

**DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER TRAINING MATERIALS: EXPERIENCE FROM THE
GLOBAL SOUTH**

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Description: The paper is about the teacher training materials that are indivisibly important component of quality education and teacher's ongoing professional development.

Key words: Translanguaging, child-led survey, researching with children, pre-service teacher education, teacher training, teaching materials.

Problem statement. Providing primary school pupils with quality teaching in English is of paramount significance since foreign language acquisition as one of the tenets of early child development is now receiving increased attention globally. The gaps and mismatches existing in the sphere of English language teaching at primary schools are being filled in with a wide range of investigations so as to bring about positive resolutions to the matters in question. One of the concerns of primary education is the qualification, preparedness, and resourcefulness of English teachers, which in turn requires paying particularly special attention to the training of highly qualified teachers. To address the matter in question, an international project "English as a school subject: learning effective practices from low-level primary English language teachers" coordinated by Stirling University (Scotland, Stirling) and Aston University (Birmingham, England) was organized and funded by the British Council between 2021 and 2023 (the project website <https://ess.stir.ac.uk/>). The main target of the project was to identify the best practices of primary school English teachers in four contexts—Uzbekistan, Mexico, Malawi, and Bangladesh—and share them widely with other educators on a global scale.

Methods and Data. Local teachers were interviewed, focus groups comprised of school children were organized, the child-led surveys were carried out, local teachers' classroom practices were observed, video recorded in each of the four countries under the framework of the project.

The interviewing session included two phases: The first phase was online and included contextual information about a school and a teacher. The second part of the teacher interview was conducted face-to-face by the research assistant of the project. The duration of each interview was 1.5–2 hours. Ten teachers from 10 schools (both from rural areas and urban areas) were selected in each country. The teachers were first introduced to the project and were presented with the consent form to be signed if they decided to take part in it. The research assistant visited the schools and interviewed the teachers on teaching English at primary schools, the challenges that the teachers encounter and the steps taken to tackle those issues, the usage of English in class, views on translanguaging, teaching materials, exams, gender-related issues, and the effects of COVID on the teaching and learning process. The interviews were taken in English with a little interference of L1, as preferred by the teachers. The recorded interviews were then transcribed, edited, and coded.

10 children from urban schools between 8 and 10 years old participated in the next stage of the project. The questions pre-prepared for focus group discussions were supposed to collect data on the children's opinions about learning English, the challenges they face while learning English, their

likes and dislikes about their English classes, the advantageous sides of learning English, gender-related issues, and the effects of COVID education restrictions.

The children were assigned the role of researchers, explained the process, defined the research direction (selecting topics, data collection tools, interaction modes), decided about the survey participants, and formulated their own research questions. The researchers chose their respondents independently and worked in small groups. Children were divided into groups of three; each young researcher chose two peers and interviewed them.

English class observations were also conducted to collect data. Local teachers from urban areas and rural areas participated at this stage of the ESS project. Video recording of lessons was carried out from April to May in 2022.

After the English classes were video recorded, as a part of data collection process. Vox-pops with the involvement of schoolchildren were video recorded too. So the boys and girls were invited to interview their peers by asking the questions discussed and decided within the ESS team. The interviewer children were given the camera and they walked around to ask the questions and video record their peers' responses. Overall, the children were enthusiastic and free throughout the process and during the follow-up debriefing the children stated that they enjoyed the whole process of both interviewing and being interviewed.

Findings Statement. The main findings deduced from the research comprise research reports, publications, briefing papers, working papers, video materials and vox-pops that have been professionally edited and are in the process of being largely available for English teachers across all countries. Most importantly, teacher training materials encompassing 20 units have been worked out, piloted and are aimed to be used in pre-service teacher education. The content of the teacher training materials is organized coming out of the data about the overall process of teaching and learning English that was collected in the previous stages of the project. More specifically, the topics of the teacher training materials refer to the questions asked in teachers' interviews, focus groups discussions, child-led surveys and teachers' practices of teaching English in the classrooms. Overall, the data analysis indicates that both male and female students view learning English as important for several reasons: as a required subject in schools; for entering universities; for their future careers; and for traveling and communication purposes. The children's positive attitudes toward learning English facilitate students of both genders' better achievements. The topics that comprise the teacher training materials are as follow: 1.Starting and ending the lesson; 2.Engaging and motivating primary school children; 3. Classroom management; 4.Creative use of locally available resources; 5.Translanguaging; 6.Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; 7.Teaching Online; 8.Introducing the topic/lesson; 9. Checking understanding and providing feedback (assessment); Meaning-focused activities; 11. Working on new language; 12. Teaching skills; 13.Teaching from the front (painting teacher-fronted classes in a positive light); 14.Drawing on local culture; 15.Context-appropriate pedagogies; 16.Interaction patterns (pair work and group work interaction); 17.Large classes; 18.Teachers' wellbeing and mental health (perhaps do some vox-pops with teachers); 19.Using research as a teaching strategy; 20.Mixed-level teaching/differentiation (teaching mixed ages, abilities, competencies and using inclusive strategies). The teacher training materials are supposed to be largely available across the countries after they undergo piloting in the countries which directly partook in compilation of it. The piloting of teacher training materials has successfully been completed in Uzbekistan, Mexico and Bangladesh so far.

Key Conclusions and Contributions. The project's outcomes and accomplishments have theoretical, practical, policy, and methodological implications. In theory, it uses a translanguaging perspective to view instructors and learners as bilinguals, avoiding the more prevalent deficit image of both teachers and students. This critical shift in viewpoint will empower both groups by recognizing and rewarding successful practices rather than setting them up for failure, which is a

typical criticism of CLT implementation. By providing information on classroom practices, which are occasionally ignored in theoretical debates, it will also serve to further theoretical understandings of translanguaging as pedagogy.

Practical effect will be realized by making online self-access and teacher education resources widely and openly available. Our partners in Bangladesh, Malawi, Mexico, and Uzbekistan will ensure that the resources are used in their own institutions and will be responsible for making teacher organizations, teacher educators, and policymakers aware of them through local conferences. Briefing materials targeted at professionals, as well as professional essays contributed by each foreign colleague, will be another means of sharing the resources. Webinars will be held to exchange materials, and colleagues will take advantage of every chance to present their work.

Long-term benefits will accrue to governments and policymakers in the four partner nations. The British Council, as a project funder, has significant links with numerous education bodies in ODA nations, as do the partners in Bangladesh, Malawi, Mexico, and Uzbekistan. These existing ties will be used whenever possible to demonstrate the materials and approach, as well as to initiate discussions about relevant pedagogies in these nations.

Local stakeholders including as children, parents, and principals are a second set of practice beneficiaries. Children and schools will benefit from enhanced learning experiences as a direct result of teachers and educators engaging with the resources, which might lead to considerable educational advances in the long run. Involving instructors and students directly in the study process and soliciting their feedback would boost confidence and motivation to learn English.

Women and girls are a third group that will practically benefit. The research team will always make sure gender is a major consideration in study design and recruitment, and wherever feasible, the opinions of girls and women will be solicited and highlighted. The study will significantly advance the burgeoning field of young researchers in terms of methodology. Children will participate not just as recognized and appreciated social participants, but also as researchers, creating research instruments and gathering and evaluating data. Teachers will develop their technical and analytical abilities through their participation in the project as co-researchers.

Future studies might examine effective pedagogies with the help of a bigger group of educators in different settings.

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