Multilingualism, English and 21st century skills

Michael Carrier
British Council
Multilingualism is more than language

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart. “

*Nelson Mandela*

“Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von der eigenen.

[Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own]

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

"In the knowledge society of the 21st century, language competence and intercultural understanding are not optional extras, they are an essential part of being a citizen"

*The Languages Company*
"I think I do present a bit of a different personality when I'm speaking in English .......when I'm speaking in Japanese, I really have to think about all the things, what's the proper style...and try to adjust myself to the identities" (Akira)

“I think in both languages, English and Bengali, together they make me truly me”

"And sometimes I say to myself, Oh my God, she's so rude...and in fact it's because I'm used to the English way of talking and sometimes when I go back to France, in the supermarkets, for example, I say to myself 'they are so rude' because they never say 'sorry' etc" (Laure)

Multilingual identities in a global city, David Block
Global English intersects with Multilingualism

Our English aim:

“...more widespread and better quality teaching, learning and assessment of English worldwide.”

We work with:

• 1.5 billion learners
• 11.4m teachers of English
• 150 ministries of education
English changes lives....

- **Access to Education** - increasing demand for English-medium schools, widening access to higher education

- **Employability** - many jobs in the commercial sector now require good English skills

- **Social mobility** - English is seen as an access route to the middle classes and social/geographical mobility

*English Next – David Graddol*
Supporting language diversity:
• Committed to principles of the Barcelona Accord
• Encouraging internal staff to develop FL skills
• Multilingualism as a competitive advantage for young people
• Sharing economic & cultural advantages

Partnering with MFL sector:
• EUNIC languages group, EUNIC members, EFNIL, IOL, ECML
• Aiming for joint research, events, publications
• Encouraging research into language learning & cultural competence
Contributing to the language education debate

Shared issues across Language Education

- Languages at Primary School
- Technology in language classrooms
- Teacher development
- Promoting Multilingualism in society
- Languages for the migrant population
- Issues of English dominance eg over-eager English in early years’ education
- Danger of monoglot Anglophones

Influencing the policymakers:

- Build sustainable change through policy influence
- Encourage debate on key issues
- Influence systemic change in key areas: eg virtual learning; lifelong learning;
- Sponsor policy research and publication series on language education & policy
- Convene policy dialogues on language education issues
21st century skills

- **Ways of thinking**
  - Creativity & innovation
  - Critical thinking, problem solving, decision making
  - Learning to learn - curiosity

- **Ways of working**
  - Communication
  - Collaboration

- **Tools for working**
  - Information literacy
  - ICT literacy

- **Living in the world**
  - Citizenship – local and global
  - Lifelong learning
  - Cultural awareness and competence

- **And:**

- **Multilingual language proficiency**

*Education 3.0 - A new vision of learning:*

“as an activity not a place, open to new people with new ideas, of learners “pulling” learning toward themselves rather than teachers “pushing” learning out”

*Michael Stevenson*
Language & culture

“between the grammar of my language and its expression in audible speech lies the filter of the social system in which I live”

*Peter Farb*

“The only way to understand the world view of another culture is through its language”

*Sapir-Whorf*

Culture or culture?

**Big C Culture:**
- Achievement culture

**Little C culture:**
- Behavioural culture

*B. Tomalin & S. Stempleski*

*Cultural awareness*

The 5Cs of Culture

- Cultural knowledge
- Cultural behaviour
- Cultural values & attitudes
- Cultural preferences
- Cultural adaptation

The 5th Language Skill:
- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Writing
- Culture
Handheld Learning: "this movement holds the seeds of a more sophisticated, more effective, more modern way of teaching, training and preparing our youth for a new world"

Robert Safran

1:1 Learning:

5m Intel Classmates in
- Portugal
- Venezuela
- Palestine
- Uruguay
- Argentina etc

Plus:
- 4m OLPCs
International Teacher CPD Framework

- A whole career support system
- Development pathways for all teachers
- A training plan for all stages
- Digital resources
- Global networks and communities
- Innovative ways to reach out to all teachers

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<td>3 Developing</td>
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<td>6 Specialist</td>
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The cultural role of English teachers

• We are making people multilingual by teaching English

• We are making learners aware of language difference

• We should make learners more *sustainably* multilingual, by
  - Teaching language with links to its cultural context
  - Teaching language with explicit cultural reference work in texts
  - Teaching 21st century skills & communication strategies along with language content

• We should teach more about language concepts, the nature of language itself

• We should create more links between ELT and MFL to share experience and achieve shared goals