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Chapter 4

What is effective pedagogy for multilingual learners? Observations of teaching that challenges inequity – the OPETAN project in England

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Abstract

There is little empirical evidence regarding how best to prepare general education teachers for the challenge of supporting multilingual learners. This is both regarding helping learners develop the language of schooling, and achieving academic success (Faltis and Valdés, 2016). Similarly, little is known about what in-service teachers should know, and what pedagogical perspective they should adopt, to achieve these aims (Faltis and Valdes, 2016; Takanishi and Le Menestrel, 2017). However, there is a promising line of research that proposes an observation tool to evaluate classroom pedagogy: 'The Standards for Effective Pedagogy' (the 'Standards' 2014; Teemant, 2015). The OPETAN project (Observations of Pedagogical Excellence of Teachers Across Nations), based in Germany, Finland, the United States, and England, draws on these Standards, which derive from sociocultural perspectives, and presents a portrait of how they work in practice. This chapter reports on the project's findings in England. Teachers in four primary schools were selected on the basis of their recognised competent pedagogical practice with multilingual learners in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The pupils were aged between four and eleven. Drawing on qualitative methods, classroom observation data were gathered and thematically analysed in the light of the descriptors of the 'Standards for Effective Pedagogy'. In this chapter, key themes from the data are presented and three teaching vignettes selected to illustrate the pedagogy observed. The findings identify pedagogies teachers can use to better support multilingual learners.

1. Introduction

In recent years, events around the globe are testament to the increased numbers of people travelling across borders for the purposes of resettlement. In many instances, such movements have included accompanying children who, over time, have begun to feature in school populations. The educational systems in our respective countries have responded to these changes on student demographics in different ways. Countries with a long history of student diversity (like the UK and the US) have fairly well-established teacher education and pedagogic approaches to respond to changes in school demographics over time, but diversity is consistent. Then there are countries that are only recently recognising a growing constituent of multilingual learners in their student populations, such as Finland. Despite differences in educational, political and social contexts, the concerns and challenges we grapple with are similar: how to educate multilingual learners in ways that are linguistically responsive, culturally sustaining, and enabling to their potential to become active members of society? This question would go on to form the basis of our research enquiry.

It is the common aim which brought us together, as a team of academics from universities in the UK, Germany, Finland and the US. Since then we have combined our efforts to respond to this challenge in ways that are relevant to our respective educational contexts. In our work, we identified another common focus, which is to better understand what makes an effective content teacher of multilingual learners good at what they do; to understand the pedagogy they employ and to examine how it can be applied to respond constructively to the demographic, socio-political and linguistic contexts of school environments today.

There is currently little empirically-based consensus on how to best prepare pre- and in-service teachers to work with multilingual learners in content area classrooms. The research that focuses on teacher preparation for language specialists is expansive and conclusive, but the work on what content teachers (e.g. teachers of science, mathematics, language arts and social studies) should know and be able to do, remains relatively under-explored (Faltis and Valdés, 2016; Freeman and Freeman, 2014; Takanishi and Le Menestrel, 2017). It has been argued that there is a need to focus on context, orientations and pedagogy in the preparation and support of content teachers of multilingual learners (Viesca et al., 2019, In press). It has also been found that evidence-informed sociocultural practices are impactful in supporting multilingual learners' progress in content classrooms (Shaw et al. 2014; Swanson et al., 2014; Teemant and Hausman, 2013). Such perspectives complement the work that has highlighted the potential

benefits of learning and teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms (Leung, 2018; Van Avermaet et al., 2018).

To answer these questions we developed the OPETAN study, to examine sociocultural pedagogical practices across four countries in content classrooms led by teachers with a reputation for excellence in their work with multilingual students in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. OPETAN, which means 'I teach' in Finnish, is the acronym for the title of the project, 'Observations of Pedagogical Excellence in Teaching Across Nations', which was undertaken in the UK, Germany, Finland and the US. This chapter shares the findings from our fieldwork data in schools in the south east of England, a subset of the OPETAN study.

Early in our collaboration, we realised the term 'multilingual' differs across countries and settings, so it was important to clarify it in the context of its use in the project. The term captures the descriptors and acronyms used in our respective countries to describe students for whom the language of schooling is not the language of their home/community. In Finland they have 'Finnish as a Second Language' students, in Germany learners are described as having 'German as a Second Language' (GSL), in the United States this group of learners is referred to as 'English Language Learners' (ELL), and in England such students are said to have 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL). These students are engaging with the education curriculum in a language that they are simultaneously learning (Commins *et al.* 2016). Whilst such learners are often conceptualised in the literature as 'bilingual' (Baker and Wright, 2017), they are in reality often adding the language of schooling as a third (or 4th or 5th) language, by virtue of exposure to more than one language at home (for religious or social reasons, for example).

The term we agreed - 'multilingual learner' - in our view, captures their linguistic abilities accurately, and provides a positive descriptor of what such students can do, rather than what they cannot do yet. However, within the use of this term is the challenge of defining multilingual competences. So, it was important that our chosen descriptor acknowledges the abilities, assets and potential that multilingual learners bring with them to the learning environment.

Tacit in our use of the descriptor 'multilingual learner' is an acknowledgement of what some researchers call 'language minoritized' students (Flores and Rosa, 2015) They are students whose language practices enjoy less social, political and economic power, which varies by

context. The aim of our research therefore includes an emancipatory focus, one that regards students' multilingualism as meaningful to their success. Notwithstanding the reality that the competent acquisition of the language of instruction remains a work-in-progress for many learners in the classrooms we observed, such notions are nevertheless embedded in the values of our theoretical framework.

2. The theoretical framework: Rationale

Building on the research that demonstrates the positive impact of sociocultural instructional practices in the teaching and learning of content for multilingual students, we designed our study around a model of sociocultural instructional practices referred to as the Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Tharp et al. 2000). These standards draw on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), which has heavily influenced the educational policies and practices across the four national contexts of the OPETAN study. Vygotsky (1978) asserted that learning is social, teaching is the practice of assisting the process, and knowledge is cultural, deriving from the competent participation by the teacher and the student.

2.1 Standards for Effective Pedagogy

The Standards for Effective Pedagogy were developed from these ideas as an operationalization of sociocultural pedagogical practices (Tharp et al., 2000). These Standards have been tested extensively and shown to be effective in both capturing and creating effective content teaching and learning opportunities (Teemant, Wink and Tyra, 2011; Teemant and Reveles, 2012). More recently, it has been developed to include a critical pedagogy focus (Teemant, Leland, and Berghoff, 2014). The addition of an additional standard for 'critical stance' requires teachers and teacher educators to 'pay much greater attention to their own deep-rooted beliefs, ideologies, and values' and 'understand them in relation to their students.' (Howard and Milner, 2014: p. 207). The work of Tharp et al. (2000) included the synthesis of an observational rubric (see Appendix 1) which we utilized for our data collection. This rubric has achieved success both as a driver for coaching and as a tool for observing teachers' practice with all learners (Teemant, 2012), but it has been found to have even greater impact on improving educational outcomes for multilingual learners (Teemant and Hausman, 2013).

Next, we provide a brief explanation and academic origins of each Standard.

Joint Productive Activity (JPA)

JPA focuses on meaningful collaborative learning opportunities that students are provided with in classrooms. Such opportunities situate learning in collaboration, resulting in a co-constructed tangible or intangible 'product' of the task or activity (e.g., a jointly constructed story or poster or co-constructed understandings). This can occur across groups in the classroom, but is most desirable with the participation of the teacher with a small group of learners. For observed teaching to be rated at the highest level on this standard, the teacher must be observed to be engaging and assisting directly and collaboratively with a small group of students. Social learning through situated performance can lead to, and model, competent participation.

Language and Literacy Development (LLD)

This Standard acknowledges the need to provide students with sustained and supported opportunities to develop their competence in language and literacy. LLD emphasizes the nature and quality of language and literacy work. At its highest level of implementation, LLD is observed when the teacher designs and enacts classroom activities that enable students to simultaneously generate language expression and develop content vocabulary. The teacher supports students in their language and literacy use with targeted questions, rephrasing and/or modelling.

Contextualization (CTX)

Students learn most effectively when they are able to connect new knowledge with what they already know and understand. Contextualization focuses on the way teaching links new learning in school to what students already know, especially from their home and community. Teachers can therefore engage in what Paris (2012) coined 'culturally sustaining practices' that enable students to make meaning of their in-school learning for their lives outside school. Heavily contextualized content is also more accessible for learners with lower levels of proficiency in the language of instruction.

Challenging Activities (CA)

There is research evidence that much classroom time in U.S. schools is spent on lower level thought work (Teemant, 2018). To engage students with complex ideas and thinking, teachers need to design instructional environments with frequent and in-depth opportunities to work at the higher levels of academic challenge. Teachers who do this well create challenging activities that include clear expectations, and simultaneously provide regular and meaningful

performance feedback. Assistance in the development of more complex thinking could be provided in the form of supportive dialogue, for example modelling language or reframing statements. Teemant (2018) refers to this as the space between teachers and learners in context. Utilizing this 'space' meaningfully is important for multilingual learners, particularly those who are able to engage with challenging work, but may still be working to develop higher levels of proficiency in the language of instruction.

Instructional Conversation (IC)

At its highest level, ICs involve the teacher working with a small group of students. This is particularly important for multilingual learners because more individualized and differentiated instruction and assistance can be provided during such exchanges. For the purposes of the Standards, ICs must comprise a clear academic goal with at least equal student-teacher verbal interaction. Meaningful ICs therefore involve discussion with multiple turn takers and contributors. Direct instruction to a whole class and small group lectures are not contemplated in this Standard.

Critical Stance (CS)

Critical Stance was first included in the Standards in 2014 (Teemant et al., 2014), to integrate Freire's concepts of critical pedagogy (Freire, 2000) into this sociocultural pedagogical approach. This was in part the outcome of Teemant and Hausman's work (2013), which demonstrated that teachers who implemented critical pedagogy at high levels in their practice tended to facilitate their students' favourable performance in academic assessments.

The CS standard encourages teachers and students to develop the skills, expertise and practice of interrogating conventional wisdom, identifying issues of inequity and work collaboratively to actively address identified inequities.

Modelling

The final standard utilized in our study is one that was also not initially contemplated as part of the 'original' five standards, but was developed separately by the lead author of the original standards work, Roland Tharp (2006). Whilst studying teaching and learning practices in Native American communities, Tharp identified modelling and demonstration as valuable opportunities to observe successful performances/applications of knowledge, explain vocabulary and concepts, as well as to interact with learners in socially appropriate ways that

simultaneously model conventions and cultural expectations. At its highest level in the rubric, the teacher provides a model of a completed product (by modelling the behaviours, verbalizing thinking processes, or offering procedures necessary for the task), which students then emulate with assistance.

2.2 Use of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy in OPETAN

The OPETAN project combines a pedagogical view of teaching for multilingual learners which has been coined as 'linguistically responsive teaching' (Lucas, Villegas and Freedson-Gonzales, 2008; Lucas, 2011), with a critical sociocultural perspective on practices. Linguistically responsive teachers are not only social advocates for multilingual learners, but they have a superior knowledge base for teaching multilingual learners. Among their key skillset is their understanding of how the design of a talk-based classroom is most likely to foster new language and literacy development. Such classrooms will be places of informed and respectful dialogic exchanges between teachers and students and also between learners. We have found the Standards for Effective Pedagogy to be useful in identifying such effective classroom practices.

The Standards have also been employed in educational contexts outside the U.S. (see the work of Wyatt and Yamauchi (2012) in Greenland, for example), so our work on the OPETAN project can be regarded as further support for its relevance and value in diverse cultural and linguistic educational contexts.

In the following section, we provide a short account of how the Standards were operationalized in the schools and classrooms we observed in England.

3. OPETAN: Methodology and the English education context

The OPETAN study was designed to explore the possibilities of capturing pedagogical excellence across our varying contexts using the Standards for Effective Pedagogy as an operationalizing tool.

3.1 Working the Standards rubric

The OPETAN team engaged in online training and meetings to strengthen our understanding of the use of the rubric for classroom observations. At these regular sessions, we viewed video-clips of classroom practice and discussed how we would rate the pedagogy observed. During these lively and ultimately insightful exchanges, we shared our respective rationales for the scores, building consensus along the way. This, and other preparatory work, were undertaken a year before the first set of observation visits, by which time we were able to use the tool confidently and consistently to arrive at similar scores.

3.2. Collecting and analysing data

Local funding was secured for co-researchers from at least two countries to participate at each data collection event. One researcher participated in all the observations across the study. These steps ensured extra consistency in the application of the Standards tool. We observed teaching in schools identified by our respective professional networks—comprising head-teachers, teachers, teacher-educators and community agencies—as being sites where positive work was occurring for multilingual learners in content classrooms. The teachers we selected had reputations for excellence within their respective professional networks. In total we completed 32 classroom observations during fieldwork in Germany, Finland, the US and England. Across the four countries, we observed teaching from the early years to the highest level of secondary education (K-12) in all key subject areas (language arts, history/social studies, science and mathematics). In England, we observed eight lessons that lasted up to an hour each. After each lesson, we conducted a preliminary analysis and discussion of the teaching and learning that we had just seen. Some teachers we observed were English-only speakers, others were multilingual. The pupils they taught were predominantly multilingual – in every classroom we observed, multilingual learners comprised at least 75% of the pupil cohort.

3.3 Evaluating the pedagogy observed

Each standard on its own can score, at the highest, a “3” or/equivalent to “enacting”. “Enacting” is the highest level of pedagogy in the Standards, for which there is a unique description for what that Standard would look like to an observer. However, when a teacher within a learning activity implements three or more of the seven standards in our study at the enacting level (level 3), then each of those standards are raised to level 4, the so-called “integrating” level. Therefore, level 3 and level 4 represent the same practices in the context of an individual standard, but a score of 4 is given in recognition that multiple standards were simultaneously put into practice at the level of “enacting”.

Activities observed in each classroom were contemporaneously annotated by at least two co-researchers present. Transcripts were later produced and uploaded to an online repository for verification of accuracy. The data was analysed jointly again during online meetings and individually, afterwards. The analyses were conducted with reference to the descriptors in the Standards as well as the scores for each element of the pedagogy observed – see discussion at pages 5-7, where the significance of each Standard for multilingual learners is explained. The individual standards were used as themes with which to organise the observation data, in order to discern patterns and trends from the scores we agreed for each.

In the next section, we will briefly describe the educational context of the English education system, which formed the backdrop for the fieldwork.

3.4 The context

In England, as in many other parts of the world, the number of children in school whose home language is not English has increased significantly in recent years; as a result of migration from other parts of the EU, and beyond. Currently more than 20% of children in primary schools (ages 4 – 11) and over 16% of pupils in secondary schools (between 11 and 18) speak a language other than English at home (DfE, 2018). As a result, teachers in most parts of the country, not just those in inner-city areas (which historically have been more linguistically diverse), are likely to need to adapt their practice for multilingual learners. Moreover, these pupils' English proficiency will range widely from new-to-English through to competent or fluent users of English; this can be regardless of whether they have been born in the UK or abroad.

A layer of complexity is added by the fact that practice for teachers in England, in most state schools, is governed by a mandatory National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). This includes detailed expectations for English teaching in relation to spoken language, reading and writing; as part of this there is a very explicit focus on the teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar. While the National Curriculum serves the purpose of providing consistency and articulating its commitment to equality of opportunity, arguably it is written with a monolingual pupil group in mind and there is very little wording in current policy which acknowledges the significant number of multilingual learners in classrooms (Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Furthermore, funded support for multilingual learners has been reduced year on year since 2011 (Strand, Malmberg and Hall, 2015), and, unlike some parts of the US and Germany for example,

there is no mandatory training for teachers who teach multilingual learners. Finally, apart from a brief spell between 2016 and 2018, there is no national, standardized collection of English proficiency data for multilingual learners and this is perceived as problematic when attempting to assess the recognised important relationship between students' proficiency and their academic outcomes (Strand and Hessel, 2018).

Nevertheless, despite an apparent lack of policy directive, and perhaps because of a comparatively long history of multilingualism, there is evidence of effective practice for multilingual learners in England's schools (Flynn, 2018). In these schools, teachers use the centralised curriculum as a servant rather than a master, and they ensure that classroom content is meaningful, contextualised, talk-based and cognitively-engaging for learners (Lucas et al., 2008). In presenting our observations we highlight the domains of the Standards of Effective Pedagogy observational rubric that we used to assess the observed practice, and the elements of linguistically responsive teaching that the practitioners echoed in their inspiring lessons.

4. Findings: Data and Overview

In this section, we will begin by providing a general account of trends in the classroom practice we observed, which will then be followed by an analysis of three classroom vignettes.

4.1 Overview of all findings

In this chapter, we focus on the data gathered during the fieldwork in English schools. Table 1 contains contextual information on the classrooms and content taught, and Table 2 sets out the ratings — or scores—each lesson was given against the Standards for Effective Pedagogy. The lessons delivered by Teachers A, B and H have been selected from the eight we observed in total. We consider descriptions of the teaching, or vignettes, later in this chapter.

Table 1. OPETAN England observation information: context

England	**Year Group**	**Content Area**	**% Multilingual learners**
Teacher A	Reception	Phonics/English	79%
Teacher B	Year 5	History	79%
Teacher H	Year 6	English	100%

Table 2. OPETAN England observation information: scores on the 'Standards for Effective Pedagogy Rubric'

England	JPA	LLD	CTX	CA	IC	CS	M	Total	Ave	Mode
Teacher A	2	4	4	4	1	2	4	21	3	4
Teacher B	2	4	4	4	1	2	4	21	3	4
Teacher H	2	4	2	4	2	2	4	20	2.86	2

As seen in Table 2, the three teachers scored highly for Language and Literacy Development (LLD), Challenging Activities (CA), and Modelling (M). In regards to CA, the lessons we observed reached the highest score of 4, illustrating that in our observation, this standard was implemented at level 3. The Standards state that to receive a score of 3, the teacher must be observed to "[design] and [enact] challenging activities with clear standards/expectations and performance feedback, AND [assist] the development of more complex thinking" (See Appendix 1). One example of this was observed in a lesson where the learners were guided by the teacher's questions and scaffolding during their discussion of a story they had read with her (see Vignette 1 below) (Teacher A). In addition to LLD and CA, the teachers we observed received high scores for modelling, i.e. the support of 'learning through observation' (See Appendix A).

In the light of the high scores in LLD, CA, and Modelling, the relatively lower scores for Critical Stance (CS) were unexpected. This was particularly since all the schools we visited featured linguistically and culturally diverse student populations which also included, as far as we could tell, a teacher community and administration committed to child-centred and equity-based learning as ways to address issues of inequity. As a research team, we share a commitment to critical work that interrogates the inequitable distribution of power and privilege, and, therefore the relatively low scores for Critical Stance were striking. However, it must be acknowledged that those scores were consistent with all other teachers we observed in England.

Taking a closer look at the CS category, Level 2 is defined as "Using variety, the teacher designs instruction that positions students to generate new knowledge resulting in a) original contributions, products, or expertise OR b) students' questioning and reflecting on issues from multiple perspectives" (See Appendix A). Interestingly, we justified most of our CA scores with students creating or making original contributions, products, or expertise, the first one of

two possible student-driven knowledge generation processes that are described in the rubric. The second option—which requires students to consider multiple perspectives—was less observed, and level 3, which describes activities where students "[interrogate] conventional [...] practices", "[reflect] upon ramifications of such practices", and "transform inequities within their scope of influence", were not seen in any of our observations. Whilst it is important to note that our observations cannot be generalized to a school's culture or a teacher's pedagogy, these scores in the CS category invite questions about this potential disconnect between the culture of the schools and teachers' observed practice that are worthy of future investigation.

In the following section, we examine these findings in more detail and illustrate them with vignettes from our classroom observations.

4.2 Teacher Vignettes

In the practice of these three teachers featured in the vignettes below, we focus specifically on their teaching in relation to three domains of the Standards: Language and Literacy Development (LLD); Challenging Activities (CA); and Modelling (M). This is not to say that these teachers did not display aspects of other Standards in their teaching, but these Standards best exemplify how and why their teaching was successful. In these settings teachers had the confidence to adapt their practice to embrace a dialogic approach — a talk-oriented classroom — that enhanced the learning of all pupils. Of interest also is that we observed in all cases, highly respectful relationships between the teacher and the class, and between the students themselves. These teachers are linguistically responsive; their practice advocates for their learners and generates learning environments that maximise learner potential.

Next, we present the first teaching vignette, which will then be followed by our reflections on the pedagogy observed.

Vignette 1: Teacher A, Phonics Lesson with 4- and 5-year-olds

Lesson starts with a series of games that include practising sight vocabulary, blending phonemes to read unknown words, and revision of vowel and consonant digraphs.

Teacher reads the children a story (without using the book) in which a pirate goes fishing; she uses concrete props — flashcards and a soft toy called 'Fred' that sits on her shoulder while she speaks— to bring the story to life and to provide a visual cue for relevant vocabulary.

During the story the teacher stops to ask children questions about the plot and to explore vocabulary. She takes children through the text of the book and identifies words that may be tricky to read and rehearses decoding strategies. Her telling of the very simple story is lively and engaging.

Children read the book of the story for themselves, quietly, while teacher cues into individuals and picks up on phonic knowledge needs; for example one child is unsure how to read the grapheme 'tch' (as in 'match').

Teacher reads the book to the whole class without expression in order to demonstrate why expression is needed. Children read the book again aloud and with expression, and the teacher continues to give targeted support to individuals. Praise is given frequently in feedback.

Reading finishes and the children are instructed to talk in pairs about their response to the book. Teacher moves between pairs and listens in to conversations. As she comes to the end of the lesson she discusses what she took from the children's conversations.

In this Reception classroom (ages 4 – 5), 14 of 21 learners were multilingual; some new to English but most of them relatively competent English speakers in terms of age-related expectations. The teacher was using a scripted phonics scheme (Read, Write, Inc.) that might have restricted her practice to a more textbook-oriented approach, but she instead used the plan to deliver a highly interactive and engaging lesson that drew on children's existing knowledge about phonics, and supported their progress.

In terms of LLD, her word/phoneme generation activities were clearly contextualized in meaningful experiences that drew on children's prior knowledge and the text in use for the lesson; activities generated new language and the development of contextually relevant vocabulary. Activities were challenging (CA) in that students were required to read independently, but were given focussed and specific feedback to support their reading fluency. Furthermore, they were actively engaged in all parts of the lesson and often led the classroom discussion. While the teacher led the lesson, there was room for the children to engage in

dialogue with each other, to encourage complex thinking. Finally, the quality and consistency of teacher modelling (M) drove success in this lesson. The children's learning was led throughout with clear indications of expectations of behaviour, processes and products. Furthermore, children were given help and individualized feedback to support progress.

The second teaching vignette is described below, followed by reflections on the pedagogy we observed.

Vignette 2: Teacher B, History lesson (The Big Stink) with 9- and 10-year-olds

In this lesson, children in a primary school close to the River Thames are learning about the problem that Victorian [i.e. roughly in the latter three-quarters of the 19th century] politicians had with legislation to tackle the pollution, and the resulting stench, of London's main waterway.

Children are logged into Google Classroom and use this tool throughout the lesson to facilitate research and development of contextually grounded vocabulary related to the topic.

Using cartoon images from the historical magazine Punch, the teacher asks the children to discern what people thought about the state of the river during the 1850s. Working in pairs, the children's discussion is facilitated by the teacher, who then gathers a range of vocabulary from the children that will be used in a writing exercise later. During discussion, the teacher also makes links to earlier work in previous lessons and to a significant historical figure relevant to the lesson's content.

Following the introductory activity the teacher articulates the learning objective 'Finding out about the Thames during the Victorian era' and the success criteria that by the end of the lesson the children will be able to understand what The Big Stink was, and what Joseph Bazalgette's solution was.

Teacher models for the children what was happening to the Thames at the time by pouring liquids and (pretend) body parts into a fish tank filled with water containing brown food colouring. In discussion with the children, she explains that at that time, the Victorians did not understand the link between the polluted water they were drinking and the spread of diseases like cholera. Children are given time to reflect on information from a previous lesson to explain what the Victorians thought was carrying disease. During further dialogue, the quality and depth of the teachers' subject knowledge is clear as she responds in highly informed ways to the children's questions.

Teacher provides more information about key historical figures—Joseph Bazalgette and Benjamin Disraeli —and explains that the children are going to engage in role play between these two politicians as they talk to each other about the problem. Children are directed to draw on the vocabulary generated earlier in the lesson, the images they have discussed and their historical knowledge. Moreover, the teacher has provided them with examples of the sort of language used in conversation at the time.

Children sit or stand in pairs and work up dialogue; much enjoyment with words related to the stinking river is had by all. Some children start to generate written scripts.

Teacher explains that in this and the next lesson, the children will be working up comic scripts of the dialogues and shows them a model of a comic strip with two scenes completed. Reminds them to use each other's ideas. Children's language use is elaborate and sophisticated as they work to draw and script the third scene.

As the lesson ends the teacher brings children back together and reminds them to ask questions about the things they don't understand, and she takes them back to the success criteria for their own self-assessment of their understanding.

In this class of 18 pupils, most of whom were multilingual, the teacher's practice was actively dialogic; she engaged the children in challenging dialogue—both teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil—throughout the lesson in ways that supported meaningful progress towards the learning outcome.

In terms of LLD, the teacher provided multiple opportunities for vocabulary enrichment and oral rehearsal of writing through discussion, drama and careful employment of web-based and other resources. The activities were tightly scaffolded within a meaningful historical and local context so that the children were able to draw on prior learning and their own lived experiences to make sense of the history of their own city. The activities were challenging (CA) throughout and they balanced teacher-led and child-led input that demanded complex thinking through research and discussion of the events relevant to the lesson content.

Modelling was employed in a variety of carefully targeted ways that involved direct explanation, careful selection of resources that supported independence, and practical demonstration which would facilitate students' production of a cartoon strip with accompanying dialogue. The teacher's content subject knowledge was excellent and this

ensured that discussion was highly informed and the teacher provided a confident model-historian. The topics for discussion in this lesson are well-researched by the teacher and primed with open questions that allow children to draw on prior knowledge and build new knowledge.

Below is the third and final teaching vignette, followed by reflections on the pedagogy observed.

Vignette 3: Teacher H, Language Arts Lesson (Coraline) with 10 – 11 year olds

The children are working with Neil Gaiman's book *Coraline* which involves two parallel worlds, and their task is to develop a new character with identities to suit each version of reality.

The children are talking about and drawing their new characters, and they use a vocabulary list created in a previous lesson to fuel their oral descriptions. As the children work, the teacher facilitates their thinking with demanding open-ended questions and praise where sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure are used in the responses.

The children work in pairs, alone or in small groups, and they are trusted to stay on-task while they co-construct their thoughts about their new characters.

Teacher notices that some children are spending too much time drawing and she brings the class together. She asks one child to read out her description and asks the other children for comments. The conversations are respectfully evaluative and referenced to the rich language used such as 'the cloak smells smoky' and 'she has a weak jawline' which paint a multisensory picture of a sinister character.

Returning to group work, children start to write their descriptions and ask each other questions like 'I want a synonym for "suspicious"'. The teacher floats and demands more detail in the writing while giving individuals examples of how this might look. As children show their drafts to the teacher, she comments on elements that need to be improved, such as the overuse of pronouns, which affect text cohesion.

As the lesson ends the teacher asks the children to reflect on where and how their character descriptions produced in the previous day's lesson have been improved following the discussions, thoughts and ideas generated today. One girl notes that yesterday her friend did not understand her new character, but today she could because of the additional, detailed vocabulary used in the description. Teacher concludes by explaining next steps towards a final draft in the next lesson.

As we started our observations of this lesson in a class of 10 – 11-year olds, the children were able to work with a very high level of independence in what was a largely talk-based activity. This lesson demonstrated most effectively the enacting and integration of the LLD domain: the teacher had designed a lesson that would generate content vocabulary and language expression, and in addition, her facilitative delivery ensured that children's own spoken contributions led the class discussion and were developed by teacher-pupil interaction.

In terms of linguistically responsive teaching, the children were given multiple opportunities to rehearse their writing orally, while being fed possibilities to enrich their language use. Modelling (M) was integral to all of the teacher's spoken input but used the children's own work as points of reference. This was only possible because the respectful relationships in the classroom meant that children were accustomed to giving each other thoughtful and constructive feedback. Activities were challenging (CA) because the teacher demanded very focussed oral and written outputs from the children, explicitly addressed their poor use of time and expected very mature expression of argument borne of higher-level thinking. This lesson illustrated how a teacher might demonstrate the "skilful" integration of multiple standards simultaneously, and thus demonstrate operational enactment of The Standards very successfully.

5. Implications for teaching multilingual learners in England and Conclusion

Given that the policy-related context for the teaching of multilingual learners in England makes very little explicit reference to their additional language acquisition, it was heartening to see such expert practice in the classrooms we attended. This gives further weight to the perception that some teachers are more likely to respond to their learners' specific learning needs regardless of policy restraints (Flynn, 2018). Furthermore, in some instances, teachers are perhaps more likely to reflect beliefs about the teaching of multilingual learners garnered at a local level, rather than to pay attention to national drivers (Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Here, what was particularly exciting was that the teachers observed managed to satisfy both local needs and national expectations. In Teacher H's school, for example, we know that pupil test scores — as related to national tests when children are aged 11 — outperformed many other schools at national level, despite the very high intake of multilingual learners. Given that we

know that multilingual learners potentially under-perform in literacy tests (Strand, Malmberg and Hall, 2015) this is particularly impressive. Furthermore, this school had bucked a general trend among schools in England to focus on written output — in preparation for the tests — by focusing instead on high quality dialogic teaching that in turn raised the bar in the quality of children's writing. While the relationship of talk to high quality writing is widely recognized in teacher discourse in England (see for example, Mercer and Mannion, 2018, and Alexander, 2018), this is not necessarily matched by courage to put such knowledge into practice. In the lessons we observed, a determination to keep lessons talk-focussed paid dividends for multilingual learners.

To sum up: our use of The Standards observation rubric supported new insights into the teaching of multilingual learners in England, in several ways, which we set out below. Firstly, the rubric is free from the constraints of national policy-related expectations, which can disproportionately influence pedagogy and practice in classrooms (Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Commonly in England context, teachers are required by their senior leaders to deliver taught content in ways that meet the expectations of school inspectors, or learning outcomes that are test-related. Such requirements can thus inhibit the potential to experiment with more language-oriented approaches. Secondly, and perhaps crucially, it draws on research-informed approaches to successful content teaching for all learners, not only those who are multilingual. It is therefore, a universally effective pedagogy.

It was beneficial that in our observations, we were applying the nuances of practice described in The Standards to our reflections on practice. This helped us to be freed from any knowledge of policy expectations we might have had, and thus we sought only to 'see' effective practice for multilingual learners. These data generate new insights into effective content teaching. They also suggest how teachers' linguistically responsive practice for multilingual learners in England might be supported once disambiguated from national policies and their testing regimes.

We conclude that our work on the OPETAN project in England demonstrates the continuing importance of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Teemant et al., 2014) to capture and measure excellent pedagogy for multilingual learners in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. In those classrooms, we observed teachers working within national policy and practice requirements with creativity and commitment. Their teaching was intentionally dialogic,

inspiring and most importantly, mutually respectful. We also saw confident learners, fired up with enthusiasm for their learning in constructive collaboration with their peers and teachers.

As education researchers, these findings affirm our belief that outstanding pedagogy can take place in any context, location with any learner demographic. For now, our work continues as we conduct our analyses of (other) patterns in the England data to gain further insight into the components of excellent teaching. Looking ahead, there is more work to be done — some of which is in progress, particularly in comparative studies across national contexts — to discern trends, patterns of similarity and/or divergence. In England, we are planning the next steps for working with schools using The Standards. We are excited as we move towards what could become a step-change for pedagogical research and professional development in England and the UK as a whole.

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Appendix 1

STANDARDS PERFORMANCE CONTINUUM-PLUS: IUPUI 2012 VERSION 1.5

A Rubric for Observing Classroom Enactments of the Standards for Effective Pedagogy Adapted by Teemant, Leland, and Berghoff, (2008) from Doherty, Hilberg, Epaloose, & Tharp (200

	NOT OBSERVED	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	ENACTING	INTEGRATING
General Definition:	*The standard is not observed.*	*One or more elements of the standard are enacted.*	*The teacher designs and enacts activities that demonstrate a partial enactment of the standard.*	*The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in activities that demonstrate a complete enactment of the standard.*	*The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.*
Joint Productive Activity *Teacher and Students Producing Together*	Students work independently of one another.	Students are seated with a partner or group, AND (a) collaborate* or assist one another, OR (b) are instructed in how to work in groups, OR (c) contribute individual work, not requiring collaboration, to a joint product*.	The teacher and students collaborate on a joint product in a whole-class setting, OR students collaborate on a joint product in pairs or small groups.	The teacher and a small group of students collaborate on a joint product. (Teacher does not float.)	The teacher designs, enacts, and collaborates in joint productive activities that demonstrate skillful integration* of multiple standards simultaneously.
Language & Literacy Development *Developing Language and Literacy Across the Curriculum*	Instruction is dominated by teacher talk.	(a) The teacher explicitly models appropriate language; OR (b) students engage in brief, repetitive, or drill-like reading, writing, or speaking activities; OR (c) students engage in social talk while working.	The teacher provides structured opportunities for academic language development in sustained* reading, writing or speaking activities. (Sustained means at least 10 minutes. If it is a whole class arrangement, then more than 50% of the students are participating. No turn taking.)	The teacher designs and enacts instructional activities that *generate* language expression and development of 'content vocabulary,'* AND *assists* student language use or literacy development* through questioning, rephrasing, or modeling. (Teacher can float.)	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in language development activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.
Contextualization *Making Meaning – Connecting School to Students' Lives*	New information is presented in an abstract, disconnected manner.	The teacher (a) includes some aspect of students' everyday experience in instruction, OR (b) connects classroom activities by theme or builds on the current unit of instruction, OR (c) includes parents or community members in activities or instruction, OR (d) connects student comments to content concepts.	The teacher makes incidental* connections between students' prior experience/knowledge from home, school, or community and the new activity/academic concepts.	The teacher integrates* the new activity/academic concepts with students' prior knowledge from home, school, or community to connect everyday and schooled concepts. (Teacher does not have to be present. This can be about activity design.)	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in contextualized activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.
Challenging Activities *Teaching Complex Thinking*	Activities rely on repetition, recall, or duplication to produce factual or procedural information.	The teacher (a) accommodates students' varied ability levels, OR (b) sets and presents quality standards* for student performance, OR (c) provides students with feedback on their performance.	The teacher designs and enacts 'challenging activities'· that connect instructional elements to academic content OR advance student understanding to more complex levels.	The teacher designs and enacts challenging activities with clear standards/expectations and performance feedback, AND assists* the development of more complex thinking. (Teacher can float.)	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in challenging activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.
Instructional Conversation *Teaching Through Conversation*	Lecture or whole-class instruction predominates.	With individuals or small groups of students, the teacher (a) responds in ways that are comfortable for students, OR (b) uses questioning, listening or rephrasing *to elicit student talk*, OR (c) converses on a nonacademic topic.	The teacher converses with a small group of students on an academic topic AND *elicits student talk* with questioning, listening, rephrasing, or modeling.	The teacher designs and enacts an instructional conversation* (IC) with a clear academic goal*; listens carefully to assess and assist student understanding; AND questions students on their views*, judgments, or rationales. Student talk occurs at higher rates than teacher talk. (No floating.)	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in instructional conversations that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.
Critical Stance *Teaching to Transform Inequities*	Instruction reflects appropriate content-area standards.	The teacher designs instruction using variety, which includes a) multiple sources of information; *OR* b) values and respects multiple perspectives; *OR* c) supports learning through multiple modalities.	Using variety, the teacher designs instruction that positions students to generate new knowledge[1] resulting in a) original contributions, products, or expertise OR b) students' questioning and reflecting on issues from multiple perspectives.	The teacher designs or facilitates instruction that consciously engages learners in a) interrogating conventional wisdom and practices; AND b) reflection upon ramifications of such practices; AND c) actively seeks to transform inequities within their scope of influence within the classroom and larger community.	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in critical stance activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.
Modeling *Learning Through Observation*	Students begin working immediately following a verbal explanation.	The teacher, or student, models behaviors, thinking processes, or procedures, but does not provide an opportunity for students to practice.	The teacher provides a model of a completed product that students then make, or models the behaviors, thinking processes, or procedures necessary for the task.	The teacher provides a model of a completed product that students then make, or models the behaviors, thinking processes, or procedures necessary for the task, and assists students during practice.	The teacher designs, enacts, and assists in modeling activities that demonstrate skillful integration of multiple standards simultaneously.