

Language: a fundamental diversity marker

Meaning-making, language using and language learning



ESRC Seminar Series:
Teacher Education and the
Changing Demographics of Schooling



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The Paradox: foreign languages, other languages and barriers to learning

Evans and Fisher (2009)

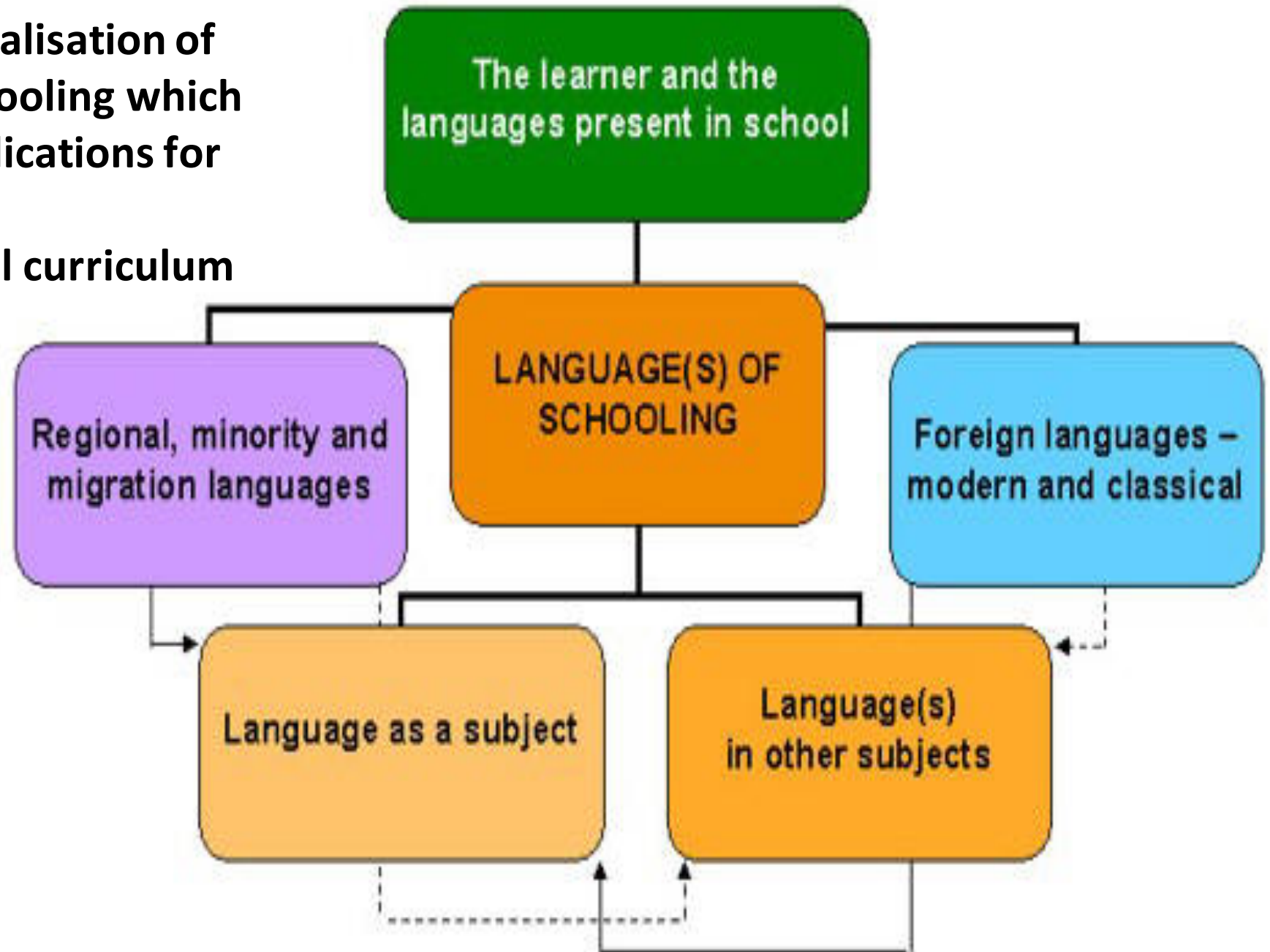
Many young people recognize the importance of foreign language skills, but classroom experiences can create barriers to successful learning as the teaching remains grammar-based with little attention paid to meeting and deepening relevant new world knowledge

Foreign Languages, Modern languages, Heritage Languages, Classical Languages, English as an Additional Language, [First Language and Literacies]

- Boring
- Irrelevant
- Too difficult
- Speakers of other languages ignored
- Grammatically driven
- Little new knowledge
- Ownership comes too late



A holistic re-conceptualisation of the Languages of Schooling which has fundamental implications for the role of language in the school curriculum



Implications of holistic re-conceptualisations of language:

- Led to new ways of thinking about language and schooling
- Reconsideration of the role of language as one of our greatest learning tools
- Explosion of language medium approaches to curriculum which differ from more well documented approaches such as immersion
- Significance of integrated approaches such as CLIL (content and language integrated learning) initially across Europe but now on a global scale
- Dominance of world Englishes and the position of 'English-speaking nations'
- Prioritising learning in language learning

are providing us with opportunities to break down some of the barriers to learning

Consider....

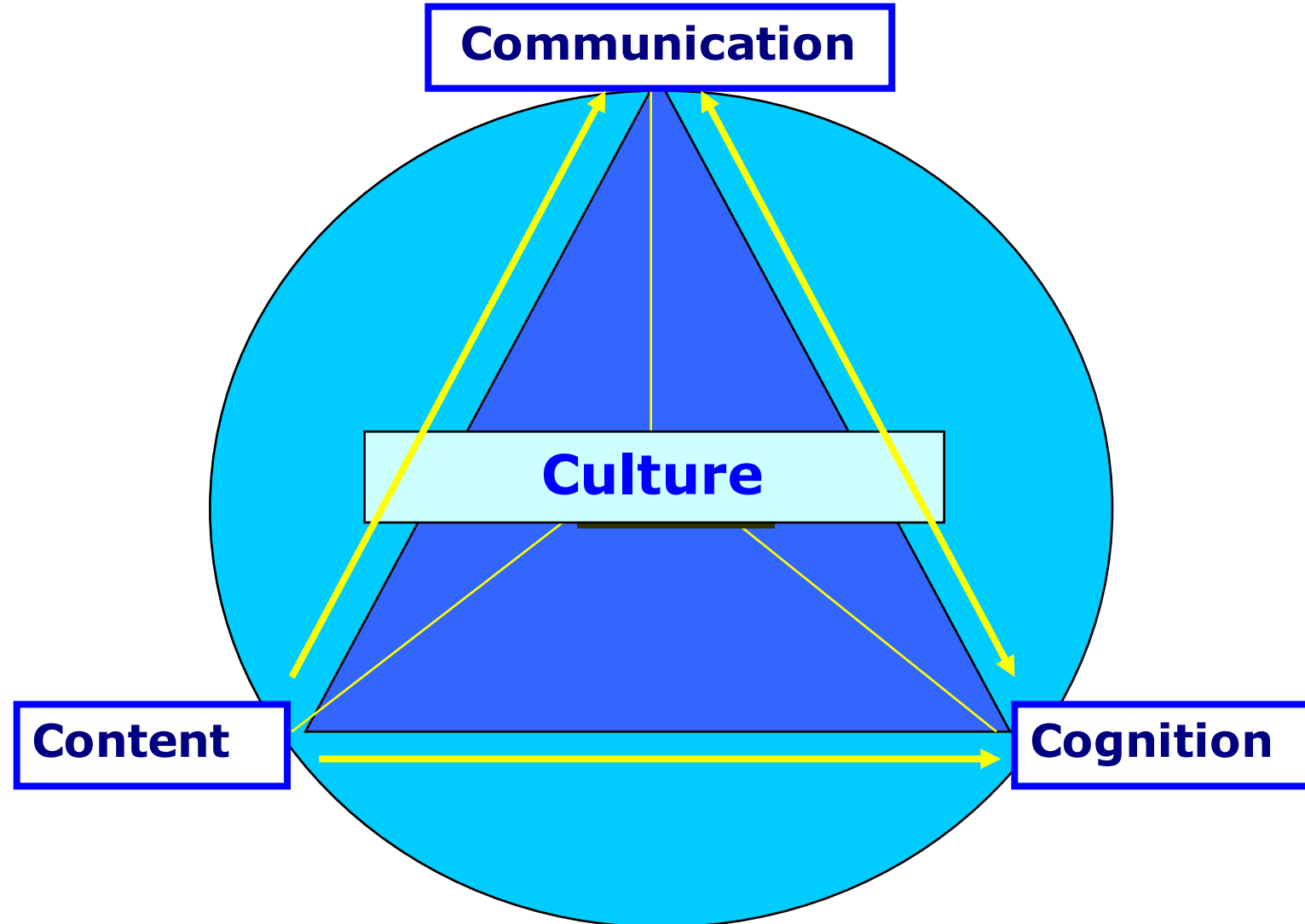
how different kinds of learning require different kinds of language which require different kinds of thinking
..... in a classroom where learners are learning a language as part of those processes



Four key drivers to making language/s more accessible

1. The differentiation between **language learning** and **language using** – learners need to use language as well as learn it!
2. The importance of 4Cs (i.e. that in ‘other language’ classrooms content and cognitive levels needs to be taken into account as well as language – all inter-culturally situated .
3. The process of **linguaging** learning is of importance to all learners if they are to own their learning
4. Academic language can be taught in the form of discourse functions so that all learners have opportunities to say what they want to say or write with appropriate help.

An Integrated Approach for Learning and Using Languages Across the Curriculum: the 4Cs



Teaching and Learning through a foreign language

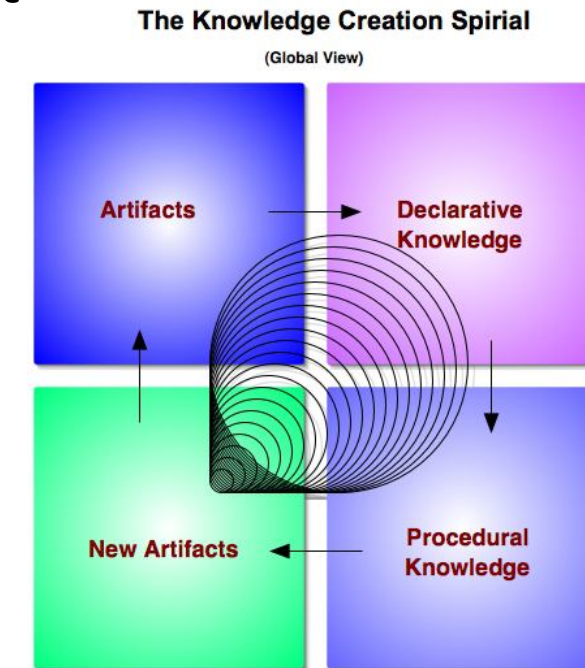
Principles of Integrated Learning where language is both the medium and the object

- Meaning-making
- Conceptual development
- knowledge building pathways
- Discourse
- Linguaging (using and learning)
- Literacies (academic practices)



Knowledge isn't just facts!

- **Factual** knowledge about
- **Conceptual** deeper knowledge about
- **Procedural** how to (applied)
- **Meta-cognitive** strategies



Maximizing Meaning Making and Guided (non-linear) Knowledge Pathways

'doing science'

(procedure, procedural recount)



'organizing scientific information'

(descriptive and taxonomic reports)



'explaining science'

(sequential, causal, theoretical, factorial, consequential explanation & exploration)



'arguing science'

(exposition and discussion, criticality)

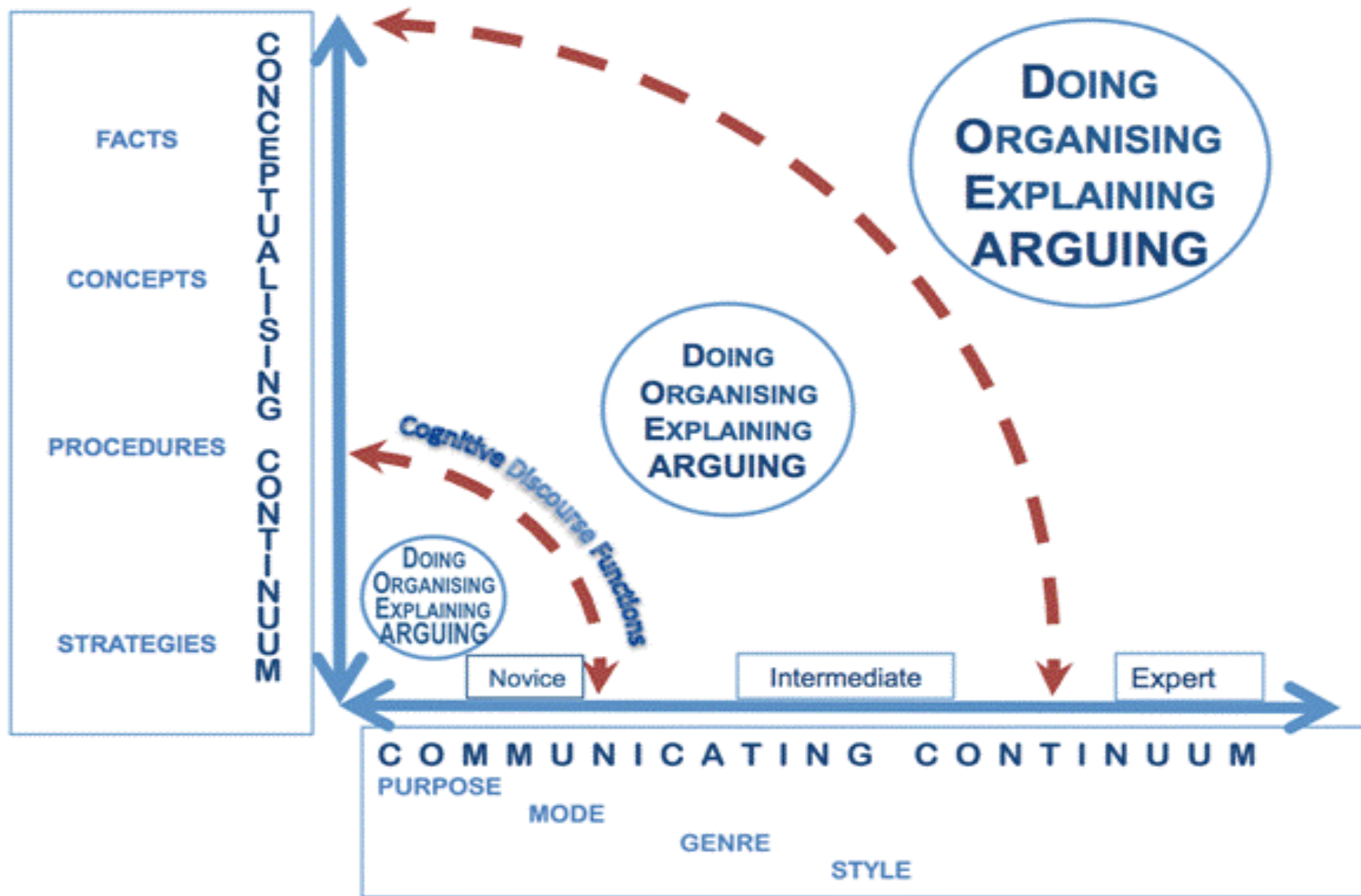
Idealised knowledge pathways (Veel 1997)

Languaging is core
A fundamental dialogic tool

Academic
Language
is nobody's
mother
tongue



Mapping Pluriliteracies Development



A PLT (Pluriliteracies for Learning and Teaching) approach...

provides a framework for integrating conceptual development (cognitive and metacognitive) and linguistic progression across languages (academic literacies).

In Science, learners need to *be apprenticed into meaning* (Veel 1997:162) of school science in such a way that they build science understanding through activities and tasks which involve them in reading texts, writing texts, making arguments and participating in class discussion (Cervetti et al.2012; Hand et al. 2003) and create an environment where science understanding deepens and evolves.

Breaking down barriers to diversity

- Academic Tribes and their Territories (mind sets)
- Teacher Identities
- Strong movement to rethinking literacies (e.g. Australia)
- Pioneering opportunities (1 + 2)
- New entrants to the profession
- Bottom up movements
- Confidence building

The role of teacher education: breaking down barriers to 'learning' capital with diversity at the core: to work together

- Second language educators
- First language educators
- Foreign language educators
- Subject specialist educators
- Literacy educators
- Language therapists
- Signing

Inspiration

- The work of the Graz Group
- The work of teacher action research/Master's level work

Examples:

- *Notebooking in Sciences classes and beyond*
Leila Eerikainen, Geneva, 2015
- FLAME (Foreign Languages As a Medium for Education) Fiona Moffat,
Stirling

Where it's all at...

If you want to improve the **quality** of teaching, the most effective place to do so is in the context of a **classroom** lesson...The challenge now becomes that of identifying the kinds of changes that will improve learning for all students...of sharing this knowledge with other teachers...

Stigler, J & Hibbert, J (1999)

The Teaching Gap