Wax on. Wax off. PLUS Recommendations for the inclusion of mathematics education in language instruction for newcomers to Canada (LINC)
AND MORE...

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Editor's Note

Hello and welcome to the November 2023 issue of *Contact* magazine.

Recently, the TESL Ontario Annual Conference took place, and I had the pleasure of listening to some great speakers and hearing more about current trends and topics in English language teaching—of which I hope you will be able to read more about in our March 2024 issue. Thank you to the amazing presenters for their hard work! But for now, let's get started with our November issue.

In the Spotlight this time around, we have Dr. Shahriar Mirshahidi—with an impressive academic and professional background, you will get to know more about his work in decolonizing English, access to English, accents, and art and lanaguage intersecting. This is just to name a few. Dr. Mirshahidi has an impressive background, and his current work is enlightening. Thank you once again for this opportunity, Dr. Mirshahidi!

In this 3rd issue of the year, Jen Artan talks about the rise of ChatGPT and artificial intelligence in language classrooms. Celine De Almeida explores mathematics eduction in LINC classrooms to help newcomers with numerical literacy. Ricardo-Martín Marroquín looks at film for learning English in the classroom because it helps with language fluidity, and language and cultural attachment, for example. Alireza Pourdastmalchi researches intercultural communicative competence in language classes, including communicative competence (CC). Alexander Popov looks at random task generators, and Jennifer Gilbert talks about self-regulated learning in an ESOL classroom. Thank you, writers, for your contributions. I am sure everyone will enjoy!

As we quickly move towards the end of the year, thank you to our membership and to all contributors and readers of *Contact* magazine. I hope you have a restful and fun holiday season!

Take care,

Nicola Carozza
editor@teslontario.org

CONTACT

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Spotlight — Shahriar Mirshahidi

Shahriar is an applied linguist and language educator whose pedagogy and research focuses on translingualism and transcultural approaches to meaning making in creative and academic contexts. He champions centering language learner identities and lived experiences while pushing against normative structures that perpetuate deficit views towards multilingual students. Shahriar is the interim manager of English for Art and Design (EAD) Program at OCAD University in Toronto. Before his academic career in Canada, he taught and researched in Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, and Iran.

Congratulations! You received the OCAD University Employee Equity Award. Talk to us a bit about that award and what it means to you.

I am deeply honored to receive the 2023 Employee Equity Award for my work as an English Language Learning Specialist at OCAD University's English for Art & Design Program and the Writing & Learning Centre. This award highlights the importance of fostering an equitable, diverse, and inclusive learning and work environment, a mission I am passionately dedicated to.

My commitment lies in empowering racialized and multilingual students by providing them with an equitable pedagogical space through amplifying their unique resources and knowledges. I advocate for translingual approaches to teaching English as an Additional Language and creating more accessible curricula that cater to multilingual students' needs to ensure their success. I'm excited to continue this important work, making a meaningful impact on our art and design community. That said, I could not do it without the people that I work with; I am grateful to be working alongside colleagues who share the same commitment. I specifically would like to thank the director of our Teaching & Learning, Susan Ferguson, our English Language Learning Manager, Emilie Brancato, and my teammates in the English for Art & Design program, Adrienne Reynolds and Elaine Munro.

I think many people, especially in times like these, are interested in your work and contribution to decolonizing English for Art Design. How did you get acquainted with this topic and could you tell us more about it?

As many of our colleagues across the sector know, there exist deficit views towards English Language Learners (henceforth, ELLs) both in and outside classrooms. These views often characterize ELLs as deficient or disadvantaged compared to English L1 speakers, focusing on what they cannot do rather than their potential and strengths. A decolonizing lens would equip language educators,

curriculum specialists, and language program decision makers with a critical understanding of and a tendency to value the diverse perspectives and lived experiences that ELLs bring to our teaching and learning contexts.

During my doctoral studies, I worked closely with international teaching assistants, which made me acquainted with their biggest paint points: Pushing against deficit views about them as well as developing the courage to argue for their outstanding academic abilities. Later on, I was privileged to engage with the scholarship on translingualism and decolonization from scholars such as Suresh Canagarajah. I'm lucky that I currently work in a setting in which decolonizing education is not only an embraced value, but it's also a mandate in our multi-year Academic Plan. On top of that, art and design open up new and inclusive possibilities for ELLs to communicate with their environment. Art and design can facilitate the expression of thoughts and feelings, enabling individuals to navigate and negotiate language and communication challenges.

Our initial conversations included your involvement in institutional practices that try to forge a commitment to access for English Language Learners and multilingual students in post-secondary contexts. Can you expand on this?

Absolutely! As a post-secondary institution, OCAD is committed to fostering a learning environment that recognizes difference as a social reality! Our students (and I'm emphasizing that this applies to many educational contexts across Ontario and Canada) join our spaces from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as with diverse ways of knowing and being. My colleagues and I, in line with our institutional commitments, try to nurture this understanding among faculty that access is a fundamental

right that needs to be incorporated from the get-go in our pedagogical praxes. In other words, accessible teaching and learning materials need be developed as intrinsic and included components of our approach; through adopting a supportive pedagogy, we will not wait for our students to seek accommodation when there are access-driven needs. Access should be anticipated and incorporated in the course design from the beginning.

We usually do this in the form of faculty-facing workshops or individual consultations in which we advocate for accessible pedagogy. When it comes to language and communication, access becomes even more nuanced. If I could think of an example of advocacy for accessible language for ELLs, I would talk about controlled use of metaphoric language in our instruction, unless if we teach a course on English metaphors for sure! Unnecessary use of idioms, passive or complex vocabulary when it is not the learning objective of the course, and metaphoric expressions could limit the understanding of our ELL and multilingual students, and therefore, promotes an imbalanced power dynamic between the instructor and the students. Another example could be [over]using pop culture references in a class that enjoys a large number of international, refugee, or newcomer students without breaking down these references thoroughly.

Your article, "*I find you attractive but I don't trust you: The case of language attitudes in Iran*," not only has such an appealing title but also touches upon something important: accents. What's your connection with this topic?

First off, I have to say that I'm an ELL myself, and despite living in North America for a long time, I'm an accented educator...and I'm proud of it! Therefore, this topic really hits close to home and is directly connected to my lived

experience both as an immigrant in an L1 English context and a language educator.

There are a lot of normative beliefs and dispositions about accented speech in our teaching and learning environments. I would like to circle back to the "deficit views" that I mentioned earlier in the interview; some of the deficit-based assumptions about ELLs pertain to their accent. Regrettably, at times, having an accent is equated with lack of fluency in oral speech or even perceived as lower overall language proficiency. In my conversations with faculty from other disciplines, I strive for this conceptualization that it is intelligibility that needs to be foregrounded as a communicative concern rather than accentedness. Research shows that intelligibility is directly associated with potential breakdowns in communication, while being accented does not impact comprehension if the speech is intelligible. Put simply, one could be heavily accented but highly intelligible. I dream of a day that, in addition to helping ELLs produce intelligible academic speech, we also train responsible listeners who are actively tolerant of different accents.

How do language and art intersect? What future projects are you working on or hope to work on?

Language and art intersect in various ways, with both serving as forms of communication and expression, and often complementing each other to convey complex and meaningful ideas. Art, as a form of non-verbal communication, uses colour, form, texture, and composition to convey meaning and evoke emotions or reflections. I'm a language educator who firmly believes in the power of translanguaging as an effective communicative strategy; thus, I view art and design as forms of communication that transcend language boundaries. Unlike words, art or design are not bound by syntactic or semantic structures.

Regarding future projects, we are currently reforming our curricula in the English for Art & Design Program at OCAD aiming at more inclusivity, access, and decolonization. We have already started to share the fruits of our work with the language teaching and learning community in Canada, and I'm looking forward to introducing our work to my TESL Ontario friends in the near future!

If you would like to know more, please visit Dr. Shahriar Mirshahidi's LinkedIn.

Thank you once again for your contribution, Shahriar!

Wax on. Wax off.

By Jen Artan, Canada

"Your first draft isn't an unoriginal idea expressed clearly; it's an original idea expressed poorly, and it is accompanied by your amorphous dissatisfaction, your awareness of the distance between what it says and what you want it to say." (Chiang, 2023)

The rise of ChatGPT

Students have always been the subject matter expert in cutting corners; if a new tool or technology gives them the edge, they will take it.

When the internet emerged, educators prophesied the end of originality. They pondered how plagiarism will now exist on an entirely new plain. The teachers had a point. The internet made it super easy for essay mills to exist and recruit customers. Indeed, since the rise of ChatGPT, many such organizations, like Chegg, are reporting huge net losses as its shares dropped by half (Bailey, 2023).

However, not all students could afford to buy their research papers or hire an expensive tutor to help them write their college entrance essays. Generative AI, like that used by OpenAI's tool, ChatGPT, is leveling the field for many students in this respect. If a private, personal tutor is something you would use, then presto! Free private tutor granted (at least in ChatGPT version 3.5; the 4.0 version is a premium service but still relatively affordable).

It has not even been a year since OpenAI launched ChatPGT. Today, students might be wondering what is the point in learning how to write a first draft when a few deft keystrokes and carefully crafted prompts will generate a near-perfect masterpiece in a matter of seconds.

Not just a calculator

ChatGPT has been often compared to the common calculator. When calculators were introduced, math teachers worried about their students' abilities to learn and perform basic calculations. Eventually calculators

came to be accepted, generally with the caveat that users needed to show their work. Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, famously makes this comparison when explaining to users the initial apprehension of the tool and the eventual integration into daily life (Anderson, 2023).

In math, as in writing, students more than ever need to show their work—how did they arrive at their final response? Offloading the crucial first draft and subsequent revisions to generative AI, like ChatGPT, ultimately means outsourcing the thinking process. Writing is thinking. In order to develop the critical thinking skills so crucial today, one has to put in the sweat equity.

The productive process of writing stimulates brain activity; new neural pathways are formed, and learning happens. It is the process that we, as teachers, know is the key. Not the end product (or artefact). This is not a new concept; academic writers have been discussing this for years (Jansesen et al,, 2013; Mertes, 1991). As teachers, we carefully scaffold the writing process, give ample time, evidence and practice, as well as formative feedback. We do it in many different contexts and involve our students in the editing and reflection process. It is not exciting, quick, or instantaneous. We are, in effect, waxing on and waxing off.

Wax on. Wax off.

Educators of a certain age know from whence this term originated. For those that do not, it is a famous expression from the 80s movie *Karate Kid*.

What happened was this: There was this kid named Daniel who wanted to learn karate. He encountered, by chance, Mr. Miagi, who happened to know the art of karate. Mr. Miagi agreed to mentor Daniel. Daniel, excited to start learning all of the cool Bruce Lee style moves, met up with Mr. Miagi at his home to begin the process. However, his first karate lesson involved waxing and polishing every single one of Miagi's extensive collection of old cars. The wax was to be applied using a very specific process and cleared using another. No shortcuts. Wax on. Wax off. Daniel, needless to say, was initially chagrined and confused. Instead of teaching thrilling and exciting karate moves, Mr. Miagi had Daniel perform hours and hours of difficult, boring labour.

The lesson that Daniel would eventually learn is this: The mere difficulty or lack of immediate excitement surrounding an activity should not render it optional; both challenging and seemingly mundane tasks hold value.

Value in difficulty: Difficult tasks stimulate our cognitive faculties, inducing stress that, in moderation, can be beneficial (Rudland, 2020). Consider the example of a challenging crossword puzzle. Solving it

requires intense focus, and while it may be mentally taxing, it also exercises your problem-solving skills and vocabulary, ultimately improving your cognitive abilities.

Value in the mundane: Mundane or boring tasks provide an opportunity for refinement and practice. Initially, Daniel's task seems like a simple, repetitive chore. However, through continuous practice, he develops his muscle memory, and the act becomes intuitive. Ultimately he is able to use his understanding of the basics and perform the more complex and creative crane kick (i.e. higher order thinking skills), which would become the franchise's signature iconic move.

Daniel's many laborious tasks under the mentorship of Mr. Miagi are metaphors for mastering basic skills before moving on to more complex martial arts techniques. The mundane task, in this case, laid the foundation for a much larger skill set. In a similar vein, mundane office tasks like data entry or organizing files might seem unexciting, but they provide the opportunity to develop organizational skills and attention to detail, which are crucial for broader tasks like project management. Yawn-inducing grammar tasks become the grout in our language foundation. Writing is a foundational skill, not only or just a tool to get other things done. Through the writing process, students can develop and refine their communication skills, as well as learn how to express their ideas effectively.

Using ChatGPT to provide feedback and suggestions and to act like a tutor will help develop both writing and thinking skills; using ChatGPT to do the work in one's stead is about as useful to your health goals as strapping your fitbit onto a squirrel. Sure, you will rack up quite a few steps, but it is not exactly going to help you get that washboard stomach.

Not to mention, our failures and mistakes also play a part in our learning process. Producing an artificial, and perfect, first draft will not get your neurons firing. It will not get you to think critically about your assignment, argument, essay, letter, or blog post, and in turn, it will not help you to develop critical thinking skills on resources and materials that come your way from others.

Conclusion

Wayne Gretzky famously advised people to skate to where the puck is going. Today, the puck is a distant blur in the far corner of the rink. Just vaguely, however, we can see where it intersects the thoughtful, critical use of machine learning and the useful-yet-boring writing process.

While ChatGPT and similar AI technologies offer valuable assistance in writing tasks, their true value lies in aiding the learning process, not replacing it. That original idea expressed poorly is an integral first step. Writing also enhances critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. Embrace technology

thoughtfully and use it as a tool to enhance the writing process, rather than as a replacement for foundational skills. As educators, we must recognize the blurred line between technological assistance and authentic learning, always prioritizing the latter.

Wax on. Wax off.

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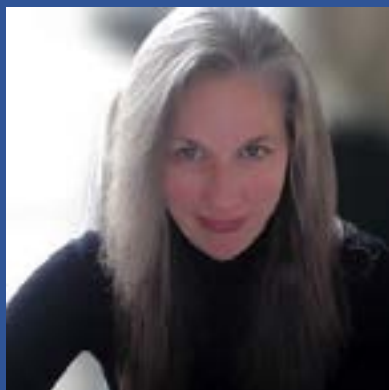
Jen Artan, M. Ed, CELTA, is an experienced Con-Ed Instructor & PBLA Lead with the TVDSB and Mentor with LearnIT2Teach. A recent panelist in TESL Ontario's "Fireside Chat", Jen took part in a discussion on the role of generative AI in education. Jen presents on ed-tech topics such as ChatGPT, Google Classroom, etc. She has worked in both the private and public sectors in addressing the need for practical, relevant and CLB-aligned resources for learners and educators.

Recommendations for the inclusion of mathematics education in language instruction for newcomers to Canada (LINC)

By Celine De Almeida, Canada

Abstract

This paper draws on literature that examines the underpinnings of language and math education in Canada as well as on the author's own professional observations and reflections as an adult English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) educator in Toronto, Ontario in order to advocate for the inclusion of mathematics education in the LINC program. It evaluates the program's conceptualizations of citizenship and existing mathematical subject matter, stressing their shortcomings, in order to make content and pedagogical recommendations for a more holistic learning experience. The original submission was in part of the author's final project for CTL5062: Mathematics Education for Citizenship submitted to Professor Alexandre Cavalcante, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at OISE.

Introduction

Moving to a new country comes with many challenges. Fitting in with the norms of a different culture, securing gainful employment, and finding a place to live are just some of the tasks that newcomers may face after arrival. Yet, the ability to check off these obligatory boxes on the long list of To-Dos is compounded when these individuals must first master the language of the country they settle in. To help mitigate this major obstacle, the federal government of Canada offers LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes in the English-speaking provinces for permanent residents or Convention Refugees, individuals who cannot return to their home country due to the fear of persecution as a result of their "race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion" (Ontario Council

of Agencies Serving Immigrants, 2022). However, LINC is much more than just about learning a language. Rather, it aims to mold a certain type of newcomer into an employable and financially self-sufficient citizen (Haque, 2017). Given this, not only does the subject matter of the LINC program need to be expanded, but its teachers should also be more adequately prepared to ensure that students are successful in achieving the goals outlined by this hidden curriculum. I argue that this can be done through the inclusion of mathematics education in the LINC program.

Contextualizing adult ESL education in Canada

In order to understand the need for math education in LINC, we must first be aware of the historical underpinnings of language training in Canada, in which policy goals bounced between societal integration and employability. Prior to LINC, there were several programs that were established respectively alongside Canada's immigration policies. At their onset, in concurrence with the Citizenship Act of 1947, the goal of teaching language to newcomers was to replace their first language with one of Canada's official languages: English or French using a curriculum entitled Citizenship Instruction and Language Textbooks (Ciccarelli, 1997; James & Burnaby, 2003; in Guo, 2015). These early programs emphasized that newcomers can only become citizens successfully if they abandon their mother tongues.

Nevertheless, as the needs of Canada's workforce shifted, so did the focus of language courses. As Canada asserted its identity as a multicultural nation, the Immigration Act of 1976 welcomed newcomers on a points-based system consisting of three categories: (1) family reunification, (2) humanitarian concerns, and (3) those who could promote "Canada's economic, social, demographic and cultural goals" (Haque, 2017, p. 99). To account for these changes, the Canadian Job Strategies (CJS) program was developed in 1978 to help new immigrants with limited linguistic proficiency find employment (Guo, 2015). However, it was short-lived because newcomers with lower education levels and women were underrepresented (Haque & Cray, 2007). The CJS' exclusion of certain demographics suggested that only some types of employment were worthy of language instruction, namely highly-skilled jobs done by men. Accordingly, it was replaced by the Settlement Language Training Program (SLTP) in 1986, expanding its eligibility to also include women by offering transportation and daycare services (Guo, 2015).

Ultimately, the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) replaced all of these programs in 1992. In line with the 1991–1995 Immigration Plan, the chief goal of LINC was integration, which was defined as basic language competency and the learning of Canadian values through real-life English (Haque, 2017). In order to ensure these aims, the LINC program follows The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), a standardized set of competencies measured on a 12-point scale, for each linguistic skill (listening, reading, speaking, writing) (Haque, 2017). In 2001, the policy definition of integration was expanded to include

the achievement of financial self-sufficiency "as soon as possible" (Haque 2017, p. 103). By attributing an economic goal to language learning, the LINC program implicitly defines who is worthy of language instruction or not. It values newcomers who are able to learn enough English to support themselves and their families, believing that they will become successful citizens.

However, it is also worth noting that until 2007, the LINC program was only funded up to CLB 4 in most of the country, with the exception of Ontario at CLB 5 (Haque, 2017). Coincidingly, a level 4 is the minimum required English proficiency level that a permanent resident must achieve before being eligible to apply for citizenship (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2021). As citizens are not eligible for funded language training, it is assumed that acquiring this level of English is adequate enough to meet the aspect of economic self-sufficiency.

Contextualizing math education

Just as the language programs in Canada have changed to reflect the needs of society, so has math education. From the early 1800s to the 1970s, mathematics in Canada shifted from being acquired rotely in preparation for university to preparing students for the workforce (Kilpatrick, 2014). However, it was still used as a gatekeeping tool in that mathematics education still prioritized "aspects of British-Canadian citizenship" such as arithmetic that valued business in order to counteract "too many immigrants" from "undesirable places" (Kilpatrick, 2014, p. 330).

Nowadays, learning math is largely viewed as being both a necessity for 21st century life and as a tool for employability. Indeed, countries around the world have spotlighted "'higher-order thinking skills' as the most important common goal" in math education, but this priority is largely upheld in order "to increase economic and political competitiveness" (Wong, 2004, in Cai & Howson, 2014). In this way, math has become a subject to navigate successfully through a globalized world. Content including "relevant, real-life examples that help connect math to everyday life, such as developing infographics, creating a budget, e-transfers and learning to code", and tools for "students [to] develop confidence, cope with challenges and think critically" have appeared in the 2020 Ontario elementary math Curriculum along with elements of financial literacy component, which has shifted from a "basic understanding of money and coins" to "understanding the value and use of money over time, how to manage financial well-being and the value of budgeting" (King's Printer for Ontario, 2021). Through this curricular change, the Ministry of Education stresses that there is a need for more financial literate citizens, who can not only understand what money is worth at the present time, but who can also communicate how fluctuations in value at a societal and personal level affect their lives.

Scope of problem

As both the policy documents outlining the LINC and Ontario mathematics curricula stress similar underlying goals of integration and employability, there is no doubt that math should also be included in adult language education programs. Given that the students of both courses of study are being prepared for the workforce, adult immigrants should be given more than just language training in order to be fully equipped for life as a Canadian citizen.

Unquestionably, omitting mathematics for adult newcomers is problematic. As mathematical literacy lies on a continuum of proficiency, grown-ups may have difficulties with some features of math (Kerka, 1995 in Ciancone, 1996). To exemplify, an immigrant from Vietnam may excel in mental arithmetic from running a street stall in their hometown, but they may be unfamiliar with the algebraic or trigonometric calculations that a professional civil engineer from Syria has been doing professionally for years. What's more, this discrepancy in skills can be further confounded when the mathematics that they learned is expressed differently in Canada. For example, individuals hailing from non-English speaking countries may express numerals with a decimal comma (i.e., 1000,75) instead of a decimal point (i.e., 1,000.75), a phenomenon I have seen both in my ESL classroom and growing up at home with immigrant parents and grandparents. Likewise, there are Canadian nuances such as weighing ourselves in kilograms using the Metric system, but weighing our produce in pounds via the Imperial system. These elements of math are taken-for-granted everyday phenomena by those who grow up in Canada but for a newcomer, they can cause grave mistakes when paying for goods/services, writing cheques for rent, or completing other banking transactions.

Notwithstanding these issues, the one mathematical concept explicitly mentioned in the LINC program is Financial Literacy. In 2013, the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) published a three-volume set of classroom resources for teaching English for Financial Literacy in LINC. In these documents, goals are outlined under the headings: Earning, Spending, Borrowing, Saving, Consumer Literacy; and are thematically categorized into the following: Banking & Personal Finance, Consumer Matters, Education, Employment, Housing (TCDSB, 2013). In this way, a model language learner and future citizen is one who already understands these concepts in their first language, and just needs to learn how to apply them in English in a Canadian context. On the flipside, it excludes newcomers from cultural backgrounds who have different conceptualizations of these themes. For example, students who practice the Islamic faith may not have the schemata necessary to understand compound interest, as it is forbidden in their religion. Likewise, immigrants from China may not see the value of some of the many credit card reward systems that exist in Canada because their society favours mobile payments or cash over being indebted.

Furthermore, as many of the Financial Literacy elements in LINC ignore "structural issues related to inequality, power and social justice", their inclusion can be viewed as largely neoliberal and individualistic (Cavalcante, 2021, p. 379). Although incorporating Financial Literacy ultimately aims to contribute to newcomers' financial self-sufficiency by explicitly including concepts such as budgeting, saving for their children's post-secondary education, starting a business, or buying a home (TCDSB, 2013), it makes harmful assumptions. For starters, it does not take into account the amount of money needed to accomplish these goals. Saving for children's education is not always feasible when one lives paycheque to paycheque. Moreover, becoming an entrepreneur is a risky endeavour that comes with many start-up costs. What is more, the ability to own a home, particularly in Toronto, a city in which many newcomers settle in in order to be close to a cultural community, is a pipe dream with the average cost of a house costing over a million dollars (The Canadian Magazine of Immigration, 2022).

Additionally, these shortcomings can also be seen in the Consumer Literacy section, which covers how to prevent becoming a victim of fraud and recognizing false advertising (TCDSB, 2013). While students are shown how to recognize phishing scams, the material does not acknowledge that those with low-literacy skills or the elderly are disproportionately affected. Upon teaching this lesson in my own LINC class, I had several students reveal that they had fallen for these scams, losing upwards of five thousand Canadian dollars. For a senior citizen, who already struggles to make ends meet on a small government pension, this has harmful consequences. Likewise, although the lesson about false advertising tries to quantify the cost of everyday goods in Canadian society, it does not acknowledge that some newcomers to Canada arrive with a security net of savings whereas others arrive with only the clothes on their backs as refugees.

Beyond the Financial Literacy documents, mathematical goals are also outlined alongside literacy ones in the CLB Handbook for Teachers. Understanding texts about numeracy or financial services as well as tables about payments (i.e., bills, child support, tax) appear in order to guide decision-making about investments or to follow instructions on how to solve a mathematical problem (CIC & CCLB, 2012). However, all of these aims appear in the stated outcomes for CLB 5 and up, with the majority of them falling into above CLB 8. Given current funding packages, as well as time constraints on newcomers becoming financially independent as fast as possible, the majority of students in the LINC program would not even reach these levels, and thus not be privy to this learning. Just as certain mathematical concepts were reserved for those entering higher education in the past, by only including explicit references to math as a discussion tool for higher-level learners, mathematics is still being gatekept from the masses.

Finally, it is largely up to the teacher to determine what is taught in their LINC classroom. So long as the instructor is following the guidelines set out by the CLB and the models of Portfolio-Based Assessment, it is

their choice as to which competency and theme will underscore their financial literacy and language learning outcomes (TCDSB, 2013). As many language instructors are not comfortable enough with the mathematical concepts to teach them (Ciancone, 1996), they may gloss over or ignore them entirely.

Content recommendations

First and foremost, the mathematical concepts in LINC should be expanded beyond the realms of a neoliberalist agenda. For example, including Mathematical Media Literacy would benefit newcomers' everyday life beyond just aiding them become financially self-sufficient. For instance, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Heyd-Metzuyanim et al. (2021) define this concept of math as "differentiating between linear, polynomial, and exponential growth; understanding the meaning of exponents; reading bar graphs; interpreting the 'flatten the curve' graphs; and interpreting the relation of an exponent to the rate of change" (pg. 208). Newcomers who could not fully comprehend the data being presented on the news were at a triple disadvantage. Not only did they experience the collective uncertainty as the global situation unfolded day-by-day, but by also not being able to fully understand the mathematical representations or language, they experienced heightened fear and anxiety. What is more, many of my students at the onset of the pandemic had a deep mistrust for the media's presentation of COVID-related news, as they hailed from countries in which data is frequently manipulated before it is reported. By teaching students Mathematical Media Literacy in tandem with language, they would feel empowered and be more informed global citizens.

Secondly, the LINC program would also better serve students by including health numeracy in its curriculum. As health-related communication often contains numbers and/or percentages, newcomers could face certain challenges in understanding vital information (Gatobu et al., 2014). Moreover, "low numeracy and health numeracy skills are both associated with poor management of disease and difficulties accessing health care services especially in vulnerable populations" (Gatobu et al., 2014, p. 1). By making sure this demographic maintains their health, it ensures that they are able to work to meet the goal of financial independence. Moreover, it also avoids putting additional or unnecessary strain on the healthcare system.

That said, math cannot be taught as the only way for a newcomer to understand a given concept. Rather, it should be one of the many tools at their disposal. While math can certainly aid in decision-making, "the reasons behind their choice will be informed by multiple epistemologies that might or not include mathematics" (Cavalcante, 2021, p. 384). In the case of health numeracy, while understanding certain values deepens a new immigrant's understanding of a medical concern, "familiarity with the health context, judgment about risks, and other non-numeracy factors" also contribute to their overall sense of health numeracy (Gatobu et al., 2014, p. 7). For example, when presented with numerical information on hypothyroidism, such as their TSH levels or the dosage and frequency of a recommended medication, a newcomer from China may opt to

treat this condition using traditional Chinese medicine instead.

Pedagogical recommendations

In order to stimulate the best math learning possible for adult ESL students, education needs to become more holistic. Many newcomers arrive in Canada with huge aspirations for a better life, but feel "easily devalued to the demands for a low skilled labour market whose requirements are simplified to transactional skills" (Atkinson, 2014). For instance, if learners are only taught the values of coins and bills in the Financial Literacy chapter of their CLB 2 class, they may feel that their skillset lies only in their ability to be a grocery store cashier. However, math can also serve as a vehicle for communication and relational skills. It can be a tool to speak about a variety of topics, such as the price of lettuce in the supermarket or make connections to their home countries. As mathematics teaching and learning is "language and culture specific," teachers can ask students to develop mathematical ideas that reflect their upbringing (Dong, 2016, p. 537). To exemplify this, newcomers can express ratios using currency conversion by comparing their grocery bill in their home country to its Canadian counterpart. This exercise not only practices their language and math skills, but it also allows them the meaningful opportunity to share a piece of their life or culture with their teacher and peers.

In order to successfully implement any sort of content or pedagogical reform, teacher training, namely for ESL instructors, must be revamped. Cavalcante (2021) calls on changes in teacher professional development so that educators are ready to "tackle sociopolitical matters in mathematics" (p. 386). However, in order to do so, an educator must be ready to address their vulnerabilities in teaching math. In my professional experience, I have struggled to implement math in my classroom for several reasons including the diverse cultural composition of my students, the fear of instilling my own opinions coming from a place of privilege (i.e., being a White, female, Canadian citizen), but most prominently, not being a Subject-Expert beyond the English aspect of the lesson. I have felt intimidated by some of Internationally Educated Professionals, especially those who were doctors, engineers, accountants or had studied math more extensively than I had. In this way, LINC educators should have access to continuous professional development that provides them with mathematical foundations and critical reflection techniques to reduce math anxiety. As a result, better learning opportunities could be created for students.

Conclusion

Having examined the foundations of language and math education in Canada, the shortcomings of the mathematical content in LINC juxtaposed with the Ontario elementary math curriculum updates, and my own professional observations, I have highlighted that LINC's current policy goal of financial independence cannot be fully met without incorporating more math education. By adopting my content and pedagogical recommendations, a more holistic learning experience for newcomers can successfully guide their journeys towards Canadian citizenship.

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Using cinema as a teaching tool in the language classroom

By Ricardo-Martín Marroquín, Canada

The art of teaching a second language (L2) in today's demands has allowed teachers to become ever so crafty and creative. When teaching any L2 (either as a foreign language or a second language) i.e. English, Spanish or Italian (to name a few), one must make sure of two concepts: First, the motive for which the student is learning an L2; and second, the strategies and tools that a teacher may possess to attain the outcome. This conforms the aptitude that the teacher may readily possess. Furthermore, I would say that any strategy may hold its own weight, and therefore, be useful depending on how the teacher decides to implement it. In fact, I would also mention that any strategy or tool has a specific purpose, and therefore, a place in the portfolio of the teacher. Many of them may be more suitable than others, especially when considering the student's language learning goal. It is important to mention that not all learners have the same learning goals when it comes to second language acquisition, as one may do it for pleasure and/or travel, while others may do it for work, and still others for school and/or academic purposes. In the first case, the student may want to become equipped with a social aspect of the language. Cummins considers this type of language as Basic Interpersonal Conversational Skills (2010), whereas in the second case, the student may benefit from a more technical vocabulary, accompanied by a degree of social language. Finally, in the latter case, the student may want to learn the language based on having goals of becoming academically sound. In this situation, the learner's language goal may require mastery of language comprehension, especially whenreading and writing.

Could there be an activity that could support these three (3) types of learners, if not all of them? Most definitely, and this article will focus on the benefits of using cinema and film to support language learning in any given L2 (and L1 inclusively). The notion of this paper will formulate why an ESL/ELD teacher or a language instructor should consider in their portfolio of strategies and tools, the usage of film to support language learning. When considered, cinema may offer the language learner the following benefits: language fluidity, language and cultural attachment, cultural awareness and fondness (including learning catchy phrases and culturally acceptable jargon), making various types of connections, and increased receptive

language skills and language comprehension; I find it to be important to distinguish between understanding and comprehension, where the former stands for being able to understand an oral message and the latter refers to being able to read a text, process it and show a high level of understanding of its meaning. Given the above-mentioned benefits, I will explain how film may be used to support language learning, as L1 but more specifically as L2.

Language fluidity

Film perfectly depicts language and how it is used in various types of dialogues. Regardless of the film at hand, the viewers may benefit from listening to discourse that uses all types of language. Given its natural form of communication, a film illustrates specific desires and ideas, by employing a precise dialogue to convey a message. Any spectator will listen, live, and acquire a message, in addition to viewing it on the big screen. I would consider this activity filled with a fabulous opportunity to listen to and subsequently live language. In fact, the pronunciation of the learner, in addition to their hearing of the appropriate pronunciation of the language, would become readily benefited by actively listening to the dialogues on the screen (Marroquín, 2015). Moreover, the repetition of the dialogue by viewing the film more than once, would also support learning the dialogue with a precise and even natural accent. This could also be evidenced as the teacher decides to incorporate specific parts of the dialogue of the movie as a way to extend the learning in the classroom. Furthermore, Antonio Vitti indicates that in many university language departments in North America, film courses are being added as a means to learning the targeted L2, not necessarily to substitute the grammar courses already being taught, but rather as a supplemental component to language learning. Additionally, he adds that many films offer a fresh real-world example of language usage (Marroquín, 2015). That is, a conversation between two senior citizens, young people, women, adults; all help support and understand (by putting language in context) a clear and concise message. I would also add that when watching a film, one is exposed to the different accents (way of speaking a language) and linguistic vocabulary, given the geographical placement point and the generation that the film represents. Therefore, one may achieve learning a language, specifically the mannerism, vocabulary, and accent that the film portrays.

Language and cultural attachment

It is important to note that language and culture go hand in hand. That is, both coexist and therefore need to be taught and learned together. Having taught second language for more than 15 years (Spanish, Italian and French as a Foreign Language, and English as a Second Language), one of the main goals in my classroom is to adorn it with specific cultural significance that displays what that country where the L2 is spoken looks like. In addition, in my ESL/ELD classroom, I would decorate my classroom with rich North American,

specifically Canadian content (pictures of nature, famous Canadians and celebrities, activities/sports, food, etc.). Furthermore, adding large photos of a trip taken, and memorabilia and souvenirs purchased, would help create a sense of being in that culture. As a matter of fact, talking about these artifacts may also increase the level of engagement with the L2 learners. A film also has this effect, as it displays specifics of a culture. For example, when it displays a monument, a statue or an iconic building, or even when it displays a significant slogan, it is a great time to pause the movie and/or make a note of it to later talk about it. I have discovered that using film to support learning culture and language, becomes beneficial, interesting, and at times, an eye-opener to many people. Keeping in mind what Louise Katainen indicated regarding this matter: "Film helps the viewers dive into the culture" (Marroquin, 2015). I would say that when a film is properly selected and used to its full potential, an educator can allow the film to recreate a mirror image of the culture, and increase the level of interest readily available through the film. Hence, a properly selected film may help L2 learners add the cultural component when learning an L2.

C'est la vie, hasta la vista…, you shall not pass, Bond, James Bond, I'll be back, I'm the king of the world, may the force be with you, you have bewitched me, body and soul, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore, are some of the movie slogans that help us remember a specific movie. Given that movies and songs offer many one-liners with specific meaning, we can use them to learn more about an L2. I have found that many students tend to repeat catchy phrases learned from a movie that they enjoyed, and after learning the meaning and how to say it, they continually repeat them with a better understanding than before.

Receptive language skills

Receptive and expressive skills are needed in order to communicate (receive and express) a message in a specific language. These two concepts are two sides of the same coin. Receptive language is categorized as the component that receives and decodes a message, whereas expressive language would be the part that produces a message (McIntyre et al., 2017). In other words, receptive language receives and understands a message while expressive language conveys a message in utterance. When watching a film, a student is aware of the message via the dialogue (either when listening to the dialogue and/or when reading the subtitles). This activity allows the learner to have a better understanding of a message. If we were to take a movie based on a novel, for example Gone with the Wind, a student could achieve a greater understanding of the literal message, the cultural aspect, and the political issues that divided the United States of America (the North and the South, racism, and slavery). Hence by viewing a film, an L2 learner may acquire a higher level of receptive language, which in turn allows for better, and at times, a holistic cultural and language learning. Depending on the level of the students, a teacher may be able to choose a more appropriate movie—a novel that may intrigue the curiosity of the students.

Due to acquiring a message via means of the audio-visual, a language learner may acquire visual framing, which according to Rodriguez and Dimitrova (2011), the message it conveys "becomes easier to understand and easier to remember". Furthermore, when the student views a movie, they would have a more feasible opportunity to decipher and understand a language and a cultural message. This leads to being able to make connections to further show a greater understanding. Connections such as text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world, could allow the L2 learner to show a higher degree of understanding of the language and culture.

Conclusion

There are many tools that a language instructor may choose in order to teach English as an L2 (or any other language as L2 or Foreign Language). It is important that a teacher becomes well-endowed with numerous strategies and tools that would best fit the needs of the students. Using film as a means would add yet another way to better prepare students, given its nature to engage, to marry language and culture, all while entertaining the viewers and grasping their attention. Having explored the benefits of using film in the classroom, I encourage other second language educators to not shy away from its use, but rather to think of it as a powerful tool that could compliment their already strong program.

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Promoting intercultural communicative competence in ESL classes

By Alireza Pourdastmalchi

Introduction

In a globalized world, ESL teachers are increasingly urged to consider developing students' intercultural communicative competence in language classes. This paper starts with the definitions of communicative competence (CC) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) from different perspectives. It then explains what teachers need to teach to help their students develop their ICC. Next, the paper touches on the appropriate method that teachers need to adopt when incorporating ICC into their lesson plans. Finally, drawing on the fundamental elements of ICC in this paper, one classroom activity is offered to show how ESL instructors can encourage students to practice the concept of ICC in their daily life situations.

Communicative competence

Different perspectives on communicative competence

Hymes (1972) coined the term communicative competence as the knowledge of both rules of grammar and rules of language use appropriate to a given context. In other words, people who have communicative competence, besides using the correct grammar, also know how to behave and act in different situations. Hymes identified four parameters of communicative competence—possibility, feasibility, appropriateness, and performance—which are delineated as follows (p. 281):

•Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;

•Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;

•Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;

•Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.

Motivated by Hymes (1972), Canale and Swain (1980) proposed their influential theory of communicative competence which was refined by Canale (1983a, b). In their initial framework, there were three components of communicative competence: (1) grammatical competence, which includes knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology; (2) sociolinguistic competence, which is made up of two sets of rules: sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse; and (3) strategic competence, which includes verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication. Subsequently, Canale (1983a; b) revised the model and added another component (i.e., discourse competence) to distinguish it from sociocultural competence. Discourse competence refers to the knowledge of the connections among utterances in a text to form a meaningful whole.

Although Canale's (1983a, b) models of communicative competence provided the main theoretical framework for communicative language teaching and testing, it failed to point out how its various components interact with each other and with the context in which language use happens. This problem is addressed in Bachman's model of communicative language ability (CLA) which was slightly altered by Bachman and Palmer in the mid 1990s.

In Bachman and Palmer's (1996) communicative language ability (CLA) model (Appendix A), organizational knowledge is composed of abilities engaged in a control over formal language structures, i.e., of grammatical and textual knowledge. Grammatical knowledge includes several rather independent areas of knowledge such as knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. They enable recognition and production of grammatically correct sentences as well as comprehension of their propositional content. Textual knowledge enables comprehension and production of (spoken or written) texts. It covers the knowledge of conventions for combining sentences or utterances into texts, i.e., knowledge of cohesion (ways of marking semantic relationships among two or more sentences in a written text or utterances in a conversation) and knowledge of rhetorical organization (way of developing narrative texts, descriptions, comparisons, classifications etc.) or conversational organization (conventions for initiating, maintaining, and closing conversations).

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Different perspectives on intercultural communicative competence

According to Lustig and Koester (2006) ICC refers to "a symbolic, interpretative, transactional, contextual process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings" (p. 46). They continue, "ICC may break down when large and important cultural differences create dissimilar interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently" (p. 52). ICC seems to focus on the challenging nature

of the communicative process between people from different cultural backgrounds among others. However, misunderstandings may also occur for non-cultural reasons as well as occurring between people from similar language and culture backgrounds. This paper proposes that the study of ICC should be integrated into language education to help facilitate both language learning and effective communication.

Byram (1997) believes that interculturally competent learner displays a range of affective, behavioural, and cognitive skills which involve the following five elements (Byram, 1997):

•**Attitudes**: Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own. This means a willingness to avoid a self-righteous attitude, i.e., not to assume that one's beliefs and behaviors are the only correct ones and to be able to see from an outsider's perspective.

•**Knowledge**: Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction. It follows that knowledge can be seen as having two major components: a sum of abstract knowledge of social processes and concrete knowledge of realizations of these processes in interactions.

•**Skills of interpreting and relating**: Ability to interpret a document or an event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own.

•**Skills of discovery and interaction**: Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

•**Critical cultural awareness**: An ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

These components are interrelated and help the intercultural speakers develop their ICC. The foundation of intercultural competence is in the attitudes of the intercultural speaker and mediator. Intercultural speakers need to be able to see how they different cultures and beliefs might look from an outsider's perspective who has a different set of values, beliefs, and behaviors. When they acquire the attitudes of decentering, they need to seek the knowledge of how social groups and identities function and what is involved in intercultural interaction. In order to gain the knowledge of social groups and their products, intercultural speakers need to acquire the skills of finding out new knowledge and integrating it with what they already have. They need to especially know how to ask people from other cultures about their beliefs, values, and behaviors. Moreover, since intercultural speakers/mediators need to be able to see how misunderstandings can arise, and how they might be able to resolve them, they need the attitudes of decentering but also the skills of comparing.

By putting ideas, events, documents from two or more cultures side by side, and seeing how each might look from the other perspective, intercultural speakers/mediators can see how people might misunderstand what is said or written or done by someone with a different social identity. Finally, however open towards, curious about and tolerant of other people's beliefs, values and behaviors are deeply embedded and can create reaction and rejection. Because of this unavoidable response, intercultural speakers need to become aware of their own values and how these influence their views of other people's values.

Once we understand the concepts of ICC, we need to discuss what teachers need to teach in their classrooms when incorporating ICC into their lesson plans, and what students need to learn so that they can communicate more effectively to avoid communication breakdowns.

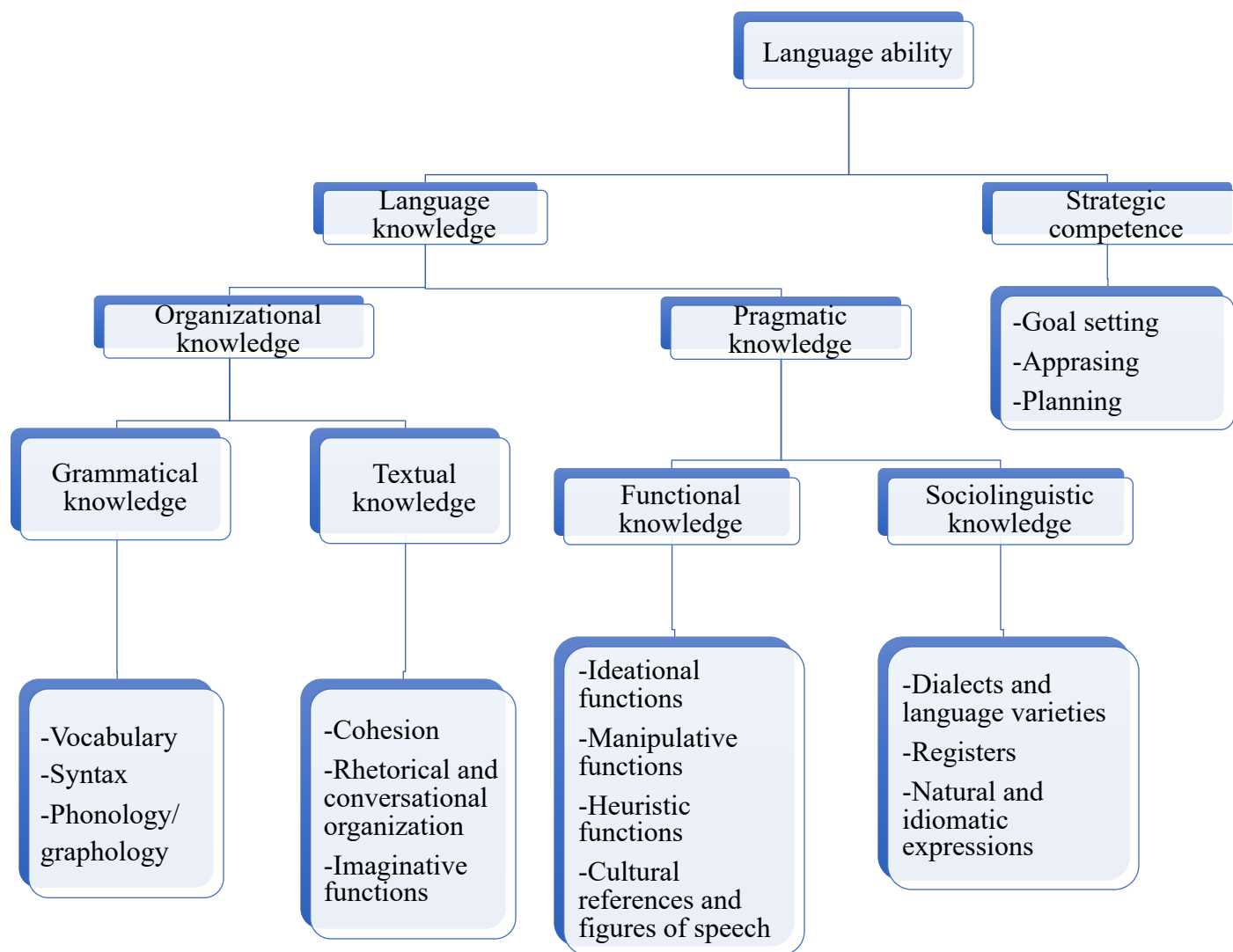## Developing students' intercultural communicative competence

As it was shown above, Byram (1997) lists five essential elements (i.e., attitude, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness). This section of the paper explains briefly why teachers should consider these elements when incorporating ICC into their lesson plan. As for attitudes, teachers should teach students not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from an outsider's perspective who has a different set of values, beliefs, and behaviours. In order for students to understand this concept, first they need to question their preconceived ideas before entering into a process of discovery about others' beliefs and values with the intent of becoming more willing to seek out and engage with otherness in order to ultimately experience relationships of reciprocity (Byram, 1997). Here, students need to explore the national identity of the home culture and the target culture in relation to history, geography, and social institutions (Byram, 1997). Once students begin to identify ethnocentric perspectives and misunderstandings related to cross-cultural situations, they become able to understand and then explain the origins of conflict and mediate situations appropriately in order to avoid misinterpretations (Byram, 1997). In addition, students need to know that skills in discovery and interaction allow intercultural speakers to identify similarities and differences between home cultures and foreign cultures resulting in successful communication and the establishment of meaningful relationships (Byram, 1997). Teachers should inform students that a successful intercultural speaker seeks out opportunities to meet individuals from diverse cultures to share information through communication in a foreign language. Once teachers understand the importance of these elements, they should consider the appropriate methods to help their students develop their ICC.

Intercultural communicative competence and ESL settings

Based on the information provided in Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997), foreign language teachers must reconsider methods for teaching language and culture in the classroom if the goal is to create true interculturally competent speakers of the language. Traditional methods for teaching foreign languages emphasized the importance of students practicing language structures, pronunciation, and vocabulary to become native-like speakers. Byram (1997) explains that putting the focus on the creation of native speakers sets most students up for failure because they are asked to detach from their own culture while accepting the fact that the native speaker holds the power in the interaction. This inhibits growth toward intercultural competence, as the learner is not given equal opportunity to bring his/her beliefs into the conversation. Rather than pushing students toward using a foreign language like a native speaker, language teachers should guide students toward using language that structures new discoveries about the other and about themselves (Byram, 1997). The focus shifts from preparing students to communicate without error in order to survive a foreign culture to communicating openly in order to build relationships so that they can thrive in a foreign culture. When teachers include intercultural communicative competence in their lesson plans, students experience the mutual discovery of another language and culture, and language classrooms become places where students and teachers consider questions of values and morals (Byram, 1997).

Appendix A

Communicative Language Ability (Bachman & Palmer, 1996)

```
                              Language ability
                              /            \
                    Language              Strategic
                    knowledge             competence
                   /        \                  |
        Organizational      Pragmatic      -Goal setting
        knowledge           knowledge      -Apprasing
          /      \            /      \     -Planning
  Grammatical  Textual   Functional  Sociolinguistic
  knowledge    knowledge knowledge   knowledge
```

Grammatical knowledge
- Vocabulary
- Syntax
- Phonology/graphology

Textual knowledge
- Cohesion
- Rhetorical and conversational organization
- Imaginative functions

Functional knowledge
- Ideational functions
- Manipulative functions
- Heuristic functions
- Cultural references and figures of speech

Sociolinguistic knowledge
- Dialects and language varieties
- Registers
- Natural and idiomatic expressions

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The rise of random task generators in language learning: Embracing the era of randomness

By Alexander Popov

With the advent of online platforms and resources, English language teaching is undergoing a remarkable transformation. In recent years, researchers have become increasingly concerned that modern educational systems are not stressing higher-order and abstract thinking enough, resulting in a decline in human IQs. A new luminary has emerged to meet these challenges: random task generators. The use of these platforms has revolutionized language learning, stimulating creativity, critical thinking, and authentic language use.

Higher-order thinking, which goes beyond mere memorization and recall, is crucial for fostering intellectual growth. Bloom's Taxonomy (Lasley 2023) provides a framework that encourages learners to progress through levels of thinking, from basic understanding to more advanced abilities like analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Abstract thinking, a type of higher-order thinking, enables individuals to understand concepts that transcend concrete physical objects and experiences. It facilitates critical thinking and problem-solving, essential skills in today's complex world.

During the digital era, web-based platforms explored the potential of randomization in various contexts, resulting in the rise of random task generators. In language learning, these generators have reshaped traditional methods that heavily relied on structured textbooks. By infusing randomness and spontaneity into language practice, these platforms engage learners in dynamic and interactive experiences.

The impact of random task generators extends beyond language learning. This phenomenon, termed grandomastery (definitions.net) or grand random mastery, is the skill of adeptly embracing and employing randomness in various aspects of life. The trend thrives on highly randomized activities that nurture improvisation, spontaneity, and resourcefulness. Experts in the field welcome this approach, recognizing its potential to establish a profound and meaningful bond between learners and the language they are acquiring.

Random task generators provide language learners with the opportunity to unleash their creativity and explore alternative ideas and solutions. These platforms inspire spontaneous role-playing and imaginative writing, providing authentic language practice that mirrors real-life communication. Moreover, they offer

a vast array of language topics and functions often overlooked in structured materials, enriching learners' understanding and abilities.

The integration of randomness into language learning encourages students to forge unconventional connections, express themselves freely, and draw from their personal experiences and strengths. It nurtures the understanding that brilliance can emerge from seemingly nonsensical ideas, fostering the development of distinctive linguistic voices and a willingness to explore unconventional concepts.

The incorporation of random task generators marks a pivotal moment in educational history, signaling a shift away from conventional methods toward dynamic and captivating approaches. These innovative tools cater to diverse learning styles, offering tailored environments that empower students to unleash their full linguistic potential. By providing fresh and unpredictable exercises, they revolutionize language teaching and foster creativity and active engagement in the learning process.

Embracing the magic of serendipity, random task generators have breathed new life into language learning, providing innovative solutions to the limitations of traditional textbooks. By igniting creativity and active participation, these platforms empower learners to unlock their full linguistic potential, forging a profound and meaningful connection with the language. As educators and learners embark on this transformative educational odyssey, the future of language learning shines brighter than ever before.

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A framework for self-regulated learning in an ESOL classroom

By Jennifer Gilbert, Canada

It is the end of the 2022-2023 academic school year and grade level teams are gathering to begin their annual data dive. Inspecting English language learner (ELL) results is on the agenda. With just over 50% of Toronto District School Board's K-12 population being deemed an ELL (tdsb.on.ca, 2023), supporting the academic achievement of this demographic is a priority. A question is posed amongst the team leaders: How do we boost an ELL's language acquisition and content learning in our classrooms while still keeping the learning standards intact? The answer may lie with the inclusion of ELL-targeted self-regulated learning strategies.

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is certainly not a new concept, for it was first introduced by Zimmerman in 1986 (Panadero, 2017). Many theorists have expounded on his initial work, but extremely few resources can be found on its impact on language acquisition. In a recent study, Pokharna (2021) defines SRL for students learning another language as "the process during which learners proactively use strategies to improve a specific language skill by managing their learning activities in order to achieve language learning goals" (p. 25). SRL strategies take a cyclical nature that begins with setting goals for learning, monitoring the progress towards the goals, and finally, self-assessing outcomes (Cousins et al., 2022; Pokharna, 2021). After the final stage has taken place, the process recycles with new goals set in place. Despite vast positive research on the benefits of SRL on students' academic achievement, Cousins et al. point out that "many individuals are not engaging in adequate self-regulation of learning and are unlikely to improve on their own" (2022, p. 1). This supports the case for explicit instruction on effective SRL strategies for students of all ages and all diversity; as Toro points out, "research shows that the majority of students do not learn SRL skills on their own" (Edutopia.org, 2021).

Based on the positive research outcomes of SRL and student learning, and the need for explicit instruction on this valuable tool, this article strives to provide a framework for implementing the use of SRL in K-12 ESOL classrooms. In particular, the suggested framework is targeted towards ELLs who have either entered fossilization in English, are deemed long-term ELLs, or ELL students needing additional motivation to

improve their English language. It can also be used for emergent level multilingual learners, with additional first language support. It is hypothesized that through strategic and language specific SRL, ELLs will boost their language acquisition to move through higher language proficiency levels, similar to the outcomes of Azatova's (2021) research. An additional benefit of incorporating this framework is predicted to be the creation of a mastery-goal oriented classroom, which increases student engagement.

A suggested ELL SRL framework

Self-regulated learning involves three phases that use cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The proposed SRL framework for language learning is based on Zimmerman's 2002 model and encompasses individual domain-specific language goal setting as phase 1, self-monitoring progress towards specific pre-set language goals as phase 2, and self-assessment of learning as phase 3 (Cousins et al., 2022, p. 2). Each phase presented will consist of suggested activities that will target the objectives of that phase. The activities will use an 'I do, we do, you do' instructional method, to support explicit instruction of SRL strategies. Once again, "students must be taught to goal-set, monitor, and reflect on their performance" (Azatova, 2021, p. 188).

Phase 1: Domain-specific language goal setting

In order for students to choose where they want to be heading with language proficiency, they must first know where they are at. In phase 1, students must be made aware of their current language skills in all four domains (speaking, listening, reading, writing). This will eliminate potential inflated or under-inflated self-awareness and ensure accuracy in goal setting. To begin this process, it is recommended to present to each ELL their current language level descriptors as outlined by their most recent proficiency test or diagnostic test results. Most school districts use some form of criterion-referenced assessments and screeners to categorize a student's language proficiency and for classroom placement. By explaining what each descriptor means and providing authentic examples of each level, a student can successfully pinpoint their current language proficiency. This can be facilitated by projecting the language descriptors by level on a smart board, meanwhile each ELL has their respective results in front of them to follow along with. In an emergent level classroom, it is recommended to have the descriptors available in the student's L1. The authentic examples can then be projected on a gradient scale so that students can both see their current level and what the next level looks like.

Once students are made aware of their current proficiency level, they can begin setting goals for their language learning. In this step, it is recommended that students be explicitly taught how to set quantifiable and measurable goals. This can be done by providing a language goal bank for students to choose their goals from, similar to a word bank, or as a collaborative effort between the student-teacher or between

student-student. As students enter upper-elementary and higher grade levels, the s.m.a.r.t. goal setting format can be taught, and students can be encouraged to create their own goals. Activating prior goal-setting knowledge and presenting an ELL and kid-friendly video explaining s.m.a.r.t. goal setting, such as one from Khan Academy (2023), is a good place to start. As a reminder, pre-teaching tier II vocabulary is suggested. An important component of this phase of SRL to remember is that students must be the creators of their goals. To increase student motivation and engagement in their goals, expectancy-value theory explains that students need to have perceived self-efficacy and perceived value in the task (Wery & Thomson, 2013. p. 103). Choosing and/or creating their own goals will satisfy both of those engagement components.

Phase 2: Monitoring progress towards goal

Once individual goals have been set, a student is ready to enter phase 2. Monitoring progress towards goals can be facilitated in numerous ways. From a simple manila folder that students can graph daily measurables, to portfolios that track learning over time, journaling, and the use of technology such as Google sheets and self-made videos are some examples. If a pre-set goal of increasing personal vocabulary by 100 words is the objective, then an example of monitoring could be placing a checkmark in a box beside the learned work every time a student uses the word correctly either in writing or orally. Additionally, every time they read the word or hear the word used correctly, they could put a checkmark. They would keep track of this themselves. After they have used the word correctly approximately 10–15 times in a variety of scenarios, as evidenced by their checkmarks, the word would be deemed as learned (Shanahan, 2016). The most important thing to remember in this phase is that monitoring should occur often and be measurable. It is recommended to monitor daily, so one does not lose sight of their goals.

One more recommendation to note is that goals work best when they are visible and reviewed often. To facilitate this, students could tape their goals on their desks so that they are easily accessible. Time could also be permitted at the beginning of the day, to review the goals within their seating group as a think-pair-share opener. Students would review their goals, choose one they want to work on that day, and share it with a partner. A teacher could then use equity sticks to select a few students to vocalize their daily goal to the whole class. Periodic formative assessments such as exit tickets could also facilitate goal-monitoring. Asking students to write out how they worked on a goal in their journal or on a Google form is a suggestion to track progress.

Phase 3: Self-assessment of learning and attitudes

The final stage before the SRL cycle begins again is self-assessment. Reflecting on achievement and effort is important for a student to become an efficient and autonomous language learner. When it comes to

language acquisition, Sheehan points out research from Little (2011), and states that self-assessments "have the potential to promote a greater understanding of the processes of language learning because it allows learners to set language goals and to select appropriate language learning strategies" (2019, p. 5). In this phase, it is recommended that an educator explicitly model how to self-assess, for this is not an inherently learnt skill. Examples that teachers can use as self-assessments include but are not limited to: surveys using Likert scales, reflection journals using evidence, video diaries, and student-led conferences.

Conclusion

Research supports the use of self-regulating learning strategies to enhance language acquisition (Azatova, 2022; Pokharna, 2021). Positive outcomes have been reported on students' academic achievement and lifelong skills. Despite the evidence, Cousins et al. explain that "there is a need for more SRL support in our K-12 schools" (2022, p. 20). It was also noted that SRL strategies work best when explicitly taught to students. This paper presented a user-friendly framework to incorporate SRL into an ESOL classroom and presented a variety of ways for educators to explicitly instruct SRL in each phase. Infusing SRL into an ESOL classroom shows evidence of boosting students' language acquisition. Aren't those words every educator wants to hear?

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