

WHAT'S NEXT?
PAST AND PRESENT TRENDS IN
LANGUAGE TEACHING

Jack C Richards

University of Sydney, Australia

Regional Language Centre, Singapore

www.professorjackrichards.com

THE PROBLEM

- Teaching of English is a costly but often inefficient investment
- Demand for fluency in English exceeds the public sector's capacity to provide it
- Limited proficiency in English is seen as a barrier to economic development

SOURCES OF CHANGE

Language teaching influenced by two interacting sources of change

- some from inside the profession
- some from outside the profession



SOURCES OF CHANGE: INTERNAL

Internally initiated sources of change

- paradigm shifts
- new ideas from theory and research

SOURCES OF CHANGE: EXTERNAL

Externally initiated sources of change

- Changing role of English world-wide
- Increasing demand for competent users of English
- Impact on teacher training
- Gap between demand and supply

1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

A changing knowledge base

Traditionally two strands within TESOL

- Classroom teaching skills
- Knowledge about language and language learning
- Provide the core curriculum of TESOL training program



1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

Questioning of relevance of traditional knowledge base

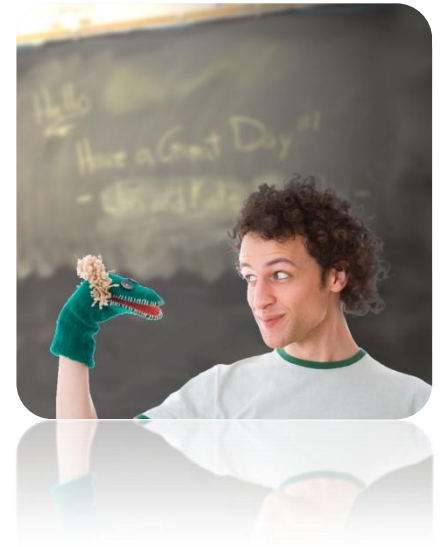
- Largely drawn from other disciplines
- Not based on the process of teaching itself
- Expanding knowledge base

1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

Methods and approaches come and go

Innovative methods no longer around

- Linked to discarded theories and practices
- Top-down
- Shift to teachers' personalized methods



1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

Communicative language teaching survives

- Based on very general principles
- Content-based Instruction, Cooperative Language Learning, Text-based Teaching and Task-based Instruction

1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

Adoption factors for new educational innovations

- Transparency of claims
- Support from high places
- Practicality
- Used for curriculum and instructional materials

1. SOME CHANGES FROM WITHIN

Changed contexts for learning

Changes in where and how learning takes place

- From teachers to learners
- Out of the classroom
- Teacher education moves out of classroom



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Changes in the status of English

The issue of ownership

- English as an international language
- Targets for learning

New Englishes

- New varieties of English
- English as a marker of identity



MY PREFERRED TERMS

- OLD: ESL EFL
- NEW:
- EMLC = English majority language contexts
- EALC = English adopted language contexts
- EILC = English instructed language contexts

2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

- Expanded hours for English
- Scaled-back objectives for teaching English
- Investment in teacher-training
- English from primary school



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

- False-beginner syndrome
- English-medium teaching
- Standards and competency frameworks

2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Off-shore English

Implications for native-speakers

- Plain English
- Avoidance of colloquiums and idioms

OBAMA'S INAUGURATION SPEECH

Original version

- My fellow citizens: I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.



OBAMA'S INAUGURATION SPEECH

Globish version

- My friends and citizens: I stand here today full of respect for the work before us. I want to thank you for the trust you have given, and I remember the sacrifices made by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as for the spirit of giving and cooperation he has shown during this change-over.



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Bilingual practices in the business world

Role of English in corporate world

- Bilingualism for senior executives
- Less need for translators and interpreters



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Organizational and management views of teaching

Influences from the corporate world

- Role of organizational constraints and processes
- Management-based view of education



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Organizational and management views of teaching

Influences from the corporate world

- Emphasis on planning, efficiency, communication processes, targets and standards, staff development, learning outcomes and competencies, quality assurance, strategic planning, performance appraisal and best practice

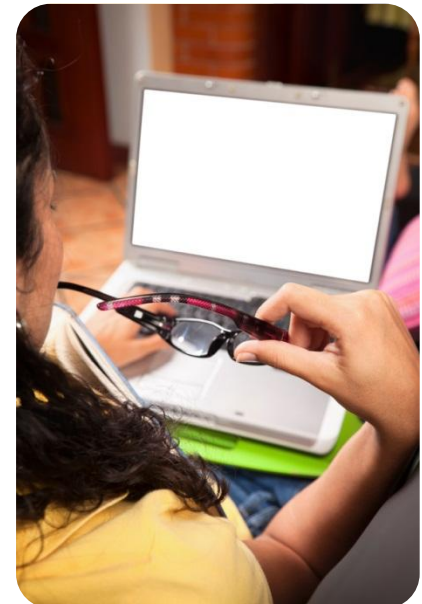


2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

Learning moves beyond the classroom

Less dependence on classroom-based learning and teaching

- Learning in chat rooms, facebook, blogs, emails
- New opportunities from internet, new technology, media, blended learning



2. CHANGES FROM THE OUTSIDE

The demand for accountability

Demand for greater accountability in teaching practices

- Standards movement
- Best practice

THANK YOU

Jack C Richards

University of Sydney, Australia

Regional Language Centre, Singapore

www.professorjackrichards.com