

The Geopolitics of Knowledge Production in Applied English Language Studies: Transknowledging and a Two-Eyed Critical Southern Decoloniality

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Article abstract

This paper mapped out and explored the geopolitics of knowledge production in applied English language studies (AELS). It did so by employing a double judgmental sampling and by investigating four composite factors in volume 42 of the journal Applied Linguistics (AL), which comprised six issues and forty-three articles, as published in 2021. These composite factors were nationalities and institutional affiliations of the editor, the associate editors, the editorial board, and the international advisory board; nationalities and institutional affiliations of publishing or contributing authors; the foci of the published articles; and the theoretical framings and epistemic orientations of the published articles. The paper maintains that these composite factors serve as important axes of epistemic production practices and as critical loci of knowledge circulation for AELS in this journal. AL has occupied the first quartile (Q1) in communication, and in linguistics and language since 1999 as ranked by both Scopus and Resurchify. As such, it is a top-tier journal in the field of AELS or of applied linguistics. Based on its analysis, one of the arguments the paper makes is that individually and collectively these composite factors function, simultaneously, as a gate-keeping mechanism for knowledge production and as a validation, legitimation, and arbitration mechanism for knowledge production in AL. The paper has also established that there is an invisibilization of the Global South authors in these six issues of AL. This factor, the paper contends, is attributable to the geopoliticizing of knowledge production in these AL's issues. Lastly and importantly, the paper advocates transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality for AELS, and draws a link between this two-pronged theoretical framing and transepistemic language education.

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The Geopolitics of Knowledge Production in Applied English Language Studies: Transknowledging and a Two-Eyed Critical Southern Decoloniality

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Abstract

This paper mapped out and explored the geopolitics of knowledge production in applied English language studies (AELS). It did so by employing a double judgmental sampling and by investigating four composite factors in volume 42 of the journal *Applied Linguistics (AL)*, which comprised six issues and forty-three articles, as published in 2021. These composite factors were nationalities and institutional affiliations of the editor, the associate editors, the editorial board, and the international advisory board; nationalities and institutional affiliations of publishing or contributing authors; the foci of the published articles; and the theoretical framings and epistemic orientations of the published articles. The paper maintains that these composite factors serve as important axes of epistemic production practices and as critical loci of knowledge circulation for AELS in this journal. *AL* has occupied the first quartile (Q1) in communication, and in linguistics and language since 1999 as ranked by both Scopus and Resurchify. As such, it is a top-tier journal in the field of AELS or of applied linguistics. Based on its analysis, one of the arguments the paper makes is that individually and collectively these composite factors function, simultaneously, as a gate-keeping mechanism for knowledge production and as a validation, legitimation, and arbitration mechanism for knowledge production in *AL*. The paper has also established that there is an *invisibilization* of the Global South authors in these six issues of *AL*. This factor, the paper contends, is attributable to the geopoliticizing of knowledge production in these *AL*'s issues. Lastly and importantly, the paper advocates transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality for AELS, and draws a link between this two-pronged theoretical framing and transepistemic language education.

Introduction

Applied English language studies (hereafter AELS) is also known as English language studies or as applied linguistics. As I was preparing to write this paper, I queried (on 24 June 2022) its name and the word, *decoloniality*, into one of the Internet search engines, Google, so as to have an environmental scan of what has been written about it. Forty-four results were returned, of which the following eight topped the list:

- *Shifting the geopolitics of critical knowledge: Decolonial thought and cultural studies 'others' in the Andes* (Walsh, 2007)
- *A Sociolinguistics of the South* (Heugh et al., 2021)

- *Decolonizing English language teaching in Colombia: Epistemological perspectives and discursive alternatives (Descolonizando la enseñanza del idioma inglés en Colombia: perspectivas epistemológicas y alternativas discursivas)* (Fandiño-Parra, 2021)
- *The decoloniality of language and translanguaging - Latinx knowledge-production* (Garcia & Alvis, 2019)
- *Resisting the coloniality of English: A research review of strategies* (Hsu, 2017)
- *Translanguaging as decolonial praxis: Pedagogic and epistemic thrusts in the politics of official knowledge* (Odugu, 2022)
- *Delinking from coloniality and increasing participation in early literacy teacher education* (McKinney, 2022)
- *Academic knowledge production and the global south questioning inequality and under-representation* (Demeter, 2020)

Four observations emerged from the Internet search conducted. Firstly, forty-four results were returned, of which only seven (the last seven from those listed above) had some relevance to AELS. Secondly, the results provided a limited view of the decolonial work going on in AELS, and very little about the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS. Thirdly, they also offered the information about a new book, *Decoloniality, language, race and Southern epistemologies*, edited by Makoni et al. (2022), which was due to be released for publication, and a book chapter in its pre-print form. Fourthly and importantly, they reflected, essentially, the data or information fed into the Internet and what Google search engine algorithms could detect from it.

The above snippet offers a relevant background to my paper. In particular, it highlights two important aspects: that, currently, AELS seems not to have much decoloniality carried out in it, and that there appears to be little done in terms of its geopolitics of knowledge production. In view of this, the main focus of this paper is to explore the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS. The paper does so by mapping out and exploring the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS as represented by the journal, *Applied Linguistics (AL)*, and by advocating transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality.

This allows me to contextualize the notion of the geopolitics of knowledge production. It is a notion loaded with multilayered meanings (see Almeida, 2015; Boussebaa & Tienari, 2021; Demeter, 2020; Grosz-Ngaté, 2020; McCartan, 2010; Tupas, 2020). For instance, drawing on the political, social, economic, and historical dynamics of race, Almeida (2015) argues that geopolitics of knowledge production entails how colonialism, Eurocentrism, and hegemony tend to (re)produce what legitimate knowers and knowledge are from a Western vantage point. She further maintains that this whole process is driven by race-based epistemologies, privileges Western scholarly canon, and marginalizes Indigenous scholars. For Demeter (2020) this notion is mainly defined by material and geopolitical inequities, socio-economic class differentials, publishing biases, and institutional elitism, while for R'boul (2022a) this notion accords primacy to Northern-Western epistemologies due to a belief that they produce universal knowledge (also see de Sousa Santos, 2021; R'boul, 2022b). Now, in this paper, I use geopolitics of knowledge production to refer to how global knowledge is (re)produced and (re)circulated by given scholars of a given race, in certain geographies of the globe as determined by particular knowledge politics and ideologies and as supported by specific knowledge infrastructure and by a specific

academic architecture. I also use it to refer to how particular epistemologies, ontologies, epistemic practices, frameworks, and orientations, and theories are valorized over others. My contention is that global knowledge often tends to be (re)produced and (re)circulated by White, male, European scholars from the Global North and this practice is sustained by the ideology that Western epistemologies have a universal generalizability and that they serve as a global standard bearer. Undergirding and sustaining this global knowledge (re)production and (re)circulation practice are academic journals (and their attendant editorial and review panels), academic institutions (academic affiliations), publishing houses, journal indexing and abstracting bibliographic databases, and journal and country ranking agencies, all of which function as the knowledge infrastructure and academic architecture. In all of this, scholars and epistemologies from the Global South consistently get marginalized, or as both Demeter (2020) and R'boul (2022a) put it, *peripheralized*, and academic journals published in the Global North get higher rankings and higher quartiles than those published in the Global South.

Given the points highlighted above, first, I want to briefly map out the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS by focusing on and by investigating the articles published in six issues of volume 42 of the journal, *Applied Linguistics (AL)*, in 2021. This journal is ranked no. 1 by both Scopus and Resurchify. The key units of analysis of my investigation here are:

- the nationalities and institutional affiliations of: the current editor, the current associate editors, the current editorial board, and the current international advisory board;
- the nationalities and institutional affiliations of publishing or contributing authors (see R'boul, 2022a);
- the foci of published articles; and
- the theoretical framings and epistemic orientations of the published articles.

I regard these units of analysis as important axes or indicators of epistemic production practices and as key loci of knowledge circulation for AELS in this journal (see Boussebaa & Tienari, 2021; Flowerdew, 2007, 2019; Lorente, 2021; McCartan, 2010; Mendieta et al., 2006; Müller, 2021; Sebola, 2018). Needless to say that the institutional or academic affiliations are an indicator of geographic locations. Second, I argue for transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality insofar as AELS as a composite discipline is concerned. Third, I draw a nexus between this dual theoretical framing and transepistemic language education.

Mapping Out and Exploring the Geopolitics of Knowledge Production in AELS: A Case Study of *Applied Linguistics (AL)*

To map out the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS, I want to focus on *AL*. I chose *AL* because it is, as mentioned earlier, ranked no. 1 by Scopus and Resurchify, which are an online bibliographic database and a search engine for ranking scholarly journals, respectively. According to the SCImago Journal & Country Rank portal, since 1999, *AL* has occupied the first quartile (Q1) in both communication, and linguistics and language (see Table 1).

Table 1: *AL*'s 1999-2021 Q1 ranking in Communication, and in Linguistics and Language as ranked by Scimago

Communication													
Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Quartile	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Quartile	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
Linguistics & Language													
Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Quartile	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Quartile	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1

This journal was selected through a double judgmental sampling, which, firstly, involved selecting 15 journals from the top 100 AELS journals ranked by Scopus and Resurchify and, secondly, entailed choosing *AL* from the 15 selected journals. This journal was subjected to a manual bibliometric analysis in which all the units of analysis mentioned above were investigated, coded, and classified according to the categories spelt out in each of the four units of analysis.

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As mentioned above, this journal was analyzed in terms of four key focus areas. Its editorial panel, which is also its *editorialmetrics* (see Mendonça et al., 2018) consisted of an editor, associated editors, a reviews and forum editor, an advisory board, and an international advisory board. The nationalities and institutional affiliations of members of its editorial board were as follows:

- the editor was an American with a US-based institutional affiliation;
- four associated editors - two of whom were Americans with US-based institutional affiliations, while the other two were a Brazilian and a Colombian, each with an institutional affiliation in their country of origin;
- the reviews and forum editor was a British with a UK-based affiliation; and
- the advisory board consisted of three members, each from the UK, Wales, and the US, with their institutional affiliations based in their respective countries of origin.

The international advisory board comprised twenty-five members. Of these, seven were Americans; five British; four Australians; two Hong Kongers; two Swedes; and one each from Brazil, the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, and Singapore. All the institutional affiliations were based in members' countries of origin.

In terms of the Anglo-spheres (or the English-speaking countries) and the geographic regions that correspond to the Global North and to the Global South, the following pattern was observed. For instance:

- Anglo-spheres such as the US, the UK, Australia, and Canada = 17 members (**68%**);
- Europe = 4 members (**16%**);
- Asia = 3 members (**12%**);
- Latin America = 1 member (**4%**); and
- Africa = 0 (**0%**).

Overall, Anglo-Europe (or the Global North) had twenty-one members or an **84%** representation. Even for the first four categories of the *Applied Linguistics*' editorial panel, Anglo-Europe had six (**75%**) members constituting these categories. By contrast, Asia and Latin America (the Global South) had four members or a **16%** representation in the international advisory board and two (**25%**) members in the first four categories. Africa, as part of the Global South, had a zero representation in all the categories of this journal's editorial panel in 2021. If a journal's editorial panel members' nationalities and institutional affiliations are to be used as one axis of the geopolitics of knowledge production in AELS, then, for *Applied Linguistics*, in 2021, all its editorial panel categories were dominated by scholars and institutional affiliations from mainly the Global North, with Anglo-spheres, and in particular, the US, leading this domination. In this context, scholars and institutional affiliations from the Global South appear to have been peripheralized, with those from Africa extremely excluded or having no representation at all.

Thus, this journal's editorial panel membership or its editorial metrics, I argue, functions, simultaneously, as a gate-keeping mechanism for knowledge production and as a validation, legitimation, and arbitration mechanism for knowledge production in *Applied Linguistics*. It is its black-box that needs to be unpacked. I use the term gate-keeping in Barzilai-Nahon's (2009) sense to refer to a practice of controlling information as it flows through a filter, which in this case is a gate (also see Erzikova, 2018; Mendonça et al., 2018). Such a practice entails selecting, sifting, enforcing, and brokering expert information, and analogously, expert knowledge and knowledge experts (see Hutton, 2019; Lorente, 2019; Shahjahan, 2016; Tupas, 2020). Moreover, this gate-keeping mechanism ensures "a systematic infrastructure of expertise and knowledge (re)production" (Shahjahan, 2016, p. 704) that continually serves and protects the interests of the journal.

Elsewhere, *Language, Culture, and Society (LCS)* Editorial Team (2021) asserts that in present-day humanities and social sciences, legitimate categories of knowers tend to be defined and ratified by their academic affiliations. Let me add that such categories of knowers also tend to be recruited and validated by their national affiliations and geographic locations in respect of journal editorial panels. This gives credence to the fact that such panels operate as de facto loci of knowledge production. In the case of *Applied Linguistics*, its editorial panel's categories of knowers (or categories of experts), tend to be structurally embedded in the broader geopolitical infrastructure of knowledge production in which the Global North serves as the locus of epistemic reference (Tupas, 2020).

Volume 42 of the *Applied Linguistics* journal as published in 2021, had six issues and forty-three articles produced by 90 authors and co-authors (see Table 1). All together, these issues had 1,137 pages, with each issue having 7.1 articles on average. However, to be precise, three issues had 8 articles, two issues had 6 articles, and the remaining issue had 7 articles. Of these 43 articles:

- 16 = sole authors (16/37.2%);
- 14 = two co-authors (14/32.5%);
- 8 = three co-authors (8/18.6%);
- 3 = four co-authors (3/7%); and
- 2 = five co-authors (2/4.6%)

The author national diversity metrics or the author nationalities in these 43 articles were as illustrated in Table 2:

Table 2: Author national diversity

Author national diversity	Anglo-spheres (USA, UK, OZ, CA & NZ)	Global North	Global South
USA (33) (37%)	(55) (61%)	(82) (91%)	8 (8.8%)
Europe (27) (30%) Spain = 7 (8%)/ (26%)			
UK (16) (18%)			
Australia (4) (4.4%)			
Latin America (3) (3.3%)			
Africa (3) (3.3%)			
Canada (2) (2.2%)			
Asia (2) (2.2%)			

Against this background, the 43 articles had author affiliation metrics, which are displayed on Table 3. In all, there were 73 author affiliations.

Table 3: Author institutional affiliations

Author affiliations (73)	Anglo-spheres	Global North	Global South
USA (28) (38.4%)	45 (62%)	66 (90.4%)	7 (9.53%)
Europe (21) (28.8%)			
UK (12) (16.4%)			
Australia (3) (4%)			
Latin America (2) (2.7%)			
Africa (3) (4%)			
Canada (2) (2.7%)			
Asia (2) (2.7%)			

Moreover, the following dominant focus areas, dominant framings, and dominant epistemic orientations were identified from the 43 articles, and were classified as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Dominant foci, dominant framings, and dominant epistemic orientations

Dominant foci	Dominant framings	Dominant epistemic orientations
L2 learning/ acquisition (27) (63%); English language teaching (ELT) (7) (16.3%); L2 + ELT (34) (79.3%); Unspecified = 9 (21%)	L2 learning/ acquisition models or frameworks (27) (63%); Critical approaches (4) (9.3%); Translanguaging (2) (4.6%); Decolonial option (1) (2.3%); Unspecified (9) (21%)	Western/ Eurocentric orientations (30) (70%); Western/ Eurocentric critical orientations (6) (14%); Modified Western/ Eurocentric orientations (2) (4.6%); Chinese/ Sino-centric epistemic orientation (1) (2.3%); Fusion of European/ African orientations (1) (2.3%); Decolonial option (1) (2.3%); Unspecified (2) (4.6%)

Pertaining to author national demographics (or authors' countries or continents of origin), it is evident from Table 2 that the country with the most authors was the US (33) (**37%**), followed by Europe (27) (**30%**) as a continent, and by the UK (16) (**18%**). In all, the Global North as a geographic bloc had 82 (**91%**) authors, while the Global South as a bloc had only 8 (**8.8%**) authors in this *AL*'s volume. The Anglo-spheres had the largest share of authors in this regard.

A similar pattern is discernible from the author institutional affiliations (see Table 3), which largely mirror the author nationalities. So, taken together, these composite indicators are a mirror-image of the journal's editorial metrics discussed earlier, suffice it to say that they operate at the two other axes of the geopolitical infrastructure of knowledge production in this journal, and correspondingly that of AELS. This means that during the year under review, 91% of the articles published in the six issues of *AL*'s volume 42 were written by authors from the Global North, and whose academic affiliations were also located in the Global North. Concomitantly, this implies that, geopolitically, 91% of knowledge in these six issues, during this period, was produced exclusively in the Global North. This constitutes, I contend, an inordinate, persistent epistemic imbalance between the Global North and the Global South in terms of the geopolitics of knowledge production and circulation, in this context. Reflecting on this pervasive epistemic asymmetry between the two blocs, R'boul (2022a, p. 2) strongly argues that: "[t]he skewed geopolitics of knowledge generation and circulation continue to subordinate the postcolonial peripheries whose epistemologies are perceived as alternative perspectives". To this end, I want to add that the continued invisibilization of the Global South authors as the peripheral others in these issues of *AL* is a direct consequence of geopoliticizing knowledge production in them. This, in turn, results in these authors being, correspondingly, invisible peripheral contributors to the global scholarly knowledge system (see Demeter, 2020) of the issues in question.

Moreover, the picture painted above highlights which and whose knowledge is legitimized and validated. This, of course, has to do with who legitimate and credible knowers or knowledge producers are, what qualifies as credible knowledge, for whom and to whom knowledge is

produced, and what the ideal sociohistorical, geopolitical, and institutional conditions for producing knowledge are (LCS Editorial Team, 2021; also see Falola, 2018). On this score, I maintain that all of these factors are structurally embedded in the broader geopolitical infrastructure underpinning how worthy and credible knowledge is produced in this volume of *AL* and, analogously, in AELS as well.

What is manifest from Table 4 is that the dominant focus areas explored in the six issues of the *AL* journal were L2 learning or acquisition and English language teaching (ELT), which both constituted **79.3%** (n = 34) of these foci, with the former being the most dominant, overall. The other nine foci were not specified. Likewise, the dominant framings (n = 27/**60%**), were L2 learning/acquisition frameworks, which far surpassed translanguaging and decolonial frameworks put together. In the same vein, the dominant epistemic orientations (n = 30/**70%**) were Western/Eurocentric epistemic orientations. These, in conjunction with their modified versions and critical approaches, were the most used epistemic orientations, while the three Global South epistemic orientations were each used once. Two articles did not specify their epistemic orientations. In relation to the dominant foci, second language learning and second language acquisition have been two of the mainstream areas of investigation since the inception of applied linguistics (see Block, 2017; Cenoz & Gorter, 2019; Kramersch, 2019; Ortega, 2019; Rice, 2021). The same applies to theoretical frameworks employed in applied linguistics and in AELS and their continued reliance on Western/Eurocentric epistemic orientations. Second language learning relies on a normative ideology, which is underpinned by Western, ethnocentric monolingualism, that is often resistant to change. Some aspects of this ideology are error analysis, native speakerism, and learner language deviancy (Loveday, 1983). Gradually, though, this normative ideology seems to be amenable to the new global linguistic realities. For example, many language learners, globally, are native speakers of other languages than English, and they multilanguage and translanguate rather than using just one language (Cenoz & Gorter, 2019; Kramersch, 2019; Ortega, 2019). But, unfortunately, in the *AL*'s issues reviewed in this paper, the demise of the normative, mainstream L2 ideology that Loveday (1983) predicted tends to be not only its reinforcement but its re-incarnation as well. This normative, mainstream L2 ideology judges language learners' proficiency only in terms of L2 monolingualism without considering their multilingual competence.

The dominance of L2 learning/acquisition frameworks and of their corresponding Western/Eurocentric epistemic orientations in these *AL*'s issues are reflective of an ontological and epistemological practice in which Eurocentric epistemic frameworks and worldviews are valorized and privileged over less-regarded, subaltern, peripheral epistemic frames and cosmologies in the geopolitics of knowledge production and reproduction. Additionally, this domination is about legitimating Western or Global North knowledges and knowers, while delegitimizing Southern or Global South knowledges and knowers. To this end, Takayama et al. (2016) contend that scholars need to pay special attention to the knowledge geopolitics of the disciplines from which concepts and theories, and let me add, from which analytic frames, are drawn. They further maintain that more often than not global peripheries such as the Global South tends to serve as depositories of data to be mined and extracted for knowledge production and accumulation purposes by the Global North. This epistemic practice, I assert, leads to the scholars and the people of the Global South being, simultaneously, excluded from the global

knowledge system and from the global knowledge economy. With reference to the *AL* journal's issues analyzed in this paper and in the case of AELS, the scholars and the people of the Global South are consistently excluded from the knowledge economy and from the knowledge system in which they are both the subjects of scholarly investigations and the purveyors of data for such investigations.

Most importantly, AL and AELS scholars, need to always pay priority attention to these twin disciplines as the axes of evil, comprising race, racism, racialisation, patriarchy, coloniality, Anglonormativity, Eurocentrism, and globalism, appear to be subtly embedded in and tend to subliminally intersect in the knowledge production and circulation of their disciplines, and in the global scholarly infrastructure of their disciplines. The case in point is the journal's editorial panels or its editorial metrics as discussed earlier. The other case in point is the twin focal areas of L2 acquisition/learning and ELT, also as discussed earlier, as they serve as the loci and vehicles of knowledge production in AL and AELS. In a different but related context, Motha (2020) points out that there are multiple modalities in which AL has operated as a convenient conduit for colonialism and White supremacy or Whiteness as its disciplinary roots are implanted in racial hierarchies and racial ideologies that often conceal racial hegemony. One way in which it does so, she argues, is by aspiring for innocuous language practices, race-neutrality, and objective analytical tools (also see Almeida, 2015; Chaka, 2021a, 2023; Chaka et al., 2022; Lo, 2020; Von Esch et al., 2020).

Transknowledging and a Two-Eyed Critical Southern Decoloniality

Let me preface this section by saying that attempts at epistemic decolonization, especially concerning African scholarship, have taken place since the time of W. E. B Du Bois and Frantz Fanon, and of many other African scholars, past and present. The focus of these attempts was and, still is, challenging and critiquing the dominance of Western colonialism, scientism, and historicism in Africa (Grosz-Ngaté, 2020; Weiner, 2018). Herein lie elements of the geopolitics of knowledge production, albeit at a macro level. Mine here, is to add to this pioneering African scholarship, in a fractional way, at a micro level.

Therefore, in this section of the paper, I want to propose transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality, respectively, as an approach to and as a framework for exploring and interrogating AELS as a composite discipline. Transknowledging, with its prefix literally meaning *across*, refers to drawing on and tapping into multiple knowledges with a view to enriching one's own knowledge, one's area of investigation, or one's field of study. It is a two-way, symmetrical knowledge exchange that entails deriving information, ideas, views, models, or frameworks from an ecology of epistemologies, of ontologies, and of cosmologies (see Heugh, 2021; Lapaige, 2010). For me, in it, no knowledge is more privileged and hegemonic than the other, whether Western, Oriental, African, or Indigenous, because it is an ecosystem in which all epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies draw from each other for each other's enrichment.

With specific reference to AELS, there is a need for it to *transknowledge* with other local Indigenous languages within which it exists so that it can enrich itself with their related

epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies together with the related conceptual and analytical tools of such local Indigenous languages. For instance, the practices of orality, *izinkondlo zokudumisa / dithothokiso tsa ho rorisa* (praise poetry) (see Kumalo, 2020), and African story telling, which are so common in many Indigenous African communities, are three cases in point. Perennially ignored and marginalized by Western colonialist epistemic modes and practices, these three practices can be tapped into by AELS, particularly by English L2 reading as ways of exploring and enriching reading recalls since recalls, like orality, praise poetry (*izinkondlo zokudumisa / dithothokiso tsa ho rorisa*), and African story telling employ the capacity to remember or the primordial skill of remembering. To frame this in a question form: why should African English L2 learners' recall capacity be subjected to and evaluated through reading recalls solely benchmarked by Eurocentric reading protocols to the exclusion of remembering practices embedded in such learners' everyday communal lives?

Another area that needs transknowledging in AELS is the twin language ideology of native speakerism and monolingualism built into the theorization of both English L2 and ELT. Grounded in post-positivist logics, quantitative rigor, and generalizability, this twin ideology frames English L2 learners as having to continually model their speech, their language learning, and their linguistic competence on an ideal(ized), perfect, monolingual, native speaker (Cenoz & Gorter, 2019; Chaka, 2021a, 2021b; Ortega, 2019). Ortega (2019, p. 28) aptly points out that this twin linguistic-ideological trope results in L2 acquisition and learning being forever “portrayed as a ladder to native-likeness, imagining monolingual-likeness as the finish line of L2 learning.” In a different but related scenario, Chaka (2021a, p. 24) contends that “in one of its crudest manifestations, the native speaker construct engenders and thrives in the essentialized and racialized polar terms such as: *native speakerism = Standard English speakerism = Whiteness versus nonnative speakerism = non-Standard English speakerism = non-Whiteness*” (also see Kubota & Lin, 2006, p. 481). Therefore, this twin language ideology views English L2 learners from a deficit perspective. How, then, can transknowledging occur here? It can occur by noting that the European-/Western-style native speaker, linguistic competence, and bi-/multilingualism, which are based on European, monolingual nation states, are no longer relevant to Southern contexts such as South Africa. Neither can they continue to be the sole benchmarks for judging multilingual learners' English language capabilities in these contexts. For instance, many, if not, all of these contexts boast diverse multilingualisms and diverse language learners, who are multilingual speakers, and who have multilingual repertoires and multiple linguistic competences. Most of these language learners tend to regularly *translanguage* in and out of school using their respective multilingual repertoires. It is these complex language dynamics and nuances displayed by the multilingual speaker and not just the ideal, Eurocentric, monolingual, native speaker that both English L2 and ELT should take into account through transknowledging in their conceptualization and theorization of L2 learners.

Now, a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality. And, first, the concept of a two-eyed perspective, and this is another instance of my own transknowledging at work in this paper. I borrow this conceptual perspective from a *Mi'kmaw* word, *Etuaptmunk*, which literally means, two-eyed seeing. *Mi'kmaw*'*simk* is the Indigenous language of the *Mi'kmaq* or the *Mi'kmaw* people (Rowett, 2018). The latter are based in Canada and some parts of the US. *Mi'kmaw*,

threatened by extinction, is soon to become the first language of Nova Scotia (ALTA Language Services, 2022). The idea of a two-eyed seeing variously refers to:

- humans as a part of ecosystems
- guide for life
- co-learning journey
- spirit
- responsibility for the greater good and future generations
- decolonization and self-determination; and
- diverse or multiple perspectives (Roher et al., 2021).

I employ it here in the first, sixth and last senses, to refer to knowledge as a part of an ecosystem, to refer to decolonization, and to refer to diverse or multiple perspectives, or to diversity of thought, or to different ways of seeing and knowing (see Martin, 2012; Rowett, 2018) in relation to AELS and to its ways and its geopolitics of producing knowledge. That is, AELS, together with its ways and its geopolitics of producing knowledge, needs to embrace and employ a multiplicity of epistemologies, of ontologies, and of cosmologies, and needs to be decolonized within a broader knowledge ecosystem. So, the idea of a two-eyed seeing resonates with transknowledging.

Second and last, critical Southern decoloniality. Critical Southern decoloniality or CSD, builds on the decolonial work of scholars such as wa Thiong'o (1986), Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Mignolo (2007), Nakata (2007), Kumaravadivelu (2016), Takaki (2020), De Figueiredo and Martinez (2021), Fandiño-Parra (2021), and Song (2022). It also extends the work of Southern scholars like Connell (2007), de Sousa Santos (2014), Takayama et al. (2016), Falola (2018); Lazar (2020), Heugh (2021), Osborne (2021), and Severo and Makoni (2021). Most importantly, it builds on Chaka's own work (see Chaka, 2020; 2021a, 2021b; Chaka, 2022), and on his work with his colleagues (see Chaka et al., 2022; Ndlangamandla & Chaka, 2022). In this context, CSD adds Southernism or Southern perspectives, and criticality and self-criticality to decoloniality (see Chaka, 2021a; Ndlangamandla & Chaka, 2022). As a composite perspective, CSD challenges and critiques all instances of essentialized, hegemonic, Western-centric epistemologies generated and circulated in the Global North and in the Global South. It does this in the belief that there are pockets of the *Norths* in the Global South that perpetuate hegemonic, Eurocentric epistemologies and that there are pockets of the *Souths* in the Global North that challenge hegemonic, Eurocentric epistemologies.

Pertaining to AELS, CSD maintains that there are scholars in the Global South, who are embracers and perpetuators of Western-style native speakerism and monolingualism in their theorizing of and in their producing of knowledge about English L2 learning and ELT. Similarly, it believes that there are scholars in the Global North, who challenge and reject Western-style native speakerism and monolingualism in their theorizing of and in their producing of knowledge about English L2 learning and ELT. This is where CSD's criticality and self-criticality lie as part of its two-eyed seeing.

Additionally, CSD argues that the Global South and the different theoretic-linguistic epistemes produced by its scholars should also serve as crucial pivots of reference in the geopolitics and economy of knowledge generation and circulation. It calls for the decolonization and de-hegemonization of epistemic practices and knowledge-production practices in AELS in general. Above all, it is of the view that there is no one universal or monolithic Southern decoloniality, but an ecology of Southern decolonialities that are informed and shaped by the different colonialities of languages still persisting and pervasive in the different regions of the Global South. Such Southern decolonialities need to be backed up by their respective two-eyed criticalities.

Finally, based on the points presented in the preceding paragraphs, there is a nexus between transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality as discussed above, and Meighan's (2021, 2023) concept of *transepistemic language education*. Meighan uses transepistemic language education with reference to heritage language pedagogy (HLP) in the Canadian context. For him, transepistemic language education is the process in which learners and educators, alike, learn from diverse, intersecting knowledges and lifeways for relational and sustainable futures. To this effect, he argues that transepistemic language education problematizes the uncritical acceptance and use of dominant, colonial, nation-state, or official languages such as English. He further points out that transepistemic language education challenges coloniallingual ideologies, or universalizing, dominant knowledge systems prevalent in ELT settings, which characterize Global North plurilingual and translanguaging contexts (Meighan, 2021, 2023). In this sense, transepistemic language education centers and embraces diverse knowledge systems and worldviews in all their multilingual, multicultural, and transnational characters (Meighan, 2023). As mentioned earlier, transknowledging valorizes local Indigenous languages, epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies. It argues for de-hegemonizing dominant Western epistemologies, worldviews, frameworks, and models in favor of an ecology of epistemologies, worldviews, frameworks, and models in AELS. This ecological orientation resonates with the foregoing aspects of transepistemic language education, as at their core is transknowledging or *transepisteming*.

The points highlighted above bring me to a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality. As mentioned earlier, this decoloniality is anchored by three pillars repurposed from a two-eyed perspective: knowledge as a part of an ecosystem; decolonization; and multiple perspectives. The other element of a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality is criticality, which is foregrounded in this type of decoloniality that is theorized from a Southern perspective. These three pillars of this decoloniality are similar to the views articulated by transepistemic language education in terms of: diverse, interlinking knowledges and lifeways; decolonizing dominant knowledges and languages, and affirming heritage, Indigenous, or minoritized languages, and espousing transepistemic worldviews. Finally, the criticality element of a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality dovetails with the view of transepistemic language education that dominant languages (e.g., English), epistemologies, worldviews, frameworks, and models need to be critiqued.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated the geopolitics of knowledge production in applied English language studies (AELS) against the backdrop of six issues of the journal, *Applied Linguistics (AL)*, which were published in volume 42 of this journal in 2021. It has focused on and used the following four composite factors as its points of analysis and discussion: nationalities and institutional affiliations of the editor, the associate editors, the editorial board, and the international advisory board; nationalities and institutional affiliations of publishing or contributing authors; the foci of the published articles; and the theoretical framings and epistemic orientations of the published articles. To this end, the paper has demonstrated and argued that these constellated factors, severally and collectively, functioned as key axes of epistemic production practices and as loci of knowledge circulation for AELS in this journal. Based on the analysis that the paper has conducted, the paper argues that, concurrently, these constellated factors tended to serve as a gate-keeping mechanism for knowledge production and as a validation, legitimation, and arbitration mechanism for knowledge production in these issues of *AL*. Moreover, one of the aspects that has emerged from the analysis is that there was an invisibilization of the Global South authors in these six issues of *AL*. Finally and most importantly, the paper has proposed transknowledging and a two-eyed critical Southern decoloniality for AELS, drawing a nexus between this dual theoretical framing and transepistemic language education.

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