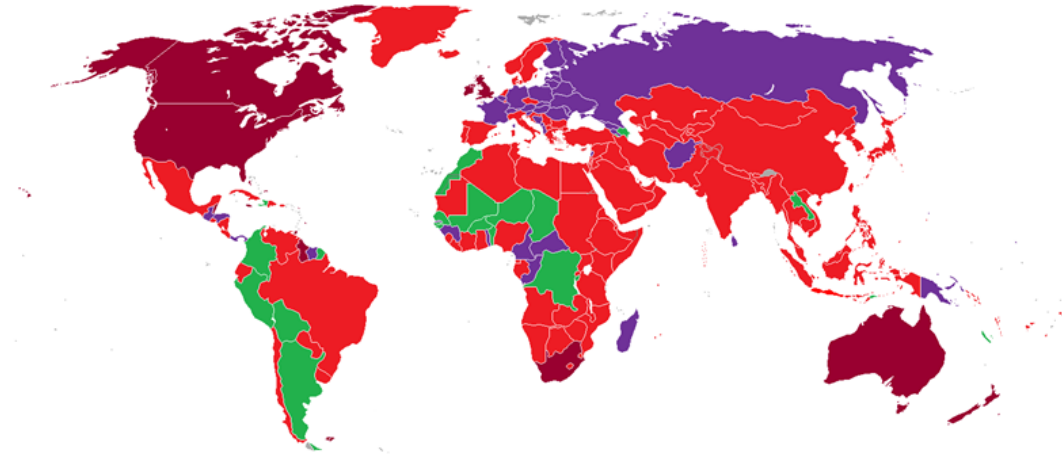

Figure 1. Which countries teach English in regular school and to how many students
(Red, all students. Magenta, most students. Green, some students. Dark Red, native language)
Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/English_Learning_World.png

3 Toward Multilingualism in English Language Teaching

Centering the SOL of TESOL positions teachers of English to speakers of other languages as teachers who are integral to their students' bilingual and multilingual development. After all, their learners already speak and often read and write in languages other than English. If they live in multilingual contexts, many may indeed use and be exposed to different languages at home, in the community, and at school. These experiences and knowledge about language and literacy do not disappear when these learners enter the English language classroom; this background and prior knowledge are integral to who they are and what they know. The Common European Framework for Languages describes this phenomenon as follows,

> "The learner of a second or foreign language and culture does not cease to be competent in his or her mother tongue and the associated culture. Nor is the new competence kept entirely separate from the old. The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*." (Council of Europe, 2000, p. 43)

What is important in this quote is that learned languages are not kept separate in the bilingual individual's brain as two separate entities. Rather, bilingualism reflects a holistic system of linguistic features and dynamic grammatical choices to communicate meaning, that are constructed through social practice (García, 2009). As Grosjean famously noted in his seminal article, "bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person" (1989, p. 3).

Understanding the holistic nature of bilingualism has profound implications for teaching and working with students who are in the process of becoming bilingual. It points to students' home languages as a key resource for content and language learning. It reminds us that for bi/multilingual learners their knowledge and learning experiences are encoded in their home languages, whether they be minority or majority language speakers. If teachers want to connect to prior knowledge and experiences, it thus

makes sense to include students' entire linguistic repertoire, their home languages as well as English, when teaching.

Viewing students' linguistic resources as assets is important, regardless of the program or setting. Access to the full range of students' meaning-making repertoires enhances students' linguistic, academic, social, and cognitive achievement (García & Wei, 2014). It can also lead to increased metalinguistic awareness when multiple languages are accessed and compared in classroom spaces. Most recently, the notion of "translanguaging" has been proposed as a way to better underscore and reflect the dynamic nature of multilingualism and students' and teachers' multilingual practices in the classroom (Conteh, 2018; García & Wei, 2014). Ofelia García (2009) defines translanguaging as "the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous language, in order to maximize communicative potential" (p. 40) Translanguaging pedagogy encourages teachers to create instructional spaces where learners use their full range of communicative abilities for learning (García, Johnson, & Selzer, 2017).

The importance of connecting to student's entire linguistic and cultural repertoires would seem a principle for teaching that goes across contexts. Practices will vary, however, according to program goals, the learning and teaching environment, available resources and affordances (see de Jong, 2011). In the sections below, two distinct settings will be discussed in more detail: the role of students' home languages when teaching English to immigrant children or children of immigrants in English-dominant countries like the United States, and teaching English as an international language to majority language speakers as may be the case in countries like Colombia, China, and Korea.

3.1 Teaching English to minority language speakers: Bilingual education

Building on students' home languages leads in some contexts to the development and implementation of bilingual and multilingual education programs, i.e., programs that use two or more languages for instruction, one of which the dominant, societal language. Some programs aim for comprehensive oracy and literacy skills in both languages. An example of this type of program are two-way bilingual education (TWBE) programs. In this program, fluent speakers of the societal language (e.g., English) and fluent speakers of the partner language (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Korean) are taught together in and through two languages. The program aims for bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and intercultural competence for all students. To reach this goal, at least 50% of instruction is in the partner language and students learn subject matter (math, science, social studies) as well as language and literacy in both languages (Arias & Fee, 2018). This program model has received increased attention for its positive academic outcomes as well as its potential to bridge linguistic and cultural differences and build stronger intergroup relationships. These findings have been document in different contexts, including the United States (Arias & Fee, 2018; Kim, Hutchison, & Winsler, 2010), Germany (Meier, 2010), and Israel (Tannenbaum & Tahar, 2008).

Two-way immersion programs are only one type of bilingual education. Another program that also aims for bilingualism and biliteracy are one-way immersion programs which have similar goals but enroll minority language speakers learning the societal language. Key to both programs is their additive and assets-based stance where students' diverse linguistic and cultural experiences are seen as resources rather than problems (Ruiz, 1984). There are also bilingual programs that use the students' home language for a certain length of time as part of instruction before transitioning to instruction in one language, typically the dominant, societal language (also referred to as transitional bilingual education programs).

Decades of research conducted on bilingual education around the world with different languages of instruction underscore its positive impact on academic and language achievement, on sociocultural outcomes, as well as school attendance and graduation rates (see Benson, 2004; Nakamura & de Hoop,

2018; Slavin et al. 2011). These outcomes are associated with well-implemented bilingual education programs that ensure access to quality teachers, curriculum and materials, as well as strong school-community partnerships (de Jong, 2011).

Bilingual education is not always an option for minoritized language speakers. Even when a bilingual program is not feasible, creating spaces for students' home languages and literacies is still equally important for student school success. For minoritized language students who are learning (in) the societal dominant language, the use of their home languages has shown to be impactful. Naqvi, Thorne, Pfitscher, Nordstokke, & McKeough (2012), for example, found that reading dual language books can foster literacy development in young learners' second language. Similarly, Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera, & Cummins (2014) successfully used a multilingual and multimodal approach to encourage literacy investment, engagement, and writing skill development with third grade elementary children who had come to Canada from many different countries.

In short, minority language speakers learning English as the dominant, societal language benefit greatly when teachers connect their teaching to students' prior learning, including experiences encoded in their home languages. It allows students to make sense of subject matter content with the full range of their cognitive and linguistic resources. Rather than asking bi/multilingual learners to leave their home language "at the school door," teachers can leverage these resources to more effectively support academic and language learning success (Cole, 2019).

3.2 Teaching English to majority language speakers: Language and content programs

Teaching English as an additional language to majority (societal) language speakers is a different context for English learning. In these contexts, the use of students' home languages is still more controversial. ELT teachers who find themselves in these teaching contexts are typically encouraged to insist on a target language-only environment and teach English through English-only strategies. The insistence on English-only approaches is partially informed by concerns about students' limited opportunities to use (oral) English outside the classroom. This concern subsequently translates into a mandate to maximize exposure to English (Lin, 2006). The monolingual, English-only approach is also informed by the assumption that second languages are best learned through the direct method and that the students' native language and literacies will interfere with the development of appropriate "habits" or schema in the second language and/or discourage students from 'trying' the target language. As a result, students are expected to not access their home languages and literacies when they enter the classroom.

These arguments overlook the fact that, regardless of this policy and as noted above, students do and will bring other language learning experiences with them into the classroom. When ELT teachers understand they are integral to the process of bilingualism and multilingualism, the question of the role of students' home languages shifts drastically. Rather than asking "should I use students' home language or not," bilingually oriented ELT teachers ask a far more dynamic question. Given that students are becoming bilingual and bring their home language experiences with them, they ask instead, "how can I strategically use students' home language resources when teaching English" (Lin, 2006). This question prompts ELT teachers to consider how they might be able to accelerate both content and language learning when they systematically leverage these experiences (Ferguson, 2013).

Across the globe, studies show that both students and teachers naturally switch from the target language to students' home languages and do so for a range of affective, social, linguistic, and pedagogical purposes, including building relationships, clarifying concepts, comparing L1 and L2 linguistic features, motivating students, and affirming students' bicultural and bilingual identities. (DiCamilla & Antón, 2012; Forman, 2012; Lin, 2015; Macaró, 2009; Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). A recent study by Ahmadian & Mansouri (2020) with adult learners suggests, for example, that using the home

language for preplanning can enhance student performance on L2 writing. In addition to enhanced accuracy and quality of writing, they also found significant differences in student engagement between bilingually structured tasks and monolingually structured learning environments.

Classroom-based research on the use of home and target language with school-age children is emerging (Crawford, 2004; Levine, 2003). In the context of programs that integrate language and content learning (also referred to as CLIL), researchers find that students use their home language, among others, for task clarification, concept learning and vocabulary development, enhancing the collaboration process, and metalinguistic awareness development (Mayo & de los Angeles Hidalgo, 2017). These functions can enhance engagement, motivation, and learning. Inbar-Loui (2010) considered the use of the home language in teaching English to young language learners by three teachers. The study found significant variability among the teachers. Importantly, it appeared role definition mattered in how the teachers approached their instruction. Shula, for example, was a homeroom teacher and considered ELT as part of her curriculum rather than a separate language class. This conceptualization of ELT as integral to and part of language and content learning led her to strategically build on linguistic, cultural, and conceptual background knowledge and experience. Some studies underscore that, for young learners, it is important to view the role of the home language dynamically and changing. Researchers suggest that the function of the home language may shift over time as students become more proficient and/or are more consistently engaged in certain tasks in the target language (Vraciu & Pladevall-Ballester, 2020). More research in on multilingualism in English language teaching for majority language school-age speakers is clearly needed.

4 Conclusion

TESOL as a profession and academic field has seen significant shifts over time. Our understandings of "language" and "teaching" have become more responsive and inclusive of the diversity of contexts that English is taught as an additional language and the notion that language learning is culturally and socially embedded within these contexts. In this article, the focus was on the SOL of English language teaching – the multilingual realities in which English language teaching takes place and re-framing the role of students' home languages and literacies in the process of learning English. Rather than only considering "teaching English", English language teachers are encouraged to think of themselves as supporting their student bilingual and/or multilingual development. This multilingual shift positions students' home languages and experiences encoded in that language as resources and assets to the process of learning an additional language rather than a problem. Multilingually oriented teachers strategically leverage these resources for teaching and consider how they can build on and expand students' entire linguistic repertoire (the home language and English), not just the one only in English. They understand the holistic and dynamic nature of bi/multilingualism and move beyond the language code binary (home language or not) toward strategically considering how to use their students' languages to accelerate English learning and supporting their students' bi/multilingual development.

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