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Beyond Language Learning Instruction: Transformative Supports for Emergent Bilinguals and Educators

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Table of Contents

Foreword	xvi
Preface	xviii
Acknowledgment	xxxii

Section 1

Chapter 1

Going Beyond Academics: Connecting With the Whole Child	1
<i>Jatnna Acosta, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA</i>	

Chapter 2

Correct Pronunciation of Student Names: A Foundation for Language Learning	24
<i>Anita Bright, Portland State University, USA</i>	
<i>Christopher L. Cardiel, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, USA</i>	

Chapter 3

How to Be Interculturally Responsive to Your English Language Learners' Writing Needs	47
<i>Kathryn Jones, Capella University, USA</i>	
<i>Jason R. Mixon, San Augustine Independent School District, USA</i>	

Chapter 4

Preparing Preservice Teacher Candidates for Educating Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners	76
<i>Alpana Bhattacharya, Queens College, City University of New York, USA</i>	

Chapter 5

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners: A Review and Some Implications for Curriculum Design 104

Rifat Kamasak, Bahcesehir University, Turkey

Mustafa Ozbilgin, Brunel University, London, UK

Derin Atay, Bahcesehir University, Turkey

Chapter 6

Distributing Leadership Within Rural Schools: Sharing Responsibility for Diverse Student Needs 126

Huseyin Uysal, University of Florida, USA

Jessica Holloway, Deakin University, Australia

Chapter 7

Increasing Retention of Linguistically-Disadvantaged College Students in South Africa..... 146

Denise Carpenter Mussman, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Venicia F. McGhie, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Chapter 8

New Roles for ESP Lecturers: The Challenges of Training Professional Researchers in Romanian Higher Education..... 181

Mirela Bardi, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Laura-Mihaela Muresan, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Section 2

Chapter 9

Moving Towards Translanguaging: Service-Learning That Leverages Emerging Bilinguals' Linguistic Development..... 208

Mara R. Barbosa, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, USA

Chapter 10

Translanguaging Pedagogy to Support Bi/Multilingual Students' Language Learning in Social Studies: "How We Communicate Everything" 233

Matthew R. Deroo, University of Miami, USA

Chapter 11

Dynamics of Translanguaging Practices..... 262

Kimberly Ilosvay, University of Portland, USA

Section 3

Chapter 12

Preparing and Enriching Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Educators
Through Professional Development.....282

Alina Slapac, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Sujin Kim, George Mason University, USA

Sarah A. Coppersmith, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Chapter 13

Where Our Paths Crossed: Latina Teachers, Professional Development, and
Funds of Identity305

Minda Morren López, Texas State University, San Marcos, USA

Jane M. Saunders, Texas State University, San Marcos, USA

Chapter 14

Emergent Bilinguals in Rural Schools: Reframing Teacher Perceptions
Through Professional Development.....332

Elizabeth Hughes Karnes, Texas Woman's University, USA

Holly Hansen-Thomas, Texas Woman's University, USA

Compilation of References 362

About the Contributors 413

Index..... 419

Chapter 5

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners: A Review and Some Implications for Curriculum Design

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ABSTRACT

With reference to theory and research, this chapter discusses the hidden curriculum of language textbooks and other teaching materials where culture, gender, race, or other topics associated with equality, diversity, and representativeness were presented in biased ways. Hidden curriculum may describe, present, or elicit stereotypes and reproduce cultural, gender, and racial bias in subtle ways; sometimes even teachers may not notice what the curriculum refers to or they may perceive stereotyping as harmless. This makes sociolinguistic problems with regard to use of a purist and monolithic cultural content more salient than ever. Yet, the new sociolinguistic landscape of language teaching where changing needs of language learners might not be accurately represented in teaching materials require the revision of current curricula and pedagogical practices. Therefore, this chapter draws conclusions from empirical studies on the topic and provides some implications for teaching and materials design.

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INTRODUCTION

Hidden curriculum which contains culture-related elements such as ideologies, political agendas and preconceived notions on gender, age, religion, sexuality and nationality is considered a serious issue in language teaching materials (Hilliard, 2014; Matsuda, 2017). Language learning and teaching deals with cultural elements which are frequently mentioned in several teaching materials such as informative and descriptive texts, dialogues, writing tasks, lexical items, realia, visuals and audio recordings. Therefore, language teaching materials in which interactions between people, historical events or social practices of a country are mentioned through verbal and non-verbal (i.e. symbols, gestures) messages, might create prejudices on certain countries and nations or groups of people. What Pierre Bourdieu refers to as symbolic power (1991), which is imbued in the domination relationship that remains implicit in cultural and habitual practices. Such domination relationships lead to what Bourdieu calls symbolic violence, subjugation of a group which is culturally dominated in representation by words, images and ideas. Implicit curriculum is such an interesting site in which relations of cultural domination and subsequently symbolic violence could be studied.

Language does not only convey communicative information but it also plays several important roles from establishing international relationships between nations to maintaining social relationships among members of communities (Byram, 1997; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012; Rose & Galloway, 2019; Sharifian, 2013). From this point of view, the importance of learning a language (other than speakers' native languages) as a common means of communication has been increasing in recent years. In line, starting from the mid-1900s, English language has been widely used over a large geographical area as a language of communication. Although this view is contested with languages such as Chinese and Spanish being spoken rather widely, English language currently has 1.5 billion speakers of whom 370 million are speakers of English as a native language (Nelson, 2019). Therefore, content of language teaching materials in English containing hidden curriculum might be a powerful source of creating social interactions, thoughts and beliefs across English speaking domains (Byram, 2008; Chapelle, 2009). Indeed, English language has been a medium of cultural power and domination across a culturally diverse geography to which it has reached.

Yet, the presence of hidden curricula which go beyond factual information, such as imposing ideologies of individualism and materialism, representing target cultures superficially and overly positive, creating stereotypes and assumptions on gender, religion, sexuality, political beliefs and nationalities, is a problem not only in English teaching materials but also in other language teaching materials (i.e. French, German and Japanese) (Chapelle, 2009; Heinrich, 2005; Shin, Eslami, & Chen,

2011; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). Thus, examples from the other languages in relation to hidden curriculum are mentioned in this study. Although there has been a positive trend in recent years towards developing language curricula with more equal gender representations and multicultural content (Gray, 2010; Hilliard, 2014), transmitting cultural content in biased, unrealistic, superficial, or idealistic ways implicitly and unconsciously by hidden curriculum still causes concern on sociolinguists (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). Drawing on empirical studies, this study focuses on hidden curriculum of language teaching materials and we are discussing implications for teaching and materials design. The study begins with a brief overview of culture and language teaching relationship. Then, how culture is transmitted through language teaching materials where hidden curriculum occurs is explained and the transmission of culture in biased and subtle ways by reading and speaking elements of language teaching materials is exemplified. In doing so we reveal the relations of power and domination that remains implicit in artefacts of English language curricula. Finally, some implications, solutions and recommendations, and future research directions for teaching and materials design are discussed.

BACKGROUND

Culture and Language Teaching

Culture which is “characterised by its products, practices, and perspectives” (Yuen, 2011, p. 459) can be represented by elements such as economics, politics, history, fine arts, colours, buildings, well-known icons, food, religion, behaviour, transport and popular individuals we know and attribute meanings or values in our minds (Brody, 2003; Moran, 2001). Language teaching materials are full of communicative examples using the elements which represent culture; thus language teaching and culture are closely related and interactive. A considerable number of researchers (i.e. Byram & Risager, 1999; Chappelle, 2009; Sercu, 2010) recognise cultural context as a compulsory dimension as well as an integral part of language teaching since culture exists in everyday life and gives meaning and purpose to current and historical issues. Indeed, culture is represented both implicitly and explicitly in language teaching curricula which are included in audio and visual materials as well as textbooks where figures, images, dialogues, accents, and metaphorical explanations are used. Culture is also a site of power relations in which not only the meaning but also the symbolic value of ideas, words, issues and images are negotiated.

Different languages which brought together very diverse groups of people were designated as *lingua francas* of different eras in world history and were learnt and taught widely across the globe. Lingua franca is defined as “any use of [a particular

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners

language] among speakers of different first languages for whom this language is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7). In the context of lingua franca, “learning a language involves learning different aspects of the culture in which the language is used and sometimes also how other cultures are represented in that particular culture because language depicts culture of its own and other cultures too” (Yuen, 2011, p. 459). There are winners and losers in terms of reach and uptake of languages in their global expansion. While some languages have completely disappeared such as Sanskrit in spoken word, others have survived the test of time and cross-cultural encounters.

The global expansion of languages is driven not just by education, communication, international diplomacy, law and commerce related factors but also by historical events (i.e. colonisation). For example, coupled with the influence of colonisation, while Portuguese served as a lingua franca in the 15th and 16th centuries particularly in the Portuguese Empire, Africa, Asian coastal areas and Indian Ocean, French was the lingua franca (la francophonie) of diplomacy, main sport events (i.e. the Olympic games) and working language of many international organisations from the 17th century until the mid-20th century (Samarin, 1968). Language and colonisation have a long historical tie. While some scholars considered colonisation as a relationship of domination in access and ownership of resources such as land and riches of economic wealth, Fanon (1967; 1986) cautions about another form of colonisation, i.e. the colonisation of the mind, and he describes the colonised mind as a cultural phenomenon in which the colonised people are dominated by cultures, symbols, languages and value system of the coloniser through adoption or by force. Our study on the hidden curriculum sheds light on one way by which language of the dominant group or culture may serve to colonise, demarcate and drive out the ethnic, gender, sexuality of the other. By studying the hidden curricula, we explore the symbolic violence that hidden curricula subjects the subcultural groups which are culturally dissimilar or peripheral to the core cultural geography that shapes the hidden curricula.

Recently, English which has become the lingua franca for a variety of jobs and interactions as well as for educational purposes in an expansive geography (Breiteneder, 2009; Seidlhofer, Breiteneder, & Pitzl, 2006) has led to an emergent global English learning society with diverse cultural backgrounds (Canagarajah, 2011; Rose & Galloway, 2017; Sung, 2016; Yuen, 2011). According to Matsuda and Friedrich (2012), “linguistic, cultural and functional diversity associated with English today” (p. 17) requires learners to improve their intercultural communicative competence which is the ability “to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language” (Byram, 1997, p. 71). Yet, the cultural diversity among English speakers “challenges some of the fundamental assumptions of English language teaching” (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012, p. 7) and makes sociolinguistic

problems with regard to use of a purist and monolithic cultural content more salient than ever. Sercu (2010), who rationalises the integration of culture into English language curriculum, suggests that language curricula should include diverse cultural knowledge and practices in order to raise learners' intercultural awareness and enable learners to improve their intercultural communicating skills and adopt an interculturalist identity. In light of these suggestions, it can be concluded that selection of cultural content in curricula can have an impact on learners (Chapelle, 2009; Matsuda, 2017). That's why the hidden curricula, similar to other monocultural constructs, suffers from centre and periphery dynamics and relations of power and domination. The culture that informs the core cultural elements of the curricula would have a significant advantage and dominating force on the non-native learner, subjecting them to cultural domination and symbolic violence.

Among language teaching materials, reading and speaking materials still seem to "remain the most prevalent sources of teaching" (Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 155) and they have a major impact on how language is taught and learned (Gray, 2010; Matsuda, 2002; McKay, 2012). Therefore, a particular concern is given to the reading and speaking sections of language teaching materials where hidden curriculum can be found.

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

Hidden Curriculum in Reading Materials

Reading materials used for language teaching (i.e. textbooks) are seen as an agent of ideologies embedded in the official/prescribed curriculum (Widodo, 2016), a curriculum artefact transmitting ideas and ideologies to shape learners' identities (Awayed-Bishara, 2015) and a medium of instilling universal and community specific values in learners (Widodo, 2018). According to Chapelle (2009), language textbooks can spotlight the cultural elements of a target language superficially. The variety and depth of cultural content used in language curricula have been examined by researchers (Boers & Demecheleer, 2001; Cargile et al., 2006; McKay, 2003; Syrbe & Rose, 2018; Yuen, 2011). In an early study by Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991), French language textbooks in terms of culture representation was examined and an overly urban, positive, and unrealistic representation of French people and culture was observed. In line, Chapelle (2009) searched a hidden curriculum in nine French language teaching textbooks that were used in the northern United States by examining the number of instances that Canada as a part of *la francophonie* was mentioned. The author found that Canada appeared in fewer than seven percent of the sections of the books on average, yet appearance of Canadian content even dropped to three

percent in some books. Chapelle (2009) criticises overrepresentation of France and French culture in French language textbooks in the light of Ogden's argument (1981) which claims that French language books portray French "not just as the language of France, but sometimes, one feels, as the language of Paris alone" (p. 1).

In this vein, Valdman (2000) states that French is spoken in five different continents where "authentic communicative situations of real speakers" (Magnan & Walz, 2002) might occur, thus learners should be exposed to different sociolinguistic varieties of French. The connection between language, culture and power is studied with the notion of cultural capital by Pierre Bourdieu (2013), who argues that education, and use of language are permeate with resources and mechanisms of legitimation that allow people to navigate their life choices. Education and language skills play pivotal roles in establishment of fine taste and distinction which are revered in the French society. These core cultural assumptions once transmitted could devalue or demean to other cultural preferences.

Similarly, in studies of Japanese language course books, Kubota (2002) and Heinrich (2005) found that representations of Japanese people and culture were always ideal, positive and superior to other cultures. Kubota (2002) suggests that this situation may become a barrier for language learning and teaching by "alienating learners from discovering how to function effectively in real social contexts" (Kubota, 2002, p. 26).

The investigation of English language textbooks from the English as an International Language (EIL) perspective yielded similar results which have a potential of giving rise to prejudice or stereotype. Findings with regard to the materials which reflect stereotypes such as, the Russian spy, the modern Western woman, the oil rich Arab, the ideal American family, the starving African, pasta-eating Italian, and the civilised British are abundant in the textbooks (Deignan, 2003; Ilieva, 2000; Shin et al., 2011). Promoting some brands, and consumption patterns and imposing lifestyles and cultures as the scripts of modernity is also evident in English language textbooks. For example, Yuen (2011) investigated the representation of foreign cultures in two English language textbooks widely used in Hong Kong by a content analysis in which the texts and images related to foreign cultures were abstracted. The author found that the representation favoured the cultures of English-speaking countries with references to Hollywood movies and television programmes (i.e. Spider-Man), food (i.e. fish and chips), merchandise (i.e. Barbie), and print (i.e. Harry Potter and Time). The analysis also revealed that while customs, practices and persons from English speaking countries such as "Thanksgiving, America's national sport is baseball, Indian student who plays street games, New Zealand's successful recycling programmes, Stephen Hawkings" (Yuen, 2011, p. 462-464) were depicted frequently, those of the Asian and the African were under-represented. Furthermore,

even less frequently mentioned Asian or African cultural content was associated with poverty in regions by the sentences “computer lessons are not offered in the school in India and there is no tap in the village in Africa” (Yuen, 2011, p. 463).

Recently, Andarab (2015) analysed the representation of non-native and native speakers of English in course books. The researcher noted that the analysed course books represented non-native speakers of English in a highly biased way. For instance, in a *Global English* elementary course book, young women in United Arab Emirates were portrayed as people who just meet up at home when they get together. On the same page a typical gathering of Arabic women with scarves covering their hair was given. The stereotypical representation of Arabic young women was a biased over-generalisation of Arabic community. In the same book many one dimensional national representations were given of ‘typical’ families from all over the world. While a typical American family was presented as a pizza and fast food lover thus being associated with unhealthy dietary habits, Guatemalan families were presented as vegetable and organic food lovers, thus indicating a healthier food habit. In another unit, a group of poor African children were watching an old TV while sitting on the ground somewhere outdoors. Similarly, Baleghizadeh and Motahed (2010) examined the ideological context of American and British textbooks used in Iran. The researchers found that textbooks in general were target culture oriented and were not efficient in developing intercultural competence and cultural understanding among students. Therefore, Yuen (2011) concluded that the representation of foreign cultures which was dominated by English speaking countries did not reflect the status of EIL in the textbooks.

The characters that are used in many textbooks are often promoted and introduced “by a subtle emulation of Western culture and traditions” (McKay, 2012, p. 75). McKay (2012) presents a striking example of dialogue from a Japanese Ministry-approved textbook where Japanese are demonstrated as emulating and accepting Western culture:

Jim: *My parents take turns cooking and doing the dishes.*

Ryo: *My father never helps with the housework. He’s too tired after a long day’s work.*

Jim: *I think the Japanese work too much and too long.*

Ryo: *I think so too.*

(After a while)

Ryo: *But you know what? He started to learn cooking.*

Jim: *Does he cook well?*

Ryo: *Yes, he cooks very well. Everything is very very well-done.*

(Source: *Echo*. 1997. Tokyo: Sanyusya, Lesson 18, “Housework” section as cited in Shimako, 2000)

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners

In a recent study by Syrbe and Rose (2018), three popular English textbook series that were commonly used within the German English language curriculum were analysed to explore their relevance to approach of teaching EIL. The authors considered ownership of English, target cultures and interlocutors, and models and norms of English presented in the materials as proxy concepts. The findings revealed that against a few exceptions from Australia and South Africa, the majority of characters used in the textbooks were US-American or British nationals. The analysis found heavily involvement of native speakers of English in twenty-five excerpts out of twenty-nine authentic materials excerpts that depicted real-world language use between speakers of English. In terms of the target interlocutor, in thirteen out of sixteen tasks in which German students were asked to imagine the reason of using English, students were either going to an inner circle country to interact with native English speakers or communicating with native English speakers in Germany. The authors found Received Pronunciation (RP) as the most dominant variety of English in speaking tasks, additionally American English, Australian English, and South African English accents were also observed. The target culture was mostly depicted from a static point of view by the traditional cultural elements of USA and UK, such as the political system in both countries, the US constitution, the monarchy, Britain as a multicultural society (Vassilopoulou et al., 2013a, 2013b), and the school system in Great Britain. Therefore, Syrbe and Rose (2018) pointed out to “over-reliance of UK models of English and static depictions of language users and cultures. . . . where the sociolinguistic reality of English [was not] accurately represented in English teaching materials” (p. 152). While the authors of curricula are clearly cognisant of the dynamism of their own culture with its ever-changing social norms and mores, they often assumed other cultures to remain static and looked at them with particularly mono-cultural lenses from their own cultural angle.

The representation of cultural content in pedagogical practice can be in more implicit forms such as using metaphoric explanations in the design of language teaching materials (Kimmel, 2004; Littlemore & Low, 2006). Although the use of target culture specific metaphors which requires metaphoric competence of learners (Bachman, 1990; Dirven, 1985) might not always function against the idea of EIL, it can lead to misunderstandings among learners (Littlemore, 2001, 2003). For example, a Bangladeshi civil servant learner who heard Margaret Thatcher’s, “I want a revolution in the way in which civil servants attack their job” (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p. 275) statement in the lecture “understood the term *to attack one’s job* to mean *be critical of one’s own performance*, as opposed to the intended meaning, which was *to work with more zeal*” (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p. 275). Post-class discussions revealed that the negative cultural context of the student’s own organisation influenced his perception and led student to misinterpretation, thus using culture-based metaphors in language materials for learners without “appropriate background knowledge” (p.

275) should be cautiously considered. Integrating in the curriculum the dynamism of the culture of the other remains a challenge that makes the hidden curriculum problematic in terms of power relations between the author and the reader today.

There is a connection between ELT curriculum and gender representation, gender discourses and sexist stereotypes, as curriculum shapes perceptions and practices of gender as embedded in English language in the dominant country (Hirschfelder, 1982). Since the seminal article *Sexism and TESOL Materials* by Hartman and Judd (1978) which can be considered as the first study investigating the sexist language use in ELT course books, a plethora of analytical studies from different countries and contexts have demonstrated the presence of gender exclusive language, male dominance and stereotyped gender rules in both Western and locally produced printed ELT materials. Sexism which is implicit in the symbolism of the curriculum may have negative effects across all age groups that have exposure to it (Hartman & Judd, 1978; Lee, 2014). Gender proofing the curriculum may serve to combat the negative consequences of such implicit sexism and its manifestations in real life. Studies on different national settings such as Japan (Sakita, 1995), Norway (Holmqvist & Gjörup, 2006), Spain (Herman, 2007) and Indonesia (Ariyanto, 2018) demonstrated the salience of gender stereotypes in such texts in sexist matching of jobs with different genders. Lack of diversity in terms of gender, race, sexuality and class in Spanish language teaching textbooks was highlighted by Herman's (2007) study. The author's critical analyses of Spanish language teaching textbooks revealed that typical and ideal students were imagined to be white, heterosexual and middle-class monolinguals. As over 150 countries have signed up to the UN Convention on Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women, sexism in curricula is no longer a moral but also an ethical and legal problem that requires urgent redress.

One of the most comprehensive analysis provided on the types of gender bias presented in English language teaching textbooks argues that three main senses on the bias against women can be encountered in textbooks: "exclusion" (males are overly presented), "subordination and distortion" (men tended to occupy both more powerful and a greater range of occupational roles than did women) and "degradation" (women tended to be stereotypically emotional) (Sunderland, 2000, p. 151).

Adding to the complexity of sexist and racist bias in hidden curriculum, a large number of studies also identify that the textbooks and curricula suffer from heteronormativity (Carpenter & Lee 2010; Letts, 1999; Castro & Sujak 2014). Heteronormativity is the unstated assumption that sexual orientation is implicitly heterosexual in life, text and speech (Sumara & Davis, 1999). Heteronormativity in written text and speech renders sexual orientation minorities absent and delegitimises their place in the educational domain, creating an implicitly hostile environment for the LGBTI individuals. When we examine the etic categories of diversity, i.e. pre-established categories such as gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation, we see that

the bias is inherent in the hidden curricula. Yet, there is also need for locally specific, i.e. emic (Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012) in order to understand the real idiosyncratic local impact on the international readers.

Hidden Curriculum in Speaking Materials

The representation of cultural content in a biased manner is not limited to text or image-based curriculum materials. Hidden curricula were also found in the speaking parts of language teaching materials. Research related to the cultural effects of hidden curriculum on language learners have extensively utilised from language attitudes studies (i.e. Bradac, Cargile, & Halett, 2001; Jenkins, 2002, 2007; Jenkins, Cogo, Dewey, 2011; Macaro & Lee, 2013; Pickering, 2009). Attitudes of learners towards a language or phonological variations of a particular language are connected to the kind of bias, discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice in society (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2007). The extant research found language speakers' accents as an influential element in attracting learners' evaluations and thoughts, thus leading to inequalities in different layers of society. Language learners associate "linguistic and paralinguistic variation in messages with both personal and social characteristics of the speaker" (Cargile, Takai, & Rodriguez, 2006, p. 443), thus learners may create negative or positive attitudes towards the nationality, gender, ethnicity or social status of the speaker depending to the context of the dialogues (Cargile et al., 2006; Dewey, 2012; Rose & Galloway, 2017). Besides, a teacher or a person whose accent deemed "standard or correct" within a society and associated with prestige "tends to be rated highly on traits related to competence, intelligence and social status" (Cargile et al., 2006, p. 444), the ones with a "non-standard or incorrect" accent attract negative attitudes for the same dimensions, and even listeners who themselves speak with the same accent might produce negative feelings towards other speakers with non-standard accents (Cargile et al., 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Ryan, Hewstone, & Giles, 1984). The cultural power and domination that written materials are imbued with, as discussed above, is exacerbated in spoken materials with the additional element of pronunciation and accent issues.

As an example on how different accents are associated with attitudes of learners, Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006) asked 96 Danish EFL learners to rate different English accents (The standard form of British English, Received Pronunciation-RP, Standard American English-SA, Australian, Scottish, and Cockney) along with native English cultures according to preference through a two-phased mixed-methods study. While students' articulating impressions they had of people based on their speech were explored through interviews in the first phase, students' attitudes towards phonological differences were investigated through a verbal guise technique where respondents rated speakers on an attitude-rating scale based on their "perceived status and

competence (e.g. intelligence, education leadership, self-confidence, social status), personal integrity and social attractiveness (e.g. reliability, friendliness, helpfulness, sense of humour, identification) and quality of language-use (fluency, communicative efficiency, aesthetic quality, correctness)” (Edwards, 1999, p. 102–103) in the second phase. The findings revealed that despite the respondents marked American as their preferred culture, they stated RP as the most highly-rated accent in terms of status and competence, and quality of language use (or linguistic attractiveness). However, RP was rated lowest on personal integrity and social attractiveness dimensions where Scottish and Australian were ranked the best. In most of language attitude studies (i.e. He & Li, 2009; Ladegaard & Sachdev, 2006), the respondents mentioned two varieties of English: American and British. No awareness for other varieties was reported. Such limited undertaking of the diversity in spoken English merely served to uphold domination of the British and American English and subjugation of the other English-speaking geographies as cultural peripheral and of lesser value and power as a result. The findings of language attitude research corroborate with that of language teaching materials research, supporting the proposition that cultural domination is retained due to the domination of a limited cultural geography.

Phonological variations that were implied as ideal or unfavourable, prestigious or low social status in the speaking parts of language teaching curricula resulted in several sociolinguistic outcomes such as leading to preferred cultures (Rose & Galloway, 2019), determining the ideal English accent for learners (McKay, 2012), influencing prestige and social status perceptions of people (Jenkins et al., 2011; Rose & Galloway, 2017), and creating socio-economic inequalities, stigmatisation and discrimination (Ball & Giles, 1982; Cargile et al., 2006; Jenkins, 2002). The problematic nature of speaking materials which include hidden curriculum is not echoed by different accents. Some examples from the speaking elements of language teaching materials which validate stereotyping and provoke the existing prejudice and biases in gender, race, class and other social issues are: the dominance of male top managers and leaders in business-related negotiations, association of ethnic and minority groups with working class and poorness in dialogues, and presentation of particular nationalities with favourable or unfavourable lifestyles and habits (i.e. sports lovers, heavy smokers, dog eaters) in conversations.

The findings of these studies once more unveiled the necessity of ELT speaking materials on the way of raising awareness of language learners to other variations in English. Our review also highlights the significance of treating reading and speaking as separately as the cultural power and domination may not manifest in the same way although there are some shared concerns.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Widespread use of English as an international language which targets billions of learners with diverse cultural backgrounds has changed the sociolinguistic reality of English (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012; McKay, 2012; Rose & Galloway, 2019). The new sociolinguistic landscape of English where changing needs of language learners might not be accurately represented in English teaching materials required the revision of current curricula and pedagogical practices. Therefore, there are some implications for teaching and material design. First, since learners of English language “share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture” (Firth, 1996, p. 240), a global culture inclusive teaching ideology rather than an exclusive and ethnocentric approach should be adopted in EIL context. In line with this ideology, students should be informed about the new sociolinguistic reality of EIL communication and should be enabled to expose “a variety of cultures, not just the cultures of English-speaking countries” (Yuen, 2011, p. 253) by teaching materials. The introduction of fluid cultures instead of target native culture in materials should be prioritised. Similarly, role model materials should include non-native English users, communities and contexts as well as native ones. The authenticity of materials should be determined according to the proficiency level, learning styles and demands of students. The examples of L2-L2 interactions which can provide a great variety in geography and culture and the social context where language was taught should also be considered in the materials.

Second, the use of ideal and Standard English which glorifies certain accents and grammar leading to socio-economic inequalities should be avoided while designing materials. Native English speakers of outer circle and non-native English speakers who reflect different cultural communities and contexts should take place in the speaking sections of curricula and introduce multiple and diverse forms of English that are used across the world. In parallel to this, teacher recruitment policies and practices which favour the teams of native and non-native teachers should be adopted by institutions. Furthermore, teachers should encourage students “to be critical of Standard English, and raising their awareness of Global English” (Rose & Galloway, 2017, p. 295). Assessment of learner proficiency should not be determined by the norms of Standard English ideology. Finally, given hidden curriculum may describe, present, or elicit stereotypes and reproduce cultural bias in subtle ways, sometimes even teachers may not notice what the curriculum refers to or they may perceive stereotyping as harmless. At this point, particularly native speakers who teach in foreign countries may cooperate with local teachers since local teachers are familiar with the expectations of learners and the local context. Therefore, a more accurate selection and design of materials that respect the local culture can be achieved.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research could explore the impact of the efforts to decolonise, degender and desexualise the dominant curriculum and language in textbooks. In this paper, we examined the magnitude of the hidden curriculum and its varied consequences of the spread of dominant gender, ethnicity and sexuality norms across English speaking cultures and societies.

CONCLUSION

We demonstrated in this paper that when unchecked the ELT textbooks serve to entrench colonisation of the mind across a wide terrain. The colonisation is very much resisted across the globe for good reason. As such we recommend caution in use of a colonial approach in all language texts that fails to recognise the value of multiculturalism. In particular, the idea of decolonising the English language curriculum is not new. Yet, only very recently we started seeing examples and efforts at the institutional level. Institutionally, one remarkable effort to decolonise the curriculum from cultural bias that privileges the centre and disadvantages the periphery, has been the effort at the SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies, 2018) to address their curriculum with diversity, fairness and openness with a view to combating racism in the hidden curriculum. Yet the lack of intersectional approach to this effort to include other categories of disadvantage in curriculum require efforts on gender, sexual orientation, and disability equality among others.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Bias: Arbitrary and often baseless belief about something.

Culture: Shared beliefs, values, symbols, and material artefacts.

Curriculum Design: Creating a context where relevant teaching and learning materials for both teachers and students are found.

Diversity: Demographic differences among people that shape their choices and chances in life and work.

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners

Equality: Having some opportunities for representation, outcomes and treatment in life and work irrespective of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability, and other arbitrary criteria.

Gender: A sociocultural expression of particular characteristics and roles attributed to people with reference to their sex and sexuality.

Hidden Curriculum: A teaching and learning context where sociocultural elements are represented in biased ways.

Race: Categorisation of people based on perceived and or shared physical and social qualities which are considered distinct socially.

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Beyond Language Learning Instruction: Transformative Supports for Emergent Bilinguals and Educators

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Series



Table of Contents

Foreword	xvi
Preface	xviii
Acknowledgment	xxxii

Section 1

Chapter 1

Going Beyond Academics: Connecting With the Whole Child	1
<i>Jatnna Acosta, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA</i>	

Chapter 2

Correct Pronunciation of Student Names: A Foundation for Language Learning	24
<i>Anita Bright, Portland State University, USA</i>	
<i>Christopher L. Cardiel, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, USA</i>	

Chapter 3

How to Be Interculturally Responsive to Your English Language Learners' Writing Needs	47
<i>Kathryn Jones, Capella University, USA</i>	
<i>Jason R. Mixon, San Augustine Independent School District, USA</i>	

Chapter 4

Preparing Preservice Teacher Candidates for Educating Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners	76
<i>Alpana Bhattacharya, Queens College, City University of New York, USA</i>	

Chapter 5

The Cultural Impact of Hidden Curriculum on Language Learners: A Review and Some Implications for Curriculum Design 104

Rifat Kamasak, Bahcesehir University, Turkey

Mustafa Ozbilgin, Brunel University, London, UK

Derin Atay, Bahcesehir University, Turkey

Chapter 6

Distributing Leadership Within Rural Schools: Sharing Responsibility for Diverse Student Needs 126

Huseyin Uysal, University of Florida, USA

Jessica Holloway, Deakin University, Australia

Chapter 7

Increasing Retention of Linguistically-Disadvantaged College Students in South Africa..... 146

Denise Carpenter Mussman, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Venicia F. McGhie, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Chapter 8

New Roles for ESP Lecturers: The Challenges of Training Professional Researchers in Romanian Higher Education..... 181

Mirela Bardi, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Laura-Mihaela Muresan, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Section 2

Chapter 9

Moving Towards Translanguaging: Service-Learning That Leverages Emerging Bilinguals' Linguistic Development..... 208

Mara R. Barbosa, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, USA

Chapter 10

Translanguaging Pedagogy to Support Bi/Multilingual Students' Language Learning in Social Studies: "How We Communicate Everything" 233

Matthew R. Deroo, University of Miami, USA

Chapter 11

Dynamics of Translanguaging Practices..... 262

Kimberly Ilosvay, University of Portland, USA

Section 3

Chapter 12

Preparing and Enriching Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Educators
Through Professional Development.....282

Alina Slapac, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Sujin Kim, George Mason University, USA

Sarah A. Coppersmith, University of Missouri, St. Louis, USA

Chapter 13

Where Our Paths Crossed: Latina Teachers, Professional Development, and
Funds of Identity305

Minda Morren López, Texas State University, San Marcos, USA

Jane M. Saunders, Texas State University, San Marcos, USA

Chapter 14

Emergent Bilinguals in Rural Schools: Reframing Teacher Perceptions
Through Professional Development.....332

Elizabeth Hughes Karnes, Texas Woman's University, USA

Holly Hansen-Thomas, Texas Woman's University, USA

Compilation of References 362

About the Contributors 413

Index..... 419