

Plurilingualism, Action-Oriented Approach and Indigenous Epistemologies: The Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Reinvented (LINCDIRE) Project

Enrica Piccardo (OISE/University of Toronto)

Aline Germain-Rutherford (University of Ottawa)

Alan Corbiere (M'Chigeeng First Nation)

Sara Potkonjak (York University)

Geoff Lawrence (York University)

Kris Johnston (York University)

Discussant: *Heather Lotherington (York University)*

Symposium Overview

Promoting plurilingualism in North America through a CEFR-inspired pedagogical online platform: LINC DIRE and LITE (*Enrica Piccardo*)

The development of a pedagogical framework fusing Western and Indigenous approaches for plurilingual and pluricultural learning environments (*Aline Germain-Rutherford & Alan Corbiere*)

Developing plurilingual, action-oriented tasks: Implications for pedagogy and teacher and student beliefs (*Sara Potkonjak*)

Exploring the potential of technology to promote linguistic and cultural diversity: A plurilingual e-portfolio approach (*Geoff Lawrence & Kris Johnston*)

Opening remarks for discussion (*Heather Lotherington*)

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Background

**Around 7 million
Canadians speak a
non-official language**
(Statistics Canada, 2012)

**65+ aboriginal
languages and several
heritage languages**
(Census Canada, 2012)
[Site for Language Management in
Canada \(SLMC\)](#)

**60 million Americans
speak a language other
than English (382
different languages with
134 native languages)**
(US census Bureau, 2015)

**Lack of recognition of
non-dominant languages in
mainstream education** (Wiley &
Lukes, 1996; Hornberger, 2001).

**Schools are not prepared to take
advantage of linguistic diversity
> decline of home languages
(Cantoni, 1997; Crawford, 2000). and
inequities in education**

Issues at Stake

Bilingual and first language maintenance provide social and academic benefits → seen as obstacle (Connelly, 2008).

Multicultural education is seen as folkloric → extracurricular
(Carlino, 2009)

Canada and the US are linguistic 'hotspots' → rapid vanishing of aboriginal languages are vanishing (Battiste 2000; Harrison, 2007; Norris 2007, 2011; Anderson, 2010, 2011)

Educational tools to promote multiculturalism/multilingualism are scarce

Disconnect between educational policies and educational practices

Ideological and pedagogical change is needed



LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY REINVENTED

3-year Partnership Development Grant

Funding agency



Head institution



Principal investigator

Enrica Piccardo

Participating Institutions



uOttawa



Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education
Support for Staff and Students, Student Learning Services

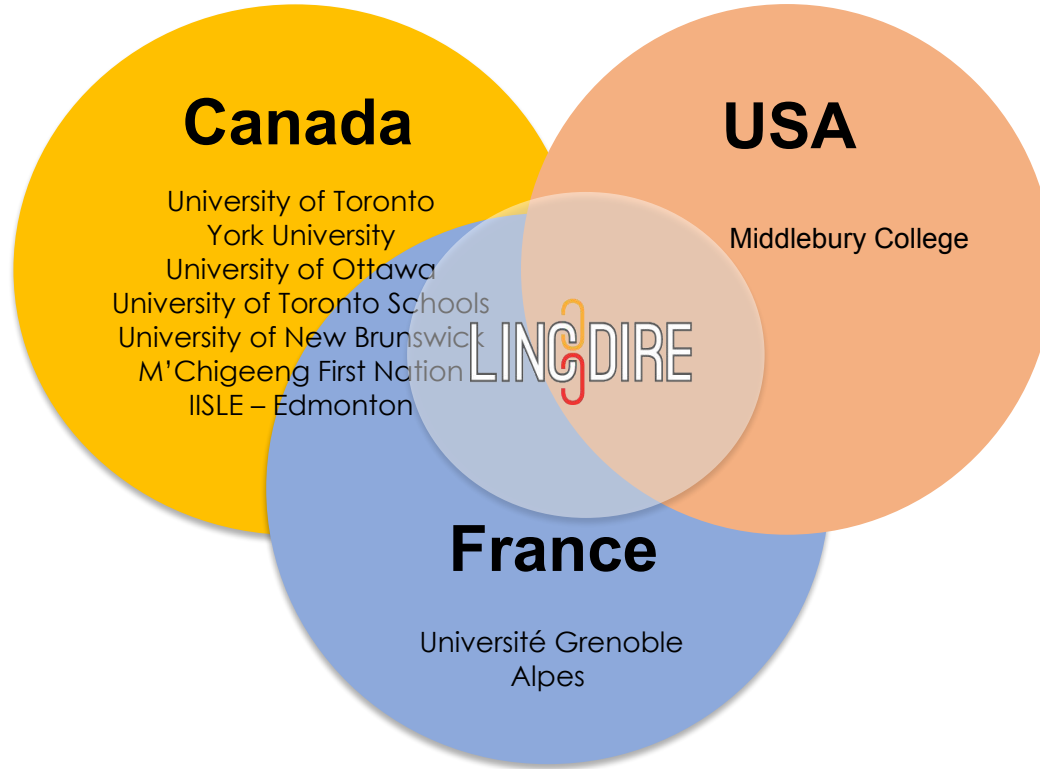


Additional Partners

- Department of Indigenous Studies, University of Sudbury
- Educators in Alberta (Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture provincial K-12 programs)



Partnership Project: Three Hubs



Conceptual framing of the project

Language innovation informed by the Common European Framework of References for languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001)

- Language proficiency expressed through **can-do statements**
- **Linguistic and general competences**
- Four modes of communication > **mediation**
- **Plurilingualism**
- **Real-life tasks** > action-oriented approach (Piccardo, 2014)

Conceptual framing of the project cont'd

Other language innovation related concepts

→ **Autonomy**

- ELP informed vision
- learner autonomy and emerging technology
(Skyles, Oskoz & Thorne, 2016)

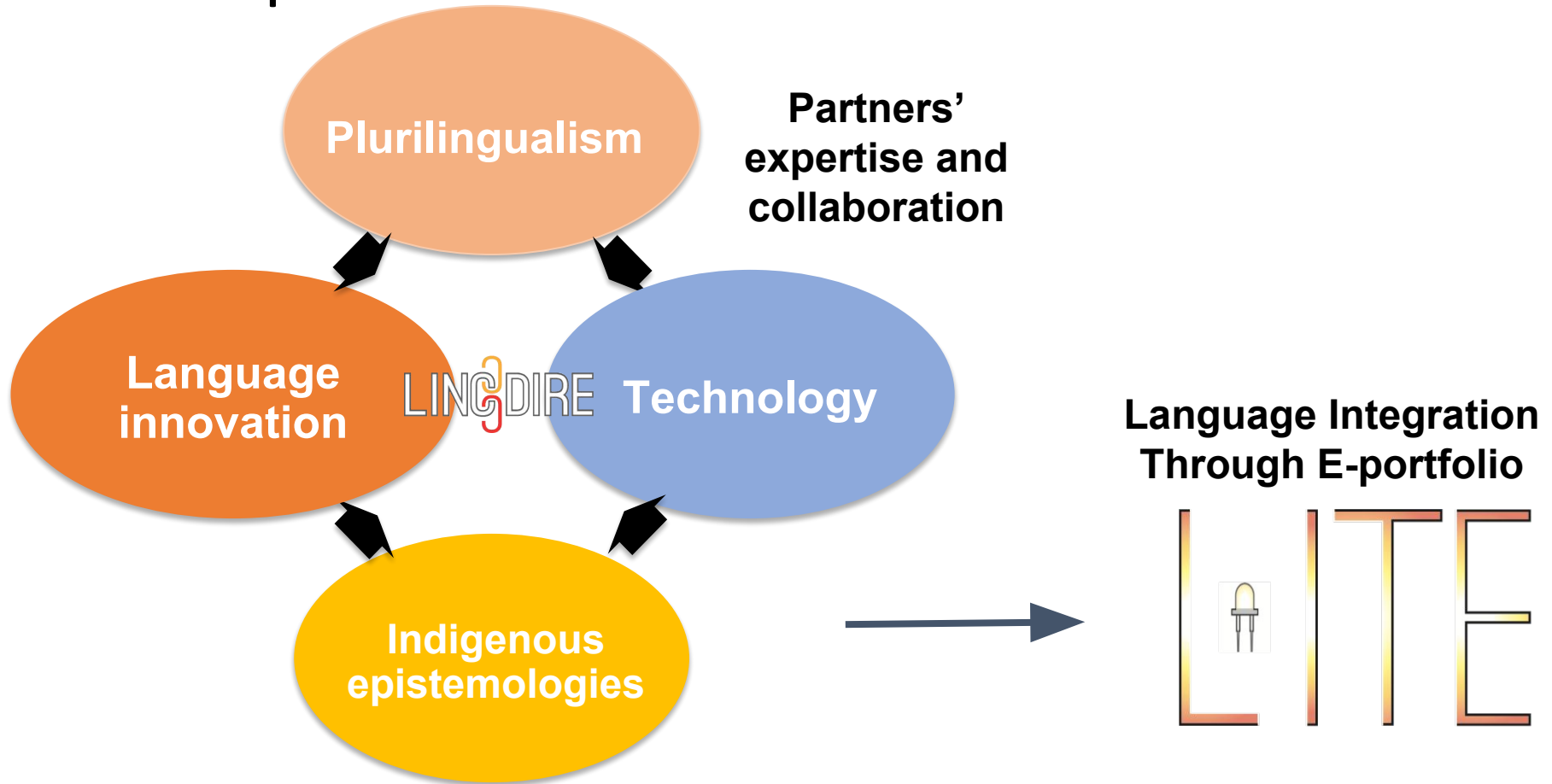
→ **Pluricultural education**

Worldviews and pedagogies

→ **Humanistic and holistic tradition**

→ **Indigenous epistemologies and educational traditions** (Toulouse, 2011; Yunkaporta, 2009)

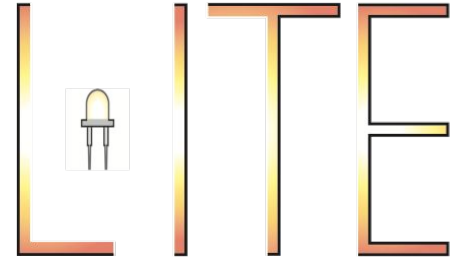
Conceptualization of LINCDIRE



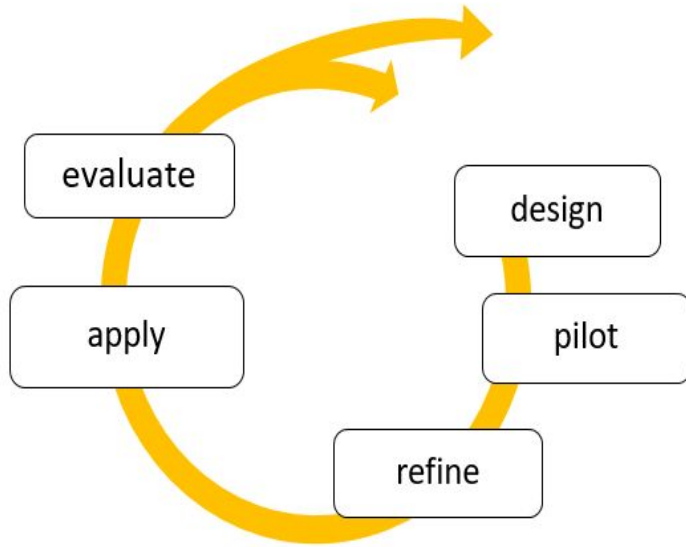
**A digital environment organized
around four sections**



**Language Integration Through
E-portfolio**



A design-based iterative research methodology



Year 1 (2015/2016): documentary search, development of LITE master template, content; technical development

Year 2 (2016/2017): piloting with core teachers; development and evolution of LITE based on feedback

Year 3 (2017/2018): piloting with expanded circle of teachers; development and evolution of LITE based on feedback

A design-based research methodology: selection of core teachers

Experience with
action-oriented,
task-based
approaches

Range of (project)
languages,
proficiencies and
contexts

Open to project's
plurilingual vision

Commitment to
mentor new teachers
in expanded piloting
(2017 – 2018)

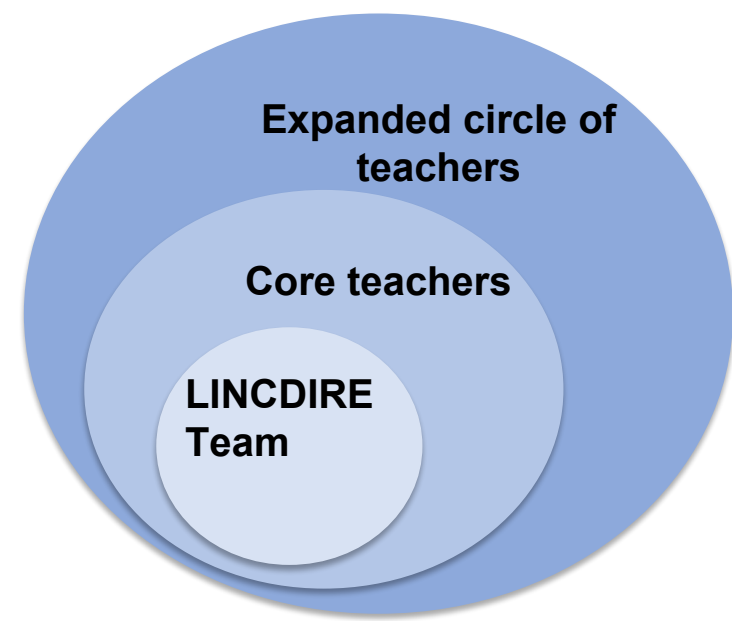
Synergies

Education
to/through
research

Professional
development

Two-way learning
(Aboriginal-
Western teachers)

International
network and
exchange



Lessons learned so far



Paradigm shift

Multilingualism → Plurilingualism

a new attitude
towards ALL
languages

reflection through
action-oriented tasks

awareness of
plurilingual practices
& linguistic/cultural
trajectories

interaction/links
between languages

interest in cultural
diversity

fostering
openness/an open
mind

Perceptions of Educators & Researchers

- ❖ Learning by doing: our progress as a team
- ❖ Reaching out to the communities (teachers and learners) → cascading effect → teachers as professional developers/trainers
- ❖ Fleshing out plurilingualism and action-oriented approach
- ❖ Making the Medicine Wheel accessible to non-indigenous teachers
- ❖ Making western (humanistic) views of learning accessible to indigenous teachers

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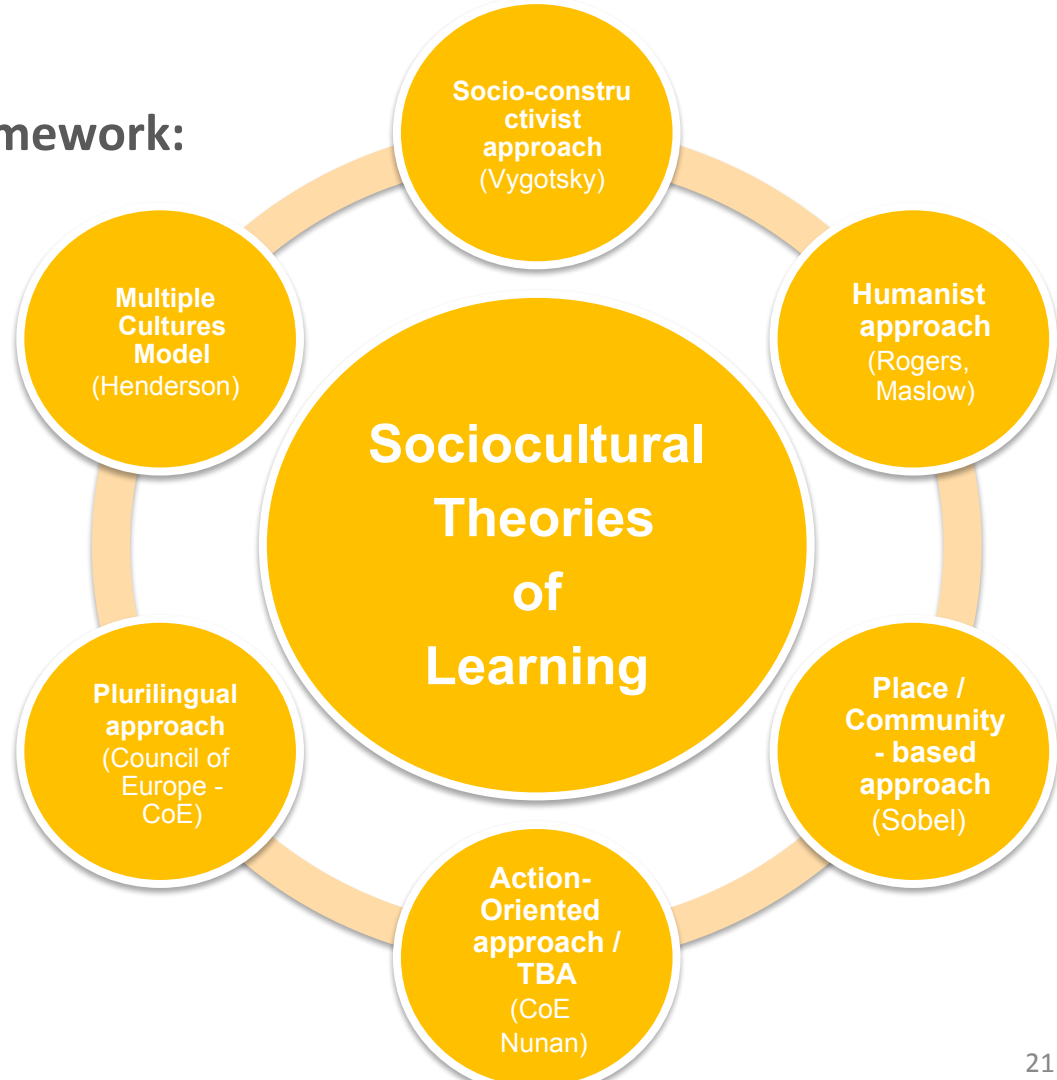
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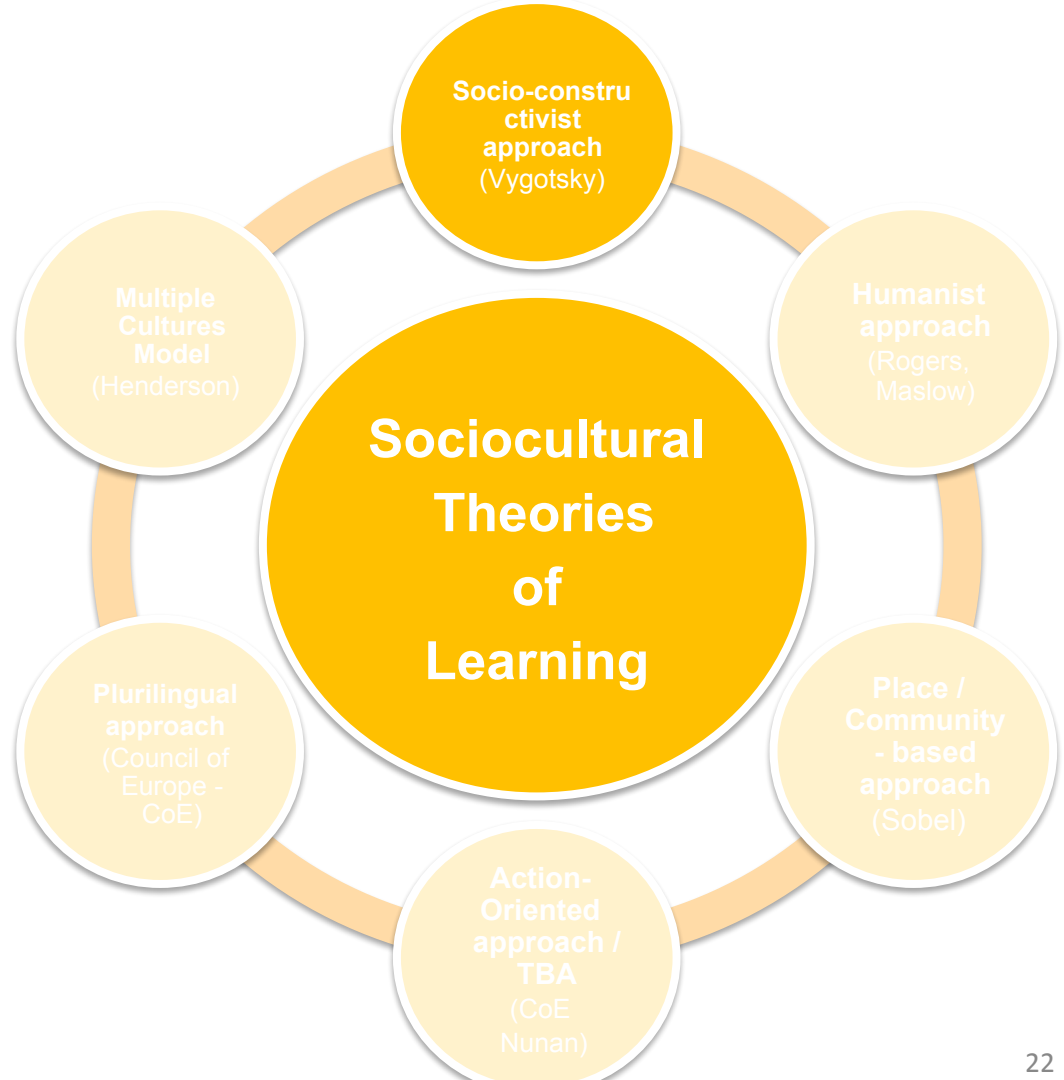
Opening remarks for discussion (*Heather Lotherington*)

Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES



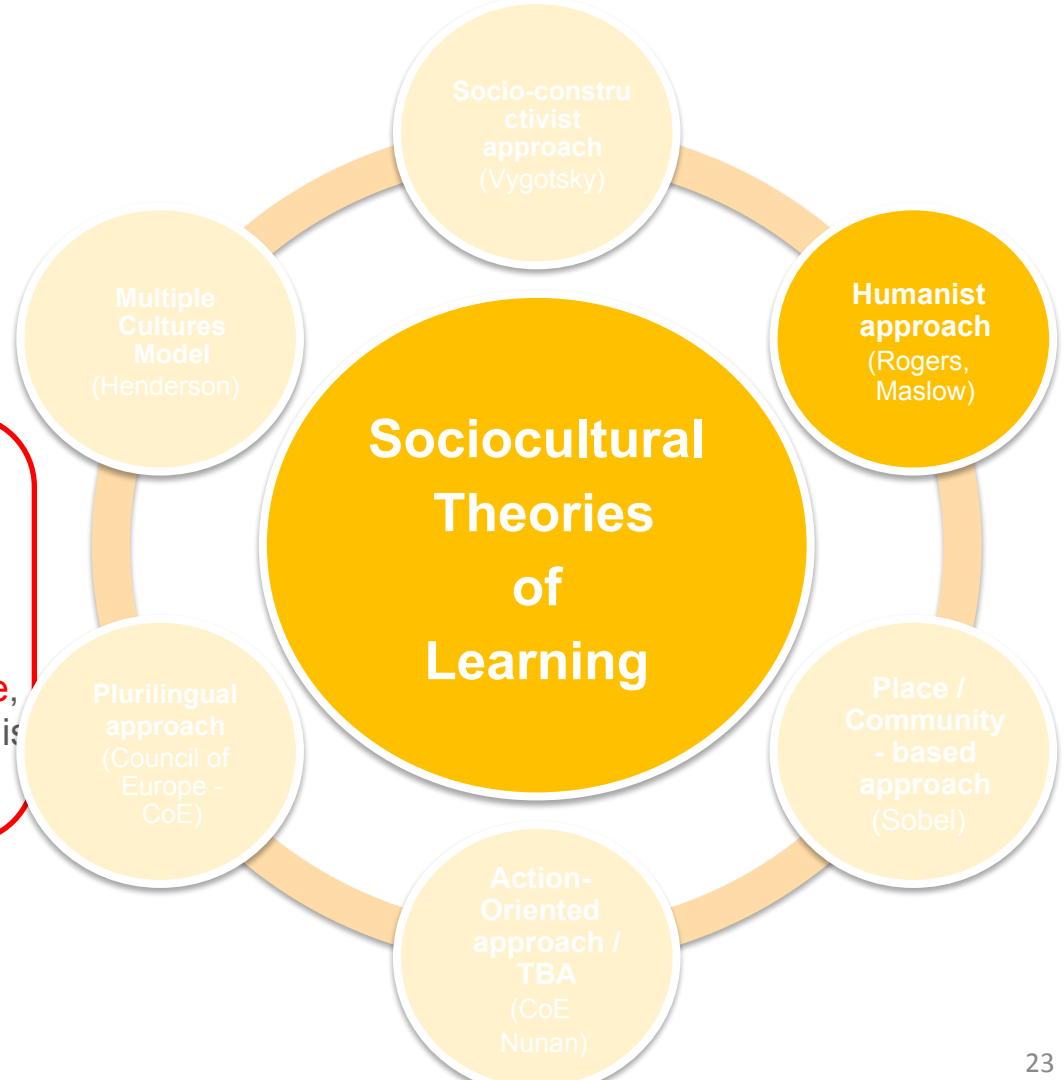
Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES

Social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development. All cognitive functions originate in, and are explained as products of social interaction.



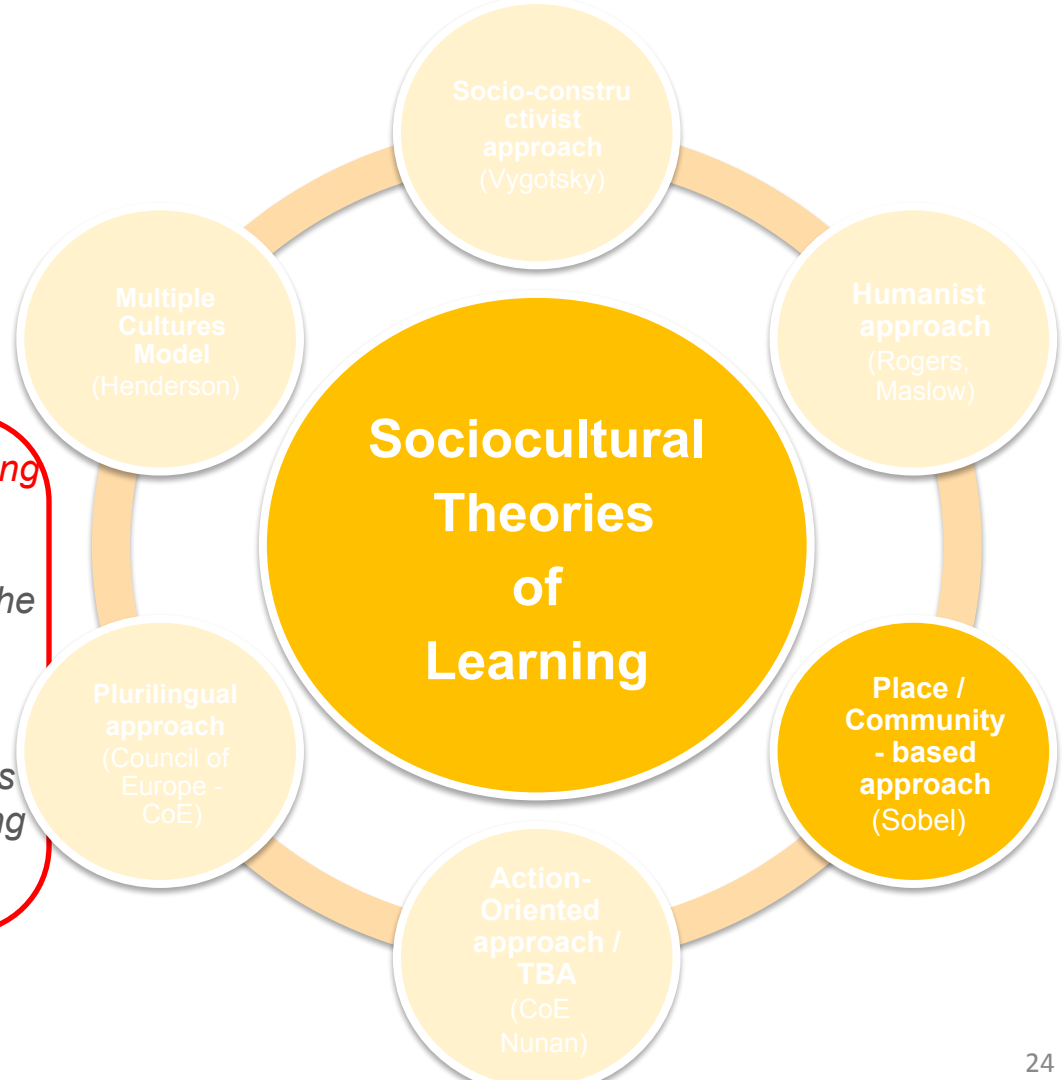
Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES

Humanism: a holistic approach focusing on the human freedom, dignity, and potential. A central assumption of humanism, is that people act with intentionality and values. It promotes positive self-direction and independence, the ability to take responsibility for what is learned, creativity and curiosity.



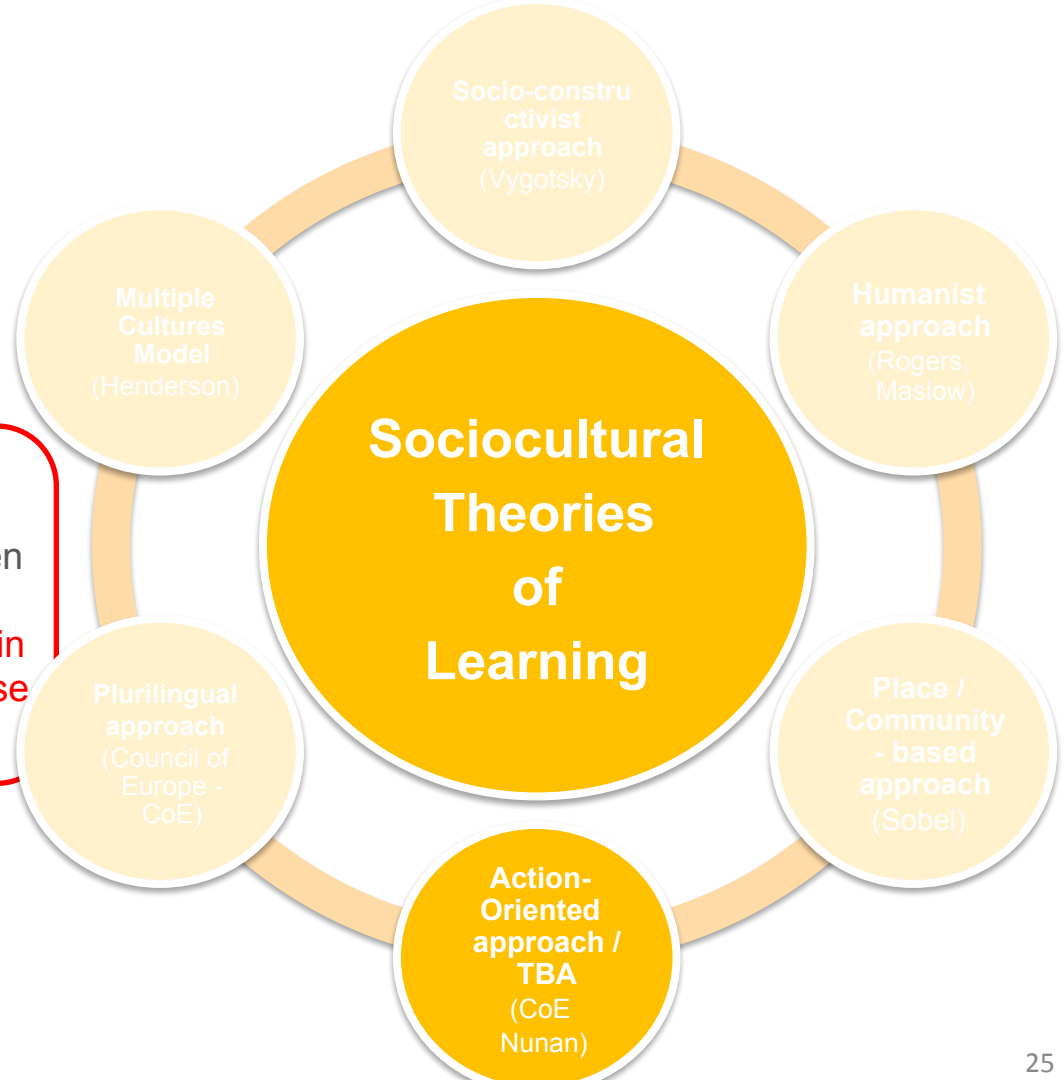
Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES

In a Community-based approach *“learning is rooted in what is local - the unique history, environment, culture, economy, literature and art of a particular place. The community provides the context for learning, student work focuses on community needs and interests, and community members serve as resources and partners in every aspects of teaching and learning”* (Sobel, 2010 p.23).



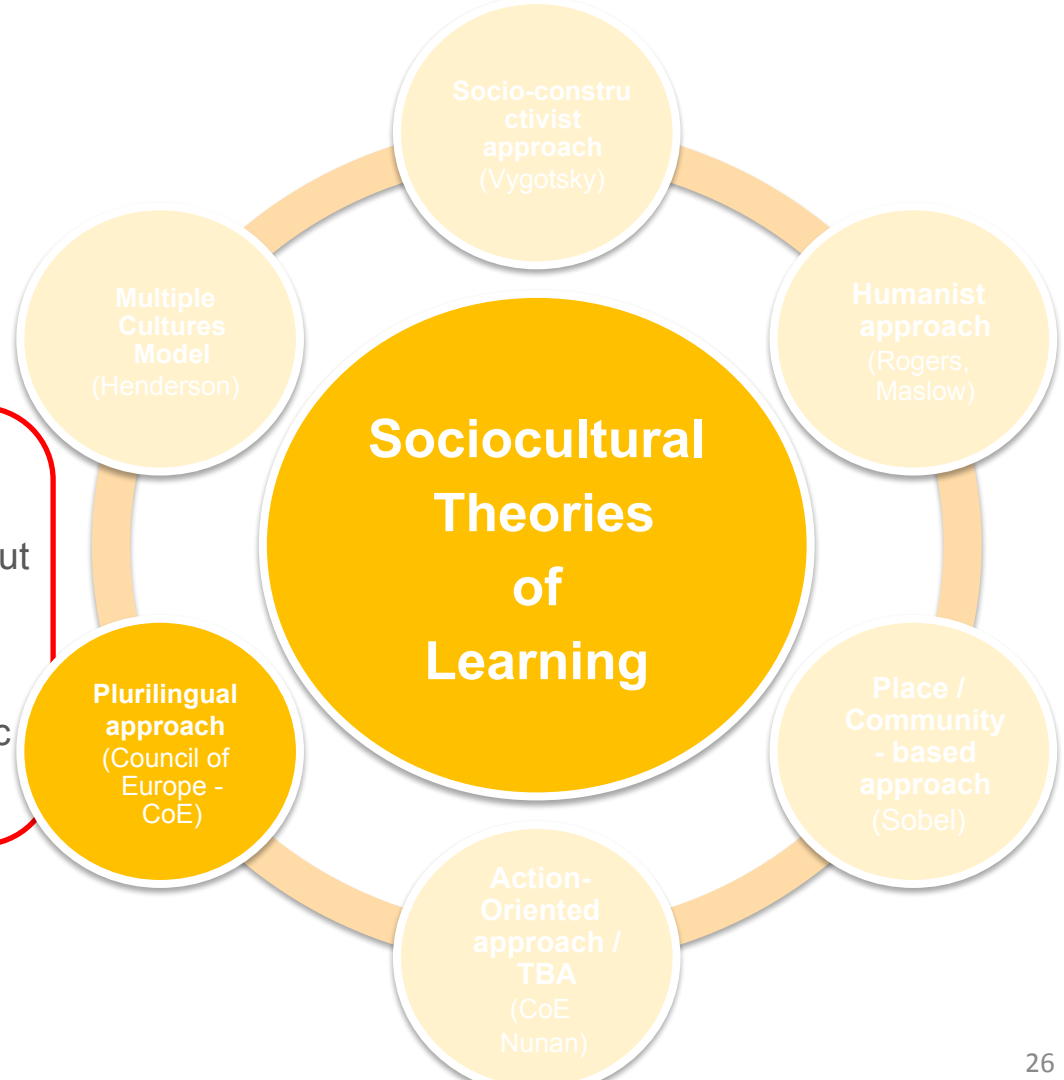
Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES

An Action-Oriented approach aims at providing opportunities for learners to experiment with and explore both spoken and written language through **real-life scenarios designed to engage learners in the authentic, practical and functional use of language for meaningful purposes.**



Developing a pedagogical framework: WESTERN INFLUENCES

From a plurilingual perspective, languages are not seen as coexisting in somebody's mind as separate entities but as **entwined and interrelated to form a composite competence**, allowing students to develop more effective learning strategies using all the linguistic and cultural tools at their disposal.

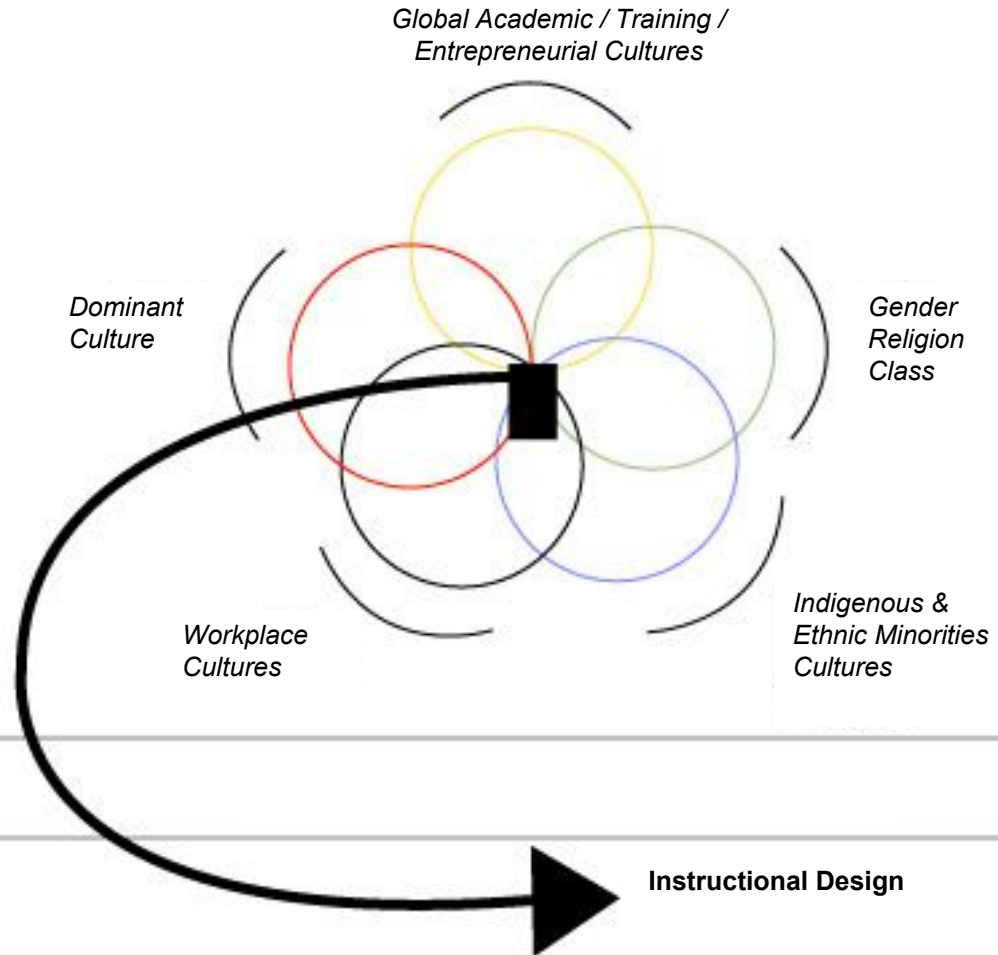


Multiple Cultures Model (Henderson, 2007)

« A multiple cultural model strives for a **coherent interplay among three cultural logics**: global academia or training cultures, the dominant culture and the minority cultures » (Henderson, 2008, p.136)

In this model learning materials and activities **centred on epistemological pluralism** help raise students' awareness of cultural diversity and allow them to **co-construct**, in their interaction with their peers, a learning space where multiple cultural perspectives are made **visible** and **debatable**.

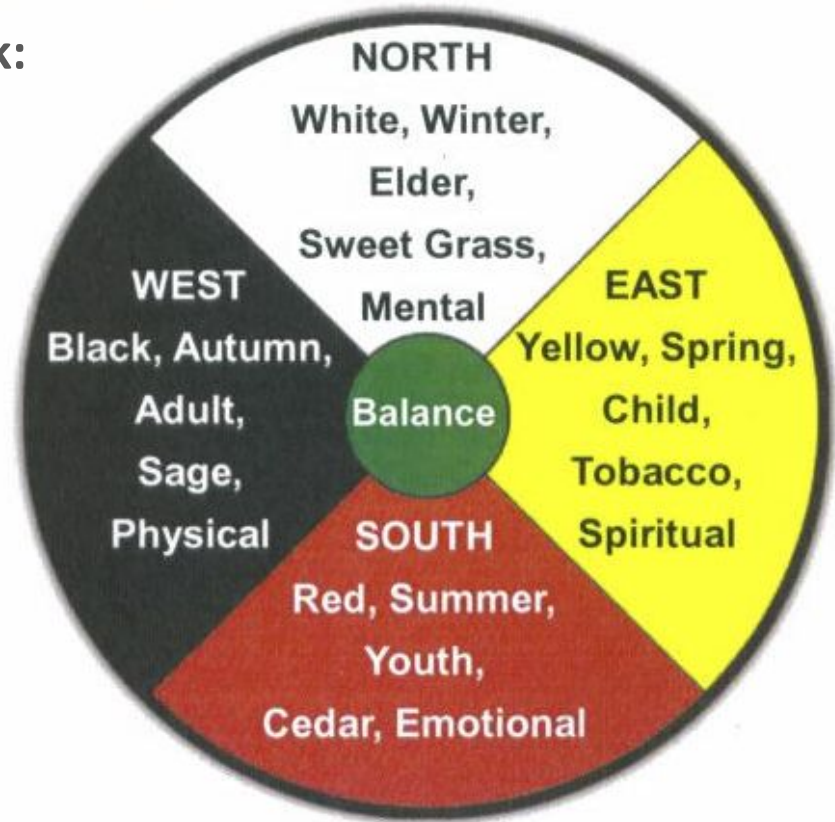
Standpoint Epistemologies, Henderson, 2007, p.136



Developing a pedagogical framework: INDIGENOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

All things, material and spiritual, are interconnected and interdependent in a circular pattern of the cycles of nature”. (Leik, 2009, p.19)

“The framework of the Medicine Wheel is based on the sacredness of the number four. [...] Movement in the Medicine Wheel is based in natural rhythms such as in moving through seasons, through life stages or through the cycle of day.” (LaFever, 2017, p. 173)



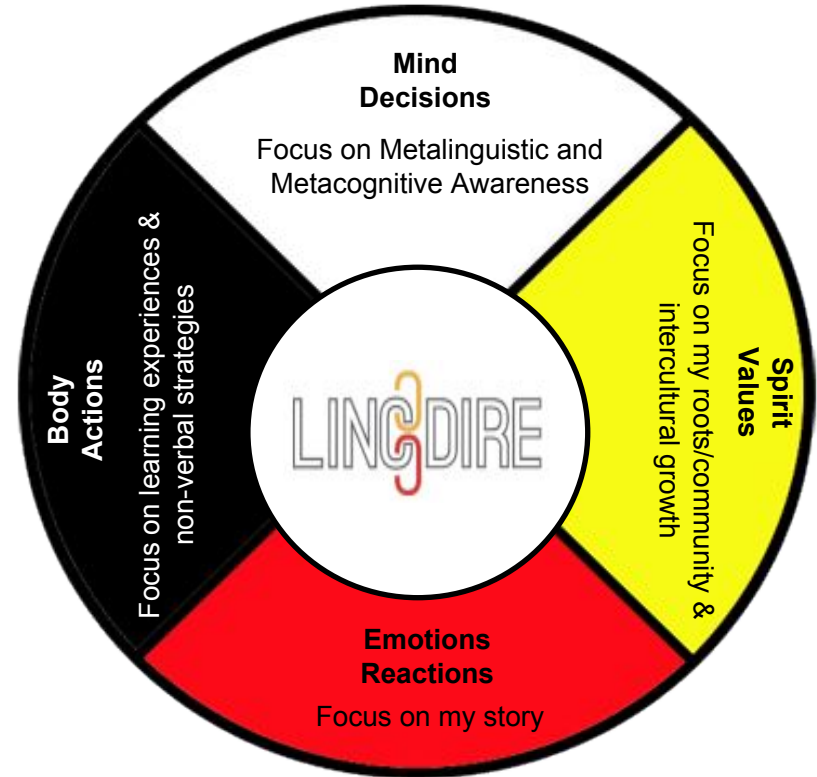
Dans la langue crie, le cercle d'influences s'appelle 'pimatisiwin', mot qui signifie "vie" (Education et Recherche Manitoba, 2003, p.9)

A Pedagogical Framework Fusing Indigenous and Western Epistemologies

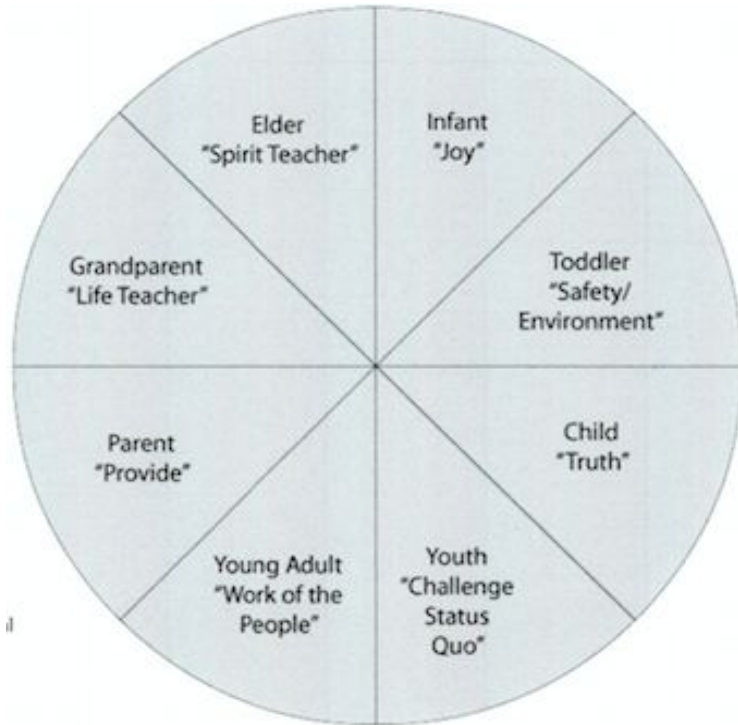
LINCDIRE's pedagogical framework integrates a **holistic and inclusive perspective** to organize teaching and guide learning **through each of the circle quadrants**, whether in the instructional design of the learning tasks or in the LITE (Language Integration through E-portfolio) architecture that students will use.

The central part of the Medicine Wheel, to which all learning is convergent, is at the heart of the learner's identity and spiritual construction. (Pitawanakwat, 2006)

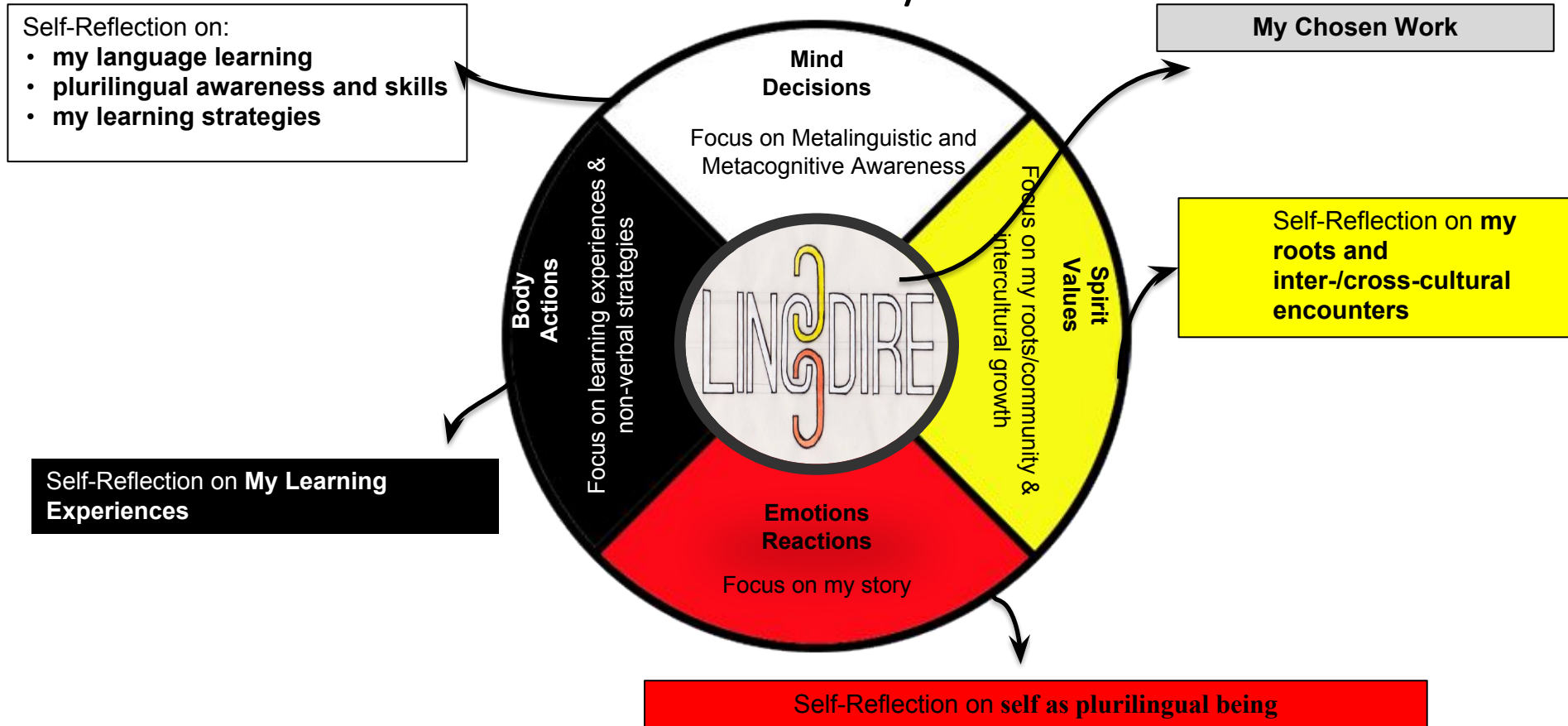
Hence, the learner is seen **holistically** as a thinking, verbal and non-verbal, emotional and spiritual human being **rooted in the values of her/his plurilingual and pluricultural communities**.



In this holistic perspective the learner is seen **at different stages of maturity** (childhood, adolescence and adulthood). The central part of the Medicine Wheel is translated into the electronic portfolio by a space where learners conserve and archive projects and works that illustrate **the development of their plurilingual and pluricultural individuality**.



student e-portfolio: possible lines of questioning at the level of each scenario/task



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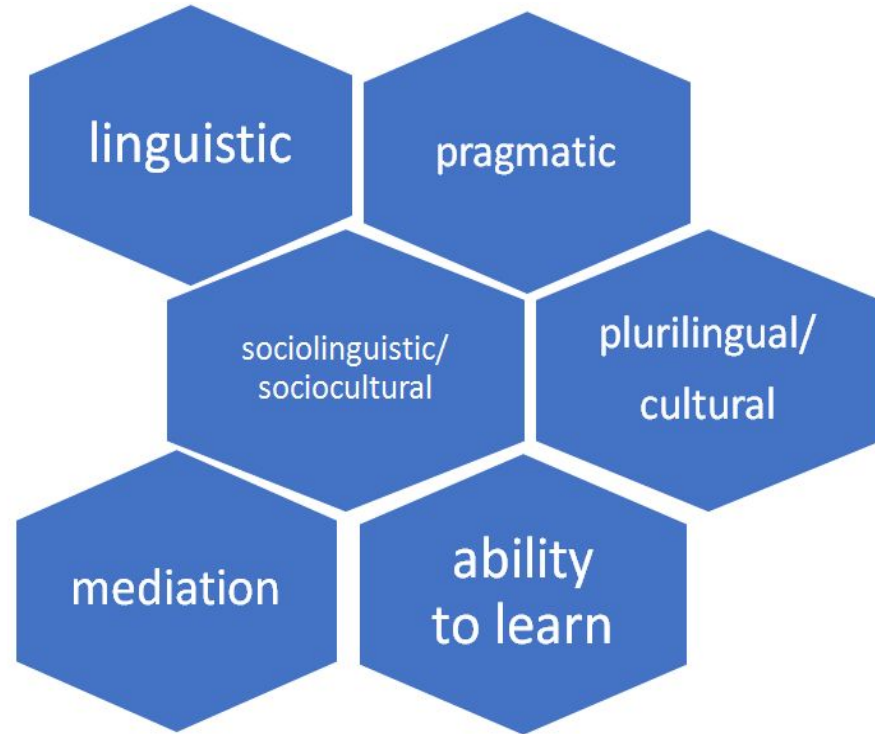
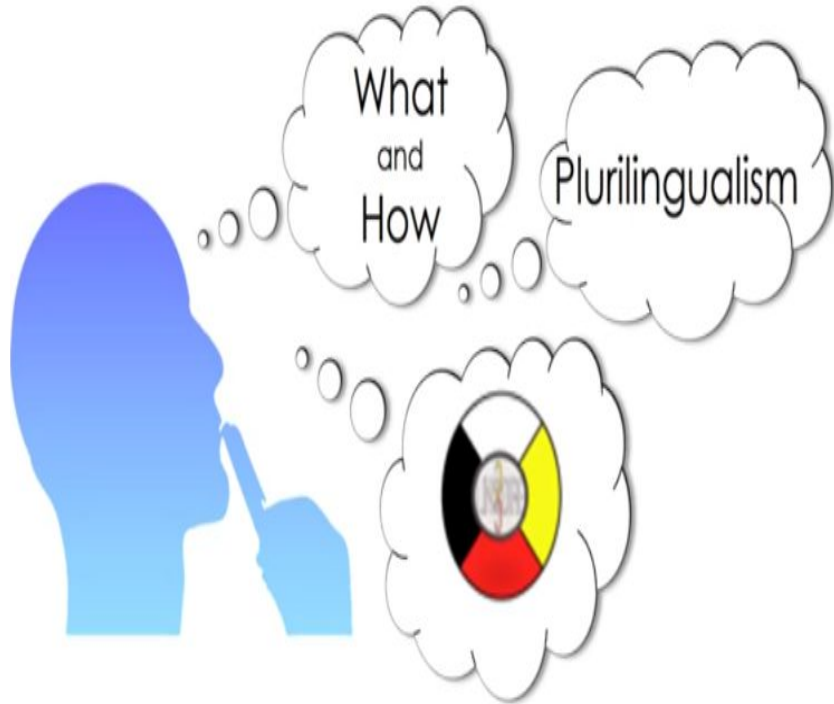
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LINCDIRE pedagogical model



LINCDIRE pedagogical model

students' work is organized around a series of real-life action-oriented tasks

activities within each task speak to the medicine-wheel quadrants


students' existing language resources are encouraged in the task

collaborative work among students of different languages/cultures

reflective learning encouraged through post-task reflection

Using the LINCDIRE template to design tasks

Part 1: Task description

| |
|---|
| 1) Task title: Lost in a New Town |
| 2) Task scenario: You are participating in an exchange program to Germany and you have lost your group after the city tour. Now you are trying to find your way back to the youth hostel, but unfortunately your cell-phone is out of battery. You cannot check online or call a friend. However, you do have a paper map and can ask someone on the street for help. |
| 3) Target learners: high school or university students |
| 4) Languages <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main target language: Any (examples given for German)• Other language(s) involved: various, depending on sample maps and students' plurilingual repertoires |
| 5) CEFR Level: A2 |
| 6) LINCDIRE Symbols (consider how the task relates to each quadrant and re-order these accordingly)  White - MIND (decisions): students compare maps with personal learning processes/trajectories Black - BODY (actions): students use non-verbal strategies to understand and interpret directions Yellow - SPIRIT (values): learning is connected to real-life purposes, contexts, and places Red - EMOTIONS (reactions): maps are used to create symbolic spaces for plurilingualism |

Part 1: Task description

Part 2: My task planner

Part 3: Task development

Part 4: Observation checklist

Part 5: Self-assessment checklist

Training material: Online Tutorials



Tutorial 1: Introduction to LINCDIRE

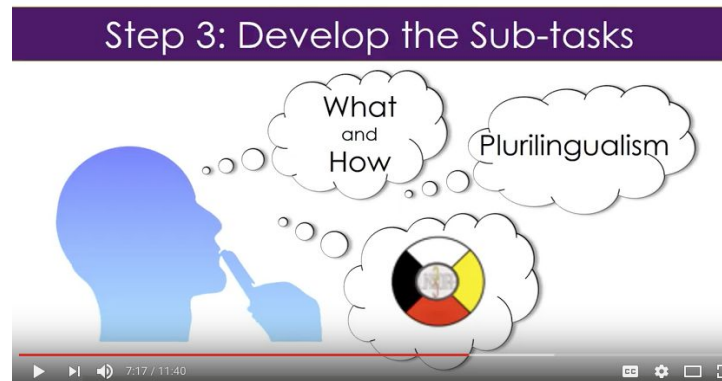


Tutorial 2: Plurilingualism



Tutorial 3: The Medicine Wheel

LINCDIRE



Tutorial 5: The Action-Oriented Task Template

LINCDIRE

Task Scenario: 21st century storytelling

To encourage younger community members to actively appreciate stories, your local library is asking the community to donate their favourite childhood fairytales . You take a look through your collection and decide that these need to be updated because they are not written in German and do not include any modern morals that can speak to the younger generation.

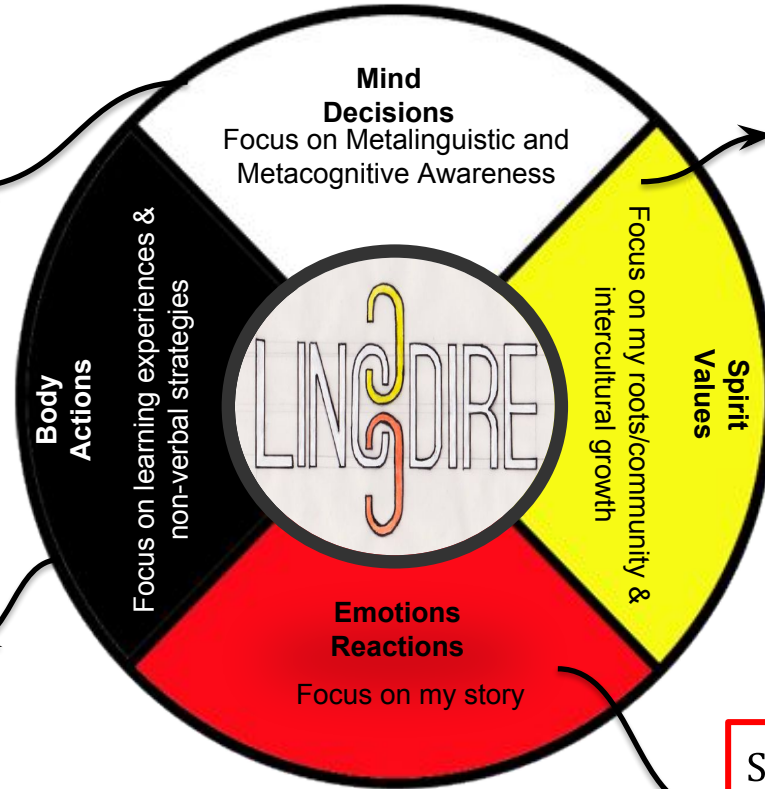
To complete this task, you will need to write an original German fairy-tale with modern twists for a 21st century child.

Target learners (CEFR level/grade): A2/B1 high-school/adult students

Other languages involved: students' home languages and cultures, English, elements of indigenous and other languages

Students compare storytelling conventions in different languages/cultures they know.

Students focus on the nonverbal aspects of storytelling.



The class “publishes” an anthology and displays this anthology in the (school or community) library.

Students bring in their favourite childhood fairytales, and read these to other students.

Examples of student creative works:

21st century student morals

A lonely goat sets off to find other goats and wants to share a beautiful greeting with them, but they don't understand her when she speaks. **Moral:** Be yourself because there will always be a friend for everyone. -Veronica

An irritable king banishes all the farmers in his kingdom to a horrible wasteland called Canada. Eventually he sees the error in his decision and comes to beg them to return. **Moral:** Don't alienate people. - Ryan

A princess is expected to marry a prince from the the neighbouring kingdom, but she prefers his sister instead. After some hesitation her parents agree that she should marry the one who will truly make her happy. **Moral:** Gay is OK. -Saskia

Task Scenario: The fall feast

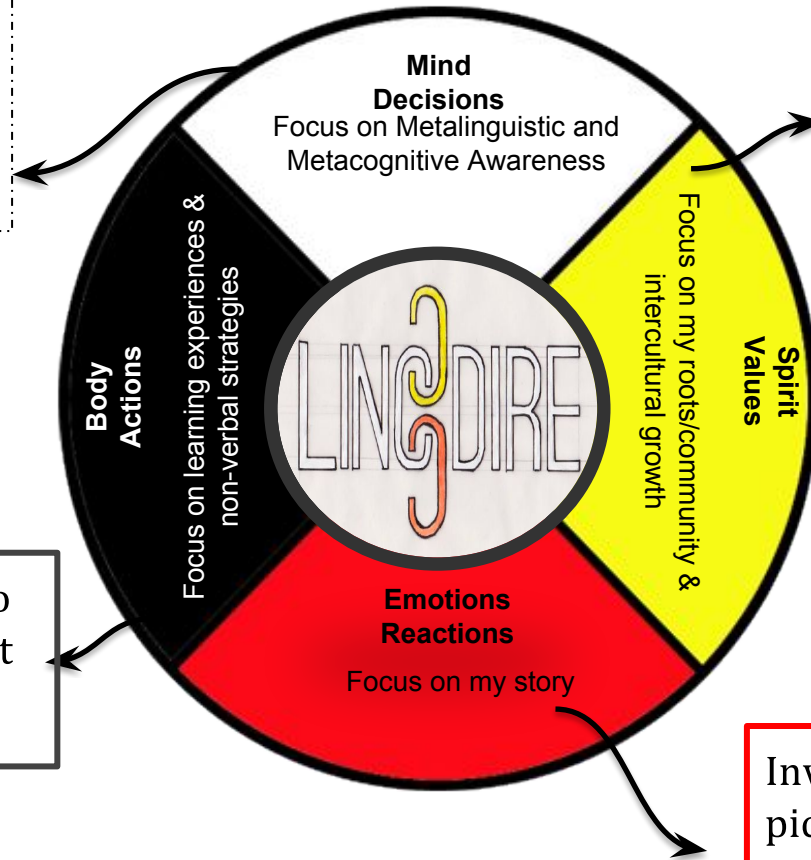
Every year, there is a Fall Feast to feed the spirits. This year, you have been asked to work as a guide during the feast. You will prepare an invitation for your parents and grandparents, and then guide your family through the feast, teaching them about each type of food, how it was cooked, and its importance to the feast.

Target learners (CEFR level/grade): A2 learners/ kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3

Main target language: Ojibway

Other languages involved: English

Students reconstruct the history of the feast using visual clues.



During the feast students are guides and language ambassadors, so parents can learn some words about the feast from the children.

Students use their bodies to express how they feel about a particular food item.

Invite students to draw a picture of their facial expression to show their level of excitement.

Piloting phase

(Fall 2017-Winter 2018)

Pre-piloting phase

(Winter /
Spring 2017)

Online discussions with teachers

Classroom observations

Teacher interviews

Online student survey

Student focus groups

LITE learner analytics

evaluate

apply

design

pilot

refine

Tasks

Tool

Resources

Methodology

Pluri-dimension

Preliminary findings: Training materials

overall positive
feedback

some difficulty with
Medicine Wheel
("Spirit" quadrant)

plurilingual pedagogy
remains abstract

additional training
materials for
teachers of young
learners

Preliminary findings: Task template

7) Main goal(s) (by the end of the task, students will be able to...):

8) Communicative language activities expressed through Can Do statements:

9) Communicative competences expressed through Can Do statements:

1. Linguistic (grammar/vocabulary/phonology):

2. Pragmatic and sociolinguistic (functional/discourse, register/contextual appropriacy):

2.1. E.g.: Asking for help or advice: "Help!/ Please can you help me with this?/ Perhaps you can be so kind to...?"

3. Sociocultural (proximity convention, directness/indirectness):

e.g. social conventions regarding the way you behave in different situations, like having a meal/r

10) Plurilingual/Pluricultural dimension:

(specify where the other language(s) come(s) in and what cross-cultural aspects are involved)

11) Mediation:

(specify aspects for mediation you intend to focus on which are relevant to the task)

12) Ability to learn:

(specify language learning strategies which are relevant to the task)

13) Final product/assessment:

- Advantage of various task template sections (linked to experience and familiarity with action-oriented approaches?)
- CEFR terminology can be overwhelming & abstract ("CAN DO - but how?")
- Desire for more examples, scaffolding of some aspects of the tasks

Preliminary findings: discussions with core teachers & classroom observations

- teacher-modeled examples/initial sharing encouraged students to investigate their own linguistic/cultural background
- the need to address cultural assumptions of student autonomy/reflective approaches embedded in tasks/pedagogy
- students expressed how the tasks confirmed their “real life” language use
- openness to other languages throughout the process, but hesitance in the final task/product?

Preliminary findings: LITE feasibility

- emerging tension between the adaptability and usability of the tasks
- adapting LITE for young learners and aboriginal language classrooms
- scaffolding needed to clarify a plurilingual approach, the CEFR, and LINCDIRE's pedagogical framework
- mentoring teachers will play an important role
- more input needed from Aboriginal language teachers

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Collaborative use of technology: language revitalization/plurilingual learning

- Linguistic diversity and emerging forms of linguistic and cultural expression thrive in our increasingly digital world (Ortega, 2017).
- Internet communication technologies (ICTs) used in L2 teaching/learning offer affordances that:
 - encourage experimentation - and play! - with multimodal forms of language-and-culture (Skyles, Oskoz & Thorne, 2016)
 - can facilitate pluricultural, meta-cognitive awareness and autonomy (Diehl & Prins, 2008)
 - can leverage imagination/imagery and emotion to play with & negotiate identity and visions of one's ideal L2 selves (Dörnyei, 2009; Norton, 2013)
 - can create community, resources and learning environments to foster language revitalization (Eisenlohr, 2004)

LITE: Interconnected, but distinct areas

1. My Plurilingual Journey

- To encourage identity negotiation, plurilingual/pluricultural awareness & learning

2. My tasks

- To focus students on tasks completed and in progress

3. Medicine Wheel guided reflections

- To build metacognitive skills/awareness, sense of self

4. Radar charts

- User analytics to update students on linguistic, plurilingual progress in LITE

Gap in relevant online plurilingual tools

Difficulties

- Existing software designed for e-portfolios required huge amounts of further development, especially concerning the user interface
- Most of components have to be developed by ourselves
- Not necessarily designed for plurilingual purposes; therefore,

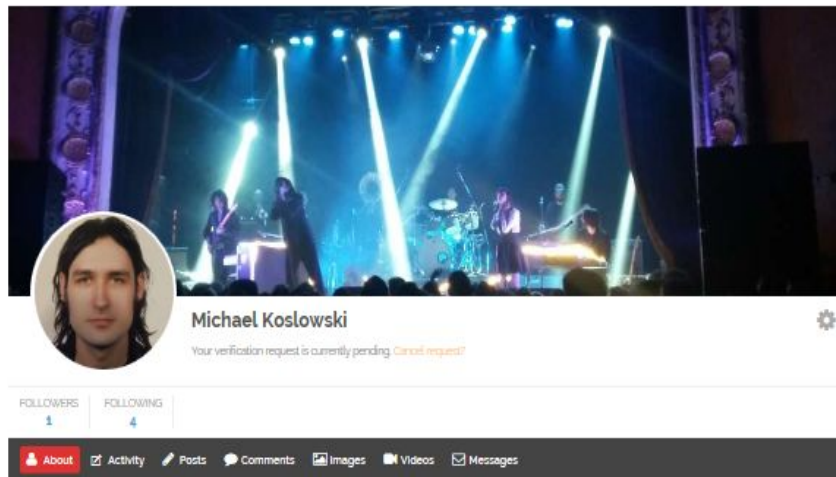
Solutions

- Made the decision to create our own plurilingual portfolio platform that supports the LINCDIRE pedagogical framework and project goals
- Better to design from scratch

Unique Features of LITE

1. My Plurilingual Journey
2. My Tasks
3. Medicine Wheel Reflections
4. Radar Chart (Future Development)

My Plurilingual Journey



1. My Languages (Know/Using/Learning)

My Story

I went to a French immersion elementary school, from grades 1 to 5 and continue to explore competencies in French. Interestingly, my grandparents spoke German but there were no schools supporting this language, other than a Saturday school far from where I lived in Calgary. As such, I have a passion for Heritage Language Education in Canada. At the moment, I am in Japan and continuing to explore this language, as I worked here previously for 5 years.

Image



2. Linguistic Encounters

My Story

I recently realized that my Japanese is largely transactional; I can do well in a restaurant or at a shop, but I'd like to develop my conversational Japanese. Being able to converse in Japanese with my friends here, with whom I normally speak English, is a new goal.

I remember meeting a French hippie family in Bangkok. I had some difficulty speaking French to the parents, but had no problems conversing with their 5 and 3 year old sons. Due to my French immersion background, I do believe that I am a fluent French child!

Image



3. My Cultural Encounters

My Story


Wow, so many cultural encounters in Tokyo. One of my favourites was going to a Japanese soccer game. The team came to our section to thank the fans. Then the fans realized that one of the players also has a beard. They called him over, we got a selfie, and when I turned around there was a queue of 15 groups of people that wanted to take a selfie with me haha. Only in Japan!


Image




My Tasks

Task 1 – Level A2

by kris-johnston

4 Lessons

1 Students

Free

2 learners taking this course

In Progress

CONTACT COURSE TEACHER

Task Scenario:

The municipal government is looking to sponsor a major art installation for Toronto's [or local city of choice] upcoming Nuit Blanche, a free, 12-hour, city-wide art exhibit featuring hundreds of artists from around the world. With the intent of inspiring understanding between cultural and linguistic communities, the city is asking for proposals for an interactive art installation that combines a celebration from one of the local cultures (e.g. Valentine's Day in Canada) with elements from a similar or different celebration from one or two other cultures (e.g. New Year's Eve in Thailand).

Your group has decided to submit a proposal for an interactive art installation. You will work on researching celebrations in various languages/cultures, design an event which meets the submission guidelines, write a proposal, and receive feedback from other artists in the class.

Task Overview:

1. Research celebrations in different cultures and languages
2. Design an art installation / event

Currently completed 0 lessons of 4 in total

0%

Search LITE

SEARCH

Step One: Research celebrations

CONTACT LESSON TEACHER

In groups, decide on one local celebration that you want to include in your project. Next, do research on celebrations and events from other cultures by visiting websites in various languages. Think about how the celebrations are similar / different and how they can be related. Here are some websites to help you get started:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_multicultural_festivals_and_holidays

<http://www.expntravel.com/2012/10/10/globe-travel-festivals-in-the-world/>

<https://dailymotion.com/festivals/>

<http://www.expnworld.com/around-the-world/colorful-festivals.html>

<http://www.schibadi.com/teachers/articles/festivals-samples-world.html>

Be sure to collect some images related to the event, as these will be important for your art installation later. You can also interview people from the different cultures as part of your research. Ask them about their experiences with and opinions of the event. Finally, find some keywords that describe the event in the local language where the event takes place. Make sure to take detailed notes on your research and be prepared to share your findings with your group.

COMPLETE LESSON

→ Step Two: Design the event

Part Four: Present your proposal Quiz

You have not taken this lesson's quiz yet

CONTACT TEACHER

1. Can, with the help of a dictionary, translate simple words and phrases, but may not always select the appropriate meaning.
☐ True
☐ False
2. Can provide a simple, rough, spoken translation of short, simple texts (e.g. notices on familiar subjects), capturing the most essential point.
☐ True
☐ False
3. Can list the main points of short, clear, simple messages and announcements provided that speech is clearly and slowly articulated.
☐ True
☐ False

Tasks (Online or In-Class)

- Immediately after each task, students will complete a short 'Can Do' quiz, based on Can Do statements from the CEFR
- Then travel to the Do a Reflections Page to complete a reflection
- Students may also choose to post the work they completed for a task and share
- there is an option to also highlight this work in the 'My Best Work' page

Medicine Wheel Reflections

I've learned something from this task that I would like to share with others.

Sharing stories and experiences helped me and my classmates learn more about the topic.



My Reflection - Mind

Task_Tag

Question 1 :

I now have a deeper connection with others, the community, and the earth.



Question 2 :

I've learned something from this task that I would like to share with others.

2016-08-04



- Each reflection creates a snapshot which is dated
- This snapshot allows learners to reflect on their posts and see growth
- The radar charts act as confidence gauges and present an average of their scores

Radar Charts (Under Development)

Chart A

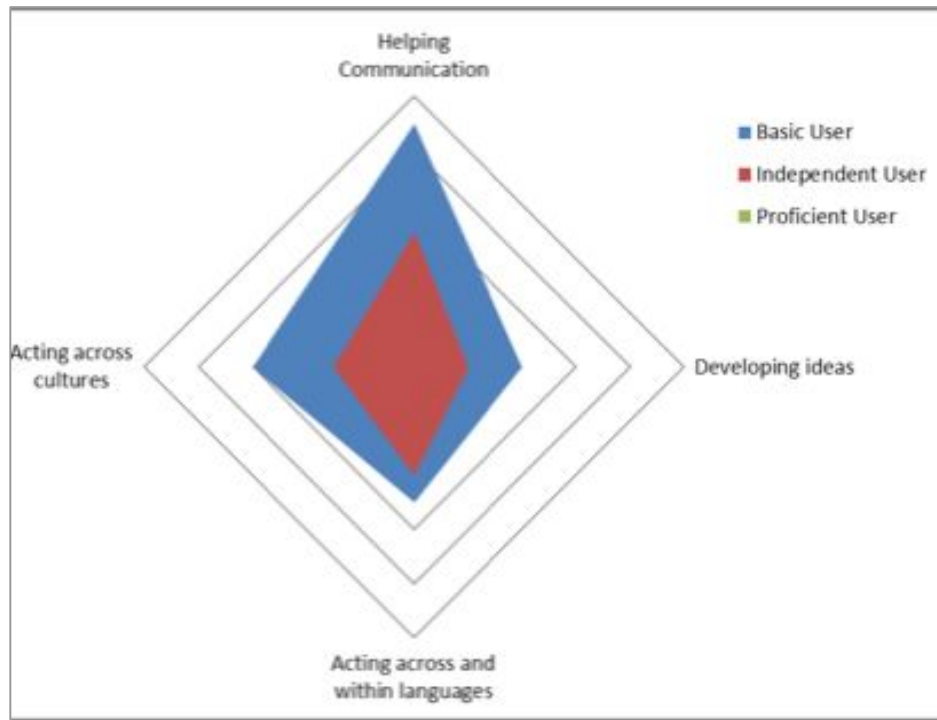
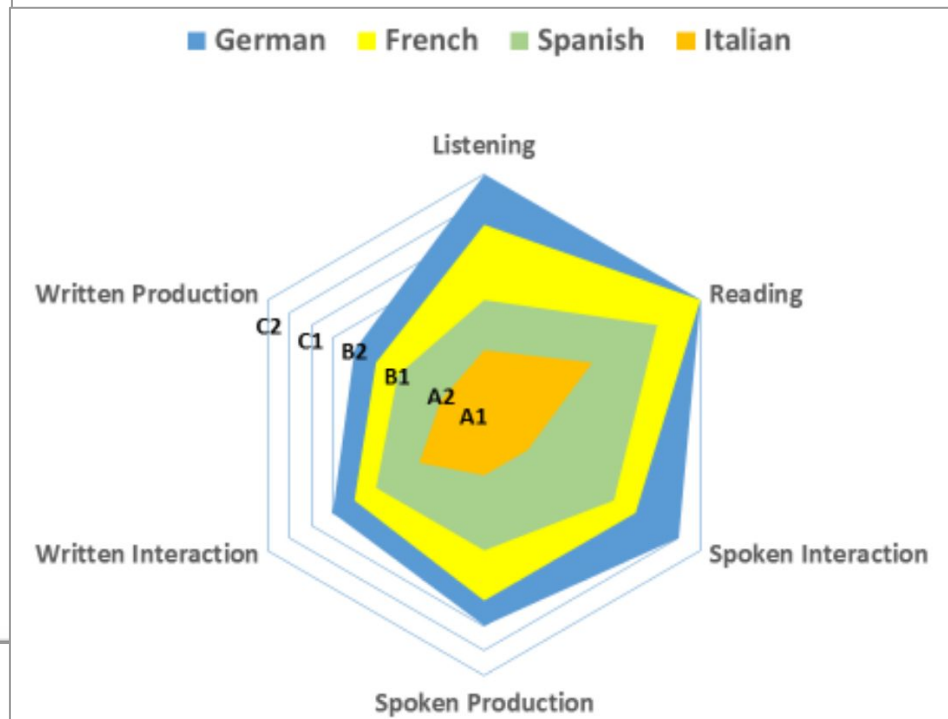


Chart B



Implications

Drawing upon both aboriginal and western epistemologies and pedagogies

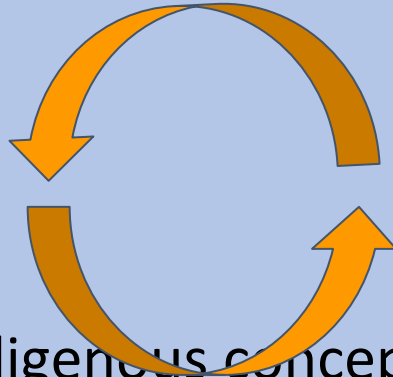
Involvement of researchers, educators, learners and different languages and communities

Dissemination of research on plurilingualism to a broader audience

Collaboration through a free digital environment accessible to many potential users

Conclusion

Making the Medicine Wheel and aboriginal epistemology accessible to non-indigenous teachers



Making latest non-indigenous conceptualization of language education accessible to indigenous teachers

Project Members

PI: Enrica Piccardo (OISE – University of Toronto & Université Grenoble-Alpes)

Co-Applicants: Aline Germain-Rutherford (University of Ottawa) & Geoff Lawrence (York University)

- Alan Corbiere (M'Chigeeng First Nation - Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, Canada)
- Anette Guse (University of New Brunswick)
- Alana Johns (University of Toronto,)
- Coralie Payre-Ficout (Université Grenoble-Alpes, France)
- Norman Sieweke (Edmonton Public Schools - Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education)
- Nicola Townend (University of Toronto Schools)
- Mary Ann Corbiere (University of Sudbury)

Research Assistants

- Kimberly Cho (OISE-UofT)
- Angelica Galante (OISE-UofT)
- Kris Johnston (York)
- Mama Ni Owoo (OISE-UofT)
- Yecid Ortega (OISE-UofT)
- Sara Potkonjak (York)
- Michael Koslowski (York)



Merci! Miigwetch! Danke! Grazie! Thank you!

Opening the discussion

Discussant:

Heather Lotherington

York University