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What does it mean to be an immersion teacher?

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Three of the many roles played by immersion teachers

1. Scaffolders	• They provide students with lots of support to understand and produce the target language.
2. Integrators	• They integrate language across the curriculum to shift students' attention between language and content.
3. Collaborators	• They work jointly with colleagues to strengthen connections across languages and content areas.

Part 1: Scaffolders

Immersion teachers are scaffolders

- Immersion students are learning content in a language that students know only partially.
- So immersion teachers need to enhance and structure classroom discourse in ways that facilitate both content and language learning.
- To do so, they **scaffold** the interaction by:
  - making the input comprehensible
  - asking the right kinds of questions
  - using a range of feedback types

Trust Me! I'M A SCAFFOLDER

Immersion teachers need to both provide and dismantle the scaffolding

- Scaffolding techniques enable students to:
  - understand the target language and engage with the content
  - accomplish tasks they would be unable to do on their own
- Because scaffolding is <u>temporary</u>, teachers need to:
  - provide just the right amount of support to make the language and content comprehensible
  - be demanding enough to ensure that learners engage in higher-order cognitive skills

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To make input comprehensible, immersion teachers are experts at:

- **redundancy**
  - repetition, paraphrase, synonyms, multiple examples, signals such as '*Let me put it another way*'
- **slow pacing**
  - repetition, paraphrase, synonyms, multiple examples, signals such as '*Let me put it another way*'
  - signals such as '*Let me repeat that*' to give students time to process language and interpret questions
- **non-linguistic support**
  - gestures, eye contact, facial expressions
  - graphs, props, visual support

Immersion teachers use IRF exchanges
(Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975)

Initiating move (I)
T: *Who won the War of 1812?*

↓

Response move (R)
S: *Canada.*

↓

Follow-up move (F)
T: *Yes, that's right.*

↗ The IRF sequence has been criticized:
  ↗ as a teacher-centered transmission model of teaching
  ↗ for engaging students only minimally

IRF exchanges: Why the criticism?

From teacher to student:	Now imagine this:
T: *How did you come to school today?*	S: *How did YOU come to school today?*
S: *I came by bus.*	T: *I came by car.*
T: *That's right!*	S: *Yes, that's right!*

Immersion teachers are expert at asking for elaboration

↗ IRF is predominant in classroom discourse because it helps teachers to monitor students' understanding.

↗ IRF can be enhanced by follow-up moves that avoid evaluation and instead request elaboration:
  ↗ *"What do you mean by that?"*
  ↗ *"Why do you think that?"*
  ↗ *"How do you know?"*
  ↗ *"What makes you think that?"*
  ↗ *"Tell me more about that."*
  ↗ *"Why might that be?"*

(from Echevarria & Graves, 1998)

Immersion teachers need to orchestrate a variety of corrective feedback (CF) types

↗ **CF types:**
  ↗ *Reformulations* provide the correct form to students
  ↗ *Prompts* push learners to self-repair without providing the correct form

↗ **Effectiveness of CF:**
  ↗ confirmed by classroom intervention studies

↗ **Paradoxes to think about:**
  ↗ Teachers hesitate to interrupt students yet CF may be most effective during interaction when students have something meaningful to say.
  ↗ Teachers are reluctant to provide CF believing that students prefer not to be corrected yet, according to research, students express a strong preference for receiving CF.

Reformulations

↗ **Recasts** (Lightbown & Spada, 2013)
  S1: *Why you don't like Marc?*
  T: *Why **don't you** like Marc?*
  S2: *I don't know, I don't like him.*

↗ **Explicit correction** (Lyster & Ranta, 1997)
  S: *We cut the straws into six different thicknesses…*
  T: *I want you to use the word **lengths**. You cut the straws into different lengths. Not thicknesses.*

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1. Clarification request
  S: *When they fire the books uh—*
  T: *When they what?*
  S: *When they fire the books.*
  T: *What do they mean when they fire the books?*

2. Repetition
  S: *Il bond.* [It jump.]
  T: *Il bond?* [It jump?]

3. Metalinguistic clue
  T: *The porcupine? Sara?*
  S: *It's the pines on its back, it's …*
  T: *The pines. Do we say "pines"?*

4. Elicitation
  S: *Well, there's a stream of perfume that doesn't smell very good.*
  T: *A stream of perfume, we'll call that a …?*

P R O M P T S

Immersion teachers can use recasts to model academic language (Gibbons, 2003)

S: *When we had the things the first one like if you put it up in the air like that . the magnets you can feel . feel the . that they're not pushing?*

T: *When you turn the magnet around? You felt that*

S: *pushing and if we use the other side we can't feel pushing*

T: *OK so when .. they were facing one way .. They/you felt the magnets attract and stick together/when you turn one of the magnets around you felt it , repelling .. or pushing away .. OK thank you, well done.*
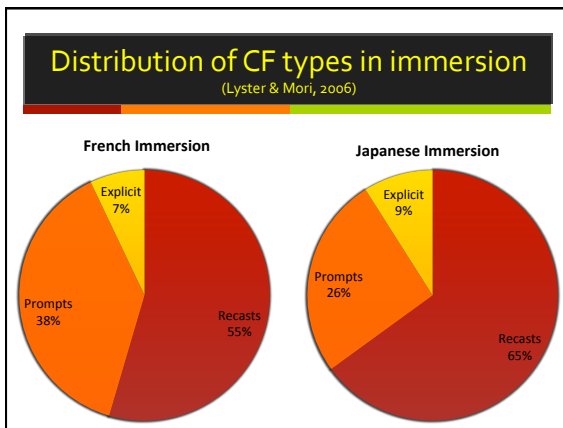
Immersion teachers can use prompts to push for more academic language (Gibbons, 2003)
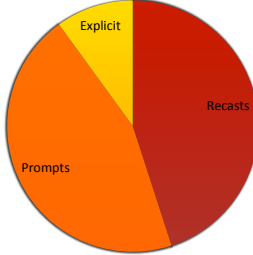
T: *Tell us what you found out.*

S: *We found out that the south and the south don't like to stick together.*

T: *Now let's start using our scientific language Michelle.*

S: *The north and the north repelled each other and the south and the south also .. repelled each other but when we put the/ when we put the two magnets in a different way they/ they attracted each other.*

Distribution of CF types in immersion
(Lyster & Mori, 2006)

French Immersion

- Explicit 7%
- Prompts 38%
- Recasts 55%

Japanese Immersion

- Explicit 9%
- Prompts 26%
- Recasts 65%

Towards more equal distribution of recasts and prompts?

- Explicit
- Recasts
- Prompts

Because:
With recasts, teachers do most of the work.
With prompts, students do most of the work.

Part 2: Integrators

Why immersion teachers need to integrate language and content

- ↗ Swain (1988) proposed that content teaching on its own was not necessarily good language teaching:
  - ↗ *it needs to be complemented and manipulated to maximize language learning*
- ↗ Lightbown (2014) proposed that without integrating language and content:
  - ↗ *students are deprived of opportunities "to focus on specific features of language at the very moment when their motivation to learn them may be at its highest"*

(CAVEAT 1: There is nothing simple about doing this!)

Integrating language and content through "counterbalanced" instruction (Lyster, 2007)

- emphasizes language across the curriculum
- draws students' attention to language in content-driven classrooms and to content in language-driven classrooms
- shifts students' attention between language and content in ways that strengthen connections in memory and increase depth of learning

CONTENT

LANGUAGE

(CAVEAT 2: There is nothing simple about doing this either.)

Instructional sequence for integrating language across the immersion curriculum

Noticing activity → Awareness activity → Guided practice → Communicative practice → Corrective feedback → (back to Noticing activity)
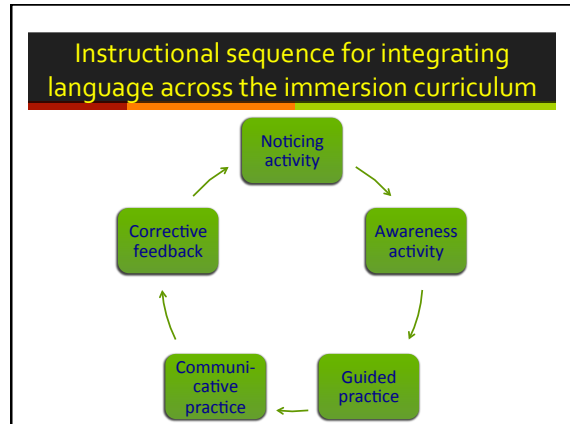
Noticing activity
- In a context related to content, students' attention is drawn to a problematic L2 features highlighted through typographical enhancement

Awareness activity
- Students engage in some degree of meta-linguistic reflection so they become more aware of the pattern.

Guided practice
- Students are pushed to use the features in a meaningful yet controlled context in order to develop automaticity and accuracy.

Communicative practice
- In a context related to content, students are encouraged to use the features in more open-ended ways to develop fluency, motivation, and confidence.

FOCUS

What do you notice in the Awareness Test?

What are the moon-walking bears in your immersion language?

- L2 features difficult to pick up from classroom input:
  - differ in non-obvious or unexpected ways from the L1
  - are irregular, infrequent, or lacking in perceptual salience
  - do not carry a heavy communicative load (Harley, 1993)
- Part of morphosyntax, long recognized as the most difficult for L2 learners, owing mainly to:
  - low salience (Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2005; Mackey, 2006)
  - lack of communicative value (Han, 2004)
- In highly inflected and morphologically complex languages, many morphosyntactic features are prone to slipping under the radar in immersion classrooms.

Grammatical gender is a moon-walking bear

- "may be the single most frustrating and difficult part of the study of French L2" (Tucker et al., 1977)
- Grammatical gender markers:
  - are not salient in classroom discourse
  - do not convey semantic distinctions
- Teachers encourage students to learn gender on an item-by-item basis in spite of rule-governed patterns:
  - 80% of nouns in *Le Robert Junior Illustré* have endings that reliably predict their gender (Lyster, 2006)

La fondation de Québec en Nouvelle-France

Après avoir reçu la mission de fonder une colonie en Nouvelle-France, Samuel de Champlain a choisi, pour faire un établissement permanent, le site où se trouve aujourd'hui la ville de Québec. C'est parce que cet endroit avait un grand avantage : la fourrure y était très présente. [...] De plus, la colonie se situait sur le fleuve St-Laurent, ce qui donnait accès au cœur du continent et ouvrait peut-être un passage vers la Chine.

La vie dans la colonie était très dure. Le défrichement de la forêt était difficile et la nourriture manquait. Les colons risquaient donc de mourir de la famine ou encore du scorbut, une maladie très grave. La survie d'une grande partie de la population dépendait donc de la marchandise venant de France. Mais, en 1629, les Anglais ont pris Québec et la Nouvelle-France est restée aux mains de l'Angleterre pendant trois ans. Par la suite, Champlain est revenu pour reprendre les rênes de la colonie.

Petit à petit, la population de la colonie augmentait, le défrichement devenait moins difficile. [...] Aujourd'hui sur la Place-Royale à Québec, on peut toujours visiter Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, une église bâtie en 1688 sur la fondation de l'habitation de Champlain.

The founding of Quebec in New France

After receiving the mission to found a colony in New France, Samuel de Champlain chose to make a permanent establishment, the site where the city of Quebec now stands. This is because this place had a great advantage: the fur there was very present. [...] In addition, the colony was located on the St. Lawrence River, which gave access to the heart of the continent and perhaps opened a passage to China.

Life in the colony was very hard. Clearing the forest was difficult and food was lacking. The settlers therefore could die of starvation or scurvy, a very serious disease. The survival of a large portion of the population depended on merchandise from France. But in 1629, the British took Quebec and New France remained in the hands of England for three years. Thereafter, Champlain returned to take over the colony.

Gradually, the population of the colony increased, and clearing became less difficult. [...] Today on Place-Royale in Quebec, you can still visit Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, a church built in 1688 on the foundation of Champlain's dwelling.

Noticing activity

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Awareness activity: detecting patterns

Terminaison	Noms retrouvés dans le texte	M ou F?
-age	un avantage, un passage	M
-tion, -sion	la mission, la population, la fondation	F
-ment, -ent	un établissement, le défrichement, du continent	M
-ine	la Chine, la famine	F
-ie	une/la colonie, la vie, une partie, la survie, une maladie	F
-ise	la marchandise, une église	F
-ure	la fourrure, la nourriture	F

Guided practice: Riddles for reviewing content

• Cela s'est produit en Nouvelle-France lorsque les colons manquaient de nourriture et crevaient de faim. • *(This happened in New France when the settlers lacked food and were starving.)*	LA FAMINE
• Je sers à couvrir certains mammifères. J'ai été très recherchée pendant l'établissement de la Nouvelle-France. • *(I serve to cover certain mammals. I was much sought after during the establishment of New France.)*	LA FOURRURE
• Le scorbut, la cause de beaucoup de morts en Nouvelle-France, en est un exemple. • *(Scurvy, the cause of many deaths in New France, is an example.)*	UNE MALADIE

Communicative practice related to content themes

Compare the attitudes of people in New France with those of people today concerning the fashionability of fur. *[Comparez les attitudes des habitants de la Nouvelle-France et celles de nos jours à l'égard de la mode de la fourrure.]*
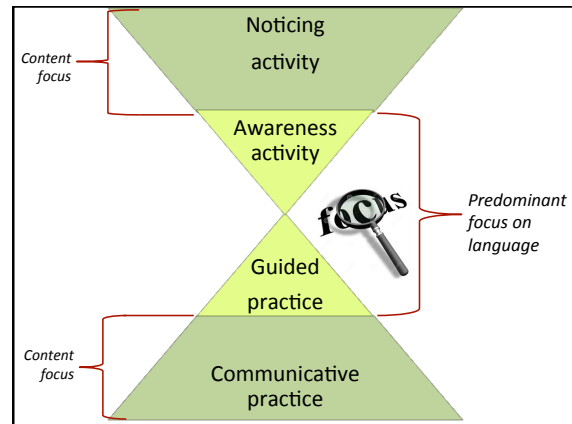
Discuss what was meant at the time that the colony maybe opened a passage to China. *[Discutez de la signification à l'époque du constat que la nouvelle colonie ouvrait peut-être un passage vers la Chine.]*

Compare the attitudes of people in New France with those of people today concerning deforestation. *[Comparez les attitudes des habitants de la Nouvelle-France et celles de nos jours en ce qui concerne le défrichement de la forêt.]*

Communicative practice related to content themes

The subject-matter goal is to have students question and compare different social realities but teachers still focus on language by ensuring correct use of gender at least with key topic words (*la fourrure*, *le défrichement*, *un passage*)

Content focus

Noticing activity

Awareness activity

focus

Predominant focus on language

Guided practice

Content focus

Communicative practice

Part 3: Collaborators

Teacher collaboration: Key to success yet challenging

- ↗ Researchers concur that success of content-based approaches depends on cross-curricular collaboration.
- ↗ Yet, collaboration between language and content teachers can be challenging.
  - ↗ UK study of ESL teacher and content teacher in same classroom:
    - ↗ *"Knowledge about language was positioned as less important in the subject classroom"* (Creese, 2002)
  - ↗ Hong Kong study of content and language teachers in high schools:
    - ↗ *rigid divisions observed between departments and a hierarchy of disciplines, with language at lower end* (Trent, 2010)

Collaboration in English-medium late immersion in Hong Kong (Kong, 2014)

- ↗ Kong collaborated with history teacher to help 9th-graders write history essays
  - ↗ History teacher invited English teacher to join the project but invitation was declined.
  - ↗ She invited the English Head, who observed lesson taught by Kong:
    - ↗ Head acknowledged they did not teach academic writing, and did not participate further in the project.

"Finding an appropriate balance between content and language might be best achieved by the same teacher and, when not, remains a key issue to explore" (Kong, 2014).

Cross-lingual collaboration for integrated language learning

- ↗ Another way for teachers to collaborate is across languages in order to promote (Cummins, 2007):
  - ↗ integrated language learning
  - ↗ biliteracy development
  - ↗ two-way cross-lingual transfer (L1 ←→L2)
- ↗ Teacher collaboration enables students to make connections between languages while maintaining a sense of linguistic and contextual integrity for each language on its own (Lyster et al., 2013)

Bilingual read-aloud project in Montreal
(Lyster, Collins, & Ballinger, 2009)

- English and French teachers read aloud from same chapter books, alternating between chapters from the French and English versions.
  - Before each reading, students explained previous chapter and made predictions for upcoming chapter;
- Students learned new concepts in both languages and were able to make the connections.

Bilingual read-aloud project at WIS – 5th-grade Spanish/English

S1: *It just has a better feel in Spanish, kind of like, I don't know what it is, but it's better to read it in Spanish.*

S2: *I feel that in Spanish it might be more interesting, but hearing it in both languages you might benefit more and you made connections.*

S3: *I like how we read it in Spanish and English because I like hearing Signora XXX having, like, emotions in the book and also how Mr. XXX can't pronounce some words in Spanish. In Spanish you can really feel the emotions but in English it's a little bit calmer.*

Teacher collaboration for integrated language learning (Lyster, Quiroga, & Ballinger, 2013)

- 2nd-grade partner teachers co-designed biliteracy tasks beginning in one language and continuing in the other:
  - language focus on derivational morphology
  - content focus on the themes of illustrated storybooks.
- Each teacher read the storybooks aloud in either the French or English version.

Focus on word formation in *Moon Man/ Jean de la Lune* (Tomi Ungerer)

*They called the **mysterious** visitor an invader.*

English teachers helped students to recognise the noun **mystery** as the base of **mysterious** and to form and identify similarly formed adjectives (e.g., **courageous** from **courage**) or nouns (e.g., **disaster** from **disastrous**).

- The word **courageux** appears in the French version.
- French teachers helped students to identify the noun **courage** as its base and to form similar words:
  - **paresseux** from **paresse**
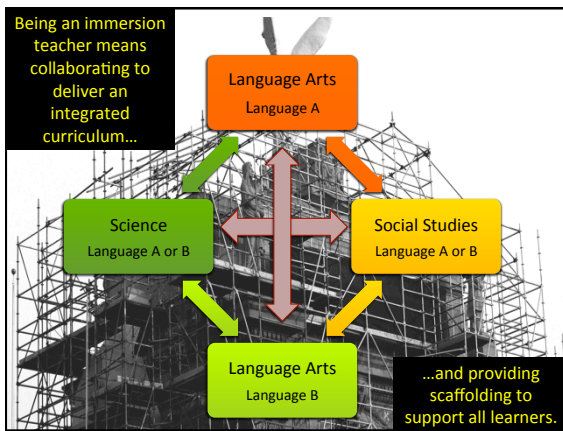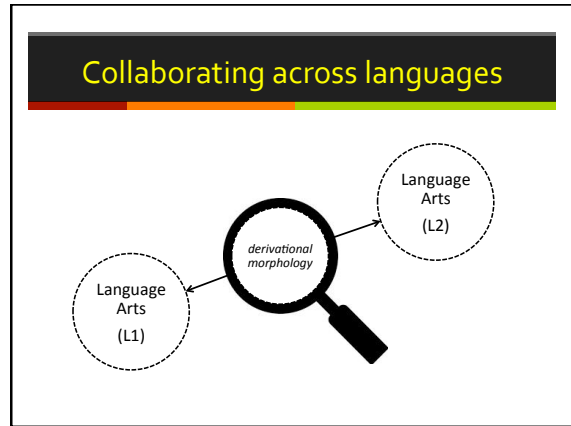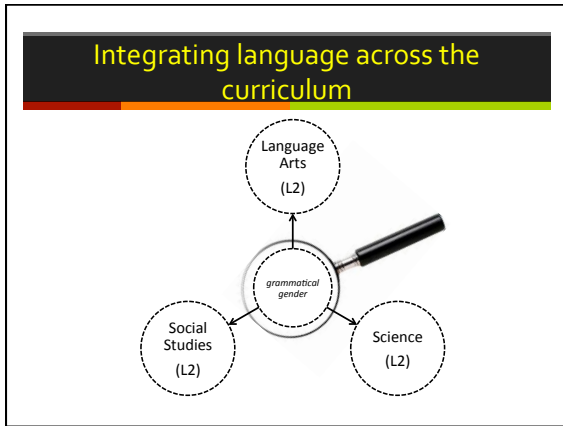 - **mystère** from **mystérieux**

Student outcomes and reactions

- Experimental group significantly outperformed comparison group in French morphological awareness test.
  - positive effects in French were similar for all students irrespective of language dominance
- About reading the stories in both languages, the teachers said that students:
  - *"loved it"*
  - *"enjoyed making connections between the two languages"*
  - *"never complained about hearing the same book"*
  - *"were very excited to hear it again in a different language"*
- One teacher said that even during math class, students would stop and say:
  - *"Oh look! A little word inside a big word!"* **addition**

Part 4: Conclusion

Integrating language across the curriculum

Language Arts (L2)

grammatical gender

Social Studies (L2)

Science (L2)

Collaborating across languages

Language Arts (L2)

derivational morphology

Language Arts (L1)

Being an immersion teacher means collaborating to deliver an integrated curriculum…

Language Arts
Language A

Science
Language A or B

Social Studies
Language A or B

Language Arts
Language B

…and providing scaffolding to support all learners.

+*Thank you to all the the Scaffolders, Integrators, and Collaborators in the audience!*

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