

The struggle to decolonize English in school curricula

Ruanni Tupas

IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, London

Abstract

In this chapter, I attempt to introduce broad approaches to decolonizing English in school curricula. It makes the case for a much longer historical trajectory of such efforts, arguing that decolonizing efforts are not simply products of recent awakenings in academia about the need to decolonize power, knowledge and being. Scholars from all over the globe, since the formal ceding of power back to subjugated nations in the 1950s and 1960s, have called for decolonizing the curriculum, including the English language curriculum, in all levels of education, as part of nationalization or cultural indigenization projects aimed at taking ownership of the design of the colonised people's future. This chapter will feature four innovative intercultural and multilingual approaches to decolonizing English-centred curricula: *taking ownership of knowledge*, *reclaiming local knowledge*, *embedding English in bi/multilingualism*, and *deploying translingual pedagogy*.

Introduction

Much has been written about decolonizing curricula around the world (Charles, 2019; Subedi, 2013). There has also been ample work on decolonizing the lenses and research we mobilize in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, language policy and language education (Phyak, 2021; Hsu, 2015; Cushman, 2016; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Rubdy, 2015). However, curiously much less has so far been done to explore approaches in transforming the uses of English in curricula in early schooling (from kindergarten to high school) through the lens of

decolonization. The lower the grade levels are (kindergarten to primary school), the rarer to find published work which tackles the question of English as a colonial language in curricula and explores how it might be transformed through a decolonizing lens. It is for these reasons that this chapter attempts to assemble broad approaches to decolonizing English in early school curricula. The texts to be used come from different postcolonial contexts, but they share similar broad approaches to transforming the uses of English in school curricula. These approaches are: (a) taking ownership of knowledge, (b) reclaiming local knowledge, (c) embedding English in bi/multilingualism, and (d) deploying translingual pedagogy.

However, in discussing these approaches, I first construct my author positionality concerning decolonization and education in order to explain why I frame my discussion the way I do. I then discuss briefly why English as a colonial language remains central to decolonizing efforts in education today but frame the discussion in the context of global coloniality to assert the fact that countries which have not been formally colonized are now also embedded in colonial logics of policy-making and knowledge production. Scholars such as Escobar (2004), Grosfoguel (2006) and Tlosnanova and Mignolo (2009) alert us to extended logics of colonialism today which are embedded in international political relations and economies, such that countries like Thailand and Ethiopia which have not been subjected to direct colonial rule could be seen to be operating within the same logics of global coloniality. In this sense, while we bear in mind that each project of decolonizing English in school curricula “should be historically grounded” (López-Gopar, 2016, p. 195; see also Tuck and Young, 2012; Loomba, 1998), we nevertheless see similar broad approaches found in different curricular contexts because they all aim to take control of knowledge production and local practices in the teaching and learning of English which historically have been devalued or erased.

My positionality

I come from the Philippines, a country governed by Spain for 333 years, by the United States for around five decades, and by the Japanese during World War II. For much of the 20th century, however, Philippine education was essentially an American construction (Rafael, 2015). Spain governed through religion, but the US made education its centrepiece tool for the accomplishment of its benevolent assimilation policy. During the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) when thousands of Filipinos were killed or injured, American soldiers simultaneously built schools in towns where they were deployed, and English was the first subject to be taught (Constantino, 1970). After the war formally ended in 1902, colonial pacification took the form of ideological warfare, for example through the provision of universal basic education. English became the centrepiece language of instruction. It remained so until 1970s during which the ‘language wars’ erupted again which resulted in the implementation of bilingual education in English (in Mathematics and Science) and Pilipino (later renamed ‘Filipino’) (in all other subjects) (Tupas and Martin, 2017), although still essentially excluding all other Philippine languages from the education system.

Nevertheless, because of decades of colonial education, the status of English as the most symbolically powerful language of education remained unscathed, thus language ideologies embedded in educational practices and policies remained heavily favourable towards English and unwelcoming of Philippine multilingualism. Despite policies affirming the multilingual repertoires of Filipino pupils in recent years, English is still the most desired language in the country purportedly for social mobility and career opportunities (Salonga, 2015).

After the Philippines’ nominal independence in 1946, decolonizing efforts since the 1960s ensued, including the so-called nationalization of education, indigenization of

knowledge, and the rewriting of history from the perspective of ‘the Filipino people’ (Guillermo, 2003; Agoncillo & Alfonso, 1960). All these efforts, however, were being mobilized within neocolonial conditions because economic and political ties with the United States were never severed after ‘independence’ (Constantino, 1970). In academe, the infrastructure of knowledge production (textbook production, theory-building, circulation of ‘best practices’, etc.), remained controlled by institutions and people sited in global knowledge centres, including the United States (Pennycook, 2018; Gray, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Therefore, as an English language major and, later, as an educator, it has constantly been a struggle to be immersed in theories and practices produced by colonialism because they could not account for my multilingual realities.

To give one very specific example, the first undergraduate major course I taught was English phonology. The English sound became a key battleground of identity-making and ideological construction. What counted as the ‘correct’ transcription of an English sound was based on American rather than on Filipino pronunciation. As the teacher, I struggled to pronounce the sounds in the American way (because this was how ‘native speakers’ sounded) but they would end up sounding ‘Filipino’. Should my students transcribe the sounds as they heard them, or as they thought the sounds should be pronounced? We learned about the phoneme as a psychological reality but the ones that are produced out of it are the allophones or the actual sounds produced by the individual speakers themselves. This was three decades ago and in the context of my own institution at least, native speakerism was deemed unproblematic.

But such classroom experiences began to unsettle me. I felt that my being multilingual (I speak English and three Philippine languages) devalued or erased the manner by which I used and taught English. If I accepted transcriptions of localized English sounds, thus reflecting the influence of phonological systems of the different languages I speak, it would appear that

I was legitimizing so-called non-native sounds of English. I had to cling on to the psychological reality of ‘native’ English sounds and disregard my own multilingual production of these sounds, as well as those of my students’.

This discomfort slowly gained ideological clarity as similar struggles emerged in the teaching of syntax, history of English, and language teaching methodologies. The erasure or devaluation of the multilingual matrix within which my education and the education of my students occurred became a question of coloniality as the theories and sanctioned classroom practices we were expected to learn and perform respectively were all imported and, in fact, could be traced back to colonial education and the colonial history of the introduction of the discipline of linguistics and English language teaching in the Philippines. For more than two decades, therefore, my academic work has been centrally galvanized by my own colonized body and scholarly practice such that my scholarly undertakings, whether they be in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, language policy, geopolitics of knowledge production, literacy and development, or Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), the concern would always revolve around addressing ‘inequalities of multilingualism’ (Tupas, 2015) and how to decolonize and transform them. This chapter is fully aligned with my longstanding decolonizing agenda, training my lenses on English in school curricula.

Global coloniality and English in school curricula

Nevertheless, if projects of decolonization began several decades ago, why is it that there remains today an urgent need for “transforming the world by transforming the way people see it, feel it and act in it” (Tloasnanova & Mignolo, 2009, p. 131)? The broad intercultural answer to this by scholars of different orientations and approaches is unanimous: colonial structures and practices of everyday life *endure* (López-Gopar, 2016). This essentially means that the

colonial situation remains until today – thus the term ‘coloniality’ because it is colonialism without direct rule -- leading some scholars to contend that decolonization has in fact been “a myth” (Fasakin, 2021, p. 902). “We are a far cry from experiencing a post-colonial turn,” contends Sugiharto (2013, p. 165) in the context of Indonesia. In academia, there have been serious efforts at epistemic or knowledge decolonization. However, these have devalued structures and practices of coloniality as objects of inquiry in favour of frameworks which focused on the agentic and resistive responses of the colonized to colonial rule (Gonzalez, 1977; Vaish, 2005).

In schools, the common argument thus has been: yes, English was a colonial language but it can now be used to speak against the empire. While this may be true, it does not give the complete picture because it has shifted attention away from enduring structures of colonialism within which resistance through English is mobilized. Postcolonial struggles as practices of resistance by the colonized have been misinterpreted as a thing of the past (for example, see Vaish, 2005, in the case of India; Paterno, 2018, in the case of the Philippines). The presence of one does not necessarily negate the presence of the other; in other words, postcolonial struggles are mobilized within conditions of coloniality.

Thus, the most recent wave of decolonization is born out of the realization yet again of the durable presence of coloniality in our lives, except that this time the “notion of coloniality relates to the global multifaceted system of control and domination designed to succeed direct European colonialism in non-Western contexts” (Fasakin, 2021, p. 903). This means that countries which were not directly ruled by another country in the past now also contend with global coloniality because the same logics of colonialism operate in the mobilization of knowledge production, the global economy and international relations (Fasakin, 2021; Escobar, 2004). In the context of language education, these proxies take the form of global industry players in knowledge production and dissemination, thus the continuing privileging

of native speaker norms and rhetorics, as well as Western-drawn language teaching methodologies and cultural content (Hsu, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

For example, Gray (2002) describes “the phenomenon of the global coursebook – that genre of English language textbook which is produced in English-speaking countries and is designed for use as the core text in language classrooms around the world [which are]...highly wrought cultural constructs and carriers of cultural messages” (pp. 151-152). Global coursebook exemplars are the phenomenal success of the ELT books of Abbs and Freebairn (e.g., 1977; 1979) which “emphasize aspects of UK culture, at the expense, perhaps, of other countries’ cultures” (Rixon and Smith, 2012). In a more recent study, Soto-Molina & Méndez (2020) also alert us to recent textbooks around the world which “emphasize the image of the native speaker (man, white, heterosexual) in a superior relation or position to other interactants in dialogues” which “consolidate[s] certain deficient practices, prejudices and stereotypes while at the same time strengthening or weakening local or national awareness” (p. 13; see also Tupas, 2021, for curriculum development and teacher education in general).

English-centred school curricula in decolonizing projects

When direct colonial rule officially ended in one country after the other halfway through the 20th century, anti-colonial protests grew on the streets demanding the dismantling of economic, cultural and political structures of oppression linked with colonialism. The struggle, in different forms and approaches, took on one central issue: colonialism may have ended officially, but colonality endured. Colonialism, in this sense, refers to particular historical periods characterized by “the control by individuals or groups over the territory/behavior of other individuals and groups” (Horvath, 1972, p. 46), while colonality refers to present-day conditions and practices which can be traced back to colonialism. According to Maldonado-

Torres (2007), “coloniality survives colonialism” (p. 243). One can argue that colonialism is a thing of the past, but it “is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience” (p. 243). The economies needed to be nationalized in order to serve the needs of the masses rather than the needs of elites who benefitted from collusion with colonial powers. Political structures of governance were still very much colonial in nature to the extent that transfer of power occurred mainly between colonial rulers and the very small local elite, thus protests were likewise focused on opening up the political arena to marginalized voices and sectors in society.

In contexts of continuing direct rule, attempts to challenge systems of power in institutions such as the schools take on unique configurations because people and institutions responsible for the silencing and the dispossession of Indigenous communities continue to rule over their lands and everyday lives. Thus, decolonization cannot be viewed simply as a metaphor (Tuck and Yang, 2012) because the struggle is real and material in nature. Tuck and Yang assert that much of decolonization discourse has moved away from talking about real everyday struggles of people to reclaim their land and other possessions taken away from them (then and now) by their colonizers such that any movement for change becomes a decolonial act or agenda.

Therefore, while this chapter argues for the need to decolonize knowledge and knowledge production because histories were written through the lens of the colonizers, decolonizing education should be seen broadly as the attempt to challenge epistemologies of oppression *as part of* the broad agenda of dismantling all structures of coloniality in society. Epistemic or knowledge decolonization introduces new ways of thinking about the past and creating knowledge for the erstwhile subjugated people, but efforts along this line should not be disconnected from other efforts to help transform society.

It is in this context that the colonial language has been and remains central to the decolonization project both in the symbolic and material sense. This is especially so with English, not only because it has taken on international intercultural functions (Baker, 2009) but also because the world has become obsessed with it through the institutionalization of English-only and English as Medium of Instruction policies in educational systems (Dearden, 2015). Thus, English is central to the decolonization project in the symbolic sense because language is a battleground for identity-making, especially of the ‘nationalist’ kind. It also has real effects on people, functioning as a socially divisive language. It privileges those sectors proficient in the colonial language with multiple resources needed to uplift their economic and cultural well-being, while marginalizing all others (Salonga, 2015, p. 139).

Approaches to decolonizing English in school curricula

Thus, decolonizing English in school curricula should be seen, first, as part of a longer historical trajectory of the decolonizing project and, second, as a response to enduring conditions of coloniality. What then have been some broad approaches to decolonizing in English in school curricula? The following discussion will present four predominant ones: taking ownership of knowledge, reclaiming local knowledge, embedding English in bi/multilingualism, and deploying translingual pedagogy.

Taking ownership over curriculum development

First is the demand for ownership of the curriculum design itself. That is, curriculum should not be an overly centralized endeavour but, rather, should be designed with the participation of local stakeholders, such as teachers who are members of the local communities within

which the teaching of English occurs. Recognizing local expertise based on knowledge of local customs and traditions, as well as indigenous ways of teaching and learning, should lead to working *with* teachers and other local stakeholders in matters concerning curriculum development. Decades of top-down decision-making on what is best for non-Western local communities of teachers and learners have created an unequal production of knowledge where local classrooms are treated as sites of theoretical and methodological application, and never as sites of knowledge-making in the first place. Thus, taking back ownership over the content and process of curriculum development would presumably alter the production and use of problematic materials and methodologies respectively.

In the context of China where, according to Beckett and Guo (2007), the presence and the symbolic power of English from kindergarten through all levels of education are products of neocolonial engagements with the United States and United Kingdom, a paradigm shift must be initiated through the lens of glocalization in the curriculum “where local actors can claim their ownership of English and act as active agents to engage in different creative practices” (p. 127). Legitimizing local expertise in this sense means moving away from the harmful practices and ideologies of native-speakerism, monolingualist classroom teaching, and cultural imperialism. Thus, it is “important to validate China English, used for international communication, as one form of World English because Chinese learners are far more likely to use their English with non-native than with native speakers” (Guo and Beckett, 2007, p. 127).

Similarly, as part of its drive to take control of curricula which would not rely on external (read: British) expertise, a body of local educators from different Caribbean countries was convened to set syllabi and evaluate examinations in these countries (Bakker-Mitchell, 2002). This was because examinations were set and evaluated externally based on British standards, leading to an individual’s intellectual ability being “measured by that person’s performance at these external examinations” (p. 194). Putting together a local body of experts

was not undertaken simply because of the assumption that local educators are experts in their own professional and cultural contexts but, more importantly, because taking ownership over the content and practice of teaching and learning is a postcolonial assertion of independent decision-making.

Teachers, however, should not be the only stakeholders who should take control of teaching and learning. In the context of a decolonizing project in Oaxaca, Mexico, López-Gopar (2016) shows the collaborative and dialogic work of student teachers and children as authors and language subjects in the classroom. They co-author ‘identity texts’ (or materials and final projects which help them affirm their own identities) while “developing authentic syllabi rooted in the children’s lives and by bringing different languages, along with their emergent alphabetic literacies, into the classroom” (p. 171).

Reclaiming local knowledge

Consequently, reclaiming local knowledge (Shizha, 2013; Matemba & Lilemba, 2015; Sugiharto, 2013) is another key approach to decolonizing English in school curriculum. In recent years this has been encapsulated in the term *funds of knowledge* (Gonzales and Moll, 2002) which essentially refers to ignored or devalued knowledge which children bring along with them to the classroom (Thomson & Hall, 2008). Such knowledge is reclaimed in the classroom as a rich resource for teaching and learning. In the case of Singapore, Goh (2015) describes the countering of English-speaking elitism, for example, through the launch of a Confucianization movement with “the introduction of moral and religious knowledge education to combat individualism and westernization in the use of English language and mass consumption of western popular culture” (Goh, 2015, p. 147). TESOL Islamia (2022) is another example in this direction as it commits itself to affirming Islamic values and practices in the

teaching of English (see also the Islamisation of EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia by Sahlane and Pritchard, this volume). In the case of the Philippines, reclaiming local knowledge early on took the form of a ‘non-conformist’ approach to the postcolonial TESOL movement, where English language textbooks starting at primary education used “English to express Philippine realities and to use English in Philippine situations” (Gonzalez, 1977, p. 445). This was because immediately after independence from the United States in 1946, English language teaching (or TESOL) materials meant for elementary school children not only featured overwhelmingly American content, but were in fact originally written for international students entering the United States to study (Gonzalez, 1977, p. 444).

Concrete efforts are described by Ramanathan (2015) when she tracks the retrieval of community-based cultural content in the form of locally-recognizable everyday practices and landmarks through the medium of Gujarati in primary English classrooms in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Valdez (2020), on the other hand, details an anti-colonial classroom pedagogy which aims to trouble colonial discourses in the academic language development classes of primary students in the United States. Such a design consists of three key stages: (1) identify and examine colonial discourse, (2) engage in anti-colonial vocabulary activities, and (3) contest colonial discourse and writing. For example, to build an alternative vocabulary to the European conquest of American Indians in North America described as a ‘competition of things’, the word ‘exploitation’ and other significant words are introduced in PowerPoint slides with visuals, and then students engage in vocabulary games like word wizard, bingo, and acting out.

Embedding English in bi/multilingualism

A third approach is to acknowledge and affirm the multilingual nature and context of the teaching and learning of English. Multilingual classrooms within which English has operated as the main language have traditionally been treated as *monolingual* classrooms which have – theoretically or ideologically, of course -- no place for multilingualism, multiculturalism and intercultural interactions. However, ample research has shown how the teaching, learning and use of English can, in fact, be facilitated more effectively if multilingual and multicultural resources which both learners and students bring into the classroom are utilized as pedagogical resources (Ferguson, 2003). Beckett and Guo (2007) assert this position very clearly in the context of China:

There is no empirical evidence to support the assertion that English is best taught monolingually. Educators must abolish the harmful idea that students' first languages must be stamped out to ensure educational success. Educators need to recognise that students' first languages are an important component of their identity and a useful tool for thinking and learning (p. 125).

In vernacular-medium primary schools in India, the postcolonial response has been to develop bilingual strategies to teach English (Ramanathan, 2015). Textbooks, for example, shift between the use of a local language, for example Gujarati, and English, to scaffold students' learning of English. Gujarati is used for instructions to students on how to navigate intercultural activities in their English lessons; local names, landmarks and cultural practices are also incorporated into reading and other activities to provide local colour to the English lessons. All this is based on the assumption that Gujarati helps capture cultural nuances and local sensibilities which, in turn, increase students' motivation to learn English. This bilingual approach is clearly a decolonial approach to addressing the divisive nature of English language

learning in India. It must be pointed out that in general the “postcolonial Indian ground” (p. 207) which is split between English-medium and vernacular-medium systems follows “a class-based divide” (p. 207). Vernacular-medium schools cater to students who are less privileged socioeconomically and culturally, thus the learning of English requires strategic use of the bilingual approach with the end-view of addressing class-based learning gaps between English-medium- and vernacular-medium-educated students. The use of local languages in primary English language classrooms should prod us “into questioning what passes for ‘effective’ and ‘appropriate’ learning and teaching in west-based TESOL” (p. 208).

In the context of the Philippines, a similar approach has also been found to be effective in the teaching and learning of primary English in peripheral communities in the country. The longitudinal Lubuagan experiment which aimed to use the local language, Ilocano, in delivering formal literacies in formal basic education classrooms, including the English language classroom, has provided empirical evidence for the effective strategic use of the local language in teaching and learning (Walter & Dekker, 2011; Dumatog & Dekker, 2003). In fact, the use of the local language in the teaching and learning of English was found to have helped pupils perform better in national examinations than pupils who were taught English solely through the use of English as medium of instruction. The institutionalization of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in 2012, which was later incorporated into the revised basic education law requiring the use of the mother tongues in the early years of elementary education, used the Lubuagan experiment as one of the major sources of evidence for the need to move away from the colonial framework of education centred on the primacy of English as medium of instruction (Tupas & Martin, 2016).

Deploying translingual pedagogy

A fourth approach is the deployment of translingual pedagogy. This is essentially a multilingual-affirming approach to the teaching and learning of English, except that its conceptual framing is different from that of a bi/multilingual approach which essentially assumes the occurrence of separate languages and language varieties in the classroom. According to the translingual framework, teachers and students bring along with them not necessarily separate languages and language varieties, but a wide range of linguistic and communicative practices which cannot be reduced to accounting for the presence of individual languages and language varieties (Dowling & Krause, 2019; Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016). They are “part of one’s unique linguistic repertoire” (Portolés & Martí, 2017, p. 65). Students’ communicative repertoires are traditionally devalued in the classroom because they presumably indicate lack of competence in any of the languages used when, in fact, these repertoires help teachers and pupils accomplish tasks, thus showcasing their competence in facilitating effective communication. In many classrooms which teach or use English as a ‘foreign’ language, translanguaging is discouraged for fear of “cross-linguistic contamination, despite the fact that no research has proven the validity of that assumption” (Portolés & Martí, 2017, p. 70). While imperial linguistic and cultural borders have been constructed by colonialism in English classrooms, translingual practices help teachers and students create and navigate alternative spaces of learning and teaching where these constructed borders do not exist (Cushman, 2016). It is in this decolonial frame that translanguaging may be viewed as ‘resistance’ (de los Ríos & Seltzer, 2017, p. 60).

In some elementary English language classrooms in the Philippines, Canilao (2020) provides examples of translingual instructional practices of teachers for better comprehension of lesson content. The teachers draw on the multilingual repertoires of the communities where the local language, Bisaya, and the national language, Filipino, find their way into the formal classroom and integrate into the target language, English, in such a way that the instructional

practices mobilize a unified intermeshed communicative repertoire. No language in the communicative repertoire is identifiable according to a particular communicative function; rather, while languages are identifiable in form, they collectively perform a function or task. Canilao's (2019) own foray into translingual practices in the classroom has led her to a personal re-evaluation of her own approach to the teaching of English:

I used to focus on all errors and pour my efforts into correcting mistakes. I used to think that allowing them to use other varieties of English and languages would impede the learning process. Now, I wear a new set of lenses with an appreciation of students' resourceful attempts to enhance communication skills and an understanding of the collective process that "owning English" for a purpose entails (p. 8).

Translingual practices in K12 classrooms in the United States can similarly be framed as decolonizing strategies. In countries like the Philippines, the US is historically a colonizing country. Colonialism, however, also defines the subjugation of Indigenous peoples of the US by white occupiers except that the colonialists settled in the country rather than left it. "Until the 1970s," according to de los Ríos et al. (2019), "American Indian children were subjected to forced assimilation in English-only Americanization boarding schools wherein punitive, physically violent, and dehumanizing school practices were utilized in the name of teaching English" (p. 361). This monolingualist English-only approach to teaching and learning has persisted in US classrooms today, thus marginalizing minoritized students' rich multilinguistic competencies and framing them as linguistically and culturally deviant. Through a decolonizing lens, de los Ríos et al. (2019) propose that translanguaging be used in minoritized classrooms not only to scaffold the teaching, learning and/or use of English, but to promote

critical multilingual awareness which enables the pupils to reflect on their own linguistic practices and how these can be harnessed to their own advantage in the classroom. They urge teachers to ask what counts as language in the classroom beyond an understanding of language as a bounded and discrete entity, and extend the use of translanguaging to all minoritized students whose communicative repertoires continue to be devalued and, worse, mocked (p. 364).

López-Gopar (2016) describes in more detail how translingual pedagogy works, this time in the context of primary English classrooms in Oaxaca, Mexico. Student teachers and Indigenous children produce identity texts which are essentially original materials about families, animals and other entities within their own communities. Children are taught English words which are most likely to be seen and heard in everyday life and urged to use them in creating their multimodal stories which affirm, rather than mock, their cultural identities. These stories are written in ways that children find most comfortable, thus bilingual and/or trilingual use is allowed.

Conclusion

Monolingualist and deficit language ideologies continue to pervade postcolonial educational systems around world today (Ashraf, 2018), and this includes primary and secondary classrooms which use English as either the subject or the medium of instruction (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016). Structures and practices of coloniality pervade both the everyday life of speakers, as well as broader economic, political and cultural relations between people, institutions and countries. Decolonizing English in school curricula is and will always be a struggle, but it has operationalized various responses to these structures and practices through

four key overlapping efforts and approaches: *taking ownership of knowledge, reclaiming local knowledge, embedding English in bi/multilingualism, and deploying translingual pedagogy.*

Early in the paper, however, we have highlighted the need to locate such efforts within larger projects of decolonization. Being able to engage in these very critical and much needed efforts should not blind us to the enduring conditions of global coloniality even if such efforts are directed at addressing these conditions in the first place. At the centre of these decolonizing efforts remains the teaching, learning and use of English; that is, while we interrogate English and everything that it stands for in our lives by reorganizing our classroom practices, reconstituting our identities, and revaluing and incorporating local knowledge, a key aim is still supposedly to help the children learn English. In other words, decolonizing the uses of English in educational systems is unavoidably ironic, but commitment to social justice and equity issues will help us link our efforts in the classroom with our lives and that of our students which are deeply enmeshed in the messy and everyday struggles against ideologies and conditions of coloniality.

References

- Abbs, B., & Freebairn, I. (1977). *Starting Strategies: An integrated language course for beginners of English*. Harlow: Longman.
- Abbs, B., & Freebairn, I. (1979). *Building strategies: An integrated language course for learners of English* [Students' Book]. London: Longman.
- Agoncillo, T. A., & Alfonso, O. M. (1960). *A short history of the Filipino people*. University of the Philippines.
- Ashraf, H. (2018). Translingual practices and monoglot policy aspirations: A case study of Pakistan's plurilingual classrooms. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 19(1), 1-21.

- Baker, W. (2009). The cultures of English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(4), 567-592.
- Bakker-Mitchell, I. A. (2002). Foreign language education in post-colonial English speaking Caribbean. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 29(3), 192-202.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2002). *A geopolitics of academic writing*. PA, USA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (1995). The political economy of code choice in a “revolutionary society”: Tamil-English bilingualism in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. *Language in Society*, 24 (2), 187-212.
- Canilao, M. L. E. N. (2020). Foregrounding Philippine Englishes in fostering linguistic equality. *Asian Englishes*, 22(2), 195-215.
- Canilao, M. L. E. N. (2019). English–Mine, Yours, and Ours: Enabling all learners to own it for a purpose. *The English Connection*, 23 (4), 7-8.
- Charles, E. (2019). Decolonizing the curriculum. *Insights*, 32(1), 24.
- Constantino, R. (1970). The mis-education of the Filipino. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 1 (1), 20-36.
- Cushman, E. (2016). Translingual and decolonial approaches to meaning making. *College English*, 78(3), 234-242.
- Cummins, J. (1981). Empirical and theoretical underpinnings of bilingual education. *Journal of education*, 163(1), 16-29.
- Dearden, J. (2015). English as a medium of instruction-a growing global phenomenon. London: British Council. Retrieved on June 10, 2022, from https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/e484_emi_cover_option_3_final_web.pdf
- de los Ríos, C. V., Martinez, D. C., Musser, A. D., Canady, A., Camangian, P., & Quijada, P.

- D. (2019). Upending colonial practices: Toward repairing harm in English education. *Theory Into Practice*, 58(4), 359-367.
- de Los Ríos, C. V. & Seltzer, K. (2017). Translanguaging, coloniality, and English classrooms: An exploration of two bicoastal urban classrooms. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 55-76.
- Dowling, T. & Krause, L. (2019). 'Ndifuna i meaning yakhe': translingual morphology in English teaching in a South African township classroom. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 16(3), 205-225.
- Dumatog, R., & Dekker, D. (2003). *First language education in Lubuagan, Northern Philippines*. Retrieved January 12, 2021, from SIL Philippines: http://www-01.sil.org/asia/ldc/parallel_papers/dumatog_and_dekker.pdf
- Escobar, A. (2004). Beyond the Third World: imperial globality, global coloniality and anti-globalisation social movements. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(1), 207-230.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fasakin, A. (2021). The coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa: experiences from Nigeria. *Third World Quarterly*, 42(5), 902-921.
- Ferguson, G. (2003). Classroom code-switching in post-colonial contexts: Functions, attitudes and policies. In S. Makoni and U. Meinhof (eds.), *African and applied linguistics. AILA Volume Review*, 16. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Goh, D. P. S. (2015). Elite schools, postcolonial Chineseness and hegemonic masculinities in Singapore. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 36(1), 137-155.
- Gonzalez, A. (1976). Content in English language materials in the Philippines: A case study of cultural and linguistic emancipation. *Philippine Studies*, 24(4), 443-454.
- Gray, J. (2002). *The global coursebook in English language teaching*. In D. Block and D. Cameron, *Globalization and language teaching* (pp. 161-177). London: Routledge.

- Grosfoguel, R. (2006). World-Systems analysis in the context of transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality. *Postcolonial Studies to Decolonial Studies: Decolonizing Postcolonial Studies*, 29(2), 167-187.
- Guillermo, R. (2003). Exposition, critique and new directions for Pantayong Pananaw. *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, 3, 1-20.
- Guo, Y., & Beckett, G. H. (2007). The hegemony of English as a global language: Reclaiming local knowledge and culture in China. *Convergence*, 40(1-2), 117-131.
- Hsu, F. (2015). The coloniality of neoliberal English: The enduring structures of American colonial English instruction in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. *L2 Journal*, 7(3), 123-145.
- Horvath, R. J. (1972). A definition of colonialism. *Current Anthropology*, 13(1), 45-57.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). A postmethod perspective on English language teaching. *World Englishes*, 22(4), 539-550.
- Loomba, A. (1998). *Colonialism/postcolonialism*. USA and Canada: Routledge.
- López-Gopar, M. E. (2016). *Decolonizing primary English language teaching*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the coloniality of being. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3), 240-270.
- Matemba, Y. H. & Lilemba, J. M. (2015). Challenging the status quo: Reclaiming indigenous knowledge through Namibia's postcolonial education system. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 9(3), 159-174.
- Mazrui, A. (1997). The World Bank, the language question and the future of African education. *Race & Class*, 38(3), 35-48.
- Paterno, M. G. (2018). Anguish as mother tongue: English in a multilingual context. In I. Martin (ed.), *Reconceptualizing English education in a multilingual society* (pp. 67-

- 83). Singapore: Springer.
- Pennycook, A. (2018). Applied linguistics as epistemic assemblage. *AILA Review*, 31(1), 113-134.
- Portolés, L. & Martí, O. (2017). Translanguaging as a teaching resource in early language learning of English as an additional language (EAL). *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, 10(1), 61-77.
- Phyak, P. (2021). Epistemicide, deficit language ideology, and (de) coloniality in language education policy. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2021(267-268), 219-233.
- Rafael, V. L. (2015). The war of translation: Colonial education, American English, and Tagalog slang in the Philippines. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 74(2), 283-302.
- Ramanathan, V. (2015). Contesting the Raj's 'Divide and Rule' policies: Linguistic apartheid, unequal Englishes, and the postcolonial framework. In R. Tupas (ed.), *Unequal Englishes: The politics of Englishes today* (pp. 203-222). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Rixon, S. & Smith, R. (2012). The work of Brian Abbs and Ingrid Freebairn. *ELT Journal*, 66(3), 383-393.
- Rubdy, R. (2015). Unequal Englishes, the native speaker, and decolonization in TESOL. In *Unequal Englishes: Politics of Englishes today* (pp. 42-58). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Salonga, A. O. (2015). Performing gayness and English in an offshore call center industry. In *Unequal Englishes: The politics of Englishes today* (pp. 130-142). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Shizha, E. (2013). Reclaiming our indigenous voices: The problem with postcolonial Sub-

- Saharan African school curriculum. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*, 2(1), 1-18.
- Soto-Molina, J. E., & Méndez, P. (2020). Linguistic colonialism in the English language textbooks of multinational publishing houses. *HOW Journal*, 27(1), 11-28.
- Sterzuk, A. & Nelson, C. A. (2016). “Nobody told me they didn’t speak English!”: Teacher language views and student linguistic repertoires in Hutterite colony schools in Canada. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 15(6), 376-388.
- Sua, T. Y. (2013). Decolonization, educational language policy and nation building in plural societies: The development of Chinese education in Malaysia, 1950–1970. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33(1), 25-36.
- Subedi, B. (2013). Decolonizing the curriculum for global perspectives. *Educational Theory*, 63(6), 621-638.
- Sugiharto, S. (2013). Rethinking globalization, reclaiming the local: A post-colonial perspective of English language education in Indonesia. *The Indonesian Quarterly*, 41(3), 148-166.
- Thomson, P. & Hall, C. (2008). Opportunities missed and/or thwarted? ‘Funds of knowledge’ meet the English national curriculum, *The Curriculum Journal*, 19(2), 87-103.
- Tlosnanova, M., & Mignolo, W. (2009). Global coloniality and the decolonial option. *Kult 6* (Special Issue: The Latin American decolonial option and its ramifications), Fall, 130-147.
- Tuck, E. & Yang, K.W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society*, 1(1), 1-40.
- TESOL Islamia (2022). Accessed from <https://www.tesolislamia.org/>, on July 21, 2022.
- Tupas, R. (2021). Afterword: *Who controls the production of knowledge?* Teacher

- empowerment in TESOL Teacher Education. In A. Ahmed & O. Barnawi (eds), *Mobility of knowledge, practice and pedagogy in TESOL Teacher Education*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64140-5_16
- Tupas, R. (2015). Inequalities of multilingualism: Challenges to mother tongue-based multilingual education. *Language and Education*, 29(2), 112-124.
- Tupas, R., & Martin, I. P. (2017). Bilingual and mother tongue-based multilingual education in the Philippines. In O. García, A. Lin, and S. May, *Bilingual and multilingual education, Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 247-258). Cham: Springer.
- Valdez, C. (2020). Disrupting colonial discourses: Anticolonial academic language development for the elementary classroom. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 22(1), 3-11.
- Vaish, V. (2005). A peripherist view of English as a language of decolonization in post-colonial India. *Language policy*, 4(2), 187-206.
- Walter, S. L. & Dekker, D. E. (2011). Mother tongue instruction in Lubuagan: A case study from the Philippines. *International Review of Education*, 57(5), 667-683.