RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Knowledge Base of Teaching in Linguistically Diverse Contexts: Ten Grounded Principles of Multilingual Classroom Pedagogy for

Yongcan Liu, Linda Fisher, Karen Forbes, Michael Evans   University of Cambridge

English Abstract

This paper aims to define the knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse secondary schools in England. Based on extensive interviews with the teachers across two schools, the paper identifies a range of good practices centred on flexibility and differentiation. These include, for example, diversifying teaching resources by using bilingual materials and dialogic tasks, as well as making adjustments to teaching by simplifying input and including cultural references. These practices are characterised by 'a situated child-centred approach' which is underpinned by ten core principles of multilingual classroom pedagogy for EAL. Implications for education policy and practice are also discussed.

Chinese Abstract

本文旨在对英国中学教师在复杂语言环境下教学所需的基础知识进行界定。文章基于对两所中学专业课教师所进行的深度访谈，发掘出一系列灵活多变且因人而异的教学方法。这些方法包括例如：通过使用双语材料及加强语言互动使教学资源多样化，以及通过简化授课信息和提供文化典故来优化教学等方法。 这些方法遵循十大多语课堂教学原则，以学生为中心， 并结合情境进行教学。文章还就本研究对教育政策和实践的影响进行了讨论。

Introduction

The number of children who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) in England has continued to rise due to a steady arrival of migrants over the past decade (Liu & Evans, 2016). According to the Department for Education (2016: 10), 15.7 percent of the student population in secondary schools and 20.1 percent in primary schools are currently recorded as EAL, meaning that they are 'exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English'. Although it is important to acknowledge that this is not a reliable indication of their proficiency in English, the overall trend of linguistic diversity in schools has been steadily increasing over the past decade. In contrast to this significant increase in the EAL population, however, the level of funding for EAL has been decreasing in recent years. The introduction of government policies, which reduce the role of local authorities in managing local schools, has further exacerbated the situation. Funding that has been devolved to schools has not been ringfenced for spending on EAL support. In many areas, free services provided by local authorities such as teacher training and bilingual translation have also been scrapped or replaced by private providers (see Arnot et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016). Despite these challenges, however, schools still strive to maintain the same level of EAL support, upholding the long tradition of inclusion in English schools. With the current policy set to continue into the future, more cuts in EAL funding seem inevitable and the professional base of EAL in this country is in danger of being eroded. While teachers arguably have to do more with less, there has been little recognition by policy-makers, of the expertise that already exists among teachers working with EAL learners. This paper thus seeks, first and foremost, to make visible the 'knowledge base of teaching' (Shulman, 1987: 4) in the multilingual classroom. Through explicating, systemising and theorising classroom teachers' knowledge of linguistic diversity, we aim to consolidate the professional base of this highly valued, yet often trivialised feature of teaching in schools (Leung, 2007). At the policy level, we also seek to contribute to the current debate surrounding EAL by arguing that more resources should be made available to support specialists to conduct knowledge-based professional work which bears educational and moral significance.

Literature Review

A survey of the literature shows that EAL research conducted in the UK context in the past decade has examined a variety of issues, ranging from literacy development and assessment, to teacher training and classroom pedagogy (e.g. Conteh, 2012; Conteh, Kumar, & Beddow,

2008; Creese, 2006, 2008; Liu & Evans, 2016; see also Leung's review, 2016). The major concern of much EAL research, among many others, is the issue of underachievement of linguistic minority children. Factors such as race, ethnicity, gender and social class have been correlated with achievement in an attempt to account for the variations in EAL students' underperformance (Strand et al., 2015). Pedagogy, however, has rarely been taken into consideration, despite research evidence which seems to suggest that the way teachers teach may greatly influence how students approach their learning and in turn may lead to different learning outcomes. Systematic analysis of multilingual classroom pedagogy for EAL is very limited. For example, Murphy and Unthiah (2015) in their systematic review of EAL pedagogy only identified two dozen studies of instructional interventions and among them only one was conducted in the UK context. What is not included in the report, however, is a large body of diverse work conducted by the EAL professional community. As Leung (2016: 166) observes, 'a good deal of research related to learners from minority groups in the English context over the last decade or so has been process-oriented. The focus has been on how EAL teaching and learning work in local, situated practices in different schools, classrooms and local education authorities.' The insights derived from this body of work are not to be overlooked, as they constitute the professional knowledge base of EAL and represent a collective memory of the history of EAL in this country. It is this body of professional knowledge that we are interested in and seek to explicate, systematise and further theorise, based on fresh contextualised evidence. We focus specifically on the English context within the UK as governmental policies and the systems of support for EAL differ across the four countries within the UK. Even within England the diversity of patterns of migration and the different emphases of needs and practice mean that we are conscious of the importance of making context-sensitive claims and judgements on this issue.

Several characteristics of good practice in the multilingual classroom have been recounted in the literature (see Andrews, 2009; Flynn, 2007; Mallows, 2012; Wallace & Mallows, 2009; Wardman, 2012; Evans et al., 2016). The most cited feature is perhaps the emphasis on the importance of interaction in the classroom, particularly at primary level (Conteh et al., 2008; Grant & Mistry, 2010). It is argued that as many bilingual children are still developing their Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) (Cummins, 2008), it is important to create opportunities for them to develop their oracy skills through peer interaction and role play (Grant & Mistry, 2010). Theoretical support has been drawn from Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of mind which argues that language learning can be seen as a form of higher mental functioning which is mediated by cultural artefacts such as peer-peer talk and

interaction (e.g. Conteh et al., 2008). Another strand of research which also supports dialogic pedagogy turns its attention from peer-peer interaction to collaborative talk between subject teachers and EAL specialists. In Creese's (2006) and Gardner's (2006) research for example, it is found that teachers' 'partnership talks' are structured, organised and styled in different ways, which can create various opportunities for teachers to help bilingual children to learn. In both strands of research, interaction is a defining feature of effective classroom pedagogy for EAL.

Another important feature of multilingual classroom pedagogy which has been widely reported in the literature is the effective use of the first language of EAL pupils. Although home language use is a controversial issue in education policy making due to its ideological implications (Conteh et al., 2008; Leung, 2001, 2007, 2016), its positive role in the education of bilingual children has long been acknowledged by researchers and practitioners alike (Gregory & Williams, 2000; Kenner & Kress, 2003; Liu & Evans, 2016). Research has found that for newly arrived migrant children with limited English in particular, opportunities to use their home language in learning are important, providing them with an essential stepping stone to accessing the curriculum.

Other practices to support EAL learners which are often discussed in the research literature include, for example, the celebration of heritage cultures (Conteh, 2000, 2015), focused support with extra tuition (Chen, 2009), inclusive pedagogy for isolated learners (Grieve & Haining, 2011), formative assessment for learning (Rea-Dickins, 2001), and languages for social integration (Evans & Liu, in press). These findings by and large concur with the commentaries on teaching effectiveness in various government inspection reports (e.g. DCSF, 2009a, 2009b; DfES, 2002; Ofsted, 1999, 2001) as well as reports commissioned by charities and professional bodies (e.g. NALDIC, 2009; NALDIC/TDA, 2014; Wardman, 2012; Arnot et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016). As discussed above, the insights of 'what works' in the multilingual classroom, whether derived from the research-based or professional literature, constitute the full body of teacher knowledge which underpins the bedrock of the professional base of EAL.

The focus of this paper is to further theorise this body of professional knowledge based on Lee Shulman's (1987) teacher knowledge framework, which has profoundly influenced much research on teaching over the past three decades (e.g. Verloop et al, 2001). In his original proposal, Shulman argues that what matters in teaching and teacher education is 'the knowledge base of teaching', a set of 'codified' and 'codifiable' principles that guide

teachers' actions and behaviours (Shulman, 1987: 4). These principles define 'teacher competences' which ultimately determine 'teaching effectiveness' in the classroom. This visionary conceptualisation of teaching played a strategic role in raising the profile of the teaching profession at a time when education was dominated by a neoliberal discourse. Thirty years later, its strategic relevance still remains significant and is particularly pertinent to what this paper aims to achieve: to raise the profile of EAL provision within the teaching profession at a time when the professional base of EAL is being eroded in schools due to the current context of educational policy-making.

Teachers' knowledge about how to work with multilingual children across the curriculum is undoubtedly a core part of their competence. However, this seemingly obvious type of teacher knowledge is not marked out as a distinct category in Shulman's framework, but rather subsumed into other categories of teacher knowledge. This does not imply that the issue of diversity did not exist when Shulman made his proposal and we should remind ourselves that his framework was proposed at a particular time, in a particular context and for a particular purpose. The conceptualisation of teaching as a knowledge-based profession successfully accomplished the mission of challenging the political debate of education reforms at the time. Yet, the knowledge base derived thirty years ago might not directly and effectively address the challenges brought about by technology and migration that we are facing today in English schools. Some innovative ideas have emerged over the past several years which suggest that technological knowledge should be included as part of teacher knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Schmidt et al., 2010). In the same vein, we would argue that a clear language diversity dimension is also needed in the teacher knowledge framework. Indeed, the English school context, which is characterised by 'superdiversity' (Vertovec, 2007: 1024) within a wider socio-political context of EU migration, provides a unique opportunity to theorise the knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse contexts. As Shulman acknowledged, 'we may be able to offer a compelling argument for the broad outlines and categories of the knowledge base for teaching. It will, however, become abundantly clear that much, if not most, of the proposed knowledge base remains to be discovered, invented, and redefined.' (Shulman, 1987: 12). It is the goal of this paper, therefore, to continue to discover, invent and redefine teachers' knowledge base through addressing the following three questions:

(1) What is perceived by teachers as good practice in the multilingual classroom in English secondary schools?

(2) What are the principles that underpin this good practice and which constitute the knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse contexts?

(3) What characterises this knowledge base?

Research methodology

This paper is drawn from part of a larger study which examined the language development, social integration and school achievement of EAL students across the East of England (Evans et al., 2016). The aim here, however, is to provide an in-depth insight into teachers' professional knowledge base for appropriate EAL pedagogy based on extensive interviews conducted at two secondary schools in the East of England, as outlined below. A grounded theory approach was adopted based on the premise that 'theories should be developed from empirical material and its analysis' (Flick, 2014: 40). As highlighted by Punch (2014), this approach is particularly appropriate for exploring phenomena arising from professional practice within a particular organisational or institutional context. Consequently, the research has a genuine focus on the individual and on gaining an in-depth understanding of the principles which underpin teachers' knowledge base in relation to EAL.

The two schools, referred to as Parkland School and Kirkwood Academy, are located in the East of England and were selected, on the one hand, due to their demographic diversity and differing experience with EAL students and, on the other hand, due to their shared commitment to quality EAL provision. Parkland School is a large, 11-18 comprehensive school in a multicultural urban environment. The school serves an ethnically diverse catchment area which is home to a large and well-established Pakistani-heritage community and which also includes a growing number of more recent arrivals from predominantly Eastern European countries. Over 55% of students in the school speak English as an additional language (see Table 1) and between them they speak approximately 60 different languages. As a result, the school has substantial experience in EAL provision. Kirkwood Academy, on the other hand, is a smaller 11-16 school in a semi-rural area where the arrival of EAL students has been much more recent. As such, the school was keen to develop its practice in this area. The school attracts students from the local farming community and from some of the nearby villages, and the majority of students are of White British heritage. Just over 12% of students speak English as an additional language, which is below the national average (see Table 1).

	Parkland School	Kirkwood Academy	National Average[1]
EAL students	> 55%	> 12%	14.3%
Free school meals	> 17%	> 20%	15.7%
Special Education Needs	> 10%	< 10%	7.4%
GCSE results (A*-C including English, and	> 45%	> 30%	56.6%

Table 1: School characteristics

In spite of their demographic differences, both schools had a wide range of support mechanisms for the EAL learners in place and were committed to developing their EAL provision. Crucially, both schools had invested in an EAL co-ordinator and, in the case of Parkland School, in further EAL support staff and resources. However, in schools where such experience, commitment and resources are lacking, the balance between practice-based knowledge and research-based guidance in informing the teachers' professional knowledge and pedagogy will need to be more weighted towards the latter.

In order to explore teachers' perceptions of good practice in the multilingual classroom, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Headteacher, the EAL co-ordinator and classroom teachers from a range of core curriculum subjects in each school; the Head of Department (or a representative) from English, maths, science, history/humanities and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). The interviews with the Headteachers and EAL co-ordinators lasted approximately one hour each, and the interviews with the classroom teachers (ten in total) lasted around 30 minutes each. All interviews were audio recorded and informed consent was given by the participants. The overall aim was to explore the perspective of teachers on their classroom practice with regard to EAL students across both schools. To this end, the interviews addressed six key areas of interest and this paper mainly reports on the data in relation to teachers' understanding of 'good practice'.

- General profile of the teacher and their role in relation to EAL students in the school;
- Teaching strategies used to support EAL students and their effectiveness;
- Language use in school and the role of the first language in the classroom;

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[1] Data in tables relates to 2015, the year in which the study was completed, and was retrieved from http://www.education.gov.uk

- Whole school and/or departmental policies on the assessment and monitoring of EAL students;
- Teachers' perspectives on the social integration of EAL students;
- Parent involvement and communication

All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using a grounded approach. In line with this, we undertook a recursive process of coding (Punch, 2014) in order to identify key themes relating to teachers' knowledge base. Analysis then further drew on the conceptual framework of the 'EAL Triangle' (see Liu and Evans, 2016: 554) which considers a whole school approach to promoting EAL learners' language development, social integration and educational achievement (see also Arnot et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016). Data analysis was conducted and cross-referenced by all members of the research team and emerging issues were discussed at regular team meetings in order to ensure consistency.

Findings

Principle 1: Drawing on professional expertise to make informed professional judgements

Many teachers in both schools felt strongly that EAL support was not 'black and white' and preferred the system to have sufficient flexibility to allow the work to be done in a sensitive way. The history teacher at Parkland School commented on how EAL worked in his school:

> I think having something that's in black and white limits professionalism and I think as long as the training and the capabilities are there and people know that there's a route to go and get advice, I think that's a much better way than having a policy. […] For myself, being able to look at the child in a classroom, assessing their needs and putting a programme in place that meets that and supporting people who need it I think is a much better approach (History teacher, Parkland School)

According to these teachers, underpinning an appropriate EAL pedagogy was the belief that teachers need to be given the autonomy to make judgements based on their professional expertise. The English teacher interviewed at Parkland School explained how she understood professionalism:

> That's our ethos (professionalism) and that's what we work to, so if there is a kid in our room who needs support they get it and there doesn't need to be a written

policy for personalised learning. That's already there, but EAL specifically we just throw every strategy we can at the class until things start to work and kids start to make progress. (English teacher, Parkland School)

Principle 2: Using bilingual resources and strategies for specific teaching purposes

Translation was one of the most commonly used strategies by the teachers in both schools. For example, bilingual dictionaries were made available as supplementary resources in both schools and were recommended to students who were keen to explore beyond the superficial and sometimes vague meanings provided by *Google Translate.* The English teacher at Parkland School mentioned another bilingual resource, referring to a Polish new arrival in her class who used a translation of *Romeo and Juliet* as a useful initial 'back-up'. In practical and heavily content-based subjects, particularly science, bilingual materials in a range of languages were sometimes used to help EAL students to understand the technical terms and vocabulary. For example, the science department at Kirkwood Academy provided laminated sheets of technical terms translated into a range of languages:

> The idea is when appropriate, because they're laminated, and when we're on certain topics – and there's a whole range of languages for this – that we can actually put them out … But it is the technical language, as I say, layered on top of the normal everyday language. I mean, some of the two courses that we had, the two sessions we had on teaching EAL students, it's noticeable to us probably as a practical and very content-based subject that we need to cut round all the normal sort of flowery language that we tend to add to stuff – teachers talk too much, don't they – and get to the nitty-gritty which is what the EAL students need. (Science teacher, Parkland School)

Principle 3: Employing multimodal aids to reduce the language demands in learning

As language remained the biggest hindrance for EAL students, multimodal 'tools' such as 'pictorial science dictionaries', 'TV programmes', 'pictures and cartoons' were also drawn upon to support students' learning. In science subjects and in maths, where understanding of the content was less dependent on text and talk, the benefits of using visual and kinaesthetic aids were seen to be paramount by the teachers. Opportunities were provided in practical sessions where students could 'feel', 'play' and 'shape' different objects and experience learning by doing, such as 'mixing chemicals'. A maths teacher shared his

experience of getting students to use cubes to make 3D shapes in order to engage EAL students to learn:

> Trying to be a bit more hands-on practical with the EAL students […] Say, for example, when we're doing plans and elevations using cubes, we get the students to make the 3D shapes with the cubes and then they can manipulate them physically in their hands […] So that works for, you know, EAL students, […] because it takes the sort of language barrier out of the way. (Maths teacher, Parkland School)

Principle 4: Simplifying tasks to cater to individual needs and contexts

As well as providing differentiation by task, teachers modified and simplified their English input, often drawing on the EAL-specific training that they had received. The history teacher at Kirkwood Academy, for example, described how, after training, he now thought carefully about his use of language and the effect this had had on his appraisal of the effectiveness of his communication:

> So I'd become very aware of how I speak, like very aware. I speak very quickly so when I'm talking to EAL students I don't slow it down massively but I will ... I now think very carefully what I'm going to say and make my voice a lot clearer intentionally and cut down on colloquialisms and those kinds of details to make it very clear what I want them to do or to check on their understanding. And that I think has had a massive impact. Or it's made me think a lot about my teaching anyway, but definitely with those students I think it ... "did I say that too fast? I'll just go over that again and make sure I'm not using language I don't need to use", and that's been a massive, massive help. (History teacher, Kirkwood Academy)

Some of the techniques used in grading language appropriately when presenting tasks were quite similar to those used for teaching classes with a range of performance levels, particularly in literacy. Underlying these strategies was the core principle of genuine inclusion whereby additional support was provided, but without labelling individual students.

Principle 5: Using home language for academic and social purposes

In both schools, there seemed to be some consensus among the staff we interviewed regarding the role that home languages should play socially and academically. They agreed that, socially, it was important to 'celebrate' EAL students' home languages and maintain

their heritage linguistic identity. Academically, there was a strong feeling that English is very important for EAL learners' academic achievement, so where possible, opportunities needed to be created and provided for them to pick up the language as quickly as possible. The majority of the teachers, however, also indicated that it was essential to allow students to use their home language on some occasions, particularly when they were really struggling to access the curriculum. These teachers recognised that many new arrivals will often use their home language anyway and they are just allowing them to do this overtly rather than covertly. The science teacher at Parkland School, for instance, commented on how a student may use their home language in learning science:

> Sometimes it's extremely important because sometimes it works better if they write what they're thinking in their own language and then they can read it again and try and process it into English. Because sometimes that doesn't naturally come and we do have EAL students that can think it, hear it in English, think it in their own language and put it down in English, and they seem to be able to make that transition. (Science teacher, Parkland School)

In language-related subjects, such as English and Modern Foreign Languages, the teachers were also keen to support the children to develop biliteracy in English and their home language. There was an indication in the interviews that having a good grasp of their home language would be useful for the development of English skills and vice versa.

Principle 6: Making cultural and contextual references to create resonance and rapport

The teachers in both schools valued the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment and were keen to create opportunities to celebrate different heritages and cultures. For example, in Parkland School cultural activities were organised which aimed to create a sense of community in light of the school ethos of 'Being Different, Belonging Together'. In subject teaching, however, many teachers admitted that opportunities to make reference to culture varied from subject to subject and from class to class. For humanities subjects, making cultural and contextual reference was more pertinent, for example, in modules on 'rice fields' in Vietnam and 'Nelson Mandela' in Africa. Science teachers also reported making an effort to refer to cultures where relevant; for example, by drawing students' attention to well known 'Russian scientists', and in maths by including work on the 'Babylonian' and 'Egyptian' traditions of mathematics. It was also clear that the main purpose of making cultural and contextual references in teaching was to create a classroom that felt more open

and potentially responsive to other cultures. The history teacher at Parkland School, for instance, commented:

> We feel it's important to try and look at ways to incorporate different cultures … But yeah, I think for us this experiential learning, this whole idea that where you come from is significant and that will shape how you interpret. It's good history and we should not be teaching our students, especially those from different backgrounds that there is only one truth and it's the white British truth, because that's where problems come from. (History teacher, Parkland School)

Principle 7: Combining mainstreaming with individual focused support to ensure that no one is left behind

Mainstreaming was the main approach for EAL students, but when they were seen to be struggling, extra tuition and language support would be put in place. This could be in the form of small group tutoring or EAL classes with a focus on language. Where resources were available, subject specific extra tuition with a particular focus on content was also arranged and conducted by teaching assistants. The EAL co-ordinator at Kirkwood Academy was a firm believer in the value of an immersion approach backed up by EAL specialist support:

> I'm not agreeing with some literature that says you have to keep them out from class for one month, two months, no, even if their English is very basic. From my personal experience, you keep them one week the most, then gradually introduce to the school system. … But when they are going in class, they are getting lost because they don't know what is this coursework, they're missing a lot and I think the quicker the better. But at the same time, they should have some intervention one to one and basic grammar ... You have to combine the language. (EAL co-ordinator, Kirkwood Academy)

The subject teachers in both schools valued greatly the role the EAL team played in supporting the students in their school. The effect of in-class bilingual support, according to many subject teachers, was both pedagogical and psychological. One of the maths teachers at Kirkwood Academy, for instance, commented that having the EAL co-ordinator in lessons was particularly useful for confirming whether an EAL student's reticence in a lesson was due to lack of comprehension of English or of the maths, or whether it was just due to lack of interest, so that appropriate support could be arranged more quickly.

Principle 8 'Buddying' to provide peer support for learning and social integration

EAL students received support not only from their teachers but also from their peers. For younger new arrivals who were new to English in particular, a pupil from the same year group was designated as their 'buddy' who would translate for them and help them to settle in. Where possible, these 'buddies' usually came from the same country and spoke the same home language as the EAL students who, according to the teachers, tended to 'gravitate towards what's comfortable' when they first arrived. However, the EAL co-ordinator in Kirkwood Academy talked about more recently making a move to pair newly-arrived EAL pupils with an English-speaking buddy, which she thought would be helpful for both language development and social integration. When the students felt 'more acclimatised' to the environment, they were then encouraged to mix with other students with different backgrounds. As a general principle, teachers tended to let their students choose what was comfortable for them. Only when they felt that students' learning was being affected by what they called 'negative groups' did they intervene and put them in new groupings. A modern foreign language teacher summarised this approach:

> If there is a student who's brand new who's feeling shy and whose English is limited, I would usually sit that student next to somebody who speaks his or her language, just to help them. But later on it plays no role, it's just as a buddy system; it makes them feel more comfortable. Unless of course it doesn't work, then I split them and I sit them next to somebody who's, who's a helper, because certain students are very much helpers and they will sit there with a dictionary and help them, whereas others don't want to have anything to do with it. It just depends on the kid. (MFL teacher, Kirkwood Academy)

Principle 9: Using dialogic tasks for effective content and language integration

Group work and collaborative learning was seen by many teachers as one of the most effective EAL strategies for achieving the dual purpose of learning content and language simultaneously. Through 'pair and share', students were provided with an opportunity to learn new concepts in science, for example, through questioning and communication, and to acquire English at the same time through collective problem-solving. Even for those recent arrivals who had very limited English, the amount of input through listening to their peers helped them develop their language skills. The maths teacher at Parkland School explained the benefits of group work for EAL students as well as non-EAL students:

If one student doesn't [understand] and another student does, then they've got to

communicate on the table to make sure that whoever gets asked on their table is

then able to, you know, give a shot at explaining and giving the answer. So that will

encourage the communication and the interaction on their tables ... so by the pure

fact that one student has to explain to another student how to do it, it then embeds

their knowledge as well and if at first they try to explain it and the EAL student

doesn't necessarily understand, then they will try to find another way to explain it so

it is developing their understanding and their skills themselves, so definitely gives

them opportunity. (Maths teacher, Parkland School)

The history teacher at Parkland School further summarised this kind of collaborative learning

as 'dialogic pedagogy' which sees task-based communication as a mediating tool for

developing reasoning skills and building confidence among EAL students.

Principle 10 Using flexible and continuous assessment to promote learning

Getting to know the students when they first arrive is an important part of an iterative EAL

assessment cycle. In both schools, the type of initial information obtained at admission

varied from student to student. Many teachers commented that they preferred to find out

what the children were like when they arrived through in-house assessments and only used

the information provided by the Local Authority or other bodies as 'an indicator' or 'a

signpost' to 'flag up' the issues that required special attention. The initial assessment was

usually conducted by the admissions and EAL teams. An interview was normally arranged for

the children and their parents in the first week of their arrival. Some specialist assessments,

particularly in mathematics, were also conducted, but in a way that only assessed 'the basic

maths and the basic skills' of the children. A maths teacher commented:

The most important thing for us initially is to know their competence within maths,

not so much their sort of linguistic and their sort of grasp of English because we

want to make sure that they go into the right set based on their maths ability rather

than their level of English because we feel that their level of English will develop in

time, but we need to make sure that […] they're going to be challenged with regard

to their maths. (Maths teacher, Parkland School)

The results of the initial assessments were shared with colleagues and mainly used to inform

decisions on setting. The teachers we interviewed reported that they would put the students

in middle or higher sets where possible in the first few weeks and provided them with the

experience of 'good language models'. Adjustments were made later on based on individual students' performance in the classroom. The initial assessment was followed up by continuous classroom-based assessment by the subject teachers who fed back the information to the EAL team.

Discussion

This paper presents ten core principles that constitute teachers' knowledge base of teaching in the linguistically diverse contexts of two secondary schools in the East of England. It addresses three questions. The first question asks what is perceived by teachers as good practice in the multilingual classroom. The findings show that teachers used a wide range of strategies to support EAL learners, many of which were also beneficial to non-EAL students. These include, for example, diversifying teaching resources by using bilingual materials, multimodal aids and dialogic tasks, as well as making adjustments to teaching by simplifying input, including cultural references, and providing extra support. These diverse strategies by and large concur with the main findings of previous research on EAL pedagogy. For example, much literature suggests that one of the most common features of effective EAL teaching involves creating and providing ample opportunities for interaction (Conteh et al., 2008; Grant & Mistry, 2010). This is evidenced in Principle 9 which suggests that teachers, through group work and dialogic tasks, can maximise opportunities for communication and achieve effective content and language integration for learning. This focus in some ways reflects the pedagogical perspective of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in the dual focus on content and language. However, while CLIL largely draws on the foreign language learning experience for its rationale, our EAL-related Principle frames these activities within the broader, more holistic perspective of language across the curriculum. Interaction, however, is not only limited to talk. As indicated in Principle 3, interaction may also involve multimodal artefacts such as audio, video, pictures and drawings, or even physical objects for kinaesthesia. Another important feature of effective teaching in the multilingual classroom involves explicitly allowing students to use their home language, particularly for new arrivals with limited English. Principle 5 reaffirms many researchers' and practitioners' belief in its positive role in EAL students' learning as well as general well-being (Gregory & Williams, 2000; Kenner & Kress, 2003; Liu & Evans, 2016). Other strategies revealed in the interviews include, for example, buddying (Principle 8), mainstreaming combined with targeted support (Principle 6) and flexible/formative assessment (Principle 10), all of which echo the recommendations of good practice reported in the research and professional

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literature as well as government and charity reports (e.g. DCSF, 2009a, 2009b; DfES, 2002; Ofsted, 1999, 2001; NALDIC, 2009; NALDIC/TDA, 2014; Wardman, 2012; Arnot et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016). In many ways, it can be said that these ten principles embody the work accumulated over several decades in the EAL professional community. However, this professional base is clearly under threat, which is reflected in teachers' expressed concern about their professional autonomy and the future of EAL. This is perhaps not surprising given recent neoliberal reforms in schools, which prioritise accountability and performativity (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). As Principle 1 clearly shows, the teachers we interviewed strongly believed in teacher professionalism. Autonomy and flexibility, in their views, are essential for a support system which bears educational as well as moral responsibilities.

The second question of the paper asks what constitutes the knowledge base underpinning the ten principles. Shulman (1987: 4) notes that the 'knowledge base of teaching' refers to a set of 'codified' and 'codifiable' principles that guide teachers' actions and behaviours in the classroom. In a multilingual classroom with a significant proportion of EAL students, teachers' awareness and understanding of EAL-related principles will determine how successful they are in the classroom. The principles also denote a range of teaching purposes broadly in line with the 'EAL Triangle' in the larger project (Liu & Evans, 2016: 554), which aims to develop a whole school support system to promote 'language development', 'social integration' and 'educational achievement'. Among the ten principles, some are intended to achieve a particular purpose. For example, 'making cultural and contextual references' in Principle 6 is mainly intended to create an inclusive environment to promote 'social integration', while in Principle 4, the action of 'simplifying tasks' is a strategy for improving 'educational achievement' through helping the EAL learners access the curriculum. Other principles, however, are intended to achieve multiple purposes which are located at the interfaces of the 'EAL Triangle'. For example, the use of 'dialogic tasks' in Principle 7 is intended to facilitate content and language integration while the 'use of home language' in Principle 5 and 'pairing up students' in Principle 8 both aim to support EAL students to engage in learning and to integrate into the school community. Taken together, the ten principles constitute a constellation of understanding of language diversity in the classroom or what we call 'the knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse contexts'.

A professional knowledge base is usually characterised by the professional and moral values of that profession. With regard to EAL, the knowledge base of teaching is codified by the core values of 'equal opportunities' and 'social inclusion' which are the cornerstones of the

English schooling system (Leung, 2016). Principle 7, as a telling example, clearly shows that these values have been successfully integrated into EAL practice: while mainstreaming ensures that EAL students are on an equal footing to other children ('equal opportunities'), needs-based targeted support ensures that no one is left behind ('social inclusion'). Such values are in line with the philosophy of humanism which is reminiscent of many prevailing language pedagogies, such as Communicative Language Teaching, where students are placed at the centre of the teaching and learning process and individuals' needs are valued and accommodated (Spada, 2007). In Principle 4, for example, the history teacher we interviewed reported a series of actions such as speaking more slowly and clearly, cutting down on colloquialisms and using repetition, all of which demonstrate a humanistic child-centred pedagogy (Alexander, 2008). Further examples of humanism can be seen in Principle 10 on assessment for learning. The abilities and needs of the new arrivals are assessed individually to determine the pathways of learning which are later adjusted and fine-tuned based on detailed information about the individual child collected through continuous assessment. The English approach to EAL differs from other additional language support systems in Anglophone countries. For example, the sheltered programmes in the US place a stronger emphasis on programme delivery where students' progress is monitored and scaffolded through a structured and focused content-based curriculum (see Stephens & Johnson, 2015). In a similar vein, in Australia the core curriculum is usually accompanied by a complementary and specialised module focusing on content and language integration (see Turner & Cross, 2016). All these approaches provide an interesting contrast with the English approach which focuses on full mainstreaming but with greater embedded flexibility and differentiation and thus can be theorised as a situated child-centred approach. In light of this theorisation, every child matters, but every child is different. The child is situated in the centre of the whole school support system and the individual needs of the child will trigger the system (see Figure 1, Arnot, et al., 2014: 18). This differentiated diversity in pedagogy for all, we argue, suits very well the English school context which is often characterised by extreme complexity and influenced by the broader phenomenon of 'superdiversity' (Vertovec, 2007: 1024).
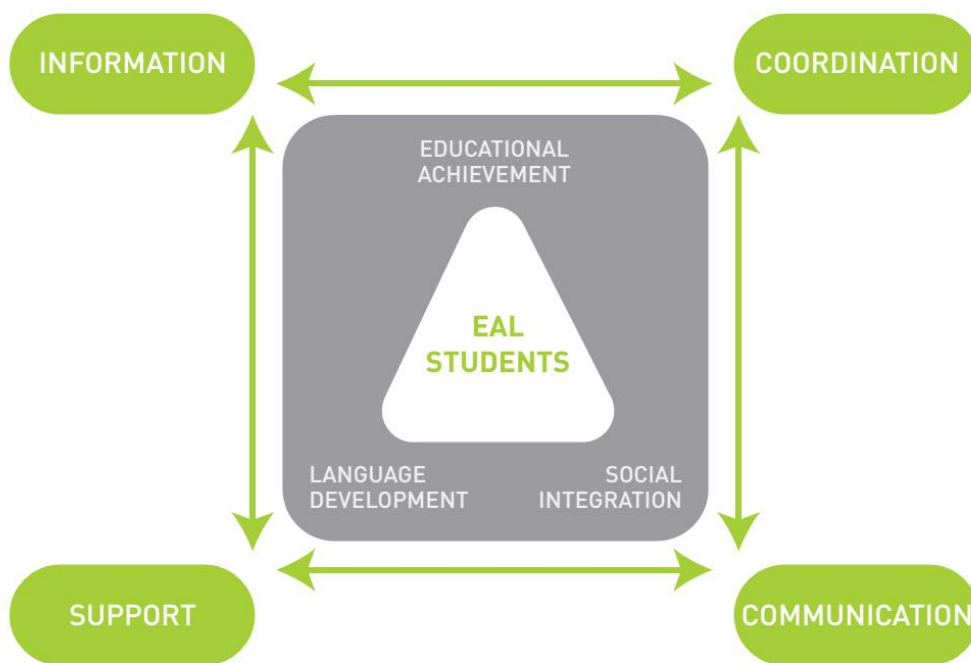
Figure 1. A holistic approach to EAL support in schools

Yet, for teachers to make informed judgements about what the individual's needs are, when to trigger the system and how to muster resources to develop differentiated strategies, a strong professional knowledge base is needed. It is the goal of this paper to make visible this knowledge base in order to support classroom teaching, teacher training and material development. First, we 'explicate' the good practices which are perceived by teachers as working effectively for bilingual EAL learners. Our findings provide clear and concrete insights into classroom behaviours and actions which enable teachers to function successfully in the multilingual classroom. Based on these good practices, we also 'systemise' the underlying principles which delineate the core competences for teaching in linguistically diverse contexts. These competences, we argue, should be incorporated more explicitly into the curriculum of initial teacher training and provide further guidance for the development of learning materials for CPD programmes. Indeed, knowledge is derived from practice and is embodied in practice. We are mindful that institutionalisation of knowledge through the curriculum might jeopardise its ecological validity. A balanced model of teacher training should enable a two-way process of knowledge mobilisation which bridges the gaps between knowledge for, in, and of practice (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). This also raises the broader concern about the lack of an enabling structure in England to achieve this goal, as currently there is no statutory requirement for specialist EAL training in initial teacher education, or indeed in continuous professional development in general. More

resources, therefore, should be provided for teacher training to encourage teachers to explore the mutual process of deriving theoretical knowledge from practice and conducting professional practice based on research knowledge.

Finally, we follow the lead of Lee Shulman thirty years ago and aim to raise the profile of EAL, which is often 'trivialised' in policy making. A comprehensive solution to the problem of 'trivialisation' is beyond the remit of the research, but the message calling for clear recognition of the knowledge base of EAL at the policy level and for more EAL resources to be made available to support teacher professionalism is clearly evidenced throughout our data.

Conclusion

Previous research on teacher knowledge mainly focuses on categories such as subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. In this paper, however, we argue that the prevalence of linguistic diversity in English schools makes teachers' knowledge about language diversity essential to teaching effectiveness in the classroom. In light of this, we propose a new category of teacher knowledge focusing on language diversity in the classroom, echoing Lee Shulman's (1987: 12) call to 'discover, redefine and reinvent' the teacher knowledge framework. Our findings show that the knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse contexts is 'categorisable' and 'visibilisable' (Shulman, 1987), which is constituted by ten core principles. This theorisation, as discussed above, is strategically important because it empirically shows the existence of a professional knowledge base for EAL. More research is needed to enable the discovery of new principles, but this paper has made an initial attempt to define the professional base for EAL.

Finally, the paper also contributes to the field of 'language teacher cognition' (Borg, 2009) by adding a new strand of research to the literature that looks at the knowledge of teachers across the curriculum as a special group of language teachers. As Leung (2001) rightly pointed out, in multilingual classrooms with a large proportion of EAL students, every teacher is a language teacher. Teachers across the curriculum are very different from traditional language teachers such as TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and MFL (Modern Foreign Language) teachers; their professional knowledge about how bilingual children learn English as an additional language alongside curriculum subjects also differs from that of language teachers about learning languages as a curriculum subject. In TESOL and MFL there has already been an established body of research that

examines the knowledge base of language teaching (e.g. Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macaro, Graham & Woore, 2015). In EAL, however, published research that looks into what subject specialist teachers, as a special group of language teachers, know about language across the curriculum is still very limited. A dedicated paper with a specific focus on multilingual classroom pedagogy for EAL is expected to address this gap in the literature. From a theoretical point of view, the research also provides an empirical basis to further theorise 'EAL' as a broader concept, moving beyond its traditional 'distinct language focus' to embrace a more encompassing learning focus with 'diffused curriculum concerns' (Leung, 2001: 33).

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