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Новоселецька С.В., Сімак К.В.,

Національний університет " Острозька академія", м. Острог

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AND CANADIAN MULTUCULTURALISM

У статті розглядаються специфіка викладання англійської мови як другої іноземної у контексті багатокультурності Канади. Підкреслюється значення інноваційних методик в організації індивідуального підходу та освітньої політики. Описується педагогічна майстерність викладача англійської мови у контексті міжкультурної комунікації.

Ключові слова: *багатокультурність, мовна політика, освітня політика,освіта багатокультурності, викладання англійської мови як другої іноземної, професійна діяльність.*

В статье рассматриваются специфика преподавания английского языка как второго иностранного в контексте многокультурности Канады. Подчеркивается значение инновационных методик в организации индивидуального подхода и образовательной политики. Описывается педагогическое мастерство преподавателя английского языка в контексте межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: *мультикультурализм, языковая политика, образовательная политика, мультикультурное образования, преподавания английского языка как второго иностранного, профессиональная деятельность.*

The article envisages teaching English as a second language in the context of multiculturalism in Canada. The value of innovative methods of teaching in terms of individualization and multicultural education policy are underlined. The professional skills of teacher of English as a second language in the context of cross-cultural communication are embraced.

Key words: *multiculturalism, language education, multicultural education, teaching English as a second language, professional background.*

This article is a collaborative initiative, and it reflects the authors' attempts to articulate the role of the ESL teaching profession and practice in Canadian multiculturalism. Recognizing ESL teachers' historical roles as agents of assimilation is that involves the promotion of more multilingual, intercultural

approaches to ESL. The article begins by considering the model of multiculturalism promoted by Canadian constitutional and legislative policies over the last decades and the key role the TESL field can and does play in this mandate. The article continues on to recommend expanding the potential stakeholders included as ESL students and professionals. This is not done to expand the profession so much as to enhance the professional ethics and responsibilities of the field.

The problem of teaching English as a second language in terms of multicultural education has been studied by various scholars and in different aspects (Burnaby [4], Kubota [10], Giroux [8], Coelho [5], Elden [6], Kim [9], Skeans [13], Thiessen [15], Morgan [12], Bramlett [3], Murdoch [11], etc.).

The topicality of the presented article is conditioned by the necessity to study interdisciplinary relations between multicultural education and language learning methodology.

The objective of this article is a systematic investigation of peculiar features of implementation of the English language studying in a modern multinational world.

It is claimed that teaching of English to non-native speakers differentiates from teaching other languages to non-native speakers. English is by virtue of its status as an international language and an official language in so many former British colonial states. This has led critics inside and outside our profession to recommend renaming our activities to, for example, multilingual or intercultural language education [5, p. 45 -60]

In particular, this article addresses the emerging relationship in Canada between the teaching of English as a second language (TESL) and multiculturalism. Canada has a long history of assimilation through education that has pressured or forced both Indigenous and new Canadians to forfeit their first

language and culture to function in the anglicized norms of the society [4, p. 70-92].

On the one hand, access to the official language - English - is nonetheless a key component of realizing equitable conditions for well-being in Canada. In this sense, English language education at once facilitates and undermines equity, and by encouraging the loss of first languages and cultures, potentially disadvantages people from full social and economic participation in Canada and global communities. Similarly, ESL holds an ambiguous place in Canadian diversity policies and practices.

On the other hand, drawing on Trudeau's 1971 statement to the House of Commons [1. p.646-669] on "Multiculturalism with a Bilingual Framework," identifies four aspects of Canadian multicultural policies that work together as checks and balances:

(a) Cultural retention – diversity;

(b) Cultural sharing – interculturalism;

(c) Equality of opportunity – equity;

(d) Individual freedom – choice.

In this respect, Canadian multiculturalism is not simply an attempt to protect cultural differences, but an active attempt to articulate and foster a distinct and unifying Canadian identity, citizenry, and system of social values.

Multiculturalism as Cross-Cultural Understanding (Interculturalism). Multidimensional political, social, cultural, and linguistic transformations are taking place in modern world. This new multiculturalism perspective that had been dominated by sociologists and political scientists began to provoke a scientific interest among scholars all over the world.

For instance, Lambert was aware early in his research on second language learning that language and culture were intimately connected. For Lambert, what was true for language should be equally applicable to culture. Hence, he argued that multiculturalism could be a reality that allowed the person to retain his or her

heritage culture while at the same time being culturally sophisticated in terms of the host society.

The survey of current research in the social sciences would indicate directions for social psychological theory, according to which one of the dramatic outgrowths of the extent to which heritage culture maintenance is motivated by economic and political subordination is the concept of affirmative action. As is the case in the above example relating to multiculturalism, this statement denies that the potential for formal recognition given to categories of people based on their race or culture; the focus is exclusively on the individual. Every individual in the theory has an equal opportunity and rewards are allocated on the basis of individual merit.

The effects of the socio-cultural context were investigated further in the recent decades in a series of articles. The conclusions to be drawn from these studies provide the theoretical rationale which is still central to mush of the subsequent research in this area, and is important as well as for later theoretical formulations.

Apart from that, the world famous scholars suggest that the commitment of Canada to cross-cultural sharing is an attempt to build national unity through rather than in spite of its commitment to diversity and cultural retention. Cross-cultural understanding arises from more than exposure to mere information; it is an active appreciation of the unique histories, world views, and perspectives of people of diverse backgrounds. It arises from more than tolerance; it is a function of the active and respectful engagement of human beings across differences. In this respect, cross-cultural sharing is a precondition for cross-cultural understanding, and effective cross-cultural sharing depends on interculturalism.

In our opinion, interculturalism is distinct from multiculturalism, the mere presence of multiple cultures in a particular group or society. Moreover, it includes the development of cultural creativity, that is, of hybrid, unique cultural

alternatives arising from knowledge of two or more cultures. Such intercultural creativity is the fruit of meta-cultural awareness, that is, the awareness that our experience is conditioned in a culturally-and historically-specified world view. Cross-disciplinary research exists on various dimensions of interculturalism, ranging from intercultural identity formation [3, p. 67-84], to intercultural communication.

In a similar vein, the responsibility as TESL professionals is to challenge the commodification and exploitation of ESL students, teachers, and public programs by governments in the service of profits and commercial interests. Like Canadian citizenship, global citizenship increasingly calls for multilingual, multicultural abilities and unique educational programs to cultivate them.

We came to a logical conclusion that teachers need to be sensitive to these students' cultural differences and their need to sustain these cultural differences while gaining appreciation and understanding of the broader Canadian context. Besides, the professional responsibilities of ESL/SESD educators have shifted significantly in the last decades from serving as agents of assimilation and integration to promoting equity, diversity, and Canadian multiculturalism. This has extended ESL teachers' professional responsibilities from the restricted domain of English-language studies to broader concerns with multilingualism, multiculturalism, first-language and cultural maintenance, and the promotion of equity, diversity, and anti-racism through education.

Effective English as a Second Language learning strategy. Taking into consideration statistics according to the 2006 Census, one in five Canadians was born elsewhere and came to Canada as an immigrant. [14] Canada Statistics also reported that most immigrants do not speak either of Canada's official languages as their mother tongue; therefore the attention of linguists is drawn to effectiveness of teaching English as a Second Language. This is even more related to the areas that attract large numbers of immigrants. For example:

- Over 40% of Toronto District School Board students have a mother tongue other than English.

- In Montreal, 34% of students speak a language other than English at home.

- In the Vancouver school district, 61% of students speak a language other than English at home.

The research has shown that many of these immigrant ESL children are well-prepared to meet the demands of the Canada's schools and go on to follow successful educational pathways. For example, young immigrants are more likely to attend university than their Canadian-born counterparts, [11, p.12-20] while immigrants for whom English is a second language show especially high rates of university attendance [11, p. 25-30].

Despite these successes, many immigrant students are faced with literacy challenges. According to data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a wide-scale survey of 15-year-old students in more than 40 countries, immigrant students in Canada scored significantly lower than their Canadian-born counterparts on literacy assessments (see Figure 1)[15].

Figure 1: PISA Reading Scores of Immigrant and Canadian-born 15-year-olds

Source: Canada Statistics and OECD, Programme for International Student Assessment (2010).

For some immigrant groups, literacy is just one of a host of difficulties that contribute to poor academic results. A recent study commissioned by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada examined the educational pathways and academic performance of students who do not speak

English at home and who live in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver—Canada's main immigrant destinations.

The report, titled Educational Pathways and Academic Performance of Youth of Immigrant Origin: Comparing Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, reveals large differences among different groups of immigrants. For example:

✓ Chinese-speaking immigrant youth tend to do as well (and, often better) than Canadian-born youth in terms of high-school graduation rates, overall grades and participation in pre-university courses.

✓ Meanwhile, Spanish-, Creole- or Vietnamese-speaking immigrant students were shown to perform well below their Canadian-born counterparts on all three of these measures.

In our research we had studied the peculiarities of TESL according to curricula of some Canadian universities that provide multinational education for international students, such as University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Memorial University of Newfoundland. As a result of our investigation, we came into understanding that using specific pedagogical approach in terms of methods of teaching English as a Second Language and understanding the academic trajectories of ESL students indicated that effective teaching strategies for ESL students – a flexible, varied approach was more successful that a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

As a result of collaborative work, we would like to introduce some applicable methods that are of significant use in the multicultural Canadian society. They are as following:

Collaborative reading

Systematic phonics instruction

Multimedia-assisted learning

The application of this level of **collaborative reading** technique is carried out by students work on different cooperative activities, including creative writing, peer reading, identification of major elements in a story, summarizing of stories and story retelling, and activities geared toward practice of basic reading skills (e.g., spelling, decoding, and vocabulary).

In **systematic phonics** instructions, learners are taught how to read and write using the correspondences between letters and the sounds they represent. The goal of phonics instruction is to help beginner readers understand how letters are linked to sounds to form letter-sound correspondences. Guided reading is a strategy to help students develop their reading skills in which the teacher provides support for small groups of readers as they learn to use various reading strategies (e.g., letter and sound relationships, context clues, word structure).

A number of effective **multimedia-assisted learning** interventions have been reported in the literature. Some of those used with ESL immigrant students include incidental word learning through the use of close-captioned television; audio taped or read-along instructional materials; computer programs for reading and writing (e.g., the Fast ForWord program; word processing).

The conclusions to be drawn are the importance of teaching and learning of English as a second language in the realization of Canadian multiculturalism. ESL teachers can profoundly affect students' views of their first languages and cultures, and thereby can affect whether they pursue multilingual, intercultural outcomes or subtractive assimilation. In the service of equity, ESL education avails new immigrants, refugees, and international students of an official language of Canada and associated opportunities. Therefore, to our understanding, it is important to clarify TESL's role in the broader context of Canada's vision of itself as a multicultural state. TESL's role in the four aspects or principles of Canadian multiculturalism can be conceived in the following terms.

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Notes

T*I* referring to *Teaching:*

ESL: English as a Second Language (commonly used in Canada);

ElL: English as an International Language;

EFL: English as a Foreign Language;