Framing the realities of TESOL practice through a translanguaging lens

Graham Hall, Northumbria University, UK

Abstract

While the professional and methodological literature surrounding TESOL has, until recently, promoted monolingual, English-only approaches in the classroom, the deployment of multilingual resources and repertoires has long been a reality in many TESOL classrooms around the world. Although many teachers perceive a value in drawing on all the learners' own linguistic resources to support learning, the multilingual classroom has, until now, been an 'elephant in the room' in the professional discourse of the field.

This chapter will therefore explore the realities of TESOL practice through the 'lens' of 'translanguaging'. Having established an understanding of translanguaging which underpins the subsequent discussion, the chapter traces the emergence of monolingual ideologies and approaches within the methodological literature of TESOL in the early twentieth century. It notes how the literature overlooked localized bi- and multilingual pedagogies, and the consequent gap between TESOL 'theory' and 'practice'. It then offers evidence of widespread contemporary multilingual classroom practices, drawing on both secondary sources and primary survey data documenting the practices and attitudes of teachers around the world towards monolingual teaching and translanguaging in the classroom. The chapter concludes with a call for further professional discussion of translanguaging, particularly in teacher training and education programmes, to facilitate teachers' professional development and support classroom practice.

Keywords

monolingual assumption; monolingual methods; postmethod bi- and multilingual teaching; TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages); translanguaging

1. **Introduction**

As with all pedagogy, the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) is an ideologically informed social practice (Creese, 2017). Consequently, most academic and methodological accounts of the field suggest that, until recently, TESOL has been underpinned by a 'monolingual assumption', that is, the belief that all activity in a language classroom should take place in English (Hall and Cook, 2012). Yet across the profession, belief in the monolingual assumption has been less universal than is often claimed; what is fashionable amongst academics and methodologists does not necessarily reflect the beliefs and practices of English teachers working in varied contexts around the world. Thus, whilst the deployment of multilingual resources and repertoires has long been a reality in many TESOL classrooms, it has been, until recently, an 'elephant in the room' in the professional discourse of English language teaching.

Since the 1990s, however, there has undoubtedly been a shift in the academic and socio-political climate surrounding TESOL that has challenged discourses that promote 'English-only' teaching. The emergence of a 'social turn' within applied linguistics (Block, 2003), which draws on sociolinguistic and socio-historical perspectives to recognise difference, diversity and uncertainty in language teaching and learning, and of 'ecological' and 'complexity' approaches to language, language learning and the language classroom (e.g., van Lier, 2004, on 'ecological' understandings; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008, and Mercer, 2016, on 'complexity' approaches), have led to new understandings of the

dynamic inter-relationships between TESOL classrooms and their wider social context, and of what is possible, effective and appropriate in class. Meanwhile, there is increasing acknowledgement that so-called 'non-native speakers' of English now outnumber 'native speakers' globally (Crystal, 2012; Seargeant, 2016), that is, that English is not the primary or home language of most of its speakers around the world, the vast majority thus speaking at least one other language and drawing on English as part of their wider linguistic repertoire (see Section 2 for further discussion of terminology). Alongside the effects of globalization and contemporary migration, this has contributed to an increased acknowledgement and re-evaluation of bi- and multilingualism in individual and societal language use (e.g., Blackledge and Creese, 2010), and the recognition and increasing de-stigmatization of translanguaging, both beyond and, consequently, within TESOL classrooms (e.g., Anderson, 2017; Li, 2018).

The chapter will therefore use the 'lens' of translanguaging to frame the realities of TESOL practice. It will initially trace the emergence of monolingual ideologies and approaches within the methodological literature of TESOL in the early twentieth century. It will also note the ways in which the literature focused (and, to a large extent, still focuses) on theoretical and methodological *change*, rather than taking account of localized continuities of practice, leading to a disjunct between translanguaging 'in theory' and 'in practice' in TESOL. The chapter will then offer evidence of widespread contemporary multilingual and translanguaging practices in TESOL classrooms. It concludes with a call for further professional discussion of translanguaging, particularly in teacher education programmes, in order to facilitate teachers' professional development, and to recognise and support its place in classroom practice. First, however, the chapter briefly outlines the terminological

challenges that exploring translanguaging in TESOL poses, and the conceptualization of translanguaging which underpins the subsequent discussion.

2. <u>Translanguaging: establishing an understanding</u>

Translanguaging is described in a variety of ways within its rapidly developing literature. It is, for example: 'a concept' but also 'a practice' (Creese, 2017); 'a process' and 'a form of interaction', but also 'a pedagogy' (Conteh, 2018); and 'a continuum' (Anderson, 2018; Williams et al., 1996) but also 'a lens' (this volume!). Additionally, while some descriptions implicitly recognise a place for named or defined languages, referring, for example, to speakers who 'codeswitch' and 'shuttle between languages' (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011), others overtly challenge the notion or relevance of defined languages in translanguaging, seeing it more as 'the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages' (Otheguy, García and Reid, 2015, p.281). Clearly, this range of understandings can be challenging for practitioners and theorists alike. However, central to the conception of translanguaging underpinning this chapter is the focus on how individuals may 'use all their language resources to achieve their purposes' (Conteh, 2018, p.446); in this discussion, that purpose is to learn the new language - English. Translanguaging pedagogies also present opportunities for learners to make links between their linguistic experiences within the classroom to those beyond (ibid.; also Blackledge and Creese, 2010).

This understanding of translanguaging is therefore broad and inclusive. Yet in uncovering the ways in which 'all language resources' may be used within TESOL practice, the discussion has to draw upon terminology which derives from different conceptual frameworks – as Canagarajah (2013a, p.8) notes, it is often challenging to discuss a new

paradigm (i.e., 'translanguaging') when the available terms belong to a previous paradigm. Thus, whilst 'monolingualism', 'monolingual classrooms', and 'English-only teaching' are relatively unproblematic from a terminological perspective and will be treated as broadly synonymous throughout the chapter, this discussion also includes bi- and multilingual teaching - here seen as classroom practice(s) through which learners can access their full linguistic repertoire in support of learning - within its understanding of translanguaging. The chapter's translanguaging lens emphasises these linguistic repertoires as fluid and dynamic resources rather than as reified, named languages (Canagarajah, ibid.).

Furthermore, it is important to note that the terms 'native' and 'non-native speaker', also occasionally used in the chapter, are essentially problematic, particularly when viewed through a bi- or multilingualism or a translanguaging lens, as they mix notions of birthplace, expertise, identity and language ownership in ways which do not reflect either language practices or attitudes to language(s) (Canagarajah, 2013; Rampton, 1990). Still widely used within the field, however, the terms are deployed in this chapter, albeit with reservation, when they are part of the specific discourse being discussed (for example, when discussing the promotional materials of some private language schools, see Section 3).

3. <u>The emergence of monolingual language teaching</u>

While histories of methods and approaches in TESOL often characterise the field as being 'in ferment' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.254) and subject to 'fashions and trends' (Adamson, 2004), support for monolingual teaching within the methodological literature remained remarkably constant for most of the twentieth century. This was, as Allwright and Hanks (2009, p.38) note, an era in which 'a profusion' of 'competing' language teaching methods emerged (e.g., the Direct Method, Audiolingualism, Communicative Language Teaching,

Task-based Language Teaching; see, for example, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, or Thornbury, 2017, for fuller accounts of these and other methods), each underpinned by differing theories of language and of language learning. Yet the idea that all classroom activity should take place in English remained for the most part unchallenged. Monolingual teaching was not unknown before this period, however. Kelly (1969, p.10), for example finds evidence of the Direct Method in the fifth century writings of St Augustine, Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009:27) describe monolingual edicts and subsequent punishments for those who spoke their own languages in medieval monastery schools, and Phillipson notes instances of monolingual teaching in secondary school language education (1992, pp.186-7). Nonetheless, what differed from the late nineteenth century onwards was the extensive promotion of monolingualism in the language-teaching literature, soon gaining the status of an unchallenged assumption held by theorists and methodologists (Hall and Cook, 2012), and, as we shall see, within certain sectors of the English language teaching profession (if not necessarily, as noted above, by all language teachers around the world).

The emergence of the monolingual assumption and English-only teaching at this time is often ascribed to the largely European and US-based academics of the Reform Movement. Reformers vigorously opposed the Grammar-translation Method – characterized, and arguably caricatured, as simply the written translation of individual exemplificatory sentences (Howatt with Widdowson, 2004, pp.151-165) - which dominated foreign language teaching in secondary schools. As an alternative, Reformers advocated the primacy of speech in language learning (especially a focus on the teaching of pronunciation), the use of connected texts rather than isolated sentences, and a speaking-oriented classroom methodology (ibid., pp.187-209). While these ideas inevitably led to a reduction in the use of learners' own languages in the classroom and an increase in the use of English (or other languages being

learned), it is significant that not all Reform academics were dogmatically opposed to any use of other languages in the classroom. Henry Sweet, for example, a leader of the Reform Movement in Britain, supported the use of translation when teaching vocabulary (1899/1964, p.194), while some Reformers saw value in activities whereby learners converted connected texts in their own language into texts in the language being learned (Howatt with Widdowson, 2004, p.191). Thus while the Reform Movement's rejection of grammar-translation is often seen as being synonymous with the case for monolingual teaching, this is a logical, and arguably ideological, 'sleight of hand' used to exclude the use of any and all other languages in language teaching and learning (Cook, 2010, p.15).

Rather than academic Reformers and their focus on language teaching in state-sponsored secondary schools, therefore, the belief in monolingual, English-only classrooms was in fact most significantly championed by private language schools. Over the course of the twentieth century, private sector TESOL subsequently developed into a global industry (Kerr, 2016), and became particularly influential within the field (Holliday (1994; 2005), for example, conceives of a predatory and professionally over-zealous private-sector or commercial **B**ritish, **A**ustralia, **N**orth **A**merica (BANA) culture within TESOL which assumes and promotes its methodological superiority, including the monolingual assumption, over 'mainstream' English language teaching). The well-known *Berlitz* chain of language schools was founded on the principle of monolingual classrooms, in which the use of other languages in class was seen as 'necessarily defective and incomplete' (Berlitz, 1916, p.4, in Kerr, 2016, p.518), and it is still marketed in this way today:

> With the Berlitz Method, all communication during class takes place in the target language. Instructors are native speakers and use a conversational approach based on listening and speaking … Our method was designed to allow learners to speak without

translation … Learners take on the new language the same way they did their first -

with natural ease. (Berlitz.co.uk; n.d.)

Where Berlitz led, other language schools followed. The monolingual principle was widely

adopted in private sector language schools, and as with Berlitz schools, has similarly been

carried forward to the present day. For example, *Inlingua*'s 300 private language schools in

35 countries employ 'only the target language' in classes taught by native-speaker teachers

(Inlingua.com; see also Kerr, 2016).

The private sector's acceptance of English-only teaching was driven by a number of

context-related factors. Classes in which learners speak a variety of differing languages

and/or where native-speaker teachers do not know the language(s) of their students appeared,

to many, to make bilingual teaching impossible (Hall and Cook, 2012). Meanwhile, the

interests of both publishers and private language schools coincided in their promotion of

monolingual products (e.g., courses and textbooks) which could be marketed worldwide

without variation, and consequently deployed by native-speaker teachers, without (so the

logic ran) the need to refer to and draw upon knowledge of other languages, or the expertise

of speakers of those languages (Phillipson, 1992; Hall and Cook, 2012). From this

perspective, any form of multilingualism or translanguaging in the classroom was

undesirable.

Also significant in the development of English-only Direct Method teaching in the

early twentieth century, which the Berlitz approach exemplifies, was a shift in the purposes

for which languages were learned. What had been seen, prior to this period, as an academic

or intellectual pursuit to develop the mind and read literature in its original language became

a more instrumental activity for learners who were preparing to travel, do business and

otherwise engage with English speakers (Howatt with Widdowson, 2004; Hall and Cook, 2012). Implicit in this new goal was the assumption that students were being readied to communicate in monolingual environments in ways which emulated native speakers. There was little or no acknowledgement that many learners would need to operate in bi- or multilingual environments or engage in code-switching or translanguaging (Sridhar and Sridhar, 1986; Hall and Cook, 2012).

Furthermore, while the Direct Method made little headway in secondary school contexts, for reasons of class sizes, the lack of native-speaker teachers and other often resource-based practicalities, the underlying assumption, that languages are learned for instrumental or utilitarian purposes, did take hold (Kerr, 2016). This carried with it the associated implications for secondary institutions of increased spoken English and less use of other languages, and was realised through the Oral Method and, subsequently, situational language teaching, based around the work of Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby in the 1920s and 1930s (Howatt with Widdowson, 2004). The Oral Method emphasised the primacy of spoken language but also reintroduced to language classes the selection of carefully graded material to be presented to students, whilst situational teaching presented, then practised new language through 'situations'. While neither approach explicitly excluded the use of other languages in the classroom, situational language teaching can be regarded as a forerunner of the still widely deployed PPP (presentation-practice-production) lesson (Richards and Rodgers, 2014) which, drawing on an essentially behaviourist conception of learning to encourage pattern practice and drilling of prescribed language, remains a fundamentally monolingual approach to language teaching.

In the United States, meanwhile, the emergence in the 1940s of audiolingualism also drew on behaviourist notions of learning via 'good habit formation' (e.g., the drilling of sentences and memorization). As potential sources of 'bad habits', errors were to be avoided, the primary cause of error being seen as 'interference' from the learners' L1. Consequently, learners' own languages and bi- and multilingual language use was to be avoided in class, the monolingual assumption by now being deeply embedded in theorists' and methodologists' conceptions of what constituted effective language teaching.

By the 1970s, therefore, TESOL had reached a point where the monolingual assumption was ubiquitous within the academic and methodological literature surrounding the profession. Indeed, so deep-seated was this perspective that the role of other languages in the classroom, and the possibility of allowing learners to draw on and deploy their multilingual resources in support of learning (or as a goal for communicating more generally) rarely needed to be ruled out explicitly. With very few exceptions (for example, Dodson, 1969; Butzkamm, 1989), the possibilities of bilingual teaching and multilingual classrooms were simply overlooked and remained undiscussed. For instance, the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the late 1960s and 1970s has generally been characterized as a paradigmatic break with the past, indeed as a 'revolution' (Bolitho et al., 1983). This perspective, however, overlooks key continuities between CLT (and related approaches such as Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content-based Instruction (CBI), and Content and Integrated Language Learning (CLIL) which are, as Richards and Rodgers (2014) note, logical developments in the application of CLT principles) and the previously promoted language methods briefly reviewed in this chapter. That is, the perceived purpose of English language teaching, preparing learners to speak to native speakers, remained fundamentally unchanged, with the central tenet of CLT, 'communicative

competence', which learners need to develop in order to become successful communicators in English, 'treated as a monolingual capability, that is, as communication within a single language' (Leung and Scarino, 2016, p.85). Furthermore, as SLA research became the dominant body of theoretical knowledge informing TESOL from the 1970s onwards, its emphasis on a natural and universal order of second language acquisition (e.g., Krashen 1982) and the need for meaning-focused input, output, activities and tasks during learning meant that any possible roles for other languages in the classroom (e.g., paying conscious attention to similarities and differences between English and learners' own languages) remained unexplored. Consequently, the monolingual assumption and promotion of English-only teaching went largely unchallenged in the theoretical and methodological literature surrounding TESOL until the late twentieth century.

4. <u>The changing context and the changing classroom</u>

Both the social and academic context of TESOL have changed in recent years, however, as 'communication within the contemporary context of globalization increasingly takes place across languages and cultures' (Leung and Scarino, 2016, p.85; see also this chapter's Introduction). There is increasing recognition that many learners will engage in bi- or multilingual communication, which will involve, but will not take place exclusively within, English. Many will speak English not to so-called 'native-speakers' but to other 'non-native speakers', as a *lingua franca* (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011). And in so doing, many will wish to maintain their cultural and linguistic identity when communicating across cultures, realized through the related practices of speaking a non-native variety or *lingua franca* form of English, or by switching between languages, or through translanguaging.

Consequently, the goals of language learning and teaching are being significantly re-oriented. While a strong instrumental rationale still exists (i.e., now learners should learn to communicate multilingually, as this is their contemporary 'real-world' communicative context), broader, non-utilitarian perspectives are now much more widely recognised. Kerr (2016, p.521) notes the US-based MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages' (2007) suggestion that the desired outcomes of language teaching in universities should be 'educated speakers who have deep translingual and transcultural competence', whereby the acquisition of functional language abilities supports the development of 'critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception'. Meanwhile, in Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (i.e., CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001) promotes plurilingualism, pluriculturalism and the development of 'plurilingual competence' (p.4) as the desired goals of language teaching and learning, whereby a language(s) user:

> does not keep … languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact. In different situations, a person can call flexibly upon different parts of this competence to achieve effective communication with a particular interlocutor. For instance, partners may switch from one language or dialect to another, exploiting the ability of each to express themselves in one language and to understand the other. (ibid.)

This represents a clear break with the monolingual and native-speaker oriented approach of the past, which, although the terminology of both the MLA and CEFR publications is not explicit, conceives of the goals of language learning through a translanguaging lens.

Such viewpoints are supported by developments in theory and research. From a psycholinguistic perspective, Cook (2001) critiques perspectives of language learning which maintain that languages are separated and compartmentalised within learners' (or, as Cook importantly reconceptualises them, 'bilingual language users') minds. Cook suggests that languages are instead 'interwoven' and integrated in users' minds in a state of compound bilingualism (which Cook (2002) terms Multicompetence), meaning that they have a different knowledge of both (or all) their languages compared to monolingual speakers' knowledge of a language. Likewise, Cummins (2007) suggests that such interdependence across languages means that, for multilingual speakers, the development of a skill or proficiency in one language assists the development of similar abilities in the other(s) (i.e., a 'Common Underlying Proficiency' exists). From this, Cummins (2008) calls for an end to 'the two solitudes assumption', that is, the belief that languages should be kept strictly separate and be taught in a monolingual classroom.

Meanwhile, the emergence of socio-cultural perspectives on language learning (e.g., Lantolf, 2000) suggest that language is a tool through which learning is mediated, via mental processes such as planning, noticing or reasoning. Taking this perspective forward through a translanguaging lens, learners' linguistic repertoires provide a tool through which learning is scaffolded, whilst also helping them develop and maintain interpersonal collaboration and interaction, processes which are also seen as central to language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, this conception of language learning, as a socially-mediated activity in which meaning is constructed through interaction with others, has much in common with ecological perspectives on education which emphasise the specific historical, cultural and social contexts of learning, both within and beyond the classroom (Conteh and Meier, 2014; see also Section 1: Introduction). Language, languages, and the linguistic repertoires and

knowledge that learners and teachers bring to the classroom are central to this understanding of the context for learning.

Thus, the merits of bilingual teaching, multilingual classrooms, and translanguaging are being re-evaluated within the field of TESOL. As the multilingual character of contemporary communication is affirmed, language teaching, it is posited, should aim to develop learners' multilingual capabilities, in order that they can 'move between linguistic systems' as multilingual language users, rather than as 'developing native speakers' of English (Leung and Scarino, 2016, p.91). Such thinking fundamentally challenges the monolingual assumption within language teaching, as learners, now seen as 'multiple language users' (Belz, 2002), draw on their linguistic repertoires within the 'multilingual speech community' of the language classroom (Edstrom, 2006). From this translanguaging perspective, the linguistic experiences of learners in class are therefore linked to their experiences beyond the classroom (see Section 2), whereby teachers might ask not what they can offer to linguistically 'deficient or novice' students, but how they can 'let students bring into the classroom the dispositions and competencies which they have richly developed outside the classroom', lessons thereby becoming sites for 'translingual socialization' (Canagarajah, 2013a, p.184).

The chapter will shortly examine the extent and ways in which such multilingual practices are now realised within contemporary English language teaching. First, however, the chapter will examine how the theoretical literature and the monolingual assumption of the twentieth century, outlined in previous sections, conveyed only a narrow view of TESOL practice during that era, and how the apparent dominance of English-only teaching during the twentieth century may in fact have been challenged by many teachers around the world. In

keeping with an ecological perspective on TESOL, the importance of context becomes evident.

5. Challenging the discourse: 'method', monolingual teaching and 'myths'

The chapter has already hinted on a number of occasions that all is perhaps not what it seems when discussing the dominance of the monolingual assumption and English-only teaching in TESOL during the twentieth century. It is clear that a monolingual perspective permeated the academic and professional literature surrounding English language teaching, was widely adopted within the private sector of the profession, and was also extremely influential in many other types of English language classrooms. And it is also clear that the case for English-only teaching was predominantly conceptualised (either explicitly or implicitly) through the promotion of individual language teaching methods, that is, 'a single set of precepts for teacher and learner classroom behaviour' that 'if faithfully followed … will result in learning for all' (Nunan, 1991, p.3). Writing from a critical perspective, Pennycook (1989) notes how the concept of method and of individual methods maintain a specific set of interests that favoured 'Western' approaches to language teaching over non-Western practices, and enable academic experts, methodologists, and indeed commercial publishers to exert 'control' over teachers (see also Holliday's (2005) reference to 'BANA' culture earlier in this chapter). In effect, therefore, the long-standing focus on methods within the field served to create and sustain the professional discourse surrounding monolingual, English-only teaching.

Beyond issues of power and 'control' within TESOL, the notion of method and methods has been critiqued in other ways which are significant for our understanding of the extent to which the monolingual assumption, so strongly promoted within the methodological

literature, really permeated throughout the profession in practice. As Pennycook (ibid., p.602) notes, 'there is little evidence that methods ever reflected classroom reality', Smith and Hunter (2012, pp.430-431) consequently suggesting that a 'mythology' has developed around methods which has 'packaged up', simplified and stereotyped complex and contested past and present practices. In other words, although the methodological literature until recently presented English-only teaching as paradigmatic across the profession and therefore around the world, this overlooks the locally constituted nature of ELT practices (Smith, 2003). It also prioritises the understandings of largely Anglo-American methodologists over the varied experiences and teaching traditions of English language teachers working in a vast array of contexts around the world (Smith and Hunter, 2012). In many settings, therefore, bi- and multilingual language teaching, and translanguaging within classrooms, continued - and still continues, as we shall see in Sections 6 and 8.

Criticisms of method (as a concept) and of methods emerged in and subsequently took hold from the 1990s onwards, and it is no coincidence that as faith in methods within TESOL has faded, the monolingual assumption and the promotion of English-only teaching has been increasingly questioned. As TESOL arguably moves 'beyond methods' (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; 2006; 2012) into an era of 'postmethod discourse' (Akbari, 2008), classroom practice is conceptualised as emerging from 'bottom-up' rather than 'top-down' processes, that is, from teachers' own 'sense of plausibility' (Prabhu, 1990, p.172) based on their experiences in context. Thus, Kumaravadivelu (2012, pp.12-16) suggests three principles for postmethod pedagogy, each of which seems to provide opportunities for recognising and facilitating multilingual teaching and classroom translanguaging where appropriate:

- *Particularity*, whereby pedagogy must be sensitive to the local institutional, social and cultural contexts of language teaching, teachers and learners.

- *Practicality*, whereby teachers are encouraged to theorize from their own practice and practice their own theories, thereby breaking the hierarchical relationship between theorists and practitioners as, respectively, producers and consumers of knowledge.

- *Possibility*, whereby the socio-political consciousness of teachers and learners is fostered so they can 'form and transform their personal social identity'.

Thus, in the early twenty-first century, the particularities, practicalities, and possibilities of translanguaging offer a way for TESOL professionals to engage more fully, both in theory and in practice, with the changing ways in which learners around the world use English as part of their wider linguistic repertoire and construct and/or maintain their identities through language. Kerr (2016, p.523) suggests that although popular beliefs about the desirability of monolingual teaching and native-speaker teachers will remain, supported and catered to by private sector organisations, 'most teachers will need little persuading' that bi- and multilingual teaching and translanguaging are desirable, as 'this confirms their own practice-driven understanding of language classrooms'.

6. <u>Acknowledging translanguaging in practice</u>

As academic and theoretical perspectives on TESOL have 'caught up' with TESOL practice, an increasing number of studies have documented bi-lingual teaching, code-switching and 'code choice' (emphasising learner choice during classroom interaction and teachers' pedagogic decisions before and during lessons), and translanguaging in the classroom. It is notable that the studies' theoretical frameworks have changed over time, with 'translanguaging' emphasised much more frequently in recent years (post *circa*-2010), whilst 'bi-lingual teaching', 'L1 use', 'code-switching' and even 'translation' tend to underpin

publications prior to this period. (In this section, these various frameworks will be regarded as analogous within our wider translanguaging lens. Pennycook, (2013, p.30.5) for example, clearly conceptualises translation in ELT as a form of translanguaging through his suggestion that translation is a means through which diverse and meanings 'can start to flow in and out of languages' as teachers and learners search for new ways to represent society through language. Similarly, García et al. (2017, p.15) and Mertin (2018, p.95) also explore the value of translation activities as part of their understanding of translanguaging in the classroom).

Thus, the continuation of translation in English language teaching (e.g., Benson, 2000) and, indeed, grammar-translation (e.g., Nasrin, 2005, writing about Bangladesh) is evident, especially in contexts where the teacher and learners' share a language. Furthermore, bilingual teaching and code-switching have been documented in TESOL classrooms from, for example, Botswana to Brazil, Hong Kong to Hungary, and Spain to Sri Lanka (Arthur, 1996; Fabrício and Santos, 2006; Carless, 2008; Nagy and Robertson, 2009; Unamuno, 2008; and Canagarajah, 1999, respectively; these and many other contexts are documented in Hall and Cook's wider review, 2012, pp.277-278). Furthermore, 'code choice classrooms' have also been documented in the particular bilingual setting of Canada (e.g., Dailey-O'Cain and Liebscher, 2009), and in the US, Australia and New Zealand (e.g., Levine, 2011; Edstrom, 2006; and Kim and Elder, 2008, respectively). The use of translation in reading and writing activities (Kern, 1994), in the teaching of English for Specific Purposes (Tudor, 1987), and as the norm in university-level language teaching (Malmkjær, 1998) has also been recorded. Meanwhile, more recent studies which draw more explicitly on translanguaging perspectives include, for example, those focusing on South Korean (Li and Luo, 2017), Swedish (Rosén, 2017), UK (Anderson, 2018), US-based (García and Kano, 2014) TESOL classrooms.

It is evident, therefore, that many, and arguably most, English language classrooms around the world have remained to some extent multilingual over the last hundred years, despite the promotion of monolingual teaching and the assumption within the language teaching literature that English-only classes were the norm across the field. Despite its absence, until recently, from the public discourses of TESOL, teaching which draws on learners' full linguistic repertoires and uses multiple languages within the classroom has in many contexts never ceased or been 'stamped out' (Butzkamm, 2003, p.29).

7. <u>Translanguaging in the classroom: continuing key questions and debates</u>

The continuation of bi- and multilingual teaching throughout the twentieth century and the current support for translanguaging in the theoretical and methodological literature surrounding TESOL raises a number of key questions for academics, teachers and teacher educators alike, however. The earliest conceptions of translanguaging saw it as 'a *purposeful* cross-curricular strategy for the *planned and systematic* use of two languages for teaching and learning inside the same lesson' (Conteh, 2018, p.445, citing Lewis et al., 2012, p.3; emphasis added). Williams et al. (1996, p.9) also discuss the need for 'purposeful' translanguaging, arguing that 'there is a need to build on and extend good practice' (p.13), which includes recognizing the differing linguistic abilities of learners, their differing ages and so forth (p.41). Echoing this, there have been a number of more recent calls for research into 'judicious' or 'optimal' use of the learners' other language(s) in the classroom (e.g., Macaro, 2009), use which is 'principled' (Edstrom, 2006) and which provides insights into 'when and why' learners' own language(s) might be used in support of learning (Hall and Cook, 2013). Although such calls are generally located in literature which focuses on 'L2' or 'own language' use in the classroom, they can all be accommodated within a translanguaging

lens which focuses on how learners 'use all their language resources' to learn English (Conteh, 2018, p.446; see also Section 2).

This search for key principles and good practice in classroom translanguaging *is* necessary - language learners clearly require input and output opportunities in English, and too much use of other linguistic resources *may* deprive them of this. In the absence of clear guidance as to how multilingual teaching and translanguaging in the classroom may be successfully developed, there is also concern that some teachers may be developing arbitrary and undiscriminating practices. And yet given ideas surrounding postmethod pedagogy (see Section 5) and teachers' own contextual knowledge, they are also best placed to decide what is most appropriate for their own classrooms (Macmillan and Rivers, 2011; Hall and Cook, 2013).

A number of studies of bi- and multilingual classrooms have therefore started to identify when and how principled translanguaging takes place in TESOL classrooms, for example, by: fulfilling pedagogical goals such as scaffolding the development of new language; facilitating empathy, rapport, collaboration and interaction between learners; and supporting learners in making connections between the classroom and their wider context, including the maintenance and development of their identities. Bringing together the ideas of Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008) and Kim and Elder (2008), translanguaging in the classroom might fulfil 'medium-oriented' functions (e.g., teaching or explaining grammar or vocabulary), 'framework' functions (e.g., organising and managing the classroom through giving instructions, setting tasks etc.), and 'social' functions (e.g., building rapport and social relationships).

Furthermore, the extent to which and how translanguaging and multilingual teaching takes place is likely to depend on teachers' and learners' perceptions of its legitimacy and value (Hall and Cook, 2013). On the one hand, some studies report that, despite its widespread occurrence within TESOL, many teachers feel 'guilty' when translanguaging takes place (e.g., Macaro, 2009; Butzkamm and Caldwell, 2009). Others suggest that teachers who are able to draw on a bi- or multilingual repertoires themselves regard drawing upon multiple languages as 'regrettable but necessary' (e.g., Macaro, 2006, p.68). Clearly, 'teacher guilt' about translanguaging practices in the classroom is widespread, and is almost certainly in part a result of the English-only discourses which have until recently dominated TESOL (see Section 3); teacher guilt is not, though, 'a healthy outcome of pedagogical debate' (Macaro, 2006, p.69). And of course, in keeping with discussions earlier in the chapter, teachers' (and learners') attitudes towards translanguaging may vary according to their cultural environment or other contextual influences such as their own language background, perceptions of the learners' abilities and attitudes, and local educational traditions.

Thus, whilst the reality and value of translanguaging and multilingual teaching is now more widely recognised within the field of TESOL, its acceptance and realization in the classroom is inevitably more uneven across the profession. Alongside some teachers' feelings of guilt on the one hand, it is also important to note concerns around the 'lure' of translanguaging (as a new theoretical concept within the field, if not a new practice) for others (Matsuda, 2014, p.480). Matsuda detects 'a complex mix of reactions' amongst teachers to translanguaging - 'the desire to use the new and exciting notion, the frustration of not fully understanding what it looks like or how it works, and even the fear that the new ideas are going to push them out of their comfort zone' (ibid.). Canagarajah (2013b) also remarks on teachers' calls for more help in the face of 'unsettling questions for pedagogy',

and suggests that the theorization of translanguaging might have 'far outpaced' principled

pedagogical practices for its advancement in the classroom (p.41).

Consequently, the next section of this chapter will bring together relevant insights

from a global survey of classroom translanguaging practices, undertaken in order to develop

further the empirical base for discussing these key questions and debates, for example: how

and why are all linguistic resources in the classroom used by teachers and learners to

facilitate learning?; are such practices principled and purposeful?; what are teachers'

attitudes towards translanguaging in class?; and how might these vary according to contextual

factors and learners' differing needs? The discussion will therefore focus on the ways in

which translanguaging is enacted as an essential part of TESOL classrooms in order to

redress the concern that theorization has outpaced principled pedagogical practice.

8.   <u>The realities of translanguaging practice: a global overview</u>

The data presented here are drawn from a recent survey of the ways in which bi- and

multilingual practices are deployed in English language classrooms around the world (as

reported by teachers themselves), teachers' attitudes towards such translanguaging practices,

and teachers' perceptions of their institutional culture and the culture and discourse of

TESOL more generally in relation to the use of linguistic resources other than English in the

classroom. The survey also sought to establish whether practice and perceptions are

associated with contextual variables such as the type of institution, learners' English language

level, and teachers' experience. The survey drew on the views of 2,785 primary, secondary

and tertiary teachers working in 111 countries around the world, and was supported by 17

semi-structured interviews undertaken with a representative sample of participants. A number

of themes emerged which are relevant to this chapter (for a full description of the project, see Hall and Cook, 2013).

8.1 Widespread translanguaging practices

One of the survey's primary findings, which by this point in the chapter will come as little surprise, is that the use of languages other than English is extremely common in TESOL classrooms around the world. For teachers, medium-oriented functions in particular draw on a range of language resources; for example, 62 per cent and 58 per cent of teachers reported explaining vocabulary and explaining grammar respectively through the learners' own languages *always*, *often* or *sometimes*, whilst 72 per cent reported that they similarly explained meanings in other languages when they were unclear in English. There were slightly fewer reports of translanguaging to carry out framework and social functions within the classroom, but with 43 per cent of teachers giving instructions in languages other than English, and 53 per cent reported drawing on the learners' own languages to develop rapport and a good classroom atmosphere, teachers' engagement with translanguaging pedagogy is evidently widespread.

Teachers also reported significant learner use of languages other than English during classes. Whilst this was sometimes through deliberate and structured activities (e.g., the use of bilingual dictionaries and word lists or the explicit comparison of English grammar to the grammar of their own languages, reported as taking place *always*, *often* or *sometimes* by 71.8 per cent and 70.6 per cent of teachers respectively), 45.4 per cent of teachers similarly noted learners' less formal preparation for tasks and activities in their own languages before switching to English.

Within this broad picture, variations can be found within the data. In keeping with this chapter's earlier discussion (see Section 3), both teachers' and learners' translanguaging in the classroom is reported as being substantially higher in the state sector than in private institutions. For example, 80.6 per cent of teachers working in state schools report engaging in translanguaging in order to explain when meanings in English are unclear (i.e., a medium-oriented function), compared to a (still significant) 60.2 per cent of private school teachers (likewise, for developing rapport and a good classroom atmosphere (i.e., a social function), the figures are 59 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively). Meanwhile, teachers with lower proficiency classes (defined here as beginner to pre-intermediate learners) draw on a wider range of linguistic resources than those teaching higher level students (i.e., intermediate to advanced proficiency). For example, 54.3 per cent of the former give instructions in languages other than English compared to 28.9 per cent of the latter (i.e., a 'framework' function), while 67.6 per cent of teachers' explain vocabulary (i.e., a medium-oriented function) through other languages to lower proficiency learners compared to 54 per cent to higher level students. Both of these trends are perhaps not unexpected.

Furthermore, it is also worth noting that although these statistics for teacher and learner translanguaging are significant, is seems likely that, as self-report accounts of classroom practice, the data actually under-represents the extent to which languages other than English are used in class. Other self-report accounts of teachers' use of other languages, for example, identify substantial differences between stated and actual practice (e.g., from a stated 10 per cent to an actual 23 per cent for Edstrom, 2006), while Levine (2014, p.337) suggests that use of the learners' own language is unmarked, yet significant, in many 'arguably crucial moments' in the classroom.

8.2 Teachers' attitudes towards translanguaging in the classroom

The survey reveals that teachers' attitudes towards the use of languages other than English in the classroom are complex and nuanced. While 61.4 per cent of teachers believed or strongly believed that they should try to 'exclude' the learners' own languages from the classroom, a greater number, 73.5 per cent, reported allowing other languages to be used 'only at certain points of the lesson' – Section 8.1 (above) identified what uses, and thus what points of lessons, these are. Implicit in these responses - i.e., 'certain points of the lesson' – is a sense that teachers are considering when translanguaging practices are most appropriate in classes. In other words, teachers *are* taking a principled approach to the use of languages in the classroom, albeit one which, in the absence of a clear professional discourse and discussion of the issue, they are most likely developing by themselves (see discussion in Section 7). From this, it is perhaps unsurprising that a sense of 'guilt' about translanguaging in the classroom was somewhat less prevalent amongst teachers who participated in this survey than is suggested by several other studies (e.g., Macaro, 2009; Littlewood and Yu, 2011, and also noted in Section 7 of this chapter). While 36 per cent of participating teachers said they felt guilty if translanguaging took place, 37.9 per cent said they did not.

To summarise, while the vast majority of teachers (90.1 per cent) either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that English should be the *main* language used in the TESOL classroom, there is clear evidence that most teachers do *not* pursue monolingual, English-only teaching, with a substantial majority (76.4 per cent) suggesting that they can decide for themselves the balance between English and other languages in their classes. There is also an implicit sense that such decisions are based around an understanding of when translanguaging might be more and less appropriate during lessons for pedagogic reasons, but also because, as the

survey uncovered, many teachers (56.7 per cent) feel that learners can express their cultural and linguistic identity more easily if the can draw upon their wider linguistic repertoires.

As with teachers' reported translanguaging classroom practices (see previous section, 8.1), attitudes towards multilingual teaching also varied according to both sector and level of the learners' being taught. Private sector teachers conveyed a stronger sense of support for English-only teaching, 63.4 per cent trying to exclude use of the learners own languages from the classroom compared to 50.8 per cent of state school teachers. Meanwhile, although just 57.6 per cent of private sector survey participants allowed multilingual activity in class at certain points of the lesson, this figure rose to 78.4 per cent in state schools. Beyond these attitudes, which to a large extent reflect (and support) the trends exemplified in the teachers' reports of their day-to-day classroom practice, the proportion of teachers who believed that English should be the main language of TESOL classrooms, and the number who felt guilty if language(s) other than English were used in the classroom, were reported as being similar across both private and public institutions. Meanwhile, there was a slight and arguably unsurprising tendency for teachers of learners with lower English language proficiencies to allow translanguaging at certain parts of the lesson (75.7 per cent compared to higher proficiency students' teachers' 70.2 per cent), and to be slightly less focused on excluding languages other than English more generally (48.3 per cent compared to 55.6 per cent for those teaching higher level learners).

8.3 <u>Translanguaging and the cultures of TESOL: perceptions and paradoxes</u>

When reflecting upon the ways in which monolingual and bi- and multilingual teaching may be encouraged or discouraged within their wider professional contexts, teachers who participated in the survey indicated that a strong preference for English-only teaching - and

thus against learners drawing upon all of their linguistic resources in support of learning - still exists amongst a range of other stakeholders within the field. This is in spite of the realities of teachers' own multilingual classroom practices, the changing context of English learning and use, and the changing theoretical and methodological attitudes towards translanguaging, documented in Section 4 of this chapter.

Although, as we have seen (Section 8.2), most teachers agreed that they can decide the balance of English and bi- and multilingual approaches in their own classroom for themselves, many also reported that their 'institution expects classes to be taught in English' (63 per cent of survey participants *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with this statement); likewise when reporting whether their learners expect English-only classes (49.6 per cent of teachers *agreed/strongly agreed*); where appropriate, their learners' parents expectations (52.3 per cent *agreed/strongly agreed*); ministries of education (46 per cent *agreed/strongly agreed*), and, indeed, whether other 'teachers in my institution feel that classes should be taught only in English' (59 per cent of surveyed teachers *agreed/strongly agreed* with this statement).

These perspectives convey a clear sense that, whilst support for the monolingual assumption and English-only teaching is far from universal across the field (e.g., over one third of teacher did *not* feel their institution expected an English-only approach), many TESOL stakeholders continue to prioritise monolingual teaching and, as a corollary, discourage (or seek to prohibit) translanguaging in the classroom. For many teachers, there remains a clear tension between the realities of their own classroom practices in which translanguaging plays a regular, often systematic and necessary role and the beliefs and expectations of their institutional managers and, indeed, their learners (although it is notable that parents of younger learners are more widely reported as favouring English-only teaching

than the learners themselves!). For Copland and Neokleous (2011, p.271), this leaves many teachers 'damned if they [do]… and damned if they do not' allow for, or facilitate use of, the learners' own languages and translanguaging more generally in class.

That so many participants felt that their fellow teachers appeared to support English-only classes, a higher proportion than, for example, their learners, parents and ministries of education, also seems particularly noteworthy and, indeed, somewhat paradoxical; why might many teachers engage in and facilitate principled translanguaging practices in their own classrooms, yet assume that their colleagues would support monolingual teaching? The survey data reveals one possible explanation.

8.4 Teacher training, teacher experience and translanguaging

A large majority of teachers reported that the pre-service and in-service training they had experienced discouraged the use of other languages in class (confirmed by 67.4 per cent of survey participants for their pre-service training and 68.8 per cent of teachers for their in-service teacher training, while just 19.2 per cent of and 18.4 per cent of respondents respectively disagreed with this perspective). Yet in qualitative survey data, many also identified a gap between their experiences on teacher-training programmes and their subsequent classroom experiences. Furthermore, in related interview data with the sample of 17 teachers who had participated in the survey and which included teachers from a range of national contexts and type of institutions, speakers of English as their main or as an additional language, and teachers with differing lengths of teaching service, it became apparent that teacher experience appeared to be a more significant determiner of views about monolingual or bi- and multilingual teaching than other criteria. The most experienced teachers appeared to be more open to translanguaging in the classroom than their less-experienced counterparts,

to an extent that cut across national boundaries and institutional contexts. For the more experienced teachers, drawing upon languages other than English in class was a pragmatic response to the learners' immediate pedagogic and social needs, and it was evident that their own personal theorizing and practice had developed over time, as they challenged the monolingual discourses promoted on their teacher training programmes (as a teacher working in Japan noted about the evolution of her views, 'I thought wait a second, it's not working. It doesn't work').

It seems, therefore, that many English language teachers develop translanguaging approaches in the classroom over the course of their teaching careers, as they progress further away from their training programmes, and in light of the realities of their professional experiences. In the absence, until recently, of any real engagement with the issue within the theoretical and methodological literature, and with few opportunities to reflect on and develop their perspectives within an accommodating professional discourse (for example, there remains, at present, relatively little discussion of bi- and multilingual teaching at major TESOL-oriented conferences, although as Kerr (2016) notes, this is starting to change), this has largely taken place on an individual basis. While teachers are developing their own principles and insights as to when translanguaging is appropriate in the classroom - all survey and interview participants could explain when and why languages other than English were used in their classrooms, for example - the suspicion lingers that most teachers are operating in isolation, sometimes with a sense of guilt, without the support they may need in order to discuss and share good practice or analyse the limitations of their approach to translanguaging in the classroom. In effect, there is not only a disjunct between 'theory' and 'practice' in TESOL (albeit one which is now gradually closing), but also significant gap between what teachers need to explore and reflect upon during their teacher training and

education programmes, and what actually happens and/or needs to happen in the classroom. Without addressing the 'elephant in the room' of translanguaging, in its many and varied forms and with all its potential to facilitate learning and teaching, to prepare learners for the ways in which they are likely to use language beyond the classroom, and to recognize, maintain and develop learners' linguistic and cultural identities, teacher training and education programmes are failing to prepare and support teachers in this vital element of classroom life. As the 'long silence' around bi- and multilingual teaching (Cook, 2010, pp. 20-36) in TESOL comes to an end, teacher trainers and educators need to take forward professional discussion of translanguaging with teachers to facilitate their professional development and support classroom practice.

9. Conclusion

The deployment of learners' full linguistic repertoires in the TESOL classroom is not a new phenomenon. In many contexts, the use of learners' own languages in class has been commonplace for as long as English has been taught. What *has* changed over time is the ways in which this has been either ignored and shunned, or accepted and (re)conceptualised within the field or, more accurately, by differing sectors and stakeholders in the field. As Canagarajah notes (2006, p.6), we should be suspicious of unifying narratives and overarching explanations of intellectual and social developments. TESOL is a diverse and complex activity, characterised by differing viewpoints, interests and biases (ibid.), a perspective which this chapter has aimed to reflect when tracing the rise of monolingual discourses in TESOL in the twentieth century, the development of a 'theory-practice' divide in which the existence of and possibilities surrounding bi- and multilingual teaching were not recognised in the methodological literature, the changing social context for TESOL which

has facilitated increased recognition of translanguaging as a social and classroom practice, and the current range of global practices and perspectives on translanguaging within the field.

However, it is evident that despite increased recognition and support for the use of all learners' linguistic resources within the classroom, teachers still face substantial challenges in developing, sharing and reflecting on what is and is not appropriate and effective practice. Whilst the theoretical and methodological literature may have started to catch up with, document and reconceptualise longstanding classroom practices, this does not seem to have thus far fully permeated the professional discourse TESOL. Although an increasing and welcome number of practical publications outline key debates and activities for teachers (e.g., González Davies, 2004; Kerr, 2014), teacher training and education programmes, teacher conferences, and indeed the informal teacher-to-teacher conversations that are part of everyday school life do not yet appear to engage with or provide a forum for discussion of the practicalities of bi- and multilingual teaching and translanguaging within the classroom.

Yet as Postmethod discourses (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; 2006; 2012) become more influential within TESOL, opportunities exist to recognize and value more fully teachers' own theorizing about, and insights into, the affordances that translanguaging offers in the classroom. Acknowledging more clearly the bottom-up understandings around translanguaging of experienced and expert practitioners, many of whom readily embed translanguaging practices into their teaching, can serve to challenge the often top-down continuing promotion of monolingual teaching by other stakeholders in the field, such as institutional managers. It can also challenge the monolingualism inherent in many popular language teaching methods, narrowing the gap between theory and practice in TESOL as the case for and realities of translanguaging in TESOL are recognised rather than ignored or

dismissed. Understanding both the complexity and diversity of TESOL's past and present, and recognising the experiences and practices of teachers working in a multitude of contexts around the world, can help end the problematic silence around translanguaging within the profession as we frame the realities of TESOL practice through a translanguaging lens.

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