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TEAL Manitoba Journal welcomes submissions from teachers, students, academics, and anyone interested in the field of teaching English as an additional language. There are three regular sections in the journal:

Features: These articles can be theoretical or practical. The range of articles in this section includes: classroom-based activities, methods, strategies, workshop presentations, theoretical and/or academic perspectives, and issues in the TEAL/TESL profession. Articles may include example worksheets, and all articles must include a reference list of materials consulted and quoted when writing the article.

Reviews: Reviews of teaching materials and resources are written by practicing teachers and instructors. In addition, we publish reviews of fiction and nonfiction books, websites, articles, movies or anything related to EAL, newcomers and international cultures and issues. A bibliographic reference of the resource being reviewed must be included with the review.

Voice Box: Lesson plans, exercises, and resources can be submitted. The purpose of this section is to provide teachers with a forum to share resources that have been useful in the classroom.

TEAL News: This section includes updates and news from and about the various associations and schools that are related to teaching EAL in Manitoba.

TEAL Manitoba encourages you to make submissions to any of these sections of the journal. Please submit articles or article ideas to the editor as a Microsoft Word e-mail attachment. Please ensure your submissions arrive by the deadlines listed.

The editors make final publication decisions, but they regularly seek advice from the TEAL Manitoba Executive at its monthly meetings. If you wish to collaborate in the editing of your submission, please let the editor know. We appreciate your input and assistance.

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PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Sandra Melo

Welcome back to another exciting year in EAL! As the new president of TEAL Manitoba, I look forward to a year of learning alongside all of our TEAL members. We have many great projects for 2013-14 so be sure to watch for events such as conferences and other professional growth opportunities.

To our new members, TEAL MB is happy that you have joined us. We welcome your ideas, voices and collaboration as part of our organization. To our returning members, I hope that our

continued dialogue and sharing grows even stronger this year. A special thank you goes to Dr Kim Hewlett, our new Past President for all of her hard work and dedication during her terms as President over the last few years.

September is a month full of new beginnings, rejuvenated spirits and great hope. I wish an excellent start to this academic year for teachers, support staff, university students and EAL learners.



EDITOR'S VOICE

Eunhee Buettner

The starting point in every part of our life usually gives us mixed feelings; excitement and anxiety. We are excited as we are filled with expectations and hope for the future. While we are nervous as we have uncertainty of whether or not we will do a good job. Many teachers and students probably have these mixed feelings when they start the new academic year in September. The good news is that both of these feelings are beneficial to us. We can start the new academic year with positive energy and a refreshing mind thanks to new expectations and hope. We can also resume our teaching by paying more attention to our students thanks to anxiety. I hope that TEAL Manitoba Journal becomes a venue which provides teachers more excitement and hope and helps them to deal with their anxiety in a positive manner.

For EAL teachers, one of the greatest concerns for the new start can be how to deal with new immigrant students' use of their native language in the class. The first feature article, *Activating or Devaluing? EAL Learners and Teachers in Cross-fire: A Qualitative Pilot Study on the Use of Home Language(s) at High Schools in the Greater Vancouver*, explores this issue by looking into high schools in the Greater Vancouver. Meilan Piao Ehlert, the author of this article discusses how the use of immigrant and international students' home language at public schools affects their learning and what struggles teachers face as a result of it. This article will provide EAL teachers insights into how to cope with this issue in their classrooms and help them to resolve the issue.

The second feature article, *Education: should it be a service or a right?*, discusses Canadian education in general. Margaret Aisicovich, the author of this article reviews the Canadian educational system by comparing it with that of Finland since Finland's educational system has been exceptionally successful. Through scrutiny and search for a solution, she found that there was a great disparity in delivery model between the Canadian educational system and that of Finland. She argues that the qual-

ity of teachers is very significant, hence; there should be changes in teacher preparedness in order to improve our educational system like that of Finland. This article gives us an opportunity to reflect upon our educational system at present and to improve it for betterment of future education.

TEAL Manitoba Journal continues to have the Activity Box section this year. We hope that it is a great resource depot for teachers. In this issue, Yi-Fang Chen introduces an activity called ABC Bingo. It is great for foundation level students. TEAL Manitoba hopes to provide practical activities as well as a deeper knowledge of teaching EAL students. Therefore, if you have any activities you would like to share with other teachers, please send us your activities. We are sure that many teachers will benefit from your contribution.

The special TEAL Manitoba news for this issue is the upcoming TEAL Manitoba conference. It is scheduled for October 25. Please mark your calendar and take a look at the details in this issue and on the TEAL Manitoba website. Furthermore, we would like to welcome Yi-fang Chen as our new co-editor. She has a Masters degree in second language education, a TESL Canada Certificate, and has contributed to the journal in the past. Yi-fang is sure to produce journal issues that will enlighten, inform, and support our members. It is a real asset having her join TEAL Manitoba and we look forward to working with her.

We hope you have a great start to the new academic year and you continue to have positive energy throughout the year. Thank you very much for your contributions! We always look forward to listening to your own voice as EAL teachers, so please share your voice with other EAL educators through the TEAL Manitoba Journal.

Activating or Devaluing? EAL Learners and Teachers in Cross-fire

A Qualitative Pilot Study on the Use of Home Language(s) at High Schools in Greater Vancouver

Meilan Piao Ehlert, Simon Fraser University

Abstract

The impact of utilizing multiple resources on the plurilingual students' learning outcome at formal educational settings has been gaining increasing attention from the educational and social linguistic researchers especially in the recent two decades. Drawing on the data from a pilot project following the main research protocols of a qualitative inquiry (QI) (Creswell, 2007), this study aims to look at the issues concerning 'coercive relations of power' (Cummins, 2009) pertaining to the integration of alternative pedagogical tools at educational institutions in a multilingual context. Utilizing the strength of the QI approach, particularly in providing the richest and most descriptive data in researching the 'lived experience of human beings' (Manen, 2007), this paper describes and provides a critical review of the essential experiences of two minority language background students (or plurilingual learners) and two English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers on the use of home languages at modern public secondary school classrooms in a school district located in the Greater Vancouver area. The findings suggest that the newly arrived language minority students (e.g., immigrants or international students) as well as their teachers at schools are constantly struggling, with regards to issues such as 'control' vs. 'freedom', or 'comfort zone' vs. 'fear'. The study demonstrates the urgency and the significance of developing and implementing current and effective alternative pedagogies that suit the education of dynamic and global citizens at schools today.

Key Words: Plurilingual learner, home language, lived experience, coercive relation of power

Context

I can never forget an incident that happened in the fall 2009 when I was working as a part-time University Bridge (UB) program international student support liaison for a School District (SD) located in the Greater Vancouver area, western Canada. A few days after the schools in the SD distributed their first mid-term reports to students, I was contacted by Ciera, the Chief International Student Academic Advisor of the SD International Division, to help out an emergency student-teacher meeting in a secondary school where many newly arrived UB students were taking senior level classes. The meeting was held upon joint requests from the students and their international/EAL program liaison in that school. The UB students who were asked to join the meeting with a SD international student academic advisor had newly arrived from China since that September. My role was to help the communication between Ciera and the 'troublesome' UB students during their one-on-one meetings. I was surprised to see almost half of students in a UB program class in the school were called.

The incident was caused by cultural disconnection, that is, the communication between the teachers and students in terms of using home languages during class hours. On the one hand, students seemed very upset as they received much lower marks than they expected for some classes, and thus they wanted to make appeals. As a liaison who is quite familiar with UB students, I was personally surprised to see some students who I considered should be in the upper level among those UB students. On the other hand, reports from the teachers indicated two main issues related to these 'troublesome' students: the first issue was their concerns about some

of the students constantly using Chinese, their home language, during regular class hours. For example, the teachers in business and marketing classes claimed that some UB students were browsing Chinese social network sites during on-task hours. Some English teachers also reported on their concerns of some the students' heavy use of Chinese/English dictionaries or translators in class. Overall, the teachers concerned about the students' behaviour of constantly attempting to use Chinese during classroom activities instead of trying to use English, the main medium language of the instruction.

During the conversation with each student, I noticed the cultural disconnection between these students and their teachers. For instance, regarding the issue of these UB students using 'inappropriate' online sources in their home language, the students informed us that they were in fact searching for some information related to the in-class assignments and tasks in the business and marketing classes. They further clarified that the main reason why they were searching for information in the Chinese sites rather than the English ones is because they were more familiar with the searching techniques in the Chinese sites than looking for the same information on English sites. As for the students who were using online sources in their English classes, they informed us that they were using online dictionaries for difficult words or expressions, because they often could not find advanced level words that were used in grade 12 level subjects in their pocket-sized electronic Chinese/English dictionaries.

Later on, I heard that the SD office arranged a joint meeting for the students and the teachers involved in this incident, and gave the teachers the opportunity to

readjust these students' grades.

The above anecdote reveals an important question related to the issues and challenges faced by English as Additional or foreign language (EAL or EFL) students and their teachers at schools in a multilingual context in the province of British Columbia, Canada⁽²⁾⁽³⁾. In particular, these issues and challenges are related to an important question of what is an appropriate and effective pedagogical approach that fits into today's dynamic classrooms in formal educational institutions, where there is an increasing number of *minority language background students*⁽⁴⁾ (or language minority students) who are from culturally and linguistically diverse families. Issues concerning utilizing multiple resources - e.g., an active integration of home language (s) in classrooms - for a better learning outcome of plurilingual students, is an alternative approach that is strongly connected to such question.

Along with globalization, plurilingualism and intercultural communication grow ever more important; however, the issues and challenges that plurilingual learners face in formal educational institutions remain almost the same as before. My review of the literature highlights an important aspect that "the connection between home, community and school became essential" (Dagenais & Day, 1999; Cummins, 2000, 2006; Anderson et al., 2005), especially in relation to the education of the plurilingual students including minority language background students. Leading examples of this line of study include Cummins' (2000) account of *Language, power and pedagogy: bilingual children in the crossfire*, as well as his study on 'identity texts' (2006) of minority language background students through case studies in elementary schools in a school district in Toronto, Canada. In both accounts, Cummins argues that the significance for teachers and educational policy makers is to understand and acknowledge the differences between language minority background students and the students from the majority (English speaking) communities in terms

of the factors impacting their academic performance at schools in multilingual and multicultural contexts. In particular, he examines the issues and challenges that the minority language students are facing pertaining to accessing different resources (i.e., teachers, pedagogical tools) of learning that are tightly connected to performance at school.

Another group of literatures focus on the connection between home, community and school include the studies that are based on the European platform promoting plurilingualism and intercultural education. Examples of such studies include the concept of *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence*, which was initially proposed and developed by a group of three European scholars Coste, Moore and Zarate (2009/1997). They see plurilingual (and pluricultural) learning as social practice of a plurilingual learner (a 'social actor') who possesses a 'life-long capital, namely plurilingual and pluricultural competence, the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in [plurilingual and] intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw (2009: v).

Based on the main perspectives of the plurilingual and pluricultural competence framework, in another insightful study, Castellotti and Moore (2010) pointed out the urgency of "*Capitalizing on, activating and developing plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire for better school integration*". While acknowledging Byram's (2009) notion of "individualities [that] develop in a relationship to otherness" (cf. Castellotti & Moore, 2010: 5), they emphasize the significance of collective efforts in promoting plurality at school by all parties (e.g., students, teachers and parents) involved in education that promote the success of young people. Accordingly, they suggest three essential tools (ibid, 2010:5) that help

in capitalizing on plurality at school, by developing plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires of the students from marginalized communities (e.g., immigrants and international students), through

Acknowledging and promoting "the legitimacy of mobility and diversity backgrounds and paths", for instance, of the students (and practitioners) in marginalized positions;

Actively developing students' "plurilingual and pluricultural competence" (Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009/1997) at school, for instance, through "knowledge transfer and interlingual supports" and an "interlinked learning process";

Activating and utilizing the power of parents and community supports as an essential step of acknowledgement of diversity and promotion of social cohesion, through encouraging "a plural learning culture" (by connecting families, school and other community partners together, or by developing pluriliteracy at school, as well as by integrating multiple perspectives in the learning processes).

These advocates, mainly based on 'evidence-based' studies (Cummins, 2013) in North American or European contexts, are questioning the traditional approaches that focus on a 'coercive relationship of power' (Cummins, 2009). They emphasize the significance of employing alternative approaches, such as by acknowledging and promoting the significance of utilizing multiple resources that support students' positive learning, in formal educational settings. More specifically, in relation to the objective of this study, these researchers affirm the positive role of home languages in students' learning, in the ways that empower *ALL students*, for instance, in the ways that home language plays essential role as an implementation tool in multilingual education; home language has a strong relation with a minority language background student's 'identity text' (Cummins, 2006), in which it often plays an important role in heightening their critical cultural awareness in the best way to help them to learn better and deeper at school, especially in a new educational environment; the integration of home

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languages in today's dynamic classrooms also helps the students from the majority groups – e.g., their understanding in inter-cultural communication, which is important in today's globalized society.

Summing up the above perspectives, the possibility of using multiple resources - including home language(s) - at schools brings special meaning to the educational trajectory of plurilingual students in formal educational institutions. From this perspective, a study of the essential experiences of these students and their teachers on the use of home language(s) in today's dynamic and multicultural classrooms would bring significant meanings not only to these students, but also to their teachers who they have frequent and long-term classroom contacts throughout their years of teaching.

The purpose of this pilot project is to examine the issues concerning 'coercive relations of power' (Cummins, 2009) in the development and application of alternative pedagogical approaches at educational institutions in a multilingual context. Challenging the traditional coercive (top-to-down one way) teacher-student relationship, such alternative approaches aim to bring forth collaborative relationships, in a way that allows all students and teachers to utilize multiple resources (e.g. lingual and cultural assets or current multi-media/modal devices) for their active and deeper level of learning. As a plurilingual learner, speaker, educator and researcher, I argue that, it is essential for the stakeholders to understand the need of developing and promoting the *Know-how* (or a proper set of strategies) of how to utilize these resources in various educational settings. From this perspective, a key objective of this pilot study is to examine the role of home language(s) of the minority language background students in their learning at schools, where the main instructional/classroom language is not their home language(s).

In this paper, by *home language*⁽⁵⁾, I mean the language(s) spoken and used most often or on a regular basis at home by an individual, in which may be same or different from the individual's *mother tongue* – the first language at home in

childhood and still understood and being used on a regular basis in their daily lives. Besides this term, as for other related terms such as 'mother tongue' or 'first language', there are various definitions from many reputable researchers in the field of social science including the socio- and applied linguists. Considering the purpose of this study and the space of this paper, however, I will not further clarify the similarities and difference between these terms.

Methodology and Research Design

Considering the purpose of this study, this pilot study was designed by following Creswell's (2007) main guidelines for a qualitative research inquiry, especially by utilizing the strength of the Phenomenological Analysis (PA) approach that provides the richest and most descriptive data in researching the 'lived experience of human beings' (Manen, 2007).

Overall, for two main reasons, this study is employing the phenomenological analytical (PA) approach as an ideal approach to examine the essentials – namely, the challenges or disconnections between the participants' educational or professional aspirations and subsequent actions – of the experience of minority language background students and their teachers at schools in today's dynamic multilingual context. *First of all*, the PA is placing a strong emphasis on examining deeper meanings achieved by prolonged immersion into the phenomenon under study, by describing the lived experience of research participants in full richness. From this perspective, the PA is best in giving voice to the research participants in the real world, namely the focal participants' direct experiences of the phenomenon (i.e. school/classroom policies, learning situation) under study. Rather than relying on explanations through onerous theories and concepts that are generally unfamiliar to the general readers of educational journal articles, the PA has a strength that can "let the things of the world speak for themselves" (Heidgger, 1962; Manen, 2007:184), in a way that "uniquely suited to leave readers with the feelings as if they have 'walked a mile in the shoes' of participants" (Padgett, 2008:36). *The sec-*

ond reason of this methodological choice is that, a good phenomenological report offers readers sufficient resources that allow them to reconsider their previous assumptions, while providing them with more space not only to obtain a deeper and comprehensive understanding of, but also to reflect on new understandings of the phenomenon under study. This aspect of PA is particularly important in the writing of an educational research report. It is in a way that the findings from a good phenomenological study become valuable assets and references for potential readers who are generally program coordinators, policy makers, educators and researchers in the educational field. This is because such study follows the most detailed and strict research design and methodological procedures for the investigation and final report writing, as described by Creswell(2007). Under the strict procedures, the qualitative/phenomenological researchers create and ensure high validity and creditability of a study by transcending past knowledge and experiences through 'bracketing' (or 'epoche' in Husserl's term)¹ strategies. Qualitative/Phenomenological researchers acknowledge and make constant efforts in bracketing those experiences throughout the data collection and data analysis processes, and even in the final report writing stage.

Employing a qualitative inquiry in this pilot study is meaningful in many ways. Exploring the meaning of using multiple(-linguistic and cultural) resources in modern public classrooms through a qualitative approach, especially with a phenomenological analysis of personal experiences, is not well studied or shared in the field of social science including educational and

1 *Bracketing* is a strategy in which qualitative researchers "set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination" (Creswell, 2007: 59-60)

applied linguistic research.² Among the studies that have employed phenomenological analysis (PA), the majority has been used in psychology and nursing (Creswell, 2007; Padgett, 2008). Only scarce numbers of phenomenological studies describe and examine the essential experiences of teachers or students in formal educational settings, including Manen's (1990; 2007) account about the lived human experiences for action-related pedagogy⁽⁶⁷⁾. His impressive work (2007) of hermeneutic phenomenological framework that had been largely inspired by the design of this pilot study. In short, another key objective of this pilot study is an attempt to fill up such a methodological gap. Having the purpose and key objectives in mind, one main research question that this study sets to explore is: *What are the essentials for the experiences of minority language background students (or culturally and linguistically diverse students) and their teachers on the use of home languages in today's public secondary school classrooms?*

Samples—Participants, Sites

In order to obtain a rich description of the phenomena under study based on Creswell's (2007) *purposive sampling*³ strategy, the research participants who can provide first-hand descriptions of teaching and learning experiences in multilingual classroom settings were chosen. The *maximum variation* strategy was also employed in

2 The majority of studies on minority language background students and their linguistic and cultural resources in the K-12 formal education setting, however, are mostly conducted through narrative approaches or other approaches. Such studies include Kanno's (2003) work on the dual identities of Japanese returnees, as well as the studies in Palvlenko and Blackledge's (2004) volume in the identity negotiation of bilingual students in multilingual context.

3 *Purposive sampling* is a technique that allows a qualitative researcher to select research participants and sites for a study as they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007:125).

order to "increase the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences or different perspectives" (Creswell, 2007: 126) by selecting the participants from two categories, with more than two participants from each category. The descriptions provided by the respondents will reveal the lived meanings of the phenomena and provide discursive meanings by which these experiences may be unveiled, examined, and understood in the key phases of phenomenological procedure (see Creswell, 2007 for more details). Data presented in this paper is focusing on an in-depth analysis of the interview transcripts of the focal participants, which were the most richly descriptive of such.

The participants for this pilot study were selected from two different but interconnected communities, that is, the community of classroom teachers and the community of culturally and linguistically diverse students, within a public secondary education system in a school district located in the Greater Vancouver region. For this study, the participants were selected from the minority language background students and their teachers in the SD's university bridge (UB) program designed specifically for senior level (mostly grades 11 and 12) international and new immigrant students. The five focal participants in the interviews were two Chinese/English bilingual UB students from China, an administrator from the SD international division, and two English as Additional Language (EAL) teachers. Of the two EAL teachers, one of them is an English/Japanese bilingual and the other is an English/German bilingual.

Data Collection

The data collection for this pilot project relied on a semi-structured 'in-depth-interview' with each participant, lasting approximately 45-60 minutes respectively. All interviews were conducted by strictly following an Interview Protocol (see Appendix A), and were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

The original draft of this paper was my final report for a Mini Project that was

assigned by the course instructor of a graduate level course taken at a Western Canadian university in early 2010. After all appropriate approvals were given by the course instructor regarding the topic, research questions and interview protocols, the potential informants of this study who met the main criteria were approached and asked to participate. For the personal interviews, one administrator, two teachers and three students were approached among over fifty teachers and one hundred linguistically and culturally diverse students in the UB program. Except one student, all the others agreed to participate in the study. Prior to the interviews, each participant received a package of participant guidelines that explained the information regarding research procedure, including Information on the Intended Study, Consent to Participate Form, and the Interview Protocol (see Appendix A). All interviews were conducted after I transferred to a different position where and when I did not have a direct working relationship with the participants.

After received informed consent from the participants, each of them was asked to verbally respond to the following: (a) *To students*: "What has your experience been in using your home language (mother tongue or first language) in your classroom? How do/did your teachers react when you use your home language in their classrooms? How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with your teachers about using your home language in their classes?" (b) *To teachers*: "What is your experience in having minority language background students (the ones from non-native English speaking families) who are using their home languages in your classes? How do/did you feel when dealing with those situations? How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with some language minority students who are using their home languages in your classes?"

Background information on the participants was obtained through a 10-15 minute preliminary interview prior to

Table 1. Selected samples of significant statements of teachers and students on the use of home languages in modern public secondary school classrooms

<i>Significant Statements</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning (by the researcher)</i>
Teachers:	
<p>Interview Excerpt 1. “It’s a continual frustration for me when I constantly have to ask my students to speak English in the classroom.... Nothing worked because it’s just their comfort zone, it’s all about their motivation and whether they deem it as important so all I can do, I’ve just gone back to reminders and most of the time it works.” (Linnie, March 16, 2010)</p> <p>Interview Excerpt 2. “In a class setting, in fact, lot of classes are multilevel classes... So I don’t encourage, you know, extended conversation in their native language, but sometimes if I can rely on high level students to help explain things to low level students, it would be a benefit.” (Antony, March 15, 2010)</p>	<p>Classroom teachers face daily challenges in motivating newly landed minority language background students’ to use their home languages during the class hours. The teachers are using various strategies in order to motivate them to step out from their ‘comfort zone’ by persistently using target language.</p> <p>Generally teacher s intend to encourage the use of target language in a class. In a multi-level language class, however, home language is used as a complementary tool in the learning of the target language.</p>
Students:	
<p>Interview Excerpt 3. “在老师要求讨论需要较深思考性问题时，我们习惯用母语交流，因为更加顺畅，效率高。” [We prefer using our home languages for the assignments that require deep discussion. It is because using our home language allows us to express our thoughts freely and more effectively.] (Mike, March 16, 2010)</p> <p>Interview Excerpt 4. “绝大多数数学老师允许使用母语。老师上课提问，用母语来回答很容易，但是用英语来说，会非常困难。老师会表示理解，只要能说出大意，老师就会认可。但是考试的时候，会一视同仁。” [The majority of our math teachers allow us to use our home language in the class. I found that it is much easier to answer the questions being asked in the class in Chinese, rather than explaining my responses in English. The teachers understand our situation and acknowledge our efforts as long as we can express our main ideas. But they give no exceptions in exams.] (Hugh, March 16, 2010)</p>	<p>Language minority students consider the use of their home language helps them to bring a better result for the tasks often requiring a deeper understanding of the topic and comprehensive discussions. This perhaps is a result from their barriers in the target language that prevent them from effectively communicating with their peers.</p> <p>Rules for the use of home languages in the classroom are different depending on the teacher. A teacher’s tolerance toward home language use in the class varies according to the teaching subject and the content of a topic during the class.</p>

the audio-taped semi-structured interview described above. The preliminary interviews followed the key criteria on a paper-and-pencil questionnaire which the researcher completed after each interview.

Validity & Reliability

For a high level of *validity and reliability* pertaining to the findings of a qualitative

study, Creswell (2007, pp. 207-209) suggested that a qualitative researcher should engage in at least two examining procedures⁽⁸⁾ in any given study. In this study, as a qualitative researcher, I was able to accomplish the following three examining procedures recommended by Creswell:

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field: Be able to build

up a satisfactory level of trust with people in new communities requires prolonged engagement, for instance, as an ‘insider’ (i.e., as I am describing with more details in the later sections).

Triangulation: In order to increase validity of the findings, the study was triangulated among different data sources,

including interviews and questionnaires;

Researcher bias: During the process of choosing this topic and designing this study, as a novice researcher, I struggled with the puzzle whether my ‘insider’ status, as an experienced plurilingual learner/speaker⁽⁹⁾ and educational practitioner⁽¹⁰⁾ in various multilingual contexts, especially as a former education consultant of the target community (the SD international division) who was actively communicating with the student participants in their home language (Mandarin Chinese) and English, would bias⁽¹¹⁾ the interview process, the analysis and interpretation of the data. Given the amount of new information that the focal participants provided, however, I soon realized that I was involved in a writing process that was a case of “learning to unlearn” (Kleinsasser, 2000) where it was found to be quite easy to transcend past experiences and focus on the fresh experiences of the participants.

Due to the time constraints of this mini project (a preliminary pilot study for future research), it is regrettable that the researcher could only provide information from the preliminary literature review and the preliminary findings based on preliminary data collection and analysis. In other words, the data from the interviews can only present preliminary findings that require further clarification through in-depth interviews and member checking. The limitations in this mini project constrained the writing style of this paper whereby, instead of writing detailed and thick descriptions and interpretations of the preliminary findings, only brief descriptions are presented of key themes, selected examples of significant statements from the minority language background students and their teachers (as shown in Table 1), and examples of some theme clusters with their associated formulated meanings (as shown in Table 2). To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings in future research, the researcher plans to collect more in-depth data through multiple in-depth interviews with each participant and take the entire written narratives back to each participant for

member checking.

Data Analysis

This project employed Creswell’s (2007:159) guideline which is a simplified version of Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen’s method discussed by Mourstakas (1994) for the phenomenological approach as the main guideline for the design, the analysis and representation of this study. Creswell’s (2007:151) *Data Analysis Spiral* was particularly helpful in the coding and interpretation process.

The analysis began with transcribing all the interviews, which were conducted in a location specified by each participant, for instance, at the participant’s office or in a quiet coffee shop. When interviewing a teacher during her lunch break, we had to move from the coffee shop which she originally thought to be a quiet place to her office as the coffee shop was very crowded that day and turned out to be unsuitable for an audio-recorded interview. Perhaps because all the participants knew that the researcher speaks their first languages, upon confirmation of each participant’s language preference, the interviews with the teachers were conducted in English and with the students were in Mandarin Chinese. All interviews were transcribed into either English or Chinese, based on the original data. As for the interviews conducted in Chinese, the researcher analyzed the data directly in the original Chinese narrative, and only translated significant statements into English for presentation and further analysis.

Upon completion of transcribing all the interview data, the researcher simultaneously annotated and analyzed the data in the margins while reading them through.⁽¹²⁾ During the analysis process, the researcher realized that she was engaged in a process of interpreting the participants’ conscious experience of a phenomenon by using the methodological schema of ‘*description-reduction-interpretation*’ (Wolff, 2002:97), or ‘*textual description – structural description – interpretive description*’ (Creswell, 2007:159).

Drawing on the methodological schema of both Creswell and Wolff, the initial

procedure for the phenomenological data analysis consists of the *description* (transcription of the interviews, a ‘textual description’ of what the participants’ experienced with the phenomenon), then *reduction* (thematizations – structural description of ‘how’ the experience happened), and *interpretations* (hermeneutic reflection, a composite description of the essence of the phenomenon, incorporating both the textual and structural descriptions). The researcher carefully read and re-read the transcripts and developed a list of significant statements from the participants’ accounts. Upon completion of the *horizonization of the data* (Creswell, 2007:159), the researcher then took significant statements and grouped them into meaning units or themes, while looking for code segments. After that, the researcher assigned names to the categories or codes by mainly using *in vivo codes* (Creswell, 2007:153), which are names that are the exact words used by participants, and the names that the researcher thought to best describe the information.

Preliminary Findings

Twenty significant statements were extracted from five verbatim transcripts of the participant interviews. Table 1 shows selected examples of significant statements with their formulated meanings. Classifying and organizing the formulated meanings into clusters resulted in 8 emerging themes. Table 2 contains three examples of theme clusters that emerged from their associated meanings.

Theme 1. Politics in the Medium Language(s) of Instruction.

Focusing on the use of the home language in public school classrooms reveals politics in the language(s) that function as the medium of instruction. The responses from both groups of research participants are concerned with power struggles between the teachers and students regarding the function of two languages, the home language and the target language, as follows: (1) showing ‘respect’ by using the common language (i.e., English) in class is revealed as an important aspect in the classroom

Table 2. Examples of two theme clusters with their associated formulated meanings

Politics in medium language of instruction

- To show ‘respect’ by using the common language in class
- To stay in ‘control’ by enforcing the use of target language in class - e.g., English only policy
- To give ‘freedom’ of effective communication by allowing ESL students to use their home languages in certain tasks
- To stay in or step out from ‘comfort zone’ of only using home languages in classes

Language knowledge

- struggles in dealing with language barriers
- comfort in using familiar languages
- teacher’s competence in students’ home languages
- fear (of incompetence and embarrassment toward unknown languages and cultures)

Cultural disconnection

- cross-cultural awareness
- different expectations: e.g., award and penalty system, body language differences
- student-teacher relationship: coercive or collaborative?
- resources/opportunities
- self

setting; (2) *for teachers*, it seems to be important to stay in ‘control’ by constantly enforcing the use of the target language in class, that is, the English only policy; (3) *for the students*, it seems that allowing them to have some opportunities to use their home languages in class can make them feel that they are given the ‘freedom’ to have effective communication on the topics that require a deeper understanding.

As for the use of the home language in class, the teachers noted that there are no formal classroom rules set by the SD. Generally, classroom teachers make their own rules; therefore, the rules for the use of home languages in the classroom differ, depending on the teacher. In addition, a teacher’s tolerance toward home language use in class varies according to the teaching subject and the content of the topic during class, as shown in the comments of Hugh (see Interview Excerpt 4), an international student from China who has been in Canada for one year at the time of this study.

Theme 2. Challenges in Class-room Interaction:

In this theme cluster, *the teachers* described their challenges and struggles in dealing with unmotivated students who are ignorant, apathetic and disrespectful in class. Linnie, a middle-aged teacher who has over 15 years’ experience in public schools in teaching Visual Arts, English literature and ESL classes, claimed that these students often have a hard time in stepping out of their ‘comfort zone’ by integrating into the majority of their classes (see Table 1 for a full description of Linnie’s experience). *The students*, on the other hand, highlighted their concerns about some of their teachers’ incompetence in language knowledge and cultural awareness of language minority students in the class. *Students* also noted the lack of flexibility and creativity in some teachers’ pedagogy and school curriculum in a multilingual context.

Theme 3. Home Language vs. Target Language:

Both students and their teachers expressed their dilemma and challenges regarding the use of the home language in the classrooms. *For students*, on the

one hand, the use of their home language helps them gain a better result for the tasks that often require a deeper understanding of the topic and comprehensive discussions. This is due to their barriers in the target language that prevent them from effectively communicating with their peers. On the other hand, as Mike (a focal student participant, an international student who arrived in Canada one year ago from China at the time of interview) explained, the students feel that they have “the obligations in using target language [English] as learning English is [his/their] primary goal and a key reason why [he/they] decided to come to study in Canada” which is far away from their beloved families and home cultures.

The teachers described that they are generally enforcing the use of target language in a class “for two reasons: one is to help them acquire target language English, and the other is to control” (Antony, teacher 2; also see the Interview Excerpt 2). By making a classroom rule such as “English only policy”, they are using the main medium language of instruction, which is also a tool for the ‘control’. In turn, when

students using home language, teachers feel that they are ‘out of control’ because they are not familiar with the languages of their students.

Descriptions regarding this aspect are consistent from all the teachers and the administrators interviewed, and they all noted the urgency of making adjustments in teaching approaches for multilingual classrooms. As illustrated by the teacher, in the practical world it seems that unspoken ‘permission’ for the use of the home language in class is generally ‘granted’ by the teacher as a complementary tool for carrying out the main curriculum designed in English (the target language). In this aspect, the home language seems to be used in the public classrooms in the following three areas: (1) during regular class activities, but never in exams; (2) in a multi-level language class; and (3) for a “transferrable framework” (e.g., brainstorming or undertaking the research process in composition classes for ESL students and problem-solving tasks in the science classes).

Theme 4. Impact of Social Political Status on Motivation:

The socio-political statuses of the newly arrived language minority background students impact the levels of their integration into the classroom. Linnie described her experience in a class where new immigrant students and international students study together. She observed that the new immigrant students tend to show more motivation and eagerness in integrating into the majority classroom culture, while the new international students tend to stay in their own ‘comfort zone’ and prefer to speak their home languages with their peers from the same culture. Linnie remarked that she had observed the same patterns in both her Visual Arts and ESL classes.

Theme 5. Language Knowledge:

The teachers’ confidence in their students’ home languages impact the level of tolerance (of the teacher) toward the language minority background students’ use of home languages in class. Antony, an English/Japanese bilingual who teaches

both ESL and Japanese classes, commented on his experiences in both Japanese and English classes:

“In the Japanese class isn’t...uhm...as much of control issues, because the majority students’ native language is English. I understand their native language, and I understand target language which is Japanese, so it isn’t control issue. In the ESL class, we have a wide range of students, we have, in the past, had students who speaks Farsi, and if they speak to each other. I am not sure about you, but my knowledge in Farsi is non-existent, I don’t even know the greetings or...I don’t know anything at all. So if students were speaking to each other, I would have to engage body language with whether they are on-task or not.” (Interview Excerpt 5; Antony, March 15, 2013)

As revealed in his description, Antony feels more ‘in control’ when he is confident in the students’ home language, for instance in his Japanese class. On the contrary, he feels that he has ‘no control’ when he has to deal with situations where he is not familiar with the students’ home language, such as the *Farsi* spoken by some of his former ESL students. In this situation, he tended to assess the students’ behaviour through their body language.

Theme 6. Cultural Disconnection:

In this theme, the participants focused on the minority language background students’ uncertainty or ‘fear’ regarding an unfamiliar culture, in which is also revealed through a brief discussion about the issues concerning a group of newly arrived UB students addressed in the anecdote shared earlier in the introductory section. In particular, they found that heightened cross-cultural awareness is especially important for a classroomteacher in today’s globalized multilingual context. This is in a way, as informed by the focal teachers in the Interview Excerpts 1, 2 and 5, (a) *body language inference* is a practical quick solution in situations where the teacher needs to infer whether the students are ‘on task’ or ‘down-task’; and (b) *critical cultural awareness* can help the teacher avoid causing any misunderstanding (e.g., the

incident that this researcher described in the introduction)with minority language background students who are using different body language than the teacher(s) in mainstream language classrooms.

Theme 7. Accepting the Differences:

In this theme cluster, the participants expressed the need for acceptance of the differences in today’s dynamic multilingual classrooms in public school systems. In particular, the students also showed their awareness of an urgent need to immerse themselves in the target culture along with improving their competence in the target language. The teachers confirmed the urgency to make adjustments to the current curriculum and experiment with different teaching approaches with the new student body.

Theme 8. Language Interaction and Student-Teacher Relations: From Coercive to Collaborative Relations of Power:

All the teachers and students interviewed affirmed the significance of, and the urgency of a positive movement in the language interaction in today’s public school classrooms. Particularly, they advocated the positive power relations between teachers and students, as a process (or movement) of transforming coercive power relations to collaborative power relations (Cummins, 2000; 2009).

Discussions

This pilot study explored how the integration of alternative approaches may contribute to the pedagogies of multilingual education in a modern public school system where has an increasing number of students from culturally and linguistically diverse families. Through the voice of the focal EAL students and teachers on the use of home language(s) in classroom, the preliminary findings of this study point to the importance of understanding the role of teachers and schools (i.e., in terms of language interaction policies in classroom). It is particularly crucial for the new minority language background students to develop into active members in today’s schools in a multilingual context. The findings suggest

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the significance of continually exploring and developing alternative approaches that allow these plurilingual students to maximize their multiple (linguistic and cultural) resources in improving their performance at school.

As revealed by the emerging themes presented in *the preliminary findings* section, the essential experiences of focal teachers and student participants in the study indicate two common features and two distinctive views on the use of home languages in public school classrooms. The two common features of these two groups of participants are: (a) *Seeing language as a tool of showing 'respect'*: Both students and teachers recognize the importance of treating language as a tool for showing "respect" to others; (b) *Acknowledging the significance of cross-cultural awareness*: Both students and teachers emphasize the importance of making their best efforts to understand each other and put forward positive ideas for cross-cultural awareness.

The findings also indicate two distinctive views between the teachers and the students, in terms of the politics concerning the medium of instruction (e.g., issues related to 'control' vs. 'freedom'), as well as other factors impacting 'learning' (e.g., issues related to 'comfort zone' and 'fear').

(i) *Politics concerning the medium of instruction: 'control' vs. 'freedom'*:

The focal student participants consider that the use of home language in classroom is connected to 'freedom', while the focal teacher participants construe it as a matter of 'control'. For them, the 'freedom of using their home language (s) in class allows them to utilize their rich linguistic knowledge that helps them achieve better outcomes, especially for the tasks often requiring a deeper understanding of the topic and comprehensive discussions, and also as a strategy to overcome the barriers in the target language that prevent them from effectively communicating with their peers and adequately articulating their viewpoints. For teachers, however, the use of home language in the classroom seems to associate with 'control' issues'. By creating class rules (e.g., English only policy), as revealed in the *Interview Excerpts 1* and *2*, teachers are constantly making efforts

to "control" a class and keep all aspects of a class in balance. It possibly is out of their professional obligations, or of effective approach which they consider best to ensure the minority language background students acquire the target language (or the main classroom language) more effectively in a supportive environment.

Other factors impacting the 'learning': 'comfort zone' vs. 'fear'

What is the nature of the challenges faced by minority language background students at schools, particularly in terms of utilizing their multiple resources (i.e., use of home languages) in classrooms/learning? This is a key question related to the essence of the two groups of participants in this study, for instance, the themes and the essential comments pertaining to the issues concerning 'comfort zone' and 'fear' at school. *Firstly*, the issues concerning 'comfort zone' seem to be critical to the focal EAL students. In particular, what does having a 'comfort zone' in school/classrooms mean to them, or, why do some students prefer to stay in the 'comfort zone' and feel reluctant to step out from there. *What is 'comfort zone'*? To the focal student participants, having a 'comfort zone' at schools/classrooms seems to bear a significant meaning. Such a comfort zone appears to be a 'space of freedom', where they can express their thoughts freely -- i.e., a comfortable and special place where they can freely (i.e., utilize their multiple languages) to communicate with their peers. More specifically, the focal participants' consistent descriptions of their experiences presented in this study reveal that having a 'comfort zone' in classroom interactions can be interpreted in two ways. One is *the positive way*, such as in the situation described by the student participants (i.e. as shown in the *Interview Excerpts 3* and *4*), where the teachers allow minority language students to use their home languages for the tasks requiring deeper understandings. The students can discuss their thoughts using their home language – an alternative/effective communication medium – with their partner or peers who also speak the same

home languages. Another is *the negative way*, such as in the situation (or concerns) described by the teachers in the *Interview Excerpts 1 & 2*, which some unmotivated students may use the freedom of using their home language in class as an escape port to hang out with people from the same cultural and linguistic background, rather than making efforts to step out from the 'comfort zone'.

Secondly, the 'fear' toward learning in a new environment, where the classroom language and culture are different from those in their home, is another key factor that impacts the learning of these plurilingual students. More specifically, for instance, learning a new language well is not an easy task, because it requires a great deal of effort in a prolonged period of time. The application of such a new language knowledge to the learning of academic subjects (especially in a new school environment) requires the courage to overcome extreme pressure, which often lasts much longer than the excitement gained from success and accomplishment (e.g., compared to the time when the students passed the TOEFL or IELTS and received a permission to study abroad in a new education system). Perhaps for this reason, the focal students in this study and the "troublesome" UB students in the anecdote were constantly struggling with various pressure of this kind. For some of them, such pressure may create 'fear' in them (e.g., in dealing with issues and challenges in a new learning environment, or a 'fear' of causing troubles or making mistakes and getting embarrassed), which may eventually impel them to slip into the 'comfort zone'.

To get anything highly valuable in our lives demands serious efforts. In most cases, we need to face various obstacles to obtain what we desire. For instance, we have to overcome the challenges in the process of learning a new language, or learning in a new environment, or understanding a new or unfamiliar 'foreign' phenomenon. Thus, it is not a surprising fact that each individual learner at schools may reach different outcomes, based on various attitudes and efforts that one has put in the learning of a new subject or in

the understanding of a new and unfamiliar situation. The most important point here, however, is that we need to have the courage to face the inevitable challenges and fears that may occur during these processes, and to seek alternative solutions to overcome them. In the case of educational context in particular, both the learners and their teachers, as well as the researchers, should constantly challenge themselves, by asking themselves or their students/teachers different questions, and by frequently reflecting on, assessing, and improving their own (learning or teaching) practices.

Implications, limitations and future studies

The linkage between globalization and education appears evident in the focal participants' personal narratives. Teachers in today's public secondary classrooms are facing daily challenges in teaching students from linguistically and culturally diverse families, particularly in teaching the newly landed minority language background students. Globalization requires a highly skilled workforce that can deal with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As Manen (2007:2) pointed out, pedagogy requires "constant practical acting in concrete situations and relations". Schools/teachers can no longer afford to enforce the 'one language only' pedagogy to language minority background students, without respecting the essential role that these plurilingual students' home language plays in today's dynamic classrooms in the public school system.

On the one hand, the findings in this study indicate, as remarked by student participants in the *Theme 2*, some teachers are not flexible, while blindly following traditional pedagogical approaches or tools, without considering the different needs of diverse groups of students. The teachers that discourage home language use in the public school classrooms may fail to realize that investing in the alternative pedagogy for minority language background students can pay off by nurturing students who are better motivated, more empowered, and productively engaged in different academic and social

activities at school and society. At present, for instance, a large number of teachers and schools still consider that the best way to help and enhance minority language students' academic success in their new schools is to enforce these students' target language (i.e., English) as the main or only instructional medium to all EAL or minority language background students, including the newly arrived students. Such an approach may have a positive impact on a small group of 'elite' minority language background students who already have a good grasp of the target language and culture. However, this perspective may not produce the desired impact (as much as what the schools/teachers are assuming) on the EAL students, especially the majority of newly arrived students who often need a sufficient time and strong support in order to adjust themselves to a new learning environment. Without providing adequate support/information in the Canadian educational system⁽¹³⁾, public schools at the very least, seem indifferent to these issues or, as in the case of the two minority students, emerge as a barrier to minority language background students' educational aspirations.

On the other hand, the key findings of this pilot study suggest that the schools and teachers hosting the plurilingual students should be encouraged to consider alternative approaches. For instance, allowing for an active use of these students' home languages is such an approach, as a helpful means for motivating their learning of target language (e.g., English) and active participation in learning new subjects in the target language, and to facilitate their effective integration into the new school culture. From this perspective, it is essential to acknowledge and promote minority language background students' home language use at schools. In particular, it is in terms of understanding how the positive aspects of such an approach or movement described by its advocates (e.g., Dagenais, D., & Day, E. (1999); Cummins, 2000; 2006; 2009; Moore & Gajo, 2009; Catelettie & Moore, 2010) can help these learners in more effective ways. As a matter of fact, most language minority students who attempt to contin-

ue education and accomplish academic success while dealing with the extreme level of stress (e.g., from learning/adopting new target languages and cultures in a new country), demand high self-autonomy and persistence, as well as a strong support from their teachers and peers. They need to leverage their cultural capital, and seek advice, and information and mentoring from their schools and teachers, as well as from other resources. More specifically, what is required here is transformative practices that are based on collaborative approaches between teachers and students, as well as between the cultures at school and at home. By doing so, schools and teachers can bring forth a high motivation of these plurilingual learners (or language minority students), and thus expand the capacity and agency of this community, which has strong ties with the larger immigrant and international student communities, the important groups in the globalized/globalizing societies like Canada and China.

To end with, considering the findings of this pilot study are based on data collected from the preliminary interviews and observations, this paper only includes the general textual descriptions and structural descriptions of the emerging themes, rather than focuses on providing hermeneutic interpretations for the themes as a whole. As for the responses to the eight themes, the preliminary findings reveal many common answers as well as some distinctive ones between the teachers and the students. Instead of making a comprehensive synthesis of the meaning and essences of the experiences from these two different categories of research participants, this paper only clarified the similarities and differences from the two groups directly under each theme, considering its main goal is to design and conduct a pilot study through a qualitative approach. The study for this mini project, however, provided valuable implications for the researcher's future research project, which requires more in-depth data collection and comprehensive data analysis of the findings.

Notes

1. All names used in this paper are pseudonyms.
2. Canada is a most culturally and linguistically diverse nation and nowhere is more evident of this than the province of British Columbia (BC). According to a report on 2006 Census Fast Facts by the BC Ministry statistics ('BC Stats' here after), despite English and French are the two official languages in Canada, almost 30% of the population in BC listed one or more non-official language as their mother tongue(s), and 16.5% British Columbians 15 years and over were reporting regular use of a non-official home language (BC Stats, 2006). The report also indicated that, for Canada as a whole, over 20% reported one or more non-official language as their mother tongues, and 11.6% of Canadians 15 years and over spoke a non-official language at home.
3. International education in K-12 BC public school system: According to a recent report of BC Ministry of Education (2010) on Student Statistics, an annual number of over 60,000 (more than 10% of total student body) of English as Second Language (ESL, or international) students are attending K-12 BC public schools since 2005. In the past a few years, increased number of international students come to study in Canada are mainly from non-English speaking regions, for instance, East Asia (e.g., Korea, China), South America (e.g., Mexico) and Europe (e.g., Germany). (BC Stats, 2006)
4. Minority language background students: In this paper, by 'minority language background students' I am referring to the 'non-native speakers of the main language of classroom instruction'. For instance, because the majority of BC public schools (except the French immersion schools) are using English as main medium of classroom instruction, all non-native English speaking students in these schools will be minority language background students.
5. Home language(s): For more details, also see the reports published by BC ministry of statistics, including the "2006 Census Fast Facts: Mother Tongue and Home Language" (BC Stats, 2006).
6. In his account entitled *Researching Lived Experience – Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*, Manen (2007) offers the alternative qualitative research approach of hermeneutic phenomenology that "taps the unique nature of human situation"(7), instead of relying on generalizations and theories in the traditional sense of educational research. For Manen, this is because "pedagogy requires a phenomenological sensitivity to lived experience (children's realities and life worlds)" (c.f., Creswell, 2007: 2).
7. Manen's (2007) account of *Researching lived experience* introduces a human science approach to research methodology in education and related professional field. In this account,

Manen offers detailed methodological explications and practical examples of hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry. Rather than relying on generalizations and theories in the traditional sense, the author offers an alternative [e.g., hermeneutic phenomenology] that taps the unique nature of human situation (see Back Cover, 2007). For Manen, "Pedagogy requires a hermeneutic ability to make interpretive sense of the phenomena of the life world in order to see the pedagogic significance of situations and relations of living with children....Pedagogy is the activity of teaching, parenting, educating, or generally living with children, that requires constant practical acting in concrete situations and relations. (2007: 2)

8. Creswell's (2007:207-9) eight examining procedures for validity and credibility: (1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field; (2) triangulating among different data sources; (3)peer reviews; (4) negative case analysis; (5) clarifying researcher bias; (6)member checking; (7)detailed description of the study for the transferability of the findings; (8) External audits.

9. I feel fortunate to be able to experience learning and using multiple languages (Korean, Chinese, Japanese and English) and pluricultural knowledge in various multilingual and multicultural contexts, including in East Asia (China, Japan and Korea) and North America (Canada).

10 As a second/foreign language (FL)educator and plurilingual researcher, I am a strong supporter of a pluralist educational view (i.e., Coste, Moore & Zarate's (2009/1997) inspired by the European perspective, including Coste et al.'s (2009) framework of the Plurilingual and pluricultural competence that emphasize the importance of maximizing a plurilingual learner/practitioner's multiple assets in his or her learning practices. For instance, in my teaching practice as a Japanese as additional or foreign language (JAL or JFL) educator in post secondary institutions in the recent a few years, I have been actively using my multilingual skills in classroom while also encouraging my students to utilize their home/all languages in their foreign language learning.

11. I consider that my 'insider' status (from the eyes of the participants) helped me to build a strong rapport with the informants. To the participants, perhaps I am an 'insider' (as a staff member who had closer relationship with them) before, and an 'outsider' (as a researcher who is no longer work for the program) at the present time. To establish positive rapport with the participants and get to know the community better, I devoted a large amount of time and efforts in working closely with the teachers and students in the community. As the result, I believe that my unique position (as an 'insider' and also as an 'outsider') helped me in many ways to build higher level 'trust', in which may be allowed the participants to feel

closer and safer to share their experiences (to me) with their inner voices.

12. During the coding process, I found various current editing functions in the M.S. Word document were very helpful.

13. For instance, through exploring various teaching approaches that based on the class dynamics, or through providing school wide cross-cultural language awareness workshops to both students and teachers.

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- BC Ministry of Education (2010). Student statistics – 2009/10: Province – Public and independent Schools Combined. *This report is listed under *Reporting on K to 12*, Retrieved on April 6, 2010 from <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/>

Appendix A. Interview Protocol Project

Re: Challenges of the Use of Home Languages in Public Secondary School Classrooms

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

(Briefly describe the Project)

Questions:

1.*To students: What has your experience of using your home language (mother tongue or first language) in your classroom been?

- How do/did your teachers react when you use native languages in their classrooms?

*To School Administrators/Teachers: What is your experience of having minority language background students (the ones from non-native English Speaking families) who are using their home languages in your classes?

- How do/did you feel in the process of dealing with the situations?

2.*To Students: How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with your teacher(s) in using home languages in his/her classes?

*To School Administrator/Teacher: How do you feel or what has been your experience when you are facing conflicts with some language minority students who are using home languages in your classes?

3.To whom should I talk to find out more about their experiences in ‘the use of home languages in the public school classrooms’?

(Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.)

Education: should it be a service or a right?

Margaret Aisicovich, B.A., B. Ed., P,B,D,E., M.Ed

We need to start looking at education as a right. Recently, Finland's exceptionally successful educational system has been shared in Canada through the professional development seminars delivered by Dr. Pasi Sahlberg, the Director General of CIMO in Helsinki, Finland to provincial superintendents and school leaders. Dr. Sahlberg used charts, slides and statistics in his presentations to explain the Finnish system. As he shared the fundamentals of the Finnish system it was difficult not to compare it to that of the Canadian system. Despite the cultural, economic and socio-political difference (which are vast) between Finland and Canada there are main principles which we share. Upon close scrutiny and a thorough search for a magic bullet it appears that the devil is in the details.

Theory

The educational theory in Finland and Canada is the same. Both believe that the education of our children requires respect, trust, equity, equality, inclusiveness, and teacher competency. However, these are broad concepts are implemented different in Finland and in Canada.

Practice

When these central tenants are put into practice in each country the result is different. Why is that? Dr. Pasi Sahlberg shared some of these differences throughout his presentation. Students in Finland spend less time being instructed in classes, and less time on homework than do students in Canada. Additionally, funding of students

in Finland is less per student per year than in Canada. In Finland, administration supports, trusts and respects teacher knowledge and gives teachers the freedom to plan and teach as they see fit. As well, teachers spend less time teaching per day than do teachers in Canada. Finnish students do not undergo standardized tested in early and middle school. Still, Finland's educational system rises above all others globally. Perhaps the secret is in the delivery model?

Delivery model

When one looks deeper into the Finnish educational system it is then that the greatest disparity between Canada's educational system and that of Finland becomes apparent. As Dr. Sahlberg shared, only 10% of Finland's education applicants are accepted into the teaching profession. Finland differs in other ways educationally: all teachers in Finland hold a master's degree; classes are capped at 16, and teachers spend two hours a week on professional development. Teachers are given the freedom to develop individualized programming for their students, meeting the needs of each child as an individual; essentially focusing on teaching the students, not the curriculum.

Conclusion

It is said that 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions.' And Canada's educational leaders have the best of intention. They share Finland's vision and expound shared ideals of trust, respect, equity, equality, inclusiveness, and teacher com-

petency. However, as Dr. Sahlberg said in his professional development session on August 14, 2013, while speaking to the educational leaders of Manitoba: "The quality of a school system cannot exceed the quality of its' teachers." The biggest difference between the Finnish system and that of Manitoba seems to be the preparedness of its teachers. The bottom line is if Manitoba or indeed Canada is to compete with Finland there are changes that will have to be implemented at the federal, provincial and divisional levels. These factors include shorter classes, smaller class sizes; teacher freedom to develop and implement individualized programming, but the greatest change will have to be made in teacher preparedness. The disparity between teachers in Manitoba, or indeed in Canada is great. How can we hope to have an equitable system with such disparity inherent in the system? We would not stand for such disparity in our medical community. It would be the equivalent of doctors in Canada having a choice to either spent 10 studying, interning and became board certified, or to complete a 4 year online course. Which one would you choose to treat your child? Clearly there are many factors which come into play in Manitoba's educational system, and teachers are only one part of it. One might say that teachers are like the engine of the car, they're the ones that make it happen in the classroom, and are integral to the education of children. However, if the engine in the car doesn't function as it should, the car isn't likely to drive very far.

Activity Box

Yi-Fang Chen

ABC Bingo	
Purpose/Aim	To encourage students pronounce English Alphabets. To engage every students into a group game.
Target Level	Adult literacy and foundation students
Language Skills	Listening and speaking skills
Preparation	1. ABC Bingo game set 2. Or homemade 9-15 squares ABC Bingo paper and stones
Instruction	1. Give each student a ABC Bingo paper 2. Explain the rule of ABC Bingo game 3. Demonstrate what to do when it is your turn (say a letter from your Bingo paper and put a stone on the letter you read) 4. Demonstrate what to do when it is not your turn (listen what others say their letters, and if you have the letter on your Bingo paper, put a stone on your paper) 5. When students put stones on all of their 9-15 squares ABC Bingo paper, they can say “BIN-GO” out loud
Variation	1. Switch ABC to target vocabulary or numbers 2. Divide students into groups of 4-5, instead playing as a whole class
Description	This activity is simple and fun for people who just start leaning ABC. And because most learners somehow know the Bingo Game so it is very easy for them to pick the rule.
Special Point	This activity takes about 20 to 30 minutes (It also depends on the class size. My class is about 12 students).



Teachers of English as an Additional Language E.A.L. Language and Learning in the 21st Century

Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate Institute, 2665 Ness Ave.

PROGRAM

8:00–8:45 am

Registration and coffee

8:45–9:15 am

Opening remarks—Awards

9:15–10:15 am

Keynote Speakers: John Wolfe and Rita Platt Part A (Gymnasium)

10:15–10:45 am

Break, Publisher's Display

10:45–11:45 am

Keynote Speakers: John Wolfe and Rita Platt Part B (Gymnasium)

11:45 am–1:00 pm

Lunch on your own

1:00–2:00 pm

Session L01

2:00–2:30 pm

Break, Publisher's Display

2:30–3:30 pm

Session L02

**Please visit www.tealmanitoba.ca for updates to the schedule*

L01 The “Big 5” in EAL

John Wolfe and Rita Platt

Level: All

Room: 2B10

Being a teacher of English language learners is one of the most challenging and rewarding of professions. There is conflicting information about best-practices, programs, and strategies. In this session you will be introduced to the “Big 5” in EAL teaching. We have synthesized the research

and found five winning big ideas in EAL:

- 1) Formative Assessment
- 2) Reading Intervention
- 3) Vocabulary Instruction
- 4) Academic Language
- 5) Structured Pair Work

Each idea will be discussed in terms of practical application, the research, and resources.

Breakout Sessions Spaces are first-come, first-serve.

L01 Building Family Literacy with EAL Learners

Melanie Davlut & Jennifer Smith,

Lord Roberts School Division

Level: Pre-School & Early Years

Room: 2B9

Come and learn how to start a family literacy program in your school. We will share with you how our program works and provide a starter package to help you on your way to creating your own family literacy program.

L01/L02 Content Area Literacy and Instruction

Cindy Petriw & Jane Drexler, Louis

Riel School Division

Level: Middle & Senior Years

Room: 2B7

This workshop will provide discussion and demonstration of instructional strategies which focus on making language and content comprehensible for middle and senior years EAL students.

L01/L02 Engaging 21st Century Language and Literacy Learners

Dr. Kim Hewlett, Pembina

Trails School Division

Level: All

Room: 2B6

This interactive session highlights a professional learning community's work from the last school year related to the topic: Engaging 21st century language and literacy learners. This study was an invitation to: address the challenge of dealing effectively with an increasing influx of students/families (many with little or no experience with the English language) entering our school as new arrivals; create a collaborative vision of how to best provide service delivery and programming for EAL learners in our school as well as; develop a response to assist EAL/LAL learners in successfully integrating into and contributing to the classroom and school community.

L01/L02 Bridging Academic Needs of Literacy, Academics and Language Learners in Content Areas

Tracey Gluska; St. James

Assiniboia School Division

Level: Middle & Senior Years

Room: 2C8

This session will provide exemplars of how resources can be used to develop the fundamental academic needs of students with gaps in their prior education. Teachers will explore how EAL/LAL materials can be utilized to enhance language learning and literacy in Science and Social Studies. Presenter will share resources that are used in an LAL program.

L01 Intercultural Translation: A Parent-Teacher Conversation on Assessment

Dr. Yi Li, University of Manitoba,

Dr. Krystyna Baranowski, University of Manitoba and University of St.

Breakthroughs and Heresies

Part and B (2 hours)

This session will provide participants with an overview of the year's most powerful and provocative EAL scholarship, including Calderon's 2012 tough-love list of nine factors that produce Long-Term English Learners, Ur's 2012 contrarian survey of research on Vocabulary Learning, Goldenberg's elegant 2012 summary and synthesis of key research, and Saunders' research-based recommendations on all students' need for form-focused EAL support. The research and recommendations are available—and they may surprise you!

Biographies

John Wolfe is a teacher on special assignment for the Multilingual Department at the Minneapolis Public School District and a consultant supporting the teaching of English as another language. He has worked with students at all levels as well as provided professional development to fellow teachers. In addition to his teaching assignments in various parts of the US, he taught EAL in Japan for four years. His areas of expertise include English Language Learners, literacy, and inte-



grated technology.

Rita Platt is a US Nationally Board Certified teacher. Her experience includes teaching learners of all levels from kindergarten to graduate student in places from remote Inuit villages to inner-city schools. She currently is a Reading and Library Media Specialist for

the St. Croix Falls School District in Wisconsin, teaches graduate courses for the Professional Development Institute, and consults with local school districts. Rita's areas of expertise include literacy, data-focused teaching, and student motivation. Find Rita's articles on hot-topics in teaching and learning at www.weteachwelearn.org/tag/rita-platt/

Together John and Rita spend much of their time thinking, talking, reading, and writing about issues in education. They believe that EAL is on the verge of a major breakthrough and love to share resources and ideas with their colleagues near and far! John and Rita's wiki-site is loaded with great information for teachers. Please visit, join, and collaborate! mplsesl.wikispaces.com/Home+Page

Boniface

Level: All

Room: 2C1

Through enacting a parent-teacher interview centering around a Chinese parent's 8-year-old daughter's report card, we will highlight the thoughts, feelings, tensions, and at times, miscommunication that can occur between two individuals from different cultural locations. We will explore the divergent goals, aims, and processes of education in China and Canada, and how these differences could both constrain and enable the ways in which we work with di-

verse learners, families and communities.

L01/L02 Stretchy language building strategies—active and adaptable.

Diana Turner, Manitoba Education

Level: General

Room: 2A8

Three classroom activities that promote inductive and active learning; adaptable for content, ages, and language level, e.g., the Picture Word Inductive Model.

L01 Adolescent EAL Literacy: More Than Just Good Teaching

Valdine Bjornson, St. James Assiniboia School Division

Level: General

Room: 2A7

How can educators best support the EAL literacy needs of adolescent students? Presenter will provide a review of the literature regarding adolescent learners as well as specific research regarding EAL students and literacy acquisition. The presentation focus will be research-based strategies for practical applications and staff engagement in the form of a school wide EAL literacy plan.

L01/L02 Accommodating Religious Diversity in Manitoba's Schools: A Guide

Anat Ekhoiz, Gray Academy of Jewish Education and Contract writer for Manitoba Education

Level: All

Room: 2A6

Manitoba Education is developing an Educators' Guide to Accommodating Religious Diversity in Manitoba's Schools. This document is intended to serve as a resource for educators and schools seeking to respond to the needs of their religiously diverse students and community. It is part of an initiative to develop resources concerning religious diversity in Canada and globally. The session will provide educators with the opportunity to review the draft document and become familiar with its content, as well as provide suggestions for improvement.

L01/L02 If These Walls Could Talk

Lori Carlson-Judson, Portage La Prairie School Division

Level: All

Room: 2A5

This workshop will include a number of teaching tools and strategies for teaching language that are quick and easy for teachers to implement in any classroom. From using paper to classroom walls we will explore simple strategies that will promote

NEWS

whole class language learning and support individual needs. Making word walls, using basic computer skills to create picture books, and computer short cuts are but a few ideas that will be covered to help you work smarter, not longer.

L01/L02 Identifying the Language Demands of Content Area Lessons

Brenda McDaniel, Manitoba Education

**Level: Early, Middle & Aboriginal
Room: 2A4**

Successful planning for EAL learners in content area instruction includes the understanding of the language demands of the lesson or activity and scaffolding the instruction to match the language proficiency levels of the student. The purpose of this session is to learn to identify linguistic, cognitive or socio-cultural knowledge that students need to know and be able to do in order to participate in each step of a lesson. A sample lesson will be examined.

L01/L02 Perceptual Mismatches in the Content Area Classroom

**Melanie Paragg, St. James Assiniboia School Division
Level: Middle & Senior Years
Room: 2A3**

At times, perceptual mismatches cause discrepancies between teacher and student expectations—specifically between cultural, educational, and social background knowledge—within the content area classroom. This presentation will acknowledge 10 specific perceptual mismatches that may occur between teacher expectations and student language / academic acquisition. Strategies presented will address how to manage mismatches taking place within the content area classroom. These strategies will assist teachers and students in acquiring and creating opportunities to embrace diversity in the classroom, as well as focusing on the needs—specifically social and educational—of the EAL learner in a mainstream classroom. Assisting EAL

Learners in the Science Content Area.

L01/L02 Challenges of Chinese Students' Oral English Learning

Dan Chen, University of Manitoba Graduate Student

**Level: Senior Years
Room: 2A2**

In China, English as a main major is taught from primary schools till universities, which means English as a foreign language exists in every level of Chinese education system. However, many Chinese students who study for their bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in Canadian universities find it hard to communicate in English. This presentation will give some insights about the Chinese students' learning obstacles in oral English learning in three aspects, including the English learning environment, high-stake testing and its impact on oral English learning, and the impact of Chinese traditional culture. As students from China gradually become the main force of international students in Canada, Chinese students' obstacles in oral English deserves more attention. The presentation will give you a general under-

standing of Chinese education system, the characteristics of Chinese EAL learners and the difficulties they encounter during their studies in Canada.

L01/L02 Restoring Hope Through Education

**Tony Tavares, Manitoba Education
Level: All
Room: 2A1**

Over the last decade Manitoba Education has launched several initiatives related to improving the educational and life outcomes of learners from war-affected and refugee backgrounds. Tony Tavares, Diversity Education and International Languages Consultant (and former EAL Consultant) will provide an overview of the two most recent initiatives Life After War: Education as a Healing Process for War-affected (published 2013) and Refugee Children and Building Hope: Refugee Learner Narratives (in development).

REGISTRATION

Membership Fees:

**Full-MTS Member.....\$35
Full-Non-MTS Member.....\$45
Student.....\$20
Other (Retiree/EA).....\$25**

Conference Fees:

**TEAL Member (Current).....\$30
Student.....\$20
Other (Retiree/Educational Assistant).....\$25
Non-member (Teacher or professional staff).....\$64**

(For only one dollar more you can get a TEAL membership and Conference Registration, including all journals.)

Late Fee.....\$10
in addition to conference fee (after October 15)

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