

## Changing Linguistic Landscape – Changing Teacher Professionalism

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All of us now know that we live in very uncertain times, and they are uncertain in a number of ways. Certainly the professional institutional situation for us is far from clear in terms of what our future might hold as teachers and as researchers and so on. But also in terms of the kind of issue that we are dealing with, and that is ethnic and linguistic diversity, because we are actually living in a time where almost everything that we held true in the last fifty years or so might not be the case anymore.

I'm not going to spend time on the data, but I've collected all the information from national statistics and the web pages, and this is a compilation of the figures for ethnic minority pupils in state schools in England over the last five years.

### Ethnic Diversity 2005-2010

In 2010 there were 6,564,430 pupils in state sector schools in England, 1,537,190 of whom were of minority ethnic origin. The percentage breakdown is as follows:

	Primary	Secondary
2005:	19.3%	15.9%
2006:	20.6%	16.8%
2007:	21.9%	18.0%
2008:	23.3%	19.5%
2009:	24.5%	20.6%
2010:	25.5%	21.4%

#### National Statistics:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000925/sfr09-2010commentv2.pdf>;  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000925/sfr09-2010.pdf>

As you can see, in terms of ethnic diversity, we are talking about a steady increase over the last several years and this has been the trend for a long time. The point is, ethnic diversity is not something that is likely to stop – if anything, it is likely to accelerate, for all the reasons that we might look at in a moment.

Here are the figures on EAL, linguistic diversity in England:

	Primary	Secondary
2005:	11.5%	9.0%
2006:	12.5%	9.5%
2007:	13.5%	10.6%
2008:	14.4%	10.8%
2009:	15.2%	11.1%
2010:	16.0%	11.6%

Again the big story there is that, year on year, we are talking about a steady increase over the years. This is significant in terms of population because it isn't the case that you find this kind of steady growth in all areas of the population. The point is ethnic and linguistic diversity in society is likely to be something that we have to reckon with for a long, long time.

Now the next quote is something that I was reluctant to show, but I thought, well, maybe I should.

### Movement of people

Over the next five years – to 2015 – over half a million more school places will be needed for the children of recent immigrants to the UK – those who arrived after 1998

(Migration Watch  
<http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/pressReleases>  
October 2010)

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Migration Watch is an organisation I would not normally associate myself with. Nevertheless, this is a piece of data that would seem to be quite

interesting. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been challenged by anybody since publication.

I suspect we are looking forward to a more diverse population, certainly in England, if nowhere else, but this would be a trend that is consistent across the EU.

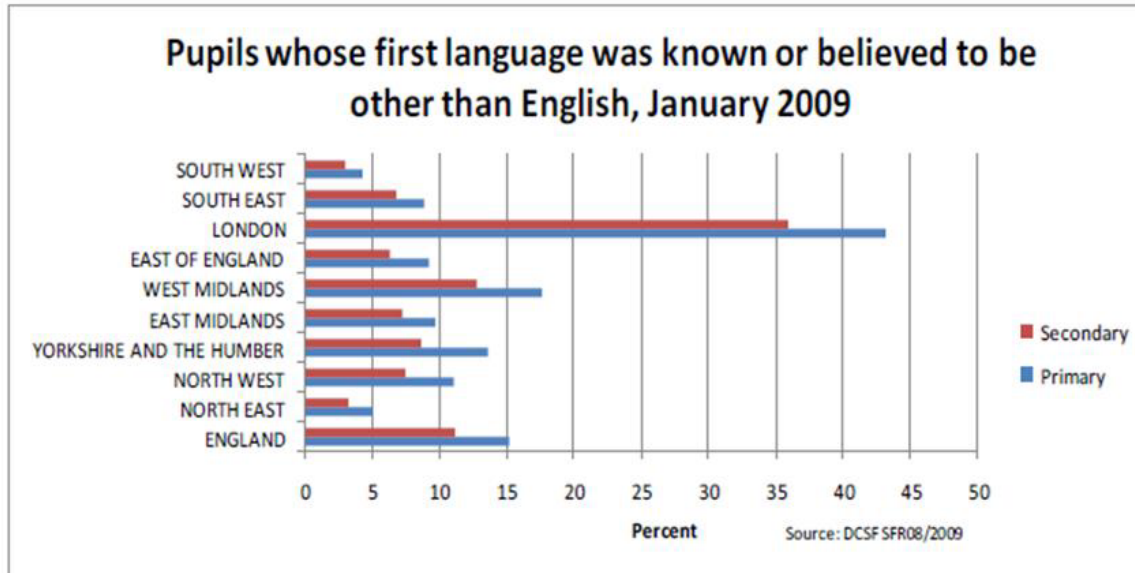
Looking more locally, the figures above for London, for example, show that roughly 43% of its school population has been classified as speaking a language other than English or having English as an additional language. The table also shows that, although there is great diversity, the diversity isn't evenly distributed across the country; that in certain areas the diversity is more pronounced than in others, but there is not a single area in England that is without some degree of diversity, and the trend,

as I was hoping to show you, is increasing.

And all this, of course, leads to all manner of political and social opinions. There was piece in the *Daily Express* that came out during the 2010 election campaign. I was fascinated by it, because of the ambiguity in the language. The headline was: 'English' pupils become minority and it went on to say, 'Labour's policy on immigration is leading to English becoming a second language in UK schools'. Well, you could read that as a positive statement, of course; there is a whole bunch of us who are totally unreconstituted and would actually rather like to see linguistic diversity in our midst and make use of it and enhance our social experience that way.

## England

### REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION, 2009.



von Ahn, Lupton, Greenwood & Wiggins (2010)

Here, for example, is a screenshot from CILT (the National Centre for Languages [www.cilt.org.uk](http://www.cilt.org.uk)), the organisation that promotes diversity in language learning. Of course, the point for us is: what are we doing about this?



I want to try to briefly characterise what has been happening within England, and perhaps Britain more generally, in terms of inclusive policy. How have we been including everybody, so to speak? Including people who may be still learning to use English for learning purposes and who might be in need of learning, supporting, growing their home languages.

Well, I think I can characterise what has been going on in the last 35 years or so, by saying that firstly, the general curriculum approach to integrating diverse pupils is to encourage them to participate in mainstream classroom curriculum-based activities. So, in a way we have got a good start, because the curriculum is the right place to start, as indeed you have seen from this morning's earlier presentation. The work we did on the European core curriculum starts from that position.

What about the teaching approach? In the main, teachers – not necessarily EAL specialists, but everybody, all teachers – have been encouraged to make sure that pupils of all backgrounds – learning experiences, language background, social background and so on – take part in activities that they can get stuck in to - hands-on, decomposed, multimodally presented activities.

What I mean by that is instead of saying: 'here's a chapter in a book, a history text, read that and answer the questions', the teachers, knowing that some of the pupils may not be able to penetrate the meaning in the text, they would then set forth activities, such as gap-filling, so that when pupils from different backgrounds read the text, they realise that, 'I think this means this'. When they come to do the exercise, and they need to fill in the word, and the word would allow them to focus on what the meaning is, but they get it wrong, the teacher would know. So there is formative assessment in that sort of exercise.

'Decomposed' in the sense that the whole task is broken down into smaller steps. 'Multimodally presented' - we have been encouraged to use visuals, videos, sound and so on to enable pupils to access meaning. When we teach, if you are doing an experiment, you demonstrate, that is one kind of multimodality, because you are doing actions, but you can also show a video of the experiment or a video of a certain kind of process if you are doing biology and so on. That's what I mean by multimodal.

When speaking of language development – I mean in terms of English as an additional language but at the same time also of English as just the language of the curriculum.

Generally speaking, the assumption has been, exposure is good for you. But in terms of pedagogic intervention, that is what we do as teachers specifically, my view over the last thirty years has been that it is primarily based on some sort of experiential engagement with language and text through the curriculum and some degree of assisted incidental language learning. It is not programmatic, it is not being, as it were, planned properly because a lot of the time, if you are working in the mainstream as EAL staff, you run into the school and the subject teacher says, 'tomorrow we are doing...' whatever – First World War, electricity. And into that you've got to ship in your work, and the work tends to be content-driven. So your job, our job, has tended to be making whatever learning opportunity that may be available more accessible. And that is about all we are talking about in curriculum terms.

Now, individual colleagues, I know, have done much better than that. But that is a matter of individual heroic effort. I'm talking about policy.

So in terms of policy then, what are the professional assumptions? Well, firstly, let's take English as an example – the National Curriculum subject, the specifications and associated literacy prescription, something all of us have known quite a lot about in the last ten years.

Generally, the prescription is assumed in principle to provide appropriate language development for all, irrespective of language and experiential backgrounds. In other words, you could be of Polish background and find yourself day one, in let's say Ealing, and the assumption is: the National Curriculum English specification would be relevant for you, whether you've had ten years of international school experience in Poland or no English at all. That is the point I'm making.

So as long as you are there sharing the classroom with everybody, then that's meant to be appropriate. And that pupils' active participation in everyday classroom activities constitutes a sufficient condition for English as an additional language development. Teachers are to be skilled up when there is money and opportunity. Some of us would have heard about the MTL (Masters in Teaching & Learning) for example and all such opportunities in the present time. But in the main I would imagine that most of you would agree with me that there haven't really been widespread opportunities to skill up all teachers, not just some of us who are specialists, as it were, but all science teachers, geography teachers – that has not been generally the case. I would like to be proved wrong on this one, but there have not been general opportunities for all teachers. EAL issues have been eluded into the general phrase curriculum 'attainment'. So EAL, for example, currently is not a specialism on the PGCE, the initial teacher training route here in England.

Nobody can be developed into a specialist through the PGCE route, and furthermore: EAL has no curriculum status, nor has it got any content. Hence I link this point back to the 'incidental learning' point of view. Our job is to make what's available accessible, but there is no

programmatic design to say: 'In relation to this group of students, this is what we need to do so that in addition to making the content of the curriculum accessible they should benefit from the language dimension of that experience'. We haven't got that.

What are we to make of all this? The key point is: the policies that we are working, living with at the moment, were founded, essentially, in the second half of the twentieth century. They were founded in a time, when - when we talked about diversity - we implicitly talked about new citizens coming from the New Commonwealth countries, settling in Britain in specific areas of towns, cities all over the place, but in big formations – that is the key word. That is why, to this day, if you go up north or go to Ealing or wherever, you tend to find that there are likely to be areas where there is a high concentration of particular ethnic groups. This is clearly the case up in some former mill towns in Yorkshire and other places, but by no means exclusively there.

We are now talking about a different situation: we have those communities settled in those city areas, but also, in the last ten years or so, certainly with the onset of the European Union, we have found that, for example, we are no longer talking about just diversity. A researcher by the name of Vertovec talks about 'super-diversity'. It's not just a quantitative but a qualitative difference when you have in a city like London now with its 230 languages, I don't know how many communities, all living in a very tight, closely integrated physical geographic area, interacting, going to school, doing work, all kinds of work, not necessarily in the kind of stereotypical way of immigrants in the 1950s with jobs like driving buses or something like that. We've got all kinds of people doing all kinds of work, just go down the road to the South Bank arts centre and chances are you'll find that English is not the preferred first language, and people are doing all kinds of work, from being musicians to serving at tables.

Super-diversity is now a reality and we need to reappraise our thinking. Who now then are these people who are 'diverse' in the general sense? Firstly, we have the settled New Commonwealth background people, but the young people from that context are now third or fourth generation, they are local British people, they are not

migrants in any sense of that word, they are just British, London, Yorkshire, whatever.

In terms of language repertoire they will have the local vernacular. Just listen to any interview with youngsters, Asian, so-called, youngsters from Yorkshire, and very familiar Yorkshire accents are coming through. What you get then is that these people are local fluent speakers of the local vernacular; they have school language to a varying degree; to the extent that they have control of the academic register that we heard about earlier then they tend to do perhaps well, if they don't, that is an issue that we have to deal with; and they also have a measure of the local community languages.

But it may well be the case now for some individuals, their local or so-called home languages, may not be their stronger or strongest language – English is their stronger or strongest language.

Then there is the new incoming family, arrival, settlement, asylum-seekers, refugees, and that represents one take on that. But there is also a new kind of diversity involving, so-called, 'circular' groups. This is a term that is used a lot in the migration study field by sociologists and other people. In the British context we are talking about EU citizens of all kinds. By EU citizens I also include Roma for example. Very often our Roma are EU citizens and they have rights of residence and in many cases almost identical social and educational entitlements and so on. Some of them are sojourners who come and go and that is part of the circular concept.

## EU & Worldwide Circular Migration

Through the course of their movement, migrants utilize, extend and establish social connections spanning places of origin and places abroad. By means of such connections or networks, migrants learn and inform each other about where to go, how to get jobs, find places to live, and so on; they also maintain families, economic activities, political interests and cultural practices through such transnational ties. While such networks have practically always functioned among migrants, modern technological advances and reduced costs surrounding transportation and communication have allowed for the intensification of transnational connections, practices and mobility. (Vertovec, 2007: 2)

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In addition, we have skilled migrants from everywhere. Even now we are talking about visas running at about 120,000 a year, whatever the public statements on immigration may be. Partly because of the ageing population, partly because all the public services hugely depend on skilled labour from everywhere in the world.

We are then talking about a situation of considerable complexity. Certain traditional assumptions cannot be held true. We now have worldwide circulating migration - people come and go, do a few years here, go somewhere else, all the time remaining strong members affiliated to the community from wherever they might have come, and they are in and out, doing all kinds of work, and not necessarily interested in long-term settlement, but they have equal rights as EU citizens and world citizens.

What about unsafe assumptions for EAL? Minority-ness, of you like, is not the same as back in the 1950s. For example, EU circular migrants are not black, so that is clearly, historically, a new dimension in terms of migration in this country. Of course, there would have been Italians and other groups in the Second World War, but I am talking about the post-war setting.

As to pupils who come to Britain on a long-term basis, we can't be sure, and I think your experiences in schools suggest that actually we can't be sure, that they might be here for a shorter time rather than a whole lifetime. Are they unfamiliar with European-style schooling and cultural practices? Some are, some are not, but not necessarily completely like strangers in our midst anymore, many people are very familiar with our kind of system.

Do all these people enter school at a relatively young age in the way that young children from first, second generation migrant families entering school do? No, not true, because in lots of situations you have quite high numbers entering into secondary school at all sorts of ages. Do the families and the pupils see learning English language as part of a struggle for equality? Well, some might, but on the whole, this is not an assumption we can make, because many of these people don't need to struggle for any equality legally – EU citizens for example. Do they want to be assimilated? Probably yes, but maybe not

depending on what you are talking about, because they may not want to be here for a long, long time, they may just want to learn enough to get on and construct your own world so to speak.

So, how can we make sense of all of this? Well, what we need to think about is the principle of social equality. The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor looks at the notion of the principles of social equality in multi-ethnic, multicultural societies, and he comes up with two contra-distinctions. One is equality of entitlement. By this, everybody is entitled to the same – so equality means the ‘same thing’. Whatever you need, you get the same response. When you come to school provision then, the curriculum is blind to individual groups, to individual pupils’ needs, because the idea is ‘same for all’.

The opposite is equality of treatment – that is, you start from the basis of construing equality in terms of difference. In order to fulfil the criterion of equality, you need to start from the basis of looking at what people need differently and respond to the difference before you achieve equality. This is a very powerful shorthand way of saying ‘what we have done is that, with relatively little of this’.

Of course, in life, we don’t really want to go to extremes. The Taylor work is very helpful analytically, but in practice we need to be thinking about finding a possible way of living with diversity because it is neither one nor the other really, in the sense that it is not absolutely difference we need to attend to, but sometimes we ought to think about the sameness of different groups. We need complex solutions.

What are they? Initially, I would say that from now on, we should be thinking about National Curriculum English and literacy prescription as appropriate for some groups of people. These would be the bilingual pupils from minority communities such as the fourth generation British youngsters, who may be, actually, mother tongue speakers of English and, funnily enough, second language learners of their home languages. But we might need curriculum extensions. By that I don’t mean just after-school hour classes, but I mean the curriculum itself should make accommodation, be expanded to

think about what we should do with diversity of the kind that we are now talking about.

That active participation in the classroom activities should be construed as a supportive condition, not sufficient. Our European curriculum starts with the mainstream, so it is a supportive thing, but we need to do a whole lot more than just leaving people in this vague swim never mind the ‘Big Society’. All teachers would need some sort of content language-integrated approach such as the inclusive academic language that we talked about earlier within the European project.

EAL teachers, not all teachers, but specialist teachers, must have specialist professional knowledge, including knowledge and competence that provides dedicated EAL learning activities and programmes to meet pupils’ needs. I am now seriously thinking about the notion of difference and what we might need to do to think about addressing difference.

Here is the last big piece that I have planned for this morning, and that is, I have been thinking about in this time of uncertainty, where most of us, in one way or another, will not be working in big formation either, because we won’t have the big shoulders of the local authority to help us out, in the very near future, I suspect, most of us will have to be working in schools, possibly employed by schools in various capacities. But the important point there is: the more you are on your own, the more you need to have a professional repertoire to survive, otherwise there is nothing to fill that hole.

For me, there are five elements that I will expand on in turn and I have included some references to work that has informed my thinking

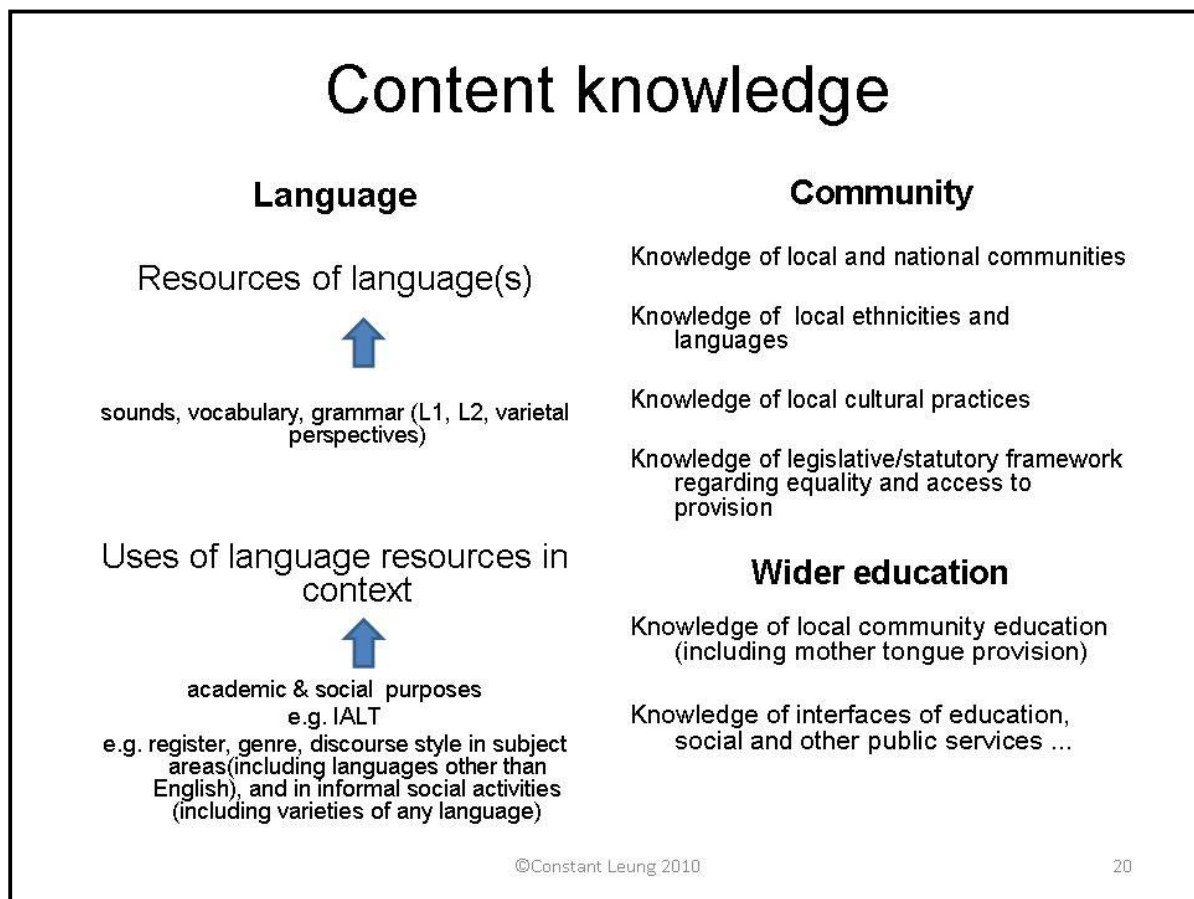
1. Content knowledge (Eraut, 1994):
2. Knowledge of pupils’ needs
3. Pedagogic content knowledge (Shulman, 1986; 1999)
4. Management of power and expertise (Creese, 2005; Richards, 2008)
5. Independent professionalism (Eliot, 1993; Leung, 2009; Leung & Creese, 2010).

## 1. Content Knowledge

Specialist EAL teachers clearly need some knowledge of the language in terms of the family of the language, vocabulary, grammar and so on. They also need to be able to use the language resources, the vocabulary, the grammar, in context, in other words inclusive academic language, register, genre and that sort of issue.

EAL specialists also need to have a knowledge of the local community, and you can see some of the more detailed descriptions above. Beyond

that, there is also wider education in terms of mother tongue provision for example. At the moment, I don't think bilingual education is a realistic proposition for the next at least three or four years, but, at least, language specialists ought to have a knowledge about what is available in the local areas, so that at least the Saturday, Sunday schools and so on could be promoted more effectively and be integrated into the mainstream schools, if only to provide a space, but integration is important and you need the knowledge of that.



## 2. Knowledge of pupils' needs

This specialist teacher needs to have, as it were, knowledge of pupil or group needs – but in context always. By personal support and protection I mean, if you know a group of students who are in your school, but they are not achieving very well, they may feel that they are failures and that is something that you need to address. It is not just individually, they are not doing well as a group, if they are seen to be useless and they are set in particular bands or sets or levels and so on. You need to be thinking about how we could address that, because the affect has to be managed.

If you are working within the mainstream curriculum, you also need to know about the

curriculum content and work with that. On top of that, you need to have specific language development insight, that is you need to know in relation to any particular piece of curriculum work what sort of language demand there may be for the group of students that you have in front of you and how you might address that. Beyond that, there is consideration of how the curriculum may or may not address all the language development needs of the students. Just because you have been in geography, science, maths this morning, it does not mean that all your additional language development needs have been met. As someone like me should know, it takes more than eight years to learn how to use the definite article 'the' properly, I can tell you that.

### Knowledge of pupils' group and individual educational needs in context

**Person support & protection**

**+**

**Subject & curriculum specifications**

e.g. topics in Science  
e.g. curriculum pathways for individuals

**Language development**

Pupils' English language & literacy needs in context of curriculum learning ( and beyond +L1 as appropriate)

**+**

Medium- to-long term additional/L2 language development needs → high level overall competence



### 3. Pedagogic content knowledge

Now this is really, really interesting for me: it's not my term, I have drawn from the work of Shulman. In other areas of the curriculum, like science education, this is a big topic and there are hundreds of research papers on this. We are not talking about the subject of science for EAL teachers, we are not talking about grammar for EAL teachers, but how to use your knowledge of grammar or how to use your knowledge of science to teach and how you teach. It is the translation of a piece of content knowledge through some activities to enable people to learn, it is pedagogic content knowledge.

I was talking to a colleague, Leanne Turner, recently, and she told me how she organised a piece of work recently. I thought, 'Well, that's it! That's the way it is!' Leanne has a group of Year 11 students, Portuguese background, not achieving very well. Leanne is in the school, she works with them, their subject teachers and so on. She finds out that these students have a kind of sense of the fact that they are not very well achieving so they are probably not very good anyway. One thing that is indexed by this is that when they are given practice runs and exam papers or questions, they choose the shortest

questions in the mistaken belief that these are the easier questions to answer and then end up getting it wrong. Well, how do you do that? If you say, 'This is an examination genre' - one thing we do is ask, 'What does an exam question answer look like? It looks like this' - you can teach that, but, of course, that is no good. If you apply pedagogic content knowledge, then you think about how you get the students from not knowing anything about a genre, and the question and the substance of the answer, to where they need to produce a right answer, the answer that will get them a good mark. In her particular case that means working through the reading material, teaching sessions, doing the decomposed activities, using graphic organisers to help get at the content meaning and then through that recompose the knowledge that they have gained, the meaning-making that we talked about earlier. Students making meaning through something they have understood and then driving at developing the genre knowledge.

That seems to me to be a case of sensitive combination of language knowledge and teaching technique. That's what I mean by that and I'm sure I am not misrepresenting Shulman

## Pedagogic content knowledge

**Helpful ways of representing and presenting learning tasks and learning content to pupils**

**Example:**

**How to organise and present the principles of magnetism to involve early stage-EAL learners in teaching & learning activities?**

**How to encourage pupils to use and practise key language expressions of comparison (e.g. This is stronger than ...) associated with the 'fair tests' in this topic?**

 **Sensitive combination of language knowledge & teaching technique**

#### 4. Management of power and expertise

I rarely, rarely hear about this, in fact, but this is a big time story for most people here. If you've ever worked with content teachers, subject teachers, in a school, you know how hard it to get to talk to them, how hard it is to get your word in. Now the issue here is simply that, do you have, as it were, equal rights, equal footing? Or do you represent some kind of deficit and are you just some helper? Now this comes through not in some sort of big time institutional, labelling thing, but also in very small time conversation. Try to plan a piece of work, and if the subject teacher says. 'In science, we do this!'

Well, that teaches you that this is science, a science lesson, their lesson, not yours. So how do we counter that? How do we reassert ourselves, because we are not going to be scientists. We are claiming to be working with scientists to develop language. So how do we develop a vocabulary?

The work of our colleague Angela Creese has been very, very useful in this, helping us to see where the cracks may be, but as an area of practice, we need a lot of further development, because we haven't got much. And this would be a subject of lots and lots of your experience, if you bring it forward to NALDIC for publication in the form of practice papers, NALDIC Quarterly articles, whatever, it would be most welcome. We would love to hear about your experiences of how you found your way through and we will compile those and represent your experiences to the constituency outside.

## Management of relationships, power and expertise

### For EMA/EAL staff:

Do EMA/EAL and subject/class teachers have equal status in school and in front of the pupils?

Do EMA/EAL staff have professional legitimacy in the curriculum for (other) teachers and pupils?

Do EMA/EAL and subject/class teachers feel the same rights to speak about their expertise(s) when planning and teaching together?



an area for further development in professional practice

## 5. Independent professionalism

It's not good enough, certainly in our time, in our context, to simply say, 'Well, that has been prescribed to us', because we know for example that the literacy strategy prescriptions were not appropriate for some groups of EAL learners. What we need is not to be, as it were, driven into simply delivering - as the jargon goes - delivering what is prescribed. We need to think through how else we can make this work better. Sometimes this might mean reflecting on our own work, our experience and our own knowledge of the subject with reference to the students' needs, so that we develop practices in the classroom, in the staffroom, through professional association activities and, indeed, ultimately through political activities like the vote, to insert a degree of independence, a cast of mind that is capable of critical reflection. We should not be driven, as it were, to the n<sup>th</sup> degree by a kind of sponsored notion of professionalism, which can change.

Just look at what's happened: in the last fifteen years we have seen at least one very powerful version of sponsored professionalism, that is,

'Everybody ought to be able to teach language and literacy in this particular way'. That was sponsored by central authorities. Within ten years it has all but gone. In the next few years, we will probably hear no more of it. Now sponsorship in that kind of way actually may be very short-lived because it is not based on educational values in the main, it is based on political agenda of a different kind. We live with that, but what we need to do is to resurrect that independence, to argue our case, and allow that independence to be inserted in our daily practice as much as in our bigger representation through our writing, our reading, in fact even doing courses is in itself a kind of independence.

So if you do an MA or PhD in language teaching that gives you an increasing notion of professional independence. You'll know more, you're interested, alive, you're interested in new developments and so on.

Thank you.

## Independent professionalism

A cast of mind that is capable of critical reflection on one's daily work that can lead to alternative perspectives and follow-up actions where appropriate.

In a context where there is increasing autonomy for schools/teachers and limited central prescription, independent professionalism is likely to become a key ingredient in our work.



a 'discouraged' tradition in need of nurturing

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