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Initial Teacher Education and the Emotional Geography of Languages: A conceptual intervention

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Abstract

The article addresses a key challenge faced by Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs: how to reconcile the growing multilingual reality of society with the limited adoption of multilingualism in educational practice. It begins by providing an overview of ITE and some of its challenges. It then examines the importance of Critical Multilingual Language Awareness (CMLA), which emphasizes multilingualism as essential for equity and inclusion in linguistically diverse contexts. To extend the discussion of CMLA, the idea of Emotional Geography of Languages (EGL) is introduced as a conceptual framework grounded in the affective turn in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, the spatial turn in education, and Indigenous views of land-people relationality. EGL explores how emotions and identities, tied to places and languages, shape human relationships while challenging policies that marginalize mother tongues and heritage languages. The article concludes by demonstrating how EGL can inform teacher candidates' CMLA, preparing them to contribute to pedagogical and social transformation in linguistically diverse settings.

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Introduction

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs around the world are facing various challenges including recruiting students from minoritized communities, funding constraints, and neoliberal structural and ideological reconfigurations (Barnes & Cross, 2018; Zeichner, 2022). For example, Biesta et al. (2020) identified eight challenges to teacher education, ranging from reclaiming an intellectually rigorous conception of teaching to re-engaging with the politics of education. I believe that we need to address all these challenges if we want to renew and sustain what Phelan (2022) described as "a sense of *educational* possibility" (p. 23). However, in this article, I would like to focus specifically on the challenge #5 regarding the politics of language and culture in teacher education.

The article is organized into four sections. First, I present an overview of the challenges to ITE in our time of increasing social and economic inequality, massive displacement of people, xenophobia, and physical and epistemological violence. In the second section, I tackle the challenge of the politics of language and culture in ITE. Since the *multilingual turn* in language education (May, 2013), we have seen greater awareness and recognition of the crucial roles of languages in students' academic achievement and civic participation. Among the researchers of language awareness, there is a growing interest in multilingualism as a principle of equity, diversity and inclusion, and as a pedagogical approach to respecting and fully utilizing minoritized students' linguistic repertoires (Shapiro, 2024). This is reflected in the recently adopted label *Critical Multilingual Language Awareness* (CMLA), which maintains that "multilingualism must be an integral focus of language awareness theory and instructional practice in educational systems characterized by rapidly increasing linguistic diversity as a result of unprecedented population mobility" (Cummins, 2023, p. 561).

In the third section of the article, I contribute to the ongoing scholarly discussions of CMLA by introducing the concept of *Emotional Geography of Languages* (EGL). My conceptualization of EGL is grounded in three distinct yet potentially overlapping areas: the *affective turn* in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, the *spatial turn* in education, and Indigenous views of land-people relationality. In brief, an emotional geography of languages recognizes how people's connections to specific places influence their sense of identity, as well as how transnationally mobile individuals carry a history of emotional experiences with places, languages, and cultures. This perspective also entails recognizing how emotions and identities interact to help individuals create, sustain, or end relationships. Furthermore, EGL acknowledges the deep emotional attachment people often feel toward their mother tongue(s). Finally, it calls for a critical examination of policies that encourage learning state-mandated languages for practical reasons while potentially undermining the value of mother tongues and heritage languages. In the concluding section of the article, I demonstrate how the EGL framework can enhance critical multilingual language awareness among teacher candidates during their initial teacher education programs. It is expected

that, upon graduation, these candidates will teach with such awareness in diverse settings, where many multilingual students use English as an additional language or dialect.

I write this article from my perspective as a former EFL student, a former ESL teacher, and a current teacher educator. After living, learning, and teaching in diverse linguistic and cultural settings, I now work at a publicly funded university in Canada, where I primarily teach courses in the TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) program. My current research focuses on areas such as critical literacy, second language writing, and language teachers' professional learning. I grew up in Bangladesh and pursued graduate studies in my native country, the USA, and Canada. I immigrated to Canada as an adult, and my mother tongue is neither of the country's official languages—English and French. The university where I currently teach is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people, an Indigenous community (referred to in Canada as a First Nation). As a result, my understanding of the topics discussed in this article is largely shaped by North American scholarship. However, in considering the readership of *TESOL in Context*, I recognize many parallels between the Canadian and Australian contexts. Both countries are multicultural and multilingual, serving as major destinations for global human migration. Additionally, both countries are committed to reconciliation with their Indigenous peoples, though significant challenges remain.

In the field of teaching English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D), both Canada and Australia are striving to implement more culturally relevant and equitable pedagogical practices. For instance, in Australia, language teachers working with Aboriginal students are encouraged to exhibit exemplary practices and support an educational culture that values and promotes respectful and reciprocal cross-cultural relationships while teaching English to Aboriginal learners (ACTA, 2015). Similar to Canada, Indigenous languages and Aboriginal English hold a distinct and significant place in Australia's national linguistic landscape (Oliver et al., 2016). However, within the complex linguistic environments, colonialism and capitalism continue to hinder efforts to build the solidarity needed for decolonizing Indigenous-settler relations. All learners from a settler background, including newcomers, need explicit instruction and conceptual tools to recognize how they benefit from colonial systems (Shin, 2022). Thus, while I write from a predominantly Canadian perspective, I hope the discussions that follow will encourage readers to reflect on their own contexts and consider how global and historical forces may shape local policies and practices—whether overtly or covertly.

Initial teacher education: A brief overview

There is a growing consensus that a well-trained professional teaching force is essential for improving the quality of education, driving social change, and ensuring economic sustainability. Yet, many observers are worried that teaching is in a state of impending crisis due to problems

recruiting, training and retaining highly qualified teachers (Robinson, 2017). In Australia, the challenges of teacher recruitment and retention, particularly in disadvantaged schools, have worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural and remote schools continue to struggle to attract teachers, while many urban schools also face severe shortages, prompting the need for urgent policy interventions. Indigenous communities are especially affected, experiencing high vacancy rates and difficulty in finding qualified teachers (McPherson & Lampert, 2025). Hence, it is difficult to overstate the crucial role of teacher education in our contemporary time. But what does "teacher education" mean? For many, it means gaining knowledge and skills necessary for teaching that occurs prior to starting formal teaching. For others, teacher education means both preparation for teaching and continuing professional learning occurring throughout one's teaching career. Thus, one popular conceptualization of teacher education is a binary of pre-service and in-service components. In this conceptualization, a clear line between pre- and in-service components of a teacher's career is imagined, based primarily on temporality.

However, compartmentalizing teachers' education from a temporal perspective may be problematic because many teachers around the world start teaching without a formal teacher education credential, and they may participate in teacher education programs while teaching or after gaining a significant amount of classroom teaching experience. Therefore, the term "initial teacher education" is used in this article to refer to programs of education that train and prepare individuals for professional work as teachers. In the context of language teacher education, and more specifically, English language teacher education, programs of ITE encompass a range of offerings that may last only a few weeks (e.g., the Cambridge CELTA) or three-four years (e.g., a bachelor's degree with a teaching specialization). In some contexts, a graduate degree such as MA in TESOL can be an initial training for language teachers. In recognition of the diversity in programming around the world, I agree with Maggioli's (2023) definition of ITE as "an endeavour where veterans and novices co-build new meanings about teaching and learning, for the benefit of the profession" (p. xvi).

In the field of language teacher education (LTE), Wallace's (1991) framework of three models has been a cornerstone for analysing and debating theory, research, and pedagogy over the past four decades. These models include the craft model, the applied science model, and the reflective model. In the craft model, effective teaching is seen as the application of techniques used by expert teachers. Therefore, the trainee teacher is expected to take on the role of an apprentice and acquire knowledge and skills from experienced teachers. In the applied science model, effective teaching involves the application of scientific knowledge to classroom practice. This model assumes that there is a body of scientific knowledge about content and pedagogy, which teachers must master to become effective educators. Finally, the reflective model maintains that teachers' professional learning is an ongoing journey, which becomes successful through intentional reflection on one's practice.

One critique of the traditional models of LTE including Wallace's (1991) topology is that they view teacher development as mastering *stable competencies*. However, recent research has shown that teachers' professional competencies are personally, socially and situationally determined (Blmeke & Kaiser, 2017). While Wallace's typology has remained meaningful (as effective teachers need classroom skills, content knowledge, and reflection), one of its criticisms is that the models promote stability and predictability in teachers' learning and development. As Cook (2013) argued, Wallace's models were meant:

> to focus inwards, advocating how teachers should orient towards the task of teaching, through classroom techniques, academic knowledge or introspection, rather than to focus outwards considering current instabilities in both the subject matter and student requirements and how they might impact on teachers. (p. 15)

It is therefore important for ITE to embrace "instabilities" and look "outwards," as Cook (2013) suggested. Most language learners today are not aiming for a fixed set of language proficiencies. Given the dynamic contexts of language use, predefined and stable proficiencies may not equip learners to meet the communicative demands of rapidly changing contexts. For this reason, LTE must acknowledge the fluid nature of language, as seen in the increasing acceptance of code-switching and translanguaging practices among multilingual speakers. As Leung (2022) observed, the fluidity demonstrated in multilingual students' language practices often eludes the proficiency descriptors of conventional language teaching and assessment programs. In other words, LTE curricula and pedagogies need to shift from stability to fluidity, from one-dimensionality to multiplicity. This shift is essential because traditional approaches to language education are undergoing a profound transformation. As Larsen-Freeman (2023) noted, the global context of language education is clearly in flux, impacted by the legacies of colonization and racism, the push for inclusion and decolonization, the ongoing effects of the global pandemic, and the displacement of populations fleeing conflict, economic hardship, and climate change. In the face of such radical changes, ITE curricula and pedagogies need to develop teachers' disposition and skills to adapt to the changing needs of diverse students. This may be possible when teachers' professional competencies are viewed and nurtured from personal, social, historical and situational perspectives.

Language awareness, multilingualism, and ITE in our changing times

Like many other countries, Australia has implemented various policies to enhance its ITE programs. In 2016, the federal government introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) as a gatekeeping mechanism for students registering as a graduate teacher. One of LANTITE's primary goals was to address concerns about teacher quality, with the expectation that new admission and graduation criteria would help select higher-quality candidates

for teacher education programs. However, Barnes and Cross's (2018) analysis showed that this policy initiative had minimal impact on broader teacher education reforms. The underlying message of the policy was that the quality of teacher education programs is secondary to the need for candidates with specific knowledge and skills (e.g., literacy and numeracy) to ensure high-quality teaching in Australian classrooms. Consequently, a teacher's potential success, as well as the success of their students, was assessed before they even enter an ITE program. If this was the case, then what would be the significance and contribution of the ITE programs (Barnes & Cross, 2018)?

Some observers have noted that the challenges in initial teacher education are multifaceted and complex (Hardy et al., 2020), and the politicized focus on teacher preparation and the ongoing push for reforms show no signs of diminishing in the near future (Anthony et al., 2016). Recognizing such complexities, Biesta et al. (2020) urged stakeholders interested in teacher education to explore new questions and adopt innovative approaches to better align principles, theories, and practices in the field. They outlined eight key challenges for teacher education. In this article, I focus specifically on the challenge #5, which wants us to "engage strongly with the politics of language and culture in teaching and teacher education across diverse educational contexts" (p. 457).

One way of addressing this challenge is to look at the politics of language and culture through the lens of multilingualism. As a communicative practice for individuals using more than one language, multilingualism has a long history. However, greater social and institutional acceptance of multilingualism was enhanced by the increased mobility of people and advancement of communication technologies. Aronin and Singleton (2008) discussed several distinguishing features of historical and contemporary multilingualism; and Cenoz (2013, p. 4) clustered these features into three main areas:

- Geographical: In comparison with the past, multilingualism is not limited to geographically close languages or to specific border areas or trade routes. It is a more global phenomenon spread over different parts of the world.
- Social: Multilingualism is no longer associated with specific social strata, professions, or rituals. It is increasingly spread across different social classes, professions, and sociocultural activities.
- Medium: In the past, multilingual communication was often limited to writing, and mail was slow. In the 21st century, because of the Internet, multilingual communication is multimodal and instantaneous. (Cenoz, 2013, p. 4)

Since the turn of the new century, various fields of language studies and language teaching have witnessed an increasing research attention to multilingualism (Duff, 2015; Siemund, 2023). Fields of study that have a specific goal of teaching a particular language have also embraced

multilingualism. For example, TESOL International Association (2004) published a position statement, in which it mentioned that:

> Although TESOL's mission is to advance excellence in English language teaching, TESOL values and encourages multilingualism in all learners at every age and level. As research shows, multilingual capabilities have positive effects on development and learning. TESOL supports and encourages programs that foster skills in first and additional languages.

It appears that the multilingual turn has become a part of the critical and progressive movement in education, although its materialization is debatable. Not only language teachers but also content-area teachers need to re-think how to understand the roles of languages in students' learning, development and well-being. They need to pay greater attention to the language-related assumptions that underpin curricular policies and pedagogical practices (Meier, 2017).

Although interest in multilingualism research is on the rise, there are several contradictions, especially in Applied Linguistics and TESOL when it comes to the question of language status and hierarchies. Sugiharto (2015) argued that, as an intellectual movement, the contemporary multilingual turn has not recognized vibrant multilingual realities that existed for a long time around the world. Others have argued that the multilingual turn sometimes aligns itself with neoliberal multiculturalism, which uncritically promotes diversity, plurality, individualism, competition and cosmopolitanism, while perpetuating colour-blindness, racism, and dominance of English (Kubota, 2016). Another contradiction which is relevant for my purpose here is that despite the recognition of a multilingual reality in society, TESOL and second language acquisition research "continue[s] to treat the acquisition of an additional language (most often, English) as an ideally hermetic process uncontaminated by knowledge and use of one's other languages" (May, 2014, p. 2).

Despite these contradictions and ironies, there is great potential in recognizing the roles of multiple languages and acting upon language-based identities for educational and social transformation. Multilingualism can be effectively translated into a pedagogical approach to achieving social justice (Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 2009). In other words, multilingualism is not only about language teaching and learning, but also about greater social and cultural equity and civic participation. It supports the general principles of equity, diversity and inclusion by promoting pedagogical approaches to respecting and fully utilizing minoritized students' linguistic repertoires. This is reflected in the recently adopted label Critical Multilingual Language Awareness (CMLA), which maintains that "multilingualism must be an integral focus of language awareness theory and instructional practice in educational systems characterized by rapidly increasing linguistic diversity as a result of unprecedented population mobility" (Cummins, 2023, p. 561).

Prasad and Lory (2020) presented a framework for CMLA that emphasizes the central role of power in shaping language practices. In their model, power serves as the core domain that interconnects and influences the four other domains: cognitive, affective, performance, and social. This framework highlights how linguistic interactions are embedded within broader power structures. The authors not only centre power in creating multilingual language awareness but also draw our attention to language in the plural and the people who use the languages. As Prasad and Lory (2020) said, a "focus on language users rather than exclusively on languages purposefully draws attention to the embodied ways individuals use their expansive communicative repertoires to make meaning as well as to the ways that linguistic hierarchies have been socially constructed" (pp. 809-810). However, we must recognize that "overturning a prevalent deficit perspective to multilingualism and, correspondingly, multilingual users is undeniably a Herculean effort" and an innovative approach to initial teacher education can be a good start to this effort (De Costa & Van Gorp, 2023, p. 557).

A sustained focus on CMLA through innovative approaches to initial teacher education is important because although multilingualism as a social fact is increasingly present in many contexts across the world, teaching practices have remained consistently monolingual. In her keynote address at ACTA Conference, de Jong (2018) "caution[ed] against the monolingual bias in preservice teacher preparation and argue[d] for the mandate for developing a multilingual stance for all teachers of EAL students" (p. 5). I believe that de Jong's warning is well-founded, and that teacher education curricula and pedagogies must foster this multilingual stance, which is essential for shifting teachers' mindsets and attitudes towards language, teaching, and learning. As Kramsch (2022) noted, when teachers have a multilingual mindset, their "attention shifts from language as product to language as process" (p. 470). This mindset may not be developed simply by encouraging teachers to use more than one language or frequent code-switching in the classroom. A multilingual mindset may be nurtured by directing teachers' attention from what their students lack to what they already have (French, 2019; Putjata et al., 2022). This shift is likely helpful to take a critical stance towards hierarchies and power imbalances among languages. Another reason why ITE should be a starting point for the development of CMLA and a multilingual mindset is that "whether teachers see multilingualism as a resource (or not) depends less on their mono- or multilingualism than on their biographical experiences in education" (Putjata et al., 2022, p. 400). Following this line of argument, I recommend that teacher candidates be provided with opportunities to develop a multilingual mindset by raising their CMLA through personal and educational experiences in ITE programs.

Against the backdrop of ITE's historical neglect of the multilingual paradigm (Portolés & Martí, 2020), I propose that LTE programs adopt a specific stance—through innovative curricular policies and pedagogical practices—aimed at developing teacher candidates' CMLA. A strong foundation of CMLA can prepare novice teachers to navigate diverse contexts of teaching and learning and address the discrepancy between increasing presence of multilingualism in society

and an apparent resistance to it in the classroom. As part of such preparation, we need an expanding conceptualization of CMLA because ITE programs are very diverse not only from logistical and material, but also from epistemological perspectives. For this conceptual expansion, I now turn to my proposal for understanding CMLA from the vantage point of an emotional geography of languages.

The emotional geography of languages

The concept of the Emotional Geography of Languages (EGL) was initially developed as a critique of Canada's official bilingualism and its implications for the complex nature of "Canadian identity." A key criticism of the official bilingualism, which is limited to English and French, is that it marginalizes other languages spoken by Canadians, particularly those of allophone speakers—Canadians whose first language is neither English nor French. While the policy of official bilingualism offers many benefits, it has also contributed to the erosion of Indigenous and heritage languages, along with the cultural diversity of numerous communities, both Indigenous and settler. In response to these concerns, the EGL framework was proposed to explore how individuals' connections to places and languages influence their identity formation. This framework also underscored the importance of recognizing and valuing people's emotional attachments to their mother tongues (Ahmed, 2024a). Before exploring how the concept of EGL can inform the development of CMLA in initial teacher education contexts, I briefly highlight three areas of work that have provided the foundation for the EGL framework.

The affective turn

Like many disciplines in humanities and the social sciences, Applied Linguistics and TESOL have witnessed a strong interest in affect and emotions. This emerging scholarly interest is qualitatively different from a historically dominant approach to emotion research in language studies, which was based primarily on positive psychology. The new wave of interest is critical in nature, and it draws from diverse contemporary areas of work, including cultural studies, feminism, neuroscience, anthropology, and literary studies. Applied linguists such as Swain (2013) and Benesch (2012) discussed why it is not a good idea to try to separate emotion and cognition in language education. Thus, the new wave of emotion research has rejected the Cartesian dualism of mind and body, of reason and emotion. It has also distanced itself from a historically dominant focus on cognitivism in applied linguistics research.

As an emerging interdisciplinary body of research, the affective turn in Applied Linguistics and TESOL has considerable internal diversity. Despite some theoretical and methodological disagreements, there is a consensus about the critical role of emotions in language teaching and

learning. Prior (2019, p. 524) identified four areas of general agreement among applied linguists interested in the affective turn:

> 1. *Emotions are not just intra-psychological or biophysiological phenomena*. They are also fundamentally social and contextual. Emotions are shaped by our languages, cultures, world views, personal histories, social relationships, and affiliations.
> 2. *Emotions are communicated, displayed, and responded to through a range of multisemiotic resources*.
> 3. *Emotions are actively managed and regulated*. Language learners/users and teachers regularly attend and respond to their communicative environments and feeling states (and the participation and feeling states of others) in ways that support some emotions and suppress others.
> 4. *Emotions take objects/objects take emotions*. Emotions are about, directed at particular people, things, places, times, activities, occasions, for example. (italics original)

Prior (2019) concluded that emotions have always been important in the field of language education, remain essential today, and will continue to be so in the future. Emotions are deeply connected to identity, agency, and power—the three core elements in language teaching and learning in an increasingly multilingual world. Emotions are important not only for those who learn second/additional languages (Plonsky et al., 2022), but also for those who teach the languages (Gkonou et al., 2020). For language teachers, it is a double-responsibility to be emotion-literate for understanding their students' as well as their own emotions. I therefore agree with White (2018) that "we need further research which can illuminate the multiple, dynamic and situated nature of emotional experiences in and outside of language classrooms—including at different stages of those processes—and their significance in the lives of language learners" (p. 30).

The spatial turn

The spatial turn in social theory has emphasized "the transient and social nature of space, that space is a construct *not* a given" (Gulson & Symes, 2007, p. 2). One way of understanding this turn is to contrast space with place. Places are generally fixed; they have names, and they appear in maps. Space, on the other hand, lacks a clear boundary; it is amorphous and hard to pin down. In this sense, place is objective, but space is subjective. Place is static, but space is created anew with every (inter)subjective encounter. So, if place is a noun, space is more like a verb (Gulson & Symes, 2007). In the field of education, the spatial turn has inspired important works related to the location of the school, the where of the students' life, the architecture of school buildings, and how all these intersect with teaching and learning. The spatial turn has also encouraged educators and education researchers to consider that places and spaces of education are not neutral; they are

shaped by such factors as power dynamics, identities, and socio-economic forces (Rißler et al., 2024). For example, Helfenbein (2021) discussed how various spatial concepts can be used to analyse curriculum, educational research, and the lived experiences of students and teachers. An important dimension of Helfenbein's analysis is how a critical geographical approach to education can shed light on the path to equity and social justice by examining the spatial distribution of resources, opportunities and outcomes.

The field of language education has focused predominantly on a particular kind of place: the classroom. However, in recent years, the focus has expanded outside the classroom (Murray & Lamb, 2018). For example, White and Bown (2018) used data from North American students who participated in a study abroad program in Russia. The authors' analysis showed how the students' emotional experiences were central to their construction of space in which language learning opportunities unfolded. Reviewing the contemporary literature on the spatial turn in humanities and the social sciences and on its implications for language education, Higgins (2017) highlighted the intersection of space, place and language and how such intersection can help us theorize language practices, including the teaching and learning of additional languages, in new ways. She concluded that "as migration and border crossing continues to become a norm for much of the world, spatial perspectives can play a growing role in understanding changing language practices and in developing pedagogical practices that benefit translocal, multilingual speakers" (Higgins, 2017, pp. 113-114). Overall, these studies illustrate the growing recognition of the importance of spaces beyond the classroom in shaping language learning experiences and how such spaces are socio-culturally constructed across a linguistically diverse world.

Indigenous views of land-people relationality

Indigenous perspectives on land-people relationality emphasize a profound and reciprocal connection between humans and the land. The land sustains life, and all living beings ultimately return to it. In Kimmerer's (2021) words, humans eventually become humus. Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have shown how to live in harmony with and nurture a deep love for the land. Consequently, land holds a central place in education within many Indigenous traditions. For example, Simpson (2017) discussed how education "comes from being enveloped by land" (p. 154). In her Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg tradition of education, Simpson (2017, p. 155) wrote, "the *context is the curriculum*, and land, Aki, is the context" (italics original). In such an understanding of people's connection to land, it is impossible to view land as property to be exploited for personal gains. Instead, land is viewed as a living entity with agency, spirituality, and reciprocity. We are custodians rather than owners of the land. Like other creatures, we have our own responsibilities to maintain harmony in nature. When we believe that we are connected with the land through mutual respect and co-existence, it is possible to extend human kinship to the land. Thus, the Indigenous perspectives on land-people relationality challenge colonial

perspectives on land ownership and advocate, instead, for a stewardship of the land that honours ancestral ties and promotes co-existence and sustainability (Coulthard, 2014).

By way of summarizing the three areas of work briefly mentioned above, I want to use the concept of *topophilia*, proposed by the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1974). He coined the term to illustrate how people's affective bonds with places contribute to the formation of their values, beliefs, motivations, and identities. He suggested that topophilia is fundamental to understanding how people experience the world and the roles of place in human well-being and identity formation that are linked to places, memories, histories, and cultural practices. In Tuan's own words, "The term *topophilia* couples sentiment with place…. Environment may not be the direct cause of topophilia but environment provides the sensory stimuli, which as perceived images lend shape to our joys and ideals" (p. 113). Topophilia proves to be an important concept because even with increasing global mobility, many social scientists agree that people's identities today are fundamentally connected to specific places, and their bonds with these places carry strong emotional significance (Boccagni & Baldassar, 2015; Easthope, 2009; Glaveanu & Womersley, 2021).

The discussion above highlights how the affective turn, the spatial turn, and Indigenous perspectives on land-people relationality necessitate a rethinking of language awareness. Place-based identities are becoming increasingly significant in the field of language education. In contrast to earlier beliefs that dislocation forced people to sever ties with their original places, cultures, and languages; new patterns of mobility—both international and within nation-states—along with advances in communication technologies, the globalization of trade and commerce, and the growing acceptance of transnational identities, have enabled individuals to create new identities while keeping their earlier ones (De Fina & Perrino, 2013). For this reason, in our contemporary time, people's strategic use of multiple languages—often linked to multiple identities—calls for a reassessment of the previously dominant "one-nation, one-language" ideology that has shaped language education curricula worldwide (Ahmed, 2024b).

Today's multilingual social reality and its contradictions in educational contexts bring us back to Biesta et al.'s (2020) challenge to address the politics of language and culture in teaching and teacher education. To respond to this challenge, we need to expand the contemporary work on critical multilingual language awareness. Drawing insights from the affective turn, the spatial turn, and Indigenous perspectives on land-people relationality, I believe that an emotional geography of languages can serve as a productive conceptual framework to inform the curricula and pedagogies of initial teacher education. An emotional geography of languages should consist of:

a) awareness of how people's relations to places influence their identity constructions;
b) attention to how transnationally mobile people carry with them a history of affective encounters with places, languages, and cultures;

> c) understanding of how affect and identity shape each other by enabling social actors to establish, maintain, or dissolve relationships;
> d) appreciation of the fact that people have a strong emotional attachment to their mother tongue(s); and
> e) interrogation of policies that promote instrumental motivation to learn state-mandated languages at the expense of mother tongues and heritage languages. (Ahmed, 2024a)

In short, an emotional geography of languages is expected to be a helpful conceptual tool to explore the close and distant emotional relationships people develop with languages and places and how these relationships impact their identity construction, particularly in contexts of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Conclusion, or hope for a transformative ITE

Teachers often say that working with diverse students is a challenging aspect of their work. As a result, the professional standards for teachers in many countries have emphasized the need to prepare teachers to support students from different backgrounds. Although teacher education policies and programs have increasingly emphasized diversity, research from various countries—including Australia, Canada, Korea, Sweden, and France—indicates that many teachers, including recent graduates, still find working with diverse students to be a complex and demanding task (Rowan et al., 2021). While diversity can be understood in many ways, here I am concerned with the linguistic aspect of diversity. Supporting multilingual learners for academic success and personal wellbeing must be a key goal not only of language teacher education but also for other areas of initial teacher education programs. This is important because children from many immigrant and Indigenous families work in an entirely new linguistic and cultural environment in their schools. If linguistic diversity is not nurtured through a multilingual approach to education, these children may "feel alienated from their families' primary emotional bases (e.g., their native land, heritage culture, and language)" (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2022, p. 319).

To effectively teach students from diverse backgrounds, teacher education programs have been tasked with developing graduate teachers' "knowledge of teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds" (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2022, p. 10). However, we need to ask: what is the nature of such knowledge and how can it be developed? Because teaching and learning are a complex endeavour and a teacher's pedagogical priorities may shift throughout their career trajectory, it is not wise to teach prospective teachers a set of strategies and ask them to apply these strategies universally in all contexts. I, therefore, recommend that ITE programs attempt to develop teachers' adaptive expertise, which will encourage them to see

professional competencies as personally, socially, and situationally determined (Blmeke & Kaiser, 2017), and thus to be contextually responsive and relevant.

One way of developing such adaptive expertise and contextually relevant pedagogical knowledge can be to incorporate a critical language awareness of the multilingual reality of today's world. Teacher candidates as well as teacher educators are likely to benefit from the concept of the emotional geography of languages because it sheds light on the complex multilingual ecology and how people, places and languages are interconnected in ways that have implications for identities, wellbeing, and education. When EGL is taken into consideration for developing critical multilingual language awareness, it can inform the curricula and pedagogies of ITE for responding to educational and societal needs of multilingual learners. In ITE contexts, EGL-informed CMLA can be nurtured by engaging teacher candidates in "multilingual identity texts" projects.

While there are many creative ways to incorporate EGL into the curriculum and pedagogies of ITE, here I focus specifically on the use of identity texts, which Cummins (2006) described as the written, spoken, or visual artifacts that students produce to represent their identity and experiences within a particular cultural or linguistic context. Identity texts can include personal narratives, artwork, poetry, or any other form of expression that reflects one's cultural and linguistic background. Cummins emphasized the importance of incorporating students' identity texts into curricula and instructional materials to respect their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, promote self-esteem, and enhance academic achievement. Opportunities to create identity texts are expected to enable multilingual speakers to "showcase their intellectual, linguistic, multimodal, and artistic talents, challenge the devaluation of identity that many linguistically diverse and other marginalized students experience in contexts where their home languages or varieties of language are not explicitly acknowledged as intellectual and cultural resources" (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 4).

In my work as a former ESL instructor in Toronto – a city known for its cultural and linguistic diversity, I was inspired to utilize identity texts as a response to the multilingual turn in language teaching, place-based education, and a call for home/heritage language maintenance. I was also encouraged by the growing recognition of transnationally mobile people's affective attachment to places and how such attachment has significant influence on their identity negotiation and the quality of their future attachment to new places (Barnawi & Ahmed, 2020). A focus on students' attachment to places - explored through identity texts - appeared to be a transformative pedagogical move because it enabled some students to trace their memories and post-memories and to imagine new possibilities in a new country. For example, a student with refugee experience created a visual narrative to illustrate her emotional attachments to people, places, institutions, and languages in three different countries (see Ahmed & Morgan, 2021 for details about this student's identity text). The outcome of this pedagogical intervention was in alignment with Choi and Slaughter's (2021) finding that "the use of identity texts can be used to explore the linguistic journey of learners and

the discourses and situational factors that have led them to their current dispositions towards language, language learning and identity" (p. 100). Upon reflection, I now believe that students' production of multilingual and multimodal identity texts may contribute to the creation of a pedagogical space where languages are not only learned but also creatively used to negotiate, construct, and affirm language- and place-based identities.

As education increasingly requires attention to diversity, CMLA can be developed and utilized in both language and content-area classrooms. Unfortunately, discussions of multilingualism and CMLA are usually centred around second/additional language education. The conceptual framework of EGL presented in this article has been meant to promote CMLA – through such activity as creating *multilingual identity texts* – in ITE programs for all subject areas, including additional language teaching. A critically reflexive way of teaching pre-service teachers to incorporate the principles of the emotional geography of languages can prepare them to practice such pedagogies in their own classroom once they enter the teaching profession. In this way, initial teacher education programs can address the challenge of engaging with the politics of language and culture in diverse educational contexts (Biesta et al., 2020). By asking teacher candidates to produce their own multilingual identity texts, teacher educators can resist the reproduction of the monolingual bias in teacher education. In turn, graduate teachers can utilize their EGL-informed CMLA as an overarching pedagogical principle in their work in contexts where monolingual practices may still be the norm. While the conceptual framework of the emotional geography of languages has been discussed primarily in the context of initial language teacher education, its relevance extends to the broader field of teacher education as well as in-service teacher development programs. Critical multilingual language awareness should be a fundamental part of all teachers' pedagogical knowledge base—not just for EAL/D teachers. The hope is that transformative changes will arise from teachers' advocacy and action for EGL-informed CMLA across diverse settings in Australia and beyond.

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