

BEYOND “ENGLISH-ONLY”: CREATING EFFECTIVE AND EQUITABLE PROGRAM LANGUAGE POLICY



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Presentation Outline

MOVING BEYOND "ENGLISH ONLY"

- Motivations for and Challenges of "English Only" in ELT
- What does the research say?
- Case Study: Program Policy Change in a University English Language Centre
- Q& A, Discussion



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WHY DO ENGLISH-ONLY POLICIES EXIST?

To maximize target language use in the classroom



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Some Benefits of Target Language Use



DRIVES LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- **Input-Output Theories of Second/Additional Language Acquisition (SLA):** Provides opportunities for meaningful output. Presentation, Production, **Practice**.
- **Sociocultural theories of SLA:** Language develops via social interaction.
- Provide a zone of proximal development (ZPD): the zone between what a learner can do unaided and what a learner can do with assistance from a teacher or more advanced peer. Moving out of comfort zone.

PUSHES CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Help move past “translationism” or a word-level concept of meaning (i.e. crappy bilingual dictionaries syndrome).

LOWERS AFFECTIVE FILTER

Builds confidence, encourages risk-taking

PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Pushes development of the language needed for social interaction.

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THE CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

What is one of the biggest shortcomings of English-Only?



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Biggest Challenge?

ENGLISH-ONLY POLICIES ARE NOT VERY EFFECTIVE.

Monolingual vs. Plurilingual Approaches



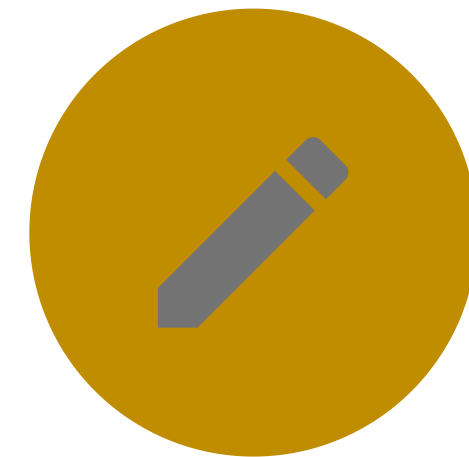
Monolingual Instrumentalism

"Monolingual assumption"
present in much ELT (Hall,
2018)



Council of Europe (2001)

Multilingual (society)
Plurilingual (an individual)



CEFR (2017)

Plurilingual and
Pluricultural
Competence

What Recent Research Says



GALANTE ET AL.
(2019)

Plurilingualism in higher education: A collaborative initiative for the implementation of plurilingual pedagogy in an English for academic purposes program at a Canadian university

MARSHALL ET AL.
(2018)

Plurilingual Students' Practices in a Canadian University: Chinese Language, Academic English, and Discursive Ambivalence.

CHEN (2019)

Problematizing the English-only policy in EAP: a mixed-methods investigation of Chinese international students' perspectives of academic language policy.



Benefits of a Plurilingual Approach



ENGLISH-ONLY POLICIES ARE PUNITIVE

Negative associations with speaking the target language. Plurilingual policies can substitute a carrot for the stick.

REVERSE DEFICIT DISCOURSES

In English-only, L1 is framed in a deficit; as something negative. This may extend to affect their identities as a speaker of that language. Plurilingual policies affirm learners' range of identities.

USE L1 AS A LEARNING RESOURCE

Learners have funds of linguistic and content knowledge in their first languages. Plurilingual policies allow learners and teachers to tap into this knowledge.

REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF CANADA

Plurilingual/pluricultural competence necessary in today's multilingual Canada.

Moving Beyond English Only

A CASE STUDY

- Canadian University English Language Centre
- 18 instructors
- Several instructors identify as non-native speakers and/or plurilingual
- EAP Program had English-only policy; right down to dictionaries
- 70-80% EAP students share an L1
- Instructors frustration around use of L1 in class



Policy Change Timeline

From "English-Only Policy" to "Classroom Language Policy"

JULY 2017

- All staff at PD Session
- Discussion of issues
- Co-editing of policy texts
- Development of resources and lessons

FALL TERM 2017

- Consolidated policy text changes and incorporated them into student handbook and course outlines
- Resource pack made available to all instructors

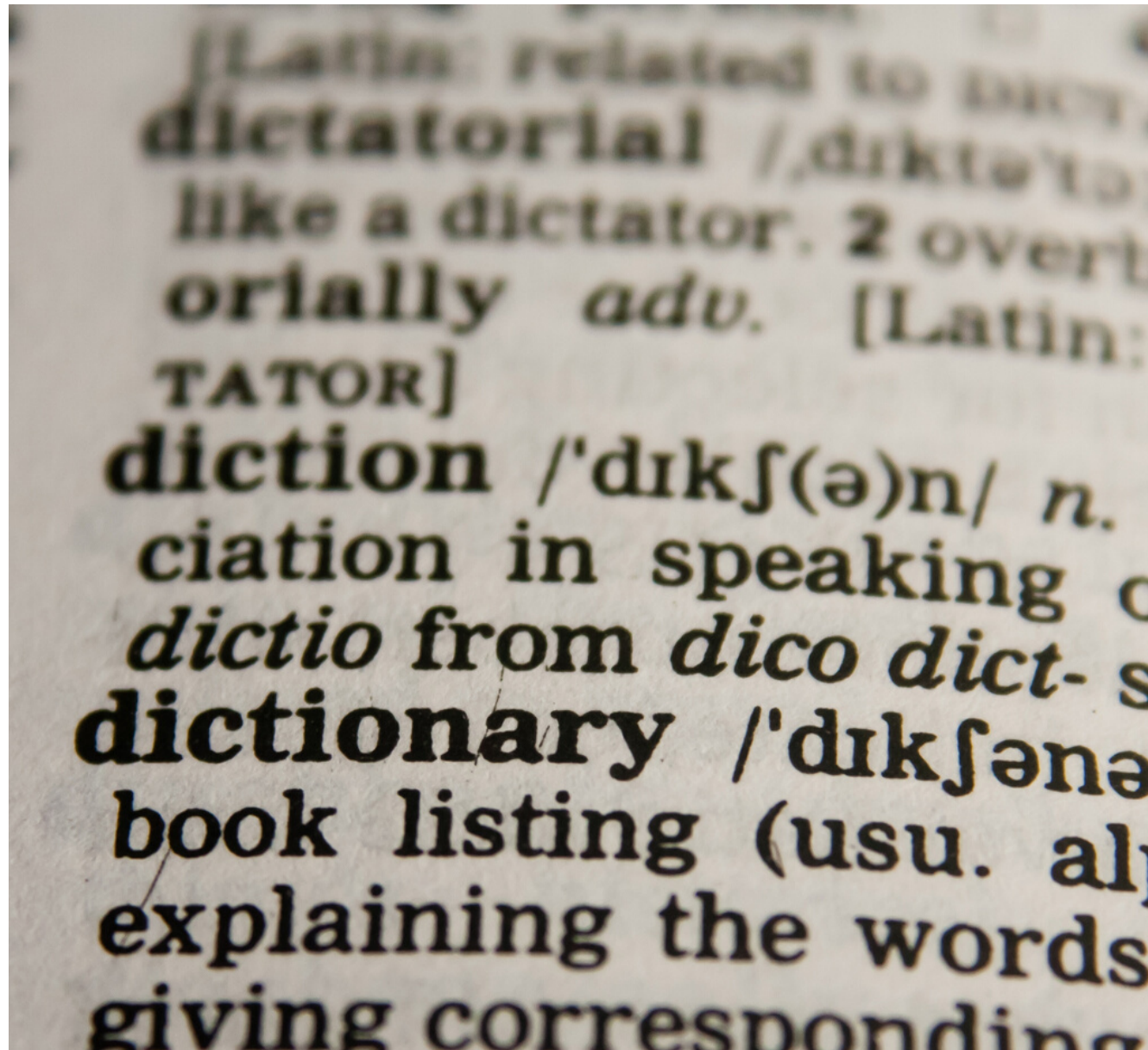
NOVEMBER 2017

- Checked in at staff PD Session
- Solicited changes to policy text, additions to resource pack

JANUARY 2018

- Policy text tweaked slightly
- Updated text on course outlines and in student handbook
- Updated and expanded resource pack

What does the policy text include?



BENEFITS OF SPEAKING ENGLISH IN CLASS

Emphasizes the benefit related to learning, course performance, inclusiveness and community-building

APPROPRIATE USE OF LANGUAGES IN CLASS

- Reminds students of the value of L1 use for comparative purposes, but also that they can talk about their L1 in English.
- Warns against L1 use as a crutch, and how it can exclude.
- Places responsibility for appropriate language use on the student.



Language Policy Resource Pack

Contents

- Goals of the Classroom Language Policy
- Classroom Language Use Policy Text
- Why don't some students speak English in class?
- Classroom Management Techniques to Support the Classroom Language Policy
- Best Digital Dictionaries for EAP Students
- Phrase Bank for Classroom Language Use
- Situation for Discussion
- Lessons and Activities that Align with Policy Goals
- External Resources



Issues and Challenges



Plurilingual
Competence as
Skillset;
Curricular
Change



Student
Pushback



Instructor
Response

Q & A

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Discussion

YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH PROGRAM
LANGUAGE POLICY

Thank You!

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