

Editorial: Collaboration, training and funding for the professional development of teachers of EAL/D students

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This issue of *TESOL in Context* contains four articles that complement each other in their focus and arguments concerning political ideologies, the commodification of English as an additional language/dialect (EAL/D) teaching and the professional training needs of both EAL/D and mainstream teachers in Australian education. The first two submissions are discussion papers, which set the scene for two articles reporting on results from empirical TESOL research. Four book reviews complete the volume with a focus on the work of EAL/D teachers and learners in a variety of contexts.

In his contribution titled *Functional linguistic perspectives in TESOL: Curriculum design and text-based instruction*, Mickan highlights the impact of Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) on EAL/D teaching and TESOL in Australia, providing the federal Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) and South Australia LEAP/D program as key examples. Mickan also emphasises the role of authentic texts in SFL based curricula and uses an extract from their own research to explicate use of SFL in an EAL/D science classroom to scaffold student acquisition of content, language and social practices. Mickan is keen to highlight the critical importance of training for SFL teachers and suggests a 6-step functional linguistic reference to assist in curriculum, instruction and policy design as well as evaluation.

In *Where is Systemic Functional Grammar in the Adult Migrant English Program?*, Tilney provides further in-depth discussion of the use of SFL in the AMEP. Similar to Mickan, Tilney argues that SFL has had an integral role in shaping TESOL in Australia and highlights the critical importance of funding for teacher support

and training. Tracing ideological shifts and policy changes that have directly impacted the AMEP over time, Tilney laments the demise of SFL and continuous funding cuts that compromise teaching quality. He concludes that the AMEP no longer holds its position as world leader in EAL/D teaching, which is not due to a shift to a licence-free EAL/D framework, but directly attributable to the lack of adequately funded professional development, which would include SFL training. Tilney further argues that these changes have not only negatively impacted the quality of AMEP, but also the teaching and learning of EAL/D students in mainstream schools.

Tilney's arguments concerning the lack of adequate training of EAL/D teachers in mainstream schools are substantiated with empirical evidence in Nguyen and Rushton's article titled *Teachers' perceptions about their work with EAL/D students in a standards-based educational context*. While not focusing on SFL, Rushton and Nguyen support Tilney's arguments that the current commodification of EAL/D teaching has led to an unhealthy focus on English literacy, which does not recognise the linguistic competencies EAL/D students bring to the classroom. Similar to both Mickan and Tilney, they call for "a classroom which focuses on language as central to learning" and for designated funding towards professional development training for EAL/D teachers. Without such specialised training, the role of the EAL/D teacher becomes tenuous, for example, they are seen as support for mainstream or content teachers, who themselves have little or no background in TESOL. Nguyen and Rushton conclude that all teachers of EAL/D students require professional learning, with a particular focus on culturally responsive and translingual pedagogies that value the cultural and linguistic resources of each individual student. They emphasise the importance of both collaboration and specialisation for EAL/D and content teachers to ensure shared responsibility for language learning by all educators.

Also employing a case study approach, in *Science and EAL teachers' perspectives and practices in building word knowledge in implementing the new Victorian EAL curriculum*, Filipi, Nguyen and Berry provide further evidence for the critical importance of collaboration between EAL/D and content teachers. Using their observations of instances of linguistically responsive instruction in a science classroom, Filipi, Nguyen and Berry further underline Tilney's and Mickan's belief that EAL/D students require explicit language teaching in authentic context (e.g. focus on grammatical

structure and vocabulary within a science class). In line with Nguyen and Rushton, Filipi, Nguyen and Berry indicate that all EAL/D and content teachers should be trained to value the cultural and linguistic diversity of students in their classrooms. In addition to external professional development opportunities, they see the collaborative nature of the context and the EAL/D teacher relationship as key to achieving a language-informed pedagogy within content-focused teaching. In the case of online learning, this collaboration may also include experts in technology-enhanced learning. In conclusion, Filipi, Nguyen and Berry call for a whole school approach that distributes the responsibility for language learning across all teaching staff.

This issue contains two reviews of *An EAL/D Handbook: Teaching and learning across the curriculum when English is an additional language or dialect*, edited by Harper and Feez. While Veliz guides the reader through an exploration of individual chapters and the authors' perspectives on pedagogical practice, Creagh provides a practical demonstration of how the handbook could be utilized for a professional development session with teachers. Creagh shares the materials that she designed for the session based on the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings explored in each section of the handbook. Her plan includes chapter summaries and discussion points for her attendees. Creagh points out that the accompanying commentary from scholars in the field of language education in Australia is particularly valuable for informing the work of EAL/D teachers.

Barabas elects to focus on the introduction and four chapters of *The preparation of teachers of English as an additional language around the world: Research, policy, curriculum and practice*, edited by Polat, Mahalingappa and Kayi-Aydar, in order to review and explore the writers' perspectives on TESOL programs in four of the eleven countries presented in the book. Barabas describes the ways in which this volume addresses how countries and nation-states create effective language teachers and identifies insights from different language teacher education programs across the globe. While Barabas suggests that some chapters would have benefited from a discussion of the influence of state laws in relation to dominant political ideologies in the context of EAL teacher education programs, overall, Barabas considers the book to be an important exploration of factors influencing education programs and suggests that a range of stakeholders including policy makers and researchers would find this book useful.

The fourth book review, written by Nastasi and Fauls, is a description and critique of *Critical literacy with adolescent English language learners: Exploring policy and practice in global contexts* by Jennifer Alford. The reviewers suggest that Alford's emphasis on the importance of critical literacy for EAL learners is particularly valuable. Nastasi and Fauls describe how Alford firstly guides the reader through the theoretical underpinnings of critical literacy, before focusing on case studies to demonstrate how EAL/D teachers engage with critical literacy in their classrooms. The reviewers find the book to be an indispensable resource for EAL/D teachers. They are particularly impressed by the way that Alford highlights the work of EAL/D teachers in advancing critical literacy in a global context, her take on the centrality of critical literacy when it comes to policies regarding English language teaching, and the inclusion of empirical data based on her research of EAL/D teachers' practices.

The articles and book reviews in this issue highlight important issues in EAL/D policy, research and practice, with a particular emphasis on the imperative to prioritise teacher preparation and professional learning. Underpinning all submissions is a clear understanding of the need for authenticity, collaboration, specialisation and utilisation of all of the linguistic competencies EAL/D bring with them to classrooms. This has implications for TESOL within and beyond Australian borders and highlights the need for continued dialogue with government and funding bodies to ensure the teaching and learning of EAL/D students is comprehensively supported in a wide range of educational contexts.

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