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CONTACT

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TESL Ontario
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IN THIS ISSUE

Articles

Calendar

April 6	TESL London. http://www.tesllondon org/?i=13738&mid=1000&id=335957
April 11–13	BCTEAL. Vancouver, BC. http://www.bcteal.org/ conferences/2019-annual-conference
April 12	TESL Windsor Spring PD workshop: LearnIT2Teach. https://www. teslwindsor.com/workshops.html
April 13	TESL Hamilton Spring Conference. http://www.teslhw.org/events.html
May 2–3	TDSB Celebrating Linguistic Diversity Conference. https://www.oise. utoronto.ca/cerll/event/celebrating- linguistic-diversity-annual-conference/
May 10–11	REAL Institute. Theory, Applied: Myths and Realities. Toronto, ON. https://www.ryerson.ca/ realinstitute/2019-conference/
May 25	TESL Nova Scotia. https://teslns.com/ conference/2019-spring-conference/
May 29–31	College Association for Language and Literacy (CALL). Scarborough, ON. https://www.callontario.org/ upcoming-conference
June 1–3	Canadian Linguistic Association (ACL/ CLA). Vancouver, BC. http://cla-acl.ca/ appel-2019-call/
June 3–5	Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics (ACLA/CAAL). Vancouver, BC. http://www.aclacaal.org/ conference-2019/
June 8	TOSCON19. Toronto, ON. http://tesltoronto.org/ call-for-toscon19-proposals
August 19–21	International Conference on Task-Based Language Teaching. Ottawa, ON. https://carleton.ca/tblt/
August 22–24	Multidisciplinary Approaches in Language Policy & Planning Conference. Toronto, ON. https://wordpress.oise. utoronto.ca/lpp-conference/

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is my last issue as editor of TESL Ontario's Contact magazine. My heartfelt thanks go out to all our readers. You are literally the raison d'être of the magazine. And of course, all the writers who have contributed their ideas and research are its life force. It has been my pleasure to connect these two groups, to put you, if I may, in contact.

In 2012, I took over the editorship from Tania Pattison, who served as editor for a year after the untimely death of Clayton Graves in 2010. Clayton was editor for seven years before that. I am grateful to them and to the other editors who went before for their vision and stewardship. I would also like to thank Kevin O'Brien, our advisory board, and other folks who have worked behind the scenes to make the magazine and the new(ish) website what it is.

Finally, I am most sincerely grateful to my wife, Yoko Reynolds, who has patiently, carefully, and skilfully designed and laid out of all of the issues that I have edited.

A call for a new editor has now gone out. You can find it on the next page. I wish the new editor the very best.

A number of the articles in this issue grew from presentations at last fall's TESL Ontario conference, which was held November 1 & 2 at the Sheraton Centre, Toronto. The issue opens with a detailed description from John Allan, Jaqueline McMaster, and Keith Hackett of their shift from textbooks to an in-house, digital system for developing, managing, and publishing course content.

Sardar Anwaruddin's article describes the results of two attempts to increase knowledge mobilization among teachers. He also describes five actors in successful knowledge mobilization and underscores the important role of teachers as interpreters of research results.

Nermine Abd Elkader presents her ideas about increasing student engagement in speaking activities by having students employ the meta skills of reflection, and self and peer assessment. Next is an article from Tessa E. Troughton, who investigated lexical borrowing among Francophones in the Greater Toronto Area and found significantly lower rates of lexical borrowing than the rates reported by previous researchers.

Wrapping up the issue, Plamen Kushkiev provides his insights into a compulsory professional development policy at a private language school, and Patrice Palmer discusses the need for teacher self care.

Along with these articles, I strong recommend reading conference report and the panel discussions to understand where English teaching in Ontario is headed.

Brett Reynolds
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CONTACT MAGAZINE EDITOR SEARCH

Paid contract position

TESL Ontario invites applications for the position of TESL Ontario *Contact* Editor, a two-year renewable contract position. The deadline for application is April 23, 2019. We anticipate a starting date of May 21, 2019 or earlier. Orientation for the Summer issue of *Contact* will be provided by the outgoing *Contact* Editor.

Contact, TESL Ontario's professional development magazine, was first established in 1974 and has developed into a sophisticated, theme-based publication. It is published online three times a year to meet the needs of various ESL/ELD constituencies represented through the TESL Ontario membership. The readership is drawn from language instructors and teachers employed in ESL programs offered by community agencies, district school boards, colleges, universities and private schools across the elementary, secondary and adult panels.

Responsibilities:

- Soliciting suitable contributions
- Providing editorial work, layout, and formatting for TESL Ontario's *Contact* Magazine
- Posting each of the articles in the WordPress system as a text document and as a PDF file, complete with artwork and tags
- Posting of the full complete versions of *Contact* as PDF files in the online WordPress system along with the necessary artwork for the articles and the cover

Skills required in addition to the editorial skill:

- Advanced skills in Microsoft Word and WordPress software
- Ability to create PDF files
- Ability to create and modify images suitable for the magazine

The Editor receives a fee of $2,900 for each *Contact* issue upon completion of the work. TESL Ontario pays for the Editor's TESL Ontario conference fee since this is a unique opportunity to gather material and meet members from TESL Ontario's 12 Affiliate Chapters.

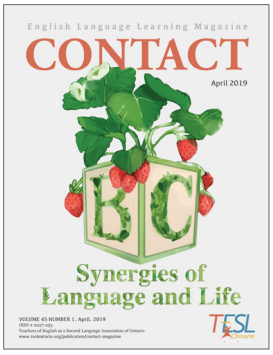
The Editor reports to TESL Ontario's Executive Director and works closely with TESL Ontario's *Contact* Editorial Advisory Board.

TESL Ontario is particularly interested in receiving applications from individuals who have a recognized ESL/EAL teaching and publication record as well as an established record of editorial work. Please review "Contact" under the Publications link on TESL Ontario's website http://www.teslontario.org/publication for an overview of current and past issues.

Please forward a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and the names and contact information of two individuals who are able to evaluate your editorial abilities to Renate Tilson, Executive Director, at rtilson@teslontario.org by the deadline of April 23, 2019.

CONTACT

Contact is published three times a year (April/May, August, and November) by TESL Ontario. May is our conference issue. It is published for the members of TESL Ontario and is available free online to anyone.



Contact welcomes articles of general interest to association members, including announcements, reports, articles, and calls for papers.

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TESL ONTARIO

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HACKING THE ESL STUDENT WORKBOOK

By John Allan, Jaqueline McMaster and Keith Hackett

In our Technical Trades Program (TCP), we were challenged with designing and creating student books and interactive Learning Objects (LOs) for our foundation students. The foundation program trains English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in trade-specific terminology and provides hands-on workshops. It is essentially a bridging program designed to prepare trainees for their programs, which consist of Process Operations, Mechanical Technician Program, Electrical Technician Program, and Instrumentation, all including a common Safety component. The majority of our students are male Qatari nationals whose first language is Arabic.

The Challenge

The first challenge was to find materials that motivated our students and that were at our students' language level, which was CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) A1 Breakthrough or beginner. It was also a challenge to match course outcomes with level-appropriate material and activities. Additionally, their ambitious schedule and focused career targets pushed us to integrate industrial concepts, scenarios, and vocabulary into our curriculum.

Another arduous consideration is our institution's movement towards Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT). We had to design digital materials presented on laptops and hand-held devices such as PowerPoint slideshows.

With these considerations, we used a backwards design method to design an educational practice through establishing learning experience goals before creating instructional materials.

This allowed us to reimagine our student book design from the learners' perspective, and always being aware of the BYOT model, we integrated blended learning techniques to address areas of weakness in our current materials.

From a branding point of view, another important factor for us was to maintain a common template, mirroring an important project simultaneously taking place in our engineering department. English as a Foreign Language department staff were involved in assisting with the assembly of student workbooks, development of vocabulary lists, review of assessments

and provision of andragogical advice in relation to foreign language teaching and learning. This experience shaped many aspects of our project including workbook template design, vocabulary treatment, QR code linking to external resources, and image sourcing.

Development Team

Our development team consisted of experienced educators. Two of them functioned as curriculum developers and in class instructors. They worked in tandem to generate material for classroom and workshop use, and produced student manuals using Microsoft Word, which were later converted into InDesign documents by developers. The developers, who were certified language instructors as well, collaborated to produce learning objects, source images, generate QR codes, and move all curriculum and materials into new manuals, created with InDesign with interactive learning objects embedded. They developed a template for InDesign documents and established target vocabulary for glossaries. As well, they developed templates for Captivate and Hot Potato activities and reconstructed technical drawings and illustrations.

QR Code Readers: Android & IPhone

QR code generators: goQR; QR Code Generator, & QR Stuff

In addition to the developers and curriculum writers, our team also included an on-call technical advisor who provided on-going support and guidance on several issues, and a departmental audio technologist who recorded all audio sound clips required for our interactive learning objects. As this project targeted entry-level English language learners, we also required an Arabic translator who translated all target and technical vocabulary. The translated vocabulary items were also included in Quizlet vocabulary activities for student reference.

Development Resources

It has taken our team a great deal of research, trial, and error as well as negotiation to decide upon our development tools. The tools listed here may change as we are always looking for more efficient means of developing learning objects. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the features of each of the tools we have used in this project.

Adobe Captivate is a tool that excels in creating interactive simulations and assessments. Our team used Captivate for learning events that required simulation and drag and drop assessments. Captivate generates HTML 5 learning objects that work well on our server.

Adobe InDesign is a digital publishing application used to create high standard documents such as books, magazines and newspapers. InDesign also publishes materials for tablets and mobile phones by publishing in e-book format. Our institution uses a learning

management system (LMS) to house learning materials. InDesign documents are easily uploaded into LMS courses.

As education and materials are continuously evolving, ease of editing is crucial. InDesign documents ensure that all media and text elements are modular and easy to update. It is easy to edit material, change layout and styles, add color and adjust master pages. Materials generated in InDesign not only have a more professional look than MS Word documents, but are also more practical and efficient from a developing and editing standpoint.

Kahoot is a free, online application for making interactive multi-choice activities. Students use their phones and the teacher projects the questions and results at the front of the class. It is simple to set up and use for instructors. Students experience a competitive game-show style activity, which injects fun into learning.

EdPuzzle is a free, online resource that allows students to retain more from online videos. EdPuzzle projects allow instructors to insert questions, comments, prompts, and closed captioning to any online video. Students can engage with the video at their own pace, reviewing segments of the video as required. Instructors simply have to share the link and students can start the activity.

Quizlet is a vocabulary learning resource. Each Quizlet study set (vocabulary list) offers a menu of seven separate activities. Quizlet allows instructors to create or borrow flashcards, tests, and study games that can improve learning engagement and allow students to access materials at school, at home, or anywhere on their mobile devices. Quizlet learning opportunities are easily embedded into web pages or learning management system (LMS) courses. Quizlet Live is a competitive and collaborative game included in the Quizlet suite.

Hot Potatoes is a quiz-generating software application used to create activities suitable for language learning. Recently, Hot Potatoes has had a facelift. This facelift ensures that learning activities are responsive. This means that the display is automatically transformed to suit laptop, tablet, and mobile phone displays.

Microsoft PowerPoint is a presentation tool commonly used by educators globally. Slideshows can be exported as PDFs or web pages to be shared online or via other digital mediums.

Templates

Our development team created templates for InDesign, Hot Potatoes, and Adobe Captivate. Templates were created to provide common design elements such as layout, color, text characteristics component styles and publishing attributes of a learning object. Templates add value as they can be the foundation for future projects within our department. Templates also ensure document consistency and accelerate the design process for future books, manuals, and learning objects. We have carefully documented our templates and have developed workshops and “How to” guides to introduce them to future developers.

Innovations

Innovations that have been realized from this project are listed below. These were both intentional and serendipitous.

English–Arabic audio/visual glossary

At our institution, Quizlet is a standard vocabulary teaching and learning tool. As this project matured, we realized that lower-level EFL students require L1 support so we included a simple English to Arabic glossary and created a corresponding Quizlet study set for student consideration. Audio is included to aid in pronunciation.

Customized low-stakes quizzing

Beyond an online vocabulary learning object, we were looking for a custom quiz building solution. After investigating a variety of products, we decided on the "Facelifted" Hot Potatoes software as our primary quiz development tool. Hot Potatoes provides utilities to quickly generate online crossword puzzles, multiple-choice, drag-and-drop, cloze, and sequencing activities. Another advantage, in addition to its being responsive and suitable for all devices, is the ability to embed online video, images, readings, and audio files. Hot Potatoes also has a printing format feature that allows us to use activities as worksheets on the fly.

Activities created with Hot Potatoes and Captivate function as self-checks for the students to determine if they comprehend concepts. Therefore, they are treated as low-stakes learning events.

Rapid design and reusability granularity

Creating and adhering to templates, agreement on a finite set of development tools, and defining learning object-treatment norms will speed up development for future projects. As well, revising existing materials will be more efficient due to standards and the granularity of learning objects. Granularity is the creation of learning objects into small, functional modules. For example, all images, text files and other digital media are stored in a common manner, permitting rapid location and retrieval. Our InDesign template is available to be used in any development of student books in the future. The granularity of elements in this template make alterations for another project easy to perform. For example, on the cover of the book, the titling and image can quickly be swapped out to provide a "brand" for the new courses. We are hoping to present our books to other departments within our college to provide them with options for materials development.

Seamless linking with QR Codes

One key model that we are using is placing QR codes throughout our InDesign student workbooks so students can have instant access to web resources. These include low-stake quizzing activities, EdPuzzle interactive videos, PowerPoint presentations, text-activity

prompts, and YouTube videos that correspond with classroom activities. QR codes have a color-coded border representing the type of learning linked object. For example, Quizlets are outlined in blue and Hot Potatoes are represented in red.

Integrating publisher content or Third-Party resources

The use of third-party content for the technician program was also required for the technical, but not the linguistic, elements of development. The main reason for this was essentially the time required to create technical content for blended learning from scratch. Even with the use of the aforementioned rapid development tools that require very little technological specialization, technical development usually requires the expertise of a Subject Matter Expert (SME). A quick cost analysis confirmed that, in our situation, it was far more efficient to license existing learning objects created specifically for the oil and gas industry than it was to create our own. This meant integrating hundreds of Shareable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) objects into our LMS and tagging them carefully for future use in a Learning Object Repository (LOR). While the reusable learning objects were SCORM compliant, the information contained within them was supplemental in nature and, as such, was not assessed.

Leveraging cloud technology (Office 365)

Another necessity of development was integrating production with emerging workflows and technologies, specifically the institution's use of Microsoft's cloud-based Office 365 and OneDrive. Unlike previous faculty collaboration and production tools, such as Sharepoint, the cloud-based versions of files, similar to Google's Drive/G-Suite with respect to accessibility, are easily shared with students via links or embed codes in the LMS. Properly harnessed and supported, Office 365 and OneDrive suddenly become powerful authoring and collaboration tools for both instructors and students alike.

Learning objects created in Office 365, Sway or PowerPoint for instance, become centrally stored and are immediately reusable and editable. This essentially makes developers out of anyone, including students, willing to apply existing office knowledge to the newer world of cloud-based interactivity. Planner, another new productivity tool found in Office 365, becomes an effective agile board for tracking development and communication within the development team.

Unexpected, but welcome, outcomes

In addition to the five student books and five corresponding teachers' learning resource guides, each module has several corresponding responsive and interactive learning objects. Above and beyond reaching our targets, were some unanticipated consequences from our project.

Introducing new methods or tools should always be complemented by teacher training. In our case a "How To" Hot Potatoes manual was generated to ensure that instructors

could create their own learning objects. In addition, four face-to-face workshops covering planning, creating, publishing and sharing Hot Potatoes activities were delivered to faculty. Other sessions were created and delivered to ensure that teachers could use or at least be aware of the technologies used in this project.

This series of sessions included Quizlet StudySet building, creating and using QR codes, digital image editing, creating engaging lessons with EdPuzzle and enhancing instruction through video manipulation. Links to these materials are available in the resources section at the end of this article.

Beyond professional development, a raised awareness of copyright resulted from this materials development project. Images were acquired from a Shutterstock account, a professional photographer, or open licenses such as Wikimedia Commons or Creative Commons. The remainder were generated by an in-house graphic artist.

Best practices of media and document treatment for sharing and archiving were adopted by the project team. This included tagging files, common naming conventions, and sharing common server spaces. This will make reusability of learning objects, no matter how small, easier for future augmentation or development in our department.

The use of common templates with InDesign, Captivate, and Hot Potatoes ensured that the final products were of similar look and feel. Since our workbooks were based on the engineering department's manuals, students will be able to experience a continuity of learning resources throughout their time at our college. Our templates are now under consideration to be used in our core academic English program and English for technical certificate program.

As a result of this project, a capacity-building plan is in consideration. Capacity in terms of instructor development skills. A pilot training scheme for Adobe products such as Acrobat Professional, InDesign, and Photoshop are under consideration. The idea is to increase the capacity of the department to develop and produce learning materials at a professional standard. This includes uniform practices and styles.

Conclusion

As a result of a small materials development project, with innovation and diligence, we have potentially transformed our teaching methods by integrating BYOT and ensuring consistent materials standards across our programs. Elements include linking to interactive learning objects through QR codes, granular treatment of learning objects, adding relevant interactive learning events throughout courses, and building training to support BYOT itself. Our team hopes that we can build on these successes as we go forward into future academic years and learn from the end users' experience with these materials.

Author Bios

Jacqueline McMaster is a teacher and teacher trainer with 16+ years' experience including Australia, Canada, Vietnam, Singapore, Japan and Qatar. She has had experience teaching in almost every kind of classroom setting. She is currently working in Qatar as an EFL instructor.

John Allan is a teacher, teacher trainer, author, blogger and an instructional developer with 25+ years of experience in the U.S., Canada, the U.A.E and Qatar. His focus on applications of education technologies has resulted a wide variety of training materials and in class learning opportunities.

Keith Hackett has a strong interest in digital-publishing and web-development. He has worked in instructor-training and continues to develop digital materials for various disciplines. He maintains a strong interest in agile project management and recently used InDesign as both a designer and developer for a college level Technical Certificate Program in Qatar.

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION IN TESL

Teachers as interpreters of research results

By Sardar Anwaruddin, Glendon College, York University

There is a longstanding criticism that academic research is not sufficiently utilized in language teaching. This so-called gap between research and practice is well documented. For example, Borg's (2009) study with English language teachers from 13 countries identified a low level of research utilization. Many teachers participating in Borg's study reported that a lack of time, inaccessibility of published research, and a lack of practical relevance of research results were among the key reasons why they did not turn to academic research for professional learning and development. Borg concluded that research utilization by teachers was a rarity in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Since the time of Borg's study, we have seen many initiatives to make research more accessible to teachers. Such initiatives include publishing research articles in online open-access journals, organizing research-based webinars for teachers' professional learning, and supporting teachers to attend academic conferences so that they can learn about latest research in their area(s) of teaching. Yet, a recent international study that investigated language educators' exposure to research has painted a picture which is "rather bleak" (Marsden & Kasprowicz, 2017, p. 613). Against this backdrop, I present some insights drawn from my own studies of knowledge mobilization in TESL. First, I define knowledge mobilization; second, I briefly introduce two of my projects; then I describe five actors in successful knowledge mobilization. Finally, I underscore the important role of teachers as interpreters of research results.

Knowledge Mobilization

There is a growing interest in the dissemination and utilization of academic research. The primary goal is to make academic research more accessible and usable for practitioners in various social fields so that research can have a positive impact on people's lives. There are a few slightly different terms—for example, research dissemination, research exchange, and knowledge mobilization—that are used to describe this kind of work. In Canada, the term knowledge mobilization (KMb) is preferred. The government of Canada is committed to increasing the impact of research and improving the quality of life. The government defines KMb as a reciprocal and complementary exchange of research-based knowledge between researchers and practitioners, not just within academia but in the greater society (SSHRC, 2019). In my work, I build on the Canadian model of KMb and ask the question: "How can research-produced knowledge be better 'mobilized' among users such as practicing

educators, policy-makers and the public communities" (Fenwick & Farrell, 2012, p. 1)? More specifically, my work is concerned primarily with how language teachers interpret and utilize academic research.

Project I: How do teachers read research?

In this study, I explored language teachers' reading of research by analyzing their responses to a selected research article published in a peer-reviewed journal. As part of this study, twelve in-service language teachers joined a wiki-based reading and discussion group. The participants read the research article and exchanged opinions through threaded discussions on the wiki. These discussions were the first source of data for this study. The second source of data was individual in-depth interviews conducted with the participants at the end of the wiki project. While a detailed discussion of teachers' reading-responses is clearly beyond the scope of this essay, I briefly highlight the importance of their prior learning and experience in how they read and interpreted research. Generally, the participants drew upon their past experiences related to the subject matter of the research article in question. These experiences—which could come from pre-service teacher education courses, practicum, or classroom interactions with students—had a great influence on how they interpreted the messages contained in the research article (see Anwaruddin, 2016 for details).

Project II: How do teachers utilize research?

My second project investigated how teachers utilize academic research for pedagogical innovation or improvement. Language educators who participated in this project chose a research article from a peer-reviewed journal, read the article carefully, and integrated its findings or recommendations into their own curriculum. After teaching their research-informed curriculum, they wrote an essay reflecting on their experiences. I collected their essays and published them as an edited book (Anwaruddin, 2019). The educators' firsthand accounts of research utilization were illuminating. They showed that the uptake and use of research evidence by practitioners is more complex than a linear transfer of research evidence from one place to another. The use of research is complex because research-based knowledge has to compete with other forms of knowledge in the context of professional practice. What educators could and could not do with research-evidence was greatly influenced by their contexts. They used their professional wisdom to adapt research-based proposals to suit the needs of their students within the cultural and material environment of their teaching. Thus, one important lesson from my project was the importance of contextualization as a strategy to make research meaningful for practice.

Understanding Knowledge Mobilization in TESL

The utilization of academic research in diverse professional contexts is a very complex and difficult endeavour. A major part of this difficulty is that the meaning of research results needs to be actively constructed, approved by other social actors, and then put into practice. The meaning that the researcher tries to transmit through research articles is almost always transformed by practitioners. These practitioners, e.g., teachers, make provisional decisions about evidence use and adjust their practice to provide the best possible service to their clientele. Therefore, I use the following illustration to underscore the multiple actors who interact and influence one another in the work of research utilization.

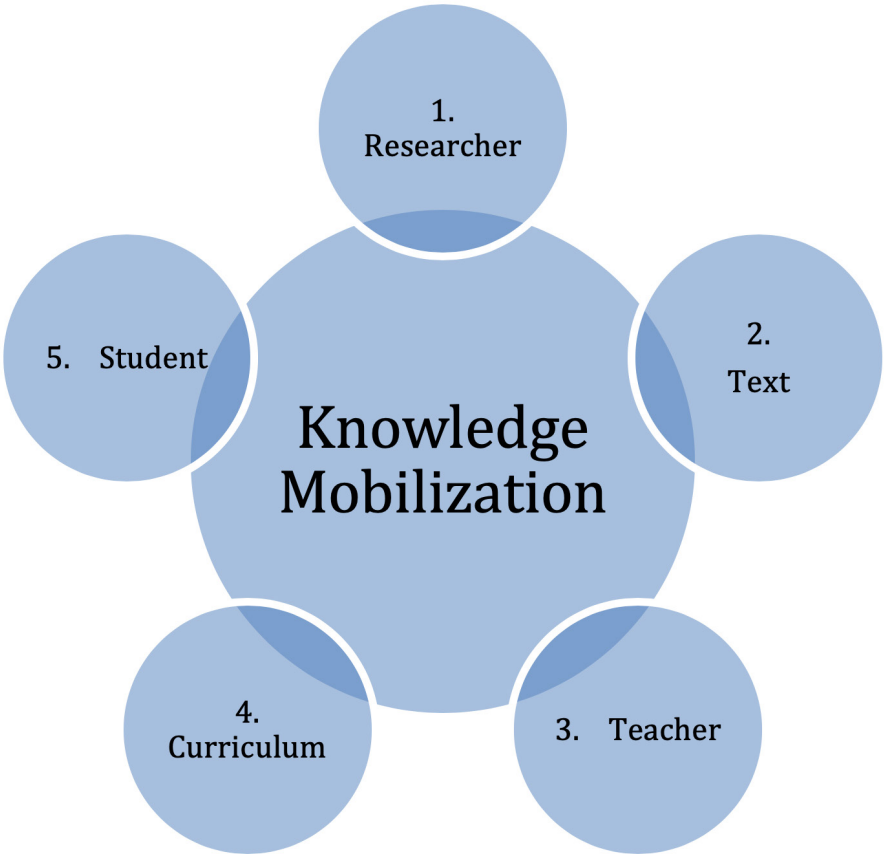

Figure 1: Five actors in knowledge mobilization

Below I briefly describe these actors whose importance and role in knowledge mobilization are variable. The list, therefore, is sequential, not hierarchical.

Researcher: Researchers are the first actor because the process of knowledge mobilization begins with them. The researcher conducts studies following systematic and discipline-specific methods of data collection and analysis. The primary goal of such studies is to construct new knowledge that will be helpful for the community at large. The kind of

knowledge generated through systematic research is commonly described as propositional knowledge. While the knowledge is generated in a *local context*, the researcher presents it in a way that will appeal to a broad readership, using a *global tone* and including implications for use in diverse contexts.

Text: The second actor is the research text, e.g., articles in peer-reviewed journals, books, or chapters in edited books. These kinds of text are important conduits to transfer knowledge from one context to another. However, they are also a potential obstacle to knowing the truth. I am saying this because text has no meaning until it is read by readers who bring their own worldviews and prior experiences to the text and thus actively construct its meanings. For such complexities of the reading process, the meaning a particular reader makes may be significantly different from the meaning intended by the researcher.

Teacher: Due to the problem of text interpretation mentioned above, perhaps the most important actor in the mobilization of educational research is the teacher. This actor decides whether or not a particular piece of research will be relevant to pedagogy, and if so, how the research should be integrated into the curriculum. However, this kind of decision is hardly made by the teacher alone. The teacher's previous education (i.e., influence of teacher educators), teaching experience, conversations with colleagues, and availability of relevant resources are among the factors that influence the decision. Therefore, the teacher's interpretation of research and the decision to act (or not) on such interpretation are collective.

Curriculum: Curriculum affects the teacher's ability to utilize research for pedagogical innovation. I use the term curriculum broadly to refer to both written guidelines and unwritten expectations that dictate what to teach and how to organize the educational experiences of students. It is not just an official document prescribed by authorities such as a ministry of education or a school board. Curriculum also involves material and cultural contexts of a teacher's workplace. In one context, a teacher may have professional autonomy to revise instructional contents and assessment procedures, while in another context, the teacher may be required to teach to the test. Therefore, curriculum is a critical factor in research utilization.

Student: The last but not the least important actor is the student. In a service-oriented profession such as teaching, professionals are concerned primarily with the education and well-being of students. Teachers generate important knowledge through their everyday interactions with students, and such knowledge can make important contributions to the disciplinary foundation of the teaching profession. However, it is not a primary goal for most teachers because they often lack the time and resources to report their practical knowledge back to the larger community. Thus, at a practical level, the teacher is likely to utilize academic research if and only it is deemed beneficial for their students' learning.

Teachers' Research Literacy

The five actors briefly described above point to the complexities of putting research into practice. Perhaps for this reason, a one-way transfer of research from university to school has proven ineffective. As the contemporary approaches to knowledge mobilization suggest (Fenwick & Farrell, 2012), it is reasonable to support collaboration between researchers and educators so that both parties can learn and benefit from each other. To make such collaboration effective, teachers need to possess necessary knowledge and skills to critically analyze research results. Only then will they be able to have meaningful dialogues with researchers—either in a face-to-face setting or through reading research texts such as journal articles. Therefore, I suggest that programs of pre-service teacher education and in-service training take necessary initiatives to support language teachers' research literacy. By "research literacy" I mean the ability to critically evaluate research evidence and judiciously utilize its recommendations. It also involves "willingness to engage with research in order to assess its utility and ripeness for adaptation to context" (Waring & Evans, 2015, p. 18). This kind of literacy should be an integral part of teaching as a complex set of activities.

Conclusion

Based on the insights drawn from my work with educators, I believe that there is no "ideal" reader of educational research. All readings are partial and contingent upon the reader's background, prior knowledge, and contextual realities. Therefore, the aim of my argument in this essay is not to romanticize teachers' ways of reading research. What I have attempted to do is to highlight some complexities in connecting academic research and pedagogical practice. To make such connections stronger, I recommend that teachers develop and possess what I have described as research literacy. This is not the ability to conduct classroom-based action research, which deserves a different discussion. Instead, research literacy is an ability and willingness to assess academic research and wisely utilize it for pedagogical innovation. Pre-service teacher preparation programs and professional organizations such as TESL Ontario can play an important role in fostering such research literacy. This kind of literacy is necessary for language teachers to become informed interpreters of research results and to mobilize knowledge in pedagogically transformative ways.

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ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SPEAKING ASSESSMENT TO INCREASE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

By Nermine Abd Elkader, University of Toronto, New College

Teachers sometimes find it challenging to engage students in speaking activities. Some students shy away from the task because they do not have the confidence for public speaking especially in the second language, or they simply find the tasks inauthentic and thus find little value in participating. However, researchers claim that there is more to students' poor participation in class speaking activities than the above. Juzwik, Borsheim-Black, Caughlan, and Heintz (2014) maintain that while student-led and student-centered talk should be the ultimate goal of any educational assignment, teacher talk tends to dominate. Teacher talk is necessary and often required as an organization tool, but when it dominates, it robs students of the opportunity to participate and to improve their speaking skills. Juzwik et al. (2014) also point out that oftentimes students who are more willing to speak dominate the discussion and make it harder for the less outspoken ones to participate even when they want to.

Thus comes the concept of students' participation in assessment to first increase their engagement in the task and second to help them take ownership of their own learning in more authentic and real-life activities. In this regard, Tarighat and Khodabakhsh (2016) observe that when students were encouraged to employ the Meta skills of reflection, and self and peer assessment, closer monitoring was observed and awareness towards structure was raised. Students also expressed a positive attitude for the equal opportunities these methods allowed for all members of the class to talk.

In general, there are two overarching methods of speaking assessment: holistic and analytical. This paper aims to discuss tools and strategies that teachers can use for each method of assessment to encourage student engagement and to ensure their involvement not only in their own learning but also in assessing their progress and that of their peers.

Holistic Assessment

Cabezas (2015) defines holistic assessment as an overall impression of the students' ability reflected in a single score. The advantages of holistic assessment are that it is fast, practical, and cost and time effective. However, holistic assessment has a greater latitude for scorer subjectivity; and unless it is followed by feedback, it is not helpful to tell learners how they can improve or what areas of strength and weakness exist in their speaking. One of the ways teachers tried to deal with the challenge of benefiting from the time and cost

efficiency of holistic assessment while also meeting the requirement of giving learners helpful, workable feedback that was to have their peers offer this feedback. In a study that involved 17 female advanced English learners, students were asked to record their speaking on a WhatsApp group chat and have their peers assess it (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). Final questionnaires revealed that students were generally happy with peer assessment and found it helpful in advancing their speaking skills, but they were also concerned about the possibility of bias, unfairness, or harshness in their peers' grading. Students also maintained that, while they were satisfied with using critical reflection to evaluate their peers on a shared goal, they often found it difficult to elaborate on what has been achieved and to set specific goals for their peers. Moreover, they complained that being occupied with assessment took away at times the opportunity to follow their peers' presentations or to thoroughly appreciate them. It also has to be pointed out that the above method of peer assessment was used with advanced level students. The study did not identify how the method would be received or if it would even be possible with low level students.

The following tool was designed to offer some remedies to the above concerns. It is initially planned for lower level students, but could be modified to be used with students at any level. Moreover, the tool involves a number of open ended questions that could be varied or rephrased to address all aspects of individual presentations instead of giving a final mark or letter grade that might seem vague and undetailed to the receiver. Teachers could instruct the students to choose only one question on the list to answer for each presentation; therefore, teachers can ensure that all students will give and receive feedback to and from everyone in the class community and that students stay on task and are engaged throughout all the presentations.

For each of the presentations you are going to listen to today, choose one of the following questions and answer to give feedback on the presentation or the presenter

1. **What's the best thing you liked about this presentation?**
   The name/names of the presenter/s……
   ……
   Your answer
   ……
   ……
   ……

2. **What was one new or interesting thing that you learned from this presentation?**
   The name/names of the presenter/s……
   ……
   Your answer

It is worth noting that the above tool is best used for individual speaking activities such as presentations and monologues. However, it can also be used for drama or role play

activities that involve a group of students where each student among the audience could evaluate a different member of the group speaking activity.

As has been discussed, holistic methods of speaking assessment could be helpful when followed with feedback. However, a more detailed method of assessing students' speaking is the analytical method. In the following section, I will discuss the analytical method and tools that employ self and peer assessment within this method.

Analytical Assessment

In contrast to holistic assessment, analytical assessment looks at independent criteria of learner's speaking performance and evaluates them on each criterion separately. The final score is the sum of grades given to each one of these criteria (Tuan, 2012). Owing to its detailed examination of the speaker's performance, analytical assessment has a higher efficiency in providing an interpretable assessment in the sense that it offers diagnostic information about students' speaking abilities. For example, some second-language learners may have excellent speaking skill in terms of content and organization, but may have much lower grammatical control; others may have an excellent control of sentence structure, but may not know how to organize their speech in a logical way. In this regard, the analytic scoring scales can show students that they have made progress over time in some or all dimensions when the same rubric categories are used repeatedly (Moskal, 2000).

However, analytical assessment is not without disadvantages despite its many merits. Hughes (2003) warns that in scoring analytically, the criterion scored first may affect subsequent criteria scored later, making the overall effect of a speech diverted to an individual criterion, a phenomenon that Fulcher (2009) names the Halo Effect of analytical scoring. Yet if analytical scoring is used as a formative assessment for self and peer assessment, the Halo Effect disadvantage can be attenuated. This will be discussed in further detail in what follows, but first it is important to point out the individual criteria that analytical assessment looks at in speaking.

Criteria for Analytical Assessment

Knight (1992) identifies a comprehensive list of broad categories of assessment; however, within each category, there are many detailed criteria. For example, Knight's list includes categories that measure fluency, accuracy, and lexical and syntactic complexity; moreover, it includes the more global measures of non-verbal, conversational, and sociolinguistic skills. Within the non-verbal skill category, more specific criteria such as eye contact and body posture; gestures and facial expressions are pinpointed.

The exhaustive list of analytical assessment allows teachers the opportunity to choose the areas they want the students to focus on in their self-assessment and peer assessment. This means that teachers can put different weight on each criterion according to the context and

purpose of assessment. For example, in assessing presentations more weight might be put on the non-verbal category such as eye contact and facial expressions than in group discussion where more weight is put on conversation maintenance and topic development. Moreover, different assessment tools might be needed for self-assessment and peer assessment since the criteria are specific and formative as opposed to global and summative as is in the case of holistic assessment. In what follows, I will show examples of one tool and one strategy of formative assessment for self and peer assessment respectively.

A Tool for Analytical Self-Assessment

One of the speaking assignments that can be given to students to assess their performance individually and not as part of a group is the *Recorded Speaking Assignment* (RSA) (Knight, 1992). This assignment requires students to record themselves reading a passage that includes certain pronunciation features or for more advanced levels talking extensively for a minute or two about a topic of interest. Teachers could prepare rubrics to assess the first submission of the assignment and give it back to the students to work on areas of weaknesses pointed out in the feedback. Students are then asked to submit the assignment a second time for holistic assessment and a final grade after they have, presumably, worked on the areas mentioned in the teacher's rubric. I propose here that, between the first submission and the second submission, the students be given a self-assessment tool to help ensure that they have noticed and focused on the areas of teacher's concern. The following tool gives an example of what this self-assessment tool could look like. Of course, teachers can modify it according to the requirements of the assignments and the specific speaking criteria they want to focus on.

Speaker's Checklist

Check the items on the following list to make sure you've met the speaking requirements

Topic Development

1. Have you started your talk by giving an overview of your topic?
2. Have you included at least three main ideas?
3. Have you used examples, details, and elaboration to support your main ideas?
4. Have you used appropriate transition words to maintain the smooth flow and cohesiveness of the talk?

Lexical Resource

1. Have you included advanced vocabulary (from the Hit List and others)?
2. Have you used idioms and less common expressions?

Grammar

1. Have you used the past tense where appropriate?
2. Have you revised the agreement between subjects and verbs?
3. Have you revised the agreement in number?
4. Have you used enough complex sentences to join sentences skillfully?
5. Have you used the passive voice appropriately?

Pronunciation

1. Have you remembered to pronounce the –ed/d/t at the end of the past tense/past participle?
2. Have you remembered to pronounce the /s/ at the end of plural nouns and third person singular verbs?
3. Have you remembered to differentiate between long sounds and short sounds; for example /this/ /these/?
4. Have you done each of the following:
   a) Linking
   b) Stressing the important/key words
   c) Pausing at different thought groups
   d) Coming to a full stop at the end of a sentence

I call this tool the speaker's checklist. Speakers can highlight the areas on the list that appeared on the teacher's rubric and feedback. Then, they can do self-reflection by checking off the highlighted items after they have done the second recording; thus they get to evaluate how far they have responded to the teacher's feedback before they do the second submission that includes both the second recording and the checklist which can also be part of the final grade.

A Tool for Analytical Peer Assessment

The second tool is more suitable for assessment of speaking within a group. Group speaking activities resemble real life tasks and often require from students more sociolinguistic and pragmatic skills than individual speaking activities. For example, conversation management, taking and giving the floor, interrupting, and negotiating meaning are all skills that are required more in group speaking activities than in individual speaking assignments. Examples of group activities are round-table discussions; fish bowls, where students sit in two circles: an inner one that has the speakers and an outer one that includes the audience; advanced presentations; and drama activities. Teachers often find it difficult to assess these activities while they happen owing to the fact that assessment requires scoring many presenters on several criteria at once. Therefore, they might find it more feasible to record the students while doing the activity and assess them after class. This might make students lose the benefit of synchronized feedback while the speaking task is still current and fresh in their memory. But with the right peer assessment tool, teachers can employ peer assessment to garner some of these synchronized feedback benefits for the performers and to ensure that the students in the audience stay on task and are focused on the activity.

In this method of peer assessment, I suggest giving each student in the audience one criterion only to assess each student performer on. Students can be asked to assess different criteria for different performances. At the end, the speakers will be given feedback on their performance on all criteria from many class members. This will also ensure that the assessors are not distracted by the immensity of the task of having to assess all performers on all criteria or even one student on all criteria (Tarighat & Khodabakhsh, 2016). It will also address any concern performers might have about bias or harsh grading by their peers since they will get that feedback from more than one individual source. Moreover, in big classes, teachers can make up a number of small groups where students exchange the role of speakers and assessors without the need for the teacher to be present and watching all the time. This will help save a lot of wait time during class as students who are not speaking are engaged in listening to their peers and assessing them.

Conclusion

Hinkel (2010) outlines two essential teaching and learning objectives related to using the integrative approach to language learning: in this case, integrating listening and speaking in assessment. These objectives are focus on needed language features and using these features in situations and contexts similar to the real world. The above approach and its related tools make it possible for language teaching to be more focused on thematic, and cohesive elements of discourse or communications (cf. Cabezas, 2015). Moreover, the engagement of the majority of the class community is guaranteed as this engagement has to remain in the center of teacher's planning. To be more specific, involving students in assessment requires for teachers to remain intentional in their assessment of speaking in terms of clear goals and reasonable and realistic expectations. It also requires students to be intentional in engaging their listening skills to be able to assess themselves and their peers. In doing so, an integrated and learner centered education is promoted and often times achieved in second language teaching.

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LEXICAL BORROWING AMONG FRANCOPHONES IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA

By Tessa E. Troughton, University of Ontario Institute of Technology

The French language in Canada has historical roots extending back to the 1600's. Today, many Canadians are French speakers. In fact, nearly 12% of Canadians speak only French, and nearly 18% of Canadians speak both English and French (Statistics Canada, 2017). In Ontario, where the current study was conducted, 622,415 Francophones comprise 4.7% of the population (Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, 2016). The current project examining the language practices of adult Francophones takes place in this minority language context.

This project examined lexical borrowing and code switching among ten adult Francophones in the Toronto, Ontario region. In-depth individual interviews were conducted during which the participants were asked to tell a story or describe an activity of personal interest. Participants also completed a questionnaire about their language use habits and language(s) of education. The data collected is discussed in terms of previous research on code switching and lexical borrowing in Canadian and United States locations where French is a minority language.

Background

Haugen's (1950) definition of lexical borrowing and Weinreich's (1968) definition of lexical interference guide the data analysis in this study. Lexical borrowing is defined as "the process which takes place when bilinguals reproduce a pattern from one language in another" (Haugen, 1950, p. 230). Weinreich (1968) describes lexical interference as a transfer of lexical elements with or without phonological integration in the target language. He cites three possible motivations: 1) confusion about the appropriate usage in the first language (L1) and the new language; 2) rejection of the word in the first language (L1) in favour of the equivalent word in the target language; 3) the development of specialized meanings for words borrowed from the target language, except in cases where the borrowings have a completely new lexical content (e.g., words which denote new technology; Weinreich, 1968). Both of these definitions are cornerstones in the field.

The participants in lexical borrowing studies were all Francophones raised in minority language communities in English-speaking provinces. Lexical borrowing among Francophone populations living in linguistic minority situations has been well documented (Brown, 2003; King, 2000; Flikeid, as cited in Brown, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Walker, 2004).

In a corpus collected among Louisiana Francophones, Brown (2003) found the French speech frequently contained words borrowed from English. In a corpus collected among Prince Edward Island Francophones, King (2000) noted words borrowed from English in the Francophones' everyday speech. Raymond (2011), whose participants were bilingual Franco-Ontarians, tallied occurrences of lexical borrowing based on levels of bilingualism, lexical category, and total number of borrowings. Walker (2004) noted code switching, borrowings from English, calques, and grammatical structures influenced by English among Alberta Francophones. Flikeid (1989, in Brown, 2003) also found borrowing from English in use in Nova Scotian French.

With this existing research about Canadian Francophones in a minority language environment borrowing English words into their French speech, a gap in the research was noted in the area of geographic location. No research on lexical borrowing focused on Francophones in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) was uncovered. Further, there is a gap in the research on the lexical borrowing of Francophones who had migrated from a Francophone region to an English-speaking region. Finally, there is a gap in the research on the rate of lexical borrowing in relation to the use of French in the Francophone home in a minority language environment.

As such, the following hypotheses were proposed:

1. The rate of lexical borrowing from English into French will increase based on the length of time spent in a location that has an Anglophone (English speaking) majority.
2. The rate of lexical borrowing from English to French will increase in relation to the decrease of usage of French at home.

Methodology

The sample consisted of ten Canadian-born adults acquainted with the researcher. No remuneration was offered for participation in the project. The data collection measure consisted of a guided questionnaire, storytelling with story cards, and an explanation of how to do an enjoyable activity or the story of an experience that was important to the participant. The researcher visited the participants individually (except a married couple, who were visited together) and asked them the questions on the guided questionnaire, then to respond to the storytelling prompts, and finally to tell a story. Each interview took about an hour. The storytelling and descriptive sections were transcribed.

Results

The transcriptions of the storytelling and descriptive sections created a corpus consisting of 1,648 word tokens, which was analyzed for evidence of lexical borrowing and/or code switching from English into the French base language; only 14 English noun tokens were

found. As such, 0.85% of the total sample collected in the current research project can be described as lexical borrowing. Also noted was a large variation among the length of responses. For example, in answering the same question, one participant used only 74 word tokens and another used 570. The present study did not note cases of code switching, except for possibly one case ("Ahh, meatballs, mmhh…").

As shown in Table 1, the results of the questionnaire depict the participants as individuals who, on average, attended school in French until age 14, yet moved to an Anglophone area at age 26. They generally do not participate in activities in the French-speaking community and most frequently work in English. As such, they might appear at first glance to be individuals largely engaged in the English world in Canada.

Table 1: *Characteristic by average age*

Characteristic	**Average age**
Attended school in French until	14.0
Arrived in an English-speaking region of Canada at age	26.2
Participate in activities in the French-speaking community	2.7

The data depicted in Table 2, as well as the participants' personal histories, portrays individuals who were driven to move to Anglophone regions by economic necessity, who largely communicate in French with their children, place a very high value on Francophone education for their children, and strongly encourage the intergenerational transmission of French within the family.

Table 2: *Characteristic rates*

Characteristic	**Percent of participants**
Attended elementary school in French	90%
Moved to an Anglophone region for work	70%
Speak French with their partner	60%
Have children	70%
Speak French with their children	78%
Send their children to Francophone schools	100%
Participant's parents (i.e., grand-parents) always speak French with their children	100%
Grandparents always speak French with the grandchildren	57%
Use French at work	34%

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 was not proved as no relationship was noted between the rate of lexical borrowing and the length of time spent in an Anglophone environment. Hypothesis 2 was not proved because all the participants state that they frequently use French at home, even if it is with their children and not with their partner (exogamous relationships). The rate of lexical borrowing found in this study (0.85%) is significantly lower than the rates reported by previous researchers, yet there were factors which could have influenced the results. First, the current study had a small group of participants (under 10), but used a mixed-method approach of a sociological questionnaire and interviews. Second, in the current study, the participants were all raised in Francophone (Quebec) or bilingual provinces (New Brunswick), and completed at least high school there, prior to moving to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) or other Anglophone locations. Third, the participants of the present study came to Ontario as adults, were extremely proud of their educated French, and demonstrated a strong desire to transmit this to their children. The participants' desire to transmit the French language to their children was demonstrated through their choice of language of home communication (French), choice of Francophone schools, and encouraging of French as the main language of communication with the French-speaking grandparents. Finally, the authors in the background studies do not address the role of the researcher with regards to the participants. In some cases, it was stated that the individuals who collected the data were members of the Francophone community (Brown, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Walker, 2004). In the current study, the researcher was not a member of the community per se, but had knowledge of the community and its infrastructure. The question remains whether, and to what extent, the role of the researcher has an effect on the participants' responses during the interview.

In the current study, lexical borrowing was documented as "the process which takes place when bilinguals reproduce a pattern from one language in another" (Haugen, 1950, p. 230), but this phenomenon did not occur very frequently. The data collected showed the development of specialized meanings for words borrowed from the target language (Weinreich, 1968; e.g., the term *high school* denotes a secondary school in which the language of instruction is English). Also evident was rejection of the French word in favour of an equivalent word in the target language (e.g., "Ahh, meatballs, mmhh", *RCMP*, and *OPP*). No examples were found of confusion about the appropriate usage of any words, which demonstrates that all the speakers were bilinguals (Weinreich, 1968).

Conclusion

As noted, the rate of lexical borrowing found in this study (0.85%) was significantly lower than the rates reported by previous researchers and neither hypothesis was proven. As discussed above, there are possible reasons for the difference in results. First, with a small sample size, it is difficult to identify trends with certainty. Next, all of the participants were from different Francophone communities of origin and the impact of this on the results is not known. Further, the researcher was an Anglophone in the Francophone community and an out-group member. Finally, the participants may have tried to speak their best French coming from a desire to "do well" at the interviews. In sum, questions remain around the way the participants presented their linguistic identities to the researcher, the effect of role of the researcher on the participants, and the first language of the participants or city of origin on the data collected; however, the results of this study suggest that future research may isolate some of the variables. Overall, the 10 individuals in the study gave the impression of being extremely proud of their language and culture as Francophones in a minority language environment and actively engaged in transmitting this to their children. This is significant as Francophones are, as noted above, nearly 5% of the Ontario population. It behoves the English-speaking population to endeavour to better understand some of the linguistic drivers within the Francophone population in the Greater Toronto Area.

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COMPULSORY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR ESL INSTRUCTORS

A literature review and personal insight

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Even though there has been a growing interest in teacher professional development (TPD) on the part of educational researchers and practitioners in the last decade, research on English as Second Language (ESL) teachers' perceptions of mandatory professional development at private language centers (visa schools) remains fragmented and scarce. In the Canadian context, particularly in Ontario, initiatives for a sustainable, practical, and professional teacher development, whose target is to curtail teacher attrition and strengthen teachers' professional profiles, remain random and without a proper practical application. The Ontario Ministry of Education sets standards and creates policies that concern public schools; the district school boards stipulate sets of policies to be implemented in their schools, too. Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is a government-funded program that employs teachers with a TESL Ontario certification, and thus requires LINC teachers to undergo a sector-specific, in-service professional development on portfolio-based language assessment (PBLA). All ESL private schools need to receive accreditation from Languages Canada under the same comprehensive scheme in order to provide ESL instruction and organize social programs to international students, who study English for a period of less than six months (Orion Accreditation Manual, 2017).

It becomes obvious that the landscape of language instruction in Ontario is varied, lacking unified standards and policies for all ESL teachers as well as uniform ways to maintain and improve their teacher competence. Such a situation suggests that when PD is undertaken, it might be fragmented and possibly ineffective, especially in the private sector of ESL. Therefore, exploring the perceptions of teachers of their own TPD in relation to the current in-service opportunities for knowledge enhancement and skills upgrade will fill a niche and may provide some insight for further research in the area. The overall aim of this paper is to outline the problem, explore some of the literature and inform prospective research.

Outlining the Problem and Literature Review

Even though there has been an increased scholarly interest in the continuous professional development of teachers in the last decade or so, there is still a dearth of research on

ESL teachers' PD and their perceptions of how efficient the development opportunities at private ESL schools are in the Canadian context. Valeo and Faez (2013) claim "there has been less interest, however, in examining the career development and employment opportunities of accredited ESL teachers as they transition from TESL programs to ESL classrooms" (p.1). The authors examine the literature on teacher attrition in Canada to arrive at the conclusion that the lack of effective opportunities for teacher growth serves as one of the primary reasons that novice teachers leave the profession within several years in service. Furthermore, Valeo and Faez (2013) present an outline of previous studies on teacher attrition (Borman and Dowling, 2008; Sleptin, 2009; Swanson, 2010) in support of their claim that personal characteristics, in-service teacher education and professional isolation may be improved with proper development initiatives.

Published studies on language teacher education and practice abound in the literature, prescribing ways that pre-service teachers should be offered training and qualification initiatives to deepen their knowledge and polish their pedagogical and soft skills. In a similar vein, Abou Assali and Kushkiev (2016) state that "a number of research studies have addressed the effectiveness of teaching in relation to teacher inputs" (p.19), claiming that no consensus has been reached by researchers how to define teacher effectiveness. The majority of the studies conducted in the field praise teachers' personal traits and emotional intelligence skills as highly as their theoretical preparation and cognitive abilities they utilize to build a conducive and positive classroom environment, in which effective teaching and learning take place. In the same vein, several other studies (Muijs & Reynolds, 2010; Campbell, 2004; Griffin, 2013) have questioned the relationship between effective teaching and what factors contribute to it, such as being positive, forgiving and passionate (Walker, 2008), fewer student problems and students being more involved in learning (Walls, 1999). It is believed that novice ESL teachers at private centers are often compelled by the constraints of the ESL industry in Ontario to juggle several part-time positions, inadequate remuneration, while trying to remain in the field despite the fierce competition. In such a reality, it becomes obvious that the PD of in-service ESL teachers might be not be their priority due to the lack of financial means, adequate opportunities or sufficient time to invest in self-development.

Similarly, Hardy (2009) claims "professional development (PD), an integral part of the life of schools and teachers, is an important mechanism to ensure educational reform and improvement in school settings" (p. 510). The dichotomy between broad and systemic PD and more localized PD for profession-oriented purposes the author outlines serves as a background for his investigation into the viewpoints of a group of senior educators in Ontario about their own PD. Hardy's (2009) study is informed by Bourdieu's approach to practice as socially constituted and contested. The author provides his interpretation of the theory- individuals and groups, who compete with each other, constitute the social practices with their own 'logics'. These contested practices occur within a social space called 'field'. Such fields are never static; they are the product of the constant dynamics

of the hierarchical order and interrelations within an organization and the 'habitus', or persuasion, of the occupants of the field.

Another component of this social fiber is the 'accumulation of varied resources, or 'capitals', that individuals and groups build up over time, and upon which they can derive advantages under particular circumstances in which those attributes are valued' (Hardy, 2009, p.511). Bourdieu's theory of society serves as a useful framework for analyzing the power relations and social change in a particular milieu. If reality is socially constructed and subject to change, teacher professional development can then be construed as a social arena where individuals compete over capitals they consider valuable. In such a multi-layered reality, teachers' perceptions of what constitutes their professional development 'is frequently limited to attendance at courses, conferences and whole-school INSET days, often to meet national requirements' (Rose & Reynolds, 2008, p. 219). It becomes evident that the contours of ESL teachers' advancement, both at personal and professional levels, are quite permeable and ill defined. Even though there has been a growing interest in empirical studies investigating ways to enhance educators' soft skills and emotional intelligence, research on in-service PD opportunities for ESL teachers and their perceptions of it at private ESL schools in Ontario remains limited.

My work context and a new PD initiative

A work context I am familiar with is teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to international students, who generally remain in Canada for up to six months. The school in question is a UK-based institution, which provides programs at undergraduate and post-graduate level as well as some specialized professional development courses. The language department is the official provider for the school, which operates campuses in the UK, Germany, and Canada. Among the courses offered are General English, English for Business & Communication, IELTS & TOEFL preparation, University Pathway Program, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) including English for Finance, Tourism & Hospitality, Advertising & Marketing, Law, and Oil & Gas. The school adopts the Communicative Approach, a synergy between Task Based Learning, the Lexical Approach, and the Guided Discovery method. The core teaching staff's average length of service with the school is 2–3 years. With the summer months being more intensive, the need for supply teachers increases substantially.

Since I assumed teaching duties in May 2016, there have been some teacher development initiatives that aimed at raising awareness of new methods and approaches to teaching, teacher growth as well as honing teachers' intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. However, the teaching staff are generally preoccupied with classes and paperwork to be filed every other week during the term and do not manifest any special interest in attending PD days. Nevertheless, peer-observation and assigning courses of different levels and content on a rolling basis to teachers is seen as an opportunity to develop new skills and pedagogical competence. Instructors are invited to observe other classes and cooperate with peers

when deciding on teaching material, introducing realia, and taking students on field trips. The school partially reimburses conference fees and encourages staff to attend or present at such events.

In general, teaching staff are expected to be competent practitioners with a solid theoretical background in pedagogy and a good grasp of teaching methodologies and to be active and resourceful teachers who guide, correct and inspire students on their educational journey. However, without regular opportunities to reflect and diagnose lapses in their teacher profiles, educators may either leave the profession within the first several years of service or experience burnout, emotional depletion and feelings of demotivation. Therefore, investigating teacher stress and the various factors that lead to it has been "a subject of intense interest in recent years" (Antoniou et al, 2013, p. 349). One of these factors is the lack of professional support and recognition as well as inadequate development opportunities. Novice teachers are particularly vulnerable to stress due to the lack of active coping strategies, which leads to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (Antoniou et al, 2013, p. 354).

During a meeting in August 2016, the school in question announced that a new policy for mandatory professional development would be in place before the end of the year. No justification about the reasons why the new policy would be compulsory was disclosed, neither were any details provided about the way the new initiative would be implemented. Questions arise whether this policy would meet the expectations and align with the perceptions of the targeted policy players. This unilateral policy implementation resonates with Sabri's (2010) concerns about the absence of the academic when new policies are created and enacted. She summarizes the assumptive world of policymakers in relation to academics/practitioners in several inter-mingled elements (p.201):

1. Academics are generic "practitioners".
2. They are an indistinct group as compared with other practitioners within the higher education and outside it.
3. Students are central to higher education policy making and improving "the student experience" and providing them, as paying customers with information to make choices, best serve their interests.
4. Academics as practitioners are not capable of or willing to meet students' needs.
5. There is unease about "the subject" and the discipline as it draws attention away from the process of student learning.
6. Institutions, not individual practitioners, are accountable for professional standards and improvements in the student experience.

Even though her research and analysis pertain to the UK higher education context, my assumption is that similar conjectures permeate the *assumptive world* of teachers at private ESL schools in Ontario. Sabri (2010) defines *assumptive world* as "a cluster of

values, perceptions, evaluations and precepts for action…that are formed in a process of structuration… where agents are knowledgeable actors structured by and structuring the rules and resources in their environments" (p. 194). The change in terminology (academic to practitioner; discipline to subject) may be intentional with the aim to emphasize the practical nature of the programs in order to attract customers (students). Despite the possible similarities in the way policies are enacted in different institutions, each school represents a distinct case, and the policy in place along with the policy makers' and players' views should be interpreted, taking into consideration the microcosm and interrelations at play.

In the context of the school in question, policies are usually announced without first consulting teachers' and admin staff's perceptions and possible concerns or resistance. What is more, Appendix A of the Faculty Handbook stipulates that the teacher is expected to be proactive about their own development and the job among other essential personal and professional characteristics. It also states, "the teacher is at the heart of the student experience" and "you will be central to our student's learning journey" (p.4). Moreover, it explicitly mentions professional development as a prerequisite for employment, remaining on the job and receiving an increment after a year of full-time service with the school. The same document of the key responsibilities and capabilities also states that teachers should "be conversant with the professional development goals and standards of the Teacher Profiling Grid and use it to self-evaluate and set goals. We will assist you to achieve these goals" (p.6). Instructors should take the initiative to be involved in peer-observation and engage in PD initiatives. Finally, attending staff and PD meeting and events are compensated at an admin rate, which is reflected in the teacher annual appraisal.

Discussion and implications for future research

Some of the commonly used terms in the discourse concerning teaching and learning are teacher effectiveness, teacher development, and student satisfaction. Even though some policy makers' predominant aim might be student satisfaction and positive feedback on their overall academic experience, creating a learning environment with professional educators who value and constantly improve their teaching expertise as well as supportive admin staff who can harmonize policy makers' expectations with the educational reality in the institution, is often a daunting task. It is assumed that those who construct policies do not always consider the input on the part of the policy players and other stakeholders. In a similar vein, those, who are expected to implement the new policy, may experience feelings of absenteeism and a lack of consideration for their voice in the decision-making process. In order to bridge this ideological gap, a study investing the perceptions of ESL teachers of compulsory professional development policies may shed light and inform future decisions on prospective policy creation and implementation in their professional context.

Note: the author no longer teaches at the school in question.

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WHY TEACHERS NEED TO CARE ABOUT SELF-CARE

By Patrice Palmer

"Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel". Eleanor Brownn

Teaching is a profession that requires giving of one's self to make a difference for students. The chronic use of empathy and depletion of emotional resources are strongly associated with emotional exhaustion and/or professional burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Also, challenges such as student behaviour, precarious work, multiple workloads or administrative responsibilities can add to the pressures of this demanding profession.

There is a growing interest in the area of student well-being but everyone must flourish, including students, teachers, and administrative staff. Research studies suggest that learning happens best when teachers and their students are well but the added benefit is that as teachers flourish, relationships with students, colleagues and the larger community become more positive (Cherkowski & Walker, 2018). Therefore, the learning and working environment is sustaining for all when teachers increase their well-being and flourish through self-care practices.

Self-care is not an indulgence but the key to sustaining the joys and rewards of one's teaching practice. Self-care is defined as skills and strategies used to maintain personal, familial, emotional, and spiritual needs while attending to the needs and demands of others (Newell & MacNeil, 2016). In addition, Reading (2017) suggests that it is "a life-giving activity that restores, sustains and improves your health, and re-fuels your tank" (p. 13). Initially self-care was thought to be the sole responsibility of teachers, but as Cherkowski and Walker (2018) argue, it is a personal, interpersonal and organizational responsibility. Without self-care, teachers are at risk of emotional exhaustion, compassion fatigue and professional burn-out.

Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison (2016) provide definitions for key terminology related to their theory of Hemorrhaging of The Caring Self:

- EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION: the state of being depleted by the chronic needs, demands, and expectations of students and organizations
- DEPERSONALIZATION: negative, cynical, or detached responses (an "I don't care" attitude)
- SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS: natural emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event

- MEANING BURN-OUT: the feeling of having lost the meaning and the purpose for the work (caring is still intact)
- PROFESSIONAL BURN-OUT - physical, emotional, psychological, and the individual, the populations served and the organization spiritual exhaustion caused by

It is important for educators to be aware of the warning signs such as fatigue, mood swings, depression, and loss of empathy. In my own case, I was aware of the some of the warnings signs before I left teaching in December 2015, but I did not associate them with the process of burning out. There were other personal issues that I was facing at the time, so I associated my exhaustion to those events. However, as Skovholt and Trotter-Mathison (2016) suggest, self-care is even more important during times of "personal crisis or excessive stress" (p. 129). I encourage teachers to watch for warning signs. Christine Maslach has conducted extensive research in the area of burn-out and has designed a survey for educators which is available online. This kind of survey can help you identify warning signs.

Joys, Rewards, Gifts and Hazards of Teaching

Teachers derive high levels of job satisfaction because of the close connection to others and the opportunity to help and teach. According to a recent study, students most often describe their teachers as caring, which is an essential quality in our work. Skovholt and D'Rozario (2000), however, suggest that in order for us to maintain the caring attitude, it must be strongly guarded.

These are the joys, rewards, and gifts of our teaching practice but the profession is not without its hazards which are listed below:

- Students: lack of motivation / failure / high level of needs (trauma) / large classes / multi-level classes
- Teachers: inability to say no or set boundaries / boredom
- Environment: continuous enrollment / negative colleagues / precarious work / multiple jobs

In addition, teachers are among those professionals with the highest levels of job stress and burnout across many countries (Stoeber & Renner, 2008). Several researchers have cited additional factors that contribute to teachers' stress such as increased legislative and administrative regulations, the introduction of educational standards with few professional development opportunities, and a lack of planning time and support (Action & Glasgow, 2015, Spilt, Koomen & Thijs, 2011). Therefore self-care is a way for teachers to build resilience and ensure their well-being.

Self-Care Solutions

The implementation of self-care requires a mindset change. When I returned to teaching in 2017, I realized that I needed to adopt self-care strategies if I wanted to prevent burn-out

again in the future. I strongly believe that self-care should be easy to follow, be no cost/low cost and avoid adding time to an already busy career. To achieve this, I incorporated "new tiny habits". My new habits include walking daily, setting reasonable marking expectations, setting boundaries such as no emails at night or weekends, spending time doing things I enjoy, connecting with people important to me, and setting Sunday as a no-work/re-set day.

Participants in the TESL Ontario workshop shared some of their self-care initiatives which are coming home and spending 20 minutes of quiet time, organizing staff treat days where people take turns brining in snacks, and using teaching strategies such as giving students "quiet" reading/desk work and playing music. The teacher who shared the last idea remarked that students liked doing this immensely. Administrators at some schools have also arranged speakers related to mental health. Teachers at these schools appreciated this effort.

Organizational Initiatives

Teacher well-being should be a concern for schools and organizations. The rise of precarious and insecure work, low wages, and a lack of health benefits has harmful health effects. According to Access Alliance (n.d.), "temporary workers earn 64% less than permanent workers and only 1 in 6 of precariously employed workers (17%) in Canada have extended health or dental insurance compared to 50% of those who are employed full-time." Furthermore, precarious workers are three times more likely to rate their health as less than good, so the promotion of well-being through access to health benefits is needed along with more stable employment (Access Alliance, n.d.). For new teachers, stress levels are extremely high so buddies or mentorships are a good way to provide support. Spurgeon and Thompson (2018) argue that well-being should be part of teacher education programs. Teachers must also be provided proper workspaces. A friend of mine who is a college faculty indicated that personal desks were replaced by open concept shared computer stations (personal communication). During the TESL Ontario webinar on this topic on December 7, 2018, teachers indicated that a good work environment, feeling valued and respected and appreciated for their work contributed to their well-being.

Conclusion

Self-care is not an indulgence but needed in the work that we do. It is natural for teachers to put others first but we must find ways to maintain our vitality, health, and wellbeing in order to be our best for others. Teachers need to be empowered and encouraged to take care of themselves and others (Cherkowski & Walker, 2018). This requires teachers and organizations to ensure that this happens.

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