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Second/Additional Language Teacher Professionalism – What is it?

Introduction

Perhaps it should be acknowledged immediately that second/additional language education provision for linguistic minority students within the EU is generally in need of further development and enhancement in terms of curriculum development, financial and material resourcing and teacher education. The sustained migration of people within and into the EU in the past twenty years has turned second/additional language education into a key issue in need of an urgent response in contemporary schooling education. This is a challenge fully noted by the Council of Europe (Fleming 2009). In this context, it is very likely that second/additional teaching, hitherto an area of curriculum provision that has suffered a Cinderella-like neglect, will begin to enjoy stronger policy support as well as to receive increasing scrutiny. This article on second/additional language teacher professionalism presents a dynamic, context-sensitive discipline-based view of teacher professionalism that has implications for teacher education and professional development.

Teaching in Context of Ethnolinguistic Diversity

The school and university student populations across Europe (and in many other world locations) are becoming increasingly ethnically and linguistically diverse. This diversity has been growing in recent years largely due to mobility of labour and movements of people for political and social reasons. Recent OECD data provide a useful snapshot of a consequence of this mobility in terms of the school populations in the countries surveyed; the Figure below shows percentages of 15-year-old students with migrant backgrounds (OECD 2009:67).
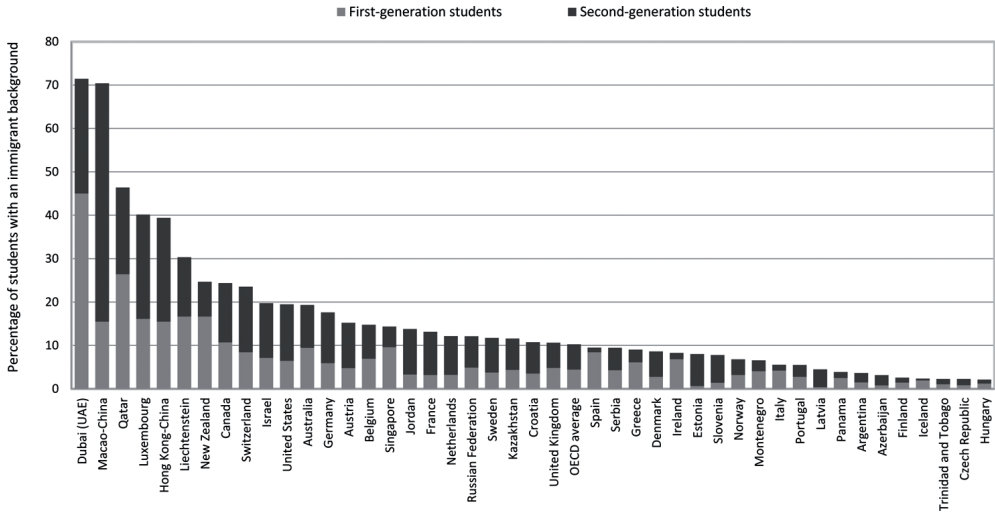
Figure 1. Percentages of 15-year-old students with an immigrant background (OECD 2009)

The OECD data, however, only show a partial picture as far as the EU countries are concerned because many of these countries also have linguistically diverse 'local' (non-immigrant) populations. The UK, for instance, has at least three other recognised indigenous national languages apart from English: Scottish Gaelic, Scots Language and Welsh. Similar issues of diversity can be found in countries such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain and Sweden. There is no reason to believe that ethnolingusitic diversity will disappear from our midst in the near future. If anything, the signs are that ethnolinguistic diversity is rapidly being recognised as a permanent feature of European societies.

So, in one way or another, educational professionals have to grapple with language issues at all levels of curriculum and pedagogy. In this context educational authorities across the EU have been asked to pay greater attention to the importance of second/additional language provision in schools and universities. At the same time we, as second/additional language professionals, should keep a watchful eye on the ways in which we respond to the demographic, linguistic and social changes. It is with this perspective in mind that I intend to discuss issues of second/additional teacher professionalism in this article. Drawing on my experience of working in the English as an Additional Language field in England as well as my collaborations with colleagues in European and Anglophone countries, I will try to sketch out the kinds of knowledge and expertise that should be taken into account when considering second/additional language teacher

professionalism. However, what counts as professionalism, as promoted by education authorities, can change over time in different policy environments. At the same time teaching involves the exercise of independent professional decision-making (a point to be expanded later in this discussion). I will therefore argue that we should recognise the importance of independent professionalism when considering initial/pre-service teacher education and continuous professional development. But first, I would like to clarify terminology.

I have been using the inelegant label 'second/additional language' up to this point. This is largely because I was keen to signal that there is a proliferation of labels in the field internationally. For instance, in the USA, language minority students from non-English speaking communities who are learning English are now referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs; previously ESL, English as a Second Language, students). In England the teaching provision of English language to adult students is referred to as ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages); for school aged students the preferred and widely used term is EAL (English as an Additional Language, up until the mid-1990s it was known as ESL). The term 'second language' is used in many European contexts. In a sense the different terminologies reflect the particular histories and experiences of the different countries, and perhaps it does not matter very much which of these terms is used, as long as the meaning is clear. That said, I do recognise that in the longer run a commonly recognised term can facilitate communication and dissemination of information both nationally and internationally. In the rest of this discussion I will adopt the term 'additional language' because much of what I have to say is drawn on my work in England where 'additional language' has become the preferred term for both ministry officials and the teaching profession working in schools.

Additional Language Teaching as a Profession

There are at least two broad views on the idea of a profession:
1. A profession is an occupation whose members are expected to possess high levels of specialist knowledge, expertise, commitment and trustworthiness.
2. A profession is an occupation that, with public support, has the autonomy of defining and controlling the substance of its own work.

The first foregrounds the 'knowledge and quality' dimensions of a profession as an occupation; the second highlights the power and status dimensions of professions in society. (See Doyle 1990; Evans 2010 for a further discussion.) These two views are of course not mutually exclusive. For

instance, many well-established professions such as medicine have characteristics of both – in the UK medical practitioners are expected to have very high levels of specialist knowledge and moral commitment to the well-being of their patients, and, as a profession, they also have a large say in what standards of medical practice should be, and what medical education should comprise and how it should be conducted. In general the more established a profession the stronger its claim of specialist expertise and trustworthiness, with the corollary that it would seek the autonomy, if not already achieved, to define and control the substance of its own work. With this perspective in mind I now turn to a consideration of what constitutes an appropriate professional expertise base for additional language teachers in ethnolinguistically diverse societies in contemporary Europe. The term 'expertise' is used here to refer to knowledge gained from formal education and training and experiential learning, as well as the capacity to convert this knowledge to professional practice.

Professional Expertise

The expertise base of additional language teaching is not monolithic and static. It can change over time. For instance, in the 1950s and 1960s when the Audio-lingual Method was popular, language teacher education prioritised knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, and classroom teaching methods were based on behaviourist principles. In practice teachers were expected to be able to work with and to develop audio (and written) language drill material and to operate individual student work stations (tape recorders for listening and oral practice) in language laboratories. From the late 1970s onwards, with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the main emphasis in teacher education has generally shifted to creating classroom opportunities for active use of language by students in individual and group activities that approximate to real-life tasks. In CLT although knowledge of grammar is still important, grammar is now mostly meant to be taught as part of meaningful communication; teachers are advised to foreground their knowledge of how language is actually used in real life in their teaching. Teachers are expected to be able to organise their teaching to maximise purposeful student language use through peer interaction. It would be accurate to say that this principle of 'meaningful language use' underpins much of the current conceptualisation of additional language teachers' professional knowledge and expertise (see Burns and Richards 2009; Leung & Creese 2008; Nunan 1991, 1999 for further discussions).

Additional language teachers, however, work in a range of different

educational contexts and systems. The discipline-specific professional expertise, as discussed above, is in fact only one aspect of their professional knowledge and expertise. The job-related knowledge and expertise of additional language teachers can vary according to context. Additional language teachers working on a refugee and asylum seekers reception programme, say, in Brussels, would need to have at least some knowledge of the students' ethnic background, social and educational experiences, their first/other languages, and the language expectations and educational entitlements of the local settlement schemes in an officially bilingual city. (This point will be further exemplified in a later section on 'independent professionalism'.) Likewise, additional language teachers working with linguistic minority students in schools across different EU locations have to address issues that are specific to their student populations as well as the local schooling education systems. I will now attempt to spell out the range of professional knowledge and expertise additional language teachers are likely to need in a context-sensitive way.

Disciplinary knowledge

The professional knowledge of additional language teachers draws on a number of disciplinary fields. These include branches of applied linguistics, formal linguistics, functional linguistics, sociolinguistics, (psychological and social) theories of knowing and learning, as well as literary studies concerned with genre, rhetoric and stylistics. The relative contributions of the different tributary disciplines to teacher professional knowledge are likely to change over time as perspectives and theories of additional language teaching develop. For instance, the onset of CLT has led to a reduction in the weight placed on knowledge of structural grammar and an increase in the importance of the knowledge of language form-meaning relationship. At the same time, developments within the tributary disciplines themselves can impact on the conceptualisation of teacher professional knowledge. For instance, the developments in functional linguistics in the past forty years have led to a wider knowledge base for grammar. From the point of view of day-to-day professional practice, the sources of disciplinary knowledge may not seem very important. However, a clear view of the tributary disciplinary knowledge is crucial in terms of curriculum design for initial teacher education and continuous professional development.

The following list comprises what I would regard as the core component areas of professional knowledge and their manifestations in everyday practice:

Disciplinary knowledge	Examples of classroom concerns
Structure features of additional language (formal and functional linguistics)	Vocabulary, spoken and written clause/sentence level grammar, pronunciation and intonation
Language form–meaning relationship (applied linguistics, functional linguistics, pragmatics)	Implicit meanings, metaphoric expressions, conventional rules of politeness and formality
Curriculum content-based language use (functional linguistics/genre studies)	Subject-specific uses of vocabulary and clause/sentence level grammar, patterns of information organisation; this aspect of professional knowledge is particularly important for additional language teachers involved in subject content-related teaching and in CLIL* classrooms
Additional language development in curriculum contexts (theories of language learning)	Practice drills of language forms (based on behaviourist learning approaches); meaningful use of focal language expressions and forms (based on theories of learning as naturalistic exposure and use)
Additional language assessment (theories of knowing and learning)	Summative assessment (often based on psychometric views of knowing and learning in the form of standardised tests); formative assessment (often based on social views of knowing and learning)
Multilingualism (applied linguistics, theories of knowing and learning)	Use of students' first/other languages to support additional and curriculum subject learning; support for students' first and/or other language development

*Content and Language Integrated Teaching and Learning.

These six component areas of professional knowledge, although presented here as distinct categories, are often called upon simultaneously in classroom activities. For instance, a teacher working with beginner stage language learners may wish to devise tasks that combine appropriate subject-related vocabulary learning with practice drill or naturalistic use, drawing on students' first/other language knowledge to assist understanding where possible. Of course, such teacher decision making does not happen in a

vacuum – collective professional experience suggests that teachers tend to adopt strategies and techniques that are likely to work in practice. For this reason the invocation of disciplinary knowledge is likely to be informed by teaching material and purpose, students' background experience, current learning needs and dispositions (as perceived by the teacher).

Knowledge of students' needs and dispositions

A one-size-fits-all approach to devising classroom tasks does not work well in classrooms where the students are from a range of diverse backgrounds with different languages and educational experiences, as most teachers would testify readily. With a knowledge of students' background experience (with particular reference to curriculum content and modes of learning in particular school/institutional contexts) and the situated curriculum expectations and demands in terms of language and subject learning, additional language teachers would be in a (better) position to fine-tune their teaching strategies and classroom tasks to promote students' learning (more) effectively. Seen in this light, knowing relevant aspects of students' background experience and current disposition is a key component in additional language teachers' professional knowledge. This knowledge is not static, it is student-related and therefore has to be revised and updated with each new cohort of students. Unless this knowledge is updated appropriately there is a potential danger that an initially good working knowledge of students can settle into a form of unhelpful universal 'truth'. Through professional experience and collective opinion over time, teachers can come to see students of a particular background as carriers of particular qualities; in England, for example, ethnic Chinese students tend to be seen as hard working and high achieving. This collective characterization is of course inaccurate for many individual students. (For a further discussion on totalising characterisation of an ethnic group see Archer and Francis 2005; for a more general discussion on this issue see Eraut 1992.) However, in classrooms where diversity is extensive and intensive (e.g. wide ranges of educational experiences, first and other language proficiencies, socio-cultural community backgrounds and so on), having a knowledge of students' backgrounds and current dispositions can create a huge challenge to a teachers' professional capacity to respond. At this point we need to consider the notion of pedagogic content knowledge.

Pedagogic content knowledge

A core responsibility in a teacher's professional work is to make new subject content understandable and learnable to students. It is generally expected that teachers should have the necessary communication repertoire to help students understand new information. In the popular folk depiction of good teaching, in the UK at any rate, a good deal of emphasis is placed on content-based teacher-fronted talk (often imagined to be given to an attentive class of students who shares common interests and aspirations). However powerful this popular idealised depiction may be, the reality for most teachers is that no single teaching strategy or technique would work for all topics and all students. This is particularly the case when working with increasingly diverse student populations. The choice of teaching strategies and the design of classroom tasks have to take account of what would work with particular groups of students. Shulman's (1986:9) notion of pedagogic content knowledge is particularly helpful here: 'Pedagogical content knowledge … includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult: the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics and lessons'. The work involved in analysing a piece of content information and developing an appropriate classroom teaching-learning activity to meet student needs converts disciplinary knowledge and knowledge of students into teaching repertoire. In the medium to long term, professional teaching expertise is made up of this capacity to identify the best match between the learning demands of subject content and supportive teaching in relation to students' needs and capacities at any given moment.

In developing their pedagogic content knowledge teachers can draw on research knowledge and professional experience of what works in relation to different topics and different groups of students. In the case of additional language teachers, given the wide range of language and curriculum content issues involved in their classroom work, pedagogic content knowledge can be a matter of on-going experimentation and evaluation in relation to each new cohort of students. For instance, in the teaching of English as an additional language, it is generally recognised that the definite article 'the' is very difficult to teach and learn because its use is governed by complex grammatical rules as well as a large number of idiomatic and cultural conventions. EAL teachers have to work out how best to approach the teaching of this grammar point: explicit teaching of the formal grammatical rules and conventions of use may be instructive for students whose first language shares similar structural features with English, but at-the-point-of-use error-correction and explanation might

be more helpful for other students whose first languages do not contain lexicalised articles. Additional language teachers working with subject content-based material, e.g. the water cycle, would need to decide how far the use of visual representation and students' first language would assist students' understanding of the content meaning and associated language expressions. A key consideration in this case would be students' background knowledge; those with comparable schooling experience in their first language are likely to be able to make sense of visual representations of the scientific concept of 'precipitation' and explanations in their first language. The student-sensitive nature of pedagogic content knowledge means that it is not the same as recipes – recommended ways of accomplishing a particular task. What works in one context with a particular group of students might not achieve the same outcome with another group. This capacity to continually devise student-focussed teaching strategies and classroom task, and to learn from the outcomes, is an important component of professional teaching expertise.[1]

So far the discussion has focussed on teacher professional expertise in terms of what individual teachers should know and be able to apply what they know to practice. However, teachers in our time tend to work in formal institutions such as schools, colleges and other organisations designed for students with specific educational needs. I will now turn to an important aspect of professional life in a work context – the management of institutional power and professional authority, particularly in situations where their distribution is unequal. An understanding of how power and authority operate in context can enhance a teacher's ability to develop effective work practices.

Management of power and authority

Schools and colleges are institutions with hierarchies of power and authority. The position of teachers within the hierarchy of any particular institution would depend on the social and national context involved. I will draw on the collective experience of EAL teachers in England in the past thirty years or so as an illustrative case. It is not assumed that the experience of EAL in England is representative of developments elsewhere. But the widely acknowledged need to improve additional language provision in school and in teacher education would suggest that the value of the ad-

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1. For further discussion on additional language teacher professional knowledge and expertise, see http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-teaching-and-learning/outline-guidance/pedagogy; http://www.tesol.org/advance-the-field/standards/tesol-ncate-standards-for-p-12-teacher-education-programs.

ditional language teaching (and by extension the contributions made by additional language teachers) is likely to be under-recognised. The recent Comenius-funded project 'European Core Curriculum for Teacher Education'[2] with special reference to migrant students signals the needs for further development across the EU generally. It is therefore all the more important to pay attention to this issue.

It would be accurate to say that at the present time EAL teaching has a very low status in terms of the official (and statutory) national curriculum. EAL is not a curriculum subject and is therefore not generally given any time-tabling allocation. There is no specialist pre-service teacher education provision for EAL; any qualified teacher (in any subject) can be appointed to work as an EAL teacher. There is no earmarked funding for specialist EAL teaching for schools. As a result, EAL provision is very patchy and uneven across the school system. In general EAL provision in England can best be described as 'thin' on the ground, and there are very few formally trained and qualified EAL teachers within the system. This situation has arisen largely because in the past thirty years or so the education ministry has tended to interpret the notion of racial/ethnic equality in education in terms of equal (same) treatment for all. This doctrine has been extended to students from EAL backgrounds, irrespective of their language needs. One of the consequences of this particular ideological regime is that EAL development is to be supported through a common curriculum in mainstream lessons (shared with all other students). When this mainstreaming doctrine was enforced rigorously in the 1990s and early 2000s specialist EAL teaching provision was frowned upon by official opinion (see Leung 2006, 2009a for further discussion). However, with increasing recognition of the futility of this one-size-fits-all approach and the increasing local financial and curricular autonomy in the current neo-liberal decentralisation of school education, individual schools can now introduce specialist EAL provision where they see fit. Even so, at this particular moment in time, EAL is far from enjoying the same recognition in curriculum terms as subjects such as English, Mathematics or French (as a Modern Language). In this situation of general low curriculum visibility and professional status, EAL teachers can find themselves being treated by colleagues as 'lesser' professionals. This 'lesser' professional standing can manifest itself at all levels of school life, but it is often felt very immediately when EAL teachers try to work collaboratively with other teachers. The following is an example, drawn from Creese (2005), when the EAL teacher appears to be regarded as being less than equal worth by the subject teacher.

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2. http://www.eucim-te.eu

The mainstreaming of EAL, as discussed above, has meant that EAL teachers are generally expected to do collaborative teaching in the subject classroom to support the English language and subject content learning of EAL students. According to the official curriculum guidance, the EAL and the subject teacher are meant to share common responsibility (e.g. Office for Standards in Education 2009). In this instance the EAL teacher and subject teacher are talking together before they go into a Geography lesson:

Key: EAL = EAL teacher; Subject = subject teacher; ( ) = contextual information

01 EAL	Have we finished the population pyramids in that class? 8 something, 8 B?
02 Subject	(Unclear sounds, subject teacher is half talking to herself about the need to find some work she is looking for)
03 EAL	Well, what is it in the end, can you remember?
04 Subject	Well yes, I know what I am doing.
05 EAL	Yeah, but what is it?
06 Subject	Interpretation of graphs.
07 EAL	Ah, right. Thanks. So we are still on that. I've found some slightly easier work that John … (Subject Teacher is doing other things)
08 EAL	Right I've found some easier work on population on pyramids that John prepared. Can I **go through it with my group**?
09 Subject	Yes
10 EAL	Because if it is interpretation then they will find it hard, yeah?

(Adapted from Creese, 2005:103, original emphasis)

At the start of this conversation, the EAL teacher does not seem to be getting the subject teacher's full attention. In Turn 4 the subject teacher sidesteps the EAL teacher' continuing questioning; it could be interpreted as a sign of the subject teacher pulling superior professional rank and, at the same time, a sign of low-key irritation. The EAL teacher prepares different work ('easier' work on the same topic) for the EAL students (Turns 7 and 8); this suggests that the two teachers have a division of labour, with the EAL teacher responsible for the EAL students only. Furthermore,

the EAL teacher seems to need permission from the subject teacher for use of different curriculum material, reflecting a sense of self-ascribed low(er) professional authority (see Creese 2005 for a full discussion on EAL teacher professional positions).

There are many other areas of professional life where the EAL teacher, in an institutional setting where EAL is not treated as a 'proper' subject, may experience a sense of deficit in terms of professional worth. When EAL teachers are not included in a regular subject department such as English, especially where they are an adjunct to a Special Educational Needs team (who themselves may occupy a marginal position in the school hierarchy), they often have little opportunity to participate in curriculum and policy discussions related to key EAL-related issues such as how to define EAL proficiency and which students to support.

It is difficult to see any ready-made answers or solutions to the kinds of issues discussed above because institutional power and professional authority, mediated by local work practices and individual personalities, can be played out very differently in different places. That said, collective professional experience suggests that engaging colleagues in informed and educative discussion on EAL matters in formal and informal school fora, allied with a visible and sustained effort to improve student learning through appropriate teaching strategies and material, can lead to positive medium-to-long term (re-)appraisal of EAL in a local school community. Individual EAL teachers' professional advancement to senior positions within a school's management structure can increase EAL's visibility. Professional actions outside the school setting can also help to raise the awareness of EAL within the education system. For instance, active participation in and contribution to academic and professional debates through national and international subject associations, trade unions and political parties can increase the pressure and momentum for change. All of this, however, is predicated on a commitment to a sense of independent professionalism.

Independent professionalism

If a key characteristic for a profession is an occupation whose members are expected to possess high levels of specialist knowledge, expertise, commitment and trustworthiness, then professionalism is the overall quality of a practitioner which displays all the components of a recognised profession. However, professionalism is not a natural phenomenon, and what counts as additional language teacher professionalism, at any one time, is best seen as a form of temporary consensus among key stakeholders. Again, take EAL in England as an example (se Figure 2 below).

Period	Policy view on language minority students in school	Subject name	Teacher knowledge/task
1950s–1970s	Foreigners/out-siders in society	English as a **Foreign/**Second Language	To **teach** English Language as system, exemplified by instances of use.
1980s–1990s	Language minorities, with equal social and educational entitlements	English as a **Second/**Additional Language	To **teach** English Language as system, linked to every-day use, **and to support** access to mainstream cur-riculum; to **promote** anti-racism, multiculturalism and equal opportunities.
2000s–	Equal citizens in an ethno-linguistically diverse society	English as an **Additional** Language	To **support** active participa-tion in mainstream curricu-lum and to raise achieve-ment.

Figure 2. Policy views on language minority students and English Language in school in England

Over the past fifty years or so there have been at least three conceptu-alisations of English Language regarding language minority students. In the period between the 1950s and the 1970s when large numbers of people from the former (British) colonies such as India and Uganda set-tled in the country, these new citizens were generally regarded by edu-cation policy as cultural and social outsiders, and English was seen as a foreign language for them. In keeping with the then dominant approach to teaching foreign languages, the teaching of English was primarily con-ceptualised as teaching its structure in terms of vocabulary and grammar. By the early 1980s, with the issues of equal opportunities and entitle-ments in an ethnolinguistically diverse society at the top of the domestic political agenda, English was beginning to be seen as part of the means to gain access to the mainstream curriculum. The EAL (still largely known as ESL at that time) teacher's task had now been broadened to support students' subject content learning and to champion their entitlements and rights on educational matters in school and in society. Accordingly, the EAL teacher's professional knowledge would now encompass both the structure of English and its use in curriculum subjects; EAL teaching

now meant collaborative working with subject teachers in mainstream classrooms (i.e. not separate EAL classes). In addition it was assumed that active advocacy of anti-racism and EAL students' rights formed part of EAL teachers' professionalism. In the past ten years or so, with a general perception that gross discrimination based on race, ethnic and language differences is no longer a key issue (particularly with reference to new students from the EU), official curriculum guidance and policy rhetoric have concentrated on promoting EAL teaching as part of general 'good practice' in subject-based teaching to promote curriculum-based achievement (e.g. DCSF 2009). The emphasis on teaching strategies that would enhance EAL students' hands-on engagement with curriculum tasks (and therefore the use of English) has been strengthened; there has been little mention of grammatical knowledge of English or minority students' social and political rights in discussion regarding EAL teacher professional knowledge and professionalism. (For further over views see Edwards and Redfern 1992; Mohan, Leung and Davison 2001; Leung 2009a.)

Thus the nature of additional language teachers' professional knowledge and professionalism can shift over time. The changes can be partly accounted for by developments in disciplinary knowledge, e.g. the advent of Communicative Language Teaching. Social and policy changes can also have a significant influence, as seen in the recent history of EAL in England. However, professional knowledge and professionalism are not entirely defined by external authorities and social forces. If that were the case, additional teachers would be nothing more than unquestioning operatives performing pre-specified tasks on a Fordist production line. The discussion on pedagogic content knowledge earlier suggests that there is an inherent aspect of teaching where independent decision-making is called for. This kind of decision-making is in fact part of independent professionalism. By this I mean a commitment to carefully reflect on one's own work, to examine the assumptions and the values embedded in the prevailing established practices, and to take action to effect change where appropriate (see Leung 2009b for a detailed discussion).

Additional language teachers, as professionals and as citizens, can (and do) make a wider contribution to education than simply implementing prevailing policy and recommended pedagogy. In many contemporary EU settings, additional language teachers work with students who occupy marginal positions in society. Their professional activities are almost unavoidably caught up with political decisions in education regarding differential allocation of resources, alternative models of curriculum and pedagogy, and graded recognition of achievements. Independent teacher professionalism does not mean an 'anti' stance on all existing ideas and

practices. Much would depend on the individual teacher's ideological and intellectual preferences. Independent professionalism can manifest itself in different ways and at different levels of one's professional work.

There are circumstances where teachers' (collective) independent professionalism argues for 'no change' in an existing policy or practice. For instance, in the past two years additional language teachers in England have been publicly arguing for protection of existing funding provision for vulnerable groups of students.[3] At the same time, it is sometimes the case that an existing or recommended curriculum framework or resource allocation system is in need of improvement or even abandonment, because it is not fit for purpose. At a local level, teachers can adapt and extend an inappropriate scheme of work or curriculum framework by devising additional teaching materials and classroom activities. For instance, in England the teaching of phonics (deciphering phonemic sounds in words) has been promoted by the official national curriculum as the most effective way of teaching young children to read in the past few years. The merits of this approach, when presented as the only route for learning to read, are regarded as highly questionable by some teachers and researchers, particularly for young EAL learners. Many teachers of EAL students have been supplementing the teaching of phonics with enhanced opportunities for talk and reading of 'whole' words in curriculum activities.[4] Beyond the level of classroom work, teachers can contribute to profession-wide debates by presenting their views and arguments, either for or against the *status quo*, in public discussion fora and professional journals. There is no doubt that this kind of activity to support a particular policy or course of action can perhaps be seen as part of wider participatory democracy. From the point of view of teacher professionalism though the important point is that all such actions should have recourse to discipline-based professional knowledge and situated knowledge of students needs.

Concluding remarks

Additional language teachers will play an increasingly important role in public education across the EU where ethnolinguistic diversity is fast becoming the norm in all school systems. Teacher professional knowledge can change over time, often in response to developments in disciplinary

3. http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2255
http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy
http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/naldic-reports-and-responses
4. For a background account of phonics in Anglophone countries, see Edwards' video clip, http://www.naldic.org.uk/

thinking and knowledge, and changing social and political climates. Additional language teachers' positions are, arguably, more complicated than that of the other subject teachers because their work draws on knowledge and research from a number of academic disciplines related to language teaching and learning. Their professionalism is at least partly shaped by the roles and tasks associated with particular political and curriculum requirements, the expectations of local (regional and/or national) language minority communities, the characteristics of their students, the work practices in their institutions, and the prevailing intellectual climate. All of this is further complexified by the fact that additional language teachers, just like everyone else in society, have their personal views and values on social and moral issues which can bear on their professional work. It is very important to recognise this complex nature of professional knowledge and professionalism when considering further developments in preservice education and continuous professional development for additional language teacher.

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