English Language Learning Magazine

CONTACT

March 2020

Conference Issue

Nurturing Reflection and Networking: The Reflective Teaching Journal

PLUS An Innovative (and Easy) Approach to Corpus Analysis

AND MORE...

VOLUME 46 NUMBER 1, March, 2020
ISSN # 0227-293
Teachers of English as a Second Language Association of Ontario
https://www.teslontario.org/write-us

TESL Ontario

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue 2
Editor's Note 3
Contact Magazine 4

Articles

Nurturing Reflection and Networking: The Reflective Teaching Journal 5
An Innovative (and Easy) Approach to Corpus Analysis 14
The Application of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model in a Business English Program 26
Informed Use of Learner L1: Plurilingualism as a Macrostrategy for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages 32
Can Sociodramatic Play Enhance Second Language Development? 44
Exploring Multilingual International Students' Identity-related Experiences through Pictures . 52
Making the Case for Blended Learning in LINC: A Demonstration Research Project 61

Swaby, J. Pink petaled flower [Image]. Retrieved from https://www.pexels.com/photo/pink-petaled-flower-2814310/

Calendar of Online Events

April

April 1 – IATEFL LASIG - in the Time of Corona: Supporting Learners and Teachers in Turbulent Days

April 3 – British Council - Teaching online - tech tools and the tutor's role

April 5 – Teacher Self-Care in Times of Change, Stress, and Uncertainty

April 16 – Virtual Teamwork - How Professionals Can Work as a Team Remotely

April 17-18 – 6th International Conference on Second Language Studies

April 23 – TESL Ontario: What's New in the Best Practices Directory in 2020

May

May 9-10 – BRAZ-TESOL Brasília ABCs of ELT

May 24 – TESL Ontario: Teaching Green Real-World Tasks in the ESL Classroom

June

June 18 – TESL Ontario: Blended Learning to Optimize Teamwork

Editor's Note

To start off, let's address the elephant in the room. I will not mention its name, but I hope as you read this, you are healthy, safe, and happy. Fifteen days into social distancing and it is quite the challenge. Just as many teachers switched almost immediately from face-to-face teaching to online teaching, many others who had been at jobs for years were laid off. I imagine it is a scary and disheartening time to say the least. But as we get through these next few weeks… maybe even months, hopefully there is a silver lining to all of this; I will let you figure out what that may be. For now, call your family, check on your neighbour, or maybe just sit back and eat some junk food for once (without that feeling of guilt, of course). We will get through this.

As for the first isue of the 46th volume, you are getting the practices and research of presenters from the 2019 TESL Ontario Conference. I had an overwhelming response from presenters sharing their insight—so much so that the Summer issue will also contain articles from the conference. Thank you to the presenters who have put in this immense effort. It is appreciated, and I think the readership is in for a treat this year.

In this issue, Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri considers the many needs of teachers and the ways in which they adapt to issues and strive for rewarding careers. Julia Williams describes how corpus analysis with technology can develop students' vocabulary skills and autonomy. David Siefker, Ling Hu, and Nataliya Borkovska introduce Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (1984) in a Business English program. What's more, Rebecca Schmor discusses her experiences with her students, their L1 usage in the classroom, and how plurilingualism practices benefit learners. Fernanda C. A. Batista explores how sociodramatic play as interactive and cooperative learning opportunities help learners acquire an additional language. Vander Tavares shares findings from a research study on student identity and identity-related experiences. And Jill Cummings, Matthias Sturm, and Augusta Avram provide insight on blended learning and LINC.

Thank you for reading. Take care.

Nicola Carozza

editor@teslontario.org

CONTACT

Contact is published three times a year (March, August, and November) by TESL Ontario. March 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.

Personnel

Editor	Nicola Carozza
EAB members	Hedy McGarrell
	Hanna Cabaj
Webmaster	Kevin O'Brien
Design	Nicola Carozza

Legal

ISSN # 0227-2938

The statements made and expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of TESL Ontario.

Copyright for all articles published in *Contact* rests with the authors, Copyright © 2020. Any reprints require the written permission of TESL Ontario and must clearly state *Contact* as the source along with the original date of publication. For permission, contact: rtilson@teslontario.org.

TESL Ontario

TESL Ontario is a supportive community empowering educational professionals to help English language learners to thrive.

Contact TESL Ontario

TESL Ontario #405 - 27 Carlton St.
Toronto, ON M5B 1L2
Phone: 416-593-4243 or 1-800-327-4827
Fax: 416-593-0164
http://www.teslontario.org

Enquiries regarding membership or change of address should be addressed to the TESL Ontario Membership Coordinator at membership@teslontario.org.

Board

Chair	Sharon Deng
Vice-Chair	David Hazell
Treasurer	Art Rekhtin
Secretary	Amy Yani
Members-at-large	Jennifer Allore
	Alex Harchenko
	Lara McInnis
	Paula Ogg
	David Wood

Executive Director

Renate Tilson

Affiliates

TESL Durham, TESL Hamilton-Wentworth, TESL Kingston, TESL London, TESL Niagara, TESL North York/York Region, TESL Northern Region, TESL Ottawa, TESL Peel/Halton/Etobicoke, TESL Toronto, TESL Waterloo-Wellington, TESL Windsor

Nurturing Reflection and Networking: The Reflective Teaching Journal

By Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri, Laboratoire ELLIADD – Pôle Contexte, Langage, Didactique (CLD), Université de Bourgogne Franche-Comté, France

Abstract

Teaching is said to be "the profession that eats its young" (Halford, 1998, p. 34). Unfortunately, this is often the reality and norm associated with many performance-based careers today. Experienced teachers would agree that performance in the classroom begins the very moment you step in front of a classroom full of students. Those teachers, who are ill-equipped for the task or not ready to perform and respond to student needs in an efficient and satisfactory manner, will be faced with many obstacles. This article considers the needs of teachers and how they can learn to cope with the issues related to teaching, in order to better prepare for and respond to the various challenges, while building resilience and striving to enjoy long and fruitful careers in education.

Teaching is said to be "the profession that eats its young" (Halford, 1998, p. 34). What a terrifying image to contemplate! Unfortunately, this is often the reality and norm associated with many performance-based careers today. Ask any experienced teacher and they will agree; the performance begins the moment you are in front of any classroom full of students. Turbulent moments and challenging times await those who are ill-equipped or not ready to perform and respond to student needs in an efficient and satisfactory manner.

An Evolving Profession

Over the last century, the teaching profession has radically changed. In the face of unstable economies and financial strain, institutions are cutting back, while expecting more of their teachers who are sometimes inadequately prepared. They are given fuller classes and fewer resources to properly prepare their learning environments. Furthermore, today's teachers are expected to adapt to their teaching to evolving student needs, while integrating innovative tools to encourage student investment and learning. While it is true that technology has given us ample opportunity for innovation, it has forever changed the way we teach. In addition, it has had a direct impact by placing new and additional demands on teachers themselves. Whether you are a technophobe or technophile, keeping up to date requires making time for on-going training or personal investment, for instance, in learning how to use new programs, software, or hardware.

At the higher education level, many traditional classroom settings have been have been replaced with distance education or Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to respond to rising competition, limited mobility, and demand for access to university studies. This has placed extra responsibilities on educators to adapt and modify their syllabus to accommodate larger cohorts of students, who work at a distance. Alongside the teaching responsibilities, this has likely resulted in accrued administrative responsibilities and the coordination of educational assistants and correctors.

And we have not seen the end of technological developments. Artificial intelligence is part of the next wave of change, and it has already begun to filter into the classrooms on many levels (from the teaching of programming and algorithmic studies to the building or use of robots in class). Faced with all of these changes and new demands, institutions are left wondering how to best prepare in-service teachers, so as to better respond to the constantly shifting needs of students that are a direct result of the evolving needs in the professional domain and society, as a whole. Yet, recent studies have revealed that when these institutions fail to properly respond to in-service teacher needs, they indeed have a negative impact on the profession as a whole.

Teacher Exodus: An Alarming Trend

In the American public school context, Joiner & Edwards (2008, p. 44) explain that neophytes to the teaching profession are at the highest risk of leaving the profession, since "24% drop out of teaching within the first year, 33% leave after three years and between 40% and 50% leave within the first five years". This exodus is often attributed to the level and quality of training and mentoring they receive as they transition from in-service teachers to the world of work. As young teaching professionals, many express fear, over-regulation, and lack of trust from an overwhelming feeling of vulnerability due to their unprepared status

as a newcomer. These statistics are particularly frightening when we consider that some of these aspiring colleagues originally dreamed of teaching as a vocation in which they could invest whilst hoping to give back in return for all they were given as students or pupils. These teachers are the rare and extraordinary ones, who for altruistic reasons, come to the teaching profession with a passion and unparalleled energy.

Teachers in the American system are not alone. A recent study (Weale, 2019) from the United Kingdom revealed that one in five teachers (18%) expect to leave the classroom in less than two years, while more than a quarter (26%) of teachers, school leaders, and support staff with less than five years' experience plan to quit by 2024. When asked for the reasons why they planned to leave, respondents blamed the heavy workload (62%) and the accountability regime (40%), amid complaints about the pressures of inspections and school performance tables.

Improved In-Service Programs

In the face of financial constraints and numerous cuts in education budgets across the world, it is difficult to imagine improved induction and in-service programs to respond to the needs of novice teachers. It is no longer possible to conceive a one-size-fits-all model, since the teaching profession is vast and fully dependent on a variety of constantly changing learner needs. It is necessary to envisage an in-service program that can better prepare in-service teachers to reflect and respond to the rapidly evolving needs of learners in highly mobile and very globalized societies which are built on highly competitive professional spheres. While there are some successful attempts to improve novice teachers' induction experience at the local level (Maciejewski, 2007; Kelley, 2004), one of the most obvious solutions is enhanced socialization practices at the local level, as an imperative component to the retention of high quality teachers (Joiner & Edwards, 2008, p. 44). Logically, communication with colleagues or administration is the key to success when novice teachers are unable to overcome the challenges they encounter as new teachers to the teaching profession. However, as "the new kid on the block", it is not always easy to confide in a colleague and share one's feelings of frustration, distress, or hopelessness. This is particularly true when the new teacher feels guilty or weak, and they feel that in doing so, they may in fact believe that they are admitting defeat. As many small issues snowball into bigger problems or many more dilemmas and issues, the easiest route is to either stick it out for as long as possible, while internalizing the problems or simply get out quickly when the whole situation becomes unmanageable. Either solution is a very unhealthy vicious circle in terms of one's psychological, emotional, physical, and social health and well-being. We all have different personalities and coping strategies; however, if left unchecked those complex challenges may breed to generate emotional and physical stress. It is at this critical moment that one must open the 'SOS cupboard' and resort to efficient

coping mechanisms, survival strategies, and stress management solutions. And yet, many novice teachers are not informed of these types of solutions, nor equipped in this way.

When considering the numerous reasons for departure, teachers cite the following issues: lack of instructional support, lack of emotional support, feeling of being isolated from colleagues, unrealistic expectations of what classroom environment includes, inadequate and poorly timed professional development, no support or induction program, no formative observations and feedback, and ineffective school climate and culture which leads to animosity among faculty members when trying to implement new ideas (Angelle, 2006; Curtner-Smith, Hastie, & Kinchin, 2008; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007; Mandel, 2006). These studies reveal an alarming trend that has persisted for far too long.

Socialization and Communication

If enhanced socialization with colleagues is a key to finding solutions for novice teachers, communicating with colleagues at the local level may prove, as we have seen, to be at the onset of a vicious circle of stress and anxiety for novice teachers. The risk of unveiling one's professional shortcomings can prove to be a source of uncertainty and create a dilemma in the psyche of the novice teacher, who can choose to remain isolated and closed to socialization. This is not the solution if the novice teacher wishes to have a long career in the teaching profession.

The benefits of communication, socialization, and simply brainstorming solutions with non-judgmental colleagues far outweigh the disadvantages, since many individuals socialize and support one another in order to work together in finding resolutions to issues. Nurturing reflection and networking is thus the key to improve and accentuate the pedagogy of novice teachers, through direct contact with other novice and experienced language instructors. And this networking and socialization need not be limited to merely colleagues at the local level. In fact, novice and experienced teachers stand to gain greatly in extending and opening up their professional circle to include national and international colleagues who may have differing perspectives and innovative methods or approaches to pedagogy. In this very wide and unlimited sphere of communication, the novice teacher is freed from the constraints of being judged locally. They can safely put aside their fears, hesitation, and reluctance to talk about their professional, personal, classroom-related or colleague-related issues, setbacks and challenges.

In reflecting on their teaching methods, strategies, and conditions, both novice and experienced teachers stand to gain, as well as share knowledge and insight into the underlying principles and foundations of teaching. Today, we are fortunate to be living in a world where the Internet provides us with a universe of research, forums, and thus potential solutions at the click of a mouse. Modern technology facilitates

and encourages global networking. A reflective teaching network could bridge the gap and serve as a viable solution for problem solving. It may serve as a database and gather valuable worldwide insights into pedagogy, theories, methods, and practices. If an open source journal format were to be adopted and exchanges were to be fostered through an international network, it would be possible for novice teachers to actively engage in socialization practices with their fellow novice teachers, but also experienced and retired teachers, who wish to give back to the vocation that has provided them with years of memorable experiences and insights. As Upitis (1999) points out, novice teachers sometimes lack the appropriate field-based experience and experience-based learning. An international forum would fill a void whereby novice teachers could gain knowledge and insight through the exchange of professional experience from international colleagues across the globe.

A Complex Profession Based on Needs

The teaching profession is a complex profession on so many levels. Even before setting foot in the classroom, teachers are faced with many obstacles and questions. Consider for instance, the basic fundamental interrogations we sometimes encounter, such as what motivates a teacher to teach, or continue teaching? Will students be invested and motivated to learn from said teacher? Will the teacher be accepted and respected by the students? In consideration of these timeless questions, it is perfectly normal for novice teachers to experience a few sleepless nights as they discover the ins and outs of the teaching profession. However prolonged sleeplessness could prove to have very detrimental effects on their health. Teachers must understand that just like their students, they also have needs which motivate them. There is logic to the way humans function, and it could be useful here to shed some light on why teachers sometimes have off days and why students are periodically indifferent or unwilling to learn. Understanding the logic behind basic human motivation may help to clarify some of those fundamental and recurring questions.

From a psychological perspective, Maslow (1943; 1954) illustrates the complexity behind motivational theory while focusing on how humans can fulfill their potential through personal growth. Often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid, the five-tier model of human needs (Maslow, 1943) was further expanded to include cognitive and aesthetic needs (Maslow, 1970a) and transcendence needs (Maslow, 1970b). According to his theory, most behaviour is multi-motivated, that is, simultaneously determined by more than one basic need. These needs can include (presented from the most basic to the highest most complex category of intellectual and existential growth):

- **Basic needs**, such as physiological (food, water, rest); safety and security;
- **Psychological needs**, such as love and belonging (relationships and friends);

- **Cognitive needs**, such as esteem (feeling of accomplishment), and aesthetic (search for beauty, balance and form), and finally,
- **Self-fulfillment needs**: self-actualization (achieving one's full potential), and self-transcendence (a sense of meaning).

Lifelong learning and personal development are fundamental themes for Maslow (1962) who explains that the expansion of and enhancing of self-actualization refers to the need for personal growth and discovery that is present throughout a person's life. In this way, an individual is always developing and changing throughout their lifetime. Self-actualization is therefore akin to an intrinsic motivational process of finding and attaching meaning to one's life. Since we are all unique individuals, our motivation levels (and interests) are just as different and unique. Self-actualization for one individual may involve getting past the glass ceiling in a corporate setting, while for someone else; it may involve winning a gold medal at the Olympics. Maslow (1943: 382–383) explains that for one individual it may take the form of the yearning to be an ideal mother, and for another it may be artistically expressed through paintings.

In the context of the classroom, it may be achieved as a result of a successful connection between the student's learning strategies and the course material or the teacher's methods. For the teacher, it may be crystallized by that invigorating feeling we feel after a successful lesson and a real sense of connection between the teacher and the students. As Maslow (1962) theorizes, self-actualization could be measured through the notion of peak experiences. Peaks occur when an individual encounters a very positive experience and as a result, they feel a surplus of emotion in the form of exhilaration, joy, or surprise. In the classroom, this can take many different forms for both the teacher (success with an approach or method) and the students (understanding the teacher or successfully passing a test). Both the peaks and positive experiences are manifested explicitly and implicitly by means of verbal and non-verbal communication. In either case, as a teacher or a student, these exhilarating moments can be viewed as motors, which help to propel our motivation levels when we encounter hardships or setbacks.

Why do teachers stay?

In an article entitled "Why Great Teachers Stay", Williams (2003) cites the interview results of 12 experienced, exemplary teachers in western North Carolina and examines why they have stayed with the teaching profession. The findings reveal that the teachers share several common characteristics, including a need for intellectual stimulation, positive feedback from students, deep sense of purpose, and strong needs for autonomy (Williams, 2003, pp. 71–74). With reference to Maslow (1943; 1962; 1970a; 1970b) and his motivational theory, these findings (Williams, 2003) give lucid insights into the self-actualization process

that the teaching profession can offer to those who dedicate their lives to the teaching profession. In fact, the findings disclose that for the most part, the teaching profession can offer individuals the opportunity to fulfill the needs found at the highest part of the pyramid, that is the cognitive and self-fulfillment levels. In order to achieve those highest levels of motivation, educators must persist when things go wrong, as they sometimes will.

Quickly finding solutions to burgeoning problems is thus a high priority in this profession. It is the best way to encourage teachers to stay with the profession. As a novice teacher, it helps to keep track of your trials, tribulations, and successes in the classroom. Documenting your approach to pedagogy by means of a teaching journal is both a viable solution and very personal approach to professional development. It is a means to preparing the aforementioned socialization process at the local, national, or international level. When doing so, it is important to note down the peak experiences which are sources of pride and self-confidence. In general terms, these peak experiences can serve as the impetus to renewed motivation since they are proof that your methods are working. They can serve as a real boost to your self-esteem level. The challenges (those most trying moments) associated with teaching must also be noted for the simple reason that organizing your thoughts and rationalizing them may assist you in better defining solutions. In this way, the facts can be separated from the emotion that sometimes blurs our ideas. This is the key to unraveling the work-related obstacle, which is problem-centered and not self-centered.

Teaching journals have been used for decades, and they have greatly evolved in their form and content over the years. However, to our knowledge, they have never been regrouped in the same place for the purpose of inspiration, exchange, and research. This is the primary objective of www.reflectiveteachingjournal.com which was launched in February 2020. The website will be developed to include forums and support groups for novice as well as experienced teachers. If integrated into reflective teaching strategies, a teaching journal could for instance serve as a useful method to express anger or frustration, without obliging the author to divulge sensitive information to a colleague, or worse, suppress fears, develop deep-rooted anxieties, and literally render them ill due to work-induced stress.

The difference between a great teacher, who stays for the long haul, and a teacher who gives up and throws in the towel is likely a difference in personality (Maslow, 1987), but above all, coping strategies and survival skills. The manner of coping "will be an important determinant of the novices' ultimate success or failure" (Eldar et al., 2003, p. 32). Furthermore, a strong personality exhibiting determination, motivation, and a drive to overcome, reflect, and learn from one's own mistakes and achievements will more likely lead to success as a teacher. On the contrary, a personality filled with self-doubt and poor coping mechanisms faces much higher odds in a successful teaching career (Eldar et al., 2003; Attard & Armour, 2005). Perhaps

the solution lies in creating an international reflective teaching journal, network, and forum where strong, determined, and resilient teachers can share their valuable insights, pedagogy, and experience with other teachers (novice or not) in need of support, advice, and guidance. Together, through socialization, we may successfully encourage more teachers to achieve their full potential, while giving true meaning not only to their existence, but also the existence of those mentors, who dedicate a part of their life to providing support and assistance to those who are in need.

References

Angelle, P. S. (December 2006). Instructional leadership and monitoring: Increasing teacher intent to stay through socialization. *NASSP Bulletin*, *90*(4), 318–334.

Attard, K., & Armour, K. (2005). Learning to become a learning professional: Reflections on one year of teaching. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 28*(2), 195–207.

Curtner-Smith, M. D., Hastie, P. A., & Kinchin, G. D. (2008). Influence of occupational socialization on beginning teachers' interpretation and delivery of sport education. *Sport, Education and Society, 13*(1), 97–117.

Eldar, E., Nabel, N., Schechter, C., Talmor, R., & Mazin, K. (2003). Anatomy of success and failure: The story of three novice teachers. *Educational Research, 45*(1), 29–48.

Halford. J.M. (1998). Easing the way for new teachers. *Educational Leadership*. *55*(5), 33–34.

Henderson, H., and K. Noble. (2015) *Professional learning, induction and critical reflection: Building workforce.* Palgrove Macmillan: New York, N.Y.

Ingersoll, R. M., & Smith, T. M. (2004). Do teacher induction and mentoring matter? *NASSP Bulletin, 88*(638), 28-40.

Joiner, S., & Edwards, J. (2008). Novice teachers: Where are they going and why don't they stay? *Journal of Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives in Education, 1*(1), 36-43.

Kelley, L. M. (2004). Why induction matters. *Journal of Teacher Education, 55*(5), 438-448.

Maciejewski, J. (2007). Supporting new teachers: Are induction programs worth the cost? *District Administration*, *43*(9), 48–52.

Mandel, S. (2006). What new teachers really need: What first-year teachers say they need to survive on the job is often markedly different from what schools provide. *Educational Leadership, 63*(6), 66–69.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*(4), 370–96.

Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper and Row.

Maslow, A. H. (1962). *Toward a psychology of being*. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company.

Maslow, A. H. (1970a). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Maslow, A. H. (1970b). *Religions, values, and peak experiences*. New York: Penguin. (Originally published 1966)

Maslow, A. H. (1987). *Motivation and personality (3rd edition)*. Delhi, India: Pearson Education.

Upitis, R. (1999). Teacher education reform; putting experience first. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 26*(2), 11–19.

Weale, S. (2019, April 16). Fifth of teachers plan to leave profession within two years. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/apr/16/fifth-of-teachers-plan-to-leave-profession-within-two-years

Williams, J.S. (2003). Why great teachers stay. *Educational Leadership, 60*(8), 71–74.

Website: www.reflectiveteachingjournal.com

Author Bio

Dr. Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri is a tenured assistant professor (teaching stream) in the English as a Second Language Program of the Polyglotte Department in the Language and Social Sciences (UFR SLHS) Faculty at the University of Bourgogne Franche-Comté, France. She holds a PhD in Foreign Applied Languages from the University of Paris IV- La Sorbonne, France, an MA in English Studies from the University of Nancy, France and a combined BA in French and Italian Studies from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. She is a member of the ELLIADD *(Édition, Littératures, Langages, Informatique, Arts, Didactique, Discours*) research team, and her teaching and research interests include the didactics of ESP, EAP, action research, multiliteracies pedagogy, critical pedagogy and discourse analysis, intercultural education, language assessment and plurilingual pedagogy. Her recent research focuses on the themes of language pedagogy, culture and identity and artificial intelligence-enhanced teaching methods in content and language integrated learning (CLIL) EAP classrooms.

An Innovative (and Easy) Approach to Corpus Analysis

By Julia Williams, University of Waterloo, Canada

Abstract

Lee and Swales (2006) suggest that using corpus analysis activities in the classroom provides students with pragmatic tools they can use to identify patterns of language use without relying on native-speaker expertise. In addition, subsequent research on the use of corpus analysis, or data driven learning (DDL) (Boulton & Cobb, 2017), demonstrates that substantial benefits accrue to students who work with corpora (Bridle, 2019; Charles, 2012; 2014). However, the complexity of existing corpus analysis technologies may deter instructors from implementing existing corpora (e.g. COCA) or corpus toolkits (e.g. AntConc) which may require significant time investments to learn and transform into effective pedagogy.

This article describes an easy, innovative approach to harnessing the benefits of corpus analysis using technology with which teachers and students are already familiar. Students build corpora in Word and use the search function to identify grammatical, lexico-grammatical, collocational, and even organizational patterns. This teaching innovation was effective with a class of graduate students. Using easily accessible corpus analysis activities in the classroom encourages students to rely less on teacher expertise and develop skills that support greater learner autonomy.

The benefits of using corpus analysis in EAP classes has been well documented (Anthony, 2017; Boulton & Cobb, 2017; Charles, 2012, 2014, 2018; Lee & Swales, 2006). Lee and Swales (2006) suggest that using corpus analysis activities in the classroom provides students with pragmatic tools they can use to identify patterns of language use without relying on native-speaker expertise. In addition, subsequent research on the use of corpus analysis, or data driven learning (DDL) (Boulton & Cobb, 2017), demonstrates that substantial benefits, in particular enhanced learner autonomy, accrue to students who work with corpora (Bridle, 2019; Charles, 2012; 2014). And Lawrence (2017) advocates for the use of corpus analysis is a useful way for students to build discipline-specific knowledge related to vocabulary and linguistic features, as

well as encourage collaborative, problem-solving skills that students can apply to their own composition processes.

However, the complexity of existing corpus analysis technologies may deter instructors from implementing existing corpora (freely available online, e.g. the Corpus of Contemporary American English [COCA]) or corpus toolkits (freely downloadable for use offline with self-constructed corpora, e.g. AntConc) which may require significant time investments to learn and transform into effective pedagogy. With regards to time requirements, two thirds of students in Bridle's (2019) study felt that learning to use corpus analysis techniques required "too much time and effort" (p. 65). And students are not the only ones concerned about time requirements; instructors are also cautious of new technologies that require significant time to learn and implement. With regards to technical issues, Anthony (2017) himself notes that students and instructors using corpora may encounter "mundane" (p. 165) technical challenges related to slow Internet connections and system failures. In addition, instructors may experience unanticipated technical glitches, such as one this author faced when introducing the COCA to her graduate students. In class, students used the university's wifi to search the freely accessible COCA website for a specific linguistic feature. Free access to the COCA website allows users 50 queries per day. Unfortunately, the COCA website considered the students in class that day as a single user as the university's wifi had assigned the students the same identical Internet protocol (IP) address. The 24 students were only able to complete approximately 2 searches each before exceeding their allowable queries, resulting in wasted class time, and a hastily revised lesson. This incident was sufficient to encourage the author to search for alternative ways to use corpus analysis in her classroom that would neither be susceptible to technical challenges, nor consume unreasonable amounts of limited class time to orient students to the benefits of corpus analysis.

Using Word and its search function, a technology both students and instructors are familiar with, this author developed a series of corpus analysis assignments that allowed graduate students to identify linguistic features common to academic English, and those that were specific to their disciplines. Student responses to the assignments reveal insights into their analytical and composing processes.

The class consisted of 24 graduate students from disciplines as varied as accounting, computer science, earth sciences, engineering (civil, chemical, electrical, and systems design), geography, kinesiology, and statistics. The students attended a graduate-level writing course called Scholarly Writing in English taught by this author. The course textbook was the third edition of Swales & Feak (2012) *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, and elements of academic style and cohesion identified in this textbook were used as searchable linguistic features in the corpus analysis assignments. Prior to the start of the course, the author developed

a model corpus, established objectives for three assignments, and developed assignment descriptions and rubrics.

The Corpus Analysis Assignments

The objective of the first assignment was simply for students to build a discipline-specific corpus for use in the subsequent corpus analysis assignments. Initial discussions on how to find and identify legitimate and reliable journal articles within the students' disciplines served to raise awareness that the quality of query output would be dependent on the quality of texts used in the corpus. To create their own corpora, students identified academic journal articles relevant to their fields of study and cut and pasted the text (minus tables, figures, author biographies, and references which do not maintain format when transferred to Word) into a Word document. An accurate citation for each paper was included based on the citation format appropriate in the student's discipline. Students then used the colour highlighting feature in Word to colour code the abstract, introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections in each paper. This colour-coding later allowed students to easily identify the sections of the journal articles in which linguistic features were most frequently found.

The resulting corpora were required to be at least 20 pages (or approximately 150,000 words) in length. This resulted in relatively short (or small) corpora, but the 20-page recommendation was suggested to limit the time and effort required to cut and paste text from a journal article pdf. to a Word document. Some students were able to create their corpus by using advanced features of Adobe Acrobat that allowed them to either convert pdf. files directly to Word, or to combine pdf. files into a single searchable document. However, these useful features are not freely available; therefore, to keep costs at zero and avoid technical issues, most students cut and pasted text into a Word document to create no-cost, low-tech corpora.

The Second Corpus Analysis Assignment: Searching for Elements of Academic Style

The second corpus analysis assignment was designed to focus student attention on how the elements of academic style, as identified in Unit 1 of *Academic Writing for Graduate Students* (Swales & Feak, 2012), were used in their disciplines. These elements include the use of formal one-word verbs to replace verb + preposition combinations (e.g. *implement* rather than *put in place*), use of first person pronouns (e.g. I, we), contractions (e.g. can't), formal negative forms (e.g. *no* instead of *not any*), vague expressions (e.g. etc. and so forth), direct questions (e.g. Why has antibiotic resistance increased?), adverbs in mid-position (e.g....was originally developed...), split infinitives (e.g. ...to adequately meet...), passive voice (e.g. ...was determined...), and the second person pronoun (e.g. you) to address the reader. Students were asked to

search their corpora for these elements, represent the results in a table, and, in some cases, create a second column to comment on the results in the first column. After each search, students were asked to briefly explain what they learned from the query.

Figure 1 displays a typical student response to the verb + preposition search in the second assignment. In this example, students searched for the prepositions *up* and *on*, identified the instances where the preposition followed a verb, and represented the results in a table. In the second column, students were asked to find a 'more academic' one-word verb synonym to replace the verb + preposition combination.

Figure 1: Example of Student Searches for verb + up and verb + on

Table 1: search ***up***

#	**Verb + Preposition combination**	**More academic single-word verb**
1	which ***takes up*** valuable land	occupies
2	if WWTPs' generation ***scales up***	This is an accepted "coined" combination in my discipline

There is only a single occurrence of the verb + up combination in each paper. This indicates how rare it is used in my discipline.

Table 2: search ***on***

#	Verb + Preposition combination	More academic single-word verb
1	***quantified on*** a sector by sector basis	
2	energy ***expended on*** drying	
3	converted to ***run on*** biogas in 2005	
4	wild algae ***cultured on*** oxidation ponds	
5	***based on*** actual fitted probability distributions	
6	This paper ***focuses on*** the trade-off	
7	the WWTP is selected ***depending on*** whether the	
8	***running on*** digested biogas from solid end products	
…		

The use of verb + on combination is found to be much more frequent compared to verb + up. No equivalent singles-word verbs were found as a substitute.

In this example, the student discovers that the verb + up combination is not frequently used in their disciplinary corpus, that the *takes + up* combination is replaceable with a more academic one-word verb (*occupies*), and decides that the second occurrence of this linguistic feature (*scales up*) is an acceptable exception to the recommended avoidance of the verb + preposition rule. Interestingly, in Table 2, the

student represents the results of the verb + on search, identifies that verb + on is much more frequently used in their discipline than verb + up, and decides that there are no easily identified one-word verbs to replace these frequently used combinations. As an instructor who often encourages students not to use verb + preposition combinations in their academic writing, I was struck by the difficulty of finding one-word verbs that would eliminate the use of on. For example, we might reasonably replace *based on* with *premised on*, but that does not eliminate the preposition *on*. This seemed to be a useful discovery, not only for the students, but also for instructors, like this author, who might encourage the elimination of verb + preposition combinations in principle, without making a distinction amongst specific prepositions, which may be more or less replaceable. The colours represented in the table reflect the sections in which the examples were found: blue for introduction, pink for methodology, red for results, and grey for discussion. Although the colour coding was not necessary for the analysis of this linguistic feature, it was helpful when, for example, students searched for passive voice verbs, which, they discovered, were mostly found in the methods (or pink) sections of their corpora.

The following quotes are taken from student responses to the 'What have you learned from this search?' question in the second corpus analysis assignment that focused on searches related to the elements of academic style. The quotes reflect what the students learned about written academic English, their disciplines, and in some cases, reflect their sense of humour.

In response to the verb + preposition (*up* and *on*) search, students commented:

- I learned that "up" preceded by a verb is not a word combination that is commonly used in [my discipline]. Even when I look in other papers excluded to my corpus, this combination seems to be way less used than the verb + on. I guess that "on" is more used in general both in written and English speaking.

- I learned that a verb followed by "on" is a common sentence structure in English. Unfortunately for me, the rule to select the most suitable preposition remains a mystery and I will probably continue to use a single word when possible. In my corpus, we could replace the verb + preposition structure with a single word in most of the cases. Nevertheless, there is some structure where the 'on' seems required in the sentence even when using synonyms. The most popular combination is "based on" and appears in every paper while "focus on" appears in ¾ papers. This means that these verbs + prepositions are broadly accepted.

In response to the first-person pronoun searches (search *I*, *we*), students responded:

- Among the papers selected for my corpus, there was no first-person pronoun used. The community prefers to use the first-person plural pronoun especially when they are describing or referring to their own experiences. This thought can be extended to computer science paper. …computer science papers are usually written in groups and therefore, the first-person [singular] pronoun is not adopted. As demonstrated by the colour code, the first-person plural pronoun can be used in every section of the paper.

- Personal pronouns should not be used in academic writing. I just found one personal pronoun we in the corpus, in the discussion section. In my discipline active voice is not common.

These two comments were from students in different disciplines. In class, students were interested in the differences in how their disciplines took up the use of specific linguistic features, and there was often cross-talk in the class as one disciplinary group of students asked students in other disciplines the results of their queries. In the second comment here, the student has learned from the search for first person personal pronouns not only that the first person pronouns were not frequently used in her discipline, but that the avoidance of first person pronouns translates to the frequent use of the passive voice. Both events – the interdisciplinary discussions that occurred in class, and the individual student's insight into how the avoidance of personal pronouns connects with frequent use of the passive voice in her discipline – were indicators that the corpus analysis activities were relevant and useful for the students.

In response to the searches for formal negative forms (search *no*, *few*, and *little*), students commented:

- I learn that the words "few" and "little" are quite uncommon to behaviour planner and computer science papers since they do not quantify properly the claims. Nevertheless, "no" seems to be a word accepted by the community since it can be found in 3/4 of the paper in my corpus. Sometimes, a more academic substitution exists like "irrelevant" instead of "no longer relevant", but in most case the word "no" is used to make the claim less wordy.

In response to the searches for vague expressions which should be avoided (search *etc.* and *so forth*), students noted:

- It [etc.] was only found once in the whole corpus, which indicates that it is uncommon to use them.

- I learned that "so forth" is uncommon to computer science paper. Nevertheless, "etc." is profusely used in my corpus. I do not believe that this is generally the case in computer science papers, but it is rather a particularity of my field of application. The behaviour planning problem is scenario-

based which means that there exist many special cases that a system needs to cover. Thus, the community exemplifies some of these cases based on their properties and simply mention that the reader must extrapolate the remainder.

In response to searches for passive voice verb use, students searched 'was' and 'were' followed by a past participle. A student responded to the searches as follows:

- The passive voice is extensively used in all sections of the corpus. "was used" and "was selected" are the most common passive verbs present in the corpus due to the nature of my research area where several parameters need to be set for modelling purposes.

Unfortunately, space constraints prevent the inclusion of student responses from each search. In each case, students' comments demonstrated their ability to think critically about the results of their searches and extrapolate their discoveries to broader understandings of their disciplines.

Searching for Elements of Cohesion

In addition to searching for elements of academic style, students were also asked to search for elements of textual cohesion as identified in the textbook. Included in this category was repetition of key words in various forms (i.e. parts of speech), use of it as a pronoun that refers to an antecedent, use of this/these + noun as a summary phrase, and use of connectors such as coordinate and subordinate conjunctions.

In response to searches for repetition of key words in various forms (parts of speech), students identified key words in their research areas and searched for the root form of the key words. For example, a student researching the recovery of resources from wastewater noted that recovery was a key word in his discipline. For this query, he searched *recover* (root word) to identify frequencies of use of *recover* as well as *recovery*, *recovering*, and *recovered*. The students had frequently been told to use synonyms to avoid repetition of key words. They were astonished to see how textual cohesion was achieved through repetition of key words, and how shifting key words to new parts of speech was a strategy to reduce the appearance of repetition.

A student responded to this search for key word repetition using various parts of speech as follows:

- The ability to connect ideas by means of repetition of key words and phrases sometimes meets a natural resistance based on the fear of being repetitive. We've been trained to loathe redundancy. Now we must learn that catching a word or phrase that's important to a reader's comprehension of a piece and replaying that word or phrase creates a musical motif in that reader's head. Unless it is overworked and obtrusive, repetition lends itself to a sense of coherence (or at least to the illusion of coherence).

The Third Corpus Analysis Assignment: Observing Characteristics of Academic Writing in English

The objective of the third corpus analysis assignment was to draw students' attention to some common features of academic writing in English. Swales and Feak (2012) identify these features in the *Language Focus* sections of their textbook. These features included attention to verbs used in definitions (e.g. *known as, defined as*), prepositions used before *which* to start adjective clauses (e.g. *at which*), -ing phrases of cause and effect (e.g. *resulting in*), word order in indirect questions, linking *as* clauses (e.g. *as can be seen*), indicators of strength of claim (e.g. *we think, likely, clearly*), and claim modification (e.g. *may, tends to, based on limited data*).

To identify the frequency of definitions in academic texts, students searched for verbs commonly used in definitions such as *called, known as, defined (as), denoted,* and *referred to*. Students commented on the results of these searches as follows:

- I think that the papers in my corpus may be focused on an engineering audience which results in fewer definitions. However, definitions and even short definitions are very important when the writer is introducing equation variables, acronyms, or specific terms.
- The definition verbs are common in academic texts. The most common verb in my corpus is defined/ defined as that can mostly be found in the methodology sections.

To identify how prepositions are used before which when adjective clauses are objects of a preposition, students searched for *at which, for which, in which,* and *of which*. A student responded to the results of these queries as follows:

- I would say I found another reason why it is not good style to end a sentence with a preposition. In my examples, it would be odd to have the preposition at the end.

To identify the frequency of using *–ing* clauses of cause and effect, students searched for *thus + verb-ing, resulting in + verb-ing, leading to + verb-ing, and causing + verb-ing*. Post-search, students explained what they had learned.

- I think that the "ing" clauses helps to reduce the wordiness of the writing while explaining the cause and effect.
- These -ing clauses are used to introduce the result of an action within a single sentence. Although these clauses are very common in formal written English, I only found 1 in my corpus, indicating

it's not common in my discipline.

To identify the frequency of linking as clauses in their corpora, students searched for *as can be seen, as seen, as such, as a result, as a consequence, as noted, as determined, as expected*. In response to the question 'What did you learn from this search?' students stated:

- I could not find instances of "as seen" in my corpus; however, "as shown" is extensively used with 30 search results. Also, I think that *as* clauses are very useful to introduce informative statements.
- Linking *as* clauses are a nice, short and efficient way to refer to a figure or table in the method or result section.

To identify how researchers modified their claims, students searched their corpora for hedging indicators (e.g. *may, might, could*) as well as *it seems* and *it appears*. Once finished, students reported the following:

- The word "may" is used many times to moderate a claim in my corpus. Additionally, I would say there are many ways to moderate or qualify a claim.
- I found hedging an important feature of academic writing, because academic writers need to clearly indicate whether they think claims are certain, likely, unlikely, or just false. On the other hand, I realized writing that contains too many qualifiers can sound unclear and wordy.

To determine researchers' verb tense usage when writing about research, students searched for *(* or *[* as indicators of citations that would reveal when researchers were paraphrasing or summarizing others' research. Students then verified the verb tense and voice used to write about research. A student responded to the search results as follows:

- The researchers in my corpus used present, present perfect and past tense verbs to refer to past studies. It seems that when referring to current research, there is no rule about the use of the verb tense. However, it looks like the present tense is often used when referring to a process of the research, and past tense when referring to the research itself or the researchers.

Evidence of Success

Although it can be difficult to determine the success of new pedagogical intervention, the author noted the following outcomes that suggested students were attentive to the corpus analysis searches. First, several students independently expanded their corpora to achieve more robust results. They quickly noted that a larger corpus would provide more reliable data, and without being prompted, they added papers to their corpora to achieve more consistent results. Second, two students who were studying in interdisciplinary

fields became aware of the disciplinary differences of writing expectations in their fields. In both cases, they developed two new corpora, one corpus for each discipline. They enjoyed informing their classmates of the differences between the disciplines and attempting to discern which patterns of use they should follow. A further positive outcome was demonstrated by students' in-class behaviour. Students rapidly habituated to completing searches of their corpora, and when the author drew her students' attention to specific linguistic features, without prompting, they would open their corpora files and search for the feature immediately. They would then enjoy informing the class whether the feature was present in their corpora, and to what extent. They were also interested in knowing the results of the searches in corpora constructed from journal articles in different disciplines. And significantly, as can be seen from their comments, students were successful at making connections between the linguistic features for which they searched and academic writing conventions in their disciplines.

The final indicator of success came in the form of student comments on their course evaluations. Several students' comments related to the corpus analysis assignments.

- First, the corpus analysis allowed me to discover the expectations of my target audience.
- The introduction of corpus assignments was very helpful, and I think it achieved more than regular grammar classes.
- Democratization of knowledge. Let students gain knowledge of academic style, grammar and vocabulary based on corpus search in their own disciplinary.

Conclusion

The experience of creating self-compiled, low-tech corpora in Word and integrating corpus analysis assignments in a graduate writing class seemed to be successful at stimulating student awareness of how linguistic features (as identified by Swales and Feak in their 2012 textbook *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*) were used in the students' disciplines. In addition, the assignments were created by the instructor and completed by the students at no additional cost, without encountering the technical challenges that may affect corpus analysis work with existing large corpora or corpus toolkits, and with minimal class time devoted to the explanation of the process of corpus analysis. It would appear that some form of search can be completed in Word to identify each of the textually significant linguistic features as enumerated by Swales and Feak. (For example, although it would be possible to search the COCA directly for a comprehensive list of verb + preposition combinations, the results of this search can be replicated in Word by searching for common prepositions and asking students to identify which of the occurrences are preceded by a verb.) Furthermore, students appeared to learn from their search queries about how linguistic features are used in

their disciplines, and how different disciplines may employ these features to varying degrees.

Paralleling the corpus analysis assignments, students were also writing discipline-specific assignments such as a problem-solution text, a data commentary, and an article summary (all addressed in Swales and Feak, 2012). Students were encouraged to integrate the knowledge they learned through their corpus searches into their writing assignments. Further research could be done to determine the extent to which students were successfully able to integrate the linguistic features they searched for in their corpora into their writing.

The author wishes to thank her students for their in-class work and the generous permission to use their comments in this paper.

References

Anthony, L. (2017). Introducing corpora and corpus tools into the technical writing classroom through data-driven learning (DDL). In J. Flowerdew & T. Costley (Eds.). *Discipline-Specific Writing* (162–180). New York; Routledge.

Antony, L. (2019). *Laurence Anthony's website*. Retrieved from https://www.lawrenceanthony.net/

Boulton, A., & Cobb, T. (2017). Corpus use in language learning: A meta-analysis. *Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies, 67*(2), 348–393.

Bridle, M. (2019). Learner use of a corpus as a reference tool in error correction: Factors influencing consultation and success. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 37,* 52–69.

Charles, M. (2012). 'Proper vocabulary and juicy collocations': EAP students evaluate do-it-yourself corpus-building. *English for Specific Purposes, 31*(2), 93–102.

Charles, M. (2014). Getting the corpus habit: EAP students' long-term use of personal corpora. *English for Specific Purposes, 35,* 30–40.

Charles, M. (2018). Corpus-assisted editing for doctoral students: More than just concordancing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 36,* 15–25.

Lee, D., & Swales, J. (2006). A corpus-based EAP course for NNS doctoral students: Moving from available specialized corpora to self-compiled corpora. *English for Specific Purposes, 25*(1), 56–75.

Nesi, H. (2016). Corpus Studies in EAP. In K. Hyland & P. Shaw (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of English for Academic Purposes* (206-217). New York: Routledge.

Swales, J. & Feak, C. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students (3rd ed.).* U.S.A.: Michigan University Press.

Tribble, C. & Wingate, U. (2013). From text to corpus – A genre-based approach to academic literacy instruction. *System 41/1*(2), 307–321.

Author Bio

Julia Williams is an experienced EAP instructor with over 30 years of teaching in second language contexts. She is the author of LEAP Reading and Writing, levels 3 and 4, and the Director of English Language Studies at Renison University College, University of Waterloo. She attempts to translate theory into effective pedagogy and teaching materials that are easy to implement.

The Application of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model in a Business English Program

By David Siefker, Ling Hu, & Nataliya Borkovska, University of Guelph, Canada

Abstract

The article introduces the application of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (1984) in a four-week Business English program at the University of Guelph. The authors explore how the stages of Kolb's experiential model informed the design of experiential activities in a Business English program. In addition, the authors discuss how experiential learning contributes to raising students' language proficiency and cultural awareness and to furthering understanding of business concepts studied in class. The article concludes with the description of some challenges of the application of the model as identified by the students and the teachers, as well as highlights pedagogical implications of the use of the experiential learning model in a second language classroom.

Experiential learning is an important component in higher education learning models found in co-ops, practicums, and classroom tasks that simulate work experiences. In his explanation of the importance of experiential learning, Kolb (2015), drawing upon the ideas of Dewey, James, Lewin, Rogers and others, believed that "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 49). Kolb played an important role in developing the experiential learning approach and presenting it visually in the Experiential Learning Cycle, which underpins most pedagogical approaches to this type of learning. His learning cycle has four stages as demonstrated in Figure 1.

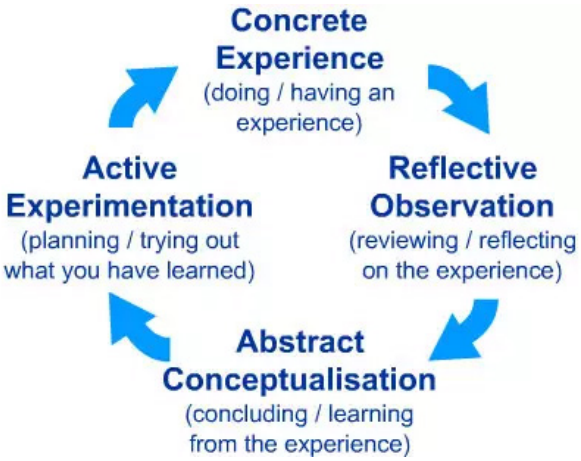

Figure 1. Kolb's Experiential Model
https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html

Back

When describing each stage Kolb (2015) explains that "immediate or concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections. These reflections are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts from which new implications can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences" (p. 51). Therefore, to learn from an experience, it must be placed in a cycle of learning where the experience is reflected on, analyzed, and tested. This is evident in most definitions of experiential learning offered by colleges or universities. For example, the University of Guelph defines experiential learning as "a pedagogical practice whereby students gain new knowledge, skills and abilities by intentionally applying their classroom learning in a workplace or simulated workplace setting. Experiential learning opportunities are grounded in an intentional learning cycle with clearly defined learning outcomes" ("Experiential Learning at the University of Guelph," n.d.).

International students who need language practice in English face an additional challenge of experiential learning. According to Kohonen (1992), for courses primarily focused on language learning, experiential learning can provide many opportunities for authentic communication, reflection on the experience and language structures used, and feedback on those language structures. He also adds language learning elements to Kolb's learning cycle to demonstrate how language learning could take place within the model. Knutson (2003) also believes experiential learning could be used to help students learn a second language effectively because learners focus on the co-creating of meaning when completing a task-based activity or in-class project and not on discrete items of the target language. Knutson also recognizes that the opportunity for self-reflection could help language learners "negotiate social meaning and their own shifting identities in a new culture" (p. 63). Consequently, the experiential learning approach allows students to work on their language learning goals while actively engaging in and reflecting on their learning before, during and after the concrete experience within the learning cycle.

Although experiential learning is primarily an individual learning process, for all learners to benefit from the opportunity, educators should ensure that the four stages of the experiential learning cycle are well scaffolded to include all learners. According to Walsh, Rutherford, and Sears (2010), writing about an experiential-based course developed at the University of Calgary, "critical to the success of the course was the opportunity to engage in experiential learning with members of the population of interest and courses should be designed in ways that support meaningful inclusion. Course instructors should consider the diversity of learners when developing the curriculum and should seek to implement supports and procedures to minimize the potential concerns and problems while maximizing opportunities for novel learning" (p. 206). When working with international learners, this support of diversity could include language support for a variety of proficiency levels. This is the focus of the Business English Program at the University of

Guelph where language and culture support for Japanese University students are added to experiential learning opportunities with local businesses.

Description of the Business English Program

The Business English Program (BEP) has been running for six years in the English Language Programs at the University of Guelph. It is a four-week intensive program for the Japanese students from Doshisha, Kansai, and Musashino universities. The students are from different academic backgrounds and are at various English proficiency levels. This program focuses on developing students' English language communication skills, cross-culture awareness, and understanding of business concepts in a Canadian context. Based on the needs analyses conducted with the students and administrators from the three Japanese universities, key topics have been selected for BEP, a few examples of which are presentations, marketing strategies, business email writing, job search, and interviewing. The highlights of this customized program are volunteer opportunities, company visits, and guest speakers from local businesses. The in-class and out-of-class experiential activities, assignments, and assessments based on Kolb's (2015) learning cycle provide the students with an authentic, engaging, and language-rich environment for language learning and a deeper understanding of business concepts in a Canadian business context. These curricular activities help students integrate language, culture, and business concepts and maximize their learning experiences by following the four stages of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation of the New Experience, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation.

Concrete Experience

In this stage, the BEP students visit a local business. The instructors provide Company Visit Worksheets with guided questions for the students to use before, during, and after the visit. Before the visit, the students research the company using guided questions and prepare their own questions about the company. During the visit, students listen to a presentation, take notes, participate in Q&A sessions, observe company operations, and interact with company employees. The instructors provide language support, such as feedback on the prepared questions and industry-specific vocabulary lists and expressions to help students understand the presentation and to interact with company staff in a professional manner.

Reflective Observation of the New Experience

During this stage, students reflect on their experience of visiting the company by noticing business concepts studied in class, sharing their observations of Canadian business practices, and linking them to their own knowledge about Japanese companies. In the instructor-provided worksheets, students record their general impressions from the company visit, identify the differences between Japanese and Canadian businesses

in similar industries, and provide suggestions that may benefit Japanese and Canadian companies. In addition, in a discussion forum created on an LMS (CourseLink), the students post their reflections about the impressions from the company visit and respond to their peers' discussion posts. They share their learning experience from the company visits and reflect on how it improves their understanding of Canadian culture and business concepts they have learned in class.

Abstract Conceptualization

In addition to sharing their reflective observations of the company visit on the discussion forum on CourseLink, the students work in pairs to complete a formal presentation in class using presentation and language skills to connect their on-site visit experience to business concepts studied in class. The instructor gives face-to-face and online feedback and evaluates the discussions and presentations. This process deepens the students' understanding of the abstract business concepts that they have learned in class and experienced during the company visit. Some of the business concepts students focus on are SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, the marketing mix, and product USP (unique selling proposition) (Bickhoff, Hollensen, & Opresnik, 2014). Through the analysis of the information obtained from observations and interactions during the company visit and feedback from instructors and peers, the students further their understanding of abstract business concepts.

Active Experimentation

In this stage, the students apply a newly acquired understanding of business concepts and language structures from the previous stage to complete a capstone project, which is a marketing analysis of a Japanese product that students want to bring to the Canadian market. Students need to identify marketing mix, SWOT, and the product USP, as well as to provide a rationale why this product would attract potential investors in Canada. This capstone project not only provides students with the platform to apply their internalized business concepts but also offers opportunities for them to practice language skills and demonstrate their awareness of cultural differences.

Opportunities and Challenges

The design of the company visit experiential learning activity in the BEP affords students the opportunity to get first-hand experience of engaging in and reflecting on the learning of both business concepts and language structures studied in class. The students exploit this opportunity by researching a company's products and business practices, interacting with a company's employees, and then reflecting on their experience. Consequently, the experience of visiting a company expands the learners' knowledge of the business concepts from the course as well as provides the learners with valuable language practice.

Some of the challenges faced by students while participating in experiential learning activities relate to their different learning needs and the short and intensive nature of the program. The learners in the program come from different academic fields; therefore, their prior knowledge of the business concepts varies. Students' language proficiency levels range from beginner to high intermediate (A1 to C1); as a result, some students have a more difficult time communicating during the visits and have to rely on the observations and support of their peers. Regardless of their proficiency levels, all students identified the challenges of understanding technical vocabulary and fast-paced connected speech. Additionally, the students stay in Canada for only four weeks and are introduced to many business concepts during in-class and out-of-class activities, which they have to internalize and practice in a short time.

The instructors in the program have observed another challenge related to interaction patterns during the visits. The students are reluctant to ask questions in front of the whole group during the visit, yet they are comfortable interacting with the company employees in smaller groups. Even though the questions are prepared and practiced ahead of time in class, the students prefer to ask them individually while interacting with company employees rather than during a post-visit Q&A session. Such interaction patterns may be culturally influenced and may relate to existing interaction patterns in a students' home country.

Pedagogical Implications

Experiential learning activities have far-reaching pedagogical implications. To bring real educational value to students, experiential learning activity needs to be tailored to students' needs. It has to be scaffolded to include a variety of activities that nurture the development of students' language, culture, and content understanding. If designed with the learners' needs in mind, experiential learning activities can contribute to a better understanding of complex business ideas, provide a platform to practice language, and help students develop an appreciation of a new culture.

References

Bickhoff, N., Hollensen, S., & Opresnik, M. (2014). *The quintessence of marketing: What you really need to know to manage your marketing activities*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Experiential Learning at the University of Guelph. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.uoguelph.ca/experientiallearning/about-el/experiential-learning-university-guelph

Knutson, S. (2003). Experiential learning in second-language classrooms. *TESL Canada Journal, 20*(2), 52–64.

Kohonen, V. (1992). Experiential language learning: Second language learning as cooperative learner education. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*, (pp. 14–40). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Kolb, D. (2015). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

McLeod, S. A. (2017, October 24). *Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Cycle.* Simply Psychology. https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html

Walsh, C.A., Rutherford G.E., & Sears, A.E. (2010). Fostering inclusivity through teaching and learning action research. *Action Research, 8*(2), 191–209.

Author Bios

David Siefker is a Lead Instructor in the English Language Programs at the University of Guelph in Canada and has taught in a variety of programs including business English and teacher training for over 25 years. He has a Master's in Applied Linguistics and is interested in how higher education teaching practices can be applied to second language pedagogy. He can be contacted at dsiefker@uoguelph.ca.

Ling Hu is a Lead Instructor in the English Language Programs at the University of Guelph in Canada. She has an MEd in Organizational Studies and BA in English Language Teaching. She has been an EFL/EAP/ESL professional for more than 20 years with a special interest in needs-based English language curriculum development that fosters meaningful collaborative and autonomous learning. She can be contacted at lhu@uoguelph.ca.

Nataliya Borkovska is a Lead Instructor at the University of Guelph English Language Programs. She has an MA in TESOL and an MA in TEFL. Nataliya has been dedicated to English instruction for the past 20 years. Her main areas of professional interest lie in second language pedagogy, teacher education and development, educational leadership, specialized vocabulary instruction, and the use of technology in language teaching. She can be contacted at nborkovs@uoguelph.ca.

Informed Use of Learner L1: Plurilingualism as a Macrostrategy for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

By Rebecca Schmor, OISE, University of Toronto, Canada

Abstract

The use of learner L1 in TESOL contexts has emerged as an effective, if controversial, teaching strategy. This strategy is validated by the notion of plurilingualism. Plurilingual practices serve a variety of classroom aims and offer a range of pedagogical and intercultural benefits. However, there are several challenges impeding the adoption and application of plurilingual pedagogy. In response to these challenges, I draw on a postmethod framework and my own teaching experiences to offer several ideas for plurilingual classroom activities, developed with Spanish and Portuguese-speaking students. A plurilingual perspective can help ESOL teachers to recognize, respect, and make use of their learners' diverse linguistic and cultural resources.

Introduction

Views of monolingualism, native-speakerism, and subtractive language acquisition still dominate TESOL learning and teaching contexts. This is evident in TESOL teacher strategies to limit the use of learner L1 in English language classrooms by implementing a strict English-only policy, asking students to put money in a jar each time they speak their L1, or not allowing students to sit beside classmates who share the same languages. These strategies represent a view of learner L1 as a problem, rather than a resource. Sociolinguistic research over the past three decades on topics like codeswitching (Canagarajah, 1995; Lin, 1990), multicompetence (Cook, 1995), translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012), hetereglossia (Bailey, 2012), and plurilingualism (Glaser, 2005; Piccardo, 2019) has (re)positioned learner L1 as a classroom resource, offering justification for the incorporation of plurilingual pedagogical practices in TESOL. While this research and theory has yet to be implemented in large-scale educational reform,

individual teachers around the world are practicing plurilingual pedagogy everyday in their own classrooms (Edstrom, 2006; Ellis, 2016a; Lin, 2013).

Coming from one of my classroom contexts, I will share some of my own experiences, challenges, and strategies in plurilingual pedagogy. I will contextualize these in recent literature to suggest a framework for the incorporation of plurilingual practices in TESOL contexts. Drawing from the literature and my own experiences, I will then use this framework to offer some ideas for plurilingual classroom activities and materials. I recognize that these materials emerged from a context where I had advanced knowledge of half of my learners' first language, Spanish, and receptive knowledge of the other half of the class' first language, Portuguese. As such, the examples and perspectives I share come from a unique synergy of classroom language ecology, and I recognize the limitations of some of the interactions and suggestions detailed for replication in other contexts. This, however, is not my aim. Rather, I intend to contribute to the conversation around developing plurilingual practices and how the diverse linguistic repertoires of learners and teachers may be embraced in different types of TESOL contexts.

German in English; English in Spanish?

In 2019, I taught beginner English and German classes for adults at a private language school in Toronto. This school had an English-only policy, with signs posted on classroom walls as a reminder for students. As a teacher in both the English language and foreign language programs, I found myself entangled in a web of contradictory language policies and practices. When I taught beginner German, I was expected to teach it in English. One day during class, one of my students pointed to the "English-only" sign on the wall and jokingly asked if he could still speak German with us. With these looming "English-only" signs, students in the school's English language program were, by contrast, shy to speak in their L1, and teachers, even those who had knowledge of their learners' L1s, swore by the English-only policy. When I began teaching the first level of the beginner English program, my predominantly South American students quickly caught on that I could understand them in their first languages: Spanish and Portuguese. However, with colleagues and supervisors passing by in the hallways, I struggled with my use of other languages in class and how this deviated from both institutional policy and the practices of other teachers. Luckily, there is a strong and ever-developing body of research that confirms and promotes the informed use of other languages in the ESOL classroom as an effective pedagogical tool.

Plurilingualism in Recent Literature

The adoption and enforcement of English-only policies in TESOL contexts reflect what Phillipson (1992) referred to three decades ago as the five fallacies in English language teaching. These myths of

monolingualism, native-speakerism, the maximum exposure theory, the early-start hypothesis, and the subtractive principle all inform the exclusion of other languages from most TESOL contexts. However, if the goal of language education is to create bilinguals, and not double monolinguals (Genesee, 2015), then TESOL teachers and schools should feel comfortable with the presence of other languages in English language teaching. Indeed, this recognition and inclusion of linguistic diversity serves in some way to challenge the coloniality and hegemonic force of English as a global language (Guo & Beckett, 2007). Beyond this, it functions as an important, versatile, and effective pedagogical tool, grounded in the notion of plurilingualism.

Plurilingualism is a concept closely associated with the Council of Europe (Breidbach, 2003; Beacco, 2005), which is defined as distinct from multilingualism in its recognition of the ecological interdependency and intercomprehension between languages in an individual's evolving linguistic repertoire (Lüdi & Py, 2009). While multilingualism describes situations of languages existing alongside one another in society, which Cummins (2008) has coined as the "two solitudes", plurilingualism depicts a "process of dynamic, creative 'languaging' across the boundaries of language varieties" (Piccardo, 2019). It recognizes uneven, unstable, partial competence among different languages in the same repertoire (Glaser, 2005), and theorizes this dynamic repertoire as the basis for a flexible, individualized, and contextualized approach to language teaching.

Plurilingual Pedagogy: Affordances and Challenges

This view of language and language learning as a dynamic, negotiated, continual process of meaning-making results in a multiplicity of affordances for ESOL teachers, along with several challenges for the broadly-defined TESOL context. Use of learner L1 in English language teaching can be beneficial for classroom management strategies, the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, and learner affect, to list only a few possibilities. To this end, institutional, ideological, and practical challenges, among others, must be addressed.

Affordance #1: Classroom Management and Giving Instructions

During one of my first classes teaching beginner General English to a group of exclusively South American adult learners, I heard some students whispering in Spanish after I had given the instructions for a pair activity. One student whispered to her partner, *¿qué es lo que quiere que hagamos?* (What is it that she wants us to do?). I did not immediately intervene as the partner began to retell the instructions in Spanish. However, when the partner explained a different interpretation of my intended instructions for the activity, I decided to engage in order to mitigate their confusion, while at the same time revealing my knowledge

of Spanish. As I walked over to the pair, I noticed that the other students also seemed unsure about the activity instructions, so I gave a quick class translation in Spanish, emphasizing and repeating the key words in English. All the students, initially surprised by my use of Spanish, then immediately understood the activity, including the Brazilian Portuguese speakers in the class.

Despite the concern and underlying sense of guilt I had after turning to Spanish to give instructions, use of learner L1 has long been conceptualized as an effective classroom management tool, especially for giving instructions or explaining meaning (Atkinson, 1987; Bouangeune, 2009; Piasecka, 1988; Tang, 2002). My decision to switch into Spanish to scaffold learner comprehension of task instructions, while a convenient and inclusive choice in this context, is obviously not an option with every group of learners (nor necessary at every level). In different contexts, plurilingual instruction-giving could mean preparing materials with key instruction words provided in the learners' L1s or projected on a screen, which would not require me as a teacher to have knowledge of the languages of my learners.

The above anecdote is emblematic of the need for such a strategy in order to avoid communication breakdowns during classroom tasks. Beyond giving effective instructions, I found it useful to refer to learner L1 to explain the reasoning behind my instruction. An important principle of adult learning theory, explicit instruction would not be possible at lower levels without use of learners' L1s (Knowles, 1968). Using learner L1s for these purposes in class also reflects the plurality of both learner and teacher language repertoires, thereby breaking down monolingual assumptions, and associated cultural stereotypes of the imagined English language speaker (Ellis, 2016b). Further, this anecdote reveals instances of intercomprehension in classroom practice, as class participants actively mediated between English, Spanish, and Portuguese to make meaning during class (Melo-Pfeifer, 2014).

Affordance #2: Teaching Contrastive Grammar and Vocabulary

As I got to know my South American students and cultivate a supportive classroom culture to enable risk-taking, my students began to recognize their linguistic resources, instead of suppressing their L1s during class. During class activities, students would often start an utterance in English, and then throw in a Spanish or Portuguese word or sentence, which I would translate for them on the spot before continuing in English. After completing the activity, I would give contrastive feedback on the newly used English grammar and vocabulary, as well as draw their attention to crosslinguistic learning strategies. As I gave this feedback, I also received important feedback from my learners. One day in class, I heard one of my students from Mexico, who was the "most-beginner" learner in the class at the time, say excitedly: "*ya puedo contar unas cosas*", ("I can already start to say some things.") and "*así puedo aprender*" ("I can learn like this."). Outside of class, these learners, contrary to the possible assumption that they would prefer to speak Spanish

with me, continued to actively code-switch between English and Spanish when needed, seeming to always incorporate more English and many of the structures and vocabulary we had just talked about in class. I was also careful to consciously start my conversations with them in English, both in and outside of class, since I know from experience how discouraging it can be when someone assumes it is easier for you to communicate in your first language, despite your effort or desire to speak in another language.

"My students began to recognize their linguistic resources, instead of suppressing their L1s during class."

By inviting my students to communicate using all their linguistic resources, we were able to draw on this dynamic communication to explore relevant contrastive structures and lexicons in class. In spite of the failed legacy of grammar-translation methods, the benefits of crosslinguistic analysis for target language acquisition are well documented (Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 2001; Macaro, 1997). Through crosslinguistic analysis in class, learners were able to identify key areas of language transfer and sources of communicative confusion, thereby saving time in the learning process (Neuner, 2004). For example, while analysing a Portuguese speaker's use of a simple past construction where present perfect is used in English, Spanish speakers (of Latin American varieties) were able to recognize the parallel use of the present perfect and the *pretérito perfecto*, and adopt a useful transfer strategy. Spanish speakers also had to engage with and become more aware of the uses of the present perfect tense by explaining it to their Portuguese-speaking classmates who do not use this tense in their L1.

Affordance #3: Enhancing Affective Factors of Learning

The acceptance and informed use of learner L1 in the English language classroom not only facilitates classroom management and opportunities for linguistic comparison, it also enhances learner affect and contributes to a classroom environment of vulnerability, risk-taking, and interpersonal learning. By having the chance to get to know my students and hear them express themselves in their L1s, I had a better sense of their learning experiences, challenges, and desires. I was also able to position myself as a co-learner, and enable students to position themselves as experts in their own languages. After class one day, one of my students, who was a grandmother in Brazil, was giving me an impromptu lesson in Portuguese pronunciation. She told me, "*muito bem* (very good), *you learn Portuguese, I learn English, também espanhol* (also Spanish)."

This utterance reflects not only the dynamic and flexible use of translanguaging, but also an instance of knowledge exchange which would never transpire in a monolingual model of learning and teaching. My student was sharing her experiences and expertise in a combination of English and Portuguese, while at

the same time expressing her enthusiasm for expanding her own plurilingualism. It has been argued that our goal as language teachers is to teach students how to learn *languages*, not just the *target* language of the classroom (Neuner, 2004). This learner's comment reflects that aim and illustrates the importance of plurilingual co-learning in order to generate respect for diversity in language, culture, and experience, while enhancing learner affect in the process of language learning.

While it is not always possible for teachers to access learners in their first languages, collaborative plurilingual efforts can be made between other teachers with knowledge of different languages, or through administrative support (L1 counsellors, multilingual questionnaires), in order to better understand learners' backgrounds, experiences, and needs.

Challenge #1: Institutional Policies

The English-only policies adopted by many TESOL institutions represent a barrier for teachers and students to feel comfortable using their additional languages in class. While ESOL teachers are surely aware of the complexities of navigating a multitude of languages in the classroom, an alternative to a strict English-only policy could be a negotiated class communication contract in which learners outline how they prefer and intend to use their L1s during class time. Of course, communication contracts shift and evolve over the course of participant interactions, resulting in constant revision, whether officially or informally (Melo-Pfeifer, 2014). The reality is, despite the intentions of institutions or instructors, learners will naturally draw on their L1s as they see fit to mediate their language learning. As such, institutional policies should focus less on limiting the use of other languages in class and more on increasing the use of English. When learner L1s are seen as a resource, rather than a problem, they can be used in informed ways by TESOL instructors to scaffold the increased use of English. For this to occur, institutional acceptance/promotion of plurilingual practices is not entirely necessary, but certainly helpful.

Challenge #2: Ideological Limitations

Just as the institutional theory behind TESOL contexts may limit or expand the space for plurilingual practices, individual teacher ideology plays a significant role in the management of languages and cultures in the ESOL classroom. As highlighted in my personal anecdotal examples of classroom plurilingualism, teachers who adopt plurilingual practices must be ready to destabilize their authority by positioning themselves as co-learners. Even when a teacher knows one or more of the languages spoken by students in class, and especially when a teacher is not familiar with many of their learners' languages, an exploratory approach that treats learners as cultural and linguistic informants is likely to be most effective in supporting communicative translanguaging and scaffolding through the L1 (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

When plurilingualism and pluriculturalism is a part of TESOL teachers' initial and ongoing professional development, the ideological terrain for plurilingual pedagogy opens up.

Challenge #3: Practical Shortcomings

A crucial part of all language teachers' initial and ongoing training is knowing how to select, adapt, and create tasks and materials. While TESOL teachers have access to a plethora of texts in other languages online, they may not see the direct application of these texts to TESOL contexts or may not feel comfortable creating or adapting plurilingual tasks or materials for the classroom. While many plurilingual practices can emerge organically from the learners themselves, teachers can also prepare and plan for plurilingualism, for example by collaborating with other instructors to develop plurilingual resources. Some possible ideas include dual-language books, identity texts (Cummins & Early, 2010), or multi-language vocabulary maps (Thomas & Maddy, 2014). In the final section, I will offer more specific ideas and examples based on the context I was teaching in.

Plurilingualism as a Postmethod Macrostrategy

Plurilingualism is part of a broader recognition and promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity. This perspective of plurality contrasts from the monolingual mindset which has traditionally governed the field of English language teaching. The coloniality of the English language itself has been deconstructed by critical theorists and scholars within and beyond the fields of applied and sociolinguistics. In response to the lasting effect of monolingual and monocultural views of language learning, Kumaravadivelu (2012) has called for an epistemic break from Centre-based knowledge production in English language teaching. This call is rooted in his analysis of the hegemonic dominance of English in an international system of economic and cultural globalization. This advances his argument for a postmethod approach to teaching English, which does not subscribe to a particular method, but adopts several teaching *macrostrategies*, such as maximizing learning opportunities, integrating language skills, promoting learner autonomy, or facilitating negotiated interaction.

These macrostrategies are further conceptualized within three postmethod parameters. The parameter of Particularity emphasizes the importance of understanding the linguistic, sociocultural, and political contexts where teaching and learning occurs; the parameter of Possibility calls for understanding of the relationship between teacher and learner identities and the relations of power which inform them; and the parameter of Practicality encourages teachers to theorize from their practice in order to practice what they theorize. These parameters parallel many aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, such as the need for awareness of the diverse linguistic resources that learners bring to the classroom, or the need

for recognition and promotion of minoritized languages and cultures (CoF, 2019). The parameters also respond to the challenges outlined in the previous section, especially the challenge of addressing practical shortcomings (parameter of Practicality). It is within this postmethod framework that a new teaching macrostrategy can be conceptualized: informed use of learner L1.

Plurilingual Microstrategies: Classroom Activities and Materials

As I began to naturally adopt this strategy in my own teaching context with my beginner English learners, who were exclusively speakers of Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese, I unknowingly developed plurilingual activities and materials for my class. Below, I share three examples of plurilingual *micro*strategies (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), or possible classroom activities.

Microstrategy #1: Raising Awareness and Recognition of Cognates

At the beginner level, I found that many students experienced frustration over all the things they could *not* understand, instead of recognizing all the things they already *could* understand. To remedy this, I brought in an activity to raise their awareness of Latin-based lexical cognates between their languages and English. I picked up several copies of free newspapers and asked learners to work in pairs to circle words that they recognized in the text. By the end of the activity, whether students had chosen the sports, politics, or advertisement section, the page was full of circled words. After seeing the success of this activity in raising their awareness of lexical commonalities, I started to bring in short texts full of cognates that I created according to the theme of the lesson. For example, though most teachers would never dare to show the following text to beginner English learners, there are at least 9 cognates to be found for a speaker of a romance language: *Globalization has resulted in the intensification of personal connections, commercial relations, and technological innovations.* Using these short texts, I would ask learners to first circle the words they recognized, and then we would discuss any new vocabulary, contrastive grammar structures, or differences in pronunciation. These texts could also be designed to draw learners' attention to false cognate relationships.

Microstrategy #2: Activating Lexical Pattern Production

When my beginner-level students asked me questions like "how do I say *comunicación* in English?", I realized that they were unaware of the lexical patterns between English and romance languages. When I was learning Spanish, one of my favourite strategies was to turn an English word into a Spanish one by modifying the ending, and then see if people understood me. I shared this strategy with my students in class one day and soon developed a collaborative resource of Spanish-English-Portuguese lexical patterns. For example, Spanish nouns ending in -dad and -ía can often be converted into the suffix -y in English

(sociedad, nacionalidad, economía, geografía). Spanish adjectives ending in -ado can often be changed to the ending -ed in English (organizado, identificado, autorizado, generalizado, mencionado). All of these adjectives are also past participles, which learners can begin to use with verbs in English by activating their knowledge of these patterns.

Microstrategy #3: Discussing Learning Strategies

While the first two microstrategies mentioned deal mostly with referring to learner L1 for the purpose of discussing contrastive grammar and lexical items, informed use of learner L1 can also support the language learning process by giving learners a chance to share and improve their individual learning strategies. This happened quite naturally in my class. Once learners realized they could speak in their L1s, the space opened up for authentic learning and teaching moments. For example, one day a student of mine began to explain to a new student how it can be difficult at first to understand what the teacher is saying, but "*poco a poco vas entendiendo* - little by little you start to understand." I took this opportunity to ask if other classmates could share some strategies they had for learning English. Learners shared many ideas, in a combination of English, Spanish, and Portuguese utterances, and I offered several of my own as we wrote them down and analyzed the grammatical, phonetic, and lexical content of the phrases.

Conclusion: Adopting a Plurilingual Perspective

When learners' L1s are seen as a classroom resource, and not a pedagogical impediment, plurilingualism can be adopted as a macrostrategy in any teaching context, with any group of learners, and at any level. Specific and appropriate microstrategies will depend on the synergic language ecology of the classroom and the repertoires of its participants, as well as the institutional and ideological possibilities or restrictions shaping the class context, and the levels and needs of the given group of learners. Drawing on my experiences teaching beginner General English at a private language institution to adult learners of Spanish and Portuguese-speaking backgrounds, I have outlined how the macrostrategy of informed use of learner L1 can produce a variety of plurilingual microstrategies. These classroom practices foster a perspective of plurality, which recognizes both cultural and individual diversity. Language learners come with diverse repertoires, strategies, and trajectories. A plurilingual perspective can help TESOL teachers to recognize, respect, and make use of diverse learner resources.

References

Auerbach, E. (1993). Reexamining English Only in the ESL Classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *27*(1), 9–32.

Bailey, B. (2012). Heteroglossia. In M. Martin-Jones, A. Blackledge, & A. Creese. (pp. 499–506). *The Routledge Handbook of Multilingualism*. London, New York: Routledge.

Beacco, J. C. (2005). *Languages and language repertoires: Plurilingualism as a way of life in Europe*. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe.

Bouangeune, S. (2009). Using L1 in teaching vocabulary to low English proficiency level students: A case study at the University of Laos. *English Language Teaching Journal, 2*(3), 186–193.

Breidbach, S. (2003). *Plurilingualism, democratic citizenship in Europe and the role of English*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Canagarajah, S. (1995). Functions of code switching in the ESL classroom: Socialising bilingualism in Jaffna. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *16*, 173–195.

Canagarajah, S. (2011). Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *Modern Language Journal*, *95*, 401–417.

Cook, V. (1995). Multi-competence and learning of many languages. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, (2), 93–98.

Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *57*, 402–423.

Council of Europe. (2019). "Plurilingual and intercultural education: Definition and Founding Principles." Retrieved from https://www.coe.int/en/web/platform-plurilingual-intercultural-language-education/the-founding-principles-of-plurilingual-and-intercultural-education

Cummins, J. (2008). Teaching for transfer: Challenging the two solitudes assumption in bilingual education. *Encyclopedia of language and education*, 1528–1538.

Cummins, J., & Early, M. (2010). *Identity texts: The collaborative creation of power in multilingual schools*. London: Trentham Books Ltd.

Edstrom, A. (2006). L1 use in the L2 classroom: One teacher's self-evaluation. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *63*(2), 275–292.

Ellis, E. (2016a). The plurilingual TESOL teacher: The hidden languaged lives of TESOL teachers and why they matter (Vol. 25). Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.

Ellis, E. M. (2016b). "I May Be a Native Speaker but I'm Not Monolingual": Reimagining All Teachers' Linguistic Identities in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*(3), 597–630.

Garcia, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Genesee, F. (2015). Myths About Early Childhood Bilingualism. *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie canadienne, 56*(1) 6–15.

Glaser, E. (2005). Plurilingualism in Europe: More Than a Means for Communication. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *5*(3–4), 195-208.

Guo, Y., & Beckett, G. H. (2007). The Hegemony of English as a Global Language: Reclaiming Local Knowledge and Culture in China. *Convergence, 40*(1–2), 117.

Knowles, M. S. (1968). Andragogy, not pedagogy. *Adult leadership*, *16*(10), 350–352.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching*. Yale University Press: New Haven and London.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). Individual identity, cultural globalization and teaching English as an international language: The case for an epistemic break. In Alsagoff, L., Renandya, W., Hu, Guangwei & McKay, S. (eds.). *Teaching English as an International Language: Principles and Practices* (pp. 9–27). New York: Routledge.

Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012). Translanguaging: Origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation: An International Journal on Theory and Practice*, *18*(7) 641–654.

Lin, A. (2013). Toward paradigmatic change in TESOL methodologies: Building plurilingual pedagogies from the ground up. *TESOL Quarterly*, *47*(3), 521–545.

Lin, A. M. Y. (1990). *Teaching in two tongues: Language alternation in foreign language classrooms* (Research Report No. 3). Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, Department of English.

Lüdi, G., & Py, B. (2009). To be or not to be… a plurilingual speaker. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 6*(2), 154–167.

Macaro, E. (2001). Analyzing student teacher's code switching in the foreign language classrooms: Theories and decision making. *The Modern Language Journal*, *85*, 531–548.

Melo-Pfeifer, S. (2014). Intercomprehension between Romance Languages and the role of English: a study of multilingual chat rooms. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *11*(1), 120–137.

Neuner, G. (2004). The concept of plurilingualism and tertiary language didactics. In B. Hufeisen, & G. Neuner (Eds.), *The plurilingualism project: Tertiary language learning – German after English* (pp. 13–34). Kapfenberg, Austria: Council of Europe.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Piccardo, E. (2019). "We are all (potential) plurilinguals": Plurilingualism as an overarching, holistic concept. *Les Cahiers de l'ILOB/OLBI Working Papers*, 10.

Tang, J. (2002). Using L1 in the English Classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, *40*(1), 36–43.

Thomas, R., & Mady, C. (2014). Teaching for transfer: Insights from theory and practices in primary-level French-second-language classrooms. *McGill Journal of Education/Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*, *49*(2), 399–416.

Author Bio

Rebecca holds a bilingual B.A. in International Studies and a certificate in the Discipline of Teaching English as an International Language from Glendon College, York University, as well as a certificate in TESOL from the University of Toronto. She is currently completing an MEd in Language and Literacies Education with a specialization in Comparative, International and Development Education at the University of Toronto, OISE. She also teaches EAP at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies and works at the University of Toronto's Centre for International Experience as a facilitator for the Intercultural Learning Program.

Can Sociodramatic Play Enhance Second Language Development?

By Fernanda C. A. Batista, Ontario Tech University, Canada

Abstract

Sociodramatic play contributes to children's communication processes in several ways, including the development of language, imagination, creative expression, self-regulation, inner thought, and socialization, as well as the paving of the way for the development of symbolic activities such as literacy, mathematics, and music. To what extent, however, can it be beneficial to second language development in teenage and adult learners? In this paper, study findings about how and why sociodramatic play—also referred to as role-play, pretend play, symbolic play, and make-believe play—can help learners of all ages acquire a second language are reviewed. In these studies, sociodramatic play is regarded as an opportunity to promote interactive and cooperative learning along with understanding the norms of other cultures, providing practice for real-life experiences, and encouraging the participation of shy learners in class. Role-play boosts students' self-esteem as well as improves their communicative competence, and is, therefore, recommended to the language teacher. Replacement Performance Role-Plays are discussed in particular in this paper because they can help second language students with all levels of thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy, i.e. remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating, which learners will need when communicating in the target culture.

Can sociodramatic Play Enhance Second Language Development in Teenage and Adult Learners?

Sociodramatic play contributes to children's communication processes in several ways, such as "growth in imagining, increased recall, discriminative listening and speaking, developing creative expression, learning

social language and motoric actions" (Yawkey, 1981, p. 223). Play situations create contexts for cultural learning, exploration, and socialization by eliciting the production of language, enabling children to develop emotionally and linguistically as they become members of society (Galeano, 2011; Vygotsky, 2016). In fact, Vygotsky (as cited in Elias & Berk, 2002) argues that sociodramatic play is crucial for the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. The impact of sociodramatic play is so extensive that it is considered the "leading activity" in early childhood and is the location of the most psychological changes, allowing for the child's transition to a new, higher level of development (Vygotsky, 2016; Worthington & Oers, 2017).

To what extent, however, can sociodramatic play be beneficial to second language development in teenage and adult learners as well? Research suggests that some of the benefits of sociodramatic play in second language classes include encouraging participation by reducing the affective filter and improving self-esteem in addition to increasing intrinsic motivation by providing practice for real-life experiences and promoting understanding about norms of other cultures (Littlewood, 1975; Snarski, 2007; Waring, 2013).

In this paper, the impact of sociodramatic play on second language development in learners of all ages is discussed and a particular kind of sociodramatic play, Replacement Performance Role-Play (RPRP), is explained and suggested to second language teachers as a way to develop students' critical thinking skills in accordance with Snarski's ideas presented in a 2007 journal article.

Sociodramatic Play and Success in Second Language Acquisition

The topic of play has received some attention in the literature of second language acquisition, with various theoretical perspectives on second language learning articulating the importance of play to development (Waring, 2013). Within the sociolinguistic perspective, play is viewed as a facilitator to second language acquisition because of its capacity to lower the affective filter, stretch learners' sociolinguistic competence, and destabilize the interlanguage system (Waring, 2013). Within the applied linguistic standpoint, on the other hand, play is regarded as "means and end of language learning" and an element that can "broaden the range of permitted interaction patterns within the classroom", constituting "a large portion of personally and socially significant language use" (Cook as cited in Waring, 2013, p. 2). Within a social psychological perspective, play may allow for intrinsic motivation, or, as Csikszentmihalyi describes, "flow", i.e., "the optimal experience of individuals being fully engaged in a given task and pursuing whatever they are doing for its own sake" (Waring, 2013, p. 2). Play indeed has "highlighting features such as transforming the way we perceive reality, stretching the limits of our ordinary experience, or allowing us to 'feel as though we are more than we actually are through fantasy, pretense, and disguise'" (Waring, 2013, p. 3).

Role-play, being one particular type of play, can work as a facilitator to second language acquisition by providing opportunity for significant language use and allowing for flow. Because of these features, it is widely used in second language classes. Littlewood (1975) claims that rationale for the use of role-play in language teaching comes from many sources, two of which are linguistic and educational. From the linguistic standpoint, the implementation of role-play can be considered a reaction against the view of language as a simply grammatical system because role-play uses language as a means of communication, treats language as a larger unit consisting of both verbal and non-verbal elements, and places language into a context of situation (Littlewood, 1975). From the educational point of view, role-play is justified because it is a technique that brings the outside world into the classroom, is important for a functional view of language, and motivates the learner by appealing to his or her game-instinct as well as "offering the opportunity for the learning to increase in relevance to his life outside the classroom" (Littlewood, 1975, p. 200).

Indeed, as Snarski (2007) points out, second language learners tend to find role-play fun and motivational because it allows them to be creative, express themselves, and interact with one another. Such interaction, from the perspective of sociocultural second language acquisition, facilitates language learning (Peterson, 2012). However, if little or no direction is given to learners, they might feel a block in their creativity and stage fright due to a lack of vocabulary or confidence. For this reason, teachers usually provide a function or scene about which students have to prepare a role-play, oftentimes using cue cards that include background information regarding the character, the scene, and the goal of the interaction (Snarski, 2007).

Replacement Performance Role-Plays (RPRP) can do more than ordinary role-plays to develop students' critical thinking skills and pragmatic competence (Snarski, 2007). In this kind of role-play, learners view a live or videotaped scene and "comment on some aspect of the story line: the resolution of the situation, the advice offered, or a particular character's words or actions" (Snarski, 2007, p. 3). After a discussion on the scene, students get ready to act by replacing one character and demonstrating what they would say and do under the same circumstances. Additionally, they are encouraged to observe how the outcome of the scene may change depending on the performance of the replacement role. Snarski (2007) claims that in this type of role-play, students are engaged because they have a natural impulse to respond to "what appears to be a here and now situation—a situation they observe, not one they piece together from cards or a description" (p. 3).

Other advantages of this kind of role-play include high engagement even by shy students, integrated observation tasks, applicability to various proficiency levels, pragmatic practice, and development of critical thinking skills (Snarski, 2007). First, high engagement can lead shyer students to participate and offer

their contribution, if not in front of the whole class, at least in small group settings because the need to react or respond may motivate them to leave their fears behind (Snarski, 2007). Additionally, the quality of the observation of role-plays by students is improved because the task will not only involve listening to the performance, which can be distracting due to a lack of specific objective, but also problem solving, that is, the presentation of a reaction or response to the activity (Snarski, 2007). Also, students of different proficiency levels can work together in rewriting the message of a particular character, the lower level ones being naturally exposed to language practice even if they speak less. This participation is beneficial because it builds confidence and self-esteem, which in turn lead to greater willingness to participate in class (Snarski, 2007). This type of role-play also helps students learn how to speak appropriately for the context, that is, develop pragmatic competence, which means choosing adequately between formal or informal speech, varying tone and intonation according to the meaning to be conveyed, and inserting hesitation markers in the conversation when appropriate (Snarski, 2007). Finally, when speaking, it is necessary to use critical thinking skills to combine language creatively and appropriately to respond to situations (Snarski, 2007).

RPRP can help second language students with all levels of thinking in Bloom's taxonomy, i.e., knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as cited in Snarski (2007), and remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating according to the revised taxonomy (Armstrong, 2016), which learners will need to have in their repertoire when communicating in the target culture. As Snarski (2007) claims, the visuals and audio of the role-play help with *knowledge* and *comprehension* (*remembering* and *understanding*). For the RPRP, "students use the application skill by working to solve a problem, to change or communicate part of the role-play in a way that suits their intended outcome" (p. 5). An *analysis* happens when "students separate out the parts from the whole or identify the different characters and see the patterns of their behavior" (p. 5) to come up with a new dialogue. A *synthesis* (*evaluation*) will happen naturally after the analysis as students will "predict what characters might do based on how they revise the dialogue. They will draw conclusions of how their new dialogue may affect a scene based on what they know about the characters of the scene up to that point" (p. 5). The *evaluation* (*creation*) step will also happen naturally because students will create new dialogues and "inevitably discern the effect the fresh dialogues have on the outcome of the role-play" (Snarski, 2007, p. 5). In an interactive activity such as this, most thinking skills need little prompting to occur, thus making it "great practice in problem solving in general and choosing appropriate, specific language that can be applied in real situations" (Snarski, 2007, p. 5).

The following RPRP, adapted from Snarski (2007, p. 16), can be used by ESL teachers in the classroom to promote the different thinking skills in students:

Scene: Two students walking toward class and talking about the upcoming exam.

Student A: Good Morning!

Student B: Morning, are you ready for the exam?

Student A: No, I didn't really have a chance to study, but I have a little help in case I need it. *(flashes a cheat sheet)*

Student B: You're going to *cheat*?

Student A: Only if I have to. I didn't have time to study last night.

Scene: They walk into the classroom, and Student A takes a seat next to Student B.

Teacher: Good morning, class. As you know, there is an exam today. Please remove your books from your desks and just have your pencils ready. You will have 60 minutes for the exam. When you are finished, you may leave.

Scene: Student A visibly needs to cheat and tries looking at Student B's paper and looking at the cheat sheet, avoiding being caught by the teacher.

Student A finishes first and accidentally drops the cheat sheet. It lands near Student B. Student A leaves.

The teacher sees the cheat sheet and believes it belongs to Student B. The teacher questions Student B about the paper.

Teacher: Is this yours?

Student B: No, it isn't.

Teacher: What is it doing under your desk?

Student B: I don't know.

Teacher: OK. I will report that, and we will discuss it later.

Students should watch the scene take place, then discuss it in small groups, and finally create new lines to replace one of the characters in it and reflect upon the changes made, which would change its outcome(s).

Discussion

Sociodramatic play is important for the development of language, imagination, creative expression, self-regulation, inner thought, and socialization, as well as for the development of abstract thought and symbolic activities such as literacy, mathematics, and music in children (Elias & Berk, 2002; Galeano, 2011; Vygotsky, 2016; Worthington & Oers, 2017; Yawkey, 1981). For this reason, it is the leading activity in early childhood, being considered a zone of proximal development, that is, a place where a child advances themselves as in no other activity, and should, therefore, be provided for in early childhood education as a meaningful resource and not just as fun (Vygotsky, 2016).

However, the importance of sociodramatic play is not limited to the development of the child. In second language teaching and learning, this type of play is also relevant regardless of the student's age because it is an opportunity to promote interactive and cooperative learning as well as the understanding of norms of other cultures, provide practice for real-life experiences, and encourage the participation of shy learners in class, boosting their self-esteem and improving their communicative competence (Littlewood, 1975; Peterson, 2012; Snarski, 2007; Waring, 2013).

In particular, RPRP can help promote pragmatic competence alongside critical thinking by getting students to respond to a given situation by replacing one of the characters and sharing with the whole class or group what they would do differently if they were under the same circumstances (Snarski, 2007). This technique can be regarded as a way to promote all levels of thinking—remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating—and provide varied and challenging activities that increase students' learning and intrinsic motivation while valuing their background and previous life experience and creating opportunities for meaningful interactions in the classroom.

Acknowledgements

This research paper was written for the course Play, Language and Learning, taught by Dr. Sharon Murphy in the Faculty of Education of York University in the Fall of 2018, and the author would like to thank Dr. Murphy for the valuable feedback provided.

References

Armstrong. P. (2016). *Bloom's Taxonomy*. Retrieved from https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/

Elias, C. L., & Berk, L. E. (2002). Self-regulation in young children: Is there a role for sociodramatic play? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *17*, 216–238. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006(02)00146-1

Galeano, R. (2011). Scaffolding productive language skills through sociodramatic play. *American Journal of Play*, *3*(3), 324–355. Retrieved from https://www.journalofplay.org/issues/3/3/article/scaffolding-productive-language-skills-through-sociodramatic-play

Littlewood, W. T. (1975). Role performance and language teaching. *IRAL*, *13*(3), 199–208. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.1975.13.1-4.199

Peterson, M. (2012). Learner interaction in a massively multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG): A sociocultural discourse analysis. *ReCALL*, *24*(3), 361–380. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344012000195

Snarski, M. (2007). Using replacement performance role-plays in the language classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, *45*(4), 2–9. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1099411

Vygotsky, L. (2016). Play and Its Role in the Mental Development of the Child. *International Research in Early Childhood Education, 7*(2), 3–25.

Waring, H. Z. (2013). Doing being playful in the second language classroom. *Applied Linguistics*. *34*(2), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams047

Worthington, M. & Oers, B. (2017). Children's social literacies: Meaning making and the emergence of graphical signs and texts in pretence. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *17*(2) 147–175. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798415618534

Yawkey, T. D. (1981). Role play and language growth: strategies for imaginative experiences. *Contemporary Education, 52*(4), 223–227. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED231552

Author Bio

Fernanda C. A. Batista has a Master's and a PhD degree in Language and Literature. She taught ESL in private language centres, basic education, and higher education as well as TESOL in a university in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. She is currently researching English language teaching in the Canadian context and working as a Writing and ESL Specialist at Ontario Tech University.

Exploring Multilingual International Students' Identity-related Experiences through Pictures

By Vander Tavares, Sheridan College and York University, Canada

Abstract

This paper shares findings from an investigation connected to a larger research study which sought to holistically understand multilingual international students' socio-academic and linguistic experiences at a university in Ontario. In here, the focus is placed on the students' identity-related experiences in light of post-structuralist theory in applied linguistics. By drawing on interviews and participant-generated photography, this study seeks to link theory and experience, and to illustrate some of the complexity, diversity, and subjectivity of identity and identity-related experiences for multilingual international students for whom English is an additional language.

Background

Canadian universities and colleges have experienced a rapid increase in the number of international students over the last decade. International students contribute to the diversification of their host academic communities in multifaceted ways. They are known particularly for their important role in increasing the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, intellectual, and financial profile of their institutions. Additionally, within the classroom, international students can contribute to enhancing cross-cultural teaching and learning by offering international and inter-cultural perspectives, especially around themes of diversity and global issues (Andrade, 2006). Intense efforts to internationalise higher education and to recruit more international students have also broadened the global range of both sending and hosting nations—this is one of the very complex reasons behind Canada's emergence as a popular choice for international students (Choudaha, 2017).

However, despite the overall increased diversity, international students continue to be discussed primarily as a monolithic group. This has been especially true for multilingual international students who speak English as an additional language, who comprise the vast majority of international students worldwide today (Tan, 2015) and are commonly categorised as English as a second language (ESL) students. While on one hand, the categorisations of "international student" and "ESL" hold practical value for academic institutions; on the other, they can be reductionist for multilingual international students. In recognition of the existing heterogeneity within this group, this study is concerned with exploring the lived experiences of multilingual international students beyond these institutional categories. This study is guided by the following question: What can an emic approach tell us about the students' identity-related experiences as and beyond multilingual international students at a university in Canada?

Re-thinking Identity

Post-structuralist theory proposes that identity is experienced dynamically; comprised of multiple intersecting positions; and constructed socially, collaboratively, and discursively (Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2002). This theoretical perspective challenges "traditional" notions of identity as "fixed" and "binary" in applied linguistics (e.g. native/non-native speaker). However, as Duff (2012) has explained, much of the early L2 research focused on the identities of multilingual speakers was largely informed by sociolinguistic perspectives on identity, generally in which first language and ethnic background were the common identity denominators for the multilingual individual. Consequently, while much progress has been made in applied linguistics with respect to identity, it is not unusual that in many contexts, identity is still discussed under the effects of a strong sociolinguistic approach.

These early perspectives led to what some have critiqued as an essentialist approach to discussing identity (Duff, 2012). This generally means that some believe parts of our identities are not only inalterable, but also ontologically necessary. Though this may be certainly true in some dimensions of experience, in the contexts of ESL and English as an additional language (EAL), this type of essentialism has become increasingly detrimental for multilingual learners. For instance, in a study exploring multilingual students' experiences transitioning from high school into university in Canada, Marshall (2009) illustrated how the students had been assigned an "ESL student" identity by their academic institution because of their English-language status. Yet, the students' expectation was that the transition into university would afford them a chance to break from this label, which they had experienced as a kind of intellectual deficit among their Canadian peers in their Canadian high school.

Findings from other studies have also reported similar concerns. Ortmeier-Hooper (2008) examined the identity-related experiences of multilingual immigrant students in a composition class and demonstrated

how the students employed effortful and continuous negotiation in order to deflect their imposed association to being (seen as) ESL learners. For them, this identity label evoked feelings of deficiency and otherness in their immediate communities. Additionally, Tavares (2019) found that in the context of peer interaction in the academic classroom, multilingual international students may often refuse participation when their oral language proficiencies in English as an additional language are considered a sign of intellectual inferiority by their host peers. Altogether, these findings highlight some of the harmful limitations imposed identities can have for multilingual, additional language learners.

Method

This study was based on interviews and photographs taken by three multilingual international students. In the winter term of 2019, four semi-structured interviews, of approximately one hour each for a total of 12 hours, were conducted to explore and understand the students' experiences on and off campus, with a focus on their multiple positions, roles, and skills, and the ways in which these intersected with their institutional roles of (multilingual) international students at Tree University, a pseudonym for a large research-oriented university in Ontario. Tree University comprised the research site for this study for its rich multicultural and multilingual profile, and large campus population.

The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed for emerging themes (Creswell, 2013). Photographs taken by the students were shared with the aim of visually capturing, from the students' perspectives, experiences which they considered uniquely representative of their identities (Allen, 2012). For ethical reasons, students were instructed to only provide photographs in which they were not present. Photographs were analysed through a visual semiotic approach (van Leeuwen, 2004). Although on average 20 photographs were provided by each student, for the purpose of this paper only one photograph is included.

The participants were:

- Gabriela, multilingual international graduate student from Brazil.
- Wong, multilingual international undergraduate student from Macau.
- Sara, multilingual (former international) graduate student from Iran.

Findings

Gabriela

Gabriela was a multilingual international student with extensive professional experience prior to coming to Canada. In Brazil, she had worked as a journalist for a major national news broadcasting company after

graduating from an undergraduate program in journalism. In addition to her professional experience, Gabriela had studied French for several years, and once she had completed a multi-level French language program in Rio, she moved on to taking Italian language courses as well—all this alongside Portuguese, the language she grew up speaking, and also English, which she had studied for a few years specifically for the purpose of passing the foreign language component of her university entrance exam. Once in Toronto, however, she experienced challenges in enacting the identities she had been constructing for herself over time because of insufficient oral proficiency in English when in interaction with others.

Before starting her graduate studies at Tree University, Gabriela was a student in a private ESL school in Toronto. Although this was an important experience for the development of her linguistic skills, she felt as if the ESL student (identity) "label," channelled and maintained through her affiliation to the language school, signalled out certain language-learner stereotypes when in first-time interactions with local Torontonians which she did not consider only inaccurate for herself, but also overshadowing of other facets of her multilingual, transnational, academic, and professional identities. She was especially disheartened when her interlocutors considered her fragile, lost, or in need of help to navigate the city or understand written communication. After a few months in the ESL program, Gabriela opted to resign from the language school in an act of identity—she wished to break ties with anything that would continuously position her as an "ESL learner" before Canadians.

At Tree University, Gabriela needed to align her identity to that of a university student once more, but this time, in Canada. Initially, she had underestimated the influence of the culturally-informed dimension behind being a student in another country: "I realised that the 'number-one student of the class' I had always been in Brazil was just not something I could naturally transfer to being a student here in Canada, and that was because of both culture and language," she reported in one of our interviews. Together with an in-progress development of her proficiency in academic language, the cultural re-alignment in being a student in the Canadian context—as in when to ask questions, to challenge her instructors, and to deliver presentations, to cite a few context-specific interactions—led Gabriela to feel like she was on a "roller-coaster" (figure 1). She felt as though she had much to learn, but all that at such a fast pace. Because Gabriela loved new challenges, she fully embraced this experience and enjoyed every lesson along the way.

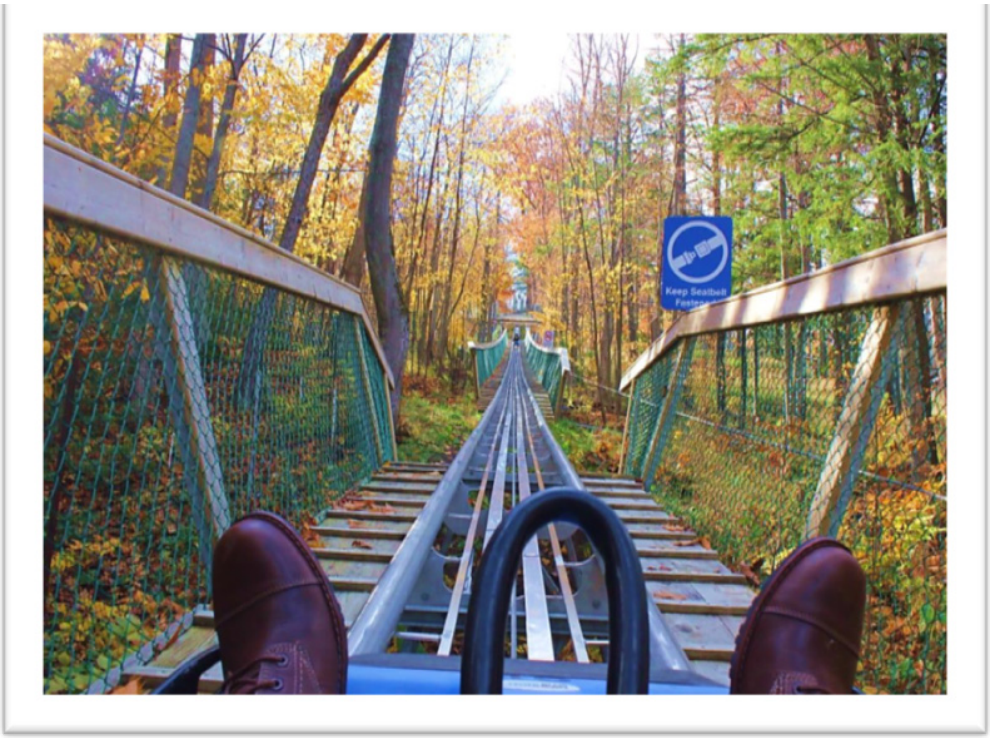

Figure 1: Gabriela's new student journey.

Wong

Wong was a multilingual international student from Macau, China, who experienced cultural shock as he transferred from a university in all-year-round sunny Santa Monica, California, to Tree University in Ontario. In his experience, the long and cold Canadian winter, along with the "socially conservative" culture of Ontario, interfered with the full enactment of the outgoing, social, and inquisitive personality traits of his identity. He experienced Canadian students as socially distant and uninterested in developing meaningful friendships with international students. On the other hand, in Santa Monica, his experience was the opposite: people seemed more open, friendly, and risk-taking in terms of cultivating cross-cultural friendships. As a consequence, because Wong's identity was most often enacted collaboratively through socialisation with others, the inability to enact—and in so doing, to live like—his "true self" like he did successfully in California (figure 2), contributed to feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction with his academic experience and with his overall time living in Ontario.

Wong spoke Mandarin and Japanese, in addition to English. While going to Tree University full-time for a degree in Linguistics, he worked part-time at a Japanese restaurant, which he enjoyed because it fuelled his interest for Japanese culture. In relation to his cultural identity, Wong preferred to see himself as "half Western-half Eastern" as he considered his long nine years in the United States—first in New York, and then in Santa Monica—to have significantly impacted his ways of seeing himself, others, and the world.

From living in the United States for an extensive amount of time, Wong embraced new cultural perspectives that he believed aligned more authentically with his view of himself. However, his new cultural orientations posed ongoing identity conflict for him when he interacted with members of the Chinese community at Tree University. He could not see himself as a full member of that community—"I've just changed too much," he explained. Accordingly, he sought ways to differentiate himself from his co-nationals while attending Tree University, often by strategising what language to speak and when.

Figure 2: Wong's vivid memory of California: "I just feel like I belong in Cali."

Sara

Sara taught herself English as an adult while she lived in Iran. The development of her English language skills was mediated by the frequent opportunities to speak English she encountered during her time working in the tourism industry in Iran and by her undergraduate studies in English at a local university. As a result, when Sara moved to Canada, she felt comfortable to interact conversationally and informally with Canadians. With plans to become an ESL teacher in Ontario, her new home, she completed a CELTA certificate and subsequently found a job as a teacher at an ESL language school. Her professional identity continued to expand as she began networking and refining her teaching skills through professional development. At the personal level, Sara was fascinated by the linguistic diversity of Canada, and enrolled in a beginner's French

language course to enhance her multilingual and multicultural proficiency. The new sociocultural context of Ontario afforded her numerous chances to explore and experiment with her identity.

As a multilingual international student in a graduate program at Tree University, Sara encountered challenges with the academic register of English, particularly around academic reading and writing. The articles she was expected to read for her classes normally employed a complex level of language which she was linguistically unprepared for. Inevitably, she spent much more of her time reading to understand than she had anticipated. Sara also drew on the skills and knowledge from her position as an ESL teacher in order to cope with and overcome some of her academic language challenges. She taught herself the very learning strategies she taught her multilingual students at the ESL school. Furthermore, she adopted some of the study habits of her host peers to help her progress and later succeed in her studies. The graduate student experience led her to eventually become a permanent resident, a new identity position which she welcomed with open arms. Sara considered herself "semi-Canadian" (figure 3) and maintained a dual cultural identity by embracing both Canadian and Iranian cultural traditions which she believed reflected her personal view of the world.

Figure 3: "I like the snow, but only for one month!"—being "semi-Canadian."

Conclusion

From a post-structuralist perspective, students' accounts of their experiences as multilingual international students help challenge essentialist views of identity as fixed, simplistic, and singular. As the students'

experiences demonstrate, identity should be seen as a nexus of multiple subjective roles, positions, and knowledge(s) (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004), along with a combination of students' individual traits, interests, goals, and abilities. Oftentimes, however, these unique facets may be overlooked by the identity "labels" assigned to multilingual language learners. When approached from the (emic) perspective of lived experience, the findings suggest that identity construction and enactment can also be experienced as sites of struggle and negotiation. As multilingual international students navigate different sociocultural spaces, including those of their host universities, they may encounter challenges in presenting their true selves once the identity positions made available to them by their host communities (e.g. native/non-native, international/domestic, immigrant, ESL) are incongruent with those developed through and throughout the complex trajectories of their individual identity journeys across time and space. Challenges related to identity enactment may also be exacerbated by linguistic, psychological, and cultural difference.

As additional and second language instructors and researchers, creating space and opportunity for multilingual learners to construct and enact their identities remains one of our top priorities. In this study, multilingual international students were invited to draw on photography in order to capture and share singular moments as well as feelings which they believed were representative of their overall identity experience. By taking and sharing their own pictures, participants may also act as co-researchers (Allen, 2012). When understood in juxtaposition with the interview data, the students' pictures can help produce a unique representation of their individual experiences.

References

Allen, Q. (2012). Photographs and stories: ethics, benefits and dilemmas of using participant photography with Black middle-class male youth. *Qualitative Research, 12*(4), 443–458. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111433088

Andrade, M. S. (2006). International students in English-speaking universities: Adjustment factors. *Journal of Research in International Education, 5*(2), 131–154. https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240906065589

Choudaha, R. (2017). Three waves of international student mobility (1999–2020). *Studies in Higher Education, 42*(5), 825–832. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1293872

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Duff, P. (2012). Identity, agency, and second language acquisition. In S. M. Gass & A. Mackey (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 410–426). New York, NY: Routledge.

Marshall, S. (2009). Re-becoming ESL: Multilingual university students and a deficit identity. *Language and Education, 24*(1), 41–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780903194044

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education/Longman.

Ortmeier-Hooper, C. (2008). English may be my second language, but I'm not 'ESL'. *College Composition and Communication,* 389–419.

Pavlenko, A. (2002). Poststructuralist approaches to the study of social factors in second language learning and use. In V. Cook (Ed.), *Portraits of the L2 user* (pp. 277–302). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tan, A. (2015). College choice behaviors of international students. *SAGE Open,* 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015618995

Tavares, V. (2019). A review of peer interaction and second language learning for ELL students in academic contexts. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education, 10* (2), 111–119.

van Leeuwen, T. (2004). Semiotics and iconography. In T. Van Leeuwen & C. Jewitt (Eds.), *The handbook of visual analysis* (pp. 92–118). London, UK: SAGE Publications.

Author Bio

Vander Tavares is an instructor of academic communication skills at Sheridan College and a PhD candidate in the Linguistics and Applied Linguistics program at York University.

Making the Case for Blended Learning in LINC: A Demonstration Research Project

By Jill Cummings, Matthias Sturm, & Augusta Avram, Canada

Abstract

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) aims to advance both newcomers' English language learning and their settlement skills and goals. Canada's official languages, cultural awareness, and employment and settlement skills are essential drivers of settlement and a core part of the LINC curriculum. In response to these needs, Blended Learning (BL) LINC programs combine face-to-face (f2f) LINC classes with online activities beyond the classroom and integrate technology and settlement skills with English language learning. BL provides learners with essential opportunities for developing their English skills while learning the digital skills necessary for effective settlement in Canada.

At the 2019 TESL Ontario Conference, LINC and ESL teachers and administrators raised important questions about BL and our research regarding the effects of BL in LINC (Cummings, Sturm, & Avram, 2019). Some wondered what to do about students who voice their preference for the traditional language learning model without technology integration; others asked about the implementation of technology and what digital skills support settlement and learning English. We discuss these questions and make a case for BL in this article. First, however, as background we review research findings regarding the effects of BL in LINC as presented at TESL Ontario on December 5, 2019: Cummings, Sturm, Avram; TESL Ontario Conference Presentation, 2019.

Background: The Effects of Blended Learning in LINC

BL provides f2f classroom instruction combined or "blended" with online and other computer-mediated activities (Kennel & Moriarty, 2014). From September 2017 to June 2018, in response to the paucity of

research about BL in settlement language learning contexts, we conducted a demonstration research project with a BL LINC program in British Columbia to examine the effects of BL for students and teachers.

This project was carried out with 45 intermediate LINC students, three of their instructors, the program manager and resource support teacher. An established LINC program that had implemented BL effectively since 2012 was selected as the research site according to a demonstration research approach. A demonstration project examines real applications of innovations in progress in order to extrapolate possible extensions to other contexts. The school board program presented as an effective, well-developed model of blending learning for English language instruction and TELL (technology-enabled language learning) that has the potential for adoption, extension, and adaptation to various LINC/ESL contexts.

Research Questions and Methodology

Three questions were the focus:

1. *What were the effects of the BL approach for the students' English language learning and for their participation in LINC?*
2. *What were the effects of the BL approach for students' self-efficacy and knowledge for using technology for language learning?*
3. *What were the effects of the BL approach for LINC teachers, instruction, and the program?; What effective or "best" practices for BL were demonstrated in this context?*

BL was examined through a variety of research activities to gain multiple perspectives on its effects:

- CELPIP Testing provided a baseline description of each student's language proficiency at the beginning.
- Student Questionnaire and Interview: A background questionnaire and 30-minute semi-structured interview provided insights about students' perceptions of BL.
- Teacher/Staff Questionnaire and Interviews: A background questionnaire and 45–60 minute teacher interview provided insights about the effects of BL and teaching practices.
- A Student Self-Efficacy Questionnaire about Using Technology: The questionnaires showed students' perceptions about their abilities for using technologies for their learning and identified areas of confidence and anxiety.
- Observations and Collection of Tasks/Artefacts: Classroom and online observations of activities provided data for description of BL. Tasks and artefacts from PBLA (Portfolio-Based Language Assessment) were collected as examples of language improvement.
- Student Focus Group Discussions: Focus group discussions regarding the effects and benefits and challenges of BL classes were done near the conclusion. Students assumed the role of researchers by recording their focus groups' BL experiences.

Data were analyzed using methods of constant comparison. Interpretations were compared to reach inter-rater agreement. Representative quotes from the participant interviews and questionnaires are included

here to illustrate the findings and themes. PowerPoint slides from the Focus Groups are also included as representative artifacts from the research.

Blended Learning Approach

What the Research Site Was Like

The research project was conducted in three BL LINC classes at a school board program in British Columbia—two daytime classes, a LINC 6 and a LINC 7/8, and one evening LINC 7/8 class. The two daytime classes met three days in class and one day online; the evening class was two days f2f and two days online. The tech base consisted of laptops and iPads. Students had access to free WiFi and often used their own devices. Before starting in any of the blended classes, students completed a Transition to BL class (25-30 hours of instruction) where they were introduced to BL, some basic EduLINC features, and PBLA, and completed PBLA About Me activities online.

All three classes used EduLINC, the LINC 1 to LINC 7 courseware for settlement language training classes across Canada. Additional digital tools were used to develop specific skills and support project work. The online and classroom activities were interdependent, and both teachers and students emphasized the importance of this interdependence. The teachers applied the principles of "flipped learning", meaning that students often worked on the content at home in advance of classes. When in class they could therefore focus on communication and collaborative activities. However, communication and collaboration, both with the teacher and classmates, were also characteristic of many of the online activities. Online teacher presence and student engagement were considered essential ingredients for success.

What the Teachers Did Online

Teachers focused on learning outcomes, content selection and development, assessment and evaluation, student engagement, integration of online with f2f activities, and activity and progress monitoring. For the teachers, it was highly important to set clear expectations about the students' participation in the online component right from the start. Details about learning outcomes, deadlines for assignment completion, and assessment methods were communicated to students. Teachers also raised awareness of successful online learning strategies and developed activities to support them. The built-in EduLINC activities online were used to various degrees, mostly customized to fit the specific context and needs of each class. As the teachers developed their skills for online teaching and digital technologies, they started creating new content and e-materials in response to student needs. They also curated and facilitated access to a variety of online resources that students could explore at their own pace to support the students in achieving their study, community and settlement goals. Digital tools to support language learning and community connections

such as Quizlet and QR Code Reader/Generator were also introduced with opportunities for the students to use them in a meaningful way. All was coordinated with the in-class activities.

Students explained the effects of these resources/tools and the online activities:

- *Freedom/flexibility (time and place)*
- *We keep learning every day. Whenever we have free time, we can access our account in EduLINC and learn.*
- *Online Activities give us more resources and topics to explore*

  (Batgirl, Arli, Sailor Moon, Kelly; Focus Group)
- [The teacher] *shares a lot of useful online resources and also apps*

  (Donya, Soda, Papula, Daisy; Focus Group)

Finally, teachers ensured their online presence was strong in order to engage and support students. Teachers guided, monitored, modelled online behavior, answered questions, encouraged, and provided feedback. They also used the data they collected to inform their overall planning and the integration of online and f2f activities.[1]

What the Students Did Online

- Students' roles were as varied and complex as the teachers' roles. Students practiced language skills through online activities that supported digital skill learning critical to their settlement process. Many of the activities replicated real-world tasks or prepared the students for them.

- Students regularly accessed online resources curated by the teacher. They selected and used those relevant to their needs; for example, they explored educational, community, and employment resources such as volunteer opportunities, training programs, or resume and interview workshops. LINC 6 learned how to access resources and engage with the community through Twitter. One participant (Cinderella) indicated "the twitter block [gave them] a chance to understand how the people and organization connect[ed] together in Canada." Students also learned how to research and evaluate resources themselves and then recommended the most relevant ones to their classmates. Students even created learning content with the teacher's guidance.

Current events were accessed and then discussed online or in class. Students appreciated the opportunity to share ideas and opinions. As Cinderella noted: "Third, I can learn from each other by sharing our writing assignments online. It is a big difference from the f2f class. When I was in f2f

1 See Figure 1, p. 72

class, I can not learn from other classmates' articles. But when I am in the blended class, we have a good place to share our writing. I can read and learn some new vocabulary or idea."

• Collaborative project work both online and in class was common, especially in the higher levels. LINC 7/8 in particular worked on projects that involved not only collaboration among the students in class, but also with the whole school and some community organizations; for example, the students applied for small neighbourhood grants used for school community building and also organized family sponsoring by the school at Christmas time. Students valued each other as sources of knowledge and support; they taught, helped, and listened and gave advice to each other, both online and in class. The online communication with each other and the teacher supported the development of soft skills for effective communication both in online and offline mediums.[2]

Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) in Blended Learning

• The nationwide teaching and assessment approach in LINC is informed by PBLA. The PBLA processes were consistently integrated and co-ordinated with the online and in-class activities. There was a high degree of interaction between BL and the implementation of PBLA. As Eleanor (Teacher) mentioned: "It is impossible to separate PBLA in any way—the requirements for PBLA drive the development of all class activities…We have monthly topics and I assess student needs, then develop skill building and using activities that will build to assessments. Any portion of this process can occur online." Many of the online activities became PBLA artefacts.

• Some PBLA activities were facilitated by the online component. Needs assessment, goal setting, self-reflections, and feedback often took place online. Online exemplars and success criteria for different types of activities and tasks were also available to students in a teacher-generated Reference Resources Glossary in one of the classes. This was one of the most accessed online resources, and some students asked if they could continue to have access to it after they left the class. Access to settlement resources was also facilitated with sections in EduLINC dedicated to this.

• Student activity in EduLINC was a rich source of information on student progress and engagement with learning, and tracking tools facilitated access to the relevant data. This was especially useful when writing the student progress reports. In preparation for the teacher-student conferences, students also used the online space. Eleanor's students completed online checklists to make sure their portfolios were ready for teacher review. Andrada's students reviewed Can Do Statements

2 See Figure 2, p. 72

and reflected on their progress in an individual wiki, an activity they were already familiar with; the regular reflections helped students engage actively in their learning and develop metacognitive skills.

Findings: The Effects of Blended Learning

This research showed BL:

- improved access to LINC classes and participation by students;
- improved student attendance, satisfaction with the program, retention, and engagement;
- increased interaction and reduced sense of isolation;
- increased use of English and students' ease in using English to pursue settlement goals;
- enhanced access to technology and increased students' confidence for using technology for learning English and achieving their settlement goals.[3]

Participation, Access, and Interactions

BL improved access and student participation. Students chose BL because it allowed them to work part time outside the home or at home with family while studying English. The administrator noted that monthly attendance in BL classes was higher than attendance in other classes: "In one BL class with EduLINC, average attendance is 95 % plus; 89 % across all [blended classes]" (Gladys, Program Administrator Interview). Teachers explained:

> "Attendance is really good… Students seem to look forward to sharing what they've done online and learn more in class…" (Andrada, Teacher Interview)

> Donya explained: "…because I have to look after my family, I can't be a full-time student in school all week long. I use a few days learning in the class, talking with my classmates to practise my oral language and listening…to participate in this program makes me feel free in study" (Donya, Student PBLA artefact).

> Ana (Student Interview), like Donya and many others, appreciated the interactions and connections that BL created: "…online offers lots of opportunities for interaction. The flexibility is great… you choose when you want or have time to do the work."

Improved English Language Learning and Settlement Skills

Students' English language learning and increased confidence in using English for achieving their settlement goals were noted by both the students and teachers.

3 See Figure 3, p. 73

Students explained how f2f combined with online learning benefited them:

> *To tell the truth, the blended learning program is quite new for me. Since I never took any online classes. In-person classes provide us the opportunity to talk to others as well as help us improve writing skills and reading strategies. While on-line classes provide us more classes to do the practice. I like blended learning since I work daytime, on-line classes allow me to finish the assignment also take care of my family. We have different topics each month which are helpful for newcomers to get to know Canada as well as to improve our English skills.*
>
> *We feel like online class and taking class at school is connected. We would prepare for the class at school because of the online class. Some programs (example: Quizlet, typing.com…) can use only online. It helps learning…We can check and review online. We could learn more details by ourselves.*[4]

The experience of students learning English and working on their settlement goals was highly positive. The BL approach allowed students to access learning in a customized way that responded to individual needs, interests, and schedules and developed their learning in these ways:

- Development of independent learning skills through BL: Students emphasized opportunities for learning digital skills and thus being able to learn more independently through BL. SweetCoco2 (Student Interview) noted: "The first day of class, I was shocked. I realized I didn't really have the skills." She explained that she got the skills she needed for Canadian society in the BL class and that she hoped it would help her get a job. SweetCoco2 added: "No more running away from the technology! …being able to use technology is not a choice anymore."

- Familiarity with technology, online learning modes, and social media: Students indicated that BL classes helped them to improve their use of technology for learning English. Jin (Student Interview) explained that she could find out about grammar more quickly using EduLINC and that she used a dictionary app on her phone to look up words. Other students noted how the access to technology for learning English helped them with their settlement. Aleesa (Student Interview) explained how she used computers for real life communications in BL activities: "…buying and selling things; searching for community events/ medical services; education for my daughter; communications with my case manager; activities in chat rooms such as What's App, Facebook, Messenger, Viber; listening to the news or Ted Talks; reading different articles and press releases; communication about volunteer work, the Work B.C. program; communicate with service providers such as B.C. Hydro…"

4 See Figure 4, p. 73

- Accessibility and flexibility of BL: Students noted that the BYOD policy and practice supported their learning. Abraham (Student Interview) explained that he relied heavily on his smartphone for learning English and about the community. He read the New York Times because he was interested in politics, and listened to music in English, and used Google Maps. He added: "I am hungry for information – after all the restrictions in the first country."

Self-efficacy and Knowledge for Technology Use

Students completed a questionnaire rating their self-efficacy for using technology. Responses showed that most students gave a high rating for their confidence to do a variety of online tasks. However, some students were uncertain about finding information, specifically about housing and education, submitting online applications, and online learning. These areas are directly connected to newcomers' settlement goals and may indicate their anxiety about doing these higher stakes activities online.

Effects for Teaching

The teachers echoed the students' advocacy of BL in LINC. They highlighted increased opportunities for engaging with and supporting students in their English language and settlement learning, as well as timely feedback and support for students, and the integration of in class and online activities and learning.

Teaching/learning activities improved as the integration of technology and EduLINC activities provided multiple opportunities for student practice. Online learning and the use of technologies both online and in class meant that a variety of tasks, media, and resources were available for activities and communications with students - audio and video recording for speaking/listening activities, presentations, and feedback; discussion forums for analysis and practice; wikis and blogs for reading and writing. And teachers noted how the combination of f2f and online learning enhanced the integration of PBLA tasks and increased opportunities for students to work on and develop artefacts for their portfolio assessments. Andrada (Teacher Interview) explained: "Blended learning transcends the classroom walls; it's engaging and creative; it connects [students and teachers] with the larger community; it breaks the potential of isolation of traditional, classroom-based language learning; it's flexible. It's also sometimes challenging – as a teacher using this approach you have to update skills and knowledge continuously. You become a learner yourself, which I love."

The teachers also noted challenges with BL. They highlighted the need for more designated professional development time to support ongoing teacher development and training for blended learning, as well as designated time for their collaboration on curriculum and online activities. Ultimately, they recommended the provision of a larger, more formalized professional community of practice in which to develop blended learning knowledge and practice.

Best Practices and Conditions for Blended Learning

This research project demonstrated basic practices necessary for BL to thrive—important information for other programs. These include:

- Stable wi-fi and consistent and sufficient technology support
- Sufficient portable devices on campus
- A Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy and practice
- Experienced and knowledgeable LINC teachers enthusiastic about and professionally developed in using technology and EduLINC
- Leadership by administration to provide the technologies, childcare, other resources, and support for teachers
- Transition to blended learning classes for students
- Ongoing professional development and training for teachers
- Consistent teacher-student engagement and interaction with students (teacher presence) – online as well as in the classroom
- Integration of PBLA activities into the blended learning program/curriculum and PBLA activities in the online activities

Discussion

We now address questions about BL raised by teachers and administrators at the TESL Ontario Conference and make the case for BL in LINC. How can LINC programs address the reservations and challenges of newcomers who are sceptical about BL? What do newcomers need in order to achieve their settlement and English language learning needs? How can BL assist newcomers adapt to the realities of life in Canada? We make the case that both language and digital skills are important elements of LINC students' settlement projects. The BL approach and research explained above demonstrate how BL provides learning opportunities that benefit both students and teachers. Programs, teachers, and students need to consider these benefits of BL.

1. Blended language learning is flexible and adaptable:

- BL accommodates a variety of learning styles. Preferences for a learning style may affect learner motivation. BL engages learners with content in a variety of ways, online and offline. The BL research project showed that presenting content in a variety of ways not only keeps learners motivated but also increases outcomes because learners are exposed to content in a variety of ways, offering opportunities for preparation, review, repetition, and adaptation. BL enables more personalized learning. It increases motivation because topics and tasks are engaging – they are relevant to students' lives.

- BL supports diverse needs of students' lives and schedules, allowing students at "higher levels" to continue to study by choice. We have seen in this BL project how blended learning can improve access and participation in LINC. However, this need not be limited to "higher LINC levels" as LINC students at lower levels benefit from BL with the appropriate supports. The Transition classes in this project illustrate that it is important to prepare learners so they can use online learning resources, e.g. EduLINC, more independently. Transition classes to BL classes and other supports make the benefits of improved access available for a wide range of LINC level learners and reduce the challenges for those reluctant to use technologies.

2. BL encourages and enables independent learning:

- Independent learning does not mean students are on their own in BL. It's self-paced and connected, in class and online. BL supports learner autonomy and self-reflection. Teacher presence and engagement with students both f2f and online is an important factor in BL.

- As we noted from the research findings, students complete most individual activities online; it leaves time for communication and interaction when f2f so that students and teachers reap the benefits (in other words, "flipped" models of teaching/learning).

- BL eases independence and the transition out of LINC 8 by building a resource base for practice outside of the classroom. BL supports independent learning skills because teachers are not immediately present f2f at all times. Students overcome their anxiety about what will happen after they leave the LINC program and develop autonomy and connections to a wider community.

3. BL builds digital citizenship skills:

- It develops and expands digital literacy and real-world skills.

- It supports students in accessing resources and services online.
- Students develop needed multi-modal literacy and digital skills.

4. BL lowers anxiety levels:

- Students engage online in more thoughtful discussions as they have time to craft their responses.
- Students have opportunities to review and repeat activities as often as they need outside of the classroom.
- Students come prepared to work and interact at school because they have opportunities to engage with the content before class time.
- Students have more choice about how they learn, when they learn it, and when they practice what they have learned.
- Students who need to attend to family and other obligations can keep up and catch up with their peers.
- Students are more connected to their teacher and their peers. Peer and teacher support is an important feature in BL inside and outside the classroom.
- Students build networks with their peers that support their settlement process during and after the LINC program.

5. BL improves attendance, engagement, and retention: Higher motivation and participation through online and offline engagement with various content activities catering to a variety of learning preferences is a definite benefit of blended learning.

6. BL supports teachers:

- The role of the teacher as a facilitator, model, and leader in the classroom and online is strengthened. The BL research demonstrated that teachers engaged consistently with students to guide them in what they needed to learn both in terms of English and settlement resources and goals; also, they modelled pronunciation, speaking, body language and gestures, and effective English language usage. The role of the instructor in BL is key to the achievement of students. BL requires teachers to be centrally involved and engaged with their students to facilitate the learning/teaching that they need.

7. BL expands access to information and knowledge:

    • Not only does BL improve access to information (web 1.0), but it also improves participation and collaboration (web 2.0). Learners benefit from online participation, which is especially important as many services and communications that newcomers need to access are moving to online delivery (e.g. government services, communication with schools….)

Conclusion

The BL research project demonstrated considerable benefits for LINC students' participation in LINC, for their English language learning, and for students' self-efficacy and knowledge for using technology for learning and achieving their settlement goals. Teachers explained numerous advantages for instruction and student learning. Effective or "best practices" and conditions needed for BL to work became evident; as well as challenges still to be addressed.

Questions about BL and how to implement it effectively such as the questions raised by teachers at TESL Ontario are important. Continuing this discussion is essential and further action research is needed. The BL demonstration research project showed the potential for this approach. Mainly, we need to provide more BL opportunities for newcomers to develop their English language while learning the digital skills necessary for settlement in Canada. BL in LINC provides this dual advantage for our learners.

Figure 1: What role did the teacher play in improving your English?

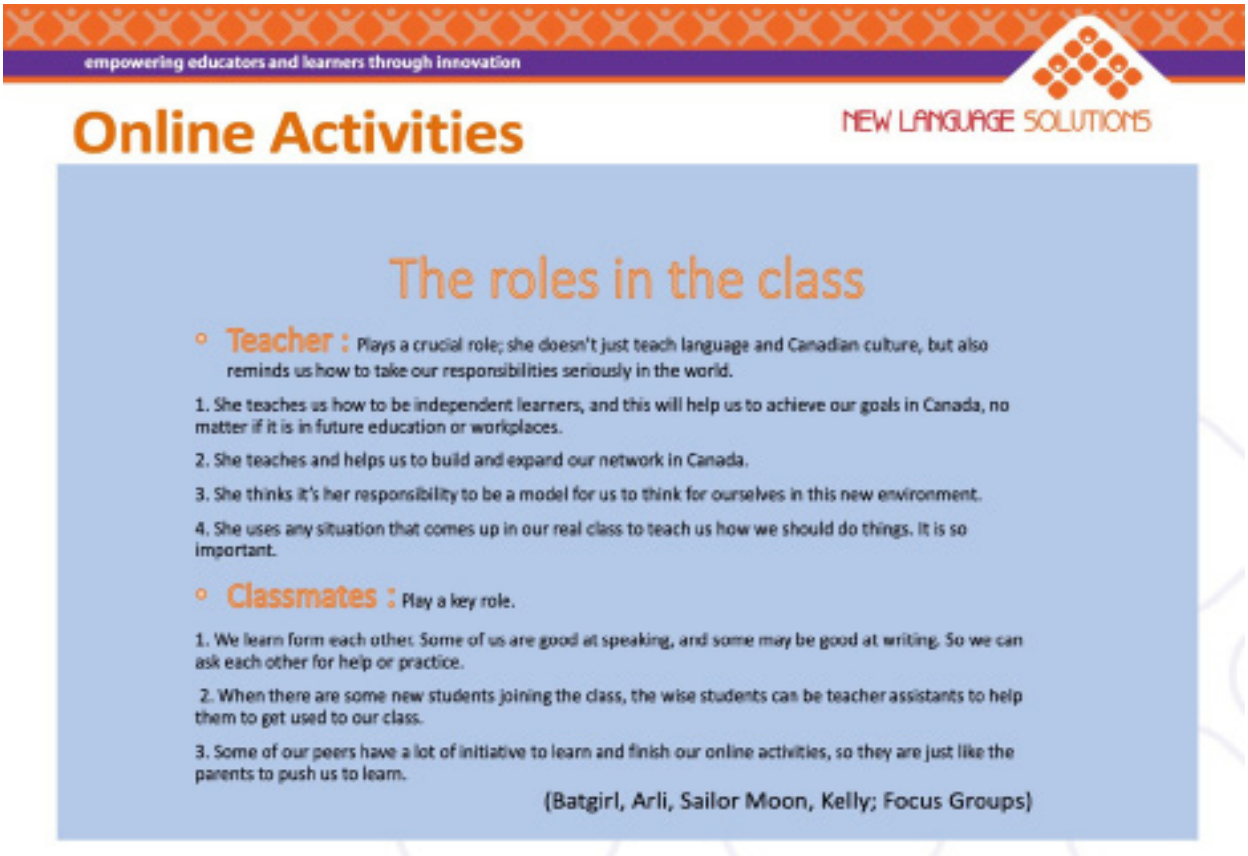

Figure 2: What roles did your peers play in improving your English?

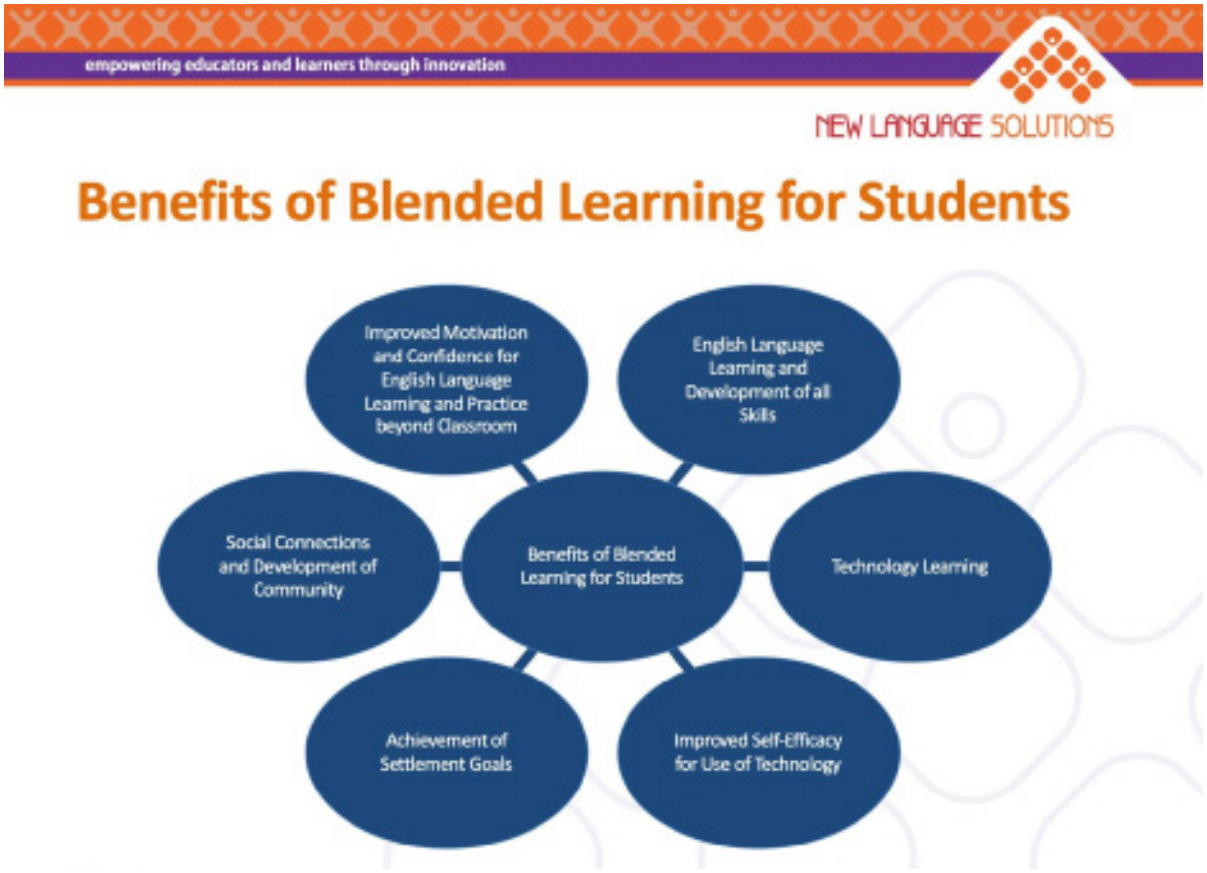

Figure 3: Benefits of Blended Learning

Figure 4: Settlement Goals and Achievement

Back

Links to resources

- Research Report: https://learnit2teach.ca/wpnew/learnit2teach-publications/
- TESL Ontario 2019 Conference session slides: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/t0w463i8t1l3ypw/AABotpvw44RFGYtm-7QlI2vta?dl=0&preview=T5K-BLdemoproject_rev13_Nov.+29+for+TESL+Ontario.pptx
- Tutela webinar playback re: "Researching the Effects of Blended Learning in LINC" - Log into Tutela. https://tutela.ca/ first; then https://tutela.ca/Event_31832

References

Cummings, J., Sturm, M., & Avram, A. (2019). T*he effects of blended learning in LINC: A LearnIT2teach Demonstration Project*. https://learnit2teach.ca/wpnew/reports/Demo_Project_Evaluation_Report_WEB.pdf

Kennell, T., & Moriarty, M. (2014). *Adult settlement blended language learning: Selected annotated bibliography*. http://learnit2teach.ca/wpnew/moodle_2_5_bib/LIT2T_Bibliography_WEB_2014.pdf

Author Bios

Dr. Jill Cummings is Associate Dean of Faculty Development with Yorkville University, Canada. Jill completed her PhD in Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning/Second Language Education at the University of Toronto. Jill researches issues related to innovation and creativity, online and blended learning/teaching, the Communities of Inquiry framework, and teacher knowledge and instruction. Her edited book, "Creative Dimensions of Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century" (Cummings & Blatherwick, Editors. 2017. Brill Sense.) focuses on innovations in education across a range of disciplines and levels.

Matthias Sturm is an independent researcher and evaluator for the LearnIT2teach project. Matthias also is working towards a PhD in the area of digital equity at Simon Fraser University, Canada. For many years, he has supported service providers in adult education and immigrant settlement in their efforts to build program capacity.

Augusta Avram is an educator interested in the impact technology has on the way we learn, communicate, and share our voices. During her long career in education, she has fulfilled a variety of roles, with those of teacher and researcher being the favourite ones. For the past few years, she has been working mainly with newcomers.