

**PLURILINGUAL AND INTERCULTURAL APPROACHES WITHIN
'LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS' IN ONTARIO,
CANADA**

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**Tese de
Doutoramento em Didática das Línguas - Multilinguismo e
Educação para a Cidadania Global**

(versão corrigida da tese)

Janeiro 2025

Modelo:

Declaração

Divisão Gabinete: Divisão Académica - Núcleo de Mestrados	Número: DA.NM.MD.03.01	CLAV: 750.30.600	Data / Atualização data: 22/04/2024
P.O. associado (se aplicável): DA.NM.PO.05.01	Responsabilidade Aprovação: Administradora Executiva (por delegação)		Informação/Despacho: Informação n.º 02/2024/DPQ

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Tese apresentada para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Doutor em Didática das Línguas - Multilinguismo e Educação para a Cidadania Global, realizada sob a orientação científica de Prof. Doutora Ana Gonçalves Matos e Doutora Sandie Mourao.

Thesis presented to fulfil the necessary requirements to obtain the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Didactics of Languages - Multilingualism and Education for Global Citizenship, carried out under the scientific supervision of Prof. Doctor Ana Gonçalves Matos and Dr. Sandie Mourao.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing this PhD thesis has been a long and challenging journey, and it would not have been possible without many individuals' support, guidance, and encouragement.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Sandie Mourao and Dr. Ana Goncalves Matos. Your expertise, patience, and unwavering support have been invaluable throughout this process. Your insightful feedback pushed me to sharpen my thinking and brought my work to a higher level.

I would like to thank my research participants, without whom this thesis would not be possible. Your curiosity, deep interest, time commitment, and constant feedback not only shaped this work but also contributed significantly to my personal growth and learning.

I am deeply indebted to my family. To my husband and daughter, Paul and Sofia, thank you for your love, patience, and unwavering belief in me, even during the most challenging times.

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS: plurilingualism; intercultural approach; language education; immigrant adult learners; ELT

Considering an increase in global migration and Canada's increased role as a host country, it becomes more important to ensure adequate adult newcomers' settlement and integration in a new social and language environment. Therefore, specialized English language education is expected to play a critical role in this process.

Newcomers' language backgrounds and skills have changed significantly within the last decades. In addition, theoretical research suggests that plurilingual and intercultural approaches in English language learning can lead to multiple learning advantages. However, in Ontario, the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada's (LINC) official English-only policy, alongside a typically monocultural approach to English language learning, remains in place.

This study examines the role of plurilingual and intercultural approaches in English learning classrooms with Language Instruction for newcomers to Ontario, Canada (LINC). Incorporating evidence from existing theoretical research, the focus group, semi-structured interviews, surveys and learning diaries, this mixed methods case study demonstrates that the proposed approaches can be implemented within the LINC educational environment while meeting the established program outcomes. The study also demonstrates that the proposed approaches lead to multiple learning benefits, such as high student engagement, intercultural competency development, and improved ICT skills. The analysis shows that it also leads to a change in perspective concerning the value of learners' pre-existing experience and language skills, regardless of their cultural, educational and language backgrounds and literacy levels.

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List of abbreviations

CLB	Canadian Language Benchmark
COE	Council of Europe
CLB	Canadian Language Benchmark
CRT	Culturally responsive teaching
ECML	European Center for Modern Languages
EDI	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
ELL	English Language Learning
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELP	European Language Portfolio
ET	English Teacher
IELTS	The International English Language Testing System
ICD	Intercultural Dialog
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
L3	Additional Language
TL	Target Language
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
SETT	Self-Evaluation of Teacher T

1 Introduction

This thesis will provide a sustained discussion of the possibility of implementing plurilingual and intercultural (IC) approaches in English language education within a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) educational environment in Ontario, focusing on its potential and current limitations. The LINC program is funded by Canada's federal government, specifically the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). LINC was initially established in 1992 and aimed at providing newcomers to Canada with English language skills and knowledge about Canada. The LINC program's objective is to help immigrants obtain a level of English competency sufficient for employment and settlement in Canada.

Most newcomers in Canada have an L1 other than English or French. Canada welcomes, on average, 300,000 immigrants annually, which reflects 21.5% of the country's population (Statistics Canada, 2021). Newcomers account for almost 22% of the population countrywide. According to Statistics Canada, in 1921, 70% of immigrants living in Canada indicated one of the official languages (English or French) as their L1. In 2016, already fewer than 30% reported English or French as their L1 (Houle et al., 2017). It demonstrates a significant shift in the language environment as over 70% of new immigrants have an L1 different from English or French. For this research, new immigrants are considered immigrants to Canada who haven't received citizenship status and are actively utilizing newcomer's support and settlement services.

Theoretical international and Canadian-based research supports plurilingual approaches to language education (Coste et al., 2009; Cummins, 2007; Piccardo, 2013), and emerging research on pluralistic approaches in language education has also highlighted its multiple benefits. However, provincial language settlement programs, such as LINC, mainly follow English-only policies. It demonstrates a significant gap between theory and practical implementation of plurilingual, and IC approaches with newcomers' ESL education. It also points to a need for a change of teaching approaches, in addition to a shift in the perceptions of all stakeholders involved. For the scope of the study, we will be looking at new immigrants with an L1 that is different from English.

In this thesis, I propose the adoption of plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC English language programs in Ontario, Canada. It will provide practical recommendations and suggestions on how to close the gap, sustained by the results of a case study focusing on the proposed approaches' application in LINC classes in Canada. The suggested approaches demonstrate an effective achievement of the LINC program learning outcomes, in addition to improving students' engagement and global competencies development.

It is important to outline that this research will include a diverse body of participants with different cultural, linguistic, educational backgrounds and literacy levels. A significant percentage of adult immigrant learners in Canada have a low academic level and, therefore, underdeveloped L1 skills (percentages will vary depending on each LINC classroom). Available research within the Canadian context mainly focuses on educated learners (elementary, secondary or post-secondary students, primarily middle class). This study, however, will cover a mix of learners that teachers typically meet within LINC classes (Young-Scholten, 2013, p. 451).

The main objective of this study is to demonstrate how to implement plurilingual and intercultural approaches in a real-life LINC environment, taking into consideration the program's intended outcomes and current limitations. Regarding the thesis objectives, the following sub-questions were developed: a) What is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC? b) What are the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches (including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs) within the LINC program?

In order to answer these questions, a mixed-methods case study was undertaken. This study included four phases (pilot, pre-intervention, intervention, and post-intervention) and involved five teachers and two classes of adult immigrant learners. A mixed-methods case study in the real LINC classroom environment, which combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis, was seen as the most suitable methodology, as it provides an opportunity for in-depth analysis while making visible the complexity of the examined issue.

A plurilingual and IC approach in English teaching, with a focus on immigrant newcomers, relates to UNESCO Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, promoting inclusive and equitable education and lifetime learning for everyone. Expressly, target 4.4,

"substantially increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship," underlines the importance of this topic (United Nations, 2020, para. 4). Newcomers to Canada with sufficient local language and communication skills have increased job prospects and have, on average, higher salaries compared to those who have not acquired the linguistic skills of the target country (Tufts et al., 2001). Vulnerable social groups are often in need of extra support during the settlement process. It is, therefore, important to provide those newcomers with the assistance needed, as their successful integration benefits the host society on many levels (cultural diversification, economic and educational development, among others).

Sustainable Development Goal 4, target 4.7 claims to promote "the learner's knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others ... human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development" (United Nations, 2020, para. 7). This point also relates to the proposed research project, as by promoting a plurilingual approach in language education, cultural diversity and inclusion are encouraged. LINC language classes also promote local cultural awareness, gender equality and sustainable development at all levels being also addressed. A pluralistic approach allows for a solid platform for global citizenship education, among others, essential within SDG 4, Educational Outcomes.

The implementation of a plurilingual and IC approaches in the LINC program claims to promote equal access to quality education that is relevant to the needs of learners, society and its sustainable development. It stimulates the development of intercultural communication, cultural diversity and learners' equity and inclusion. The results of this research are believed be useful for current educational system improvement on different levels. Language teachers might find the outcomes useful, as it will provide practical suggestions concerning their everyday practices. Finally, the study wish to contribute to a general perspective shift concerning non-official language skills and their practical implication in adult ESL programs in the Ontario education environment.

This thesis will start with Chapter 1, an introduction that will provide an orientation into this study context. Chapter 2 will follow with a description of the research and an

introduction. It will describe the LINC programme, in addition to typical LINC students' and teachers' profiles. Chapter 3 will cover a state-of-the-art discussion of plurilingual and intercultural approaches in education, specifically in adult immigrant learners' education. It will further discuss the reasons underlying the implementation of the proposed approaches in LINC and the program's potential inherent limitations. Educational material development for plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC context will also be discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will present the methodology adopted in the empirical study and present the research design, data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter 5 will showcase results and a discussion of findings, arranged as per the identified themes. It presents the results of the Focus Group, the Pilot research phase as well as the final educational materials used in the research. It will also cover LINC assessment approaches, the monolingual context of LINC, IC skills development and guided L1 use within LINC English-only policy. Chapter 6 provides a conclusion to the study, describing the change in perception of plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC and research limitations.

2 Description of Research

2.1 Central Concepts

There are more bilingual speakers worldwide than monolinguals (Grosjean, 2012; Baker et al., 1998; Potowski, 2013). Although it is hard to obtain accurate, updated data on speakers worldwide, we can refer to specific parts of the world to get an overall picture. Grosjean has noted that 35% of Canadian residents are considered bilingual (2012). What remains unclear in the related research is the definition of plurilingualism and, related to it, notions such as multilingualism, first language (L1), second language (L2), and third language (L3), among others. There are some questions and disagreements regarding definitions and related concepts. This section will review the core terms to establish the theoretical framework for this research.

2.1.1 *Core Terminology*

Before we get to the concepts and definitions of multilingualism and plurilingualism, we will clarify other terms also used in this work. There are many definitions of the L1. Most of them outline that L1 is a prevailing language in the home environment (or in the region) of learners growing up and the first language used for communication (Goode, 2022; Nordquist, 2020).

The term L2 also has a variety of definitions and associated terms. and can refer to a second language or a foreign language (Nordquist, 2020). Some authors define L2 as any language other than L1, that is being studied within its environment (Mizza, 2014). For the purpose of this work, we will define L2 as a language learned after the L1, when learned subsequentially or when referring to "non-native speakers" (Bardel & Falk, 2021).

The term additional language will be used to refer to any additional language other than the L1 (one or many) (De Angelis, 2007; Anderson, 2022). I will be using the term additional language, as it is seen as inclusive from the perspective of the number of languages and the learners' perspective (Anderson, 2022). The term avoids labelling and dividing speakers according to perceived language abilities and instead refers to all as "additional language learners" (Anderson, 2022). Another term that will be adopted in this

work is ‘target language’ (TL) (similar to the term new language (NL), used by Hall and Cook (2012, p. 274)), referring to the language that the learner is currently learning.

The Ministry of Education in Ontario, Canada defines English Language Learners as students in provincially funded English language schools whose L1 is a language other than English or is a variety of English that is significantly different from the variety used for instruction in Ontario's schools, and who may require focused educational support to assist them in attaining proficiency in English (Ministry of Education, 2007, p.8). This also includes Canadian-born and locally educated students. In the context of this work, we will extend the English Language Learners definition to all learners actively pursuing the English language in specific ESL/LINC programs.

The term language acquisition also requires some clarification. The terms language learning or development will be used instead, as both terms are seen as more dynamic and flexible in nature, reflecting the essence of the process more appropriately. Language skills are constantly evolving. The process of language learning does not imply a completion as a result of cumulative processes but rather a potential outcome. (Anderson, 2022)

Multilingualism. Multilingualism is defined as the ability to speak several languages, emphasizing that language aptitudes are not always equal (Eaton, 2018; Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty, 2008). Others see multilingualism as the active use of several languages, where all language aptitudes are balanced (Braun, 1937, p. 115). Piccardo emphasizes that multilingualism tends to keep languages apart within a person or society, calling it a “balanced co-existence” (2013, p. 601).

In this work, we will follow the definition of multilingualism as the co-existence of several languages within a community or an individual (Aronin, 2012; Canagarajah, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Jessner, 2008; Mehmedbegovic, 2019; Piccardo, 2013; Vildomec, 1963). This definition will help to demonstrate a fundamental difference with the notion of Plurilingualism.

2.1.2 *Plurilingualism*

First officially outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), according to Recommendation 98, that underlines the importance of diversifying and strengthening language learning to promote plurilingualism (CEFR, 2001). Plurilingualism is seen as a learner's competence that needs to be developed in order to communicate with members of other linguistic and cultural communities. This competence implies neglecting the notion of one common language, often English, and instead utilizing all linguistic resources available to learners (CEFR, 2021). It is also emphasized that a speaker's ability to use different languages at different levels is expected, diminishing the goal of developing a native speaker's level (Coste et al., 2009; Smith & Bak, 2019). Plurilingualism is seen as a lifelong process or state of learning and communication.

Plurilingualism, as an approach to language learning, is fast growing in popularity. However, in Canada, the preferred perspective remains "English-only policy" (Paterson, 2020), even if some teachers choose to adopt plurilingual practice in their particular language classroom settings (Paterson, 2020; Schmor, 2020).

Australia is another country that attracts a large number of newcomers with a variety of multicultural backgrounds and mirrors Canada with prevailing monolingual approaches in English language education. Research on plurilingual educational approaches within English teaching, however, are emerging (Dutton, 2020; D'warte et al., 2020; Oliver et al., 2020; Slaughter, 2020). Similarly, there is a growing body of literature advocating for plurilingual approaches also in the Canadian setting (Cummins, 2007; Paterson, 2020; Piccardo, 2014; Schmor, 2020; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008).

In the educational classroom context, Piccardo describes the multilingual classroom as a classroom with students who have different L1 and the plurilingual classroom, as a classroom where students actively utilize their plural language repertoire in the educational process (Piccardo, 2018, p. 212). Plurilingualism, therefore, implies the active inclusion of students' existing language repertoire into the learning process. A plurilingual speaker is seen as an unconfined active communicator who can activate any part of the existing

language repertoire at any point in time, depending on the communication needs (Grosjean, 1989; Lüdi & Py, 2009).

Pluriculturalism plays an important role in intercultural communication. Piccardo outlines that both plurilingualism and pluriculturalism “go hand in hand” (Piccardo, 2014, p. 197). It allows for more flexibility within the communication process (Coste et al., 2009; Eaton, 2018; Mehmedbegovic-Smith & Bak, 2019). Knowing several languages and cultures can make people better learners, as they are able to apply those existing learning mechanisms to acquire new competencies (Coste et al., 2009, p.12). Plurilingual experience allows learners to utilize their complex sociolinguistic background, determine general and unique linguistic features and enhance their ability to gain new knowledge and understand new environments (Coste et al., 2009).

To conclude, we can suggest that plurilingualism differs from multilingualism by the type of relationship with speakers. Multilingualism focuses on gaining language skills and mastering them separately, and plurilingualism aims to create an interconnected, inclusive relationship between languages, where, to facilitate learning, all parts of the language repertoire draw on each other (Piccardo, 2018). Another distinction is seen in the main goal. Plurilingualism emphasizes language learning as a lifelong process, never finalized but constantly evolving with the person, where communicative competency development remains fundamental (Baker et al., 2012; Grosjean, 2002).

2.1.3 *Translanguaging*

The term interlanguage first appeared in Selinker's work (1972), but prior to this, Corder and Nemser (Corder, 1967; Nemser, 1971) referred to the notion of interlanguage conveying the idea of a speaker's language being a means or a "transitional competence" (Corder, 1967). This refers to a learner's transition from the L1 to the TL, with the goal of proficiency being the TL (Aronin, 2012; Selinker, 1972). Interlanguage is characterized by referring to L1 while interfering with the TL throughout the learning process. Mistakes and errors that learners make in the process demonstrate the stage of the TL proficiency of learners (Aronin, 2012). It becomes visible when speakers, for example, transfer the principles of grammar from their L1 into L2 use or misuse a specific term due to the

interference of L1. This is considered a normal and expected experience of additional language learning in plurilingual learners.

The term translanguageing within scientific research, first emerged in the work of Cen Williams in the 1990s in Welsh and English. Williams was trying to incorporate two languages, Welsh and English, into the lessons with the goal of developing learners' bilingual competence. Both languages were actively and interchangeably used while practicing the four language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking). Learners were receiving information through one language and utilizing this information through the use of another language. According to Williams this leads to a better understanding of information (1996, p. 64).

Later the term was used by Baker in English translation (Baker, 2001): "Translanguageing is the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages" (p. 288). Wei underlines that translanguageing is not an objective; it is rather a practice and a process of knowledge construction (Wei, 2020).

2.1.4 *Summary*

As we saw in this section, there are multiple definitions and interpretations of the core concepts in use. To move further, we first needed to clarify the research context and determine how the core concepts would be explored throughout the study. It is essential to define the main terms within the context of this work to provide a clear starting point for further discussion.

I have also demonstrated the fundamental difference between the concepts of multilingualism and plurilingualism. This will help bring clarity when introducing the proposed educational approach. Understanding the main conceptual differences will also be helpful when analyzing the language used to describe some of the LINC program's goals and how those align with the societal values in Canada.

2.2 Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada: A Description

The LINC program is funded by Canada's federal government and, specifically, by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) department. The LINC programme was originally established in 1992 and aims at providing newcomers to Canada with English or/and French language competencies and knowledge about Canada. The program is free for newcomers and, in Ontario, is offered mainly in English. The LINC programme in Ontario is offered at levels 1-7 (Hajer et al., 2000). It is designed as a classroom-based program, with 95% of learners attending in person classes (Government of Canada, 2011). The in-person design has been challenged by the recent pandemic (COVID-19) context, leading to the implementation of remote and blended program methods through eligible educational providers across Ontario.

The LINC program can be delivered by a local school board, NGO, college, and community center, among other institutions. In addition to general ESL classes, LINC offers English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes specific to the professional area of newcomers and English Literacy Development (ELD) programs for learners with low literacy levels in their L1. The whole range of programs might not be offered by all eligible educational providers. Classes might be mixed-level due to low enrollment. This can be different for each educational provider.

The LINC program's objective is to help immigrants obtain a level of competency in English that is sufficient for employment and living in Canada. Teaching materials reflect Canadian reality and are aimed at helping students to complete everyday tasks, such as speaking to a health professional, using mail service, and opening a bank account in Canada, among others (Toronto District School Board, 2002). The English-only policy is common within the LINC language teaching approach. It is normally enforced by the educational providers and is reinforced in and outside of the classrooms by some teachers delivering the program (Barker, 2021; Paterson, 2020, Schmor, 2020; Watson, 2009).

It should be emphasized that the LINC program does not have a specific textbook, which is seen as problematic by some practicing teachers and is welcomed by others (Government of Canada, 2011). When evaluating the LINC program's effectiveness, the IRCC did not find a significant difference in language proficiency levels between the

learners attending specifically the LINC program and the control group (similar learners outside of the program) (Government of Canada, 2011). In addition, it was indicated that LINC students did not feel that the program has helped them to reach their academic goals, neither did it assist them with their employment (Ricento et al., 2008). In 2016 funding for LINC programs beyond level four was reduced (Lam, 2019, p. 80). Level 4 in the LINC programme corresponds to a high A2 CEFR level (Piccardo & North, 2018).

It has been outlined that overall, language classes for immigrants have high dropout rates (Lukes, 2009). On average, learners complete one level within the LINC program (Government of Canada, 2011). Lukes (2009) noticed that English language courses that incorporate L1 (bilingual programs) have a retention rate of 95% for lower-level students, which is considerably higher than regular ESL programs (p. 170). Lukes outlined that the ideal language program for immigrants would be a blended version of quality instructions in L1 with English language instructions, qualified teachers with L2 skills, technology and a culturally supportive educational environment (Lukes, 2009, p.170).

2.2.1 *LINC Students' Profile*

The LINC student, within the context of the study, is an adult, over the age of 15, a newcomer to Ontario, Canada, in need of an English language competencies upgrade and local settlement assistance. For evaluation purposes IRCC, the federal funding body, conducted a study to better understand the impact of the program on the language progression among the learners (Government of Canada, 2009). This study also helped to outline the LINC student profile. According to the IRCC, an overwhelming majority of students were female (over 70%) in the age group of 25-44 (65.6%), who had spent three or more years in Canada (31.1%) (Government of Canada, 2009). A student's level of education ranges from the secondary level or less (37%) to a university degree (38.5%) (Government of Canada, 2009). Most of the students attended four levels within LINC, according to the report:

- level 3 (25.4%), which corresponds to Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level 3 and A2

- level 4 (19.1%), which corresponds to CLB level 4 and A2
- level 2 (18.3%), which corresponds to CLB level 2 and A1
- level 1 (13.9%), which corresponds to CLB level 1 and A1

(Government of Canada, 2011; Picardo et al., 2018).

The evaluation report, provided by the IRCC, characterizes a Canada-wide student body attending LINC programs. There was no data available on each individual province. However, according to the survey's limitation, 80% of the respondents were attending Ontario-based LINC programs (Government of Canada, 2011). Therefore, this allowed for a better understanding of the student population attending the LINC program in Ontario, Canada.

It is important to refer that, according to the Government of Canada (2011), 3% of learners within the program did not have any education, and 9% of students attended elementary school only. High school credentials were received by 14% of learners, but they were not able to complete their education. At the same time, 48% of attending learners had some postsecondary education, including graduate-level studies. The majority of students indicated that the main reasons for attending LINC classes were improving the level of English for everyday communication (47.1%) and getting a job (33.6%).

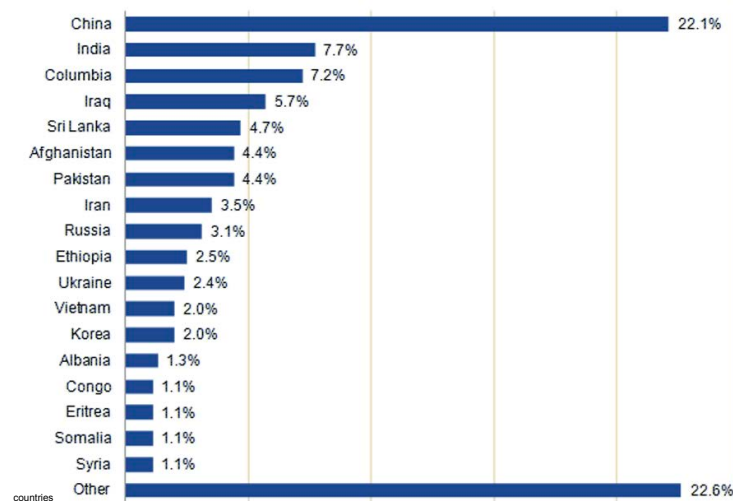


Figure 1: Country of birth of LINC students

Source: Government of Canada, 2011

LINC students demonstrated linguistic diversity (L1), with 77% of the learners speaking at least one of the 18 dominating languages or dialects associated with the countries listed (see Figure 1), with the remaining almost 23% speaking other languages. LINC learners had diverse backgrounds at all levels. It was important to know the students and their educational needs when considering the implementation of an alternative educational approach. Therefore, the proposed plurilingual and intercultural educational approach drew on students' diverse backgrounds, levels of skills and experiences and utilized those to create an inclusive educational environment and to improve the learning outcomes for LINC students.

2.2.2 LINC Teacher's Profile

The Evaluation of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada report (Government of Canada, 2011) outlines the profile of a LINC teacher. Most of the teachers within the program are female (85%) and are in the age group of 35-64 years old. At the same time, 30% of teachers have either passed retirement age or are close to retiring.

It is important to note that 46% of teachers within the program have an L1 that is different from English. According to the same report, some students believe that “non-native” English-speaking teachers, as opposed to “native speakers”, are not able to facilitate the English language learning process, and therefore those students question LINC teachers' qualifications and preparedness. At the same time, 96% of LINC teachers have at least Bachelor level studies (including BEd.), 34% possess Master level degrees (including MEd.), and 2% of LINC teachers hold PhD. level degrees.

In addition, LINC practicing teachers are required to have a TESL Ontario certificate that covers 250 hours of theory in TESL methodology, 30 hours of ESL class observation (taught by a certified TESL Ontario teacher) and 20 hours of supervised teaching practice (TESL Ontario, 2022). It needs to be noted, that there is no data provided on additional IC training teachers might have received. It is assumed that no such training is provided to the LINC teachers as part of professional development or to satisfy requirements to teach within the program.

The study reported in this thesis, among others, proposes providing professional reflective space to practicing teachers to create an opportunity to improve teaching approaches and to reflect on potential biases while teaching. In addition, it looks at potential changes to LINC teacher's qualifications, allowing educators to be better prepared to meet their diverse students' needs. Furthermore, the proposed plurilingual and intercultural approach within LINC allows teachers to build on diverse language and cultural competencies and experiences not only of their students but also of teachers themselves. This will allow for the creation of an inclusive, collaborative educational environment with engaged learners, where IC competence development will be targeted as part of the learning outcomes.

2.3 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the context to help readers unfamiliar with the subject to gain a better understanding of the LINC program, its teachers, and students' profiles. It also provided information on the LINC program evaluation by the Canadian government authority to better understand how efficiently the program meets learners' needs and expectations within the Ontario context. As per published results, there might be multiple aspects of the program that might need improvement as to serve its students better and meet its' established goals efficiently.

From the chapter above, we can see that the LINC programme has a 30-year-old history and has welcomed many new immigrants to Ontario, Canada, over that period. However, as the profile of the students has changed, the LINC Ontario program has not evolved to reflect it. It has been demonstrated that immigrant learners joining the program display diverse language, cultural, social, and educational backgrounds. They also have diverse needs that should be met.

In addition, taking into consideration the overall high dropout rates from the language classes for immigrants and the above-mentioned program's limitations, low LINC student attendance and a high dropout rate appear consequential. To address some of the challenges, an alternative educational approach is proposed. An inclusive educational environment, topics relevant to the students' needs and building on students' existing

language competencies and experiences to meet the learning outcomes efficiently are integrated parts of a plurilingual and IC approach.

The LINC teacher's profile should also be taken into consideration when developing an alternative approach. Most of the teaching positions within the LINC structure are contract-based. Positions are often unionized, resulting in teaching hours distribution based mainly on teachers' seniority level. Those factors might be connected to a low number of new LINC teaching professionals and the somehow stagnated nature of the program. Veteran teachers are more resistant to new educational strategies and approaches (Snyder, 2017). Their maintenance of the perceived best practices that worked for students for a long time (Snyder, 2017) might contribute to the lack of development in the program.

As outlined in the chapter above, all LINC teachers have a minimum undergraduate-level degree; however, what seems to be missing from the professional job requirements is IC training or experience. Teachers lacking IC skills are not able to facilitate those to their students. Therefore, the learners' educational experience might be limited to the monocultural and monolingual traditional focus.

The LINC program has demonstrated some limitations on the programming level but also in relation to teachers' and students' perceptions and beliefs. The program also has the goal of supporting students' employment and settlement in Canada, which requires certain knowledge and competences. This work will demonstrate how the proposed plurilingual and IC approach will help to achieve the program's goal, overcoming the program's limitations.

In addition, there is clearly the need to make more information available and accessible to the public on the importance and practical benefits of developing plurilingual and IC competencies. If potential employers demand IC skills from the employees, then educational institutions will have to meet this demand by adjusting the curriculum for all learners, local and international.

Furthermore, in Ontario, Canada, a gap in the practical application of plurilingual and IC approaches is observed, specifically within the adult immigrant context. The contextual information from this chapter will help to build a theoretical framework for the proposed approach, which will be discussed in detail in the following literature review chapter.

3 Literature Review

This chapter will provide more information concerning the plurilingual, and IC approaches in existing studies. It will discuss existing research on plurilingual and IC approaches in the context of adult immigrant learners and L1 inclusion in English Language Teaching (ELT). This chapter will also cover teacher reflective practices and existing assessments within the plurilingual and IC educational approaches.

3.1 The plurilingual approach in language education and its assessment

This section will review the pluralistic framework for language teaching and pluralistic approaches in language education and its relevance for English language settlement programs. It will also introduce the L1 concepts and the reasons for L1 inclusion in TL classrooms. The chapter will also review plurilingual assessment, addressing its limitations, requirements, and possible solutions for implementation. Additionally, it will cover the teacher's role, beliefs and practices in the approach implementation. I will also discuss reflective practices as part of teachers' training.

3.1.1 Plurilingualism within immigrant language learning programs

Plurilingualism within language education has a relatively long history (Baker, 2011; Bismilla et al.; Cummins, 2007; Galante, 2018; Piccardo, 2018; 2006; Wei, 2020). Learning an additional language offers a different perspective on one's L1 (Piccardo, 2018, p. 81). Many researchers underline the importance of demonstrating the interconnectivity within the language repertoire, as it provides valuable recourses and skills for continued learning (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 1979; Piccardo & Ortega, 2018, p. 82). In addition, plurilingualism connects different languages and associated cultures, illustrating the denial of "one way of speaking or being" (Coste, 2014; Zeaiter, 2022, p.212).

An essential characteristic of a plurilingual approach is the acceptance of what Blommaert (2010) calls "truncated repertoires," referring to unbalanced language competencies within a student (p. 103). The valuable realization that "no one knows all of a language" might help to shift the educators' focus from basic mistakes immigrant learners might make to the ability to communicate successfully and assess it accordingly

(Bloommaert, 2010, p. 103). Canagarajah (2013) supports the adaptation and active use of partially developed language competencies as part of a plurilingual approach for TL development, as even "incomplete" and sometimes "conflictual", but communication taking place between the immigrant learners (p. 32).

Smyth (2021), working with immigrant and refugee students, demonstrated that a plurilingual approach allowed for better student engagement, the co-construction of knowledge and, essentially, "improved learning processes" specifically with immigrant and refugee students (p. 4). Choi and Najar (2012) outlined that a plurilingual approach with low-educated female immigrant and refugee learners in an English language settlement program provided major benefits concerning students' learning outcomes. A plurilingual approach encouraged immigrant students with a low level of English to actively participate in conversations and be engaged in the educational process (Choi & Najar, 2012).

Hebert et al. (2008) described the potential benefits of the cognitive model within an immigrant educational context, where the curriculum adapts the immigrant-oriented content, and cultural differences are acknowledged (p. 64). Denial of the latter might lead to immigrant students' isolation and poor educational outcomes (Choi & Najar, 2012; Smyth, 2021). Hebert et al. (2008) argue that in Canada, plurilingual education is currently only available to certain groups, such as Francophones (p. 60). The federal government policy was adjusted for that to take place. However, the policy did not change in relation to other immigrant language groups, and researchers are calling to close the gap (Hebert et al., 2008).

Plurilingual research in the Canadian context suggests that the majority of local language educators working with newcomers tend to adopt "an English-only policy in their classroom, believing that immigrant students' native languages are actually hindering their learning" (Hebert et al., 2008, p. 61). Therefore, the emphasis has been put on a monolingual educational environment (Cummins, 2007; Kiernan, 2011; Paterson, 2020; Well and Paquet, 2020; Zeaiter, 2022), where immigrants' existing language skills and cultural experiences tend to be completely disregarded (Li & Sah, 2019; Zeaiter, 2022).

Settlement programs aim to assimilate immigrants to Canada. Therefore, such programs tend to outline the local reality with the dominance of the official language. However, if the value of plurilingualism is not acknowledged, newcomers might lose their cultural connections and struggle to learn a new language in a new cultural environment (Sterzuk & Shin, 2021).

A plurilingual and IC approach might present an alternative. Within the Ontario context, a plurilingual approach was studied with a focus on educated, middle-class students at elementary, secondary, or post-secondary levels (Bismilla et al., 2006; Cummins, 2007; Galante, 2018). There is no current research on a plurilingual approach to language learning among adult immigrant learners in Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). There is also growing research support for adjusting the language teachers' qualifications within the settlement programs, making L2 and IC skills necessary (Hebert et al., 2008, p.66; Khan, 2019; Lam, 2019). This study intends to contribute to the advocacy of specific teacher training within the context of adult immigrant language teaching.

3.1.2 Teacher training programs and reflective practices

When talking about professional teachers' training programs, Towers (2013) mentions some issues, specifically in Canada, describing new teachers abandoning their innovative research-based practices in favour of traditional ones or the approach existing within the institution where they start teaching (p.108). Many researchers confirm in their findings the effect of "fading away" knowledge and skills developed during the pre-service programs (Korthagen et al., 2006; Towers, 2013; Wideen et al., 1998). The acquired knowledge does not tend to transfer to teacher's practices, especially over the years (Ensor, 2001; Korthagen et al., 2006; Schulz & Mandzuk, 2005). Some teacher programs are trying to be more proactive by incorporating practicum experiences into their theoretical courses and assisting graduates during the first years after graduation; however, in the long term, collecting data on the graduates' teaching approaches is difficult (Towers, 2013, p. 109).

Towers worked with a small group of teachers, graduates from one of teachers' programs in Canada, for the duration of seven years, and she concluded that all participants

stayed true to the core values of the program (reflective and collaborative practice, inquiry-based learning, small-group structures among those principles), although they were systematically pressured by other work colleagues and school administration to adjust their teaching approaches to a traditional mainstream style (Towers, 2013). This led researchers to the conclusion that the set of skills that makes teachers ready for teaching was not only limited to the traditional one (knowledge of lesson planning and class discipline, among others) (Towers, 2013). Pre-service teaching programs should focus on developing a “particular way of thinking about the work of teaching” and a deeper understanding of the teacher’s role and responsibilities in the educational process (Towers, 2013, p.119). Towers (2013) concludes further that correctly developed and delivered teachers’ programs can help new and upgraded teachers develop beliefs and practices that will help them to integrate new learner-focused approaches (p.120).

Teachers’ reflective practices (RP) could be used as a tool to improve teaching practices (Farrell & Ives, 2014, Magos & Simopoulos, 2009). The RP can be effective, if conducted correctly (Walsh & Mann, 2015). It needs to be data-led and be based on information collected through a combination of authentic sources, such as class observation, teacher’s qualitative interviews, and teacher’s speech transcripts or recordings (Walsh and Mann, 2015, p.354). Farrell and Ives suggest that observing classes and analyzing beliefs and actions in the classroom might help teachers to reflect on their educational strategies and actions and will lead to an improvement of new teaching practices (2014, p.15).

A dialogue format is important for the RP (Walsh and Mann, 2015, p. 365). If a teacher is able to talk through the issue or situation with another educational professional and receives proactive feedback, the approach might be more successful than individual-based isolated reflection (Walsh and Mann, 2015, p.356).

Based on the above, it is possible to suggest that although updating teacher training programs is not the sole solution for challenging outdated teaching approaches, methods and tools, it could be a big step forward that might lead to significant development. Teacher training programs need to draw on RP more effectively, so teachers understand the value of periodically re-evaluating their practices, making data-driven decisions and aligning teaching approaches and tools used in a classroom with the changing students’ needs.

3.1.3 *Incorporating L1 in ELT*

It is not uncommon for ESL teachers and students themselves to exclude (or try to exclude) L1 from the TL classroom (Lukes, 2017; Mandalios, 2012; Paterson, 2020; Payant, 2019;). Teachers often insist on leaving L1 outside of the school or forgetting it altogether in order to learn the English language correctly. Exclusion of L1 is common with ELT, specifically in Canada (Paterson, 2020; Schmor, 2020). A similar approach is often practiced within LINC classes or other immigrant-focused English language programs in Ontario, Canada (cf. Watson, 2019).

Increased interest in multilingual and plurilingual competency has reinstated L1 use in TL classrooms, as it implies student's abilities in more than one language (Grim, 2010). Use of L1 in TL class has been discussed in the research extensively, with several researchers arguing against it (Hsien-jen, 2001; Hunt, 1996; MacDonald, 1993; Nazary, 2008; Prodromou, 2022), however, many authors are in support of its' balanced use in a language learning context (Atkinson, 1987; Auerbach, 1993; Bingjun, 2013; Cervatuic, 2009; Cheung, 2003; Cook, 2001; Cummins, 2007; Hall & Cook, 2012; Kramsh 1998; Macaro & Lee, 2009; Schweers, 1999; Slavin & Piccardo, 2018; Stern, 1992; Zulfikar, 2019).

When looking at teachers' reasons for using the variety of combinations of L1/ TL, Duff and Polio (1990) identify institutional policy, materials/topics, teacher's training on the matter and the proximity of languages (language family) as the main factors. It is important to outline that the teacher's language proficiency level and the extent of their professional experience do not seem to have a significant effect on the amount of L1 used in the classroom (Duff and Polio, 1990; Grim, 2010). Grim, based on their study, describes the following functional reasons of L1 use: metalinguistic explanation, instructions (tasks), class management, teachers' empathy, and translation (2010, p. 197).

Castellotti (2001) noticed that L1 accepted by language teachers, based on: student's level of TL, type of educational task and overall learning context. This demonstrates teachers' flexibility with L1 use and its adaptation to the specific learning environment and students' needs. Research demonstrates that, for example, learners with a high proficiency

level in TL rely less on L1 compared to students with a lower level of TL (Akbar et al., 2020; Algazo, 2018; Almohaimeed, 2018; Ma, 2009; Prodromou, 2022).

In addition to the above, there are other reasons for utilizing L1 in a TL class. Specifically, in the context of an adult immigrant learner's context, L1 provides a sense of security (Auerback, 1993; Canagarajah, 1999, p.132; Schweers, 1999). Students can express themselves better without vocabulary limitation, which often becomes visible through discussions when student groups with a common L1 are identified, but also with written assignments when students are asked for their thoughts on a specific subject. Often, learners may perform thinking and original drafts in their L1 to ensure they are able to transmit the correct message (Choi & Najjar, 2012). Piasecka (1988) further suggests that students might feel threatened if asked to abandon their L1, which is directly connected to their identity (p.18). Hall and Cook (2012) outline similar reasons (p. 276). Paterson (2020) notices that when teachers ask students to leave their L1 outside of the classroom, a big part of their identities stays there as well. Extensive research suggests that learner's identities and their L1(s) skills are directly linked to ICC development in the language learning process (Hall and Cook, 2012, p. 279; Levine, 2011; Stiefel, 2009).

Building on previous knowledge (Bransford et al., 2000) incorporating L1 (and previous cultural experience/knowledge) is considered to be an effective strategy (Cummins, 2007; Hall & Cook, 2012, p. 290; Stern, 1992). With respect to adult learners specifically, Stern (1992) points out that "whether we like it or not, the new language is learnt on the basis of a previous language" (p. 282). L1 is a cognitive tool that learners tend to use to navigate through mental processes (Swain & Lapkin, 2000, p. 253). From that perspective, the use of L1 seems only natural, as it is used by learners, implicitly or explicitly, to acquire the TL (Hall & Cook, 2012; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2007).

The L1 in the TL classroom ensures group collaborative communication among all participants, especially if there is an opportunity to group students with the same or similar L1. This not only allows for peer support (Cook, 2001), but also helps to maintain the knowledge exchange, to support the conversation and therefore to meet communication goals (Scott & Fuente, 2008). In contrast, omitting L1 can lead to artificial and often meaningless conversations that are far from being authentic (Macaro, 2001).

Instructional use of L1 has been described by many researchers as the most used approach (Grim, 2010; Schweers, 1999; Yough, 2010). If the teacher has another common language or languages with students, it might result in a more efficient use of class time, and it might help to ensure a deeper understanding of a new concept. In addition, looking at L1 from a socio-linguistic perspective might help to acknowledge that in authentic communication, L1 is often used together with L2 by plurilingual speakers (code-switching, alternating languages, among others.) (Grosjean, 1982). This is often done intentionally to reach a specific effect (Grim, 2010, p. 194). Using English for communication within the province of Quebec (Canada), would illustrate this point within the environment of one country, where often a mix of both languages is used.

Learners with limited L1 competence. Another reason for L1 inclusion in L2 classrooms is related to learners with limited L1 skills. By bringing in L1, the teacher provides essential support on many levels to those learners (Lukes, 2009). Target language learners with limited L1 skills are often at a disadvantage in a regular ESL (or LINC) classroom, as they often don't possess basic learning skills, making learning additional language more difficult. There is a correlation between the level of language skills development in L1 and in L2/L3 (Burt, 2003; Cummins, 1979; Lukes, 2009; Young-Scholten, 2013, p. 445;). Cummins (2007) mentions languages' interdependency, where the increased proficiency in one language positively affects the development of competencies in another language (p. 232). Therefore, the inclusion of L1 into TL class might lead to improved L1 skills, in addition to other academic skills development that normally those students lack (Yousaf and Khan, 2014, p. 33).

Instructional use of L1 has been reported as effective in target language classrooms with low-level L1 literacy students (Lukes, 2009). Lukes outlines the positive effect of instructions in L1 and the use of translation when working with new concepts (p.169).

L1 might be used as part of students' retention strategy. Students with limited L1 skills are generally subject to higher dropout rates and interrupted educational and professional paths and therefore, as a result, run a higher risk of being marginalized. Specifically, adult immigrant ESL programs have a significantly higher lower-level student retention rate,

when L1 is used within the program (Lambert, 2008; Lukes, 2009, p.170). Therefore, its inclusion in the learning process is seen as essential for students' retention purposes.

Teachers' and students' perception of L1 inclusion. If teaching is to be more learner-centred, understanding of students' interests and needs should be considered when selecting an educational approach. Although research indicates that some students might believe in the exclusive use of TL in the classroom (Payant, 2019; Prodromou, 2022), in practical terms, those learners often still use it as a tool for TL learning (Akbar et al., 2020; Payant, 2019). It is important to distinguish perception and the actual actions taken in the TL classroom (Payant, 2019). Overall, students demonstrate being in favour of L1 inclusion into the TL learning process (Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Hidayati, 2012; Schweers, 1999;). According to Schweers' survey (1999), 88.7% of student participants like the use of L1 in ELT (p.6). A similar outcome is demonstrated in other studies (Ma, 2009; Payant, 2019; Prodromou, 2022).

Teachers' perception of L1 inclusion in TL class, however, seems to be more ambiguous. Research indicates some teachers feel guilty using L1 in the TL classroom (Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Macaro, 2006; Thompson, 1987). Macaro (2006) describes teachers' perception of L1 use in the TL classroom as "unfortunately necessary" (p. 68). Hall and Cook (2012) note that most language teachers value the benefits of L1 in ELT (p. 295). Cummins (2007) indicates that teachers' negative perception of L1 in a TL classroom might be directly associated with the natural method of language teaching, which still influences currently practicing teachers (Cummins, 2007; Paterson, 2020). It is important to outline that teachers' beliefs can change over time. McMillan and Rivers (2011) describe how, initially favouring a monolingual approach, teachers came to understand the value of L1 (cf. Atkinson, 1993; Auerbach, 1994; Burden, 2000).

It is essential to consider both learners' and teachers' perceptions when introducing a new teaching approach. It is also important to remember that participants in the process may change their perception of a teaching approach once they see its value in relation to their teaching/learning needs and goals. Although researchers overall support the benefits of L1 use in TL classrooms, practicing teachers in Canada seem to need to catch up on the

updated methodology (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009, p. 8). Therefore, more work is needed to connect teachers to current research and to close the gap between theoretical knowledge and its practical application.

Bilingual dictionaries. Concerning utilizing L1 as a tool in TL learning, Mandalios (2012) has studied teachers' beliefs about their practices in the classroom and described inconsistencies. ET L/L2 support the use of bilingual dictionaries for their own TL learning but tend not to allow those to be used by students. Teachers suggest the use of monolingual dictionaries instead (Mandalios, 2012). When teachers were asked to experience using monolingual dictionaries when learning a TL, the absolute majority expressed "dissatisfaction", "frustration," and "irritation" (Mandalios, 2012, p. 13).

Some reasons named for not using bilingual dictionaries in ELT among practicing professionals are institutional mandate, current methodology and negative perception of bilingual dictionaries among ELT educators (Mandalios, 2012, p. 15). That perception or rather a decision to rely on monolingual dictionaries only has been called "naturalized," as it is no longer questioned by practicing teachers (Mandalios, 2012, p. 2; Pennycook, 2001, p. 7).

Mandalios (2012) underlines that there is no substantial proof of the negative effect of bilingual dictionaries on student's TL learning (Ard, 1982, p. 2; Hsien-jen, 2001; Mandalios, 2012, p. 4; Thompson, 1987, p. 282). Instead, there is extensive research on the benefits of using L1 in the TL classroom (Auerbach, 1993; Bruton, 2007; Cook, 2010; Laufer & Girsai, 2008; Macaro, 2003; Paterson, 2020 among others). In addition, reports show learners prefer bilingual dictionaries in TL classrooms (Chan, 2011; Gonzalez, 1999; Thompson, 1987). The conflict between the methodology teachers perceive as valuable for their learning, and the teaching approach they implement in the class on their students is remarkable.

3.1.4 *Plurilingualism and biliteracy*

Wei (2020) underlines that the goal of language learning is always plurilingualism and not the replacement of L1. As such, it might be possible by providing an educational environment to support L1 competency (Cazabon, 1998). Specifically, in the case of adult immigrant learners, plurilingual skills development is often the goal (Potowski, 2013). In addition, through plurilingual and IC approaches, students may build metalinguistic connections and, at the same time, develop critical and creative skills, mind flexibility, and enhance memory processes, among others (Marsh et al., 2020).

Being bilingual does not always equate to being biliterate. Often, within LINC programs, learners possess a low literacy level in L1. Incorporating students' L1 in ELT might help to improve the literacy level across the language repertoire. A plurilingual approach might assist in reinforcing a "weaker" language (Baker, 2012). Estyn (2022) describes the importance of establishing functioning dual literacy skills, which is described as the ability to utilize language competencies freely and, at the same time, being able to switch languages, depending on communication needs (pp. 1-2). It has also been outlined that strong L1 literacy skills have a beneficial effect on TL literacy skills (Burt, 2003; Cummins, 1979; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine 2017, p. 23). Cummins (2019) underlines that all languages within a learner develop in an interconnected way and will correlate to overall literacy development (p.16).

In the LINC context, learners' pre-existing experience and language competencies need to be considered. Understanding the students' level of L1 literacy is important. A low level of students' L1 literacy might correlate to a low level of learning skills and global competencies overall. It might be a barrier to future employment, which is one of the goals of the LINC program. Therefore, with those students, it is crucial to incorporate L1 in TL learning, as it will help to improve and balance overall language competencies within a learner. As a result, it might lead to global competencies development, specifically IC competence, which is essential for employment in Canada.

3.1.5 *Plurilingual assessment*

Plurilingualism is becoming an integral part of educational systems worldwide (Moore, 2020; Cummins, 2007). Teachers face an increasingly diverse student body, which could encourage teachers to adjust their teaching approaches. It is becoming more evident that plurilingualism is linked to, and often results in, higher mobility, better employment conditions and overall improvement of residents' socio-economic environment (Schwab, 2020; Moore, 2020).

If teaching approaches are adjusted in some parts of the world to meet new multicultural realities, the field of assessment has been largely left out. The area of plurilingual assessment is relatively new and is currently getting more attention from researchers and educational stakeholders (Little & Perclova, 2011). Plurilingual assessment is innovative, as it goes against the traditional and well-established monolingual assessment and evaluation model. It is essential to encourage the switch within the educational community towards a new model of assessment to be able to support global teaching efforts through plurilingual and IC approaches. Without appropriate assessment, the proposed plurilingual and IC approaches are incomplete, educational goals will be hard to reach and measured accordingly.

Needs and Limitations of Plurilingual Assessment. The field of linguistics and language education intentionally kept languages apart, contributing to the “one nation - one language” policy (Dendrinos, 2019, p. 1). Practical reasons for the “one language at a time” approach was also linked to in-service teachers' practices (i.e., a strong belief in the language separation approach) and to the insufficient understanding of plurilingual assessment tools for both language skills and knowledge of plurilingual students (Dendrinos, 2019, p. 2).

Following the Council of Europe (CoE) (2020) definition of pluralistic competency, many educational providers at different levels were starting to adjust curricula to new principles (p. 28). Educational practices started to move away from the native speaker model to acknowledge existing language repertoires with an uneven level of competencies and cultural experiences. These were reflected in updated educational curricula in some

countries. All pluralistic principles are called upon to reach a communication goal and for additional language learning. This is what many authors, in general, refer to as the “multilingual turn in language education” (Conteh, 2014).

As noted above, the assessment field is largely excluded from plurilingual research and remains monolingual (Dendrinos, 2019, p. 2; Fiorenza & Diego-Hernández, 2020, p. 43). There are several reasons for that. First, there is a limited number of plurilingual assessment practices, with many of them still being under study or being designed due to the relatively new introduction to language education.

Secondly, there is a lack of a centralized approach to research to demonstrate the efficiency and benefits of plurilingual assessment’s practical implication for plurilingual educational environment (Dendrinos, 2019, p. 3). Some well-known global examples are the national-level foreign language exams in Greece (Stathopoulou, 2013), a plurilingual competency test in Southern Tirol (Gandini, 2020), the critical thinking skills multilingual test by Cambridge Assessment in Uzbekistan (Seed, 2020), among others.

A third reason is the absence of plurilingual assessment from most of the schools’ curricula. This imposes a significant limitation on practicing teachers, as they lack support from educational institutions and higher authorities on the implementation of those practices. Connected to the third reason is the lack of teacher training and personal experience with plurilingual assessment. The process of designing and implementing practices for plurilingual assessment has been taking place but has not been widely adopted by educational institutions and teachers globally (cf. Shohamy, 2011; Spolsky, 2009). Considering the conservative nature of schools, as institutions, it will take significant work, where researchers and teachers will need to work together to integrate plurilingual assessment into schools’ curricula.

Finally, there are political reasons to keep languages separate for assessment and evaluation, connected to the one nation - one language agenda that is still being promoted openly or more discrete across the globe. Shohamy (2011) brings the example of monolingual tests given in a national language, where the goal was to penetrate local societies with the national idea. Usually, this takes place in countries where the communication emphasis is on dialect or local languages or countries with a large number

of newcomers with different L1s. One example of such can be monolingual content-based tests at postsecondary institutions given to all students, including recent immigrant students, whose level of the language of instruction is expected to be low. Shohamy (2011) illustrates this in Israel's example, where at a university level, academic tests are given in Hebrew, when a significant percentage of students mainly possess different L1 (Russian, Arabic) in language tests and therefore demonstrate lower results even when subject-base knowledge is at a high level. Another example is language tests, which are provided to newcomers on arrival who intend to fulfill a gatekeeping role (Shohamy, 2011, p. 421). The practice contradicts existing research on the benefits of multilingual assessment.

Many existing policies at the government level contribute to the active use of monolingual assessment tools in educational institutions. This evidently does not support the promotion of plurilingual approaches within any educational sector; on the contrary, monolingual testing works against pluralistic principles in language education.

Possible solutions for plurilingual assessment implementation. Although the issue is complex and involves many stakeholders, it is important for educational professionals to consider a plurilingual approach, including appropriate assessment and evaluation strategies, considering learners' needs. With respect to English language teachers, IC skills development and the importance of plurilingual repertoire need to be emphasized. English language competency, while important, is certainly not enough to meet the current communication needs (cf. Cushner & Mahon, 2009; Huber & Reynolds, 201). Plurilingual and IC skills need to be brought in and include assessment and evaluation to reflect the needs of current students (Seed, 2020). This notion, therefore, could be considered to be introduced within teachers' training. The implementation might lead to multiple educational benefits, including learners demonstrating better results (Shohamy, 2011). This could be carried over by trained teachers with different linguistic skills. Among the tools that could be chosen are bilingual tests, test accommodations, self-assessment and other techniques outlined below.

Bilingual tests. Bilingual tests are found helpful by learners (De Backer, 2020; Shohamy, 2011). The assessment technique challenges one language at a time approach and contributes to L1 + TL meaning construction, which plurilingual students find helpful. Learners have admitted while taking bilingual tests, they read questions in both languages and are able to create a new meaning, by drawing on their whole language repertoire.

Within a LINC program, this can be facilitated by offering tests with questions most common among LINC students, L1 and English (with answers provided in English). This would help students to participate in the educational activity, fully understanding the task, which should also lead to an increased learner's confidence. It can also help to demonstrate critical thinking skills development. Such tests can be implemented through ICT tools or a virtual platform. Although, digital solutions might be associated with an additional cost.

Self-assessment and peer-assessment. If we accept that a plurilingual approach is learner-centred, then we should consider assessments within the approach to be based on students' needs. Placing learners at the center of assessment has been widely discussed (Seed, 2020; OECD; Schleicher, 2020). Self-assessment and peer assessment are among the suggested strategies that could be utilized in addition to other forms of formal assessment (Schleicher, 2020). Learner-based approaches normally utilize group work and project-based tasks. This would create a suitable educational environment for self-and peer assessment that the teacher can also facilitate. Self-assessment might present a good fit within adult ELT and assessment. This will provide students not only with an opportunity to honestly reflect on their own level of knowledge and competencies but also critically think about how those skills can be improved.

Both self and peer assessment within a plurilingual approach might successfully be used as a learning experience (Fiorenza et al., 2020; Little & Perclova, 2011). However, for this assessment type to be accurate, it should be used in combination with other tools, like teacher observation, and analysis of evaluation metrics, among others. Huber and Reynolds (2014) also suggest the focus might be placed on a teacher or on a learner, with self-assessment and peer-evaluation (p. 34). Students' personalities might lead them to

grade themselves too low or too high on the language competency scale, and therefore, a trained teacher's observation will help to reconsider their evaluation if required.

Teacher observations and oral examinations. Trained teacher observations and oral examinations might provide complementary insights into a learner's stage of development and competence. This is usually a traditional tool for student evaluation and is widely used within the educational field, including ESL and LINC. Trained teachers should be able to provide an adequate assessment. However, this is not always the case. Teachers with low IC levels or lack IC training might not always be able to recognize and value students' plurilingual repertoire and, therefore, be unable to provide a correct assessment of students' abilities. Cultural prejudice might also take place and affect the outcome (Magos, 2009).

Student portfolios. De Backer (2020) and Huber and Reynolds (2014) outline student portfolios, oral examinations with the teacher, teacher's observation, and learner diaries in addition to the mentioned assessment tools. Student portfolios foster the development of essential skills such as creativity, critical thinking, research, independent study, Information and communication technology (ICT) skills, among others. Utilization of such an instrument allows for an actual practical portfolio that students can benefit from in the future for professional and educational purposes. Portfolios also afford a space for reflection and the possibility for students to manage their own goals and skills development. It can be also used as a record to be presented at the institutional level. In combination with other assessment tools, it allows for the improved evaluation of students' language levels and their educational needs. European Language Portfolio (ELP) can be an excellent example of such an assessment tool and has already been successfully used in adult immigrant ELT (Little and Perclova, 2011, p. 16).

Evaluation based on specific criteria. Another plurilingual assessment tool can be the evaluation based on specific criteria. The criteria can be set for reaching communication goals. If students are asked to describe a picture in TL, transmitting the main message

(communication goal), but being allowed to utilize their whole language repertoire, the assessment criteria should be based on reaching or not reaching that communication goal, therefore fulfilling the main criteria of the task regardless of linguistic tools used. This should be utilized in a guided manner to ensure TL competencies are being developed and that students do not use L1 exclusively. In an ESL setting, this can be criteria used for writing mainly in English text, with some words utilized in L1 (or other dominant languages) that do not divert from the main communication goal, meaning the receiver is still able to understand the intended message. If students are able to complete the task, they should be assessed appropriately, regardless of the use of non-English words to substitute the unfamiliar words in English. This approach was used in the Cambridge Assessment Test for young learners in 2018 (Seed, 2020, p. 23) and could be a successful assessment criterion in ELT, especially where the emphasis is placed on communication. It might be less effective in relation to grammar language learning.

Plurilingual assessment, as part of the set curricula, also needs to meet contextual needs (Seed, 2020). If the local environment requires most of the speakers to have plurilingual competency and the ability to code-switch is highly valued, then implementing a plurilingual test that assesses that specific language competency fits the environmental needs. If it is established that linguistic diversity in some areas is increasing (Seed, p. 17), assessment tools need to consider the reality and adjust to learners' and society's needs.

Regarding LINC assessment tests specifically, the program recommends standardized tests. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB), a nationally recognized standardized language test in Canada, are among the variety of tests used. Some institutions providing LINC use in-house language tests in addition to CLB to ensure accurate assessment. Many institutions have indicated that basing decisions on CLB assessment results only can lead to inadequate results (Chen, 2020; Rossiter & Pawlikowska-Smith, 1999). It is becoming evident that the lack of adequate assessment tools is one of the major limitations of LINC programs. This not only limits correct student placement in the appropriate level but also does not reflect on the progress of the language learners accurately.

3.1.6 *Teachers' beliefs and practices*

Teachers play a significant role in the implementation of progressive educational approaches and development. They are often in the position to correct commonly used techniques and implement innovative approaches with their classrooms, drawing on their education, experience, and best international teaching practices within the area of their expertise.

Teacher's practices, however, are often affected by their attitudes and beliefs. Extensive research is available on teachers' beliefs and its effects on the classroom (Farrell & Ives, 2014; Thompson, 1992; Yero, 2002). Although there is a lot of complexity in the studies of teacher's beliefs and attitudes, researchers overall agree that teachers' beliefs and attitudes influence their teaching practices in the classroom (Farrell & Ives, 2014; Mansour, 2009, Standen 2002; Thompson, 2006; Wilkerson, 2008; Yero, 2002). Yero (2002) notices that when a proposed new tool or educational approach correlates with the teacher's personal beliefs and therefore educators believe that it has educational value, they will find a way to implement it. If it does not align with their beliefs, teachers will try to prove their ineffectiveness (Yero, 2002, p. 24).

There is some disagreement among researchers concerning the extent of the effect of teacher's beliefs on their practices. Some describe it as significant (Kuzborska, 2011; Yero, 2002), while others outline a limited correlation between teachers' beliefs and their practices (Farrell & Lim, 2005). Another group of authors describes the discrepancy of the interconnectivity of teacher's beliefs and their practices, explaining different levels of such by teachers' adaptation to learners' level, educational system, and teachers' motivation among other factors (Kane et al., 2002; Kaymakamoglu, 2017; Havita et al., 2001; Rashidi, 2015). Other researchers see the reason of teachers demonstrating different extend of their beliefs affecting their practices, in teachers trying to fit in with the mainstream teaching approach, but in practical terms not willing to utilize it, applying it incorrectly or not having right training for the application (Kaymakamoglu, 2017, p.33).

Teachers, participating in Mandalios' study (2012), mentioned that the overall English Language Teaching culture and establishment of mainstream methodology sometimes "force" them to employ strategies that are against their beliefs regarding teaching (p. 16).

Several studies investigating Arab-English integration in ESL teaching in Kuwait and United Arab Emirates demonstrate that although L1, as part of plurilingual approach, allowed in ESL classes, it is at the same time considered by educators as a contributing factor to a consistently low English competency level (Akbar, 2020, p. 57; Algazo, 2018).

It is important to outline teachers, when planning their educational activities, are relying on their beliefs of students needs in a particular situation (Good & Brophy, 2003, p. 67). Teachers also rely on their personal experience as learners, when selecting a specific educational approach (Borg, 2003, p. 88). Teachers might base their decisions on their understanding of student's academic abilities (cf, Good & Brophy, 2003, p.67; Miller & Satchwell, 2006), and although it might be a difficult task, it is essential to try to separate beliefs from factual knowledge (Kaymakamoglu, 2017).

Teachers' perception of their students also tends to affect their teaching approach (Downey, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1994) If teachers, specifically within language teaching, perceive students as individuals with a valuable set of skills and abilities, they tend to involve them more actively in the educational process, making it more learner-centered (Kaymakamoglu, 2017). Once teachers believe that students have less capabilities, the approach tends to shift to become teacher-centered (Kaymakamoglu, 2017). Ladson-Billings (1994) notes that students "are likely to demonstrate competence, when they are treated as competent" (p.123).

Teachers' perception of student's academic success, behavior and professional potential might also be influenced by the learner's race (Starck et al., 2020). A twice-repeated study, which included over 1.6 million participants (including approximately 70,000 teachers), showed that participating teachers express a similar level of implicit (77%) and explicit (30.3%) racial bias as the average adult (77% and 30.4% respectfully) (Starck et al., 2020). It demonstrates that teachers do not differ from the regular society members and are, as everyone within the society, subject to biases effect. Teacher's biased perceptions of specific students, based on culture, age, gender, L1, social background and the family's social background is directly correlated to a high rate of suspensions, students' drop-out rates and students' academic evaluation level (Cushner, 2009, p. 310; Parekh et al., 2018).

Schools represent mini societies, mirroring the environment, and therefore teachers' beliefs towards their students are affected by the society they live in (Starck et al., 2020). Researchers also emphasize that teachers, although usually with good intentions, lack the skills and tools to resist that influence, as only good intentions are not enough (Starck et al., 2020).

According to Bezcioglu-Gokotlga and Yagmur (2018), some teachers view students from immigrant backgrounds negatively, compared to local students. In the Netherlands, for example, many teachers tend to perceive immigrant languages as “a problem, rather than as a tool” (p. 223).

One proposed answer to these issues is to adjust professional programs for teachers to address these and to re-emphasize the importance of critical reflective practices. Another recommendation concerns balancing the educators' load, as research connects teachers' tiredness with a heavier reliance on stereotypes while practicing (Starck et al., 2020).

To conclude, considering the complexity of teachers' beliefs and its direct correlation to their practices in general, it is important to keep it in mind when considering the implementation of a new plurilingual approach and/or when evaluating in-class teachers' practices. If the significant influence is observed, mitigation strategies might be suggested to correct the teaching approach.

3.1.7 *Students' beliefs*

When discussing the effect that beliefs have on the educational environment, learning processes and practices and eventually on learning outcomes, students' biases should be considered. A recent study in Southern Ontario has demonstrated that Canadians, as early as five years old, demonstrate strong biases against teachers with foreign accents (Paguetter-Smith et al., 2022). This study was based on previous data showing university-level students demonstrating significant biases against instructors based on their language background, race and gender (Paguetter-Smith et al., 2022).

Cultural biases are also present among LINC students, who have demonstrated preferences for having a teacher with a local accent (Government of Canada, 2011). The

association of a LINC teacher's foreign accent with his/her potential underperformance in the classroom and potentially negative influence on students' language learning was also common.

3.1.8 *Summary*

Although the notion of plurilingualism is not new and has gained support among researchers, it did not seem to seep into teachers' practices, and therefore, a gap is observed between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation, specifically within ELT in Ontario, Canada. Special attention should be given to research on plurilingual and IC approaches, including plurilingual assessment, and its application with classes for adult immigrants, such as LINC, as the lack of studies has been identified. This is especially important in the global context of increased migration and refugee displacement.

In this section, I have demonstrated that plurilingual and IC approaches might be beneficial, specifically within language settlement programs. These approaches currently are not implemented, with an English-only approach dominating newcomers' ELT in Canada. For plurilingual and IC educational approaches to be adopted by ELT programs, including LINC, several changes are recommended to take place. One of the adjustments concerns re-evaluating existing teachers' practices, updating teaching training programs and adjusting teaching job requirements specifically for English language settlement programs.

Another adjustment relates to L1 and IC inclusion in ELT practices. Understanding the value of learners' language repertoire and their existing cultural experiences concerning immigrant students and using those as resources for TL learning might lead to an improved educational environment and better learning outcomes. Special attention should be given to immigrant students with limited L1 skills. Those students might benefit from plurilingual and IC approaches, improving not only TL but also L1 and their learning skills overall. This might lead to better employment opportunities, which is one of the LINC program's goals.

Teachers' and students' beliefs and practices might have a significant effect on the implementation of educational approaches. Therefore, if the perception of plurilingual and

IC approaches or its elements in ELT is negative, then additional work needs to be done. Guided reflective practices for teachers might be beneficial, as they allow teachers to construct alternative critical perception of their existing practices and reflect on those.

Plurilingual and IC approaches are incomplete without suitable assessment techniques. Plurilingual assessment tools in ELT in Ontario, Canada, including LINC, are largely underrepresented, as many of such tools and techniques contradict the currently dominating monolingual teaching approach. The use of bilingual dictionaries, bilingual tests, self and peer assessment, and evaluation based on specific criteria (for example, reaching communication goals) might represent effective assessment techniques, supporting the educational value of plurilingual and IC approaches. The use of bilingual dictionaries in ELT, for example, despite being an effective tool for TL learning, remains disputed due to a predominantly negative perception in ELT. As discussed above, this remains a perception issue rather than a research-based finding. If an educational community agrees with the UNESCO 2030 agenda, the insufficiency of currently utilized teaching and assessment techniques and tools needs to be addressed, as it does not meet immigrant learners' needs, neither does it correspond to the international society's need for sustainable development.

3.2 Education of Adult and Immigrant Learners

This section will discuss the specific characteristics of adult immigrant learners and how those aspects need to be taken into consideration in language teaching practices, including LINC ELT.

3.2.1 *Adult Learners*

There is a certain misconception about the correlation between age and proficiency potential in a foreign language. Perception of older learners not being able to reach L2 or L3 learning proficiency has not been largely opposed by research (cf Chiswick et al., 2007; Hakuta et al., 2003). However, it has been challenged by Pfenninger and Singleton (2019), who have demonstrated that a learner's age does not directly determine the level of TL proficiency. Other factors outweigh the age factor, such as the learners' motivation, biliteracy skills, and intensity of the TL instruction among others (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p. 111). Research also indicates that a high proficiency level in a TL among adult learners is achievable (Moyer, 2004). Therefore, the learners' age does not necessarily present an obstacle to language learning.

While attending to adult students, educational stakeholders need to be aware that external factors might affect their learning outcomes, such as employment, childcare, and immigration-related trauma among other factors. Therefore, it might be difficult for those learners to devote all their resources to learning the TL.

In the case of adult learners specifically, it is essential that their goals are met by educational providers and reflected in the language program outcomes (Tomlinson, 2011). Those students might refrain from attending a program that does not meet such goals or does not take learners' needs or way of living into consideration (Lambert, 2008; Cervatuic, 2009; Lam, 2019). Themes and lesson topics also play an important role in engaging with adult learners. Studies demonstrate that topics directly related to the learners' interests result in greater engagement, whereas more abstract themes tend to disengage some learners (Poupore, 2014).

An important learning goal for adult language learners might be the global competencies development, including IC skills (Lambert, 2008). Learners are looking for

meaningful cultural experiences to help them meet communication goals during international encounters in the process of settlement and employment. Other skills, essential for adult learners, as they directly relate to employment, are critical and analytical skills, problem-solving, self-management and active learning skills, resilience, flexibility, and stress tolerance (Schwab, 2020).

Teachers might want to consider learning more about their student's goals and conditions, adjusting or rotating topics and tasks appropriately. Lambert, for example, suggests emphasizing discussion, specifically if students lack conversational practice within work, family, or the social environment (2008). The same can be applied to foster other skills development. This aspect is deemed essential within the LINC students' context.

3.2.2 *Immigrant learners*

When discussing specifically immigrant and newcomer learners' needs, there are additional characteristics that might need to be taken into consideration. Drawing on Skilton-Sylvester et al.'s model (1998) of adult immigrants ELL's needs, Lambert (2008) outlined other goals such as: "practical concerns" (being able to complete everyday tasks in the environment of a new country), "upward mobility" (improving living conditions, obtaining a better employment among, in the context of a new environment), and "being informed" (being able to understand communicated information). Adult immigrant students might face unique obstacles that might affect their educational goals, attitudes, and performance (Lam, 2019). ELT programs need to consider those when building the program.

New environment-related difficulties. Depending on the settlement area, newcomer learners might face issues with the shortage of transportation, housing, access to ICT, limited funding, juggling studying and employment, and low employment level (Cardozo & Pendakur, 2008). In addition, immigrant learners are often affected by limited childcare and mental health support, low literacy level, and English language and cultural related difficulties (Lam, 2019, p. 82).

Concerning the mental health aspect, the lack of affordable, culturally sensitive mental health services has been identified (Lam, 2019, p. 81). Some learners might experience post-traumatic mental health issues in relation to the conditions of the countries they came from. Therefore, students might require extra support for successful integration into a traditional learning environment.

ICT issues. ELT in Canada is becoming more reliant on students' ICT skills. Lam (2019) argues that ICT skills and tools requirement might lead to an access inequality issue (p.85), as many students do not have access to an appropriate electronic device. In Canada, public recourses are available, often allowing students to borrow laptops at the local libraries and community centers. This service, however, is not accessible across the country yet. On the other hand, use of the ICT tools may provide an alternative solution for learners who otherwise are not able to attend classes in person for a number of reasons.

Another issue that might affect ICT use in classroom is the lack of technical skills. Many newcomer students lack ICT skills or experience, due to limitations within the educational systems back home. Those students might require additional teaching.

Specific needs of adult immigrants need to be considered in ELT programs, including LINC. If we consider an educational newcomers' program to be learner-centred, then the program's tasks, educational tool selection and learning outcomes should be mindful of the learners' related background and needs.

Assimilation and Integration. When looking at the educational program for newcomers, it is important to understand the difference between the notions of assimilation and integration. Shields et al. (2016) in defining integration as the ability to advance the target society, without any additional obstacles. The immigrants' contribution to socio-economic, cultural, and political dimensions is implied. In North American and, specifically, Canadian context, however, many ELT programs for newcomers aim at the newcomers' assimilation by immersing them in the official language(s) and dominant culture(s) (Barker, 2021; Watson, 2009). This often happens at the expense of students'

identity exclusion and adapting it to the new Canadian “norm” (Barker, 2021; Day, 2000; Haque, 2012).

Integration is often used interchangeably with the notion of assimilation within the LINC classes, where newcomers are expected to realign with Canadian standards (Barker, 2021, p.76). LINC materials call on learners “to distance themselves from their own cultural background and move towards being Canadian” (Barker, 2021, p. 85). Barker (2021), analyzing the LINC curriculum, suggests that LINC is not successful in achieving the integration goals (as defined by Shields et al.), and it deepens the inequality between Canadians and newcomers (p.89). Immigrant students are expected to assimilate and replicate the Canadian way of thinking and speaking, with the teaching approach being “one-direction”, and the responsibility for successful communication is placed on the newcomer only (Barker, 2021, p.88).

Newcomers to Canada are encouraged to be more suitable for employment by reducing their accents or by changing their names to fit Canadian society (Guo, 2009; Barker, 2021, p. 77). Many immigrant learners describe negative attitudes from native speakers toward their accents (Cervatuic, 2009). Attitudes toward the learner’s immigrant community and language learning overall also affect the TL of adult learners (Lambert, 2008; Horwitz, 1988; Gardner, 2001). Social perception might affect not only TL learning but also immigrant learners’ plurilingual repertoire and the development of IC skills. The issue of discrimination needs to be addressed within adult immigrant ELT programs. Students need to be prepared and know how to respond should they face discrimination outside or inside a classroom. There is a need for advocacy to acknowledge and try to address this systematic issue of how ELT within immigrant student’s context is addressing the integration of newcomers to Canada (Barker, 2021; Fleming, 2015; Kubota, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018).

3.2.3 Learning through interaction with adult learners

Studies demonstrate that learning a language through social interaction leads to improved acquisition and better word retention, among other advantages (Li, 2020; Marsh et al., 2020). Marsh et al. (2020) indicated that learning through interaction enables students

to utilize their existing knowledge and experience to construct new knowledge, which is the goal of a meaningful educational process (p. 11). This process implies not only adding further information to the existing but, more importantly, using the metalinguistic connection, critical and creative thinking, and building new knowledge (Marsh et al., 2020).

L2 word learning, which occurs in social interaction, activates the same part of the brain as normally does the L1 word attainment, specifically the right Supramarginal Gyrus (SMG) part (Li, 2020, p. 3). By studying the difference between traditional language learning (ie through grammar drills and word translation exercises, among others) and language learning through social interaction (ie imitating the natural environment), Li & Jeong (2020) concluded that more brain areas are involved with the second approach. This means the human brain is more actively involved when learning another language in a natural environment through social interactions. Marsh et al. (2020) identify translanguaging as an example of such a language learning process that encourages the meaningful use of L1 in TL language classrooms, including for cognitive tasks (p. 6). Multiple benefits on “physiological, neurological, and psychological” levels were reported when the use of a TL, in addition to L1, is encouraged for thinking and learning tasks (Marsh et al., p. 6; Kaushanskya & Marian, 2007). In the context of the ELT multilingual classroom, this translates into the encouragement of active use of L1 and L2 for the cognitive tasks’ completion and TL learning.

The use of gestures and visual aids is also beneficial for TL learning (Li, 2020, p. 4). While learning in this context, the adult brain demonstrates “significant neuroplasticity”, which is comparable to the state of children’s learning within a similar context (Li, 2020, p. 3). Learning TLs using those additional means (gestures and visual aids while interacting socially in meaningful ways) will involve the whole body in the educational process and, therefore, is considered more efficient for effectively using and learning the TL. If adult learners are given an opportunity to communicate with each other in a natural language environment or imitate it, they have better chances of being engaged and successfully communicate and learn the TL (Li, 2020).

Interaction is also possible through the use of ICT (imitating natural environment) tools. Such tools are beneficial for all learners, often replacing live interactions without negatively affecting the learning outcome (Li, 2020, p. 5). Learning through social interactions activates brain areas responsible for memory and action and might lead to long-term retention (Li, 2020, p. 5). ICT tools might, therefore, be a solution to complement social interactions in class, in-person or through digital spaces. During the global remote educational program delivery, ICT might be a useful tool for language learning and would be able to be integrated in plurilingual and IC educational approaches.

3.2.4 *Summary*

As discussed in this section, adult learners are capable of achieving a high TL proficiency level if appropriate conditions are met, such as learner's motivation, developed learning skills, the extent of TL instructions, and a clear understanding of how the proposed educational approach might help learners to achieve their educational goals. Adult immigrant learners might require additional support due to a specific focus on their settlement and employment in a new environment.

The educational content of ELT programs should be relevant to the learners' needs and should consider their pre-existing skills, experiences, and goals. To encourage students, the program should demonstrate the value of diversity and inclusivity rather than enforcing a one-way approach, with the students' responsibility to fit the Canadian "norm". Educational stakeholders, being aware of specific issues adult immigrant students might be facing, should attempt to look for appropriate answers, enabling equal access to education, regardless of their respective socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

The terms assimilation and integration are often used interchangeably within the LINC context. It is important to distinguish those concerning the ELT program goals and to reemphasize the latest, as the notion of integration underlines the value of knowledge and skills newcomers are bringing to the host society. Plurilingual and IC approaches in language education, specifically within LINC, might help to overcome some of the difficulties identified. If implemented, these approaches might help to meet adult immigrant learner's needs more efficiently while improving the students' educational experience and the program's learning outcome

3.3 Intercultural Competence in Education

This section will discuss the Intercultural Competence (IC) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) development and the teachers' roles. It will also introduce the Intercultural Dialog (ICD) concept. This section will cover how IC and ICC relate to adult immigrant learners specifically.

3.3.1 *Intercultural Competence, Intercultural Communicative Competence, and Intercultural Dialog*

The concept of mutual understanding and Intercultural competence are gaining more recognition as fundamental for humanity's sustainable development. Hate speech crimes, and intolerant behaviour at different levels are becoming more common across the globe. In North America, for example, crimes against people with different cultural backgrounds are on the rise. It is essential for global society to work on the development of IC and ICC competencies through intercultural and language education in order to promote collaborative work on dialogue and cooperation, rebuild international socio-economic cooperation and be able to hold a dialogue and live within a community (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, p. 27).

Troncoso (2010) outlines that it is essential to understand the difference between multicultural and intercultural concepts (p.91). The first concept suggests that different cultural, ethnic and religious groups co-exist, but they might not be in close contact. Within the second one, the same groups were able to live together respectfully, communicate, successfully mitigate cultural differences and value the different ways of thinking and doing things (Troncoso, 2010, p.91).

The notion of Intercultural Competence (IC) covers the awareness of the role of language, including the understanding that plurilingual competence might vary with different speakers. It allows people to utilize intercultural interactions to enrich their perspectives and to reflect on their own culture. This is an essential competency for a global educational, business and social environment. Language educational programs are seen as an ideal environment to foster the development of IC and ICC within students and teachers.

It is important to distinguish IC from the ICC. Byram introduced his model of ICC in 1997, defining it as one's ability to communicate with a person from a different culture utilizing L2, whereas IC refers to a similar interaction but in L1 (p. 71). Within language education and ESL contexts, it is often ICC that should be addressed. Learners with ICC are able to successfully mediate communication within an international context in L2. The Council of Europe in an open consultation for a White Paper on Intercultural Dialog, defined Intercultural Dialog (ICD) as

an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's global perception" (COE).

ICD implies that communication partners are from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and therefore might have different perceptions of the process and rules of communication (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2015).

Leeds-Hurwitz (2015) underlines that among other characteristics, ICD assists with "increased respect for cultural diversity human rights and freedom", "develops a sense of community in multicultural populations", and "promotes tolerance, pluralism, openness, mutual respect" (p.2). ICC is often linked to ICD, however, as per Leeds-Hurwitz (2015), ICD is more focused on "what actually occurs in interaction", rather than what people think has occurred in the process of communication (p.5). However, ICD requires developed IC competencies to be able to interact effectively (UNESCO, 2009).

Paige and Goode stated that the IC learning process was "significantly enhanced when facilitated" by qualified educational professionals (2009, p.334). Educational experts should be able to foster those competencies in students through a variety of learning experiences: in informal, non-formal and formal educational context (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, p. 31). Within non-formal and formal educational systems, IC requires structured and guided activities (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, p. 27). To develop IC, among other desired competencies, Huber and Reynolds suggested utilizing educational activities that promote analyzing an object from different perspectives, simulations and role plays, creative writing, ethnographic tasks, creating images, and the use of ICT, among others. All of the

tools and activities, if guided and planned, can be enriching not only to the learners' but also to the educator's perception of the world.

Barett et al. in the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Series, No. 3 (2014) describe cooperative education as one of the means of developing IC competence. Huber and Reynolds (2014, p. 29) suggest that "experience, comparison, analysis, reflection and action" need to be part of the learning activities. In other words, students learn by doing things or acting in accordance with what they have experienced and reflected on. Learners of all ages and in all subjects can be encouraged to develop attitudes of openness and curiosity toward each other (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, p. 34). Experiential learning and project work might also be applied to foster IC development in learners.

Assessment and evaluation of ICC also form an essential part of the curriculum. Huber and Reynolds (2014, p. 34) discuss alternative assessment tools, like portfolios and students' diaries, in addition to tests. A significant role is also given to self-assessment and peer assessment (Huber & Reynolds, 2014, p. 34). An example of such a tool is the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE), which draws on the dimensions of Byram's Intercultural Communicative model (Byram et al., 2009). The tool might allow for a broader evaluation of collaboration or creative thinking, problem-solving or digital literacy skills in addition to IC or ICC competence development.

All mentioned IC assessment tools form part of a wider plurilingual assessment approach that aims at utilizing students' plurilingual and IC skills and is built around learners' needs. Plurilingual assessments discussed earlier utilize the same principles, such as pre-existing experience, the whole language repertoire, and peer- and self-assessment, among others.

3.3.2 IC and ICC development

Cushner and Mahon argue that IC should be a fundamental part of teacher training (2009, p. 307). They suggest that the idea of promoting common understanding between speakers with diverse backgrounds for educational purposes is not new and was proposed in 1600 by Comenius (Cushner & Mahon, 2009, p. 305). Within our current societies, effective intercultural communication in the educational setting is essential, considering

increased mobility and migration processes. Interculturally competent teachers are fundamental in providing good quality, equally accessible, relevant and lifelong education, as per UNESCO 2030 agenda (United Nations, n.d).

According to Le Roux (2002), interculturally competent educational providers are flexible, open to new cultures or new knowledge, and embrace new learning opportunities. Sercu (2004) outlined three professional qualities that interculturally competent educators possess: intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness and intercultural skills. In case of immigrant learners, Ogbu (1991) called attention to the fact that learners might develop an inaccurate negative perception of the receiving country's educational system based on IC insensitive teacher's behaviour. In practical terms, multiple studies globally demonstrate teachers' lack of IC (Bezioglu-Gokotga & Yagmur, 2018; Grossman, 2006; Magos & Simopoulos, 2009; Mahon, 2006; Santos, 2021). Moreover, the same studies often indicate that students surpass their teachers and display higher IC sensitivity levels (Grossman, 2006; Mahon, 2006).

Teachers' level of IC Awareness. Utilizing Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, Mahon (2006) studied 155 US teachers, placing all of them, as per gained scores, on the scale's ethnocentric side (minimization stage or below). Grossman and Yuen (2006) worked with 107 teachers in Hong Kong and discovered that 98% were also within the ethnocentric side of the spectrum. Only 2% of teachers scored higher and demonstrated ethnorelative skills and attitudes (acceptance or adaptation) (Grossman, 2006). It is important to notice that all teachers believe they are incorporating IC principles in their practices, which makes it harder for them to move up the scale and develop a higher level of IC sensitivity (Grossman, 2006; Mahon, 2006).

Pedersen (1997), working with elementary and middle school students (n=145), has concluded that 70% were in high minimization or acceptance stages. Students expressed curiosity about intercultural interactions and a desire to have more international experience. Research illustrates not only a lack of updated IC teacher training (Magos & Simopoulos, 2009) but also a growing gap between teachers and their students regarding IC skills (Grossman, 2006; Mahon, 2006; Pedersen, 1997).

Magos and Simopoulos (2009) conducted a study on 20 Greek L2 teachers, concluding that these teachers largely lack IC competency. Authors indicate a lack of understanding of the IC concept and its practical implementation, suggesting the need for updated teacher training programs (Magos and Simopoulos, 2009). Nevertheless, positive attitudes towards IC and ICC inclusion into TL teaching were observed (p. 257).

Magos & Simopoulos (2009) observed the 20 teachers in practice and noted that only four teachers demonstrated IC sensitivity and student inclusion. The overwhelming majority of teachers within the study demonstrated low IC sensitivity levels, failing to encourage discussions or see the relevance of students' experiences in the classroom. The same teachers occasionally demonstrated their cultural dominance and disrespect for other cultures and students associated with those cultures. They found students' language repertoires and cultural experiences irrelevant to the TL classroom (Magos & Simopoulos, 2009, p. 259).

The difference in perception of proper behavioural norms might lead to misunderstanding, often resulting in conflict within the academic environment and leading to students' discouragement in the learning process (Gay, 2006). Lack of teacher experience or skills in managing situations that involve culturally diverse students and their behavioural choices lead to students' confusion and misinterpretation of the teacher's actions (Gay, 2006). Immigrant students might demonstrate low motivation and a high drop-out rate if they find the learning process irrelevant to their needs, experience their culture being disregarded or diminished, or if they feel discriminated (Magos & Simopoulos, 2009).

When analyzing their students' low performance teachers often link it to their learners' respective cultural background, lack of learning skills, or lack of previous education (Magos & Simopoulos, 2009, p. 260). Often teachers are not able to see a connection between their practices and the students' performance. Misunderstanding between educational stakeholders and lack of teachers' IC skills might lead to an inadequate educational experience.

In Canada, according to an unpublished survey by Santos (2021), all 25 Canadian-born ESL teachers at one of the public, post-secondary institutions located in a small town scored

low in IC. All participating teachers are Canadian English speakers (L1) without overseas teaching experience and L2 skills. They teach international students on a daily basis. All participants obtained at least an MA in education from a Canadian University. The majority of participating teachers (80%) indicated that they utilized learning materials and samples only from within the North American context and believed that a westernized view of the world is the norm. All teachers indicated they treated all students equally, regardless of their cultural background, and believed teaching methods are similar across the globe. When asked about personal international experience, the majority emphasized they do not try to speak a local language when overseas (use English only) and try to keep regular habits from their home environment, having their meals at the same time, among others.

The findings are not surprising. Partially it might be explained by the lack of IC training provided by the educational institution (Santos, 2021). It is also an outcome of living and practicing within a dominantly English-speaking and perceived developed monocultural community. An English language environment traditionally discourages plurilingualism and interculturalism (Spolsky, 2009). Cushner and Mahon (2009) have noted that teachers overall lack L2 skills (over 95% of 25 participants have only L1), and they demonstrate a lack of mobility and teach within the proximity of where they were born (p. 310), which might have an affect their level of IC competency.

3.3.3 Teacher's IC sensitive approach to adult immigrant learners

When considering adult TL learners, it is important for an educator to acknowledge the possible cultural gap between the students' previous and current educational environments. Lee et al. (2002) outlined that learners crossing cultural borders to complete a task within an educational setting are not always judged within the appropriate context (p. 28).

Adult learners might also have different expectations from an educational experience and might resist the teacher's approach at the beginning. Therefore, it is important for an educator to explain the rationale underlying the approach and the expectations regarding learning outcomes. If the learners have a low level of the TL, then translation could be considered for a consistent message (Mandalios, 2012) .

Another important point for teachers to consider is the possible isolation effect on the students. When students experience a cultural educational gap, they often find themselves confused and, in some cases, marginalized (Lee et al., 2002). The way the teacher approaches the situation might affect the learners' academic performance (Lee et al., 2002, p.30). The following steps might be taken by the teacher to ensure inclusive and lifelong learning:

- a) Design an inclusive curriculum (Lee et al., 2002, p. 32). Students' culture and plurilingual repertoire need to be taken into account. The teacher might be able to demonstrate that events can be viewed from different perspectives so students realize there is no dominant culture or point of view that is correct or incorrect. The teacher might be able to emphasize that different perceptions have value.
- b) Examine cultural assumptions (Lee et al., 2002, p. 32). Teachers within an adult learning environment need to be mindful of not only cultural differences but also of different styles of educational systems, students are coming from. It is important to consider corresponding educational actions interpretation. An example could be Asian students within the North American educational environment being mostly silent during discussions or activities, involving opinion expression, which is often misinterpreted (Lee et al., 2002, p. 32). Student's behaviour should not be perceived simplistically as lack of knowledge or lack of language skills, as silence might be a sign of respect or expression of different learning process expectations (Lee et al., 2002, p. 32). In Asian educational systems, the teacher-led didactic approach is often a norm, and discussions are rare and might not be considered relevant. It could also point to a culture-related learning attitude, where speaking up means overrepresenting, therefore students might avoid it. The variety of tasks to meet different learning styles is considered essential, when facing multilingual classes, especially in the case of adult learners (Tomlinson, 2018).
- c) Create a community feeling within the classroom (Lee et al., 2002, p. 33; Johnson, 2013, p. 28). Teachers can facilitate educational discussions on the importance of IC in the TL classroom. This might lead to an increased confidence in learners. Teachers might also try to incorporate elements of CRT (culturally responsive teaching) to link

students' cultural experiences and foster a culture of inclusion, encouragement, and mutual understanding (Johnson, 2013).

3.3.4 *Summary*

IC and ICC competencies are of critical importance in the global context. Several global events in recent years clearly demonstrate the need to teach adult learners, in particular, better communication skills and the ability to hold IC dialogues in culturally diverse environments. The lack of IC skills might evidently lead to situations where people's well-being and life are effected.

Language educational programs are seen as key to foster those vital skills. The ability to communicate successfully across different cultures and to reach mutual understanding should become an integral part of all educational programs, including TL learning and teacher training programs. IC and ICC skills can be enhanced when they are facilitated by a skilled educator. Therefore, language teacher programs are recommended to include IC skills training. Well-prepared teachers are able to create inclusive IC-sensitive classroom environments built around an internationalized curriculum. Students within such an educational environment might be more successful in their learning process and more efficient in reaching their educational goals.

3.4 Materials Development

This section will cover the language teaching material development within plurilingual and IC approaches. It will also analyse current LINC ELT materials.

3.4.1 *Materials development for plurilingual and IC approaches*

Current research notes that the TL learning can use the same resources as in L1 learning, such as the use of an inner voice or talking to "ourselves", repeating what we have heard (Tomlinson, 2013, p. 13). This can be reflected in the materials in the form of task formulation. Students might be asked to think of an idea and talk it through internally first in using L1 if preferred, before discussing the idea in a group or producing a written reflection (Tomlinson, 2013; Knutson, 2006).

Concerning adult learners, materials should meet specific objectives and learners' expectations (Tomlinson, 2011). They should be time-saving, suitable for immediate use, causing curiosity and interest in the learning materials and process, and encourage self-discovery (Graves, 2003; Tomlinson, 2011; Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2018, p. 284). Materials should foster an inclusive, calm environment that would allow students to feel "at ease" (Tomlinson, 2011). If samples are provided for the assignments, they should include familiar objects, references to the student's cultures and be overall relevant to the learner's pre-existing experience; all of this should facilitate the educational process (Graves, 2003).

Materials for TL learning should strive to be inclusive of local and global contexts with a variety of topics to reflect on the relevance of the acquiring knowledge and competence development (Tomlinson, 2011; Troncoso, 2010). Tomlinson (2011) also underlines that the language used in the tasks should be relevant to the students. They should be able to see "the face" of the speaker/writer to understand from what perspective the information is provided (Tomlinson, 2011). Troncoso (2010) describes how students noticed their TL learning materials were monocultural, always showcasing "the same culture" and "designed for other people," where they "don't see themselves" in them (p.89). Troncoso also notes that overall TL learning materials tend to promote language and culture standardization, often reinforcing cultural stereotypes and not facilitating development of

IC and ICC (2010, p. 91). However, a positive shift towards the acceptance of English as an international language with its' diverse cultural background and, therefore, an appropriate reflection in ELT materials is becoming visible (Mishan & Timmis, 2015, p.39; Nault, 2006, p. 316).

TL materials should provide opportunities for reflection, discussions, research, and age-appropriate language games, among other activities (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2018, p. 284). Troncoso (2010) suggests including “cultural bumps”, i.e., ordinary situations that did not go as planned by one of the participants, from their cultural standpoint, in the educational tasks and learning materials (p. 94). Another approach, capitalizing on the IC and ICC development within learning materials, is based on a test-driven approach (Tomlinson, 2003), where learners are engaged, challenged to reflect and then asked to produce a written or oral reflection on the topic.

Positive and negative emotions also seem to influence language learning (Tomlinson, 2013, p.12). Tomlinson outlines materials that cause learners to laugh, feel excited and be confident, tend to help students to improve the "language in use" (2013, p.12). Materials that make learners experience negative emotions, like anger or strong disagreement, seem to also have a better language-learning effect than materials that do not cause any emotional response (Tomlinson, 2013, p.12). The emotional involvement effect on language learning has been supported by existing research (Braten, 2006; Pavlenko, 2005; Schumann, 1997). Learning materials should facilitate confidence in the learners, as well as challenge them, and at the same time, encourage them to utilize their existing skills, like plurilingual and IC competences, to complete the task (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009; Graves, 2003; Seed, 2020; Tomlinson, 2011; Troncoso, 2010). Materials for TL learning should also reflect different learning styles, as students learn in a variety of ways.

The above-mentioned characteristics of language teaching materials correspond well with the factors affecting TL learning in adult immigrant learners within plurilingual and IC approaches. If ELT materials are adjusted accordingly, they might positively impact adult immigrant learners' motivation, clarify their educational goal's achievement and ensure their engagement in the process. Within the proposed plurilingual and IC

approaches, it is essential to ensure the relevance of the materials and the active use of students' pre-existing skills and experiences.

3.4.2 *LINC Materials: An analysis*

As noted earlier, the LINC program does not have a specific textbook. LINC teachers are able to select from the variety of available ELT materials. There is, however, significant criticism of published LINC materials suggested for use in the classroom. Gulliver and Thurrell (2016) have analyzed 24 textbooks, currently in use by LINC teachers in Ontario, and identified multiple indirect indications of racism and discrimination against immigrants in the texts (Gulliver & Thurrell, 2016, p.56). They suggest using those textbooks in a LINC classroom by applying a critical lens to the offered texts and assignments or as materials for reflective tasks. It is, however, not a part of the instructions within such textbooks (Guo, 2009).

After analyzing the language of the LINC curriculum, Barker (2021) concluded that most of the assignments contain definitive statements, such as “Diplomacy is...” (Geraci et al., 2010, p. 363), “being assertive means...” (Geraci et al., 2010, p. 370), implying that all Canadians agree on the definitions and that all newcomers should replicate the same understanding (p. 81). In addition, often, the LINC curriculum fails to include newcomer students' opinions or to reflect on the learners' understanding of the topics within their own cultural and experiential context. This to imply the “invalidation of their (students') own way of thinking” (Barker, 2021, p. 81; Guo, 2009).

Baker (2021) also notes that in many Canadian ELT textbooks Canadians are portrayed positively where immigrants are presented as “lacking cultural understanding and needing to be educated” (p. 77). The attention is being called to recognize that type of discrimination, specifically within LINC (Barker, 2021; Fleming, 2015; Kubota, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018). Barker (2021), analyzing the “cultural note” within the LINC materials (see Figure 2), outlines the opposition of a newcomer learner (“your way”, “your perception”) to the Canadian environment (“diverse”, “many different cultural backgrounds”) (p. 84). Use of specific words, grammatical structures (use of imperative in

specific tasks) and/or pronouns (“We” Vs “You”) in a specific context might encourage segregation of learners (Barker, 2021, p. 87).

Culture Note with highlighted discursive themes

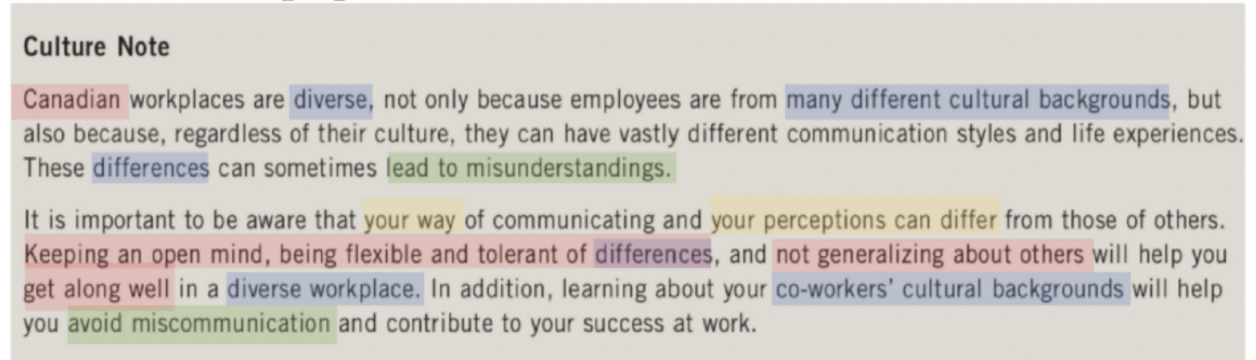


Figure 2: Sample from an official online LINC teacher resource. Source: Barker, 2021, p. 84 (taken from Geraci et al., 2010)

A similar argument is raised by Gulliver & Thurrell (2016), who suggest that most Canadian ELT books used for LINC classes oppose the Immigrants to the Canadians, suggesting that the first group is in the position to learn “our good things” (p. 57). Language used within LINC curriculum, its texts and assignments tend to promote segregation, rather than integration (Barker, 2021; Haque, 2012). The difference between the teacher (referred to as “We”), who is considered a cultural guide, and the immigrant student (referred to as “You”) is explicit within the LINC curriculum (Barker, 2021, p. 86). This might deepen the division into “ours” (Canadian teachers) and “theirs” (immigrant students) (van Dijk, 1989). The use of language in some texts for LINC classes might not be effective for the goal of the program, which is to help newcomers to settle in Canada and successfully integrate into society (Barker, 2021). Critical language awareness might need to be considered in the teachers’ training, as it has a significant effect on learners (Barker, 2021, p. 87; Jorgensen & Philips, 2002).

Barker also emphasizes that, based on LINC texts and assignment instructions, it is up to the student to avoid misunderstanding by learning about different cultures, including Canadian culture (2021, pp. 84-88). The responsibility for miscommunication or failed communication in Canada is also put on the newcomer student only (Barker, 2021, p. 88). Barker outlines that the issue is rooted in a bigger assumption of not accepting diversity as a value (2021, p. 88). The reason is seen in traditional multiculturalism being presented

through an officially bilingual perception, which is limited to two official languages and the associated national cultures (Barker, 2021)

The underrepresentation of diverse societies in many LINC learning texts is seen as another issue (Dendrinos, 1992, p.153; Gulliver & Thurrell, 2016; McGrath, 2005, p.212; Troncoso, 2010). This might lead to immigrants being unprepared to face the reality of a new country, as the learning materials might have form a different picture, fostering an unrealistic perception of Canada and its' society (Dendrinos, 1992, p.153).

When we analyze some of the learning approaches suggested to teachers and students by LINC material developers, we can also see the predominance of the monolingual context, as the example below illustrates (see Figure 3).

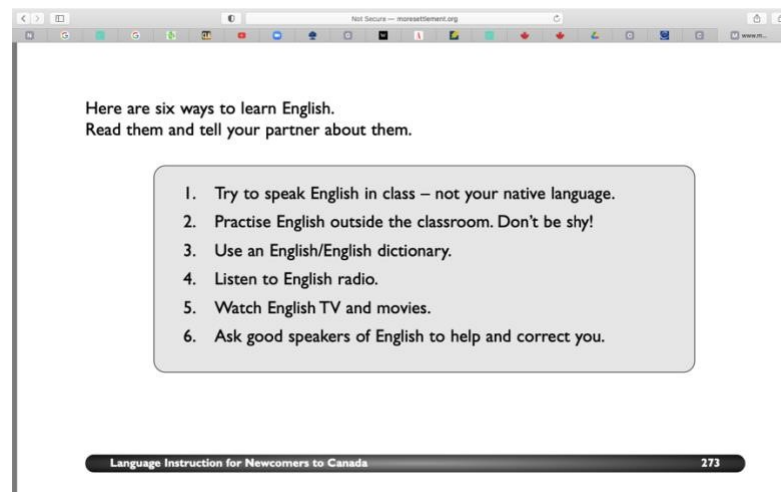


Figure 3: Sample from an official online LINC teacher resources. Source: Watson, 2009, p. 273

The “English-only policy” forces students into a monolingual and often monocultural learning environment. As it is showcased in the chart above, English-only use is strongly encouraged. The use of L1 as a TL learning tool seems to be undesirable in the LINC ELT. The use of bilingual dictionaries is not encouraged. As discussed previously, there is no empirical data-based evidence to support the use of monolingual dictionaries instead of bilingual dictionaries for TL learning purposes. There is also no reference to the L1 tools to assist with the TL learning. Point 6 on approaching “good speakers of English” as a tool of learning English, without providing an explanation of who is considered a good speaker, is deemed unclear and at least subjective.

In addition, the task instruction is also unclear. It does not provide explanation of what exactly students should be “telling partners”, neither does it provide information on why students are completing the task. The activity instruction also has no critical thinking component, which is not necessary but is strongly desired. As outlined earlier to be successful in TL learning, adult learners should be able to clearly understand the goal of the assignment and see it as relevant to their learning needs.

The students’ plurilingual repertoire, cultural experience and identity seem to be ignored, which might imprecise learning outcomes (Magos & Simopoulos, 2009; Paterson, 2020). There is evidently a need to revisit currently offered within the LINC systems learning materials to ensure students are fully benefiting from those. Adaptation or supplement of the existing materials might need to be considered by the teachers.

3.4.3 *Summary*

As demonstrated, current LINC materials might need to be critically revisited, as they do not seem to fully contribute to the program learning goals of newcomers’ integration and settlement in Canada, but rather promoting segregation. In addition, bias in language learning materials regarding diverse linguistic and cultural competencies has been identified in currently used LINC materials, which needs to be addressed. English-only policy and related text materials and instructions are no longer sufficient for current learners’ needs, nor are they accurate in reflecting modern social reality in Canada. In addition, LINC assignments’ instructions require critical review to ensure the students’ understanding and to reflect the learners’ goals.

Developing LINC ELT materials within plurilingual and IC educational approaches might be beneficial to address these issues. LINC ELT might need to consider incorporating L1 resources and demonstrate how materials are to meet the learners’ goals. LINC materials should remain inclusive of diverse local and global contexts and be relevant to the students. Materials and tasks should provide space for reflection and critical skills formation by incorporating the learners’ pre-existing competencies and experiences. Such an approach is deemed essential not only for TL learning but also for IC enhancement, as learners would be able to reflect not only on TL cultures but also on their own. Drawing

on adult immigrant student's needs, LINC learners should be actively involved in the co-creation and knowledge discovery as equal participants in the process rather than just perceiving what is communicated to them as information. This only takes place if students can relate to the process and clearly understand the goal of the learning approach. Therefore, ELT materials should reflect these.

All mentioned above points will be taken into consideration when developing and adjusting LINC materials and tasks for the purpose of this principle study. When designing and adapting materials, goals of life-long learning, newcomers' integration and employment in Canada will be prioritized.

3.5 Research questions

This study will attempt to answer the following question: How can a plurilingual and IC approach be implemented within a LINC context, taking into consideration the program's specific outcome and current limitations. In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions need to be addressed:

1. What are the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches (including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs) within the LINC program?

2. What is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within the LINC program?

To answer the main question and, consecutively, the sub-questions, a case study will be conducted in a LINC classroom in Ontario, Canada. The research question implies a deep understanding of the matter and, therefore, requires the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. The methodology to support the proposed research question will be presented and discussed in the following chapter.

3.6 Summary

Plurilingual and IC approaches aim at valuing and integrating the cultural and linguistic differences in a TL environment. It is always learner-oriented, which aligns well with the language immigration program goals. Practical work often focuses on learning through interaction, facilitated by the teacher, where all stakeholders might gain substantial benefits, including the development of ICC.

In this chapter I discussed plurilingual assessment within the LINC context. I have demonstrated that the proposed approaches might be beneficial at different levels, but are not implemented currently, with the English-only approach dominating newcomers' ELT in Canada.

The characteristics of adult immigrant learners were discussed, underlying the capability of achieving high TL proficiency levels if appropriate conditions are met, such as, but not limited to, learner's motivation, developed learning skills, extent of TL instructions, and consideration of learners' goals. Adult immigrant learners might require additional support, due to their specific focus on settlement and employment in a new environment.

This chapter also discussed the critical role of IC in global education and the importance of IC competence inclusion in the LINC programme specifically. In addition, LINC material development within plurilingual and IC approaches was analyzed, concluding that LINC materials might need to be revisited, as they do not contribute to the program's successful learning outcomes. It is my belief that the educational approach within LINC classes in the province of Ontario should be reconsidered. The teaching and learning environments have changed in Canada over the last decades, however, the teaching and assessment approaches have not evolved to reflect significant development.

4 Methodology

This chapter will discuss the research methodology and the specific approach to data collection and analysis. It will also provide an overview of its limitations and ethical considerations.

4.1 Research Design

The approach to research taken in this study intended to capture the complexity of implementing plurilingual and intercultural approaches in adult immigrant language learning settings and address the proposed problem: how to implement plurilingual and intercultural approaches in a real-life LINC environment, taking into consideration the program's specific outcome and current limitations. To address this proposal, the following sub-questions need to be addressed:

1. What are the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches (including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs) within the LINC program?
2. What is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within the LINC program?

Both mixed method research (MMR) and case study research offer a unique methodology to gain insights into the complexity of the research issue (Cook & Kamalodeen, 2019; Guetterman, 2018; Plano et al., 2018). The case study approach is often utilized to explain, describe, or illustrate a specific phenomenon in its natural environment or specific conditions, which are considered highly relevant to the study (Yin, 2009, pp.8-20). Furthermore, following Yin (2009), a case study might be beneficial in situations when the research issue relates to how and why social phenomenon works; focuses on contemporary events, and works; within limited control of behavioural events (pp. 8-11). Often, the border between mixed-methods and case study methodologies is fluid, allowing for seamless integration (Carolan et al., 2015; Cook & Kamalodeen, 2019; Guetterman, 2018). Guttermann (2018) has noted an increased use of both methods combined to support a deeper understanding of a specific research issue. Drawing on Yin's work (2014), mixed methods case study research might address "broader or more complicated research questions than a case study alone" (p. 67).

A mixed-methods case study (MMCS) was utilized for this research, as it looked at a specific case requiring a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in a real-life environment (Crowe et al., 2011). This was achieved by combining quantitative and qualitative research tools applied to multilevel information resources (Clarke, 2018, p. 116; Creswell & Plano, 2017; Guetterman, 2018). Drawing on Stake's (2005) qualification of case studies, an instrumental case study was chosen for this research which is defined as a case study where "the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates understanding of something else" (Stake, 2005, p. 445), thus using the case as a vehicle to gain a better understanding of a broader incident or phenomenon.

Within this MMCS, quantitative data (student and teacher survey information) was complemented by qualitative information (semi-structured interviews, class observations, learning diaries and focus group results) to ensure a full understanding of the phenomenon. Multiple mixed methods research designs were explored, but none of the proposed designs (Creswell et al. 2011) matched this research design needs. Therefore, it was decided to rely on a MMCS approach, utilizing qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, but without following a specific mixed methods research design.

Figure 4 represents the overall data collection process. "Step" refers to the stages of the data collection process, which began with the gathering of qualitative data through the pilot phase (Step 1). The results were fed into the following phases of the research. During Step 2, quantitative data was collected through the teachers' and students' surveys in the pre- and post-intervention phases. The digital platform Survey Monkey was used to collect the data. The quantitative data were analyzed, and the primary observation of a transition in participants' perceptions was noted. The reasoning behind the results at that stage was not explained.

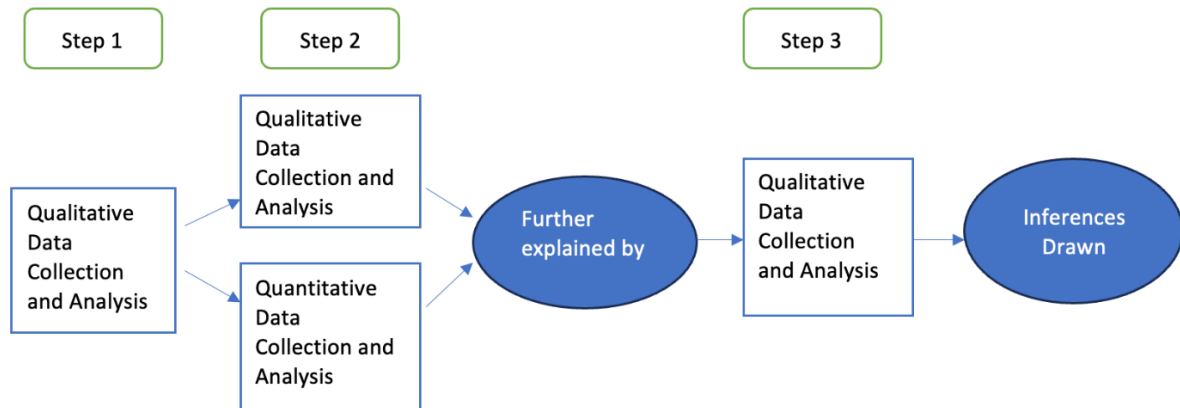


Figure 4: Research diagram

Finally, Step 3 involved returning to the qualitative data collection to help interpret the quantitative data and the results gathered. It should be noted that the gathering of some qualitative data took place in parallel to some quantitative data collection. For example, a focus group with practicing LINC teachers and the first student survey took place during the Pre-intervention research phase. Qualitative data collected through the focus group, semi-structured interviews with the LINC teachers, and the implementation phase (including observation, students’ diaries, and teacher’s reflections after each class) were instrumental in interpreting the quantitative data. Qualitative data was collected using digital tools and platforms, such as Live Worksheets, Zoom, and MS Outlook.

4.2 Data collection and analysis

The research was conducted in four phases over a period of 14 months. The term “phase” will be used to describe the phases of this research, such as the Pilot, Pre-intervention, Intervention and Post-intervention phases. Five teachers and two groups of students participated in the research (see Figure 5).

When collecting data from research participants, it was expected that some participants might alter their behaviour in response to being observed. This is often referred to as observer’s or Hawthorne effect (Cohen et.al, 2018). Some participants might provide “expected” responses. Therefore, the Hawthorne effect was taken into consideration when collecting and analyzing the research data.

Phase	1. Pilot	2. Pre-intervention	3. Intervention	4. Post-intervention
Content	- Teaching materials were designed - Data collection tools were developed - Consent forms for Pilot phase were distributed (T, Ss)*	- Administrative work to secure the research side - Focus-group (FG) with 3 Ts* - Consent forms for FG were distributed (Ts)* - Consent forms for the main part of research distributed (T, Ss)* - Semi-structured interviews - Selection of 1 teacher and a class - Class observation - Reflective practice sessions (T)* - Survey (Ss)* - Educational tasks adjustment	- Teaching - Class observation 10 educational tasks were introduced - Reflective practice sessions (T)*	- Post-intervention S's survey - T's final interview - Analysis of notes from teacher's reflection sessions
Timeline	May-July, 2021	February-May, 2022	June-July, 2022	July, 2022
Stakeholders	- Researcher - T* 1 class	- Researcher - Schoolboard administration 4 Ts 1 class	- Researcher 1 T* 1 class	- Researcher 1 T* 1 class
Data collection tools	- Observation - After class discussion/reflective practice session (T)* - Pre-intervention surveys (Ss)* - Post-intervention survey (Ss)* - Semi-structured interview (T)*	- Semi-structured interviews - Class observation - Survey (Ss)* - Focus-group	- Learning diaries (S)* - After-class reflection sessions (T)* - Observation - Field notes	- Post-intervention survey (Ss)* - Semi-structured interview (T)* - Reflection (T)*

Figure 5: The mixed methods case-study research design

Key: T*- Teacher(s); Ss*-Student(s)

4.2.1 Phase 1: The Pilot phase

The pilot phase was conducted six months before the pre-intervention phase. The timing of the research was influenced by the schools' and teachers' availability and willingness to participate in the study. In addition, COVID-19-related uncertainty influenced the initial plans regarding the mode of delivery and made the possibility of

implementing earlier adaptations difficult. During this pilot phase, one teacher (Aziz) and his class were involved (see Figure 6). The main objectives were to learn more about the LINC program and its teaching and assessment approaches within an actual classroom, in addition to identifying current LINC limitations. Furthermore, it was essential during this pilot phase to design and test all documents, forms, digital tools, and platforms later to be used in the actual intervention. This included the content of the forms, such as students' and teacher's consent forms, students' surveys, teacher's semi-structured interviews, some teaching tasks and digital tools and platforms. It was essential to ensure the students' understanding of the information being asked, time management and tools required for completion and adjustments to be made if gaps were identified.

Phase	Content	Stakeholders	Data collection tools	Objectives
Pilot	• Design of teaching materials • Development of data collection tools • Development of consent forms	• Researcher • Teacher • 1 class	• Observation • After class discussion / reflection session (T) • Pre-intervention surveys (Ss)* • Post-intervention survey (Ss)* • Semi-structured interview (T)*	• To test the ICT teaching tools and platforms • To test language adjusted consent form for lower-level students • To test the materials • To learn more about the LINC program and current teaching approach within an actual classroom • To learn more about current LINC program's limitations

Figure 6: The mixed methods case study research design, pilot phase

The Pilot phase of the research had three stages involving one LINC teacher and one class. We used the term “stages” to refer to the stages of the Pilot phase specifically. Teacher and the class were identified through a professional reference via social media digital connect space for academic researchers in Canada. The teacher agreed to allocate time during the existing class periods to the study, but not exceeding a total of two weeks. As the proposed time suited the objective of the Pilot phase and taking into consideration

an overall low interest among LINC teachers in research participation, Aziz and his class were welcome.

Stage1. The main objective of Stage 1 was to develop and test all documents, tools and language used to ensure the understanding of content, in addition to high completion and submission rates. One example of a document, developed and tested during Stage 1, was a language level-adjusted consent form for the lower-level English language students (see Appendix H.IV). The original form was provided by one of the largest public universities in Ontario, Canada, to ensure legal compliance. This standard research consent form was not deemed suitable by the researcher for students' participation in the research, as the formal language used within the form exceeded their English language level. Therefore, the form was adjusted to meet the needs of students participating in the research and to ensure a full understanding of the concepts, participants' rights and responsibilities, and compliance with the research ethics requirements in Canada. The teacher was consulted on the form first to ensure his feedback was considered and their suggested language adjustments were applied.

To ensure full understanding and a high completion rate, sufficient time was allocated during one of the classes to complete the consent form. Students had an opportunity to ask the teacher or me for clarification if required. They were also allowed to use electronic dictionaries to complete the form. The planned time of 15 minutes was not enough to complete the task, so an additional 15 minutes was provided to enable the students to submit their signed documents. Consent forms were submitted through a digital platform and an e-mail, as not all students were able to access the digital platform.

The teacher was also asked to sign a consent form, which followed the ethics regulation of York University (Canada). The form was kept as per the original format, and the language used remained original. This pilot experience was taken into consideration for the Pre-intervention phase of the study.

During Stage 1, three lessons were observed. The observation and the after-class discussions with the teacher provided an opportunity to learn more about the teacher's educational approach, their teaching experience and IC encounters in and outside of the

school environment. Participating in the Pilot phase, students were surveyed through a Pre-intervention questionnaire (see Appendix C.IV). Biographical information was gathered on the participating teacher by means of a semi-structured interview to gain a better understanding of their IC level, L2 skills, their English language teaching experience, level of education, and cultural experiences outside of the Canadian bilingual framework (see Appendix C.III).

Teacher's Interview. The biographical information collected from Aziz, helped me to evaluate his perception of plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC. During the semi-structured interview Aziz was encouraged to provide relevant information in relation to his perception of plurilingual and IC approaches in language education in addition to his educational and cultural background information (see Appendix C.III). The semi-structured interview format was selected to encourage interactive two-way communication and to better understand the participant's beliefs on specific topics (Heath, 2023; Kallio et al., 2016). The format allows for flexibility and a natural flow of the conversation, encouraging the participants to express their beliefs openly (Heath, 2023; Mayers & Newman, 2007). The semi-structured interview format not only facilitates the gathering of "structured" information by following pre-planned questions but also discovers "unexpected" data by allowing participants to take the conversation further and provide their insights (Heath, 2023). Therefore, it was important to prioritize open-ended questions, aiming at collecting richer qualitative data.

The semi-structured interview lasted for 30 minutes, within the suggested optimal timeframe (Heath, 2023). The objective was not only to gather Aziz's bio information but also to learn more about their beliefs and lived experiences concerning L1 and IC use in the language learning environment. The friendly interview environment allowed for a conversation to flow and for Aziz to share his intercultural life experiences from outside of the classroom and provided me with a better understanding of his educational and cultural background and skills fully applicable to language teaching. Notes were taken during the interview, and the interview was also recorded.

Student survey. The students participating in the pilot phase survey completed a pre-intervention survey. The survey consisted of 13 questions (see Appendix C.IV), and its objectives were to collect students' bio information, including their educational and cultural backgrounds, to learn about their beliefs concerning the value of L1 and different cultures in Canada and to gather information on their perception of plurilingual and IC approaches in language learning. The format was a fillable pdf form, which was chosen based on the teacher's suggestion that most students in the class struggled with digital tools and platforms. In addition, the available at-no-cost tool's structure did not fit the desired questionnaire format. Students received the PDF form by email from their teacher's email and were asked to send it back to the researcher upon completion. The researcher's email was provided.

Observation. Three classes were observed during the Pilot phase of the research. Each class was approximately one hour and was delivered online through the Zoom platform. I had an opportunity to observe a group of 13 students and their teacher. Notes were taken during observations, and the results of the class observation are presented in the next Chapter.

Material Development. The LINC program does not follow a specific textbook. Therefore, teachers select and use other textbooks and language teaching materials to meet program goals. McGrath (2005, p. 75) refers to five principles for adding or adjusting learning materials:

- localization i.e. to make the task relevant to the local reality;
- personalization i.e. to make tasks relevant to the specific learners' needs and to make it "about the learners";
- individualization i.e. to meet the personal or/and group learning styles;
- modernization i.e. to demonstrate up-to-date language use;
- simplification i.e. to make the material easier to understand.

To meet students' needs, materials' supplement can be done in two ways: by bringing materials from other sources (e.g. textbooks, teachers' books, among others) or by designing the teacher's own materials, including using authentic materials (McGrath, 2005, p.82). Authentic materials are materials that have been "produced for purposes other than to teach language" (Nunan, 1988, p.99). The use of authentic materials is deemed essential, as they prepare learners for the real use of the language (McGrath, 2005, p.105). All language learning materials should meet certain criteria or contain certain characteristics. Pienneman (1985) and Tomlinson (2013) discuss the psychological readiness of learners that the selected materials can facilitate. Students should have a clear indication in the materials (or added by the teacher) of why the specific language feature is important to successfully complete the task (Tomlinson, 2013, p.13). Graves (2003) adds that students need to be prepared to undertake an educational activity. They need to know what, why and how they will be completing the task (Graves, 2003, p. 231). She also underlines that being prepared means students are able to either explain in their own words what is required by the task, or they are able to demonstrate it by the action (Graves, 2003, p. 231).

Based on the above-mentioned principles, ten lessons were prepared for the purpose of this research (see Appendix D). Each lesson was designed to fit within the existing class learning schedule (30-45 min in length) and, therefore, did not exceed 45 minutes. Ten presentations were developed using Microsoft Office software. Each lesson was planned to include several tasks, reflecting a variety of different learning styles to provide all students with an opportunity to practice all language macro skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). All tasks included multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate and enhance their IC skills, ICT skills, and reflective skills. Students were encouraged to use L1 tools, such as bilingual dictionaries, L1 peer support, formulating answers first in L1 and then using translation among others. L1 use was guided by the researcher or the teacher.

Topics of the developed lessons covered the following:

1. Introductions,
2. Language and cultural diversity,
3. Students' plurilingual identity,

4. A job interview,
5. Citizenship,
6. Work idioms,
7. Metalinguistic connections,
8. International food,
9. Holidays and citizenship,
10. Interviewing skills (see Appendix D).

All tasks' topics, content and learning objectives were aligned with the LINC study plan, as per the teacher's and institution's request. All tasks and topics were built within the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level 3 curriculum requirements. It was essential to ensure that tasks aimed at specific competence development, such as students being able to introduce themselves and introduce other people. They should be able to understand and use basic description information and numbers. As a result of Level 3 appropriate educational activities, students should be able to search for required information utilizing ICT tools. Therefore, all tasks were aligned with the requirements.

All lessons' objectives included teaching students to introduce themselves and other people and to understand and use basic description information and numbers. Another objective was to teach students to look up information using ICT tools and digital platforms. All ten lessons aimed at practicing the use of L1 tools and demonstrating to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English. Practicing reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in English, in addition to practicing reflecting skills, were included in the lesson objectives (see Appendix D). In addition to the above, each lesson had specific objectives related to the research; for example, Lesson 2 aimed at the introduction of the notions of Interculturalism, Language and Cultural Diversity (see Figure 7).

Lesson	Objectives	Topic
Lesson 1	To demonstrate of how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English	Introduction
Lesson 2	To introduce the notions of Interculturalism, Language and Cultural Diversity	Language and cultural diversity
Lesson 3	To introduce the concept of plurilingualism and its value in student's everyday life in Canada	Students' plurilingual identity
Lesson 4	To enhance the understanding of the concept of job search and interview in the Canadian context and how students' IC and plurilingual skills can be of asset	A job interview
Lesson 5	To prepare for Canadian Citizenship test	Citizenship
Lesson 6	To build a connection between Canadian and students' original cultures while enhancing their IC skills in the context of a job search in Canada	Work idioms
Lesson 7	To build metalinguistic connections, expand students' English vocabulary, and encourage them to try reasonably guessing the meaning of unknown words, utilizing their plurilingual repertoire	Metalinguistic connections
Lesson 8	To continue enhancing IC skills by engaging students as topic experts in international food discussion	International food

Lesson 9	To enhance IC skills development, by building connections between Canadian traditions and student's original cultural traditions	Holidays and citizenship
Lesson 10	To practice research skills within the cultural context while learning more about students' surroundings	Interviewing skills

Figure 7: Lesson objectives

Some activities were taken from open-source modern English teaching recourses and adapted to the current class needs ensuring relevance to students' backgrounds and specific learning goals. All activities were placed into educational platforms and adjusted to the interactive educational platform features, ensuring ICT skills development. Each task was designed to be delivered through different media, including ICT tools and platforms. One of the main educational platforms used was Live Worksheets, and for this, an educational account was created. Access was granted to the students, and the teacher participated as well. Other digital tools and platforms included YouTube, Kahoots, ESL Collective Digital Platform, and a variety of Microsoft Office applications. The platforms were selected due to their accessibility (open and free access), interface (straightforward navigation) and interactive characteristics.

Due to LINC-specific educational goals, all activities were ensured to be applicable to both local and global contexts. Each activity provided an opportunity for students' reflection. A variety of learning skills were also considered when designing the activities.

Stage 2. The objective of Stage 2 was to test some of the educational tasks and the time required for their completion and to test and troubleshoot the use of digital tools and platforms. Two lessons were presented to a teacher, ensuring their alignment with the structure of the learning process and the thematical blocks of the LINC program. Due to the limited time allowed by the educational establishment for the pilot study and the teachers' other competing priorities, only two out of the ten lessons were tested with the students - Students' Introductions and Language and Cultural Diversity (Lesson 2) (see

Figure 8). Students were able to gain access to the platform and complete some of the assignments through the digital platform, ensuring the efficiency of the learning process.

Task:

- You will see a document "Let me introduce myself". You will be asked to fill in the gaps about yourself. We will review the vocabulary together. Then you will have 10-15 min to fill it out. <https://www.liveworksheets.com/3-ij211144p/>
- You don't need to tell the truth, if you don't want to. You can use the samples, provided in colourful boxes. If you don't know the word you would like to use, please use dictionary or google.
- Now I will divide you into groups of 2. Please tell your group partner about yourself, use the worksheet as a reference/guide. As partners, you should listen and complete the second form with the information given to you. You will be asked to present to the group your partner's information for this exercise (10-15min).



Figure 8: Introduction task from lesson 2

The concept of learning diaries was introduced to participating students to be able to collect their reflections on the topics and to gather their feedback on the tasks. Some students were successful in submitting their learning diaries, but the overall submission rate was low with the pilot phase group of students. Reflection sessions with the teacher were also undertaken after classes when time permitted.

Stage 3. The pilot post-intervention phase included testing the post-intervention students' survey based on the educational experience and participating teacher's final semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview format was selected as it allowed to gather the teacher's insights and beliefs concerning the introduced teaching and learning approach. Unfortunately, the final semi-structured interview with Aziz did not take place due to the limited time allocated to the pilot by the educational institution. It was important to ensure sufficient time for the final interview with the teacher in the main research post-intervention phase.

The student post-intervention survey was selected as a method of data collection, as it allowed for more precise comparison. The selected method permitted the collection of information in a similar mode as the pre-intervention, aiming at tracking differences in

students' perceptions, if any was noted during the post-intervention phase. The students' post-intervention survey had nine questions, where four questions were repeated from the pre-intervention students' survey (see Appendix G.I). Students received a link by email and were invited to complete it through the Survey Monkey digital platform. Time to complete the task wasn't allocated during class time. Therefore, students were asked to complete the survey at home.

Results were collected, recorded, and analyzed as part of the pilot with respect to the development of future research phases. All student-produced materials were collected digitally through email and digital platforms (Live worksheets) and were kept in a digital cloud space until the final stages of the research as part of the condition outlined in the research participation consent form concerning the collection of data. All pilot phase materials, forms and task content were used in the implementation phase of this study.

4.2.2 *Summary*

One of the main goals of the pilot phase implementation was to learn more about the LINC program in practical terms. Gaining further insights into LINC teaching and assessment approaches within an actual classroom was deemed essential. In addition, identifying current LINC programs' limitations from the practicing teachers' perspective concerning plurilingual and IC educational approaches implementation was critical. That would be difficult to achieve without class observation and data collection performed during the pilot phase. An additional objective of the pilot phase was the development and testing of original materials and platforms, adjusting where needed and when difficulties were identified. The pilot phase helped to identify issues and to make the appropriate adjustments for the main research phases.

The pilot phase allowed the test of the completion time of the tasks planned and the implementation of adjustments where needed, for example, breaking down a task into several smaller activities and planning the completion over several lessons to maximize learning benefits. I realized it was important to ask students to download the required digital tools in advance if the tool was used to complete an educational task during the lesson. It was essential in enabling an effective flow of the lesson and helped to ensure a higher

participation rate. The materials designed, digital tools tested, and new information collected during the research Pilot phase were fed into the following research phases. Changes applied to the educational materials as result of the pilot phase will be discussed in the result and discussion section.

4.2.3 Phase 2: Pre-intervention phase

The main objective of the pre-intervention phase was to identify the LINC system's limitations by collecting data and information from the LINC practicing teachers. Additional objectives of this phase were to collect more information on the practicing teachers' teaching approaches by conducting a Focus Group (FG), to collect primary data on the students and their perception of the plurilingual and intercultural approaches by observing LINC classes and conducting a pre-intervention student survey (see Figure 9). Furthermore, during the pre-intervention phase, it was essential to ensure the completion of all administrative requirements concerning the study. This consisted of securing the research site and distributing and collecting consent forms to the four participating teachers (three teachers participated in FG, and one teacher participated in the main phase of the study) and from all participating students.

Biographical data relevant to the research was also collected during this phase. Short semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers who participated in the FG. The interviews took place before the FG to collect bibliographical information, and, at the same time, to avoid a detrimental effect on other participants. Although teachers knew each other, they were not necessarily aware of each other's years of experience, L2 skills and cultural connections. The semi-structured interviews were also undertaken to collect core information about the participants' teaching practices and their perception of plurilingual and intercultural approaches. During the FG, notes were taken and then analyzed using MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2022 software.

The semi-structured interview with the teacher who participated in the main intervention was also conducted during the pre-intervention phase to gather more information about their teaching experience, cultural background, and experiences. During this phase, the materials were revised and adjusted to meet the needs of the participants.

Phase	Content	Stakeholders	Data collection tools	Objective
Pre-intervention	• Administrative work • Focus-group with 3 Ts • Consent forms for FG (Ts) • Consent forms for the main part of research (T, Ss) • Semi-structured interviews • Selection of 1 teacher and a class • Class observation • Reflective practice sessions (T)* • Survey (Ss) • Educational tasks adjustment	• Researcher • Schoolboard administration • 4 Ts • 1 class	• Semi-structured interviews • Class observation • Survey (Ss) • Focus-group	• To ensure legal procedures for the research • To collect biodata from 1 T • To collect information on the selected Ts' teaching approach, by observing their classes • To collect primarily data about the students' and their perception of the PL & IC approach • To explain Case study

Figure 9: Pre-intervention phase

4.2.4 Focus Group

The FG, as a method of data collection, is currently actively used for academic research purposes. The main outline of a FG is planning, recruiting, moderating and analyzing (Krueger, 2015). As moderator, the researcher needed to have a clear plan of what and how to achieve it. Purpose and an appropriate process are essential to have an effective FG (Krueger, 2015). This implies not only understanding the purpose and the process but also having the necessary skills and being able to lead the group of participants (Krueger, 2015). Criteria for participant selection needs to be established, and recruitment tools need to be selected. The FG needs to be guided by prepared in-advance questions. Krueger (2015) suggests the following question structure: opening (to get participants to talk), introduction (to introduce the topic), transition (to guide the conversation to the key questions), key (the main driver of the study) and ending (to conclude).

Moderators should refrain from any opinion or judgement during the FG and let participants interact, expressing their feelings, ideas and experience. It is essential for the results to select the right participants and lead them through the experience. Participants are normally selected as they meet specific criteria and therefore are in the position to contribute meaningfully to the FG discussion (Krueger, 2015). Krueger (2015) suggests having a group of five to ten people participating in a focus group so it is easier to guide, the atmosphere is more enjoyable for everyone, and participants are able to have meaningful discussions where everyone is able to contribute (p. 26). However, mini-focus groups are also acceptable, consisting of a minimum of three participants (Nyumba et al., 2018). Mini-focus groups are used when the pool of candidates is limited due to the required set of skills and level of expertise or if the audience is hard to reach.

Focus Group Design. The original plan for the pre-intervention phase data collection was to send out approximately 100 surveys to LINC institutions across Ontario to collect the initial information on their teaching practices and to learn more about teachers' perceptions of IC and plurilingual practices and its potential limitations within the LINC programming. The approaches were not named to avoid misperception. Approximately 50 replies were expected. Unfortunately, the response rate was low. Therefore, it was decided to conduct a FG with teachers who have experience in teaching LINC in Ontario. An outreach to the researchers' professional networks through personal connections secured three participants.

Following Morgan et al. (1998), the FG was aligned with the following structural steps: research design, data collection, analysis and results. This process started with identifying the main goal and primary research objectives (Ochieng et al., 2018). The goal for this FG was to confirm the limitations of a plurilingual and IC approach within the LINC program, including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs, which corresponded to the research sub-question 1 and contributed to the main research statement. One of the key objectives was to get an in-depth understanding of practicing LINC teachers' experiences and perceptions. This information was deemed difficult to gather otherwise in a comprehensive way. In addition, the FG allowed for the optimal use of resources, by gathering more detailed data

in a short period of time at a relatively low cost (Willson, 2012). The use of FGs also offered flexibility in data collection, as conversation often followed the group, which resulted in a friendly experience for all participants.

Originally the FG was planned as a virtual experience, utilizing Zoom, due to COVID19 limitations in the province of Ontario. However, as regulations changed, it became a face-to-face, as the desire to have an in-person social experience was identified by the potential participants. The format adjustment seemed to help make the whole experience more comfortable and "at ease" for the teachers to discuss the issues and share opinions.

The criteria for the FG participants included establishing the experience level in teaching ESL and LINC within the Ontario context; personal connections to the cultures outside of the bilingual framework, and L2 competence. Ten or more years of teaching experience was counted as extensive experience. Due to the limited number of responses to the FG invitations, the researcher's personal network within the international education sector in Ontario, Canada was used. As a result, three participants met the established criteria and were available to participate in the FG. The constraints, determined by the candidates' pool and the criteria to be met, lead to some group homogeneity. All participants were male, which is identified as one possible research limitation.

It should also be mentioned that the teachers selected for the focus group knew each other, which is believed to have helped them to have an open conversation without holding their opinions back, as the atmosphere created was encouraging and not judgemental (Krueger, 2015). From the research perspective, recruiting teachers through personal connections makes it easier to ensure participation and is more convenient in terms of planning.

A mini-FG is used when facing a small pool of potential participants or difficulties with participants' recruitment (Ochieng et al., 2018; Krueger & Casey, 2015). Such participants are expected to be highly qualified professionals (Hague, 2002). The conducted FG included three participants, following the research recommendation (Adler & Clark, 2008). This small group format also provided participants with an opportunity for

interactive discussions, where participants can build on each other contributions and have more time to contribute meaningfully.

Focus Group Data Collection. Drawing on Stewart et al. (2007), the methods of data collection used for this FG were note-taking and participant observation, in addition to audio recording through a smartphone as backup. The total length of the FG was one hour 35 minutes, within the limit supported by current research (Ochieng et al., 2018; Krueger & Casey, 2015).

Participants were asked a total of 12 questions (see Appendix F.I), with the intention of only guiding the discussion without turning it into an interview. Following Kruger and Casey (2015), the questions were divided into the following sections: opening, introduction, transition, key and ending. It was also ensured that the questions "evoked conversation" (p.104), were easy to ask, and were clear and short (p.106-8).

Words used for the FG guiding questions were familiar (p.105) and in "one dimension" (p. 110) to ensure their understanding of what the researcher meant and being able to respond to the same meaning. For example:

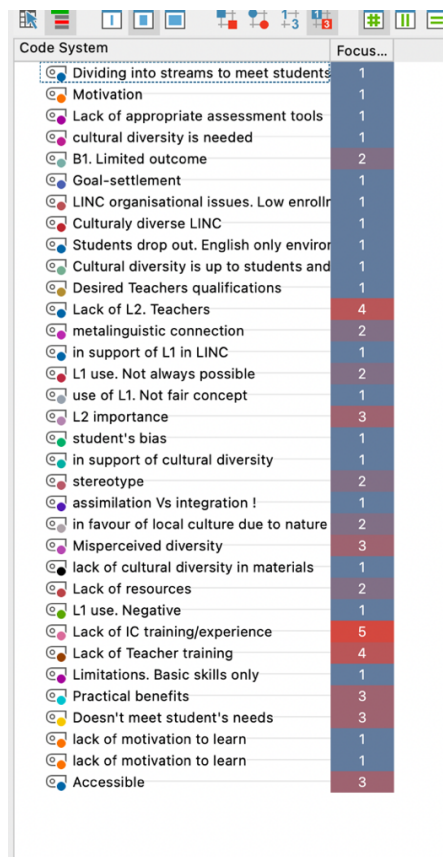
Do you think Canadian culture is a diverse culture that consists of parts and pieces of other cultures, or do you think it is a solid and very distinct culture that does not have many similarities with other traditions and cultures?

The same words (for example, "culture") were repeated, rather than using synonyms, to ensure the consistent use of the notion. Simple and familiar words were used in FG questions, for example, "parts and pieces of other cultures" to ensure the same understanding of the questions.

Questions were, where possible, open-ended (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p.109). For example, "Think back to when you first started teaching with LINC. What was your first impression?" or "Thinking about everyday Canadian culture or environment, what is the first thing that comes to mind?". Open-ended questions encouraged participants to share their thoughts on the suggested issue and, potentially, draw on other participants' responses

to come up with new knowledge and ideas in relation to the topic. Respectful and productive discussions were also encouraged among the participants. Gestures and behaviour of participants during the FG were also noted as part of the data collected.

Focus Group Data Analysis. Field notes and audio recordings were transcribed, and an abridged transcript was created (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p.346). The audio recording was used as a backup to clarify filed notes when required (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Data coding was performed using MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2022 software. Following Ochieng et al. (2018), data coding was executed in two steps. The first step, initial coding, was to assign a number of codes without limitation (see Figure 10). During this stage, general ideas emerged, and common themes were outlined.



Code System	Focus...
Dividing into streams to meet students	1
Motivation	1
Lack of appropriate assessment tools	1
cultural diversity is needed	1
B1. Limited outcome	2
Goal-settlement	1
LINC organisational issues. Low enroll	1
Culturally diverse LINC	1
Students drop out. English only environ	1
Cultural diversity is up to students and	1
Desired Teachers qualifications	1
Lack of L2. Teachers	4
metalinguistic connection	2
in support of L1 in LINC	1
L1 use. Not always possible	2
use of L1. Not fair concept	1
L2 importance	3
student's bias	1
in support of cultural diversity	1
stereotype	2
assimilation Vs integration !	1
in favour of local culture due to nature	2
Misperceived diversity	3
lack of cultural diversity in materials	1
Lack of resources	2
L1 use. Negative	1
Lack of IC training/experience	5
Lack of Teacher training	4
Limitations. Basic skills only	1
Practical benefits	3
Doesn't meet student's needs	3
lack of motivation to learn	1
lack of motivation to learn	1
Accessible	3

Figure 10: Focus group codes

During the second step, focused coding, the identified codes were merged, some were eliminated, and more recurring themes were collated (Ochieng et al., 2018). The 11 resulting themes are outlined in the following chapter.

Administrative work. In February 2021, 150 emails were sent to different LINC providers in Ontario, Canada, including individual LINC teachers and LINC assessment centers registered with the province of Ontario. This was done to find a suitable LINC class and a teacher to participate in the main phases of the research: pre-intervention, intervention and post-intervention. The organizations demonstrated little interest in participating in the research, with most of the intended participants declining the invitation to take part. Some establishments advised on the internal policy that prohibits external professionals from attending their LINC classes; other institutions suggested that their teachers were not available, even if teachers had expressed a willingness to ensure their availability and interest in research participating.

Eventually, a large educational institution in Ontario that delivers various educational programs, including the LINC programming, responded to the invitation to participate in the research and advertised the opportunity internally to all currently employed LINC teachers. A LINC program manager distributed an invitation to participate in the study to all practicing LINC teachers within the school board. Since the study took place during COVID-19 restrictions, and all classes were in online delivery mode, the physical location of the teacher and the students were not factored into the selection process.

Three teachers responded to the call, and the teacher who demonstrated a higher interest in participation was selected. They requested additional information about the proposed topic, asked about educational benefits for their students, and enquired about a professional reflective practice opportunity. In addition, the class suggested for the research by the teacher had diverse student backgrounds concerning academic skills, education level, and cultural experiences.

A teacher and a LINC class were selected for the intervention phase. In preparation for the intervention, a class observation was undertaken as well as a semi-structured interview with the teacher, and a students' survey to collect the primary data on the participants and their perception of the plurilingual and IC educational approaches.

For the student pre-intervention survey, the areas of focus included students' cultural and educational backgrounds, language repertoire, and perceptions of plurilingual and IC educational approaches. All forms, data collection tools and platforms used had been

designed and tested during the pilot phase. Some learning and teaching materials were also tested during the pilot phase.

4.2.5 *Observation*

Prior to the intervention task implementation, a class observation was conducted. It allowed the researcher to become familiar with the students and the overall educational environment concerning the group of participants. The class observation was essential to gain a further understanding of the LINC programming and teaching approach from a practical perspective.

The LINC classes observation. In total, five 75-minute online classes were observed. The number of classes selected was aligned with the progression of the class. When I joined the class, students were concluding a topic, and it was decided in consultation with Les to introduce the research task after the current topic was finalized. This allowed for additional learning about Les' teaching style and techniques and gathering more information on students to customize tasks accordingly.

Each LINC class started with the Canadian national anthem, as per standard practice within public school boards in Canada. The version of the anthem presented to the students was different every week, but always in English or a combination of English and French. The video shown during the first observation lesson had a visual military-related background. A natural discussion that started after the video was about the role of the military in Canada. Other versions contained music only. When questioned about the purpose, Les shared that it was a traditional way to start the class and "to put students in the right mood." On the one hand, it aligned with the school board's traditions, which the LINC class was a part of. On the other hand, it created a Canadian national environment where students' cultures were left outside of the classroom. When the issue of cultural isolation was brought up with Les during one of the reflective sessions, she introduced the anthem version in different languages during the next class. Some of the languages corresponded with students' L1. Other languages used in the new video were Indigenous. Those introduced indigenous Canadian cultures, which form an essential part of Canadian

history and society but are often overlooked. This created an educational environment for discussions on indigenous and immigrant heritage in Canada.

Les always resumed the discussion of COVID numbers concerning the number of cases registered in Canada and the importance of vaccination. A short to medium-length (five to twenty minutes) speaking exercise would normally follow. General topics were covered, such as "What do you wear?", "What do you eat?", "What did you do yesterday/on the weekend?" among others. Often, the topic of weather was brought up, and online weather forecasting resources were utilized for discussions. The lesson topic was introduced after 20-30 minutes of general discussion.

In general, Les demonstrated a good understanding of a variety of accents students displayed in the classroom, which enabled communication and the flow of the lessons. Overall, students felt comfortable when speaking during the class. She also demonstrated being approachable and relatable to the students by bringing in jokes that students understood. She encouraged students to study by making positive comments like, "My students are smart."

The English-only policy was strictly enforced for the first three classes, and students did not use L1 in any class situations. Student engagement was often observed to be low during those classes. They did not understand some questions or tasks and preferred to remain silent. Les was observed doing most of the talking during those classes.

Due to the lessons being online, I observed some technical issues affecting the learning process. While discussing the general topic of clothing, Les could not hear or understand some students and so corrected when correction was not necessary, as can be seen from the example below.

Teacher: What are you wearing?

Aly: I am wearing...

Teacher: Not I wear, I am wearing...

Online delivery created some additional difficulties for classroom management. When Les asked students to turn on cameras during a test, two out of eight present students complained and expressed being uncomfortable with the task or not having a camera on

their device. In addition, many students experienced difficulties accessing online accounts or submitting assignments.

LINC class observation was critical to gather more information on the teacher's background, their beliefs, and educational approach. It was also helpful in learning more about the students and their learning approaches and skills as well as in confirming the LINC program limitations for implementing plurilingual and IC educational approaches.

Introductory class during pre-intervention phase. During the first class, Les introduced the researcher to the class, explaining why I was there. The purpose of the research project, the proposed structure and timeline of the practical component and how it related to their learning process was also explained. Students were also provided with an explanation of the benefits of participation, and asked if they were interested in being part of the proposed research. They were asked to complete a written consent form if they showed interest in participating.

The consent forms were distributed to the students and the teacher. Students' consent forms were adjusted to their English level to ensure students' understanding of the content. The forms, tested during the pilot phase, were used during Phase 2 of the research, as students' level of English language aligned (CLB level 3). All students were familiar with the digital platform (live worksheets). Therefore, an additional workbook was created for research purposes within the digital platform, and a section was assigned to the consent forms. Les allowed 30 min of the class time to be allocated for the task, so students were able to work on it while Les and I were available to assist and answer questions when needed. I was able to confirm submission during the same class time. Les submitted her consent form at the same time. The process was completed in 30 minutes, and a 100% submission rate was achieved. One student did not agree to participate in the study but participated in all the activities with the other students.

4.2.6 *The pre-intervention student survey*

All 18 intervention students were given a pre-intervention survey during the pre-intervention phase. The survey consisted of 13 questions. The survey was designed to include four questions that were repeated in the post-intervention survey to track any changes. It was distributed to the students through the Survey Monkey digital tool. Students were given an opportunity to fill it in during the class, so they were able to ask questions if needed. Within the survey, students were asked to indicate their names so the results could be identified and associated with the appropriate person. Students' biological data will be discussed in the research participants' section; therefore, in this part, we will be looking at other areas from the survey.

The original question about the participants' age group (the second question of the survey) was formulated in a way that would allow students to indicate their age in a blank space. However, what appeared to be a straightforward question, got a mixed reaction from the students. Visibly many students did not feel comfortable disclosing their age. Therefore, the question was switched to the age group format instead, which resulted in a 100% completion rate for the question.

Question 3 looked at students' language repertoire. The intent was to learn about their language or languages regularly used at home, with friends, with parents, to read, and to watch TV, among other situations. As per results, 39% of students indicated speaking three languages. Another 39% of students indicated four languages currently used in their everyday life, and 22% of respondents declared two languages (see Figure 11).

Number of languages	%
3	39
4	39
2	22

Figure 11: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 3

Students were asked to include English as one of the languages they speak. The reason for re-emphasizing was to address the students' high level of self-critique. Most of the

students did not consider they spoke English well enough to count as an existing language competency. In addition, it was also observed that most of the students tended to undervalue their pre-existing linguistic skills and were evaluating their overall language proficiency ability in relation only to the level of English language learning. It should be stressed that all additional language abilities were self-identified and were not tested within the current research work.

Question 4 aimed at identifying the students' L1(s) and additional L2(s), where applicable to assign students to appropriate groups according to their language repertoire. Students were not told the intent behind the question, but instead, they were asked to self-identify their proficiency level in each language. Being mindful of the students' English language, the categories were defined as follows: "I speak a little," "I speak ok," "I speak ...well", and "My first language is..." with the last one equal students L1.

As a result, 55% of students identified Arabic as their L1. However, overall, 65% of students indicated they could speak or understand Arabic (see Figure 12). Another 15% of students indicated Somali as their L1. It was observed that 10% of students declared French and 15% of participants named Assyrian as their L1. The rest of the responses were combined in 5%, with students indicating Korean, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Hindi, Urdu/Punjab as L1.

Languages	%
Arabic	55
Assyrian	15
Somali	15
French	10
Other languages	5

Figure 12: students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 4

As demonstrated, the class had a diverse linguistic background with a clear dominance of the Arabic language. As the Arabic language is a right-to-left writing system, this will partially explain difficulties with writing in English assignments during the intervention

stage going forward. Writing in English meant adjusting to a left-to-right writing system for that group of students.

Question 5 concerned the main reason students chose to attend the LINC program (see Figure 13). Most students (35%) indicated that they are attending the class to understand the new society (for example, at the doctor's office and post office, among others). Passing Canadian citizenship, and therefore receiving Canadian citizenship, was considered as the main goal for attending the LINC program by 30% of participants. It was observed that 15% of students would like to be able to assist their children with school, and 10% of students were looking to continue their education and therefore needed to improve their English skills. Only 10% of participants reported that they were attending the class because they simply enjoyed it.

Reasons to attend LINC	%
To access community services	35
To receive Canadian Citizenship	30
To get a job in Canada	0
To start a business in Canada	0
To assist children with school	15
To pursue further education	10
I enjoy the class	10

Figure 13: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 5

Getting a job or starting a business in Canada was not named as a main goal of attending the LINC program. Employment in Canada is, however, one of the main goals of the LINC program in Ontario.

Questions 6 and 7 aimed to collect data on students' educational levels (see Figure 14). During the pilot stage, the students seemed to be intimidated when asked specific questions, specifically questions in relation to their educational background and age group. In particular, students with a lower level of academic exposure or without any previous educational experience and belonging to the older age group were observed being nervous and often not answering. Those students did, however, reveal the information in discussions or while answering other questions. In responding to Questions 6 and 7, 60% of students indicated that they did not have any post-secondary education. Out of the 60%, 70% of students did not provide their level of education, and the other 30% indicated four to six years of some education.

Post-secondary Education	%
Yes	40
No	60

Figure 14: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 6

Post-secondary Education (out of 40%)	%
College Degree	6
Some University	30
Ph.D.	4
Up to Post-secondary	60

Figure 15: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 7

The remaining 40% of students indicated some post-secondary education (see Figure 15). Most respondents (4 students) recorded 'Some university', with other students completing college-level degrees (2 students) and PhD degrees (1 student).

This question raised some discussion among the students while they were answering it. Many students did not feel comfortable providing an answer, as they seemed embarrassed of their low educational level. Students explained the situation in their home countries in relation to the educational system structure and access to education, specifically for the female population. An assurance was given that the data was confidential and would never be discussed, nor would any participant be identified. In addition, this allowed for a brief discussion about the educational systems and the commonality of the female population attending specific educational institutions in their home countries.

Question 8 of the survey aimed to learn more about each student's educational background in relation to English language learning, specifically how long students had been attending the LINC program (see Figure 16). The range indicated within the group of students was from two months to six years. Almost half of the students (40%) had attended the LINC for less than one year. A fifth of the students had been studying in the program for one to two years, and another fifth between two to three years. Another fifth had been attending the LINC for four to six years.

Length of attendance	%
Less than 1 year	40
1-2 years	20
2-3 years	20
4-6 years	20

Figure 16: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 8

To summarise, 60% of students had attended the LINC program for over a year. This clarifies the students' English L2 progression, as most students attended the LINC program for over a year and remained at a lower English A2 level (CEFR). Furthermore, some participants had attended the program for up to six years and remained at the A2 level (CEFR). There was, however, no question included on the number of levels students went through. Within the LINC program, students are able to repeat the levels, which potentially

can result in a student taking the same level for 2-3 years. It might also indicate some shortcomings in the educational process, learning outcomes or the ELT approach.

When asked about the desired level of English in Question 9 of the survey (see Figure 17), some students (34%) indicated that they were looking to reach a higher A2 level (level 4 LINC). When formulating these question-and-answer options, the terms "beginner"/"intermediate" / "native-like" or A1/A2/B1/B2/C1/C2 (European language benchmark) were avoided to ensure students' full understanding of the categories used. Instead, the LINC levels were indicated, as students were familiar with these, in addition to further explanation. The language used for the description was also adapted to students' level of English. For example, "Level 3 (current level) is enough", "Level 4 for citizenship", "Level 5 or 6 to finish school at LINC", "High level, so I can understand almost everybody and say everything", "Very high level because I want to go to college or University", "Highest level because I want to speak like Canadians". The technique was used only due to a low level of English language among respondents; therefore, terms needed to be more explanatory to ensure full comprehension.

The Desired Level of English	%
Beginner/Low A2/ LINC 3	34
High Beginner/ High A2/ LINC 4	5
Low Intermediate/ Low B1/LINC 5	17
High Intermediate/ Low B2/ LINC 7-8	17
C1	10
C2	17

Figure 17: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 9

As a result, 17% of students indicated that they were looking for high proficiency level (low B2 level), as they were planning to continue their studies and to pursue higher education studies. Another 17% of respondents revealed that they sought the highest proficiency to speak "like Canadians," and 10% of students indicated that they were

looking to improve their English to "understand almost everything." Other 17% of students were looking to complete the LINC program, which equals the LINC Level 5 within their current program (high B1 or CLB 7). Only 5% of students indicated their goal is to reach the English level enough to obtain Canadian citizenship (A2 or LINC Level 4). In Question 9, most students indicated they intended to complete one LINC program level on average.

The last set of questions, Questions 10 to 13, aimed to learn more about students' perception of plurilingualism and the importance of intercultural skills (see Figure 18). Students were asked to respond "Yes," "No," or "I do not know". For example, in Question 10, students were asked if they believe speaking other non-official languages in Canada is good, with 50% of students responding positively, 20% indicating negative perception, and 30% unsure in their evaluation (see Figure 21).

The Use of Non-official Languages in Canada	%
Yes	50
No	20
I don't know	30

Figure 18: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 10

In Question 11, students were asked if it was possible to use L1 to learn English. Here, 44% of students believed they were able to utilize L1 in the LINC ELT environment (see Figure 19), suggesting these participants saw potential benefits of L1 use for English language learning. However, 56% responded either negatively or uncertain (28% for each category). This demonstrated an overall lack of support for L1 use or dismissal of the educational value of L1 in ELT from the student's perspective.

The Use of L1 for ELP	%
Yes	44
No	28
I don't know	28

Figure 19: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 11

Question 12 referred to the importance of learning about Canadian culture, and not only the language skills, during the LINC class. Students were asked to express if they agreed, disagreed or were not sure if it is important to learn more about Canadian culture during their English classes (see Figure 20).

The Canadian Cultural Component in LINC	%
Yes	72
No	0
I don't know	28

Figure 20: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 1

In answer to this question, 72% of the students indicated the importance of cultural knowledge inclusion, and 28% were uncertain. No negative responses were recorded. This suggests students' overall understanding of the cultural knowledge value linked to language learning. Most of the students saw Canadian cultural component inclusion in LINC English language lessons as beneficial in contrast to a grammatical approach.

A different understanding was demonstrated in the last survey question. Question 13 contained information on the importance of learning about other cultures other than Canadian culture during the LINC class. Half of the students indicated learning about other cultures was an essential part of the class (see Figure 21). The other half responded either negatively (22%) or expressed uncertainty in relation to the question (28%).

The Other Cultural Component in LINC	%
Yes	50
No	22
I don't know	28

Figure 21: Students' demographics, pre-intervention survey. Q 13

The completion of 13 survey questions took students approximately 30 minutes. It was originally planned to take 15 minutes. However, considering the previous experience with the pilot class, a longer time for task completion was anticipated, and the teacher was advised accordingly. Many questions were asked by participants while working on the survey task. An explanation was provided to the students in relation to specific word meanings; additional clarifications were given by providing further context for questions considered unclear. In addition, some questions, for example, Question 7, lead to a short discussion on related topics that engaged students, the teacher and the researcher. All discussions were held in a respectful, friendly, and engaging manner with students, often acting as subject matter experts.

The students were asked to submit results through the digital platform. All results were received by the end of the class before students disconnected from the class space. This was done to ensure a high submission rate. The survey results were collected and analyzed.

To summarise, half of participants indicated seeing no benefits or uncertainty concerning the use of other non-official languages in Canada. Most of the students (56%) were not in support or uncertain in relation to the benefits of L1 use in LINC ELT. Most students (72%) were in favour of Canadian cultural component inclusion in LINC classes, and half supported the inclusion of other cultural components in the ELT program.

Based on the students' responses to the last part of the survey (i.e Questions 10 to 13), notes were taken indicating students with a potentially low and high level of intercultural sensitivity. Students having two or more negative answers were identified as individuals with potentially low IC sensitivity. Those notes were compared to the task results and class observation notes from the following intervention phase and to the results of the post-

intervention survey during the post-intervention phase. This data was used at a later stage to evaluate the potential effect of the plurilingual, and IC approaches implementation within the LINC class.

4.2.7 *Summary*

Several observations were made during the pre-intervention phase. While working on administrative tasks, securing the research side, and reaching out to LINC providers, a low level of response was observed. If that occurs systematically with other research collaboration proposals, it might be a concerning sign of a lack of cooperation between researchers and educational institutions in Ontario, Canada. This does not, however, always reflect the practicing teachers' willingness to contribute to the research. Institutions often create administrative barriers that lead to a lack of collaboration and limited professional individual development opportunities for practicing teachers. In addition, administrative staff might not be able to see the value in such collaboration and, therefore, not explore research proposals further. This was also confirmed by the Focus Group (FG) results. The institutional barriers to professional and research development in Ontario contradict federal and provincial mandates on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) ethos in Canada.

The pre-intervention stage allowed to gather information on the research participants at the institutional, teacher and student levels. The FG provided valuable insights into potential plurilingual and IC approaches implementation within the LINC program, in addition to practicing teachers' perception and evaluation of the LINC program's limitations.

Teacher's and students' data concerning their educational background, pre-existing language skills and cultural experiences were collected. Class observation provided an opportunity to learn about teachers' practices and to observe students' perceptions of those practices. In addition, insights on students, and teachers' perceptions of potential plurilingual and IC approaches implementation were gathered. It was also important during this stage to learn more about participants' ICT skills and resources, and experiences in its application to ELT. Class observation during the Pre-intervention phase allowed to gather information on the content and structure used in LINC assessment methods. Data were

collected on students' learning skills, their engagement and inclusion in the educational process. In addition, class observation provided more insights into the overall effectiveness of the LINC ELT in achieving the program's learning outcomes. Special attention was paid to the existing use of the IC and plurilingual elements, such as guided use of L1 and inclusion of cultural elements and experiences, among others. Limited use or apprehension toward such elements was observed concerning the teaching approach during the original class observation. However, with the development progress of reflective practices, a change in the teaching approach was registered.

It was also noted from the class observation, post-lesson reflections with the teacher and the FG that LINC teachers tend to emphasize the importance of Canadian national culture and way of communication rather than developing intercultural communication skills, where newcomers are seen as equal communication partners.

The student survey provided valuable information on students and their beliefs concerning plurilingual and intercultural approaches within LINC. Student Pre-intervention survey also revealed some inconsistency with the information provided. In Question 9, 17% of students indicated that they were aiming at high English language proficiency (low B2 level) as they were looking to proceed with post-secondary studies. This result did not align with the results of Question 5, where only 10% of students indicated the intention to pursue further education. Only 5% of students indicated that their goal is to reach the English level necessary to obtain Canadian citizenship (high A2 or LINC Level 4). This again did not align with the survey's Question 5 results, where 30% of respondents indicated obtaining Canadian citizenship as their main goal for attending the LINC program. A possible explanation of the discrepancy at this stage could be the possibility of students being unaware of the English language level requirement for the citizenship exam. Overall, in Question 9, most students indicated they intended to complete one LINC program level. It matched the results from the official LINC report (Evaluation of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada, 2009), suggesting that, on average within the LINC program, only one level is usually completed by students. The results of Question 13 demonstrated a potential need for further IC competency development among students. The student Pre-intervention survey also helped to formulate an additional goal

for the research, which was to help students to value their existing language skills and cultural experiences.

It was interesting to observe that participants did not consider employment in Canada as the main goal for attending the LINC program, although it had been outlined as the main program goal. Another outcome of the Pre-intervention phase was a confirmation that a low educational level does not imply a lower level of IC skills. Students indicating no postsecondary educational background demonstrated high IC sensitivity levels during the Pre-intervention survey. The survey results were revisited during the intervention and post-intervention phases for further clarification and confirmation. Class materials for the intervention phase were adjusted during this phase based on class observation and student survey results.

4.2.8 *Phase 3: Intervention phase*

During Phase 3, the intervention phase, implementation of the plurilingual and IC approaches took place (see Figure 22). The researcher was able to teach Les' group of students. Feedback was collected regularly after each class when we met for a post-lesson reflection. Students were asked to keep learning diaries, which doubled as an educational activity, with the students' focus on writing skills enhancement. Students learning dairies were submitted through a digital platform.

Phase	Content	Stakeholders	Data collection tools	Objective
Intervention	• Teaching • Class observation • Introduction of 10 educational lessons and tasks • After-class discussions/ reflection (T)*	• Researcher • 1 T* • 1 class	• Learning diaries (S)* • After-class discussions/reflection (T)* • Observation • Field notes	• To implement the designed tasks in a LINC class environment • To demonstrate to the teacher in the authentic environment how PL & IC tasks can be implemented • To collect Ss'* and T's*ongoing feedback on the tasks and the approach and their perception of their effectiveness

Figure 22: Intervention phase

The objective of Phase 3 was to investigate the practical outcomes of the implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches and the changes in students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the language learning approach. Another objective was to model plurilingual and intercultural educational approaches for the practicing teacher. The aim was to use the LINC authentic environment, implementing ten educational activities specifically designed for the purpose of the research. Finally, the additional objective was to collect students' and teacher's ongoing feedback on the suggested approaches.

The intervention phase was conducted over a period of two months with Les' group of students. Prior to each task, an explanation was provided to the students on the relevance of the tasks for their English language skills improvement, their learning skills development and the approach taken. As it was expected that the proposed educational approaches might contradict the students' expectations regarding language learning classes, a hypothesis confirmed by the pilot phase of the research was that prior explanation of the tasks would help to reduce any possible negative perceptions caused by the lack of understanding.

Task introduction. Before introducing each task, I ensured that a proper explanation was given to the participants on the objectives of the task and how it might help them reach their learning goals. During this stage, minor materials adjustments continued as a result of learning about students and their interests. This was done to ensure relevance of the materials to the specific group of students and promote a higher level of students' inclusion and engagement.

During the intervention phase, students were also introduced to the concept of learning diaries and were asked to provide their feedback after each lesson by filling in an interactive feedback form. The digital tool (live worksheets) was demonstrated again, although most of the students were familiar with the platform already. The submission process was presented to ensure a higher task completion and submission rate. Participants were also provided with the rationale for using learning diaries as part of the research work. Students were advised that working with the learning diaries would help them to enhance their

writing skills. Feedback on persistent language errors was provided to the students as a whole group so that the author of the original error was not identified. This allowed for increased confidence and engagement in the educational process among students. They were not afraid to make a mistake, in addition to observing that their colleagues might have similar questions about a discussed text. Students' perception of an additional opportunity to practice their writing skills and contribute to the overall research goal was positive.

Teacher reflection sessions. The reflection sessions took place after each class during the intervention phase. There was an introductory session, conducted after the third observed class during the pre-intervention class. The reflective session started by providing the teacher with more information on the plurilingual and intercultural approaches in language education. Les asked questions during the introductory research session and expressed concerns, specifically about the English-only policy established at the institution. Les also emphasized that she strongly reinforces the policy in her classrooms. The class observation also confirmed this at the beginning of the research cycle.

Les' concern about the English-only policy breach was addressed by suggesting guided use of L1 for student inclusion, enriching their learning experience and effectively achieving the learning outcomes, including improving English learning skills. Les seemed to remain skeptical specifically about the L1 use. Recommendations on the related state-of-the-art publications were also provided to her as Les demonstrated an interest in reading more about the topic. The research timeline and the final goals were also communicated to Les to facilitate a better understanding of the research process and the proposed teaching approaches.

The reasons for the task topic selection and their explanation within the specific language program of LINC were also discussed during the first session. We both agreed that the research and the successful (or unsuccessful) application would represent essential contributions to the language teaching practices within LINC, and if successful, the results could be used by other teachers to improve their practices and supported by research findings. Successful results from the research could support teachers' adoption of

plurilingual and IC approaches within LINC, should it be questioned concerning officially established English-only institutional policy.

Reflective practices followed and took place after each class during the intervention phase. The time allocated to each session was not always consistent, as Les was also working with another class, and often her availability was limited. However, Les remained committed to at least ten minutes of reflective practice after each class, often staying for as long as 30 minutes (see Appendix H.I). Les' interest in participating and engaging in the process was observed. A flexible format was allowed so that Les could talk through her issues or concerns in relation to each lesson topic, the teaching approach and her perception of the proposed plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC classroom environment.

4.2.9 *Summary*

This section described the main objectives of the intervention phase. It outlined how plurilingual and intercultural educational approaches can be implemented into the LINC program environment and how educational tasks were designed and delivered to the class of students. In addition, it described how feedback from the students and teacher's on the plurilingual and IC educational approaches was gathered.

During the intervention phase, ten educational lessons were delivered to the participating students and a teacher. All students participated in the lessons and were observed to be engaged in the learning process. After each lesson, regular reflective practices took place with the participating teacher. Field notes from reflective practices were collected. Students were asked to maintain learning diaries, by providing consistent feedback for the educational activities after each lesson.

The observation was also conducted during the intervention phase, and field notes were kept. Changes in students' and teachers' perceptions of the plurilingual and IC approach to English language learning, in addition to perceptions concerning L1 use, were identified and will be explored further in the following chapter. The teacher also observed students' high engagement in educational practice.

4.2.10 Phase 4: Post-intervention phase

The main objectives of the post-intervention phase were to collect the data from my research participants and to track changes in their perception of the proposed activities (see Figure 23). The post-intervention phase was essential for gathering quantitative and qualitative data to support the research.

Phase	Content	Stakeholders	Data collection tools	Objective
Post-intervention	• Post-intervention S's survey • T's final interview • Analysis of notes from teacher reflection sessions	• Researcher • 1 T* • 1 class	• Survey (Ss)* • Semi-structured interview (T)* • Field notes from RP (T)*	• To collect data from students and the teacher to see if their perception has changed after the educational experience • To gather quantitative & qualitative data to support the hypothesis

Figure 23: Post-intervention phase

During Phase 4, a post-intervention students' survey was distributed. To ensure the completion of the survey, students were asked to complete it during the last class of the research cycle. A final semi-structured interview with the teacher was also conducted after the delivery of all ELT tasks. All collected data were analyzed, and results were recorded.

Post-intervention student survey. After completing the last task of the research cycle lessons, the post-intervention student survey was given to participants. Approximately 15 minutes were allocated for students to complete the survey. They were encouraged to ask questions if needed. In addition, the teacher and I were available to clarify unknown words or concepts. The survey was created on Survey Monkey, and a link was sent to students by e-mail. It had nine questions, four repeated from the pre-intervention student survey. The

repeated pre-intervention survey questions were used to ensure students' complete understanding of the questions and track changes in perception concerning the notions.

In Question 1, students were asked to indicate their names so that tracking of changes in the student perceptions was possible. One student failed to include their name, but it did not affect the results, as it was easy to cross-reference with the class list to identify them.

Question 2, "Do you think it is good to use your first language, or other languages, to learn English?" aimed at tracking the change in students' perception concerning the use of L1 in the LINC English learning environment. Question 3, "Do you think it is good to speak other languages in Canada, not just English or French?" aimed at tracking the shift in students' perception concerning plurilingual skills and their application within the Canadian context. It also reflected students' perception of Ontario, Canada's linguistically diverse and inclusive society.

Question 4, "Do you think it is important to learn about Canadian culture during the English class?" referred to the importance of the cultural component and the IC competence inclusion in the LINC ELT classes. Question 5 asked about the importance of other (outside of the Canadian bilingual framework) cultural components within the LINC ELT. Participants were asked if they thought it is important to learn about other cultures (not Canadian) during the English class. The following question, Question 6, referred to students' experience with L1 use in the English learning environment. Participants were asked if it was helpful when the teacher allowed them to speak their L1 to understand the task better. As LINC's official English-only policy remains in place, it was deemed essential to demonstrate to the students and the teacher that the appropriate use of L1 might benefit the programs' learning outcomes' achievement.

Question 7, aimed at collecting information concerning the type of influence on students' perception. Participants were asked if they changed their opinion about using their L1 for English learning after the research-related educational experience. The following question, Question 8, aimed at gathering data about students' experiences while incorporating the Canadian cultural components in the LINC ELT classes. Participants were asked if they enjoyed learning more about Canadian culture. The last question, Question 9, referenced to cultural (outside of the Canadian official bilingual framework)

aspects and students' learning experiences during the research. Participants were asked if they liked learning more about their classmate's cultures. The post-intervention survey results will be discussed in the following chapter.

Teacher Interview. At the end of the Intervention phase of the research cycle, the teacher was interviewed in relation to their experience within the plurilingual and IC educational approaches within the LINC. The interview, 30 minutes, was arranged outside of class time. A semi-structured interview format was used (see Appendix G.II). It allowed for flexibility and a natural flow of the conversation and for the teacher to be able to provide meaningful feedback concerning specific areas of research, as per teachers' perception. Zoom was used to conduct a virtual semi-structured interview.

The goal of the interview was to collect teacher's feedback on their experience and to confirm any shift in their perspective regarding the suggested approaches with the LINC educational environment. Les expressed her interest in the final interview participation and conveyed that she believed she now understood the notion of IC and plurilingualism in relation to the adult ELT within LINC. Les also expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the research, enhance their professional development and use research materials in future classes. Les also indicated that she would be seeking further opportunities to participate in research projects if allowed by the educational institution.

4.3 Ethical Considerations

It was also part of the consideration to ensure that this research did not have a negative effect on individuals within and beyond the scope of this research. Informed written consent was obtained from the participants before the start of the research and kept on file digitally for the duration of the research cycle. After the conclusion of the final phase of the research, all student-produced materials were deleted. Ensuring the security of the data collected was important. Therefore digital, password-protected platforms were used to collect data from all participants.

As this research dealt with human participants, ensuring a respectful environment while working with all students and teachers was essential. It was also ensured, to respect some potential participants right to withdraw from the study and, therefore, to delete their data and count it towards the research findings.

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured for all participants. All identifiable markers were removed after data collection. Participating educational institutions were not named; in addition, all participants were given fictitious names making it impossible to identify them. As this research involved working with some vulnerable participants, no negative effect on that group of students was ensured. Transparency of this research findings was also ensured. No results were altered to fit the researcher's overall expectation. In addition, this research's data are original and not based on previous research work.

4.4 Summary

This methodology chapter has presented the research methodology and design, by describing the specific approach to data collection and analysis. It provided a detailed description of the four phases of the research, including research participants, and tools used for data collection. It also provided an overview of this research's limitations and ethical considerations.

I have described how this research was conducted over four phases, including the Pilot phase, which provided preliminary results concerning the required documentation, educational materials and digital platforms' use. The Pilot phase results were taken into consideration when working on the following research, including the pre-intervention, Intervention and post-intervention phases.

Concerning the post-intervention phase of the research, the main objectives were to gather quantitative and qualitative data to support the hypothesis and demonstrate that plurilingual and intercultural approaches could be successfully implemented in LINC programs in Ontario, taking into consideration the program's strengths and limitations. It was executed by collecting data from the research participants in relation to the changes in perception of the proposed approaches. The post-intervention student survey and final

interview with the teacher were used to collect the required data. All data collection instruments were used as planned and within the time allocated.

Analysis of field notes taken during the research cycle also took place during the post-intervention phase, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Based on the obtained data and results of the post-intervention phase of the research, conclusions were drawn, which will also be presented in the following chapter.

Before proceeding to the study results and discussion, it is important to acknowledge that with respect to the research positionality, I could be considered an insider due to my involvement in multiple capacities (as a materials developer, researcher, mentor and teacher) and this perspective can be considered emic (Fetterman, 2008). At the same time, the etic ontological position was maintained due to the specific research environment. The diverse backgrounds of the participants, in addition to the LINC educational environment, with its specific characteristics and limitations, were unfamiliar prior to the commencement of this research. I believe that maintaining multiple positions could be achieved at the same time, which allows for objectivity within the research.

5 Results and Discussion

This chapter will present and discuss the research findings. It will start with showcasing and interpreting FG results and pilot phase results. Followed by the material adjustment section, where the final tasks' program is outlined. The description and discussion of the study results, presented through a variety of themes, will follow. Finally, this chapter will present research participants and will describe changes in the participants' perceptions concerning plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC. The results of the study will be triangulated using a variety of data sources.

5.1 Research Participants

This study included a total of 33 participants partaking in different phases of the research. Three teachers took part in the focus group. Another teacher and 13 students participated in the pilot phase. One more teacher with her class of 18 students engaged in the intervention phase, contributing to the main case study results.

5.1.1 Pilot phase teacher's profile

The teacher who participated in the Pilot phase was given the pseudonym Aziz. He is a bilingual male teacher (Russian as L1 and English as L2). He shared his L1 with ten of the 16 students in the group. Aziz had a graduate-level degree (MA) in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) and had over ten years of teaching experience, with the last five years teaching within the LINC Ontario program. Aziz's profile did not fully align with the LINC teachers' profile in the LINC evaluation report (see Chapter 2), falling under the minority group within the evaluation report based on gender, bilingual skills, and level of education.

5.1.2 Pilot phase students' profiles

The class that participated in the pilot phase of the study consisted of 16 students. However, only 13 students were present during the observed lessons. Low attendance corresponds to the LINC and immigrant-focused language programs' description (see

Chapter 2). The student group was a mixed-level class, with LINC levels three, four and five combined (lower A2- lower B1). Of the students in attendance, 85% were over the age of 50, and 77% shared Russian as their L1. Additionally, 85% of the students had a university degree, among which 15% had graduate-level degrees. Most of this group of students were female and, at the time of this study, had been living in Canada for a period of two to five years. The class profile was built on a combination of the students' responses to the pre-intervention student survey and bio data provided by the teacher.

5.1.3 *Institution's profile*

The research site was the largest and one of the most diverse public-school boards in Canada, an educational provider with approximately 600 schools located in one of the biggest cities in Ontario. The school board has 247,000 students at elementary and secondary levels, in addition to 130,000 students in adult learning programs (including LINC). It also employs over 40,000 teachers and instructors, often teaching across different programs within the organization.

5.1.4 *The intervention teacher's profile*

The intervention teacher, anonymized as Les, had over 20 years of experience within the LINC program and had a master's degree in teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from Ontario, Canada. Les was a female teacher who showed a very positive attitude and was, in general, welcoming toward students. The English-only policy was strongly imposed in the class, as per institutional direction.

Les had a vast cultural exposure and an immigrant family upbringing. Although she was born in Canada, her parents emigrated to Canada from another non-English/French-speaking European country. Some of her immediate family members remained in Europe, so Les had a firm connection to a different national culture outside of the Canadian bilingual framework. In addition, she had spent several years living and working abroad at the same time acquiring an L2. At the time of the research, Les spoke English (L1), French (L2) and German (L2).

Furthermore, Les belonged to a cultural minority group within Canada, which helped her connect to her students, as she understood the importance of IC competence. Les appeared to be empathetic and able to relate to the adaptation process that newcomers go through in Canada.

Les also demonstrated an open mind toward new learning and cultural experiences. She mentioned that in her everyday life, within the community, she liked being exposed to different cultures, for example, eating in authentic international restaurants. She also had experience in mitigating issues that involved communication difficulties between Canadian residents and newcomers to Canada. Les' background and professional attitudes made her an excellent candidate for this study.

5.1.5 The intervention students' profiles

The class consisted of 18 adult students but was divided into two groups once a week (see Figure 24 and Figure 25). The groups consisted of ten and eight students, respectively. One student did not wish to participate, and the respective data was not used for this study. All participating students are referred to by pseudonyms in this thesis.

All students tested at Canadian Language Benchmarks Level 3 (CLB), which corresponds to the A2 level (see Appendix H.IV), as per the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (Piccardo, 2018). The LINC assessment center conducted the testing prior to assigning students to the appropriate level classes.

Research Name	Gender	Age group	# of Languages	L1	Languages	Languages used at home	First Country	Canada at the time of the research	Number of years in LINC	Level of education completed
Aly	F	50-55	3	Arabic	Somali, Arabic	English	Somalia	6	0,2	Elementary
Alaa	F	55+	5	Arabic	Arabic, Urdu, Punjabi, Kurdish, English	L1 or language other than English	Pakistan	4	0,4	No formal education
Henry	M	50-55	3	Tigrinya	Hebrew, Arabic, Tigrinya	L1 or language other than English	Eritrea	2,5		1 HE (Some College)
Hayan	F	55+	2	Korean	Korean, English	L1 or language other than English	South Korea	3	0,4	HE (College Diploma)
Masha	F	55+	2	Arabic	Arabic, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	8		3 No formal education
Nadine	F	55+	2	Arabic	Arabic, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	6	3,5	Elementary
Nura	F	50-55	4	Arabic	Arabic, Assyrian, French, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	2		2 Highschool
Ridhima	F	35-39	3	Arabic	Arabic, Assyrian, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	3		2 HE(BA)
Rihanna	F	45-49	4	Somali	Arabic, French, Somali, English	L1 or language other than English	Somalia	4,5		2 Elementary
Anna	F	55+	4	Ukrainian	Russian, Ukrainian, Chechen, English	L1 or language other than English	Ukraine	12		2 Ph. D. degree

Figure 24: Student pre-intervention survey. Group 1

Research Name	Gender	Age group	# of Languages	L1	Languages	Languages used at home	First Country	Number of years in Canada at the time of the	Number of years in LINC	Level of education completed
Aisha	F	45-49	4	Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean	Arabic, Assyrian, Chaldean, English	English	Iraq	8	4	Elementary
Genry	M	45-49	2	Arabic	Arabic, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	10	3	Elementary
Fatima	F	55+	3	Tigrinya	Arabic, Tigrinya, English	L1 or language other than English	Eritrea	1	0,2	Elementary
Lily	F	50-55	3	Somali	Arabic, Somali, English	L1 or language other than English	Somalia	6	5	Elementary
Lina	F	45-49	2	Arabic	Arabic, English	L1 or language other than English	Iraq	9	4	Elementary
Nabila	F	55+	4	Punjabi	Gujarati, English, Punjabi, Hindi	L1 or language other than English	India	1,7	1,5	HE (Some college)
Nawra	F	35-39	2	Arabic	Arabic, English	L1 or language other than English	Yemen	6	1	Elementary
Mariana	F	20-25	4	Spanish	Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, English	L1 or language other than English	Dominican Repu	2	0,3	HE (Some University)

Figure 25: Student pre-intervention survey. Group 2

During the pre-intervention phase of the research, students were asked to complete a pre-intervention survey. The objectives of the survey were to collect their bio information, including their educational and cultural backgrounds, to learn about their beliefs concerning the value of L1 and different cultures in Canada and to gather information on their perception of plurilingual and IC approaches in language learning. The data collected also allowed for a better understanding of the class dynamics. Most participants (61%) were over the age of 50, and 22% indicated their age group as 45-49. In addition, 17% belonged to the 20-39 age group. Furthermore, 90% of the students were female.

Students' geographical and cultural backgrounds were diverse and included nine different countries and 20 different languages, including English. It was recorded that 67% of the class spoke three or more languages. In addition, 80% of students indicated that they predominantly speak L1 or other languages they know well at home. Only 20% of participating students indicated their use of English with friends and family.

The largest group of participants (33%) had been in Canada for six to eight years, and most students (39%) had attended the LINC program for one to two years (at the time of the study). However, a trend connecting the duration of stay in Canada and the duration of the LINC program attendance was not consistent. All but two of the students were taking the LINC program part-time. Therefore, completing a level would likely take them one academic year, as per Les. Those attending LINC full-time were expected to complete a level in six months. The educational level of students within the participating LINC class was diverse, varying from a doctorate to an illiterate level, with most students having completed elementary-level education.

It should be outlined that the students provided this information, and it was not verified. The data was, however, complemented by students' comments and additional information provided during the research cycle. A potential discrepancy was noted concerning some students' level of education. For example, Rhianna indicated completion of elementary level of education. However, she was observed to be potentially illiterate. My assessment, based on class observation and access to some of her regular assignments, was echoed by the teachers' assessment and their observation. Rhianna's assessment was not affected by this issue. The school conducted the original English language level assessment, and

Rhianna was assigned to an appropriate level as per the established process. She remained in the class and had been in the LINC program for two years at the time of the study.

5.1.6 *Focus Group Participants*

The focus group was conducted with three teachers. They will be referred to by the pseudonyms Ramon, Pedro and James. All three teachers indicated extensive experience teaching in ESL and LINC (see Figure 26).

Characteristics	Ramon	Pedro	James
Experience teaching ESL	15 yrs	15 yrs	10 yrs
Experience teaching	10 yrs	7 yrs	5 yrs
L2 competency	French L2 Japanese L2	Spanish L2 Portuguese L1	Spanish L2
Family connections to the cultures outside of the official bilingual framework in Canada	Immediate family members	Immediate family members, including spouse	Immediate family members, including spouse
Heritage	Raised in Canada	Born and raised in Canada	Born and raised in Canada
Level of education	BA (ELT) + TESOL	MA (ELT) + TESOL	BA (ELT) + TESOL
Overseas living and working experience	10 yrs	20 yrs	7 yrs

Figure 26: focus group's participants characteristics.

All three teachers also indicated significant overseas living and working experience. In addition, all three teachers have L2 competencies (Ramon speaks French and Japanese as L2, Pedro speaks Portuguese (L1) and Spanish (L2), and James speaks Spanish as L2).

All three teachers have family connections to the cultures outside of Canada's official culturally bilingual framework (all three teachers have immediate family members, including spouses, from different cultural areas outside of Canada). Two out of three teachers were born in Canada (Pedro and James) and were raised in Canada. All participants have at least a bachelor's degree (with one teacher, Pedro, holding a master's level degree in ESL). Two out of three teachers (Ramon and Pedro) have a degree in English teaching, and all three teachers have TESOL training.

5.2 FG Results

The focus group participants' responses were gathered, transcribed, and analyzed. As an outcome of the FG results analysis, 11 themes were detected (see Figure 27). The limitations and strengths of the LINC program's outlines were supported by the FG results, reflecting the professional opinion of the experienced LINC teachers.

Number	Theme titles
Theme 1	Teacher establishes the teaching approach
Theme 2	Strength of the program and cultural values
Theme 3	The programs' structure as a weakness
Theme 4	Teachers' skills
Theme 5	L1 use and English-only policy
Theme 6	Materials selection
Theme 7	Lack of resources
Theme 8	Stereotypes
Theme 9	Cultural diversity
Theme 10	Students' L2 skills
Theme 11	Assessment

Figure 27: Focus group themes

5.2.1 Theme 1: The teacher establishes the teaching approach

One theme that emerged during the FG was the implementation of the plurilingual and intercultural approaches within the LINC depended more on a specific teacher and less on an educational establishment. All three teachers underlined that it was their responsibility to bring cultural content to the classroom and create opportunities for intercultural learning, “I think teachers should be bringing in the class more cultural examples, as it boosts communication and will make students talk. This is true regardless of their level” (James, FG transcript, Pos. 29, Appendix F.II).

I think my classes were inclusive... where I taught. We were trying to ensure it was inclusive. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn about other cultures in addition to Canadian culture (James, FG transcript, Pos. 47, Appendix F.II).

The variety of cultural examples was seen as beneficial for students' language and overall cultural learning purposes, regardless of the students' level of English language competency and educational background.

In addition, building on the fact that Canada is a multicultural country, all participants outlined that the associated values of plurilingualism should be demonstrated in language teaching, "If we accept Canada as a plurilingual society, then diverse language skills should be valued, and it should be demonstrated" (James, FG transcript, Pos. 40, Appendix F.II). This suggests that currently, LINC programming in general does not use plurilingual elements in ELT teaching. Some practicing teachers, however, might already be able to see the need to change the approach to be able to meet educational needs better.

None of the participants noted an educational establishment throughout their careers that intervened in their teaching approaches on an administrative level, should those be an alternative to the officially established approach. This showcases the fact that the implementation of a teaching approach in most educational environments depends largely on a teacher and not, in general, on the educational institution. This, however, might not be applicable to all LINC educational establishments at different levels and with a variety of structures.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Strength of the program and cultural values

The strength of the LINC program emerged as another common theme during the FG. Among its benefits, LINC was seen as a program that provides practical knowledge to students, essential for newcomers in their day-to-day lives in Ontario, Canada.

Students learn how to open a bank account, how to make appointments at the doctor's office and so on. This is very practical knowledge that they will use day-to-day and is essential for their basic needs (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 8, Appendix F. II).

LINC was described as providing students with applicable practical knowledge, but it also helped with situating newcomers to Ontario, Canada, in a new cultural context. Students learn about main Canadian historical events and traditions. They also gain an understanding of culturally determined Canadian perceptions of global processes and events. This was deemed by the teachers as essential for newcomers' settlement within the new society. It was also considered beneficial for IC skills development, which is critical for Canada's settlement and employment process, as expressed in Pedro's comments.

Let's take hockey as an example. Students are taught that hockey can be a good theme to pick for small talks at work with colleagues. Now those colleagues might not be familiar with hockey at all, as they also came from another country, where it is not practiced, so it might not be practically useful. However, LINC is an IRCC funded program, and hockey is perceived as part of Canadian culture. It might be a wrong concept to be used for small talks, but it needs to be described, so students have an idea of what it is (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 25, Appendix F.II).

This illustrates that students within the program were taught perceived parts of traditional Canadian identity, so they have a better understanding of what those are when settling into a new cultural environment. The participants saw it as essential for many contextual situations, including future work environments. It also aligned with the funding source of the program, the Canadian Government's objectives and its goals of promoting what has been seen as part of cultural identity. Therefore, those have been often artificially transmitted through the LINC program.

This also showcases a possible consideration that the current approach might need to be adjusted, as Canadian society has changed and, in practical terms, has been functioning within a diverse cultural environment, where the need for IC skills and understanding of such diversity might be greater. Therefore, new cultural markers might need to be added to the program, and additional skills fostered through the LINC program. This might help to meet current immigrant learners' needs better and assist them more efficiently with integration into Canadian society.

5.2.3 Theme 3: *The program's structure as a weakness*

Another common theme observed was the LINC program's structure. Participating in FG teachers specified the program's weakness, as it permitted students to remain within one level for a significant length of time without intensifying learning progress.

Students can stay in one level (class) for a full year, regardless of their level. It takes six to eight months to learn languages like Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese and two years to learn Japanese from scratch. There is no reason for students to stay two years in a program and not reach B2, unless there is a learning disability or any other external factors affecting the outcome (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 6, Appendix F.II).

The FG teachers saw the program as not actively encouraging the progress of some students. It also might have led to delayed employment, which contradicted another of the program's main goals, "I mean, it almost encourages students to stay longer in the program, as they get paid by the government. It is obvious. The longer they stay, the more they receive" (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 5, Appendix F.II). This might be an indication of the LINC program's insufficiency, where students are not encouraged to progress as fast as they possibly would if in a private ESL program.

In addition, the LINC program allows students to repeat the level several times. It also provides several delivery modes, including full-time and part-time options. The last option allowed students to combine some employment or other duties, such as childcare, for example, with the program. Employment that LINC students were able to secure while within the program was usually low-skilled work that required minimum English language skills. This often delays students' language and learning skills development progress further. Current LINC educational approaches did not appear to effectively meet the overall program goals. The program seemed to effectively meet the goals at a basic level only. "...basic level of knowledge is enough for students to start in the workforce. The further learning was up to the students" (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos.55, Appendix F.II). FG teachers pointed out that the LINC program might provide enough skills for students to start certain low-level jobs, but it did not provide a "diversity of options" in terms of employment (James, FG transcript, Pos.52, Appendix F.II).

5.2.4 *Theme 4: Teachers' competencies*

Lack of LINC teachers' competencies was also brought up by participants during the FG. Refreshing the LINC teachers' job requirements was seen as a possible solution. The three FG teachers indicated lack of training, IC skills and experience, based on their personal experience, as potentially negatively impacting plurilingual and IC approaches implementation in LINC.

I needed more training on methodology. You complete TESOL, but no one explains why you should be teaching in that way. Training lacks theory on a teaching approach itself. And of course, lack of Intercultural experience was noticeable. Again, I was barely taught that (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 15, Appendix F.II).

The lack of preparedness to teach the class was underlined by all the FG teachers. Although required for the LINC teaching job, training and education were met, lack of methodology knowledge in combination with lack of IC skills and experiences made the FG teachers feel unprepared to perform their work and, therefore, to make regarding teaching approaches. "Lack of intercultural experience was obvious in my case, but I also observed that with other teachers" (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 16, Appendix F.II).

It became evident that all participants saw a correlation between teachers' level of professional experience and preparedness and their ability to implement plurilingual and intercultural approaches, "I think the issue is...teachers are coming in with no professional experience" (James, FG transcript, Pos. 30, Appendix F.II). It suggests that the LINC program needed to reconsider the established requirements for the teachers' academic professional training and experience to ensure practicing teachers were skilled to foster the required skills in students to meet adult immigrant learners' needs.

Participants put emphasis on LINC teachers' L2 skills. All participants saw it as an essential qualification for LINC teachers that should be included in the job requirements, "I also think that a LINC teacher should have L2 skills or experience learning a foreign language at least. Otherwise, they have no idea where their students are coming from" (James, FG transcript, Pos. 42, Appendix F.II). The three FG teachers considered it important for a LINC teacher to have experience in acquiring an additional language so they were able to be empathetic with their students. Such experience could help teachers to

identify learners' knowledge gaps better and to assess students and their educational needs more efficiently. In addition, to be able to relate to their students and appreciate their learning experience overall, "ESL or LINC teacher should have theoretical knowledge of pedagogy, be empathetic and always up to date on the current teaching approaches. It is certainly a value if they speak another language" (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 43, Appendix F.II).

This aligned with Hebert et al. (2008) ideas on making L2 and IC skills essential for teaching qualifications to meet immigrant English language learners' needs (p. 61). When discussing the teacher's L2 skills, it was also observed that the language level was less important than the overall experience of learning a new language, as LINC teachers with L2 skills might be able to apply their personal experience to ELT and help their students by using tools and methods that they found beneficial for their own practical experience. This might need to be considered when working with existing and new ELT teachers.

5.2.5 Theme 5: L1 use and English-only policy

The theme of L1 use in LINC emerged in FG discussions displaying diverse evaluations. The FG teachers demonstrated a variety of opinions. These included the "not fair" notion, discussed in relation to the teacher's additional language skills and inability to assist all students equally.

If students speak the same languages, they can be put in groups and that might boost learning, but not always groups are possible. I can translate for one student, but what about the rest? It is not fair (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 37, Appendix F.II).

Both Pedro and Ramon saw the use of L1 as beneficial, but only within a specific class environment. By the same teachers, L1 use was perceived as benefiting some students while disadvantaging others. Aziz also confirmed this thought in the Pilot phase of the research. He expressed a similar perception of the "not fair" notion of L1 use and the advantage provided to some students by teachers who share a common language besides English. Therefore, this guilty feeling of plurilingual teachers might prevent them from using L1 in their ELT classroom, even if they appreciate the benefits and acknowledge the

learning potential of such. This might also be why some teachers limit plurilingual approaches implementation in ELT.

At the same time, some reliance on conventional beliefs by the FG-participating teachers became evident. "From my experience, if students know their teacher understands their L1, most of them will not try hard to speak English" (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 39, Appendix F.II). Teachers' reliance on stereotypes was discussed in the literature review section and was noted as one of the potential limitations for plurilingual, and IC approaches implementation.

Another theme concerning the L1 use was the metalinguistic connections and the associated benefits for language learning purposes.

On a technical level, sort to speak...it is important to help students build metalinguistic connections, so it will make it easier for students to understand grammatical structures. Once you understand the grammar, it is about building vocabulary (James, FG transcript, Pos. 48, Appendix F.II).

The benefits of L1 use in additional language learning, specifically when learning new grammatical structures, were identified by the FG participants. Adult language learners tended to benefit from building on their existing skills and knowledge. The LINC teachers were able to help students to build metalinguistic connections. Another sub-theme within the L1 concept that came to light during the FG was the negative perception by teachers of the English-only policy.

I disagree with the English-only policy, as it demonstrates the disconnect between the researchers and teachers. It's like when I learned how to draw, and now, when I am studying to be an architect, I am not allowed to draw. It does not make sense (James, FG transcript, Pos. 40-41, Appendix F. II).

A negative perception of English-only policy in an English-learning classroom showed the connectivity of research with some practicing teachers' approaches. The FG teachers demonstrated an understanding of the adult language learners' needs and their ability to build on existing repertoire and skills to acquire new language skills.

5.2.6 Theme 6: Material content selection

Learning materials within the LINC tended to reflect the local Canadian context only. All participants identified a narrow approach to material selection within the program.

I had an issue with recourses, specifically with the monocultural and narrow approach to material selection. I was only allowed to use Canadian-focused materials; when in a private ESL program, where I also taught, I was allowed to select foreign-focused materials in English that often provided different perspectives. That presented a challenge (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 18, Appendix F.II).

Working with Canadian culture-focused materials only might be problematic. Firstly, teachers would only be able to present one view when looking at a specific issue or event using those materials. Secondly, students might form an incorrect perception of Canada, as the reality might differ from the resource's representation. A plurilingual society was not often reflected in the traditional LINC monocultural materials. Therefore, the texts 'perspectives might not be effective in preparing learners to settle in Canada or contribute to their IC skills development. Pedro described how he brought other resources into his classes, "Again, when teaching private ESL, I was allowed to use BBC materials or articles from South Africa, for example. This helps to bring a different perspective to the students" (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 25, Appendix F.II).

A lack of culturally diverse materials might have a negative impact on global skills development. It might also negatively impact students' engagement in the educational process and create obstacles for students to learn from specific topics or concepts. Therefore, the educational outcome and students' performance might be negatively affected.

5.2.7 Theme 7: Lack of resources

All FG participants referred to the need for more resources within LINC. The lack of funding might have contributed to some of the limitations teachers have outlined during the FG

What I recall is a lack of resources and that classes did not really meet the needs of the students, at least not efficiently. Thinking about the reasons for it...its understaffing, lack of teaching recourses, its lack of funding for sure (James, FG transcript, Pos. 17, Appendix F.II).

A lack of resources within the existing LINC program might have a negative effect on the implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches, as it might limit the ELT material selection, access to educational resources, teachers' professional development and new teaching staff recruitment. Although limited resources might restrain the diversity of options for LINC ELT, this should not have a detrimental effect on the core plurilingual and IC approaches implementation within the program.

5.2.8 *Theme 8: Stereotypes*

The students' and teachers' stereotypes as a common theme also emerged during the FG. It was observed that teachers with sufficient international exposure do not always demonstrate a high level of IC sensitivity and open attitudes toward diverse learner groups and the potential of plurilingual and IC approaches implementation within the LINC classes. Teachers demonstrated some reliance on stereotypes despite extensive international and cross-cultural experiences.

In my experience, Asian students are shy, Latin Americans are talkative, and Arabs are not, so you need to be mindful of that as well. Too many concepts can be confusing to the students, and it will make learning English more complicated for them (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 27, Appendix F.II).

Reliance on stereotypes, however, was not limited to teachers' beliefs only. LINC students demonstrated cultural bias as well, based on the participants' ELT experience.

In Toronto, some of my students were questioning a teacher, who did not sound Canadian. The teacher was originally from Toronto, but had a touch of British accent, as she went to school in the UK. She was also of Asian descent, so wasn't blond with blue eyes. What is it?... Some students told me "James (name changed), you look like a Canadian". What is it again? I am still struggling to understand what was meant (James, FG transcript, Pos. 31, Appendix F.II).

It also needs to be noted that some teachers were aware of the teachers' biases within the LINC ELT and acknowledged that. "There are lots of biases, but also on the student's side." (James, FG transcript, Pos. 31, Appendix F.II). Exposing this kind of self-awareness and being at times affected by stereotypes, acknowledging how it might potentially affect the teaching practices was important. It may allow for practice improvement and the potential implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC.

5.2.9 Theme 9: Cultural diversity

The theme of cultural diversity in Canada and how it was reflected within LINC in Ontario emerged during the FG. The theme appeared to be controversial. It was expressed that diversity is often discussed but not actioned.

Lip service is the first thing that comes to mind. Cultural diversity in Canada is more talked about than practiced. There is certainly less acceptance than people like to think (James, FG transcript, Pos. 22, Appendix F.II).

This was also reflected in the LINC teaching approach and material selection. It was emphasized that teachers are often cautious about incorporating diverse educational content, as it might lead to additional complexities in a class. As per the FG participants, the introduction of diverse cultural material within a culturally diverse student body might lead to controversial discussions that are not always seen as positive, “I think yes, it sounds good in theory, but also it can be confusing for students” (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 24, Appendix F.II). This might also indicate a lack of teaching competencies or preparedness to navigate controversial educational discussions within the class environment, leading students through new knowledge discovery and fostering IC skills in the process.

In addition, many teachers believed that the LINC program’s goal is the assimilation of newcomer within Canadian society, and therefore, students should learn about the perceived traditional Canadian values, “If the main purpose of the program is assimilation, then, students should be exposed to a traditionally perceived culture, so they understand the society better” (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 26, Appendix F.II). The idea of newcomers’ assimilation rather than integration and one-way cultural interaction, rather than a mutual exchange of cultural values, might reemphasize the controversial perception of diversity in Canada and how it affects LINC ELT teaching approaches.

Concerning cultural diversity within ELT materials, it was pointed out by the FG teachers that, ultimately, it depends on each teacher. LINC teachers are often in the position to choose how, when and what type of culturally diverse materials should be introduced within the class environment.

... all students usually like learning about international food, celebrations, and traditions from each other... but LINC's focus is on Canadian culture only. It is ultimately up to each teacher to diversify the classes (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 45, Appendix F.II).

The desire and ability of a teacher to introduce culturally diverse context within a class and utilize it to maximize the learning outcome might also depend on the teacher's professional experience, IC competency and understanding of the value of cultural diversity. If teachers understand the practical value and importance of IC skills and experiences, in addition to the need for IC skills specifically within Canada, they might choose to incorporate IC development elements into their teaching practices within LINC. Such implementation would also require the development of teachers' professional competencies.

I think the issue is...teachers are coming in with no professional experience. Growing up we have seen more diversity in Toronto, at school, and playing with friends, but Canadian ESL overall is not multicultural (James, FG transcript, Pos. 30, Appendix F.II).

All teachers agreed that the current Canadian cultural environment is different from their own experience growing up in Ontario, Canada. All three teachers recall the diverse classes they attended and the culturally inclusive educational system they went through. All FG participants concluded that the lack of cultural diversity and inclusion is evident in the current LINC program.

5.2.10 *Theme 10: Students L2 skills*

The importance of L2 skills in Canada also appeared as a topic the FG discussion. All FG teachers agreed that additional language skills should be important for employment purposes in Canada, which corresponds to the LINC program goals (within the scope of this research, students were learning English as an additional language). However, it was also underlined that L2 languages other than English or French might not be essential for employment in Canada and remain a subject of specific job requirements, "Yes, but the emphasis is on specific language skills: English and French. The rest is very specific to the

job” (Ramon, FG transcript, Pos. 34, Appendix F.II). Some controversy, however, was noted by James, who stated, “Pluralistic society means diverse language skills. I think it sort of implies that services to newcomers should be offered in other languages as well, including LINC.” (FG transcript, Pos. 35, Appendix F.II). This might indicate an understanding of the value and willingness of some LINC teachers to consider plurilingual approaches within ELT.

5.2.11 *Theme 11: Assessment*

Another theme that emerged during the FG discussion was students' assessment. All FG teachers brought up insufficient assessment tools within the LINC program. Standardized testing, which is often used as the main assessment tool for students' assessment, was rated by the teachers as the least effective, "We all know that tests are not effective alone. Tests need to be used in combination with other assessments." (Pedro, FG transcript, Pos. 63, Appendix F.II). This might indicate the need to reassess the LINC assessment rationale. Plurilingual and IC tools and assessment techniques might present a better alternative, as it may be more accurate. In addition, they might provide LINC ELT teachers with better student needs assessment approaches.

5.2.12 *Summary*

The FG interview demonstrated that the LINC program showcases many educational benefits. LINC provides students with practical information and everyday support and helps situate learners in a new environment, meeting their basic needs. However, it was also stressed that the structure and the length of the program might not be efficient, leading to a lack of encouragement for students' progress.

Referring back to the research questions, regarding the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC program, it was also emphasized that the LINC program is often subject to monocultural and monolingual approaches, where other cultural values, perceptions and language skills, outside of the official bilingual framework, might be disregarded. Although the LINC program does not provide a variety of opportunities for

culturally diverse materials and teaching approaches, it largely depends on a teacher to ensure a culturally diverse educational environment and teaching approach. L1 use and reinforcement of English-only policy also mainly appear to depend on a teacher rather than the institution.

FG results supported the relevance of this thesis by demonstrating the disconnect between theoretical research knowledge and practicing teachers' approaches. Teachers were not always utilizing existing research to maximize the learning outcome, and, as a result, they might feel unprepared to address the needs of the multicultural classroom. In addition, demonstrated during the FG, LINC teachers' focus on assimilation, rather than integration of newcomers, might affect the teaching approach and potential implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches. The value of cultural diversity and the benefits of other cultural experiences need to be demonstrated within LINC ELT approaches. LINC learning materials, the structure of the lessons and the program mind need to reflect students' opinions, cultural references, and experiences more efficiently. It appeared to be currently overlooked or disregarded. This helps to form a potential strategy for the plurilingual and IC approaches implementation within LINC, corresponding to the second research question, namely, what is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC?

The LINC program appeared to demonstrate a one-way communication approach, where newcomers were expected to learn and act according to the new cultural environment and where the onus of miscommunication was also on the student only. It underlined that society was not expected to learn from immigrants' experiences or about their cultural values. If Canada is considered multicultural outside of the bilingual framework, then diversity, as one of the values of the society, should be reflected actively within the educational program. Incorporating IC and plurilingual teaching approaches might be an effective approach to achieving the goal and fostering valued IC skills in learners.

FG demonstrated that LINC teachers' job requirements and training might need to be adjusted. Developed IC skills, L2 skills, and knowledge of progressive teaching approaches should be considered. This would ensure teachers are prepared to foster needed skills in learners, create an inclusive educational environment and be able to reach programs' learning outcomes efficiently.

To conclude, FG demonstrated some program strengths alongside multiple limitations that might affect the implementation of the plurilingual and IC approaches within LINC. FG helped to answer the first research question, naming limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches (including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs) within the LINC program. It also assisted in collecting more information to answer the second research question, to indicate the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC.

The FG interview was instrumental in collecting the data, in addition to providing insights into LINC practicing teachers' beliefs concerning the proposed educational approaches. The results of the FG were considered for the next phase of this research.

5.3 Pilot phase results

The Pilot Pre-intervention survey demonstrated that adjustments were required to improve completion and submission rates. For that purpose, ensuring sufficient class time for task completion was essential. Ten minutes were allocated for students to fill out the original survey form. The time offered was insufficient. Many students visibly struggled with locating the required email and attachment. In addition, many students did not understand the questions. As class time and time allocated for the study were limited, it was suggested that students complete the task at home. As a result, the submission rate was low.

Concerning the research consent form, the language selection appeared difficult for the students at their English language level. Some students within the class demonstrated a low level of English (lower A2) and were unfamiliar with many words and concepts. At the same time, factors such as the institution's official English-only policy, legal research requirements for document translation, and the associated cost made it difficult to translate the form into the students' L1. It was deemed important to work with the standard consent form and other documents requiring students' consent. The document's language, however, needed to be adjusted to the appropriate students' level to ensure learners' full understanding of the requirements, their rights and responsibilities within the research cycle. Therefore, it was decided, for the actual intervention, to simplify the language used

for the form while still working with the standard consent form and to complete it during class time when students have an opportunity to clarify unfamiliar terms or ask questions.

Another learning outcome of the pilot pre-intervention stage was the decision made on the use of digital tools. The first attempt to collect data was by using a fillable PDF form. Although it made it easier for some students to complete and allowed for flexibility in question design, the layout of the survey looked outdated; it did not allow for interactive features, and manually copying the required submission email address presented a challenge for many students. In addition, compiling the result data took significant time. It was decided to redesign the questions, so they were suited to the digital tool format and to utilize paid tool features, such as Survey Monkey, for the study purposes going forward. Based on the pilot phase results, during the actual implementation, the intention was to ensure the proper use of the digital platform for task submission, where email selection was automated and submission issues were minimized. Explanation on how to use the platform needed to be provided to the students in advance, if possible, as many students demonstrated difficulties with the ICT skills.

In addition, caution needed to be applied when formulating the questions, as some students might feel intimidated when asked direct questions. They might prefer to provide an ambiguous answer, where possible, especially when collecting personal information.

It was critical for adult learners specifically to ensure their understanding of the task and its relevance to their learning goals. When proposing a new educational approach, it was beneficial to explain what and why was expected from the learners. Providing an example to the students on how to complete the task is instrumental.

Based on the Pilot phase, it became evident that it was important to ensure the teacher's understanding of the plurilingual and IC approaches and the discretionary condition of the teacher's bilingualism. As the participated-in-the-pilot teacher noted bilingualism (where languages were shared with the students) is essential for plurilingual and intercultural approaches implementation within LINC. Therefore, it was beneficial to demonstrate the approach to the teacher. This allowed the teacher to see in practical terms that their bilingualism might be useful but was not required for the successful implementation of

plurilingual and IC approaches. The proposed approaches can be implemented by a monolingual English language teacher.

It was also noted that sufficient time needs to be allocated for consistent teacher reflective practices (RP) on their teaching approach, and for the teacher to provide feedback on the tasks and platforms used for the task completion. I also considered that the after-class reflective practices (RP) might be useful not only for teachers but also for students. Students' RP might allow for a better understanding of the material and present an additional opportunity to practice language skills. Therefore, students learning diaries were introduced for the implementation phase.

During the Pilot phase, students demonstrated a struggle with the English language spelling and were not always able to submit assignments to me, as they were not able to type in the correct email. Based on the Pilot phase results, during the actual research implementation, the intention was to ensure the proper use of the digital platform for task submission, where the email selection was automated and minimized submission issues. Explanation on how to use the platform needed to be provided to the students in advance, if possible, as many students demonstrated struggle with the ICT skills.

Since only two out of ten developed educational lessons were tested during the pilot, no significant adjustment was made to the materials, with the exception of alignment with the new class demographics. The adjustment was made to ensure material relevance to the adult learners and therefore, students' engagement. Objectives of the tasks remained (see Chapter 3). The final materials used during the intervention phase will be discussed in the next section. The Pilot phase results were beneficial in identifying and partially confirming the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC, which referred to sub-question 2 of this study and helped to address this study hypothesis.

5.4 Materials adjustment

Taking into consideration Pilot phase results, educational tasks were adjusted. All tasks were revisited during the Pre-intervention phase to ensure they aligned with the class English level and demographics (see Figure 28). Les provided a class list before the

Intervention phase, and it was ensured by the researcher that all cultures, represented by students in the class were reflected in the tasks and educational exercises.

Lesson's number	Topics
Lesson 1	Introductions
Lesson 2	Language and cultural diversity
Lesson 3	Students' plurilingual identity
Lesson 4	A job interview
Lesson 5	Citizenship
Lesson 6	Work idioms
Lesson 7	Metalinguistic connections
Lesson 8	International food
Lesson 9	Holidays and citizenship
Lesson 10	Interviewing skills

Figure 28: Tasks

For example, topics on holidays and celebrations included samples from each student's cultural background (see Appendix D.VIII). This allowed for students' cultural inclusion in the lessons and enabled them to act as subject matter experts when supplying additional information concerning their culture-specific events or objects. Another example was the topic of international cuisine, which was introduced after analyzing the students' demographics, interests, and learning goals within the program (see Appendix D.VIII). Students were highly engaged while working on this task, and the discussion also continued after the class. The introduction topic task was also adjusted to ensure questions build on students' diverse backgrounds and experiences, inviting students to act as subject matter experts and ensuring a relevant educational environment (see Appendix D.I).

It was also ensured that all tasks corresponded to the CLB level 3 curriculum and aligned with the level-specific objectives. The learners should be able to communicate information concerning everyday needs and, therefore, understand simple formal and informal communication on topics of personal relevance. Students at this level should be

able to read and write simple texts about personal experiences and everyday situations (Hajer et al., 2000). Lessons' topics were also designed with overall LINC program goals in mind, as per the teacher's request. Therefore, the emphasis was placed on employment and settlement in Ontario, Canada.

Authentic materials were utilized to ensure students' learning within the context of the real language environment and situations. Based on Tomlinson's work (2011), it was also ensured that materials are time-saving and suitable for immediate use. One example was the use of a real job interview recording within the Canadian context. Employment and job search in Canada were emphasized as one of the priorities by the program administration and by Les and therefore, job interview topic replaced originally planned during the pilot phase lesson "International women's day". Ensuring that LINC stakeholders' feedback was incorporated, the topic and corresponding tasks were included and prepared for the implementation phase. Students were asked to analyze different employment-related scenarios (see Appendix D.IV). It was also essential to ensure students' understanding of certain behaviours, appearances, and word choices with the intention of helping students with their potential employment in Canada, as aligned with the programs' outcomes.

Following Troncoso and Tomlinson's ideas, materials were inclusive of local and global contexts with a relevant-to-students language (Troncoso, 2010; Tomlinson, 2018). Students also had an opportunity to reflect on their job interview experiences outside and inside of Canada and to explain to their colleagues the main similarities and differences between such. In addition, students had an opportunity to connect some of the job interview performance expectations to the cultural realities in different countries. All tasks within the ten developed lessons were designed considering not only material development principles but also adult immigrant learners' educational needs and requirements. After each lesson, students were invited to provide feedback by filling out the learning diary form provided by the researcher. This provided students with an opportunity to reflect using different learning styles, as per unique students' needs. Each following class started by reviewing the feedback provided, from the writing skills improvement standpoint only. Feedback was always provided anonymously, aimed at the group and not the specific student. This was done to encourage learning and not to intimidate students.

5.4.1 *An overview of the tasks*

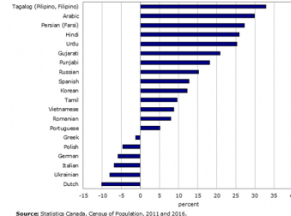
All ten lessons were based on the plurilingual and IC teaching approaches in ELT. Les was always present during the class, observing the teaching and learning process. One day a week, classes were separated (see Appendix H. III). The division into groups made the research itself more complex, as the same topic needed to be delivered twice on the same day when the class was divided. In addition, students sometimes had different opportunities to benefit from peer support and diversity to the extent of the full class. However, during the course of this study, the division in morning and afternoon classes only affected task delivery once, creating additional complexities mentioned above (see Appendix H. III).

Every lesson included at least one opportunity per student to practice their IC skills. Students were invited to share their IC experiences in relation to the topic of the lesson and were provided space for reflection on why the experience took place. This was deemed essential not only for a successful adult student's learning process but also for the participant's understanding of the educational value of the IC and plurilingual approaches.

The educational tasks remained divided into the following thematic blocks: Introduction, Language and Cultural diversity, Students' plurilingual identity, Job interview, Citizenship, Work idioms, Metalinguistic connections, international food, Holidays and citizenship, and Interviewing skills (see Appendix D). Topics were selected based on the LINC program theme requirements. Les was also consulted, and her suggestions, when finalizing the tasks, were incorporated.

For each lesson, a PowerPoint presentation was developed as a tool to present the overview of the activities. It was also used as a reference and a source to access digital platforms when applicable. All digital platforms used were interactive; many had gamification elements and interfaces (Kahoot, Live worksheets, and YouTube, among others). This allowed for the inclusion of ICT skills practice into each task. Each lesson started with a short introduction or ice-breaker activity to engage students in an educational discussion. All activities were built in an interactive mode, using a variety of informational sources. YouTube was used frequently as a way of providing information, for example, within Task 2 (see Figure 29) and at the same time teaching students how to access required information using ICT skills and digital open-access resources.

Chart 2
Change from 2011 to 2016 in the population of certain
immigrant mother tongues, Canada



1. 7 000
2. What are the most spoken languages in the world?
3. Do you know how many languages people speak in Canada?
4. What languages you hear spoken in the community around you? How do you know that those are the languages?
5. Do you believe it is important to have cultural diversity (many people from different countries) in Canada? Why?

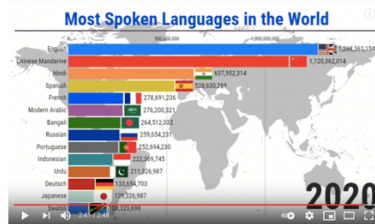


Figure 29: Sample of the task

Drawing on Mandalios (2012), during all lessons within the research cycle, students were encouraged to use bilingual dictionaries to enhance their understanding of the material and engagement in the educational process. This was a change for the students, as bilingual dictionaries were not previously allowed in the class, only monolingual dictionaries were permitted.

The lessons also included reflective tasks (see Figure 30), as per Tomlinson and Masuhara's (2018) recommendations. Students were prompted to reflect on various issues. For example, within Task 3 (see Appendix D. III), students were encouraged to reflect on the values of linguistic diversity in Canada and globally, on the value of cultural experiences and respect for other cultures, and on the value of their language skills (see Figure 30).

Task “Language portrait”:

- Draw your own portrait (5-7 min)
- Groups of 3
- Note taking method
- Include in your portrait “Hello” in your language to teach others.
- Present to the class your classmate’s portrait and what have you learned about her/him.

<https://www.liveworksheets.com/3-xu249428ic>



“Привет” / “Hallo” / Hi

Figure 30: Sample of a task. Language Portrait

Some of the tasks included group work, for example, Lesson 2 (see Figure 31). On the first occasion, students were divided into groups where members of the group did not share L1 - as per usual for the LINC program approach. They were tasked with asking each other questions about a specific cultural experience and then presenting each other responses to the rest of the class in English (see Appendix D. II).

Task :

- In your own language think about the situation, where you had to deal with a person from different culture (including Canadian).
- Talk it through with yourself
- In groups of 2-3 discuss your examples):
 - Why do you remember that situation?
 - What was the result or your experience?
 - What did you learn from that experience? (10-12 min)
- Now, present your partner’s experience to the class (5-7 min)



Figure 31: Sample of a task. Language and Cultural diversity

Each group was assigned a virtual space using Zoom breakout rooms. I joined all groups to observe. In some groups, students were silent, and I had to help start the conversation. In other groups, students struggled to ask questions in English and utilized their L1 words to help move the conversation forward. When students presented back to the class, they could not transmit the whole story. Some students could not explain anything, as they admitted they did not understand the information given to them by their peers.

For the following assignments during the same lesson (Lesson 2), students were divided into groups based on common L1 or another common language, where possible, in addition to English. Utilizing L1 resources for ELL (Tomlinson, 2018), students were encouraged to structure and think through their responses in L1 first (see Appendix D.II). Students were tasked with interviewing each other and then presenting the information about their colleagues to the rest of the class. They were given sample questions and were encouraged to think through the interview structure in L1. They were also allowed to use L1 or another language when clarifying the interview information with each other. The outcome was significantly better. Students were able to communicate all the details they were given by their peers. In addition, Les noted that the results demonstrated by the students during the lessons appeared better compared to what she usually observed during regular classes as an outcome of a similar task.

Lesson1. Lesson 1 (Introduction) main objective was to teach students to introduce themselves and other people (see Appendix D. I). In addition, students should be able to understand and use basic description information and numbers, in addition to looking up required information utilizing ICT tools, as per level-appropriate LINC program requirements (Hajer, 2000). Among other objectives were practicing the use of L1 tools and demonstrating to participants how L1 guided use might be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English, in addition to practicing reading, writing, listening, speaking and reflection skills. The overall objectives mentioned above were also present in all ten lessons.

Within Lesson 1 students were encouraged to present information about themselves to a group partner and then present back to the class what they learned about each other. Drawing on Paterson (2020) and Bruton (2007) among others, students were allowed to use bilingual dictionaries and peer support. They were also reassured they could invent facts about themselves if they did not feel comfortable sharing any real-life details to provide a safe and calm learning environment.

Students were provided with a structure and new vocabulary was explained prior to the task completion. They were visibly engaged in the tasks and were excited to share new information they had learned. Peer support appeared to be effective, as academically stronger students were helping weaker students to complete the task, by providing an additional explanation or where possible translating.

Lesson 2. The main learning objective for Lesson 2 (Language and Cultural Diversity) was to introduce the notion of Interculturalism, Language and Cultural Diversity, in addition to the above-mentioned overall objectives (see Appendix D. II). Drawing on Tomlinson's test-driven approach (2011), students were encouraged to reflect on their Canadian community's linguistic diversity and to discover potential biases and stereotypes. For example, students were encouraged to reflect on how they knew if it was Mandarin being spoken if they did not speak the language. Students were also invited to participate in a discussion on why they believed cultural diversity in Canada was important. After that students were divided into small groups to discuss their meaningful intercultural experience in Canada. Students were also asked to share their group partner's story with the class.

Lesson 3. Lesson 3 (Plurilingual identity) aimed at introducing and enhancing the understanding of the concept of plurilingualism and its' value for the students in their everyday life in Canada (see Appendix D.III). The lesson started with an explanation of the notion of plurilingualism and how it relates to students' everyday lives. Drawing on Tomlinson (2011, p.14) and Graves' (2003, p. 230) works, materials developed for this task were inclusive and contained multiple opportunities and samples to reference students' cultures, which could facilitate an easier educational process and lead to faster learning of

information. Students were offered to draw their language portraits and explain their drawings to their group partners. L1 tool use was encouraged. Students were also asked to share a greeting in their L1 with others and they were asked to share their group partner's story with the rest of the class. After completion of the exercise, students were asked to reflect and discuss with the whole class if they believed the languages, they spoke defined them and affected how they saw the world and if/how they changed after their move to Canada. Students were promoted to work on their IC skills, by looking for similarities and differences between their original and Canadian cultures.

Lesson 4. The objective of the Job interview-related task's (Lesson 4) was to enhance the understanding of the concept of job search and interviewing in the Canadian context and how students' IC and plurilingual skills can be an asset (see Appendix D. IV). Drawing on Poupore (2014), by ensuring topics were directly related to students' interests and immediate needs, students were offered to watch three different job interview recordings for Canadian companies. They were asked to reflect on what went well and what needed to be improved. Considering local and global context inclusivity in the educational task in addition to the intercultural perception of ordinary situations (Troncoso, 2010, p. 94) on, students were asked to look at the situations through cultural lenses and explain their perceptions. For example, why the specific situation was not appropriate in Canada in their opinion and why/if this can be acceptable in any other cultural environment. Students visibly enjoyed the discussion and were engaged in sharing information as subject matter experts on other cultures.

Lesson 5. As one of the LINC programs' objectives was a settlement that implied Canadian citizenship test completion, the test-related information was embedded into the lesson. Drawing on the above-mentioned theoretical studies, it was ensured that tasks were inclusive of the local and global context with a variety of topics to reflect on the relevance of the acquiring knowledge. Students were asked to contextualize Canadian citizenship-related information in global surroundings. By outlining students' favourite places to travel in Canada and globally and explaining their choices. Students were sharing Canadian

geography knowledge, as part of the Citizenship test preparation, but also sharing their favourite places to travel globally.

This lesson (Citizenship) helped to continue enhancing participants' IC skills, while meeting students' immediate needs and addressing immigrant students' practical concerns. Li (2020, p.6) and Marsh (2020, p. 11) outline that learning through interaction might lead to faster knowledge acquisition and better information retention, thus, it was suggested that students play a Kahoots game. The game contained 17 Canadian citizenship test-related questions created by the researcher (see Appendix D.V). All students appeared to like the gamification feature, although some were experiencing technical issues when downloading the game, the day prior to the lesson. Following Mishan and Timmis (2015) recommendations students watched a video about Canada, where speakers had diverse cultural backgrounds and a variety of English accents to reflect the acceptance of different variations of English with its' diverse cultural background and at the same time to demonstrate the intercultural nature of modern Canada.

Lesson 6. Enhancing the understanding of the concept of job search and interview in the Canadian context and how students' IC and plurilingual skills could be of asset was the main objective of this lesson (Work-related Idioms). The concept of idioms was introduced to the students. They were offered a list of work-related idioms in English and were asked to try to guess the meaning (see Appendix D.VI). They were also asked to try to put one idiom in a sentence or describe a situation where it might be used. Students were also asked to select one or two idioms from the list and to try to find an equivalent in their L1. It should be noted that Les expressed her doubts that this group of students was able to complete the task. Students, however, were successful.

From the plurilingual perspective, this activity could help students to build metalinguistic connections and to better understand not only common expressions in English (in Canada), but also in their own language. This could lead to overall language learning enhancement and IC skills development.

Lesson 7. Helping students build metalinguistic connections, expanding their English vocabulary, and encouraging students to try reasonably guessing the meaning of unknown words were the main objectives of this lesson (Metalinguistic connections). Drawing on Marsh (2020), it was ensured that students utilized their existing funds of knowledge and experience to construct new knowledge (p.11). Words were brought to students' attention, which definitions they were easily able to guess using their pre-existing language repertoire (see Appendix D.VII). Students were then encouraged to think of the English words that were commonly used in their L1 (some examples: Business, IT, VP, International, mango, ex-, TV). They were also offered a matching exercise, where they needed to match unknown-to-them words with the illustration (see Appendix D.VII). Interactive learning was utilized as it led to better word retention, based on Li's work (2019). Students were also encouraged to reflect on their linguistic repertoire and how it helped them to complete the task.

Lesson 8. Lesson 8 (International food) aimed at enhancing IC skills and engaging students as subject matter experts, drawing on adult students' specific requirements for learning materials. Drawing on Graves (2003, p. 231) and Tomlinson (2013, p. 13), it was ensured that the materials were based on immediate use, caused students' curiosity, and encouraged self-discovery. All students were engaged and even shared with the class recipes for their traditional meals. The researcher asked students to reflect on the multicultural culinary scene in Toronto and an opportunity to learn about other cultures through their traditional meals. Students were offered a matching exercise, connecting a country with its traditional meal. It was ensured that all students' cultures were represented in this task, so students had an opportunity to provide additional information about each meal, tradition, and celebration that the meal accompanies. Followed by a flip card game, "Let's talk about Food" (see Appendix D. VIII), where students were encouraged to talk about their culinary traditions and habits. Students were able to compare their experiences and build cultural bridges between their home countries and Canada.

Lesson 9. Enhancing IC skills development and building connections between Canadian traditions and students' original cultural traditions were also the main objectives of lesson 9 (Holidays and Citizenship). Drawing on Troncoso's idea of "cultural bumps" (2010, p. 94), it was ensured that educational tasks include their reflection on ordinary situations that did not go as expected as per original cultural traditions.

The notion of multicultural Canada was discussed during this lesson (see Appendix D.IX). Students watched a short video about holidays in Canada and were asked to name some holidays they knew were celebrated in Canada, in addition to their favourite holiday that they celebrate in Canada (which did not have to be a Canadian). Students were encouraged to tell their group colleagues about their traditions and also reflect on what celebration traditions they found unusual in Canada and why. The task concluded with a Kahoot game on holidays, where students were asked to guess what symbol is associated with a specific holiday in Canada.

Lesson 10. The main objective of Lesson 10 (Interviewing skills) was to practice research skills, while enhancing IC and plurilingual skills (see Appendix D.X). Drawing on Tomlinson and Masuhara (2018, p. 284), it was ensured that materials provided opportunities for reflection, discussions, research, and age-appropriate language games, among other activities. Students were asked to interview their group partners about their family and cultural traditions, comparing those to what they observe in Canada. This allowed for reflective skills and IC skills enhancement. The last assignment was to conduct mini-research in groups of three concerning the languages spoken in their communities and present it back to the rest of the class.

5.5 LINC approaches to assessment

During the pre-intervention phase, there was an opportunity to observe LINC classes and the LINC assessment and registration processes. It was a standard procedure that all LINC applicants in Ontario, Canada, go through. Initial LINC assessment aligned with an actual learning experience. Referring to Research Question 1: What are the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC program?, the LINC assessment approach

demonstrated a lack of plurilingual elements, for example, the instruction for the test completion was offered available in English, which resulted in a poor student experience, starting from the programs' assessment. Such an approach supports Shohamy theory about the lack of plurilingual assessment for a variety of reasons (2011, p. 420), including political, where monolingual language tests offered to newcomers fulfill a gatekeeping role. The monolingual assessment approach, in this case, might also lead to questions about the accuracy of the students' level allocation. Specifically, the concern was linked to lower-level English students, in addition to lacking academic skills, not being able to understand the task and therefore not being able to complete it. All content of the assessment documents offered to newcomers in English was deemed above the comprehension level specifically for the lower-level students (see Appendix E).

The LINC initial online assessment, which took place during the time of the study, presented a set of complications of its own. It required the future learner to navigate the system in English independently to register for the assessment, complete it and submit their results. To be able to complete all the required tasks, students needed either external support or pre-existing knowledge of English, requiring a minimum of high beginner level. The established process might be problematic because LINC offers classes from the pre-A1 level, equivalent to Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level 1 (Piccardo, 2014). When a LINC assessment officer was approached concerning the registration process for lower-level students, they admitted the insufficiency of the process, but no changes were implemented, and neither was the additional support provided to the students.

Referring to Research Question 2: What is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC?, translating the instruction guide, the consent form and the other essential documents that required full understanding from the signee would enhance student inclusion and increase the learner's confidence from the beginning. Before COVID-related restrictions, students were provided the option of in-person testing at one of the LINC testing locations. Therefore, applicants were able to use testing center support during the registration process. However, it should be noted that multilingual support was not offered during the time of study, nor were alternative options or modifications to the established assessment structure offered to students, which resulted not only in a monolingual and

monocultural experience for the student but might have affected the accuracy of the testing results.

5.5.1 *In class assessment*

Concerning in-class assessment, FG participants described insufficient assessment tools within the LINC program (see section 5.1). During the Pilot and Pre-Intervention phases, some diversity of methods was observed. I noticed during the class observation that the assessment structure and assessment tools' selection within LINC depends on the teacher and are not strictly imposed by the program or educational institution. For example, during the Pilot phase class observation, Aziz did not appear to use self- or peer-assessment among other available assessment approaches in his class. While being observed, his evaluation was based strictly on standard testing and observation of his students' progress. The lack of diversity of assessment tools' in the LINC program and a need to utilize alternative approaches in addition to standardized testing for an accurate assessment was confirmed by the FG teachers (see section 5.1).

During the Pre-intervention phase class observation with Les, alternative assessment techniques that align with the IC and plurilingual assessment approaches were present. For example, students were offered a job search-related task. Utilizing the Canadian Federal Government Job Bank, students were to analyze a job offering and apply for one on a simulated form. The indication of successful completion and a base for the student's assessment was the submission of the form (it only went through once completed correctly). As demonstrated, Les incorporated evaluation based on criteria. Students were engaged and appeared motivated, as the task was directly related to their needs and the realities they faced, based on adult learners' specific needs (Lambert, 2008; Lam, 2019). Some of the students had never had a job and were unfamiliar with the concept of job search. For students who completed the task before the assigned time, Les had extra tasks. This assessment reflected an applicable real-life character of the learning approach offered to the LINC students. It also demonstrated the teachers' approach to incorporating different assessment techniques outside of standardized testing. It was interesting to notice that many assignments, including the job search-related one, had a self-assessment component. Les

was also observed offering test accommodations to her students by providing extra time and using language simplifications when re-formulating the tasks. For example, during the second observation lesson, Les explained the task by highlighting a word by circling it and also used the corresponding gesture to ensure everyone understood the task.

During the observation period, Les offered assignments with self-evaluation, where students were asked to self-evaluate their skills and progress. Students had an opportunity for self-reflection, which helped them to enhance their learning. Most of the students were stricter with themselves than Les was when evaluating their work. This underlined the teacher's willingness to utilize a variety of assessment techniques and students' ability to use those appropriately.

During the Intervention phase, all offered educational tasks had embedded self- or peer-assessment, in addition to accommodations (for example using translation), and assessment, based on criteria among others, to demonstrate a variety of alternative assessment techniques that can be successfully implemented. Les indicated that she found the provided samples useful and asked for my permission to use these designed tasks in her practice with future students. She also highlighted how the demonstrated plurilingual assessment tools were beneficial as in combination they appeared to demonstrate an accurate assessment regarding students' skills.

5.6 The monocultural context of LINC

Further supporting Research Question 1: What are the limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches, including stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs?, the LINC class observation demonstrated, echoing Sterzuk and Shin (2021), that the orientation on local Canadian realities with little space provided for the global context. This was also outlined by FG teachers, noting that LINC classes remained monolingual and were oriented toward local context only. The FG teachers also emphasized that the cultural diversity of the materials depended largely on the teacher and their ability to bring multicultural materials and elements to LINC ELT.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the LINC program curricula need to be adjusted to include both internationalized local and global contexts that are directly linked to the global competencies' development in learners (see p. 59). By allowing only the local context within the class, students' learning experience and educational outcomes might be limited. The proposed in this study plurilingual and IC approaches in English language education drew on cultural and linguistic diversity and, by improving the level of students' engagement and inclusion into the educational process, was able to improve the educational experience and learning outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

During the first class observation (the pre-intervention phase), speaking exercises were observed to be monocultural, situated in the local Canadian context only. For example, a discussion of a military service that was built around the Canadian national anthem that students were offered to listen to at the beginning of the observed lesson. Les explained the military service approach in Canada without inviting students to share with the rest of the class practices in their countries.

The Canadian Armed Forces are voluntary services. You can join Canadian Armie for three to nine years. The length depends on what job you choose to do. You can join as early as 17 years old and normally you can not join after 35 years old (Les, class observation 1, 13.06.2022).

The practice of using a national anthem in English for every class appeared to set the tone for a monocultural discussion. After-class reflection sessions with Les, however, resulted in students' speaking exercises at the beginning of each class being more culturally diverse. As a result of drawing on Adult Immigrant learners' specifics (Cervatuic, 2009;; Lam, 2019; Lambert, 2008; Tomlinson, 2011), students were visibly more engaged as they were communicating on the subjects. They were experts within the class setting as part of utilizing plurilingual and IC educational approaches (Lee et al., 2002, p. 33). During the fifth lesson, IC elements were visible within the teaching approach. Les gave students more opportunities to talk about their countries and to compare their cultural notions and traditions, as can be seen from the excerpt below:

Les: Is small talk different in your country? How do you act when talking to other people? Do you look them in the eyes?

Rhianna: Yes. In Somalia we speak about weather (Lesson observation, 23.06.2022).

Les also appeared genuinely interested in different cultural traditions and learning from their students. Most students responded positively. When talking about specific subjects, Les was trying to bring in local examples that all students understood. It often meant they needed to provide several examples for each cultural group within the class. For example, when explaining the word “cafeteria,” Les named local cafeterias within the cultural communities of all students in the class. As a result, all students understood the meaning of the word.

Les: Henry, Plata is the cafeteria you probably know. Aly, you have probably been to Hamdi or Xawaash. That is an example of the cafeteria. For all Iraqi students, Orly or Alforat would be good examples. What else? Nabila, do you know The Indian Canteen? That is a cafeteria. Hayan, the only local cafeteria I know that serves South Korean food would be K-Pocha.

Students: yeah, teacher, we know.

(Class observations, 23.06.2022)

As noted above, during the FG the teachers demonstrated cultural biases. During the pre-intervention class observation, Les also demonstrated cultural biases and some reliance on stereotypes. At the after-class reflection session, she shared her opinion about a specific group of students. “Educational system is low in Iraq, that is why students might be difficult” (Les, reflective session, 16.06.2022). Les appeared to be biased toward the specific cultural group of students. Drawing on extensive research connecting teachers’ beliefs and practices (Farrell & Ives, 2014, Mansour, 2009; Standen 2002; Thompson, 2006; Wilkerson, 2008; Yero, 2002), Les’ attitudes and beliefs concerning cultural biases toward some students were mainly visible in the conversations during our reflective sessions. It did not, however, appear to become explicit to the students, and learners did not demonstrate any reaction during the class.

At the same time, during the class observation, several occasions were noted when Les appeared to be culturally insensitive. An example came during the class observations, when she said, “John Smith used to be the most common name in Canada, but not anymore. Now it is Li something, as there are many Chinese now” (Class observations, 16.06.2022), “...immigrants do the work well, but they do not know the culture” (Class observations, 21.06.2022). Drawing on an existing theory that IC skills’ development might only be facilitated by an educator with such skills it was imperative to ensure Les was able to

enhance her IC skills. This demonstrated a need for further teacher IC skills development and the plurilingual and IC approaches being able to meet the need.

Drawing on Walsh and Mann (2015) and Towers (2013) that facilitated reflective practices can improve a teaching approach, it was evident that reflective sessions were an effective tool for Les to re-evaluate and improve her practices. It was effective in encouraging her to try a new approach and not to be afraid of bringing diverse cultural references and examples into the educational space of the LINC program, at the same time not demonstrating cultural biases toward groups of students.

It also was necessary for Les to understand that all tasks and guided educational activities within the IC and plurilingual approaches were backed up by existing research. Knowing that Les could defend the guided use of L1 and IC elements within the class environment appeared to motivate the teacher.

It is good to know that we can fall back on this theoretical research, in case my approach gets questioned by the administration. This will be also useful in my professional discussions with other LINC teachers. I think there is a lot of reliance on English-only approach here. This research could help me to demonstrate that there is a room for alternative practices.

(Les, reflective practices 14, 18.08.2022)

5.6.1 *Citizenship-related information*

One of the LINC learning outcomes is preparing students for the citizenship test without intentionally training them for the test. Therefore, the cultural information asked during the Canadian citizenship test needed to be blended into the program's curricula. The Canadian citizenship test material was not only monolingual but was also often narrowed to provincial-level-related information. Therefore, Les was often asking students about the provincial governmental structure and the current governors in place in Toronto. The information provided did not seem to be acquired and remembered by the students. It was evident that most of the class did not have background knowledge of the Ontario or Canadian political structure.

In addition, the students' level of English prevented them from gaining more information from the local media sources. Neither did they demonstrate an interest in reading or watching the local news. This underlined that information unrelated to the

student's educational needs might be difficult to acquire (Poupore, 2014). More work needed to be done to emphasize the relevance of the provided information to the learners' educational goals. During one of the Pre-Intervention phase classes, Les tried to raise interest in the discussion by bringing up a popular Canadian local hockey team and their success at the local championship, but the students did not show interest. Most of the students were from Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, and the selected topic seemed irrelevant to them, as hockey is not popular in those parts of the world. The approach to present this information could have been more explanatory, outlining that hockey is a part of Canadian culture. This could have been an opportunity for culturally informed discussion, engaging students and utilizing their experience.

The students also demonstrated little or no knowledge of world history from the Canadian perspective. When asked a question concerning the Second World War, students did not show knowledge of any facts related to the topic, as the excerpt shows:

Les: What was the war about? What were the countries participating?

Rihanna: We don't know

(Class observation, 23.06.2022).

When Les asked about European historical events, students appeared lost and did not understand the context. It demonstrated an expectation of the same perception of world events and did not consider specifics of educational systems in different countries based on national curricula and agendas. This underlined the importance of an inclusive curriculum. Drawing on Lee's work, it was essential to include students' cultures in the educational process to understand different perspectives on world events or situations (see p. 52). Students might not have studied the same facts and events at the educational institution back home, or they might not have completed a certain level of education. The class also included a student who did not have a chance to receive a formal education (see Figures 12 and 13). This needed to be considered when introducing topics within the LINC classroom.

Les provided basic information about the history of the First and the Second World Wars, connecting it to Canadian history and bringing the discussion to the immigrant discrimination theme. "The Japanese were handled badly by the Canadian Government,

but they did not do it to the Germans. This was discrimination” (Class observation, 23.06.2022). Les talked about a historical period in Canada when discrimination against immigrants of certain nationalities was significant. This information was also linked to the local Canadian news on the recovery of indigenous children's remains. The news got not only local but international attention. When discussed in class, students seemed to be interested in learning more but demonstrated no prior knowledge of it. This suggests that students do not utilize media sources to learn more about society or to improve their English language or learning skills. They appeared, however, interested in learning facts about Canadian history from Les.

Overall, based on the LINC program teaching tradition, the citizenship-related information was observed to be presented in a fragmented way, without a specific structure. This made it difficult for students to acquire and retain this information. Therefore, one of the tasks delivered during the Intervention phase was dedicated to Canadian Citizenship Test preparation, and some additional tasks had assignments dedicated to the topic (see Appendix D.V). The information was provided in the form of a game, following theoretical research on an interactive approach to education that leads to better learning outcomes (see p.55). The tasks were structured and separated from other topics. This was done to improve information retention and reach better educational results.

5.7 IC Skills Development

As demonstrated in the FG, an overall lack of IC elements was noted concerning LINC ELT. It was also outlined by FG teachers that IC elements were dependent on a specific LINC teacher. During the Pilot phase, Aziz was observed trying to include intercultural skills development in his lessons. When a new student with a Slavic background, who joined a class during the observation, introduced themselves, the other student with a similar culture and background reacted and corrected them.

Student C: My name is Tania

Student D: No, it's Tatiana

Aziz: It can be either. In some countries, those are two different names, for example, in some Latin American and European countries

(Class observation, 02.06.2021).

Student C had a lower English language level (CLB lower level 3) and was nervous about speaking English. Aziz intervened by explaining that both names exist and are common, including in Latin America, North America, and Europe. The automatic equation of both names to people with a certain cultural background did not necessarily reflect the reality within the global context. This was an educational IC moment for all students.

Prior to implementing the tasks, an overall concept of bringing a variety of foreign cultural elements into the LINC class environment was seen skeptically by both teachers who participated in the study (although it should be noted that Aziz demonstrated on several occasions that he utilized IC elements). Both teachers outlined that the goals of the LINC program were settlement and employment in Canada. The FG teachers echoed the same concern. Therefore, learning about foreign cultures was outside of the scope of the program. This contradicted the existing IC educational research (Huber & Reynolds, 2014; Troncoso, 2010).

During Pilot phase and Pre-intervention phase observations, teachers failed to acknowledge an opportunity for settlement and employment within not only a multicultural Canadian society but also within the global context. Initially, 50% of students indicated that they saw a benefit in learning about foreign cultures within the program. However, foreign cultural elements inclusion was not seen as a fit for the LINC program goals and the program's purposes by some students, for example, one student said, "I live in Canada. I need to learn about Canada" (Anna, Lesson 1, 27.06.2022).

However, a shift in perception started to become visible during the intervention phase of the research. All designed and delivered tasks, based on existing research (see 3.5.1) involved intercultural skills development components (see Appendix D). Students were encouraged to learn not only about Canadian culture but also about their class colleagues' culture, in addition to sharing information about their own culture.

During the task's completion and discussions, Les was positively surprised by how engaged students were in discussions involving foreign cultural elements. In future lessons, not only did Les not oppose the foreign cultural elements, but she also actively participated in the discussions, bringing in their own experiences and traditions.

During another class, discussing what students were wearing, Les brought up some foreign cultural elements in an icebreaker:

Les: What are you wearing?

Aly: I am wearing Baati.

Marianna: What is Baati?

Les: It is a traditional Somali home dress. Made out of cotton. I believe women in Somalia are using the dress a lot. Sometimes they even use it as a swimsuit. Is that correct?

Aly: yes, some do, but not all

Lina: Teacher, like Kaftan

Les: Perhaps, yes, similar

(Class observation, 20.06.2022).

Les explained what traditional Somali dresses were, when Aly mentioned she was wearing a Baati. Most students were not familiar with Somali culture and its dressing traditions. The discussion created an inclusive educational environment where students showed genuine interest in their classmate's cultures and traditions.

A similar situation occurred when students were discussing the word "Demon," Most were unfamiliar with the notion of the word, as most of the class was unfamiliar with elements of the Christian religion and the associated cultures. It created an inclusive educational environment for discussing and learning new cultural elements.

Rihanna: I worked at "Demon" (hotel)

Teacher: It is a bad word. How do you spell it in Somalian?

Rihanna: The same

(Class observation, 21.06.2022).

Other students engaged in the discussion to share the concept of perception within their own cultures. The students were so engaged they were interrupting each other to speak and share their ideas and opinions. Les' comment was influenced by her own beliefs and culture and demonstrated in their evaluation of the word and, in a way, imposed this upon students.

The "How was your weekend" discussion during one of the observed classes was linked to the cultural topic. Les explained to the students that it is a common topic in Canadian professional or work environments.

Teacher: In your culture do you ask How was your weekend?

Teacher: In Eritrea?

Henry: Yes

Teacher: How about in Iraqi culture?

Masha: Yes

Teacher: Is it one day?

Masha: Yes, one day

Teacher: How about in Korea?

Hayan: (didn't understand the question)

Teacher: In Canada we usually have two days off

Hayan: In Korea is the same

Alaa: In Pakistan Sunday off

(Class observation, 21.06.2022).

Les also used the discussion as an educational opportunity to learn about the norm in students' home cultures. She tried engaging many students in the discussion by asking them to provide cultural references, acting as subject matter experts.

During one of the last observed classes, Les started a discussion by asking about the student's previous class with another teacher and the topics they had discussed. Students advised that they were talking about coffee habits in Canada. Les immediately moved the discussion into the international context and invited her students to participate:

Teacher: I think Korean people might like green tea

Hayan: Coffee, Teacher

Teacher: Ok. In Somalia?

Aly: Coffee with ginger

Ridhima: In Iraq Armenian coffee is famous

Teacher: Turkish coffee is also famous. Is it common in Ukraine to have tea?

Anna didn't respond

(Class observation, 23.06.2022).

Les, without being discouraged or asking Anna again, continued asking about student's traditions:

Teacher: I like green tea with Chinese food

Henry: In Eritrea and Ethiopia coffee is very important

Rihanna: In Somalia too

(Class observation, 23.06.2022).

Most students were actively engaged in the conversation and enjoyed the cultural references other students provided them. They were also excited to share their knowledge with colleagues. Another cultural reference occurred when Henry mentioned their home country of Eritrea and compared its recent history to Pakistan and India. The information was new to most students. Les utilized it as educational material to provide students with historical and cultural information.

During the reflection session after class on this day, Les admitted that she had allowed more foreign cultural elements and related educational discussions into the classroom space after continuous reflection on the plurilingual and IC approaches, based on my further explanation and our after-every-class reflection sessions.

I just wanted to let you know that today, I have intentionally let students speak their languages more than I normally would. Our previous discussion made me think I should try a new approach. I was impressed by how much they spoke during today's class.

(Les, reflective practices 5, 23.06.2022)

She realized that by encouraging students to share their personal experiences on the topics, she fostered an inclusive, engaging and productive learning process where her students felt integrated and often led the discussion as knowledge experts. The results address Research Question 2: What is the potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within LINC?, by demonstrating the potential in learning outcomes that can be achieved using plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC. The results were also supported by existing theoretical research on IC and specifically adult immigrant learners' education (see Chapter 2), which demonstrated that IC elements and adult learners' principles of inclusion in the

educational process improve knowledge acquisition, student engagement and information retention.

5.8 Lost Opportunities

There were also some lost opportunities to introduce other cultural elements and, therefore, did not result in an educational experience. For example, when one of the students, during the Pilot phase, disregarded their group colleague's question, as they did not understand it due to the student's accent, it was not noted by the teacher. It needs to be noted that the question was asked in English. The student, who was asking a question, was a low-level student and had a strong accent. Therefore, it was difficult for their class colleague to understand.

Student A: [in a strong Russian accent] You... are (an) engineer?

Student B: Don't know. I don't speak Russian

Aziz: Looks like soon you will be speaking Russian

(Class observation, 27.05.2021).

The teacher failed to address students' inappropriate attitudes and behaviour in class and responded ironically. This situation could have been handled differently. One way of addressing it could be asking Student A to repeat the question and ensure Student B understood what was being asked and that it was being asked in English. An explanation of Canadian multicultural reality and therefore a need to understand a variety of different accents to be able to live and work in Canada could have been provided by the teacher.

I observed a lack of ability to see the bigger issues of all students' inclusion and a lack of IC skills behind the students' dialogue. The underlying issue here was also some frustration of Student B concerning the specific L1(Russian) use in LINC, that excluded Student B. The opportunity could have been also used to address L1 use in the classroom and its benefits for English language learning within adult learners' context (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 1979; Piccardo & Ortega, 2018). It could have been outlined that the guided use of L1 affected higher engagement and learning outcomes specifically in immigrant students with a lower level of English. Students could have been informed that the acknowledgment

of cultural differences, specifically within the immigrant educational contexts was beneficial and the failure to do so could lead to student isolation and poor educational outcomes, which took place in this case.

On another occasion, during the pilot phase observation, a student mentioned, evidently guessing, that the other student has a certain father's name (a father's name in Russian-speaking cultures holds a function similar to middle name in English). The new student confirmed their guess.

Student E: If you are Tatiana, you must be Ivanovna

Student C: Yes

Aziz: How did you know? Do you know each other?

Student E: From her face

Aziz: That sounds offensive. I don't like it. Let's move on

(Class observation, 31.05.2021).

The teacher's reaction demonstrated misjudgment. Most of the students indicated that they did not find the comment offensive. This was a case of a direct translation issue. Student E has translated from their L1 into English. There is a common expression in the Russian language that matches the phrase. It is being used to state an obvious fact ("Na lize napisanno" = it is written on one's face). It might have a negative connotation, depending on the context, but a negative context was not demonstrated in this dialogue. In addition, Student's E limited vocabulary and lack of other means to express the thought resulted in the produced phrase. The conversation ended in a silent moment, where most of the students did not appear to understand the situation. The learning opportunity was lost.

Another approach in this situation, if the teacher, who shared L1 with both students, was concerned with an offensive comment made by one of the students in addressing their classmate, could have been actioned after class. The reach-out to the students involved could have taken place to ensure everyone's well-being. Alternatively, the teacher could have explained to the class that it was simply the most common name in the student's E home country. Neither approach was taken by the teacher. This appeared as an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to the students the importance of IC skills development,

specifically when communicating in a TL (English) within the Canadian intercultural context.

When discussing the situation with Student C, I confirmed it was not perceived as offensive, and in the student's opinion, it was complicated to provide more explanation during the class. Both students limited English language vocabulary prevented them from expressing their thoughts appropriately, and no additional support from the teacher was provided in this situation.

To conclude, the inclusion of IC skills in LINC ELT depended not only on the teacher's willingness to use those but also on their abilities to facilitate IC skills development correctly. The teacher in the Pilot phase had the desired language and IC skills to facilitate a plurilingual and IC approach in the LINC classroom. However, he was often unsuccessful in applying his skills correctly to maximize the learning outcomes for the group of students with diverse cultural backgrounds.

5.8 Guided L1 use and English-only policy

As noted in the FG results and observed during the Pilot and Pre-Intervention phases, guided use of L1 in LINC ELT classroom did not appear to depend on the teacher's ability to speak the same L1. In addition, drawing on existing research on L1 in TL education, the teacher's language proficiency and the length of their professional experience did not affect the amount of L1 used in the classroom. Both teachers (during the Pilot phase and the main part of the research) were able to leverage the guided use of L1 for ELL purposes. Both of the institutions outlined clearly that L1 is not allowed in the class, and both Aziz and Les formally expressed support for the policy by repeating it during the class, which aligned with existing research on the common exclusion of L1 from TL teaching. However, at the same time, both teachers in real classroom situations were utilizing L1 to help lower-level students. Whether L1 matched teachers' language repertoire or not.

Aziz, for example, shared Russian L1 with most of the students within the class, although he cautioned students and reinforced the English-only policy, he actively used lower-level students' L1 for instructional purposes and vocabulary translation. That allowed for a continued meaningful conversation among the students, as Aziz visibly

encouraged lower-level students to continue participating. Aziz kept all students engaged by asking a student to describe a story they had read. The flow of the conversation was maintained, despite of student's lack of vocabulary:

Student: [speaking in Russian] Iz Greziin (translation: from Greece).

Aziz: Ok, good, she is from Greece

(Class observation, 10.05.2021).

At the end of the class, I had an opportunity to briefly discuss the benefits of using L1 with the students, who shared an L1 with the teacher. The students expressed appreciation for the ability to use L1, as it allowed for constant involvement and engagement in the educational process. "It is easier. The teacher understands Russian" (Pilot phase class observation, 30.05.2021). It seemed especially beneficial for the lower-level students, as it helped to eliminate many barriers, including the lack of English language vocabulary. Some students also noted that the opportunity to utilize their L1, when needed for learning purposes, was the main reason for them to remain in the class and not switch to another LINC teacher.

Les, although bilingual, did not share an L1 with any student in her class. She was also initially more insistent on English-only use in class. During the first reflection session, when asked about the cultural diversity in the classroom and if it might be considered an advantage in terms of teaching approach, Les agreed that it is an advantage, as "students do not switch to their own languages" (Reflection session 1, 13.06.2022). She also noted that teaching online has been more manageable regarding L1 use. According to Les, students spoke more English when studying online. As the research progressed, during the fifth class, a discussion on what students were doing at the weekend took place. It resulted in students' engaged interaction when one explained how to cook a traditional meal in their culture to the other students. The second student from the same cultural background disagreed with the meal preparation description but could not communicate their opinion in English, so Les let the two students have a short discussion in their L1. After students agreed on the approach in their L1, they finished the explanation in English.

During the after-class discussion with Les, she admitted that she had allowed a discussion in L1 for the first time cautiously, having the study in mind. According to Les, normally, she would have stopped the students' discussion in L1. In future lessons I observed Les becoming more comfortable with the guided use of L1, encouraging peer support and allowing academically stronger students to help other students to ensure all students' inclusion in the educational process.

When acknowledging the plurilingual repertoire of their students, Les emphasized that they should always include English as one of the languages they speak, regardless of their level, in addition to the other languages they speak, as "those are valuable skills" (Class observation, 27.06.2022). As per our after-class reflective session, Les shared that this resulted from our guided discussion on the notion of plurilingualism and the importance of students' self-awareness concerning the skills they possess.

Changes were also observed within Les' teaching and material introduction approach. When discussing international food, for example, Les participated by asking students to teach everyone the word "delicious" in their L1. This demonstrates that she was able to adjust learning conditions within her own classroom if she saw a need, despite the institution-wide policy. At the same time, students' demonstrated appreciation of such an approach, as it allowed for a better understanding of the tasks and their inclusion in the educational process.

Aly: we like it, Teacher. I can teach you Arabic

Nadine: I now understand, Teacher. I know how to do it

(Class observation, 23.06.2022).

During the research cycle, guided use of L1 and bilingual tools, such as bilingual dictionaries, were incorporated into each educational session. Drawing on existing theory on specifically adult immigrant learners with a low level of TL and beneficial use of L1 in the ELT (Burt, 2003; Cummins, 1979; Young-Scholten, 2013), students were encouraged to think in their language or talk through an idea or concept in their L1 before sharing it in English with the communication partner or a group (see Appendix D.II). In addition, students were allowed to use their digital or paper-based bilingual dictionaries. The

approach allowed students to structure their responses better and start valuing their existing language repertoire. This is exemplified by a student, who said, “My teacher before said, ‘Think in English’. How can I? I think in Arabic. I (am) happy first to think in Arabic and then speak English. It helps me to have a better answer” (Nadine, lesson 10, 25.08.2022).

By the end of the research cycle, students and Les admitted that they found the option of L1's guided use crucial and beneficial in many ELT situations. Les explained, “I like how the quality of students’ output improved when L1 use was permitted for their group work. Normally students, who perform low, showed better results” (Reflective session, 25.08.2022). This demonstrated that research participants started seeing the benefits of guided L1 use in ELT, as a result of this educational experience. It led to better student inclusion in the learning process and, as a result, better learning results, as noted by the teacher.

5.8.1 *Students’ perception of L1 use*

One of the interesting research observations concerned the difference in students’ perception of the plurilingual and IC approaches implementation in the LINC and their actual behaviour. Students who originally expressed a negative perception of L1 use for ELL purposes and indicated the insufficiency of using L1 in LINC ELT were observed utilizing L1 the most, which supports existing research by Payant (2019) and Prodromou (2022) among others, on students’ perception. Within this study, it was observed that students, although stating the opposite, often used L1 for comprehension and explanation purposes within the LINC environment. Here is an example of Anna when she was asked to describe what she did over the weekend.

Anna: we had a PROEKT (Russian word for project)

Researcher: Project?

Anna: Da (Russian word for yes), we studied VULKAN (Russian word for volcano), DINOZAVRI (Russian word for dinosaurs), TORNADO (Russian word for Tornado)

(Lesson 6, 27.06.2022).

Anna originally indicated strong support for the English-only educational environment, basing her evaluation on their professional background within higher education and demonstrating the strongest lack of flexibility concerning an alternative educational approach. They were often observed, though, utilizing L1 for communicative purposes in addition to task completion. The student also used L1 to get assistance with the digital tools used due to limited ICT skills.

Les did not react verbally during the student's interaction with me, but her facial expression indicated concerns about Anna's L1 use in the classroom. Guided use of L1 in this specific situation allowed for Anna's inclusion in the educational process. She was one of the few students in the class, who did not have a group partner to share L1 (or any other language within her language repertoire) and was often noted not participating in educational exercises during the class observation. She appeared to disconnect often during the class, as a result of a mismatch of her academic background and inability to express her thoughts at the same level in English and her established perception of an educational process. Guided use of L1 with Anna specifically helped to engage her in the educational activities.

Similar situations were observed with Lily, when responding to a similar question about students' activities on the weekend, she responded:

Lily: I visit my family, alaba' fi alqanun (Arabic word for parents-in-law).

Researcher: What is it?

Ridhima: Teacher, it's my husband's parents

Researcher: Ah..Parents-in-law

Lily: Yes. I did homework. I cleaned. I cook Kimis

(Lesson observation, 07.07.2022).

The conversation was followed by Les explaining that Kimis was a traditional meal in Lily's culture. Lily also originally indicated that she was not in support of L1 use in an English learning classroom but was observed utilizing it often, in addition to peer support. She had shared L1 with some group partners but was also observed often disconnected during the lessons. This demonstrated that guided use of L1 in addition to peer support helped to improve students' engagement and inclusion in educational activities. It also

helped to engage other students as subject matter experts. These results supported existing research on guided L1 use, specifically with adult immigrant learners and help to support research questions within this work.

5.8.2 *Negative L1 perception*

During the Pilot phase, an “English-only” policy was observed to be reinforced by a teacher with a group of students who did not share his L1, and that might have led to those students feeling left out or under-supported. This was confirmed in the after-class reflective session with Aziz. The group of students, who did not share a common language with the teacher (except for English), might have felt they were at a disadvantage when taught under the “English-only” policy. This might be a reason why some of them later indicated their negative perception of L1 use in LINC classrooms. They appeared to feel not being treated equally, as they were unable to receive the same level of support. This concern was also brought up by participating in the FG teachers.

During the Pilot phase, some visible irritation was observed in the student’s behaviour and facial expressions when other students were leveraging L1 for English language learning purposes. I did not observe this in Les’ class, as she leveraged peer support and encouraged the use of bilingual digital tools, among others, following my recommendations. This allowed for all students’ engagement in the educational process.

During the Pilot phase, students with matched L1 skills with the teacher enjoyed the educational benefits and were fully engaged in the learning process. The other group of students, who did not have matching L1, evidently disliked the frequent use of other students’ L1 in the class if the teacher was not able to leverage other approaches to L1 inclusion. However, if the teacher was able to include all languages, using plurilingual approaches, all students enjoyed the educational experience.

Therefore, it was essential, drawing on existing research (Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Duff & Polio, 1990; Hidayati, 2012; Schweers, 1999), to demonstrate during the Intervention phase that teachers do not need to share the same L1 with their students to utilize plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC classrooms. The proposed approaches can be successfully included by any teacher in ELT to ensure all students’ engagement in the educational process. The

LINC class observation during the Implementation phase demonstrated the teacher's ability to adjust the class learning environment, by incorporating plurilingual and IC approaches' elements into ELT, despite the established "English-only" institutional policy. Students confirmed the beneficial effect of such an approach.

5.8.3 *Students' experience, as adult learners*

During the pilot observations, it was evident that on multiple occasions, students were denied their experience in Canada. When discussing job search in Canada, students were talking about their personal experience and their perceptions of the issue:

Student B: they have problems with my age

Teacher: I don't know if that has actually happened in Canada, because of the law

(Class observation, 25.05.2021).

By invalidating newcomers' personal experience in Canada, the student's engagement was discouraged in further conversation and may also have made the student doubt their own experience based on the teacher's personal and, in this situation, subjective perception of the Canadian labour environment. It is essential for adult learners to be included in the educational process by sharing their experiences and pre-existing knowledge.

Similar issues were observed in Les' class during the research cycle. There were failures concerning teacher follow-up and explanations. The following excerpt took place before a test:

Masha: We are nervous. Could you explain (list of unknown words)?

Teacher: Yeah, yeah

(Class observation, 20.06.2022).

No response or acknowledgment was given to the student addressing their concerns verbally. It appeared students' experience was disregarded in this classroom situation. Although Les failed to address the emotional state of the students, she provided an extensive explanation about the task completion. Les was also often observed imposing her own perspective on the students. "Crime is an issue everywhere, but Toronto is not too

bad” (Class observation, 20.06.2022). Drawing on Johnson(2013, p. 28) and Lee et al. (2002, p. 33) it was important to ensure that the educational experience was culturally inclusive and provided an opportunity to see events and situations from different perspectives and that culturally responsive teaching was visible. As a result of participating in this study, Les was observed being more encouraging towards students to share their experiences within the classroom space, to respond to them and to create opportunities for discussions.

Les: Is small talk different in your country?

Ridhima: no, we speak about weather.

Hayan: In my country, we do not look (the) person in the eyes

(Class observation, 23.06.2022)

Another example of Les actively engaging students in the conversation as subject matter experts during the class:

Les: In Canada majority of people like coffee. Do people in your country prefer tea or coffee?

Aly: In Somalia. Coffee with ginger.

Nura: In Iraq, Armenian coffee is famous

(Class observation, 23.06.2022).

Rather than imposing her opinion or sharing perceived Canadian traditions only, she invited students to share their opinions, perceptions, and experiences. This resulted in students’ engagement in the educational process. Most of the students wanted to participate and share facts about their cultural traditions.

5.9 Learning diaries

During the Intervention phase, students were asked to keep learning diaries, where they were asked to provide feedback for their educational experiences. The completion rate of students' learning diaries was 95%. It required constant reminders from the researcher and often extended deadlines to complete the forms. Les' assistance was valuable in persuading students to take advantage of the additional learning opportunity and complete each lesson's

feedback form. Considering the limited in-class time provided for the study, in addition to students' limited availability to attend classes due to work or family-related obligations, and that students always had additional homework to practice newly acquired skills or knowledge the learning diaries' completion rate of 95% was very successful.

Within the learning diary, students were asked to reflect on what they have learned during each class within the research cycle and to reflect if the newly learned or enhanced skills were helpful for them. Students were also encouraged to think about where in real life, they could apply their new, improved skills and knowledge, to ensure students understand the relevance of the newly acquired information. After the first lesson, Ridhima in her learning diaries indicated that new knowledge was useful and applicable to her everyday life.

I learned to answer a lot of questions for example what your hobby is and what is your favourite place many questions and answers because before I didn't know a lot (of) questions I understand (understood) but I didn't know how to answer Thank you.

(Ridhima's learning diary. 27.06.2022)

Students were also encouraged to provide feedback on their IC experiences. When providing feedback on lesson 2, Marianna demonstrated her IC skills and cultural experiences in Canada.

Today I learned that in Canada there are more than 250 different cultures and languages. When I arrived in Canada, I found it strange that almost all (the) food was spicy, but I have not seen anything that I find unpleasant because each culture is different and what I do not like (in) another person, I respect.

(Marianna's learning diary. 07.07.2022)

The students expressed appreciation for being provided with multiple IC learning opportunities, as it allowed for reflection and a comparative analysis concerning their experience in a new environment, their home countries and other cultural environments, represented by their group colleagues' home countries. Most students liked learning about new countries and cultures and, at the same time sharing their knowledge. One example of such can be a situation when a student from Somalia was very engaged, learning that national days in her country and Canada are celebrated on the same day (see Figure 32).

Winl came to Canada .
I want to celebrate somaliya day
And then I want outside I saw the people in Toronto all celebrate
I am asking the people Why they Outside?
They say we celebrate Canada day
So I was excited
Canada and Somalia
They celebrate same day
Thank you so much teacher

Figure 32: Aly's learning diary, 28.07.2022

The activity and its discussion made Aly feel welcomed in this new cultural environment. The link between her home country and her new country was essential for her to feel engaged and retain new information. The learning outcome might have been different if the topic had been presented from within the Canadian cultural context, referring to Canadian celebration traditions only. It was important to allow students to build cultural bridges, which also allowed for meeting students' immediate learning needs (Troncoso, 2010).

As part of students' preparation for the Canadian Citizenship test, students were asked about places they travelled to in Canada. At the same time, students were asked about their favourite travel destinations. Most students, as expected, chose locations within their home countries and appeared proud of being able to educate others about their home countries. For example, a student from the Dominican Republic was excited to tell their group about her country (see Figure 33). She looked proud and appeared to feel valued when acting as a subject matter expert and providing new knowledge to others within the class environment.

My favorite place is my country and the most beautiful place is
San José de las Matas (SAJOMA), because there are a beautiful
landscape, natural pools, many animals, rivers and a pool of hot
sulfur waters that comes down from the mountains.

Figure 33: Marianna's learning diary, 28.07.2022

Drawing on adult learners and IC educational theories, it was essential to engage students, as subject matter experts when an educational opportunity presented itself

(Lambert, 2008). The results were also seen as significant, drawing on the importance of building participants' IC skills and being able to hold an intercultural dialogue (see p.48).

When discussing job interview-related topics, all students found learning about the cultural aspects expected during the interview behaviour useful to them. Drawing on Troncoso's cultural bumps theory (2010, p. 94), students had multiple opportunities for reflection. While comparing the expectations in Canada to the cultural norms back home, many students realized that the norms were different. That reflective exercise was indicated by many students as valuable. Ridhima wrote in her diary, "I learned how to get a job. This was helpful and great. Come to the interview early and pay respect (by) asking questions. In my country, you can be late. People work with (the) family. It is different." (Learning diary, 21.07.2022). Additionally, Aly wrote, "I learned not to use (a) cell phone (during the interview). It is ok in my country. In Canada, I won't take it (the cell phone)" (Learning diary, 21.07.2022).

The students demonstrated that IC elements inclusion, allowed them to build connection to their home cultures and therefore deepened understanding of the Canadian cultural norms, at the same time enhancing their IC skills. In addition, when applicable, students were asked to reflect on their educational experience of using their L1 or working in groups, arranged based on shared L1, for ELL purposes. Fatima wrote, "Yes, (it was) good to work together. We can help each other with communication and experience" (Learning diary. 07.07.2022).

The submitted responses were positive concerning students' in-class experience, the IC opportunities and how they saw the acquired skills or knowledge applicable to their real-life environment. In addition, as the study progressed, students demonstrated they valued other cultures and enjoyed building cultural connections between their original and new home countries. The students appreciated the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas better, using L1 and peer support when needed. Some students also felt more confident writing the after-class feedback rather than sharing their thoughts during class. "I can write better than I speak" (Hayan. Lesson 3. 14.07.2022) or "I focus better at home. I am not nervous" (Rihanna. Lesson 5. 28.07.2022). Drawing on existing research that TL learning materials should reflect a variety of learning styles, as students acquire information

differently (Tomlinson, 2018), learning diaries provide an alternative for students to express their ideas comfortably.

5.10 Writing skills

The learning diaries helped improve students' writing skills, although it was not the primary goal. Students with Arabic as L1 originally demonstrated limited knowledge of punctuation in the English language. It made their writing challenging to read at first. Some students were applying Arabic rules of punctuation writing in the English language. Other students, with Arabic as L1, were writing from right to left, which made reading the final text complicated (see Figure 34).

We know each other's languages very well and helped each other.
First we need to learn their languages and understand their literature to understand their cultures.
We understand each other's language today.
We can benefit from it by reading and writing.

Figure 34: Alaa's, learning diary. 14.07.2022

It was interesting to notice that not all Arabic L1 speakers wrote right to left, following Arabic language rules. It was observed that students within one group had different literacy and educational levels, which made the educational process more complex for the teacher and students. LINC program includes a literacy level, where assigned to this level students were assisted with developing literacy skills and at the same time were taught English language skills. In this case, I believe two students, Alaa and Rhianna, were assigned to the existing class (CLB level 3) in error. The assignment to the class implies that the students had literacy in L1 and existing learning skills. Both students demonstrated a lack of literacy skills, which created additional complications in their educational process. Alaa let me know that she did not receive any formal education in her home country and Rhianna reported completion of elementary school back home (see Figure 12).

Hayan, a student with Korean as L1, demonstrated level-appropriate writing skills, and no confusion with writing direction was noted. This might be partially explained by the fact that most people write left to right in L1 in contemporary Korea. The same applies to

other L1s in the group. When providing her feedback on the first task, Hayan outlined that she learned useful for her everyday life vocabulary and correct ways to apply them in real-life situations:

I learned a sentence that introduces me. Where I live, I learned to introduce my family. I learned to talk about my favourite month, food, and place. I learned to talk about my hobby, and my job in Canada. I learned to say my name and age from a country. And it's useful to be able to talk about me (with) someone you meet for the first time.

I can use new words or information when I go shopping, go to the bank, or go to the hospital. The same goes for meeting people and finding a job. Thank you.

(Hayan's learning diary. 27.06.2022)

Hayan's feedback for lesson 1, provided in her learning diaries, demonstrates her appropriate-to-the-level 3 (CLB) English writing skills. Her writing was also aligned left to right, as per the English language system. This demonstrated a student with pre-existing learning and academic skills, regardless of their level of English were able to acquire English language writing skills, even if the writing system differed greatly from their original language. Based on this and as suggested by FG teachers, the LINC assessment process might need to be revisited, which would assign students to LINC groups taking into consideration not only their English language level, but also their previous academic skills in L1, which would ensure appropriate educational process for all LINC students and teachers.

After completing corrections and analyses with the students, some students demonstrated a better understanding of punctuation. The work with the learning diaries led me to the conclusion that students with at least basic learning skills and level of education, regardless of their L1, and when actively participating in the education process, could demonstrate level-appropriate writing skills in English. The same could apply to students, lacking literacy in L1. This could also be supported by Baker's existing research on bilingualism and biliteracy, where he demonstrated that L1 inclusion in the TL educational process might lead to L1 literacy improvement. In addition to existing research on the correlation of L1 and L2 skills development. Based on this study results, it appeared possible to teach a student demonstrating low L1 literacy and English language writing skills within the LINC program, CLB level three (A2). This corresponded with the overall

goal of ELT, as plurilingual skills development and not a replacement of L1, specifically within adult immigrant learner's context (Yousaf and Khan, 2014).

5.11 Change in perception of the plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC

This section will cover changes in students' and teachers' perceptions concerning the plurilingual and IC approaches implementation in LINC, which will be essential in supporting our research questions. The teacher's reflection sessions and final interview will be discussed here. Students' post-intervention survey results will be presented, and common themes will be outlined.

5.11.1 *The reflective sessions*

Les, the teacher who accepted to be part of my intervention, engaged in this study, was willing to learn, and tried to remain open-minded towards the new educational approaches I suggested, even when she expressed her concerns or disagreement with the approach. For example, when the guided L1 use was introduced, Les did not agree with it initially but was willing to try it.

I am not sure I can support students speaking their languages in my class. As you know we have a strict English-only policy and, as a teacher, I fully support that. I ask students to leave their language outside of my classroom. Based on my experience, students learn better when in an English-speaking environment. I am curious to see, though, how guided L1 use can help students improve their English.

(Les, reflective session 2, 16.06.2022).

Les was always open to discussions and willing to try a task or a method, even when remaining skeptical. Her openness to the research process and willingness to continue working were believed to be critical in the implementation of new educational approaches. Les expressed gratitude for the professional development opportunity: "Students are very engaged. They liked it. Thank you", and "Always good to have a new teacher. You learn new things, new styles" (Les, reflective session 14, 18.08.2022).

Reflective sessions with Les were held after each class. The time was not always consistent due to the teacher's competing priorities, but the session always took place (see

Appendix H.I). During these reflective sessions, I noted a change in Les' perception of the proposed approach with a gradual progression throughout the research cycle. One example was the use of bilingual dictionaries. During the intervention phase, students were allowed to use bilingual dictionaries. Les admitted that they had never allowed bilingual dictionaries in class, but as research progressed, she saw a benefit and positive effect of bilingual dictionary use on students' English language improvement. "I can see it might work. It helped to improve their vocabulary. Students are more engaged. They speak up more" (Les, reflective session 8, 14.07.2022).

Les indicated that she liked the proposed exercises, which included L1 use and foreign and Canadian cultural elements. She admitted that to her knowledge, L1 and IC elements had never been used within the LINC program, but she shared that she would always use them in her classes from now on, as positive results were demonstrated concerning students' engagement, their learning skills and English language skills improvements. Les also confirmed with the students during the last class of my intervention if they wanted to continue the plurilingual and IC approaches, including the guided use of L1. Students confirmed their support.

Les: Is it ok if I let you speak your language sometimes? Just a little? So, you understand better?

Students: Yes, we like that

(Class observation, lesson 10, 25.08.2022).

Les' effort to ensure students' feedback supported her teaching approach indicated her interest in ensuring students also felt comfortable with the new educational approach. As demonstrated during the reflective sessions, Les changed her perception not only of L1 use in LINC ELT but also of her understanding of the value of students' diversity. At the beginning of the cycle, she noted, "I like having diversity in the classroom. Students do not switch to their L1" (Les, reflective session 2, 16.06.2022). Throughout the experience, she came to a different understanding of the value of cultural diversity, where students can co-create an IC educational environment, sharing their cultural knowledge with others.

Concerning the format of the reflective sessions, Les noted that this practice was uncommon for her. Usually, she would only be able to discuss issues with other LINC

teachers when they got a chance, but they had never engaged in such an extensive reflection of their own beliefs and how those might affect their practices for a long time. She expressed gratitude for this opportunity. The reflective sessions were seen as essential in Les' perception change concerning the plurilingual and IC approaches implementation in LINC. Drawing on the reflective practices theory (Towers, 2013), indicating that correctly conducted RP can affect not only changes in teacher's beliefs but also as a result create positive changes in teaching practices and their teaching approach. As demonstrated the results of this study supported the existing RP theory.

5.11.2 Les' change in perception towards plurilingual and IC approaches

Drawing on Auerback's (1993) and Burden (2000) works, among others, indicating that teachers' beliefs can change as a result of a meaningful experience, Les' change in perception of the proposed approaches was evident, as a result of this study's educational experience. At the beginning of the research work, she demonstrated full support for the English-only approach. At the end of the educational experience, she showed an understanding of the value of plurilingual and IC approaches. When asked to describe the main concept in her own words, during the final interview, she focused on the cultural aspect of the approaches, expressing her solidarity with it. Les expressed that she understood the IC approach as:

Introducing, discussing, and retaining knowledge of cultures (not only the Canadian and the learner culture) in order to learn the language (English) better. ... whenever a subject such as employment, food, or holidays is introduced, the teacher should encourage discussion of cultural differences (with no implication that Canadian culture is the best, only one that every potential Canadian citizen has to learn).

(Les, reflective session 15, 25.08.2022).

Les also expressed a strong belief that students benefited from learning about other cultures during the LINC classes, and now they were able to understand better the concept of multicultural Canada.

The plurilingual approach improves cultural awareness and tolerance. My culture has good and bad points, just like other cultures. It increases interest in other students and their cultures. It affirms the Canadian multi-cultural approach where every culture is officially accepted and respected

(Les, reflective session 15, 25.08.2022).

Les' demonstrated, as a result of this educational experience, a changed understanding of the IC skills value, specifically within the Canadian intercultural environment. This, I believe, is essential for LINC or other ELT programs for newcomers, as it helps newly arrived students integrate into the new environment and gain a better understanding and appreciation of the values they bring, which might lead to newcomers' upward mobility among other benefits.

If the intercultural aspect of the approach was seen as positive and was embraced fully, the plurilingual elements seemed to cause some concerns, especially with the strictly enforced English-only educational approach. When asked if the introduced tasks and suggested approaches had shifted her professional opinion regarding the "English-only policy," Les responded positively. She reassured me that she would reconsider the approach and allow students to use L1 in the classroom for educational purposes as she found students benefited from such approaches as introducing peer support. However, Les still outlined some concerns with the guided use of L1. She pointed out that it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that L1 does not dominate the lesson, which corresponds with teachers' concerns, outlined in the existing research on L1 in TL classrooms.

I'm also concerned that some students will rely on L1 translation from their fellow students at the expense of learning to listen themselves. Several students have previously also told me that they appreciate my strictness in emphasizing English-only.

(Les, reflection session 14, 18.08.2022).

Les also noted that she would be bringing more diverse cultural references into their ELT practice. As a result, Les incorporated materials based on the proposed approaches in her teaching plan for the next level of the LINC program. She also adopted ICT tools and platforms suggested during the intervention, as those were demonstrated to be efficient in meeting students' educational needs.

Les' reflective sessions were instrumental in implementing the approaches. The provided professional reflective space helped her talk through the proposed approaches' benefits, ask researcher questions, share their concerns, and receive additional information on the topic, such as references to the state-of-the-art articles, ECML resources and CEFR, among others. In addition, the demonstration of the approaches' practical application helped clarify additional concerns related to the approaches' application, specifically to LINC.

Les' level of education and cultural experiences did not prevent her from relying on stereotypes and demonstrating some cultural biases. However, the reflection sessions helped her to realize that personal beliefs might influence her ELT practices. At the same time, her willingness to reflect on potential issues within the professional space and her readiness to try new approaches within ELT were essential for the plurilingual and IC approaches' implementation.

5.11.3 *L1 use in Canada*

The post-intervention students' survey confirmed a significant shift in the student's perception concerning the use of L1 inside and outside the classroom space. In addition, it demonstrated a change in students' perspectives concerning Canadian and foreign cultural elements' inclusion in LINC.

A shift in students' perception was demonstrated concerning the value of non-official language use in Canada (Question 3 of the post-intervention student survey). When asked prior to the Intervention phase, 50% of students responded positively, 20% indicated a negative perception and 30% of participants were uncertain (see Figure 35). This was supported by the existing local research on the enforcement of English-only policy outside of the ELT classrooms in Canada (see p.10), which underlined the value of the official bilingual framework (English and French) and largely disregarded L1 outside of the framework.

As indicated by FG teachers, a non-official (outside of English/French) L1 use in Canada might be not seen as valuable unless required by job specifics (see p.134). Class

observation during the Pre-intervention phase and the beginning of the intervention phases confirmed students' perception of the English skills equaling their "educational" level, with the majority commenting about being seen as "smart" only if they have a high English language level. "Whatever you do, English is important. I need someone who can speak English. Because my English is not good enough" (Hayan, class observation, 23.06.2022). My initial class observation notes confirmed students' beliefs, as the pre-existing teaching approach disregarded any other language skills but English. "You need English to speak and do a lot of things...English can help you learn." (Ridhima, class observation, 23.06.2022). The educational materials provided were mainly monocultural and monolingual. The Teacher's reflective session notes also confirmed their initial understanding of the diversity value as to support monolingual and monocultural environments so "students do not switch to their L1" (Les, reflective practice 2, 16.06.2022). In Les' understanding, maintaining an English-only environment could allow for the development of English language skills more efficiently.

After the educational experience, 80% of students noted positively the non-official language (outside of English and French) use in Canada. However, 20% of students continued to believe that non-official language skills in Canada were not valued in their perception (see Figure 35).

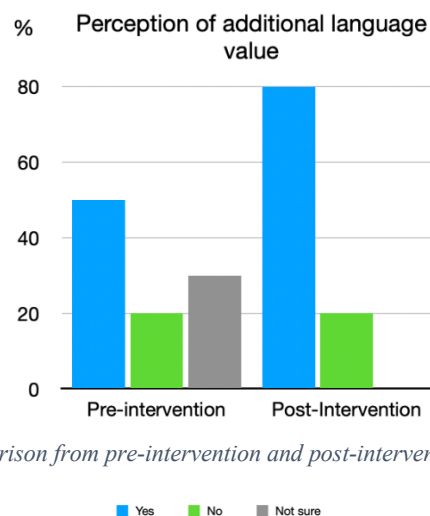


Figure 35: Data comparison from pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys

Throughout the educational experience, students developed an appreciation of other language skills and an understanding of their pre-existing language skills and cultural experiences being valuable, including employment in Canada. Students' learning diaries, class notes, and the post-intervention survey results supported the demonstration of a perspective change. At the end of the educational experience, the percentage of students favouring diverse linguistic skills in Canada increased from 30% to 80% of the participants (see Figure 35). This demonstrated a positive effect and a change in student perception of the L1 (different from English and French) use in Canada, as a result of students' educational experience and exposure to plurilingual and IC approaches to English language learning.

5.11.4 *L1 use in LINC ELT*

Most students at the beginning of the study reported a negative perception of L1 use in LINC ELT, including during peer support. As a result of the educational experience, the students not only demonstrated an active use of L1 throughout the research cycle, specifically for peer support but also indicated their positive perception of L1 in LINC ELT by the end of the research cycle. This was supported by student post-intervention survey data, class observation notes, and feedback from students' learning diaries.

It appeared students were using L1 for ELL purposes outside the classroom but did not see the practice as correct. The educational experience changed students' perception of L1 use. For example, Rihanna (Somali as L1, Arabic as L2) and Aly (Arabic as L1, Somali as L2) shared two languages, Arabic and Somali, in addition to English (see Figure 12). Both students responded negatively to Question 11 in the Pre-intervention survey, indicating a lack of acceptance of L1 inclusion in LINC ELT. However, they often demonstrated an active use of L1 in the classroom to support each other by translating tasks and explaining specific words' meanings using L1. Aly was observed to be an academically stronger student in the pair and helped Rihanna improve her learning skills and confidence. As a result, Rihanna was observed to be engaged and actively participating in discussions and task completion. Both students responded positively when asked about the value of L1 use in ELT in the post-intervention survey. This educational experience contributed to changing these students' perceptions of L1 use in ELT.

When asked in the pre-intervention survey, 44% of students supported the use of L1 in LINC ELT, 28% did not support L1 use and another 28% were uncertain. As can be seen in Figure 36, as a result of the study, 80% of the students agreed that L1 use can support ELL purposes in LINC (an increase from 44% in the pre-intervention survey) and 20% remained unconvinced of L1's benefits in LINC, which has dropped from 28%. The result indicated an overall change in students' perception concerning L1 benefits for ELLs.

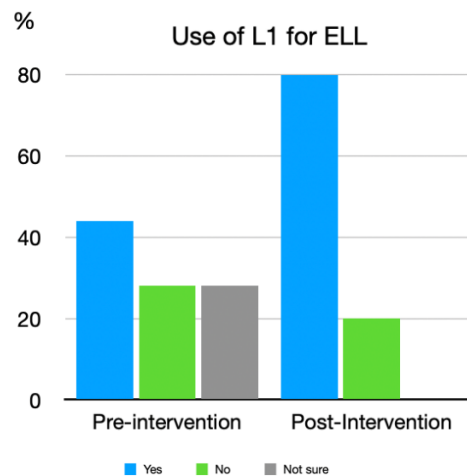


Figure 36: Data comparison from pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys

The result was confirmed by participants' responses to additional questions within the post-intervention survey (Question 6). Students were asked about their experience with L1 use in the ELL environment. Participants were asked if it was helpful when the teacher allowed them to speak their L1 to understand the task better. As LINC's official English-only policy remained in place, it was deemed essential to demonstrate that the guided use of L1 might benefit the programs' learning outcomes achievement.

The L1 use in LINC was supported by 100% of students, as they agreed it was helpful to utilize the L1 to ensure the tasks' understanding and, therefore, student's inclusion in the educational process. The results of this question aligned with the results of the second question ("Do you think it is good to use your first language (or other languages) to learn English?") of the post-intervention survey (see Appendix G.I).

The alignment of the outcomes in both questions helps to reinforce the results. Once students learned in practical terms how beneficial the guided use of L1 might be in the LINC ELT classroom, and once the teacher refrained from providing negative feedback about the practice of L1 inclusion, students were much more engaged and demonstrated interest in the educational tasks. This can also be supported by students' feedback in the learning diaries:

I think (it) is important (to) work with someone that speak(s) your language, because sometimes you need help or explain something and it (is) more easy (easier) in your language. Then it is easy to say (when) I know what I am talking about.

(Marianna's learning diary. 07.07.2022).

In the post-intervention survey, students were also asked if they changed their opinion about using their L1 for ELL purposes as a result of the research-related educational experience, where only 38% of participants responded positively (see Figure 37).

Did you change your mind (about using your 1st language for English learning) after the lessons you had?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

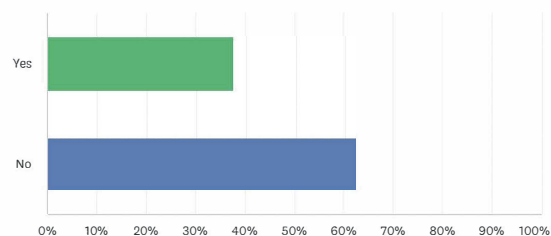


Figure 37: Q 7, Post-intervention student survey

When analyzing this result, it should be noted that the post-intervention survey questions two, five and six indicated a significant shift in students' perception concerning the benefits of guided L1 use in LINC ELT. Moreover, 44% of students indicated in the pre-intervention survey that they support using L1 for English language learning. Therefore, the additional survey data does not support the results of this specific question. The change in students' perception of the L1 use in ELL, as a result of the Intervention phase educational activities, was demonstrated in the results of the previous questions

(questions two, five and six) and supported by other information sources, such as class observation notes, teacher final interview and students learning diaries.

Seeing the survey results, Les also commented that she had not realized how much potential there was in a guided use of L1 within the classroom environment and how she should reconsider their approach to an "English-only policy".

I should admit, I am a bit surprised that allowing students to use their language (in the classroom), significantly improved their engagement. That was visible. I am also happy to see some students participating in lessons more actively than they usually do. I can see why they like it

(Les, final interview, 30.08.2022).

This demonstrated an essential change in the teacher's perception concerning professional practices, which appeared to be a direct result of her participation in the study throughout the implementation of the plurilingual and IC approaches in the LINC ELT context. A change in perception of the L1 use in LINC by all participants was noted as essential. It aligned with the research on the benefits of L1 use in ELT within the Immigrant context, which indicated adult immigrant students in the learning process build on the existing knowledge and skills for English learning purposes while supporting the natural learning process.

5.11.5 *Canadian culture in LINC ELT*

Another change in students' perception was noted concerning the inclusion of Canadian Cultural elements in LINC. When asked in the Pre-intervention survey, only 72% of students considered Canadian cultural elements inclusion in LINC ELT essential, and 28% were uncertain (See Figure 38). As a result of this study, all participating students saw the inclusion of the Canadian cultural component as essential (post-intervention student survey, question 4).

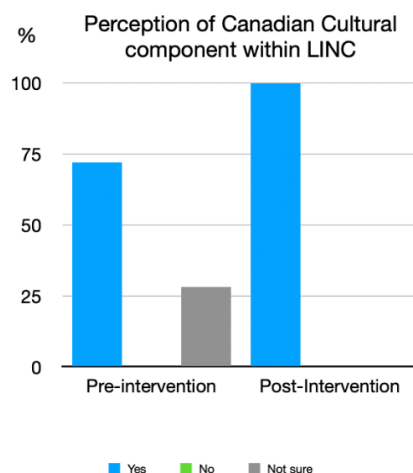


Figure 38: Data comparison from pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys

Drawing on existing research, intercultural competence could facilitate intercultural interactions, to enrich students' perspectives and reflect on their own culture (see p. 48). Language education, including LINC, could be considered the perfect environment to foster such skills (see p.48). Therefore, inclusion of Canadian cultural elements in LINC, taking into consideration the program's limitations, was seen as essential.

During the Pre-intervention phase, class observation notes and students' learning diaries outlined some students' perceptions, indicating culture-related information as "destruction" within their LINC ELL. "I am here to learn English, nothing else" (Anna, lesson 1, 27.06.2022) or "I need to learn how to speak well English to work in Canada. I need to know more grammar" (Nawra, learning diaries, lesson 1, 27.06.2022). According to those students' feedback, the focus should be on language grammar learning. It also should be noted that only 30% of students indicated passing the Canadian citizenship test as their LINC class attendance goal (see Figure 16), where Canadian Cultural knowledge was considered beneficial as part of the LINC program.

The teacher's reflective sessions also confirmed some limitations of the LINC program structure concerning cultural components inclusion. As per the program guidelines provided, LINC could prepare students for the citizenship test without explicitly having that information in the lessons. The Canadian Citizenship Test is a part of the requirements to obtain Canadian citizenship status. The expectation was that Canadian cultural

information be disseminated in the program's materials and provided to the learners in the process of acquiring the language. There was no structure within the LINC program concerning cultural knowledge, which made it difficult for students and the teacher to work with the culture-related knowledge introductions. Structured preparation for the citizenship test lesson and related tasks were included in the educational assignments offered to the students during this study. For example, a separate task was developed only on the Canadian Citizenship-related information so students could focus on retaining that information only. Small assignments with the task were structured to reinforce the same knowledge. All assignments were interactive, utilizing gamification techniques (see Appendix D). Students found the material delivery within the research cycle valuable, as it effectively met their learning objectives and practical needs.

In addition, in the post-intervention survey students were also asked if they enjoyed learning more about Canadian culture in LINC (see Figure 39).

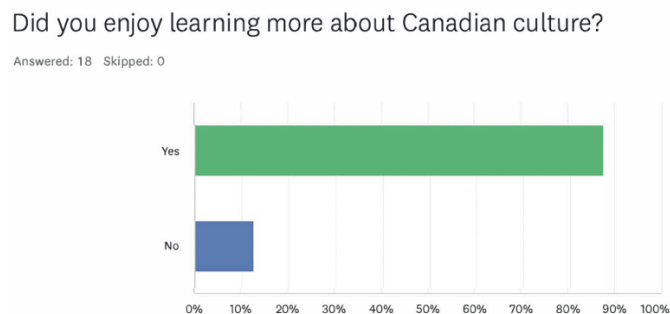


Figure 39: Q8, post-intervention student survey

A positive response to Canadian cultural inclusion in the LINC ELT classes was noted by 88% of students. This was supported by students' learning diaries feedback. "I learned about one word that describes. Maple, population, freedom, beautiful, multicultural, hockey...I learned many words that symbolize Canada" (Hayan, learning diaries, 28.07.2022).

As indicated above (see Figure 39), 12% of participating students demonstrated they did not enjoy the Canadian culture-related material. During the class, some students

reported being focused on the grammatical type of knowledge rather than looking to divert from it. The results from questions five and six of the post-intervention survey indicated that the majority of students were in favour of Canadian cultural elements inclusion in LINC ELT. The post-intervention survey results also indicated that the majority of the students also enjoyed the learning process.

Les also agreed on the importance of the structure within the Canadian cultural information presentation to the LINC students. She supported the inclusion of Canadian cultural elements into LINC but was not certain how to present the information in a retainable format.

I agree it is important for students to learn more about our culture, especially considering all of them want to stay here. Unfortunately, we are not allowed to explicitly support the test preparation. I will be rethinking how I can better structure the approach now, seeing how engaged my students are (Les, reflective practice 10, 28.07.2022).

The plurilingual and IC approaches demonstrated how Canadian cultural elements could be included in LINC ELT. As a result, participating students demonstrated high interest in the material and high engagement in the educational process.

5.11.6 *Other cultures in LINC ELT*

One of the most exciting results of this study was observing the change in student's and teacher's perceptions concerning other cultural elements included in LINC ELT within the plurilingual and IC approaches. When asked originally, during the pre-intervention student survey, 50% of participants saw the other cultures' presence within the educational LINC environment as important, 22% disagreed, and 28% expressed uncertainty (see Figure 40).

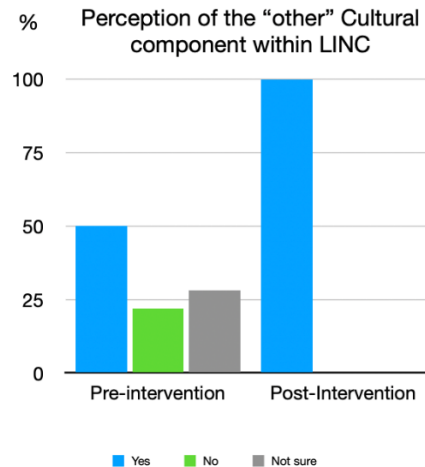


Figure 40: Data comparison from pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys

Some reliance on stereotypes was noted by the FG teachers (see pp.130-131) and was also observed within the educational process during the Pre-intervention phase on the teacher's and students' sides. Often culturally insensitive comments were noted from students during class time and from Les during the reflection sessions. For students, this can be explained partially by limited vocabulary and partially by the original culture and social communication traditions, where such comments might often be considered a norm.

Furthermore, Les demonstrated a prevalence of Canadian culture on multiple occasions. During the Pre-intervention class observations, topics like "the Weather" or "COVID" were brought up at the beginning of each class. Les tried encouraging students to practice numbers. The COVID numbers' discussions, however, on some occasions came across as insistence on vaccination for students. When asked about that during the after-class reflective session, Les admitted that this was the real objective, "They do not know that here, in Canada, vaccination is widely accepted. I think students should follow our tradition and get vaccinated, so we do not find ourselves in this situation again" (Les, reflective session 2, 16.06.2022).

It underlined a demonstration of a monocultural environment within the classroom, where one way of thinking dominates. Les did not appear to accept that some students might have a different perception of vaccination or opinion concerning the matter, which they believe is valid and correct. The lack of value or inclusion of other cultures in the

LINC ELT was observed. Drawing on Li and Sah's (2019) theory of cultural assumptions and Huber and Reynolds' (2014) approach to utilizing educational activities that promote analyzing an object from different perspectives, it was important to demonstrate that different cultural perspectives and culturally determined behaviour are present and interpreted correctly within the educational space. This implied learning about other cultures and building IC skills to be able to navigate intercultural communication.

Drawing on Huber and Reynolds' (2014) idea that learners of all ages can be encouraged to develop attitudes of openness and curiosity toward each other during the intervention, students and the teacher were offered multiple opportunities to include foreign cultural elements in the educational process. In addition, Les was offered multiple opportunities to reflect on the approach during the reflective sessions. Student were also provided with reflection opportunities in their learning diaries. The results of the post-intervention survey showcased a significant learning outcome achievement.

Question 5 of the post-intervention survey, asking students if it was important to learn about other cultures during their LINC classes demonstrated that 100% of the students considered it important to learn about other cultures during their LINC ELT classes (see Figure 40). The result presented a significant shift in students' perceptions.

In addition, in the post-intervention survey (Question 9), students were also asked if they enjoyed learning more about their group colleagues' cultures and 100% of students responded positively. The results of both questions align and support the evidence of the students' change in perception concerning foreign cultural elements inclusion in LINC.

This was also supported by students' feedback in learning diaries. For example, "The personality of a person who was born anywhere should be respected and, therefore, the culture of other countries should be respected" (Hayan's learning diary, 18.08.2022) or "(It) is important to respect other cultures because it is said: respect for the rights of others is peace, then there may be more friendship even though we are from different cultures" (Marianna's, learning diary, 07.07.2022).

Students were highly engaged when the tasks offered included foreign cultural elements. For example, when students were asked to describe to others their favourite holiday and the celebration tradition associated, all students picked celebrations from their

original cultures and appeared to be proud of being able to share that knowledge with others. Similar engagement and strong emotional connection were observed when students were encouraged to bring parts of their culture into the class discussions. This also helped to create a community feeling in the educational space.

Although self-identified as Canadian, Les brought cultural samples from other countries that she identified with. For example, she mentioned her German background and how their family was treated right after the Second World War in Canada.

My parents immigrated from Germany. We used to go to a German church here. I remember one day, at that time people in Canada did not like Germans very much, we were in a church, and someone threw a brick through the window. It was not too bad, no one was hurt, but I was scared.

(Les, class observation, 21.06.2022).

It helped her to demonstrate empathy for students and relate to some of the students' experiences. A substantial shift in Les and her students' perceptions concerning foreign cultural values, specifically within LINC ELT, was one of the significant results of this study. By the end of the Intervention phase, participants demonstrated their understanding of the importance of other cultures, enhanced IC skills and their willingness to learn more about other cultures. The post-intervention survey confirmed a change in students' perceptions. It suggested that a shift in perception on a larger scale is possible, regardless of participants' educational level and cultural background, if the appropriate educational approaches are applied.

5.11.7 *Additional Results*

As a result of plurilingual and IC approaches implementation, students demonstrated additional improvements concerning their skills. It should be mentioned that participated-in-this-study students boosted their ICT skills, enhanced their reflective skills and improved their English communication skills, including non-verbal components.

Students' reflective skills. Reflective tasks were not observed during the Pre-Intervention phase. Once introduced during the Intervention phase, reflective tasks appeared to be difficult for students to complete. For example, when students were asked at the beginning of the Intervention phase to reflect on the value of language diversity in Canada, most students were unable to do so, as this type of task was new to them. During the reflection session with Les, she confirmed that students were never asked to do such reflective or critical skills development exercises in class. In addition, Les confirmed that reflective skills development was not normally included in her approach, "I do not think they can do it. They (students) do not have any reflective skills. I do not think that was part of their education back home" (Les, reflective session, 27.06.2022).

Going through the research cycle and completing learning diaries, students developed their reflective and critical skills. Closer to the end of the teaching cycle, students were asked to reflect on the value of their linguistic skills and to do so, they were asked to draw their linguistic portrait. Students were also advised that drawing their linguistic portrait will help them with their reflective skills, to improve the structure of their verbal response and note-taking skills. Students were encouraged to use their whole language repertoire for the portrait. They were also encouraged to think in their L1. All students were able to present their reflections (see Figures 41 and 42).

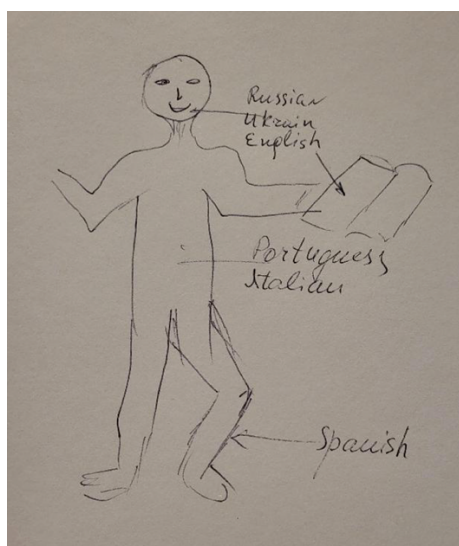


Figure 41: Anna's language portrait

Anna indicated that she speaks Russian, Ukrainian and English languages daily. She did not realize she was plurilingual until participating in this study. Anna described Portuguese and Italian cuisines as her favourite and that she enjoyed cooking those traditional meals. Anna also shared that she enjoyed travelling to Italy with her family but did not see herself being able to speak Italian. The book in the language portrait indicated her English language learning that was in process and at the same time it symbolized helping her granddaughter with the school. Anna's granddaughter was enrolled in elementary school in Toronto at the time of this research. She also shared that she liked Spanish music and dancing during her free time. This allowed all participants to learn more not only about Anna's linguistic abilities but also about her cultural experiences and exposures. The language portrait helped Anna improve her speaking skills, by making her response structured. It also improved her overall communication. The rest of the students understood her response, as it was also illustrated.

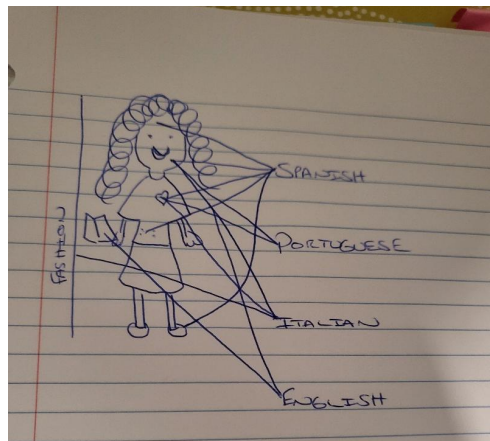


Figure 42: Marianna's language portrait

Marianna's language portrait presented her as a plurilingual person, speaking four languages (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and English). She however indicated that she normally thought in Spanish (her L1). Marianna was married to a Portuguese speaker and because of the similarities between Spanish and Portuguese languages, she was able to learn Portuguese quickly. Marianna also indicated that she was studying English and

intended to continue her studies at a University in Canada (she also drew a book, as a symbol of her studies). Marianna shared that she enjoyed Italian fashion and that was why she learned the language. Similar to Anna, Marianna did not realize she was plurilingual which might be valuable in Canada. In her home country speaking two or three languages, especially within one linguistic group was a norm.

Students not only provided more information about their language skills, while presenting their language portraits, but they also shared their values and cultural traditions, in addition to working on their learning and global skills. This task, among others, provided cultural and linguistic learning experiences. All students were encouraged to teach the class a simple greeting in their L1. Les also participated in the task, and they were not only taking notes of all greeting words but also pronouncing those words to ensure they got them correctly. Les also shared that those will be used with the next cohort of students to welcome them into the class. As demonstrated in this research, reflective skills can be developed within plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC ELT, regardless of students' educational and cultural backgrounds.

Students' English language skills. Participants' engagement and English language skills improved with each class during the research cycle. When a task on English language idioms was proposed in lesson 6, students were asked to find equivalents in their L1. During the reflection session before the class, Les was skeptical, sharing that the task was too difficult for the student's level of English (A2 level). As the task's completion also implied the use of reflective skills, which were never included in LINC, as per Less (see p.194), her skepticism was expected. Nevertheless, we went ahead with the task, and 60% of students demonstrated completion of the task during class time. They were allowed to use bilingual dictionaries and peer support if needed. This goes against "English-only" research that suggested L1 use in an Immigrant ELL environment might hinder students' learning and supports local plurilingual research challenging that belief (see p.20). Analyzing the task's results, it was stressed that most students could translate one or two idioms from L1 into English and explain their meanings in English to the rest of the class.

During the reflection session after the lesson, Les expressed her surprise and admitted that she might have underestimated students' learning abilities.

I am pleasantly surprised most of the students were able to complete the task. I did not think they could do it at this level. Perhaps I underestimated their skills. I think I will do this with my future level three students

(Les, reflective session, 04.08.2022).

This task's results along with other reflective exercises within the Intervention phase, demonstrated that regardless of student's English level, they can complete tasks requiring critical thinking, reflective and IC skills and enhanced English language skills if appropriate resources and tools are provided. Plurilingual and IC approaches were demonstrated to be effective in achieving English language skills development.

ICT skills. At the beginning of the research cycle, during the Pre-Intervention phase class observation, most students demonstrated a low level of ICT skills, struggling with opening their emails, accessing digital platforms or electronic tasks' submission. Enhancing ICT skills was observed as one of the student's needs. In addition, during the Pre-intervention phase, students demonstrated low confidence in trying new digital tools and platforms. ICT skills are essential for settlement and employment in Canada. Newcomers' low confidence in using ICT skills and digital platforms presented a barrier to their educational progress. Furthermore, some students did not have a laptop or computer, and they were using phones to attend classes. It created additional difficulties for students attempting to work with a new digital platform.

The teacher demonstrated good knowledge of ICT, successfully utilizing a variety of online-based recourses, including tools suggested by the ECML, such as Live worksheets and ESL library, among others. Les was prepared to provide the required technical support, which indicated that the concern was ongoing. For example, Les asked students to send her a screenshot to troubleshoot the issue together. She also helped the students to troubleshoot by phone, helping to resolve the issues.

It should be noted that often discussions within the digital space were observed to be disorganized, with everyone speaking at the same time, which resulted in a difficult learning environment. Not only did the quality of internet connectivity have a negative effect, but sometimes so did the teachers' approach to the situation. The following interaction occurred between Alaa and Les. It shows Alaa became evidently more nervous and afraid of making another mistake as Les started raising their voice.

Alaa (discussing their weekend): I go

Teacher: No go

Alaa: I going

Teacher: No go, no going

Alaa: I No go, no going

Teacher: [raising her voice] I went

Alaa: I went

(Class observation, Lesson 2, 16.06.2022).

These unorganized discussions were taking place partially due to students' lack of proficiency and user experience with ICT. It created a challenging learning environment in the class. When Les was trying to encourage students to come up with the correct sentence, they could only reemphasize the grammatically incorrect sentence by pronouncing it. Drawing on the Oral Corrective Feedback theory (Sheen & Ellis, 2011), the correction could have been made by the teacher with a metalinguistic explanation of an error the student made, or the correct sentence could have been articulated to the student, or clarification could have been requested by the teacher to indicate the error and allow the student to correct it. Alternatively, utilizing translation might have been another approach in this situation. Either approach could have led to better results in assisting the student to improve their language skills and accuracy long term.

To mitigate the issue with the technical tool's access, students were referred to free recourses available to students at the local libraries in Toronto. Additionally, to address students' low confidence issues in using digital tools, throughout the intervention phase, participants had an opportunity to navigate the Live Worksheets digital platform, YouTube, Kahoot, collective digital platforms, and a variety of Microsoft Office applications to be

able to complete and submit assignments. All assignments were created in a digital interactive format. Students were also asked to work and submit learning diaries within a digital platform. At first, some students demonstrated a struggle with the digital tools mentioned above. However, while completing the tasks with the help of other students or the researcher, they visibly enjoyed it. For example, during lesson five, all students were engaged and using Kahoot and asked for more tasks in the future involving the tool. The setup was ensured by the researcher (using peer support with some students and researcher's direct assistance with others) before the class so all students had the required tools to complete the task. Every class involved the use of ICT tools. With increased practice and additional support, students gained ICT skills and demonstrated good use of digital platforms by the end of the cycle, which supported their educational progress. This corresponded to one of the student's goals for LINC attendance, as indicated by them. Some of the students expressed gratitude, as they have gained digital skills and would be able to assist their children with schoolwork when needed in the pre-intervention survey.

This research demonstrated the ability to enhance any student's ICT skills while practicing them in the LINC environment within the proposed plurilingual and IC educational approaches. L1 inclusion enabled students to use peer support while navigating technical issues or learning the digital tool interface. It increased students' confidence in using the proposed tools and platform. During the reflective session after the fifth lesson, Les expressed her pleasant surprise that all students were engaged and were able to navigate the digital tool (Reflective session 10, 28.07.2022). She also noted that she normally does not use digital tools, as students demonstrate difficulties navigating those. She also admitted that it appeared beneficial for some students to use their peers' assistance in L1, as it resulted in students' ability to use the tool for educational purposes.

Non-verbal communication. Although FG participants did not outline the potential importance of non-verbal communication being aligned within the proposed plurilingual and IC approaches, the lack of such was observed during the pre-intervention phase. Participating students had a low English language level (A2). Therefore, to enhance communication and improve students' comprehension, Les was utilizing gestures to

explain some words (Li, 2020, p. 4). When discussing different types of crime, including drinking and driving, they demonstrated a gesture commonly used in North America for drinking, but not all students understood. Most of the students were from countries where alcohol is either illegal or not received well within the social context. Therefore, the gesture was unfamiliar to them, and Les did not conduct follow-ups.

Gestures, as non-verbal communication tools, should be considered when communicating with a culturally diverse audience, as those can be misunderstood. For example, if utilizing gestures while teaching a language, which is strongly encouraged, a teacher might want to consider first explaining the meaning behind the gesture within the current cultural context and then using it, so students can contextualize it and become familiar with it for future use. In addition, existing research showed that using gestures could be beneficial for TL learning, student' engagement and information retention.

This was considered when I was introducing educational tasks during the Intervention phase. During the class discussion on international food (lesson 8), for example, I used a gesture to indicate that food is delicious and explained what it means to ensure students' correct understanding of the context and non-verbal communication used. Students also shared how they normally demonstrate non-verbally that the food is good. For example, Anna showed that gently rubbing a stomach might show others in her culture that food was good. Marianna explained that kissing your closed fingers also meant a delicious meal in her culture. Students visibly enjoyed the educational activity and appreciated the opportunity to share their cultural knowledge with the rest of the group. It demonstrated that non-verbal communication in an intercultural environment was imperative. It was important to explain gestures or other non-verbal communicative means used in the classroom to avoid miscommunication and to enhance participants' IC skills development. When discussing the task after class, Les noted that it was important to explain non-verbal communicative elements to the students so they can interpret those correctly.

Yes, I think you are right. I honestly did not think about it before, it seemed clear...but of course, how would they know what it means ...or it might mean the opposite for some students. I will try to remember next time

(Les, reflective session 13, 15.08.2022).

She also admitted that she did not give it enough thought prior to this task's observation, assuming students understood the gestures, as they seemed self-explanatory. It demonstrated that the proposed plurilingual and IC approaches could facilitate comprehensive skills development in LINC ELT. The approaches were revealed to be inclusive of non-verbal communication to enhance students' comprehension skills when communicating in English in the Canadian intercultural environment.

5.11.8 *Summary*

The main result of this study, addressing the main research problem of how can plurilingual and IC approaches be implemented in LINC, Ontario, Canada, was the illustration of the successful implementation of the plurilingual and IC approaches. This chapter also demonstrated that the approaches could help effectively achieve students' educational goals, despite the LINC program's limitations and by drawing on the program's strengths. Furthermore, it showed that the proposed educational approaches could help shift participants' perceptions concerning L1 use in Canada and specifically within the LINC, Ontario, ELT program. In addition, this study has showcased that all participants, students and teachers, can change their perceptions of the value of Canadian and foreign cultural elements in the LINC ELT within the proposed educational approaches.

One of the findings of this study concerning the plurilingual and IC approaches implementation was the observed difference between students' perception of the proposed approach and what they were utilizing in the LINC class environment for ELL purposes. Students initially indicated a negative perception and insufficiency of L1 use in ELT but were observed actively using L1 during the lessons.

Participants' educational experience led to significant changes in their perspectives concerning the value of their pre-existing linguistic and IC skills. All students found the use of L1 in ELT beneficial, but only 80% of students indicated benefits of L1 (outside of bilingual framework) use overall in Canada. This demonstrated a possible influence of the overall Canadian language environment on the participants, with a strong dominance of the official languages, where students do not see benefits of using their L1 for everyday living in Canada. A 100% shift is not always realistic or possible, especially within a short time. However, a significant shift was observed within this research work, which indicated a change that might be possible in a broader educational environment. In addition, students demonstrated an improvement in critical thinking skills and reflective skills development. They were also able to improve their ICT and digital skills. Moreover, during the research cycle, students demonstrated improved English language skills and their level of confidence and engagement in the educational process.

Using students' learning diaries as a reflection tool was beneficial to gather students' feedback; in the process, the approach also helped students improve their writing skills. Some students demonstrated difficulties with their writing skills in English while completing their learning diaries. However, going through the educational experience and correction practices as a class helped students to improve their English language writing skills and demonstrate improved writing samples in their learning diaries.

In addition, this study has demonstrated that educational games are effective for interactive learning with adult immigrant learners. Adult students enjoyed educational games when they found them relevant. Gamification of some educational tasks was also observed to be beneficial for students' ICT skills development.

The result of this study demonstrated that it was possible for a teacher who firmly believed in and supported an established educational approach to change their perspective. As demonstrated, the change in perception resulted from the educational work with the teacher. Consistent reflective practices, demonstration of the proposed approaches within the natural class environment and students' confirmation of their benefits within the plurilingual and IC approaches led to the teacher's change in perception concerning the established LINC ELT.

6 Conclusion

While Canada is committed to welcoming an increased number of newcomers, the commitment to an educational policy change is required to meet the educational needs of immigrant students effectively. This study has answered the proposed research questions and demonstrated how plurilingual and intercultural approaches can be applied to the real-life LINC environment, taking into consideration the program's specific outcome and current limitations. Based on this mixed methods case study results, it can be concluded that the plurilingual and IC approaches can be successfully implemented in the LINC program, leading to the effective achievement of the LINC program's educational goals, regardless of students' level of education and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The proposed methodology, utilizing qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, without following a specific mixed methods research design, was seen as successful in proving the hypothesis of this study. Extensive data collection and analysis throughout all four phases of this research, provided opportunities to cross-check the validity of collected information and support presented in this study results interpretation.

6.1 The limitations of plurilingual and IC approaches within the LINC program

One of the outcomes of this study was confirmation that the implementation of the plurilingual and intercultural approaches within the LINC program depended more on a specific teacher and less on an educational institution despite the officially established English-only policy. Participating teachers were able to work within the proposed plurilingual and IC approaches despite the strict English-only policy. This re-emphasized the need for professional development for LINC teachers to be able to foster the intercultural environment within the class environment and the possibility to do so in any educational institution in Ontario, Canada. The proposed plurilingual and IC approaches challenged the established LINC's "English-only" policy and demonstrated the need to change the established policy and the existing teaching approach in LINC. This study demonstrated that practicing teachers were able to address the existing and often outdated teaching methods after receiving the appropriate training. English-only policy, as a

potential limitation for plurilingual and IC approaches implementation, could be overcome if a teacher was able to understand the value of the proposed approaches and plurilingual and IC tools in effectively achieving LINC program outcomes. Therefore, one of the recommendations of this research is to re-consider the English-only policy within the LINC program.

This study contributed to outlining other potential limitations of implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches in the LINC program, such as the current structure of the program. Current program design did not appear to be effective in encouraging students' educational progress. In addition, the program setup continues to support basic TL skills development only.

Lack of LINC teachers' training, L2 skills, IC skills and experiences were also among the limiting factors. It was demonstrated that teachers' reflective practices and additional training could help to mitigate the limitations. The lack of resources and a narrow approach to material selection also contributed to the LINC program's limitations. It was demonstrated that those factors could be mitigated by specific teachers utilizing culturally diverse materials that reflect not only local but also global realities.

Stereotypes concerning teachers' and students' beliefs also proved to present the LINC program's limitations. Mitigation strategies focused on all stakeholders' awareness of being exposed to and affected by stereotypes and acknowledgement of the potential effect of such on teaching practices. It encouraged practice improvement and supported the implementation of plurilingual and IC approaches in LINC.

This study also illustrated that the current LINC program's lack of diversity and inclusion contributed to the LINC program's limitations, which were mitigated by the incorporation of global context educational materials, adult immigrant learners' inclusion in the education process, and teachers' reflective practices. The latest also supported a shift in teachers' perspectives regarding the benefits of students' bilingual skills outside of the official language framework. Those skills were proven to be valuable in securing employment in Canada, which corresponds to one of the main goals of the LINC program.

Finally, traditional LINC assessment approaches were determined to be an additional limitation. Therefore, plurilingual assessment techniques and tools were employed, which

were demonstrated to be effective in implementing the plurilingual and IC approaches and meeting LINC students' learning goals.

6.2 The potential of plurilingual and IC strategies within the LINC program

This study also demonstrated that participants could change their perception of the plurilingual and IC elements in ELT despite established monolingual and monocultural educational approaches. It also showcased that participants could change their perception of the value of non-official language skills and diverse cultural experiences inside and outside of the classroom environment in Canada. In addition, this research demonstrated that the plurilingual and intercultural approaches could positively affect student engagement in the educational process while reflecting on students' learning needs and goals. By incorporating students' existing experience and language skills into the LINC classes, learners became actively involved experts in the co-creation of the educational process. The majority of participants noted the guided use of L1 in LINC as beneficial. Students admitted that being allowed to clarify information in L1, including the use of peer support, bilingual dictionaries, and structuring responses in L1 first, was helpful for English Language learning.

Another result of this study was students' changed perception concerning L1 (outside of the official English/French framework) use overall in Canada. Considering the influence of the overall dominant Canadian language and cultural environment, a complete shift of perspective was not expected, especially within a short time. However, a significant shift was observed within this study as an outcome of the intervention phase educational activities, which indicated a change might be possible in a broader educational environment. The achieved results corresponded to one of the goals of this study to encourage students to value their pre-existing linguistic and cultural skills and experiences. As a result of this research, most students indicated their understanding of the value of plurilingual skills in a broader Canadian context.

The most significant shift in participants' perception was observed with the inclusion of Canadian and foreign cultural elements in LINC ELT. As demonstrated by the post-

intervention survey, 100% of students indicated support for cultural inclusion in LINC, with 90% of students enjoying learning about Canadian culture and 100% of students enjoying learning about other cultures within the class environment.

This study showcased that IC skills development was crucial for LINC students. Because within LINC, the emphasis was on future employment and settlement within Canada, students needed to be aware of the culturally diverse Canadian environment to be successful in their settlement goals achievement. Plurilingual and IC approaches helped students enhance their critical thinking skills, allowing for a better understanding of different cultures and their own culture in the context of the new Canadian environment. It helped students to build awareness of culturally accepted skills, socially acceptable attitudes, or practices in a local work environment. The plurilingual and IC approaches created conditions within the educational setting for intercultural discussions and IC competency development.

Students demonstrated an improvement in reflective skills development. They were also able to improve their ICT and digital skills. During the research cycle, students demonstrated improved English language skills and their level of confidence and engagement in the educational process. The students' high engagement was ensured by the inclusion of the relevant educational materials and tasks. Students were increasingly engaged in discussion and task completion once they understood how the learning outcomes could help them reach their personal and educational goals. It was demonstrated that students' engagement in the educational process might depend on the teacher considering students' backgrounds, educational needs and interests when designing the learning process and learning materials and overall planning the lessons.

Furthermore, it was demonstrated that the reflective sessions were important for the teacher to analyze and improve their teaching practices within the ELT context. Les demonstrated progress in her perception of plurilingual and IC approaches during the course of the research. As a result of the educational experience, Les demonstrated a change in perception and willingness to revisit her existing approach to ELT, material selection, guided L1 use and foreign cultural elements inclusion into the LINC learning process.

It was expected for some participants to show resistance to the IC and plurilingual approaches implementation within their classes due to the lack of training or lower level of IC sensitivity. However, this study demonstrated that teachers were interested and encouraged to pilot the approaches once the training was provided to them. Some students also demonstrated resistance to the proposed educational approaches, as those contradicted their perceptions of educational practices; however, after the relevant educational experience, students showed an increased understanding of the approaches and educational benefits.

6.3 Research Limitations

It is important to note the limitations to better understand the outcome of this study within a specific context and to interpret the validity of this study appropriately. Some limitations, specifically with the focus group, were noted, as only male LINC teachers participated. The limitation was due to a lack of responses from potential participants among practicing LINC teachers in Ontario, Canada

Another limitation concerns the research sample profile. A teacher and students from one school board were selected. The school board is known as one of the most diverse educational settings in the country. Had the research site been a smaller schoolboard in a rural setting, the outcome might have been different, and it might have affected the research outcomes.

Furthermore, as expected and noted in the research, the Hawthorne effect was taken into consideration, as participants might change their behaviour or/and feedback as a result of being observed. To minimize the effect, I tried to reinforce my role as a researcher in the setting by being present during classes before the intervention phase and explaining the whole context of the research, therefore reducing the novelty effect (Robson, 2016).

Finally, the student's level of English might have resulted in an additional limitation for some students might not have been able to provide the precise information they intended to provide. The multilingual option to provide answers was not always possible due to English-only LINC program policies.

6.4 Contributions

As supported by the literature review, this study has contributed to closing the gap between plurilingual and IC educational theory and its practical implementation in LINC classes in Ontario, Canada. Participants were able to look past their existing communication practices and work on adjusting those to different cultural contexts, allowing them to gain multiple perspectives on a variety of situations. This led to positive results and successful implementation of the plurilingual and IC approach in LINC. This study was conducted in one of the biggest and most diverse school boards in Canada. To better understand the implications of these results, further studies could address additional research within rural educational settings with less exposure to diversity.

I believe the results of this research can be useful for the improvement of the current LINC programs in Ontario. Language teachers might find the outcomes useful, as those provided practical suggestions concerning their everyday practices. Designed during this study, educational materials were made available to LINC teachers within the participating institution for incorporation into their daily practice. Educational materials were also uploaded to the educational platform (Live worksheets) and will become an open-access resource after the completion of this study.

Finally, I hope this study contributed to a general perspective shift concerning the use of non-official Canadian languages and diverse cultural elements in the ELT programs in Ontario, Canada. In my current capacity, working with adult immigrant learners in higher education settings, I continue the advocacy on changing educational stakeholders' perspectives regarding adult immigrant learners and the benefits they bring to and beyond academic settings in Canada.

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9 Appendices

Appendix A. Consent forms

I. Research Participation Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Date:

Study Name: **A plurilingual and IC approach within ESL for adult immigrants, in the context of Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) to Ontario, Canada**

Researchers: Svetlana Volkova, Volkova_lana@yahoo.com
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities – NOVA University of Lisbon

Purpose of the Research:

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: to participate in plurilingual task completion with the purpose of English Language Learning. You will be asked to provide feedback on the presented tasks.
Duration: 1 month

Risks and Discomforts: There is no risk or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with LINC program either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. If you decide to stop participating, please send an e-mail to the researcher, indicating the withdrawal. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The data will be collected through ICT tools, digital devices, and audio records. Your data will be safely stored offline and only research staff will have access to this information. The data will be store until the completion of the research (in 2023) and it will be destroyed after the study. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Ph.D (C) Volkova by e-mail (Volkova_lana@yahoo.com or a2020104340@campus.fcsh.uni.pt) or Dr. Matos (Associate Professor, Coordinator of MA in ELT. Department of Modern Languages, Cultures and Literatures at NOVA FCSH) by e-mail (anagoma2@fcsh.unl.pt). This research has been reviewed and approved by the FCSH/NOVA University of Lisbon and Universidade Alberta, in Lisbon, Portugal and conforms to the standards of the Research Ethics guidelines.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I (fill in your name here), consent to participate in A plurilingual and IC approach within ESL for adult immigrants, in context of Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) to Ontario, Canada conducted by Svetlana Volkova. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature

Participant

Date

Signature

Principal Investigator

Date

Appendix B. Invitation letter

I. Invitation e-mail

Hello, my name is _____. I am currently in a final year of my Ph.D. program with focus on adult education (ESL). My research is on English studies for newcomers and specifically on Plurilingual and Intercultural approach within ESL in Ontario, Canada.

I have successfully completed the first part of my research with a public school board in Toronto and now I am hoping to finalize my study with another LINC class. Ideally I am looking for students at levels 3/4/5, but I am able to work with any class. Online or in-person (depending on the location).

I am looking for apx 10 academic hours commitment in total, that can be distributed throughout the semester, however it fits the class' needs the best (30-45 min per week or 2 weeks at the end of the term or any other time).

Implementation of the proposed approach will assist in aligning programs' learning process and outcome with UNESCO agenda 2030 and specifically the educational goal (SDG4). One of the outcomes of the project will be creation of the digital learning portal, that your students will also be able to utilize if they choose to. Participation is online. Full anonymity is guaranteed for all stakeholders involved.

If this is not a correct e-mail for the matter, could you please forward it to the appropriate person or kindly let me know the best way to reach out to the person/department responsible.

Thank you for your consideration, and looking forward to hearing back from you if you feel that this might be relevant to your institution,

Signature

Appendix C. Survey Samples

I. Pre-intervention Survey invitation

Questionnaire

Dear LINC student,

Please note personal information and results from this questionnaire will be kept confidential. This is only to be used for this research purpose.

You will be given 13 questions. This survey should take approximately 5 min. When you are done, please click SUBMIT.

Thank you for participating,
Lana

OK

II. Pre-intervention survey questions

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
 - 20-25
 - 26-30
 - 31-34
 - 35-39
 - 40-44
 - 45-49
 - 50-55
 - 55 and above
3. What languages do you speak at home (or with friends, with children/parents, to read, and to watch TV)?
4. What languages do you speak?

	I speak a little...	I speak ok..	I speak ...well	My first language is
Arabic				
Assyrian				

Chaldean				
Chechen				
English				
French				
Gujarati				
Hebrew				
Hindi				
Italian				
Korean				
Kurdish				
Portuguese				
Punjabi				
Russian				
Somali				
Spanish				
Tigrinya				
Ukrainian				
Urdu				

Other:

5. Why do you want to learn English? What is the main reason?

- To get Canadian citizenship
- To get a job
- To start a business
- To help my children at school
- To speak at the doctor's office, hospital, store, bank, and other places
- To go to college or university in Canada
- Other: (example: I like English school)

6. How many years did you go to school?

7. Did you go to university or college?

- Yes
- No

a. **Only if you answered “Yes”:**

What level of education do you have ?

- Some University
- B.A. (Bachelor’s Degree)
- M.A./M.Sc. (Master’s Degree)
- Ph.D.

8. How long have you been in the LINC program (how many years/months)?

9. How much English do you want to study?

- Level 3 is enough
- Level 4 for citizenship
- Level 5/6 to finish school at Albion LINC
- High level so that I can understand almost everybody and say everything
- Very high level because I want to go to college or university
- Highest level because I want to speak like Canadians

10. Do you think it is good to speak other languages in Canada, not just English or French?

- Yes
- No

11. Can you use your first language (or other languages) to learn English?

- Yes
- No

12. Do you think it is important to learn about Canadian culture during English classes?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you think it is important to learn about other cultures (not Canadian) during English classes?

- Yes
- No

III. Pre-intervention Teacher's semi-structured interview questions

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself, your background. Where and what did you study?
2. How long have you been teaching within LINC ?
3. What do you like doing outside of work? Do you travel often?
4. Do you have any connections to other cultures? How did you acquire them?
5. What do you believe is a multicultural society? Are there, in your opinion, benefits of living in a multicultural society?
6. How do you believe students might benefit from learning about other cultures during LINC classes?
7. Why do you think it might be important to bring diverse cultural references into LINC teaching practices?
8. How you think students might benefit from the use of L1 in LINC classroom?

IV. Pilot phase pre-intervention student survey

Questionnaire:

Dear Student,

Any information you give will be confidential. I will use this information for research only.

Thank you for your help.

1. What is your name?

2. How old are you?

3. What languages do you speak?

Please put X

	No	A little	Medium	A lot	My first language
Arabic					
Assyrian					
Chaldean					
Chechen					
French					
Gujarati					
Hebrew					
Hindi					
Italian					
Korean					
Kurdish					

Questionnaire:

Dear Student,

Any information you give will be confidential. I will use this information for research only.

Thank you for your help.

4. What languages do you speak at home?

5. Why do you want to learn English? What is the main reason?

☐

To get Canadian citizenship

☐

To get a job

☐

To start a business

☐

To help my children at school

☐

To speak at the doctor's office, hospital, store, bank, and other places

☐

To go to college or university in Canada

☐

Other (example: I like English school/ To be happy in Canada)

6. How many years did you go to school?

Appendix D. Educational tasks

I. A. Lesson 1: Introduction. Intervention phase

Students' level: CLB 3

Objectives:

- Students should be able to introduce themselves and introduce other people. They should be able to understand and use basic description information and numbers (based on CLB (level 3))
- Learning how to look up required information utilizing ICT tools (CLB level 3).
- Practice the use of L1 tools
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in English.
- Practice reflection skills

Teacher: In many situations (at work or within the community), you will be often asked to read or to listen to the information and to present it a short version (it is often called a summary). Today we will practice that.

Task 1: Introduction



Task:

- You will see a document "Let me introduce myself". You will be asked to fill in the gaps about yourself. We will review the vocabulary together. Then you will have 10-15 min to fill it out. <https://www.liveworksheets.com/3-jj21144pl>
- You don't need to tell the truth, if you don't want to. You can use the samples, provided in colourful boxes. If you don't know the word you would like to use, please use dictionary or google.
- Now I will divide you into groups of 2. Please tell your group partner about yourself, use the worksheet as a reference/guide. As partners, you should listen and complete the second form with the information given to you. You will be asked to present to the group your partner's information for this exercise (10-15min).



Let me introduce myself

- Hi, my name's
- I'm from (country)
- I am a (profession)
- I speak language/s
- I live in (city)
- My birthday is on
- I'm a student at
- There are ... people in my family.
- They are
- In Canada I would like to be a because
- My hobby is
- In my free time, I also like
- I don't like
- My favourite food is
- My favourite drink is
- My favourite day of the week is because
- My favourite month is because
- I like (movies).
- My favourite place is I like it because
- I (don't) like travelling. I have been to
- The most beautiful place in my country is
- I study English because
- "Thank you" in your native language

Hobbies - Free time activities

- reading, painting, drawing
- playing computer games
- surfing the Internet
- collecting stamps/coins/...
- going to the cinema
- playing with friends
- playing with my dog
- going to the park/beach/...
- listening to music
- shopping, singing, dancing
- travelling, camping, hiking

Months

January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December



Movies

action movie
comedy
romantic comedy
horror movie
sci-fi movie
war movie
thriller
animated cartoons



Because...

- ... I like it a lot.
- ... I think it's important.
- ... there are many things to see and do.
- ... I have to.
- ... I can relax there.
- ... it's relaxing/popular/nice/...
- ... it's the last day of the week.
- ... I'm good at English/maths/...

Jobs

teacher	policeman	doctor
nurse	builder	architect
civil servant	engineer	social worker
secretary	businessman	shop assistant
manager	fire fighter	shopkeeper
cleaner	postman	waiter/waitress

Task:

- You will see a document "Let me introduce myself". You will be asked to fill in the gaps about yourself. We will review the vocabulary together. Then you will have 10-15 min to fill it out.
- Now I will divide you into groups of 2. Please tell your group partner about yourself, use the worksheet as a reference/guide. You don't need to tell the truth, if you don't want to. You can use the samples, provided in colourful boxes. If you don't know the word you would like to use, please use dictionary or google.

As partners, you should listen and complete the second form with the information given to you. You will be asked to present to the group your partner's information for this exercise (10-15min).

Note to the teacher: There should be apx 4 groups (total of 8 students). You can ask the weaker speaking student from the pair to present (5min x 4= 20 min).

Total time: 50 min

At home: Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

- What did you learn?
- What did you find useful (good)?

Use the file provided for the feedback.

At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Source: <https://en.islcollective.com/download/english-esl-worksheets/level/beginner-pre-a1/international-words/59771>

B. Lesson 1: Introduction. Pilot phase tasks.

Let me introduce myself

- Hi, my name's
- I'm from (country)
- I am a(profession)
- I live in (city)
- My birthday is on
- I'm a student at
- There are ... people in my family.
- They are
- My hobby is
- In my free time, I also like
- I don't like
- My favourite food is
- My favourite drink is
- My favourite day of the week is because
- My favourite month is because
- I like (movies).
- My favourite place is I like it because

Months
 January
 February
 March
 April
 May
 June
 July
 August
 September
 October
 November
 December

Hobbies - Free time activities
 • reading, painting, drawing
 • playing computer games
 • surfing the Internet
 • collecting stamps/coins/...
 • going to the cinema
 • playing with friends
 • playing with my dog
 • going to the park/beach/...
 • listening to music
 • shopping, singing, dancing
 • travelling, camping, hiking

Movies
 action movie
 comedy
 romantic comedy
 horror movie
 sci-fi movie
 war movie
 thriller
 animated cartoons

Jobs
 teacher
 nurse
 civil servant
 secretary
 manager
 cleaner
 policeman
 builder
 engineer
 businessman
 fire fighter
 postman
 doctor
 architect
 social worker
 shop assistant
 shopkeeper
 waiter / waitress

Because...
 • ... I like it a lot.
 • ... I think it's important.
 • ... there are many things to see and do.
 • ... I have to.
 • ... I can relax there.
 • ... it's relaxing/popular/nice/...
 • ... it's the last day of the week.
 • ... I'm good at English/maths/...

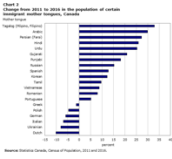
II Lesson 2: Language and Cultural Diversity. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Introduce the notions of Interculturalism, Language and Cultural Diversity.
- Learning how to look up required information utilizing ICT tools (CLB level 3).
- Practice repetition and paraphrasing (CLB level 3).
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Practice the use of L1 tools
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- Practice reflection and English writing skills.

Teacher: Start by reviewing writing/vocabulary mistakes (from feedback submitted) (5-10 min).
No references to specific students, so everyone is involved. If students want personal feedback, it can be provided by e-mail.

Task 2:
Language and Cultural Diversity


1. 7 000
2. What are the most spoken languages in the world?
3. Do you know how many languages people speak in Canada?
4. What languages you hear spoken in the community around you? How do you know that those are the languages?
5. Do you believe it is important to have cultural diversity (many people from different countries) in Canada? Why?

Task :

A. In your own language think about the situation, where you had to deal with a person from different culture (including Canadian).

B. Talk it through with yourself

C. In groups of 2-3 discuss your examples):

1. Why do you remember that situation?
2. What was the result or your experience?
3. What did you learn from that experience? (10-12 min)

D. Now, present your partner's experience to the class (5-7 min)



At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Teacher: Linguistic and Canadian diversity. Reflect on the personal plurilingual experience

Ask questions in the beginning to set the tone of the task (3-5 min):

- Do you know how many languages do people speak in Canada? (Answer: 200 (Statistics Canada)).
- What languages do you hear spoken in the community around you? How do you know that those are the languages? (Example: if You don't speak Mandarin, how do you know that it is Mandarin being spoken?)

- Do you believe it is important to have cultural diversity (many people from different countries) in Canada? Why?

Note for the teacher: The task is about the notion of Interculturalism. It is a “heavy” concept for beginner level students, therefore term “culture” is used. Repetition and paraphrasing are used, as an appropriate technique for level 3 CLB . (Themes correspond to the CLB level3).

Teacher: Do you believe language diversity is important in Canada?/Do you think it is valuable/important/useful/good to speak many languages in Canada? Why? How can it help you or other people?

Task :

Teacher: In groups of 2-3: Discuss your meaningful intercultural experience in Canada? (10- 20 in total min)

For students: In groups of 2-3 talk about one time you remember when in Canada you met or had to deal/work with a person from a different culture (including Canadian). Why do you remember that situation? What was the result of your experience/situation? What did you learn from that experience?

Now, briefly/in general present your partner’s experience to the class (3 min per person x 7=21min)

Total time: 36-50 min

At home: provide your feedback on the assignment. Why is it important to respect other cultures and consider it in communication/work environment/business environment?

- What did you learn?
- Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

III Lesson 3: Plurilingual identity. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Enhance the understanding of the concept of plurilingualism and its’ value for the students in their everyday life in Canada.
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Explain the concept of alternative notetaking.
- Practice the use of L1 tools.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- Practice English writing skills.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Task 3: Plurilingual Identity



❖ Most people in Canada and around the world are plurilingual. This means they speak more than one language, but not always equally well. This is the norm.

✓ I speak English, German and Russian. Sometimes I watch TV shows in Portuguese. I enjoy traveling and learning new words from other languages.

✓ I am plurilingual/multilingual.

Task “Language portrait”:

- Draw your own portrait (5-7 min)
- Groups of 3
- Note taking method
- Include in your portrait “Hello” in your language to teach others.
- Present to the class your classmate’s portrait and what have you learned about her/him.

<https://www.liveworksheets.com/3-xu249428ic>



“Привет” / “Hallo” / Hi

At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Teacher:

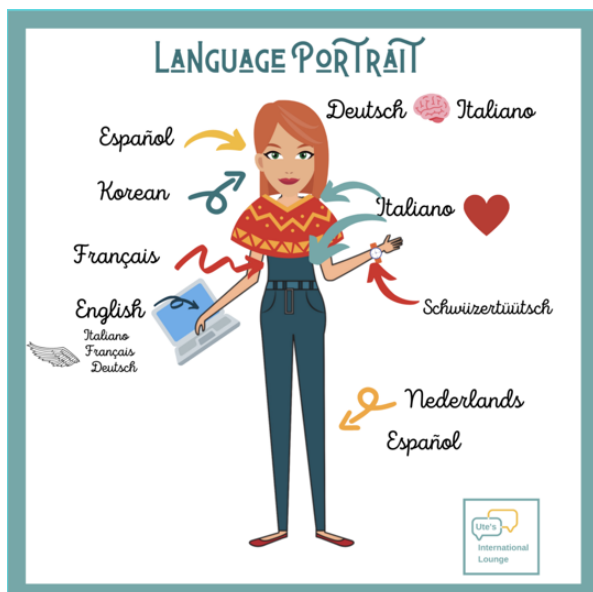
- Most people in Canada and around the world are plurilingual. This means they speak more than one language, but not always equally well. This is the norm. (2-3 min)

Note to the teacher: It is important to explain, that a person who speaks one language and knows some words from another language and is interested in learning another language is considered plurilingual.

Teacher (Example):

- I speak English, at school I took French for 5 years, sometimes I watch my TV shows in Spanish and I enjoy travelling and learning new words from other languages. I am plurilingual.
- Are you plurilingual? Why?
Students should reflect and say yes and talk a bit more about their linguistic behaviour (3 min).

Language portrait. Teacher to demonstrate the example.



(Based on: D'warte, J. (2014). Exploring linguistic repertoires: Teachers and students study their everyday worlds. *Language Arts, Special Edition*, 91(5), 352-362.)

Picture source: <https://utesinternationallounge.com/language-portrait/>

Tasks:

- Work in groups of 3-4. Students need to draw a language portrait (5 min) and explain it to others within the group (10 min). Use L1 if needed/possible; ask a peer to help translate the word if it is unknown.
- Include in your portrait “Hello” in your L1 to teach others.
- Present to the class your classmate’s portrait and what have you learned about her/him (3 min/per speaker x 8 = 24)

Teacher (10-15 min):

- Do you think it (how many languages people speak) affects the way people see the world? Why? The way people interpret (explain) situations, other people’s behaviour (the way people act/do things)? The way they communicate with other people?
- Does your culture and language/s define/affect/describe you? Did you change, when you moved to Canada?
- What did you find in Canada in terms of culture? Is it different? What is different?

Total time: 45-50 min

At home:

- Was it helpful to have peer support?
- What did you learn?

- How can you use new words/information in real life?

IV A. Lesson 4: Job interview. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Enhance the understanding of the concept of job search and interview in the Canadian context and how students' IC and plurilingual skills can be of asset.
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Practice the use of L1 tools for students.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- Practice English writing skills.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Task 4:
Job Interview



- What about this applicant?
- Let's watch another example
- What do you think about the last interview? Please describe the applicant and what did she do right or wrong?



- Getting employment in Canada is a goal for many of you. Let's watch the video on a job interview and try to understand what went wrong.
- What have you noticed applicant (someone who is applying for a job) did right or wrong? What should she have done instead? What is the right way to do...?
- Would some of the applicant's actions considered appropriate/ good in your country?



At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Note: The topic corresponds directly to the goals of the program and CLB (level3).

Teacher:

- Getting employment in Canada is a goal for many of you. Let's watch the video on a job interview and try to understand what went wrong.
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akjwDe0811A> (3 min).
- What have you noticed the applicant did wrong or right? What should she have done instead? (5-10 min)
Note: this might require an explanation, the applicant is the person who is applying for a job.
- Would some of the applicant's actions be considered appropriate in your country?
Example: it is considered acceptable in Latin America to be 5-10 min late for a meeting.

In Germany, for example, being on time is considered late. The expectation is to be 5 min earlier.

- How is it in your country?
Students should outline their experience or to the best of their knowledge what is the appropriate/inappropriate behaviour at the interview (5-10 min)
- What about this applicant?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt2ZZBZ4Mow> (2 min)
- Let's watch another example
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naIkpQ_cIt0 (2 min)
- What do you think about this interview? Please describe the applicant and what she did right or wrong.
Discussion for 5-10 min.

Total: 35-40 min

- At home: Provide your feedback in the diary. What did you learn? Was the information provided helpful? How can you use new words/information in real life?

Note: to make sure students have downloaded the app (Kahoot) before the next class.

B. Lesson 4. Pilot phase

International Women's Day



Listen and fill in the gaps 1-6 with a correct sentence A-F. <https://english-portal.com.ua/worksheet/women-1-day#topady>

Women's Day began in the early 1900s. **1** Before that time, women had mainly worked at home. They cared for their families. Or they helped on family farms. But in the 1900s, women in these countries were starting to enter paid work. They worked mostly in cloth factories.

2 And the working conditions were very poor. These factories were not very safe. And the workers had to work long hours. At this time trade unions were developing. These groups worked to protect the rights of all workers. **3**

Women also joined these protests. They protested the poor treatment of women factory workers. The Social Political Party formed a women's national committee. This group called for the party to give one day each year to women. **4**

In the year 1910, Women's Day celebrations became more popular. Many women joined the protests in the USA. Some of these women to the International Conference of Socialist Women in Copenhagen in Denmark. They planned to suggest that Women's Day become an international event.

Other women fought for a right to vote. **5** She proposed that women throughout the world should unite for their rights. They should do this on a particular day each year. Many countries celebrated the International Women's Day on March the 8th, 1911.

Over the time, women have gained many rights, they gained the right to vote. And they gained many other rights too.

6 In some places, like Russia, no one has to work. In others places, like China, only women get a day off. Even in places where Women's Day is not a holiday, people still celebrate. In Chile and Albania, men may give women small presents, like flowers or chocolate.

A. One of these activists was Clara Zetkin.
B. It was a time of great social crisis in Europe and the United States.
C. The workers on these factories worked for low pay.
D. National Woman's Day began the following year, in 1909.
E. They organized mass strikes – the workers stopped working for some time.
F. Women's Day is an official holiday in many countries.

Match the words to their meaning		
1	Care for	A a day when you do not work
2	Factory	B to keep someone or something safe from injury, damage, or loss
3	Conditions	C all the particular things
4	Protect	D that influence someone's living or working environment
5	Vote	E a building where large amounts of goods are made using machines
6	Day off	F the act of showing your choice or opinion in an election or meeting

Fill in. Use the words above.

1. their families 2. cloth 3. working
4. the rights 5. right to 6. get a

True or false.

Before 1990 women worked on farms.
The factories had good conditions.
Women in New York went on strike because of low pay and terrible conditions in the factories where they worked.
The International Conference of Socialist Women was in Copenhagen in Denmark.
Clara Zetkin fought for a right to work.
Over the time, women haven't gained many rights.
In Chile and Albania Women's Day is an official holiday.

V Lesson 5: Citizenship. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Embedding Canadian Citizenship test information into the lesson as part of IC development in addition to the citizenship test preparation.
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice the use of L1 tools
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).



The year Canada is 154 years old!
Well, not really. Media in Canada often call Canada Day Canada's "birthday" but Canada is much older than 154! Canada Day celebrates the beginning of Canada as it is now. An Independent country, with its own government, divided into provinces and territories.

1. Describe Canada in 1 word
 2. Listen and write down the words used to describe Canada
- https://www.huffpostpost.ca/2017/06/29/we-asked-canadians-to-describe-canada-in-one-word-they-did-not-a_23006738/



At Home



Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).



What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?



Use file provided for the feedback

Note:

- To make sure students have downloaded the app before the class or have access to the online platform
- Students have indicated that one of their goals in the program is to obtain Canadian citizenship

Play (Kahoot) with students on Canada/Citizenship related information, to help them learn.

17 questions Canadian citizenship test-related (20-30 min to play).

Additional discussion:

- How well do you know Canada?
- Where did you travel in Canada?
- What is your favourite place to travel? Why?

At home: provide feedback on the assignment (learning diary).

VI Lesson 6: Work-related Idioms. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Enhance the understanding of the concept of job search and interview in the Canadian context and how students' IC and plurilingual skills can be of asset.
- Introduce the concept of idioms within the job interview context
- Enhance IC skills, while building connections between Canadian and student original cultures
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice the use of L1 tools
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.

- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Note:

Topic corresponds with CLB (level 3): use of common idioms.

From the plurilingual perspective, this activity will help students to build metalinguistic connections and to better understand not only common expressions in English (in Canada), but also in their own language. This leads to overall language learning enhancement and IC development or support.

Teacher:

- Why do people use idioms?
- What are the idioms? (answer: Group of words that have a specific meaning/expressions)
- Link to live worksheets. Read. Try to guess the answer.

Name:	Level:	Date:
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IDIOMS

IDIOMS are not to be taken literally. Study their meaning carefully and then choose the correct answer by ticking [✓] the meaning on the right

Idioms	Meaning
1. My friend Sarah is nuts , she wants to colour her hair pink.	a) My friend is crazy. ☐ b) My friend is sad. ☐
2. I don't know why, but she just gave me a dirty look .	a) A nice friendly look. ☐ b) A bad unfriendly look. ☐
3. Going to parties is not my cup of tea .	a) It's perfect for me. ☐ b) It's wrong for me. ☐
4. My wife is feeling blue today!	a) Very happy! ☐ b) Very sad! ☐
5. You are chicken!	a) You're afraid to do something. ☐ b) You're very thin. ☐
6. I am in a pickle .	a) I'm so sleepy. ☐ b) I'm in trouble. ☐
7. She is going bananas .	a) She's angry/ crazy. ☐ b) She loves bananas. ☐
8. The test was a piece of cake .	a) The test was difficult. ☐ b) The test was very easy. ☐
9. Ann's brother can be a real couch potato .	a) He spends a lot of time sitting and watching TV. ☐ b) He spends time eating potatoes on the sofa. ☐
10. He is a cold fish .	a) He's friendly. ☐ b) He's unfriendly. ☐

- Do Canadians use idioms often? Have you noticed?
- Is it often used in your language? (5 min)

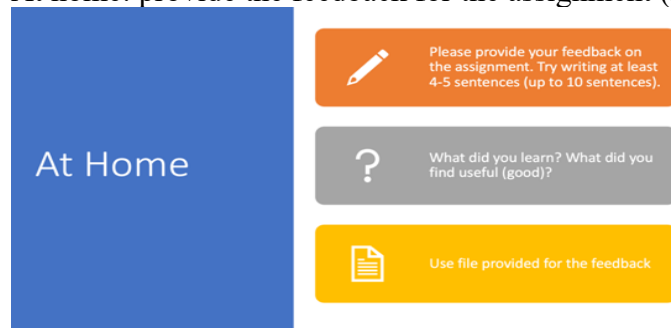
- Ask students to select 1-2 and translate similar expressions in their language. Finish at home if not enough time (10 min)

Note for Teacher :

- Please go through each idiom to make sure they understand the meaning. Ask students, if they translate back into their own language. Does it make sense? (15 min)
- Each student to select 1 idiom and use it in the everyday or work situation. Some students might read it out loud (5-10 min)

Total: 40 min

At home: provide the feedback for the assignment (learning diary).



Sources: <https://www.english-at-home.com/idioms/work-idioms/>

VII/A Lesson 7: Metalinguistic Connections. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Help students build metalinguistic connections, expand their English vocabulary, and encourage students to try reasonably guessing the meaning of unknown words.
- Students will be able to build meaningful connections utilizing their plurilingual repertoire.
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice the use of L1 tools
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- To demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Task 7: Metalinguistic connections



- International, Auto, Coffee
- 1-3 English words (or words commonly used in English) that are also commonly used in other language (Business, IT, VP, International, Mango, Broccoli, ex- , TV).
- <https://www.liveworksheets.com/3-nr265994yn>
- <https://www.liveworksheets.com/ag1567530lk>
- Does knowing other languages help you to understand English?



At Home

Please follow the link in your e-mail to complete your homework.

Note: Activity to help build metalinguistic connections, expand the vocabulary, and encourage students to try reasonably guessing the meaning of unknown words. Students will be able to build meaningful connections utilizing their plurilingual repertoire.

Note to Teacher:

- Please start with demonstrating some words from other languages that are used in English or whose meaning is easy to guess, as they are similar (5 min).

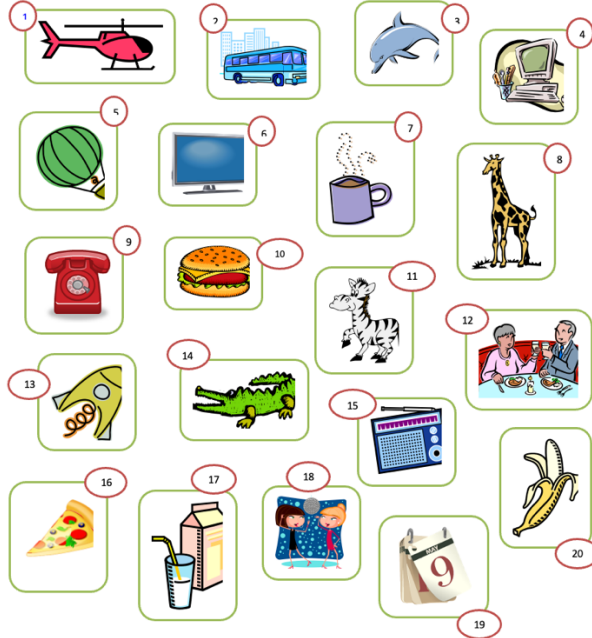
Samples on the picture (In addition: International, Auto, coffee)

- Ask students to name 1-3 English words (or words commonly used in English) that are also commonly used in their language (some examples: Business, IT, VP, International, mango, broccoli, ex- , TV).

Task: Match the words interactive spreadsheet (10 min)

CAN YOU MATCH THE WORDS?

banana radio alligator television coffee
 hamburger telephone dolphin computer bus
 pizza restaurant giraffe balloon milk
 disco zebra rocket helicopter calendar



Teacher. Questions for discussion:

- Did you match all the words?
 (**Note to the teacher:** Check with the group on the answers) (5-10 min)
- Does knowing other languages help you to understand English?
- How? Please explain (10-15 min).

Total: 30 min

At home: please provide feedback.

At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Picture (source) <https://www.movingoncourses.com/en/international-words-only-from-english/>

Source: <https://en.islcollective.com/download/english-esl-worksheets/level/beginner-pre-a1/international-words/59771>

VII/B Lesson 7: Metalinguistic connections. Pilot phase

Task 1: to come up with translations in L1

Funny English Idioms

1. The Lights Are On, But Nobody's Home.

(about a stupid person)



2. When Pigs Fly. (about something that will never ever happen)



3. To Have Van Gogh's Ear For Music.

(to be tone deaf)



4. To Pig Out. (eat a lot and eat it quickly)



5. Use Your Loaf. (use your head, think smart)



6. John is one of those fair weather friends. (a friend only when the things are going well for you)



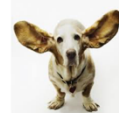
7. Why don't you zip your lip, buddy?

(close your mouth)



8. The class is going to be all ears today.

(be very eager to hear what someone is going to say)



9. That poor guy is all washed up!

(no longer successful)



Source: islcollective.com

Taks 2: weather-related idioms in English

Weather Idioms

Look at the pictures and complete the gaps with words in the box below:

Lucy has little contact with her uncle. They see each other <u>in a blue</u> <u>in a blue</u>.	He goes to the <u>gym</u> every day, come <u>or</u> <u>or</u>.	When the teacher announced the results of the exam, I was on <u>nine</u>.
As soon as the race started, the <u>opened</u> and we were all <u>were all</u>.	Sheila is a dreamer. She always has her <u>in the</u>.	My friend looks exhausted. He is <u>feeling a</u> <u>1</u> bit <u>the</u>.
He got <u>really angry</u> with me about being late. But it was a <u>in a</u> <u>I was only</u> 5 minutes late.	Sometimes marriage can have tough times, but if you <u>the</u> <u>it turns</u> all right in the end.	I'm so sorry but I <u>can't</u> meet you for dinner. I am <u>under at</u> <u>I have to work until late</u>.
You can never tell what mood he is going to be. He always <u>hot and</u> <u>You have to be</u> very careful.	1- Once - moon 2- Rain - shine 3- Cloud 4- heavens - soaked 5- head - clouds 6- under - weather 7- storm - teaup 8- weather - storm 9- snowed - work 10- blows - cold	

Source: islcollective.com

VIII Lesson 8: International Food. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Enhance IC skills.
- Practice reflective skills
- Engaging students as topic experts
- Practice the use of L1 tools for students.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Note: Topic corresponds with CLB (level3). It will contribute to IC development.

Teacher: you all live in or close to Toronto. It is a big, multicultural city. You probably have friends from different countries and they cook traditional food. In Toronto there are many different restaurants where you can try traditional food from different countries.

- Do you like trying different food or you prefer eating your own cuisine/traditional food that you are used to ?
- Let's see if you know what food comes from what country.

Note for the teacher: Please put the task on your screen and go through it as a group.

Task 1: Task should include traditional dishes from student's home countries. If others are asking about it, let the student from that country explain what the dish is and when it is normally eaten (every day food/special occasion) (10 min).

Match the right food to the right country:

1. Qusi



Somalia

2. Tagine



Italy

3. Tteokbokki



Pakistan

4. Injera



Iraq

5. Escargot



South Korea

6. Pizza



Morocco

7. Basbousa



Japan

8. Varenyki



Ukraine

9. Sushi



France

10. Tarka Daal



Eritrea

Answers

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|
| 1. 1. Quzi | - | Iraq |
| 2. Tagine | - | Morocco |
| 3. Tteokbokki | - | South Korea |
| 4. Tibs | - | Ethiopia |
| 5. Escargot | - | France |
| 6. Pizza | - | Italy |
| 7. Basbousa | - | Somalia |
| 8. Varenyki | - | Ukraine |
| 9. Sushi | - | Japan |
| 10. Tarkaa Daal | - | Pakistan |

Task 2:

Note: Spreadsheet contains speaking cards. It will be a flip card (interactive). Teacher will flip one card and 1 student will answer. There are 18 cards, so each student will answer 2-3 times (20 min).



Speaking and listening - Elementary

Let's talk about **FOOD**



Conversation cards

What's your <u>favourite</u> food? How often do you eat it?	What's your <u>favourite</u> restaurant? Why?	How often do you eat in a restaurant?
Describe an everyday meal from your country and tell how to prepare it.	Which country do you think has the best food?	What food do you refuse to eat? Why?
Can you give some examples of fast food (also: junk food)?	How often do you eat fast food?	What are the most popular dishes in your country?
What do people usually eat on a special holiday (like New Year)?	Have you ever eaten Japanese food? Did you like it?	When did you last go to a nice restaurant? What did you order?
If you visited a country where people ate exotic food, would you try it?	Have you ever eaten insects or snails? Would you like to try them?	Can you cook? What is the last dish you cooked?
What's the strangest food you have <u>ever</u> eaten?	Who usually does the cooking in your family?	Is there a pet in your family? What does it eat?

Tick the food you have tried			
baked potato	frog's legs	pancake	
cake	fruit salad	pizza	
ceviche	hamburger	rabbit	
dog	horse	sausage	
duck	lasagna	seafood	
escargots	mashed potatoes	snake	
fish & chips	monkey	spaghetti	
fondue	noodle soup	steak	
fried insects	ostrich	sushi	
fried rice	paella	tortilla	

Optional: if there is time left. Students can go through the chart (10 min).

Total: 30-40 min.

At home: please provide feedback (learning diary).

At Home

Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Source: <https://en.islcollective.com/download/english-esl-worksheets/level/beginner-pre-a1/international-words/59771>

Lesson 8: International Food. Pilot phase. Sample

Task 1

Name: _____

Date: _____

Match the right food to the right country:

1. Haggis



South Africa

2. Tagine



Italy

3. Tteokbokki



India

4. Paella



Scotland

5. Escargot



South Korea

6. Pizza



Morocco

7. Bobotie



Japan

8. Taco



Mexico

9. Sushi



France

10. Curry



Spain

Task 2

	Canada Canadian		South Korea Korean
	France French		The Dominican Republic Dominican
	Ethiopia Ethiopian		Turkey Turkish
	Pakistan Pakistani		Somalia Somali
	Portugal Portuguese		Japan Japanese
	Iraq Iraqi		China Chinese
	Ukraine Ukrainian		India Indian

1. I am from...
She/He is from...

Example:
I am from Russia.
She is from France.

2. I am...
She/He is...

Example:
I am Canadian.
She is Turkish.

3. I speak...
She/He speaks.....

Example:
I speak English.
He speaks Portuguese.

IX Lesson 9: Holidays (IC) and Citizenship. Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Enhance IC skills development. Build connections between Canadian traditions and student's original cultural traditions.
- Enhance plurilingual skills development.
- Practice reflective skills
- Practice the use of L1 tools for students.
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Note: Topic corresponds with CLB (level3). It will contribute to IC and Pluricultural development. This activity will provide information for the citizenship test preparation.

Note for Teacher: Please Talk about Canada being multicultural (250 ethnic groups are reported to be living in Canada. Statistics Canada). We celebrate many holidays here. Select a holiday and ask students if they know what the celebration is about.
Example: Christmas (3 min).

<https://www.liveworksheets.com/jk1941669gh>

What holiday do you know in Canada?

- **Teacher:** Why do you think people like Christmas in Canada? (Get together/ Presents/ time off/ good food etc).
- **Teacher:** What is your favorite holiday your celebrate in Canada?

(Note: student can name their traditional holiday, which they continue to celebrate while in Canada)

- **Teacher:** Why is it your favourite holiday?

<https://en.islcollective.com/video-lessons/canadian-holidays> Video to watch (10 min).

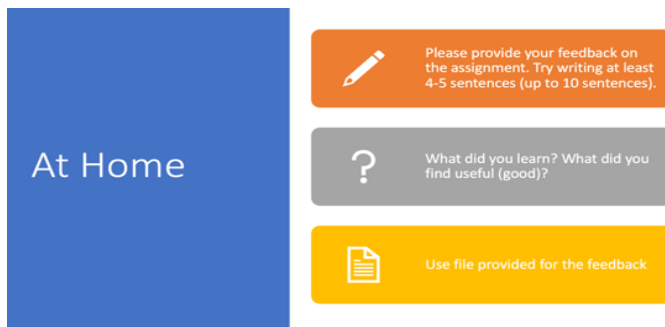
(If the holiday is not connected to students' original culture)

- Did you start celebrating it after you moved?
Instruction: If students name their own holiday, ask them to explain the meaning to the others.
- **Teacher:** What is the strangest holiday or tradition you have found/seen (encountered) in Canada? Why do you think it is strange? What did you learn from that experience? (total 20 min).

Game on Canadian holidays (Kahoot). Show them symbols, to see if they can name a holiday or why it is associated with Canada. Explain the connection (15 min).

Total: 35-40 min

At home: please provide feedback (learning diary).



The graphic consists of a large blue square on the left with the text "At Home" in white. To its right are three stacked rectangular boxes. The top box is orange with a pencil icon and the text "Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences)". The middle box is grey with a question mark icon and the text "What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?". The bottom box is yellow with a document icon and the text "Use file provided for the feedback".

X **Lesson 10: Interviewing skills.** Intervention phase

Objectives:

- Practice research skills
- Enhance IC skills development.
- Enhance plurilingual skills development.
- Practice reflective skills

- Practice the use of L1 tools for students.
- Practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English.
- Demonstrate to the teacher and students how L1 can be beneficial in reaching communication goals in English.
- The topic and skills targeted correspond with CLB (level 3).

Task:

In pairs of 2 interview your classmate. A question sheet is provided.



Let's talk about FAMILY

Family: (1) relatives living together; (2) all your relatives (also: extended family)



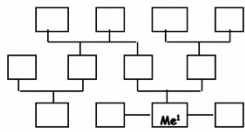
How many people are there in your <u>family</u> ⁽¹⁾ ? Who are they?	Do you have any brothers or sisters? Talk about them.	How many grandparents have you got? How often do you see them?
How do your parents <i>earn a living</i> ? (= what are their jobs) Talk about it.	What does your family usually do on Sundays? Talk about it.	Who's the oldest in your family? Who's the youngest? Talk about them.
How many cousins do you have? What do you do when you see them?	Do you have any great-grandparents? If so, how old are they?	Do you have any family living or working abroad? Talk about them.
Pick a family member. Describe <i>looks</i> (= what are their jobs) and <i>character</i> (= inside).	Does your family eat meals together? What else do you do together?	Who does the <i>housework</i> in your family? (e.g. cooking, cleaning, washing)
Talk about the relative you like most. Say why you like him or her.	Would you live with your parents after getting married? Why or why not?	Are there any rules in your family? What are they? Do you think they are fair?
What do your parents look like? Do you <i>take after</i> them? (= look like them)	Is family important to you? Explain why.	Do you ever hold a <i>family reunion</i> ? If so, what happens there?

Fit into the family tree:

1 (you)	6 grandmother
2 aunt	7 mother
3 cousin	8 brother
4 father	9 sister
5 grandfather	10 uncle

Match

1. family reunion	a. son of your sister or brother
2. cousins	b. daughter of your sister or brother
3. stepmother	c. family that lived a very long time ago
4. in-laws	d. children of your uncle and aunt
5. great-grandfather	e. husband of your sister
6. niece	f. daughter of your children
7. ancestors	g. get-together of an extended family
8. brother-in-law	h. father of your grandparents
9. nephew	i. parents of your husband or wife
10. granddaughter	j. your father's new wife





Why not make your own family tree?

Source of tasks: <https://en.islcollective.com/download/english-esl-worksheets/grammar/questions-interrogative/lets-talk-about-family/1988>

Ask students to work in groups of 2-3 to conduct research.

A. What languages do your neighbours or your community at large use?

B. Who uses languages other than English in your immediate environment (in the school setting, in the family setting, in your neighbourhood, in your community, etc.)?

C. What languages do they use?

D. What language is the most used?

Source used: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1176139.pdf>

At home: please provide feedback (learning diary).

At Home

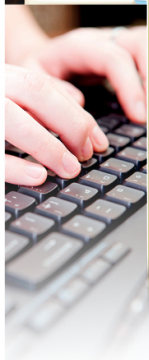
Please provide your feedback on the assignment. Try writing at least 4-5 sentences (up to 10 sentences).

What did you learn? What did you find useful (good)?

Use file provided for the feedback

Appendix E. LINC assessment

I. LINC assessment samples



Gathering Information to better meet the needs of newcomers to Canada

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) helps immigrants, including refugees, to settle in Canada. To do this, we fund organizations across the country to provide newcomers with services such as language training and career counselling. To make sure newcomers get the right services, we need your help.

The IRCC-funded organization that provides you with these services will ask you to give certain personal information: your full name, date of birth, and immigration number or immigration document. We urge you to provide this information when requested.

Your service provider organization gives this information to IRCC. During this process, we keep your information confidential. Your personal information will not be used for any other purpose without your consent. You have the right to ask your service provider to show you this information at any time.

Why IRCC collects personal information

IRCC collects personal information to better understand newcomers' needs. With this information, we can ensure that service provider organizations are performing well, decide how we can improve the services we fund, and report to the public about how our programs are working. To accomplish all this, we combine your information about the services you need and the services you have used with the details you provided when you applied to come to Canada.

Service provider organizations use this information to help plan and manage our programs and the services provided to you. So, your information helps us ensure that the services fit your needs.

Your personal information is protected

While IRCC has the authority to collect your personal information under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, Canadian privacy law requires that the federal government protect your personal information. Your information cannot be shared except as allowed in the *Privacy Act*. For more information, consult <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-21/page-3.html>.

The personal information you provide is stored in a personal information bank, a type of database, called Settlement and Integration Services. It also contains some information that you provided when you applied to come to Canada. This bank is owned by the Government of Canada. To learn about the kinds of personal information held in the Settlement and Integration Services bank (PIB # CIC PPU 062), consult <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/atip/infosource/pibs.asp>.

You can access your IRCC record of personal information by making an access-to-information request or a Privacy Act request.

For details, please consult
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/atip/index.asp>.



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Canada

II. LINC Consent form

Language Assessment & Referral Centre Consent Form - Remote Language Assessment

In order for you to participate in English or French language training funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) or Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), your Language Assessor at will need to share your personal information with language training provider(s) you choose, through a secure database. This information will include your full name, date of birth, language assessment results and other information needed to provide you with service. Your information will also be shared with government databases for reporting. If you do not give your consent, we will not be able to provide this service.

I give my consent.

I do not give my consent.

Name

Date

Our Privacy Policy is based upon the 10 Privacy Principles contained within the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Model Privacy Code for the Protection of Personal Information and reflects the requirements of applicable legislation including the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). In accordance with our privacy policy, should you wish to access the contents of your information file with us, you must make an official request in writing.

III. LINC Assessment Instructions



To access the online self-assessment, please follow these steps:

- 1) Go to <https://www.clb-osa.ca>
- 2) Choose English.
- 3) Click on the red "Start Assessment" button. 
- 4) For first time visitors, click on the grey  "Register" button.
- 5) Create a username and password.
- 6) Enter your email address.
- 7) Fill out registration page. For 'How did you hear about CLB-OSA?', select **Language Assessment Centre**.
- 8) Click on the grey "Complete Registration" button. 
- 9) Log in to the Testing Centre.
- 10) Choose one Reading and one Listening Test. (Each test is 1 hour long.)
- 11) If you **Quit** before the end of the test, you will not receive your CLB results.
- 12) To receive your results, you must click all the way to the end of the test,  and then click on the "Finish" button.
- 13) After that, you will need to complete a survey.

Your feedback is important to us.
Please take a few minutes to complete our survey. Thank you.
- 14) You will be able to see your Reading and Listening results and CLB description on screen.
- 15) Please click on the "Send Results" button  to receive your Reading and Listening results by email.
- 16) When you receive your OSA Listening & Reading results by email, please forward them to: onlineysd@achev.ca
- 17) Once an assessor contacts you, you will receive an email when the Writing test is open.
- 18) Follow #1-3 and 9, above.
- 19) Choose Writing, and do the test.
- 20) Follow #11-13, above.
- 21) An assessor will score your OSA Writing.

Appendix F. Focus Group

I. Focus Group Questions

Opening	5min	1. Tell us your name and tell us how long have you been teaching with LINC, ON program?
Introduction	10min	2. How would you describe the program? • Alternative: What are the main goals of the program in your opinion?
Transition	10min	3. Think back to when you first started teaching with LINC. What was your first impression? • Alternative: How does LINC program differ from other similar ESL programs?
Key	50-60 min	4. Thinking about everyday Canadian culture or environment, what is the first thing that comes to mind? • Probe: Do you think Canadian culture is a diverse culture that consists of parts and pieces of other cultures or do you think it is a solid and very distinct culture, that does not have a lot of similarities with other traditions and cultures? 5. Going back to the main goals of the program, do you believe teachers should be bringing more diverse cultural examples into the curriculum or should they be focusing on local culture only? Why? 6. Do you think foreign language skills (other than official languages) are beneficial in Canada? Probe: for employment/settlement/ networking/business development etc. 7. Do you think foreign language skills (other than official languages) are a beneficial in an ESL class, specifically LINC? Why? Why not?

		8. Do you believe LINC environment is inclusive, welcoming foreign cultures and language skills? Why? Why not? 9. Do you think the fact that LINC is a federally subsidized settlement programs effects the way the program is structured (topics, levels, CLB test alignment) and delivered? Probe: program is paid by taxpayers to help new immigrants to get to work and contribute to economic development? Would it be more flexible if funding was from a different source? 10. What do you think about the funding cuts for the program, that allow students to learn English mainly up until high B1/low B2? Is it enough for new immigrants to settle? (Direction: if students are taught to build metalinguistic connections, they have higher confidence levels, they might continue improving language skills outside of the program, reaching better results and therefore better chances for better employment).
Ending	10 min	11. If you had a chance to ask for one change within the program, if any are needed, what would it be? 12. Is there anything you would like to say that we haven't talked about?

II. FG Abridged Transcript

4

MODERATOR: NICE TO MEET YOU ALL AND IT IS GREAT TO HAVE PEOPLE WITH AN EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE AT THE TABLE. YOU ALL HAVE LOTS OF TIME TEACHING ENGLISH, INCLUDING OVERSEAS AND GAINED VALUABLE EXPERIENCE. I DO WANT TO, HOWEVER, BRING YOU BACK TO CANADA, TO ONTARIO AND ASK YOU HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE LINC PROGRAM?

5

TB: It has its own pluses and minuses in my opinion. It is free to all students, which is important. In terms of methodology, I should say I disagree... in some cases it looks like social aid. I mean

it almost encourages students to stay longer in the program, as they get paid by the government. It is obvious. The longer they stay, the more they receive.

6

TA: I guess....students can stay in one level for a full year, regardless of their level. It takes six to eight months to learn language like Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and two years to learn Japanese from scratch. There is no reason for students to stay two years in a program and not reach B2, unless there is a learning disability or any other external factors effecting the outcome. That is a different story though, perhaps traditional LINC is not the best program for those students. It has very limited recourses.

7

TC: I agree. It does not seem to meet student's needs. It is understated. Not enough recourses for sure.

8

TB: Although to be fair, LINC is accessible to students and provides basic information about Canada. Students learn how to open a bank account, how to make appointments at the doctor's office and so on. This is very practical knowledge that they will use day-to-day and is essential for the basic needs.

9

TA: I believe program also provides child minding, which helps, as it is a barrier for some students.

10

MODERATOR: SO SORT OF SUMMING UP HERE. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE THE MAIN GOAL OR GOALS OF THE PROGRAM?

11

TA: settlement

12

TC: addressing basic needs

13

TB: I guess. It is designed to help people to get them self oriented in Canada and give them very basic language skills.

14

MODERATOR: THINK BACK TO WHEN YOU FIRST STARTED TEACHING WITH LINC. WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION?

15

TA: That I needed more training on methodology. You complete TESL, but no one explains why you should be teaching in that way. Training lacks theory on a teaching approach itself. And of course lack of Intercultural experience was a noticeable. Again I was barely taught that.

16

TB: I agree. Lack of Intercultural experience was obvious in my case, but I also observed that with other teachers. The first class I taught was predominately Latin students and I speak Spanish and Portuguese and I wasn't allowed to translate to help them. This did not help with Intercultural skills development.

17

TC: What I recall is a lack of recourses and that classes did not really meet needs of the students, at least not efficiently. Thinking about the reasons for it...its understaffing, lack of teaching recourses, its lack of funding for sure.

18

TB: I agree, I had an issue with recourses, specifically with monocultural and narrow approach in material selection. I was only allowed to use Canadian-focused materials; when in a private ESL program, where I also taught, I was allowed to select foreign-focused materials in English that often provided different perspectives. That presented a challenge.

19

MODERATOR: THANK YOU, THIS WAS VERY INTERESTING. SINCE WE HAVE STARTED TO TALK ABOUT THE CULTURAL ASPECT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING, I WANTED TO ASK YOU, THINKING ABOUT EVERYDAY CANADIAN CULTURE OR ENVIRONMENT, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND?

20

TA: well... European-looking Canadians , who are perceived sort of majority, are in fact minority at least in the area where I live and work. In big cities in Ontario, you see multiculturalism. Ontario countryside is still very Anglo.

21

TB: yes, diversity in Canada depends on the geographical area. If talking about big cities, like Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, then a multicultural environment is visible; however, if looking at rural areas, Anglo-speaking and European-looking Canadians seem to dominate.

22

TC: lip service is the first thing that comes to mind. Cultural diversity in Canada is more talked about than practiced. There is certainly less acceptance, than people like to think.

23

MODERATOR: OK. GOING BACK TO THE MAIN GOALS OF THE PROGRAM, DO YOU BELIEVE TEACHERS SHOULD BE BRINGING MORE DIVERSE CULTURAL EXAMPLES INTO THE CURRICULUM OR SHOULD THEY BE FOCUSING ON LOCAL CULTURE ONLY? WHY?

24

TB: I think yes, it sounds good in theory, but also it can be confusing for students.

25

Again, when teaching private ESL I was allowed to use BBC materials or articles from South Africa for example. This helps to bring different perspective to the students. However, I sort of understand the emphasis on Canadian or perceived Canadian culture. Let's take hockey as an example. Students are taught that hockey can be a good theme to pick for small talks at work with colleagues. Now those colleagues might not be familiar with hockey at all, as they also came from another country, where it is not practiced, so it might not be practically useful. However, LINC is an IRCC funded program, and hockey is perceived as part of Canadian culture. It might be a wrong concept to be used for small talks, but it needs to be described, so students have an idea of what it is.

26

TA: yes, it sounds Canadian. I agree, yes and no. Yes it sounds good, but in practical terms it might be complicated. If the main purpose of the program being assimilation then, students should be exposed to a traditionally perceived culture so they understand the society better.

27

Maybe bringing in controversial topics for higher level students is ok, but then students might question it. Why are we discussing it? Are you discussing it to introduce the liberal issue? Or learning about students' opinions on the matter is a part of the task? It is not straightforward. In my experience Asian students are shy, Latin Americas are talkative and Arabs are not, so you need to be mindful of that as well. Too many concepts can be confusing to the students, and it will make learning English more complicated for them.

28

TB: I would also add that lower-level students wouldn't have enough vocabulary to discuss those issues.

29

TC: I think absolutely... Teachers should be bringing in more cultural examples, as it boosts communication and will make students talk, regardless of their level. And it is linked to students' future work as well.

30

I think the issue is...teachers are coming in with no professional experience. Growing up we have seen more diversity in Toronto, at school, playing with friends, but Canadian ESL overall is not multicultural. There is lots of biases, but also on student's side. In Toronto some of my students were questioning a teacher, who did not sound Canadian. Teacher was originally from Toronto, but had a touch of British accent, as she went to school in the UK. She was also of Asian descent, so wasn't blond with blue eyes. What is it?

31

Some students told me "TC (name changed) you look like Canadian". What is it again ? I am still straggling to understand what was meant.

32

MODERATOR: GREAT DISCUSSION. MOVING FORWARD, DO YOU THINK FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS (OTHER THAN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES) ARE BENEFICIAL IN CANADA? PERHAPS FOR EMPLOYMENT/SETTLEMENT/NETWORKING/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ETC.

33

TB: yes. It is important for employment.

34

TA: yes, but the emphasis is on specific language skills: English and French. The rest is very specific to the job.

35

TC: Yes. Pluralistic society means diverse language skills. I think it sort of implies that services to newcomers should be offered in other languages as well, including LINC.

36

MODERATOR: EXCELLENT, THIS BRINGS US TO THE NEXT QUESTION. DO YOU THINK FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS (OTHER THAN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES) ARE A BENEFICIAL IN AN ESL CLASS, SPECIFICALLY LINC? WHY? WHY NOT?

37

TB: yes, if students speak the same languages, they can in groups and that might boost learning, but not always groups are possible. I can translate for one student, but what about the rest? It is not fair.

38

TA: I would say it is not always possible. But something like bilingual story telling approach might work.

39

TB: yes, that might. From my experience, if students know their teacher understands their L1, most of them won't try hard to speak English.

40

TC: If we accept Canada as a pluralistic society, then diverse language skills should be valued, and it should be demonstrated. I disagree with the English only policy, as it demonstrates disconnect between the researchers and teachers.

41

It's like when I learned how to draw, and now, when I am studying to be an architect, I am not allowed to draw. It does not make sense.

42

I also think that a LINC teacher should have L2 skills or experience learning a foreign language at least. Otherwise they have no idea where their students are coming from.

43

TA: I agree. ESL or LINC teacher should have theoretical knowledge of pedagogy, be empathetic and always up-to-date on the current teaching approaches. It is certainly a value if they speak another language.

44

MODERATOR: DO YOU BELIEVE LINC ENVIRONMENT IS INCLUSIVE, WELCOMING FOREIGN CULTURES AND LANGUAGE SKILLS? WHY ? WHY NOT?

45

TB: Yes and no. Yes, as all students usually like learning about international food, celebrations and traditions from each other. No, as LINC's focus is on Canadian culture only. It is ultimately up to each teacher to diversify the classes.

46

TA: there must be a problem though if so many students drop out. Maybe stereotypes are partially at fault and students feel excluded.

47

TC: I think my classes were inclusive... where I taught. We were trying to ensure it was inclusive. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn about other cultures in addition to Canadian culture.

48

On a technical level, sort to speak...it is important to help students to build metalinguistic connections, so it will make it easier for students to understand grammatical structures. Once you understand the grammar, it is about building vocabulary after. Let's say you know German, English structure is similar, all you need is to gain more vocabulary.

49

MODERATOR: GREAT THANK YOU FOR SHARING. WE ARE AT QUESTION NINE. DO YOU THINK THE FACT THAT LINC IS A FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED SETTLEMENT PROGRAMS EFFECTS THE WAY THE PROGRAM IS STRUCTURED (TOPICS, LEVELS, CLB TEST ALIGNMENT) AND DELIVERED?

50

TB: for sure. I think private ESL schools would have better outcomes in delivering the program, as they have more freedom and students would have a better selection of the schools. ESL programs have high enrollment, and students wouldn't be jammed into split classes. You wouldn't see CLB level 3/4/5 mixed together. It is a difficult learning environment for lower-level students.

51

TA: I disagree, I like that LINC program is not-for-profit. I believe if the program was granted to a private ESL provider, it would turn into a for-profit program.

52

TC: Yes, I think its main goal is settlement, to understand the new place (Canada), but unfortunately from a very stereotypical perspective. Certainly there is no diversity of options within current LINC.

53

MODERATOR: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUNDING CUTS FOR THE PROGRAM, THAT ALLOW STUDENTS TO LEARN ENGLISH MAINLY UP UNTIL HIGH B1/LOW B2? IS IT ENOUGH FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS TO SETTLE ?

54

TA: I think so. B1 is high enough to meet basic needs. After B1 you don't need a teacher. Everything depends on the students at that point. They need to learn on their own. Now, newcomers are often isolated, especially in smaller towns. Past B1, LINC provides a good environment for those students to communicate with different people, to practice English among peers and to learn from the peers as well.

55

TB: B1 provides a basic level of knowledge, enough for students to start in the workforce. The further learning is up to the students.

56

It is expensive for the government to subsidize all students at many levels, so I get it.

57

TC: I disagree with colleagues, it is certainly enough from the stereotypical point of view, but it does not provide a diversity of options. If we are bring those people in, giving them high immigration scores, meaning most of them are highly educated professionals, we should be providing more recourses to them to gain skilled employment in Canada. Instead we provide enough for them to barely support basic needs. Then we see doctors and engineers working in Tim Hortons. Not suggesting it is a bad job, but we certainly (we) should be able to provide a better service to maximize their chances for professional success.

58

MODERATOR: THANK YOU FOR THE DISCUSSION, WE ARE ALMOST AT THE END. IF YOU HAD A CHANCE TO ASK FOR ONE CHANGE WITHIN THE PROGRAM IF ANY ARE NEEDED, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

59

TC: more international examples. We should be exposing people to international English and associated cultures. It will help with global skills development. Especially considering Ontario is fifty percent French, it should be an additional motivation.

60

TB: I would add L2 skills to teachers' job requirement, so they understand the learning process better.

61

TA: yes, I would also work on qualifications for teacher. I would also like to see an updated training for in-service teachers, including Intercultural skills development.

62

TC: agreed.

63

TB: certainly. I would also add assessment tools. We all know that tests are not effective alone. Tests need to be used in combination with other assessments.

64

MODERATOR: EXCELLENT. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT WE HAVEN'T TALKED ABOUT?

65

TA: I think motivation is a big one. I always start with students' motivation. I would learn why students are in the program and use it to stimulate students. Even retired students can be motivated if you connect the ability to speak English with the opportunity to make money, for example.

66

TB: I would separate LINC into two streams, where one would focus on ESL and different cultural experiences, as we don't know where those students are going to go next. The second stream should focus on citizenship information, as that is often the reason for students attending the LINC program. They often need to pass a citizenship test.

67

Appendix G. Post-intervention phase

I. Post-intervention student survey

1. Name:  0

 0

EDIT

OPTIONS

MOVE

COPY

LIBRARY

DELETE

2. Do you think it is good to use your 1st language (or other languages) to learn English?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Do you think it is good to speak other languages in Canada, not just English or French?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Do you think it is important to learn about Canadian Culture during English class?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Do you think it is important to learn about other cultures (not Canadian) during English class?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Was it helpful when the teacher allowed you to speak your 1st language to better understand the task?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Did you change your mind (about using your 1st language for English learning) after the lessons you had?

 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Did you enjoy learning more about Canadian culture?

👍 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. Did you like learning more about your classmate's culture?

👍 0

☐ Yes

☐ No

II. Teacher Post-intervention interview

1. Do you believe you understand the notion of plurilingualism in regard to the adult ESL teaching?

A. Yes

B. No

2. Could you please explain in your words what the main concept is about, based on the tasks/lessons you have observed and then introduced?

3. Do you agree that plurilingual approach can be beneficial for LINC (ESL) students?
If yes, why?

4. Do you believe that students benefited from learning about other cultures during ESL classes?

A. Yes

B. No

5. Do you believe that students now are able to understand better the concept of multicultural Canada?

A. Yes

B. No

6. How likely you will be using the materials/tasks presented in your practice with future students?

A. Very likely

B. I am still on the fence and need more information.

C. Not likely. I disagree with the concept.

7. How likely you will be bringing more diverse cultural references into your teaching practice (references to international traditions/ food/celebrations/educational differences etc)?
- A. Very likely
 - B. I am still on the fence and need more information.
 - C. Not likely. I disagree with the concept.
8. Did the introduced tasks and suggested approach shift your professional opinion in regards to “English only policy” ?
- A. Yes. I will be reconsidering the approach and allow students to use L1 in the classroom for educational purposes as I find students benefit from it (for example peer-support etc)
 - B. I am not sure at this point. I need more information.
 - C. I would reconsider the approach, but I am bound by the institutional “English only policy”.
 - D. No. I am not convinced. I will continue reinforcing traditional practices and “English only approach.”
9. Additional comments and suggestion (based on your observation/teaching of plurilingual materials):

Appendix H. Tables

I. Teacher Reflective Practices

Number of sessions	Date	Time	Notes
1	13.06.2022	15 min	Pre-intervention phase
2	16.06.2022	10 min	Pre-intervention phase
3	20.06.2022	10 min	Pre-intervention phase
4	21.06.2022	10 min	Pre-intervention phase
5	23.06.2022	11 min	Pre-intervention phase
6	27.06.2022	20 min	Intervention phase
7	7.07.2022	10 min	Intervention phase
8	14.07.2022	15 min	Intervention phase
9	21.07.2022	10 min	Intervention phase
10	28.07.2022	25 min	Intervention phase
11	04.08.2022	15 min	Intervention phase
12	11.08.2022	20 min	Intervention phase
13	15.08.2022	10 min	Intervention phase
14	18.08.2022	15 min	Intervention phase
15	25.08.2022	35 min	Intervention phase

II. Tasks schedule

Lesson number	Date	Topics	Notes
1	27.06.2022	Introduction	
2	7.07.2022	Language and cultural diversity	
3	14.07.2022	Students' plurilingual identity	
4	21.07.2022	A job interview	
5	28.07.2022	Citizenship	
6	04.08.2022	Work idioms	Divided class
7	11.08.2022	Metalinguistic connections	
8	15.08.2022	International food	
9	18.08.2022	Holidays and citizenship	
10	25.08.2022	Interviewing skills	

III. Class attendance

Date	Attendance
27.06.2022	All students
7.07.2022	All, except Henry
14.07.2022	All
21.07.2022	All, except Henry and Lily
28.07.2022	All
04.08.2022	All, except Nawra, Aisha, Henry
11.08.2022	All
15.08.2022	All
18.08.2022	All, except Fatima
25.08.2022	All, except Nabila, Aisha

IV. Equivalency chart. LINC and CLBA

Skill Area		LINC1	LINC 2	LINC 3	LINC 4	LINC 5
Speaking	Entrance	Pre-CLBA, CLBA 1	CLBA 2	CLBA 3, 4	CLBA 5	CLBA 6, 7
	Curriculum Objectives	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3, 4	CLB 5	CLB 6, 7
	Exit	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 4	CLB 5	CLB 7
Listening	Entrance	Pre-CLBA, CLBA 1	CLBA 2	CLBA 3, 4	CLBA 5	CLBA 6, 7
	Curriculum Objectives	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3, 4	CLB 5	CLB 6, 7
	Exit	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 4	CLB 5	CLB 7
Reading	Entrance	Pre-CLBA, CLBA 1	CLBA 2	CLBA 3	CLBA 4	CLBA 5, 6
	Curriculum Objectives	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3	CLB 4	CLB 5, 6
	Exit	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3	CLB 4	CLB 6
Writing	Entrance	Pre- CLBA	CLBA 2	CLBA 3	CLBA 4	CLBA 5, 6
	Curriculum Objectives	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3	CLB 4	CLB 5, 6
	Exit	CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3	CLB 4	CLB 6

Source: <https://settlement.org/downloads/linc/LCG1to5/overview.pdf>

V CLB and CEFR chart

CLB Level	CEFR Level
1-2	A1
3-4	A2
5-6	B1
7-8	B2
9-10	C1
11-12	C2

Source: North, B., & Piccardo, E. (2016). **Developing illustrative descriptors of aspects of mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)**. Council of Europe.
<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806a1a0c>