Summer 2020

A Framework and Curriculum for Teachers of Adult English Language Literacy Learners: Incorporating Essential Skills and Intervention Plans for ALL/LESLLA Learners

Eman Ghanem

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A FRAMEWORK AND CURRICULUM FOR TEACHERS OF ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERACY LEARNERS: INCORPORATING ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND INTERVENTION PLANS FOR ALL/LESLLA LEARNERS

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literacy Education.

Hamline University
St. Paul, Minnesota
August 2020

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DEDICATION

To adult ESL literacy teachers and learners... worldwide!
“The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves”.

— Paulo Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My sincere appreciation and gratitude go to:

Kelly, your encouragement and feedback have brought invaluable additions to this project.

Patsy, your work has established the building blocks of the LESLLA domain and your generous guidance as well as shared knowledge have drawn me from the periphery to become a legitimate LESLLA researcher.

Susan, thank you for your guidance, friendship, and thorough reading of my many drafts.

My MALEd classmates and ALL/LESLLA colleagues who have inspired me with their successes and intriguing questions.

My students who exemplify the power of hope and agency by overcoming the intricacies of learning English: Mahad Sanid and Shukran!

My family and friends whose unwavering support keeps me grounded and continues to energize me to challenge myself to be the best that I can be.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

| CHAPTER ONE | .. | .. | .. | .. | 9 |
| CHAPTER TWO | Introduction | .. | .. | .. | 17 |
|  | Essential Skills (ESs) | .. | .. | .. | 18 |
|  | Adult ESL Literacy Learners | .. | .. | .. | 20 |
|  | Motivation and Trauma | .. | .. | .. | 21 |
|  | Age | .. | .. | .. | 22 |
|  | Literacy Framework | .. | .. | .. | 23 |
|  | Reading and Writing | .. | .. | .. | 24 |
|  | Second Language Learning | .. | .. | .. | 26 |
|  | Instructional Approaches and Methods | .. | .. | .. | 27 |
|  | Materials | .. | .. | .. | 28 |
|  | Response to Intervention (RtI) | .. | .. | .. | 31 |
|  | Evidence-Based Interventions for Tier 3 Readers | .. | .. | .. | 33 |
|  | Summary | .. | .. | .. | 42 |
| CHAPTER THREE | .. | .. | .. | .. | 43 |
|  | Introduction | .. | .. | .. | 43 |
|  | Adult ESL Literacy Research | .. | .. | .. | 43 |
|  | Curriculum Setting | .. | .. | .. | 44 |
|  | Intended Audience | .. | .. | .. | 44 |
|  | Goals for Curriculum and Instruction | .. | .. | .. | 46 |
|  | Five Components of Reading | .. | .. | .. | 47 |
|  | Curriculum Description | .. | .. | .. | 48 |
|  | Tier 3 Scenarios and Intervention Plans | .. | .. | .. | 54 |
|  | Evaluation of Curriculum | .. | .. | .. | 55 |
|  | Timeline | .. | .. | .. | 56 |
|  | Summary | .. | .. | .. | 56 |
| CHAPTER FOUR | .. | .. | .. | .. | 58 |
|  | Capstone Literature Review Highlights | .. | .. | .. | 59 |
Project Successes and Benefits to the Profession ................................................................. 60

Hamline School of Education Conceptual Framework ......................................................... 61

Project’s Limitations ............................................................................................................. 64

Future Research .................................................................................................................... 65

Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 66

REFERENCES ......................................................................................................................... 67

Appendix A ............................................................................................................................... 77

Appendix B ............................................................................................................................... 79

Appendix C ............................................................................................................................... 80

Appendix D ............................................................................................................................... 81

Appendix E ............................................................................................................................... 83

Appendix F ............................................................................................................................... 84
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:
Overview of the Comparative Framework .................................................. 19

Table 2:
Perspectives to Reading, Reading Components, and Proposed Assessment Tools .... 35

Table 3:
Employment-Focused Curriculum Overview of Week #1 and Week #2 ................. 49

Table 4:
Employment-Focused Curriculum Overview of Week #3 and Week #4 ................. 50
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:
Strands of Early Literacy Development................................................................. 39
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) has been at the core of my work and research for over three decades. When I started teaching ESL literacy to adult newcomers to Canada, I thought that it would be an easy transition from teaching mainstream adult ESL because all that I needed to do was to review the ESL for Literacy Learners (Johansson et al., 2000) to familiarize myself with literacy levels’ profile of ability and engage in some ESL literacy teacher training to learn about recommended methodologies for Adult Literacy Learners (ALL). Little did I know, making such a transition was not that simple due to the questions/challenges that started to emerge in my classroom. For example, I was not sure how to support my students who were enrolled in “developing/adequate reading ability” (CCLB, 2012, pp.48-55) classes but were in fact “emergent readers” (Schwartz, 2005, p.436) who were unable to read despite the extensive practice of bottom-up and top-down reading strategies (Vinogradov & Liden, 2009). I began to wonder if there is more to reading, and in turn writing, that I needed to research to be able to support my students. I started contemplating, how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners? To embark on answering that question, I provide a descriptive profile of my adult ESL literacy learners and discuss the rationale for a comprehensive approach to literacy teaching.

Working with adult ESL literacy learners has informed my understating of their needs, strengths, and areas of improvement. I teach in an ESL literacy-focused Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program in Western Canada. LINC programs are federally funded to support adult newcomers, whether immigrants or refugees, by providing English language instruction for
resettlement purposes. My students are mainly refugees who have a range of 0-9 years of education in their First Languages (L1s). It sometimes feels that my classroom mirrors Canada’s multiculturalism (Multiculturalism Act, 1988) where the linguistic and cultural mosaic feeds daily interactions for 4.5 hours between representatives from different parts of the world, such as Somalia, Syria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eretria, Thailand, Nepal, and Rwanda. Despite the differences in students’ cultural backgrounds, beliefs, gender identities, and familial responsibilities, students have one goal in common and that is the desire to learn reading and writing in English so they can fit in the highly literate society they live in by accessing government services, such as going to the doctor’s office and reading a prescription without having to ask for L1 support. Since reading is hard, as my students like to vent, and takes a long time to develop for ESL literacy learners (Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011), students tend to compensate by using strategies that allow them to get by and pass school assessments to progress from one level to the next without actually sustaining the then developed reading skills (Warner, 2001).

In a similar vein, Wall (2017) indicated that ESL literacy learners often resort to asking for support from family members, friends, and LINC teachers to decipher written messages; a phenomenon that often leaves the teacher with a choice to make between (1) helping the students with resettlement issues which is an option that often crosses the line between the professional and the personal; and (2) sending the students to seek resettlement support from professionals which entails students missing classroom instruction. As a compromise, I started to help students with simpler and shorter tasks, e.g., reading and explaining letters from the federal/provisional government and supporting them while submitting their monthly income review to continue accessing income support benefits. As for longer and more complicated tasks, such as reviewing residency renewal applications, I began to book them appointments with settlement counselors.
While I knew that such documents are written at a language level that is beyond my students’ reading level, I expected some of them to be able to decode/read the documents without necessarily having to comprehend them. When I attempted to read one sample letter with one of my students, I realized that the student was guessing the words without trying to utilize any of the decoding strategies practiced in class; e.g., breaking down the word to its basic sounds; e.g., the word *months* would be read as (m says /m/, o says /ʌ/, n says /n/, th says /θ/, s says /s/) but the student would instead read *mother* because of the shared first syllable. This type of calculated guessing is actually visual and auditory memorization that preliterate learners have been practicing to compensate and sometimes survive (Bigelow & Tarone, 2004) in L1 contexts as well (Warner, 2001).

L1 literacy level is reported to be an important variable in second language learning and acquisition (Bernhardt, 2011). When learners have the knowledge and basics of how one language works, it can make the journey of learning the target language easier or harder depending on the number of similarities and differences between the two languages; i.e., Language Transfer (Gass & Selinker, 1983) which is defined as the application of linguistic features from one language to another by a bilingual or multilingual speaker. Almost all of my students are multilingual speakers (at least three languages) because of the paths they have taken until they made it to Canada. Furthermore, some of them may have developed some basic literacy skills in some of those languages. Using the Native Language Literacy Assessment (King & Bigelow, 2016), I was able to determine L1 literacy levels among my learners and understand some of the difficulties they face while reading. To check their literacy levels in their L1s, I had to study the alphabetic system in the L1s represented in my class. For this discussion, I will briefly refer to the most popular two languages in my class, namely, Somali and Arabic.
The Somali Language is reported to be an oral language for which a written system was developed in the 1970s (Piersma, 2013). That system was based on the English alphabet because Somali linguists wanted to develop a system that allows Somalis to communicate with the world while using Arabic sounds to maintain their cultural identities. Knowing that fact helped me realize why my semi-literate Somali-speaking students are sometimes confused while reading. To illustrate, the letter (X) is pronounced as /ks/ in the English alphabet but it is read as (H) and pronounced as /H/ a very dry English /h/ in Somali language. This entails that when a semi-literate Somali student tries to read a word that starts with the letter (H), e.g., house, the student might be considering pronouncing it as xouse.

On the other hand, the Arabic language is a Semitic language and is reported to have a 100% correspondence between the alphabet letters and the sounds they make (Ryding, 2011). When such correspondence is transferred into English, my students find it challenging to decode words that include allophones of the same phoneme in different word positions, e.g., /f/ as in fish, elephant and cough, silent or quiet letters, such as (k) in knee, and differentiating between homonyms like no and know. Those are some of the linguistic features that require scaffolding and time to develop in both spoken and written mediums while practicing class activities (Bigelow & Tarone, 2004; Tarone, 2010).

Building literacy from a linguistic perspective has led Lems, Miller & Soso (2017) to prescribe a “syndrome for success” (p. 301) for K-12 English Language Learners (ELLs) to enjoy and succeed in reading and writing in English. They suggested seven components: (1) oracy, the combined skills of listening and speaking used as a precursor and fellow traveler as learners develop literacy; (2) learning successful decoding skills of the English alphabet; (3) using morpheme study to increase vocabulary; (4) using word-formation processes, cognates and
allocations in English; (5) developing reading fluency; (6) developing a set of flexible reading comprehension strategies; and (7) learning to write in academic registers and using writing to learn (pp. viii-ix). Looking deeper into reading, Wren (2000) developed a cognitive framework of reading for K-12 students that focuses on (1) language comprehension which is composed of linguistic and background knowledge; and (2) decoding skills which include cipher and lexical knowledge. Lastly, The International Literacy Association (ILA, 2018) recommended that for students to acquire the fundamental reading skills by the end of the third grade, they need (1) training in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading accuracy and fluency; and (2) teachers/reading specialists/literacy coaches must familiarize themselves with state-of-the-art research, such as turning around the focus from skill training to the student her/himself to identify each student’s reader identity, fluency and comprehension levels, hence developing reading plans to guide the teacher while supporting the student during their literacy journey. As an ESL teacher for ALL, I find those recommendations to be very useful while working with adult ESL literacy learners because the documented similarities between the two age groups speak to “the universality of the human learning, that perhaps adult learning theory and how children learn are not so different after all” (Vinogradov, 2014, p. 163).

Teaching adult ESL literacy learners in a literacy-focused program has given me the opportunity to support learners who were learning to hold a pencil either for the first time in their lives or have not held one in a very long time and witness their successes when they achieved an ESL literacy task as well as their frustrations when they could not. Those stories took a number of unsuccessful trials because navigating the available resources can be challenging, especially when working with students with different needs. Although adult ESL literacy learners often have higher listening and speaking abilities in comparison to their literacy skills, they may also
have different classroom needs depending on the unique gaps they developed during their literacy journeys. As I continue to support my learners, I am interested in learning how to accommodate their shared and individualized needs to become better readers and writers.

The purpose of this project is to identify the building blocks of a comprehensive literacy framework to overcome literacy intricacies for adult ESL literacy learners and address individual student’s learning gaps through intervention plans independent of the holistic efficacy of class time. More specifically, the project aims at answering this question, *how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?* To answer that question, I reviewed many resources to guide my quest. I am grateful for experts at Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB)\(^1\) who have been working tirelessly to provide documents and training sessions to raise teachers’ awareness of adult ESL literacy learners’ needs at a national level and for Literacy Education for Second Language Literacy for Adults (LESLLA)\(^2\) organization, conferences, and conference proceedings which have contributed to my understanding of students’ needs as well as my areas of improvement as a teacher. In fact, LESLLA led me to Hamline’s Master of Arts in Literacy Education (MAEd) program which offered me new ways of thinking about ESL literacy in general and reading intervention tools in particular. My trajectory at Hamline has helped me identify possible routes to address my adult ESL literacy

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\(^1\)The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks is the centre of expertise that supports national standards in English and French for describing, measuring and recognizing second language proficiency of adult immigrants and prospective immigrants for living and working in Canada. More information can be found at [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca).

\(^2\)LESLLA is a term used to describe adults with emerging first-language print literacy and emerging second language proficiency. It is coined from the international professional organization LESLLA, more information can be found at [www.leslla.org](http://www.leslla.org).
students’ needs holistically and analytically by proposing a comprehensive literacy framework for literacy and developing a sample curriculum to guide classroom teaching.

Perhaps the answer to my capstone question and the developed tools can be useful resources for adult ESL literacy teachers across Canada to support their learners’ literacy journey and “enable [them] to perform work functions and carry out other life tasks” (CCLB, 2015a, pp. 2-3). Since second language learning is an integral part of the resettlement process, I hope that my project contributes to adult ESL literacy teachers’ informed classroom practices and in turn, enhances their students’ learning and retention of literacy skills.

**Summary**

Adult ESL literacy teachers may find themselves overwhelmed by the demands of an ESL literacy class that requires addressing students’ unique characteristics and instructional needs. This capstone project aims at identifying the essential dimensions of a literacy framework to guide adult ESL literacy teachers while instructing their students and developing intervention plans if/when needed, thus aiming for a more inclusive instructional environment. The project also provides a sample curriculum to illustrate the use of the framework in instructional plans.

The following chapters delve into the components of the proposed literacy framework in terms of reading and writing and the idea of adapting instruction to suit emergent and developing readers’ distinctive needs. Chapter Two provides a literature review of research on Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs), Essential Skills (ESs), adult ESL literacy learners’ motivation, trauma and age as factors affecting their learning and recommended instructional strategies, a detailed discussion of a proposed literacy framework for adult ESL literacy teachers, and introduces Response to Intervention (RtI) approach and evidence-based reading interventions for
emergent readers. Chapter Three describes the curriculum project in terms of the intended setting for implementation, the audience to be engaged and proposed tools for project evaluation.

Chapter Four provides conclusions and reflections on the project, discusses limitations, offers suggestions for future research, and proposes considerations for ALL/LESLLA curriculum planning, instructional methods as well as intervention tools.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The one continuing purpose of education, since ancient times, has been to bring people to as full a realization as possible of what it is to be a human being. Other statements of educational purpose have also been widely accepted: to develop the intellect, to serve social needs, to contribute to the economy, to create an effective workforce, to prepare students for a job or career, to promote a particular social or political system. These purposes offered are undesirably limited in scope, and in some instances, they conflict with the broad purpose I have indicated; they imply a distorted human existence. The broader humanistic purpose includes all of them, and goes beyond them, for it seeks to encompass all the dimensions of human experience (p. 279).


The varying perspectives of education’s objective have been in flux. With the recent emphasis on utilizing education to create a self-sufficient and financially independent workforce, literacy skills for both children and adults alike have been brought to the fore. While literacy has been the cornerstone of K-12 educational systems and curriculum guidelines, it took longer to develop to its full potential in adult learning. To illustrate, The Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, a branch of the Canadian Federal Government, developed *Essential Skills* (2009) which are skills that people need for learning, work, and life. Therefore, it is not surprising that such a list of skills focuses on reading and writing for employment purposes. That is why it is indispensable for adult literacy teachers, let alone ESL literacy teachers, to understand what is entailed in teaching adult ESL literacy learners in terms of teaching approaches and instructional materials as well as developing intervention plans based on learners’ needs, thus supporting all learners become successful English readers.

In this chapter, the literature on adult ESL literacy teaching and learning approaches and strategies is discussed to provide context and grounding for my research question, *how might*
adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners? This chapter starts by delving into the main and specific Essential Skills and subskills. Second, the importance of reading for Adult Literacy Learners/Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (ALL/LESLLA) is given a closer look because of their unique characteristics and contextual surroundings. Third, a detailed discussion of a proposed literacy framework for ALL/LESLLA teachers to use for planning and implementing their instruction. Fourth, introducing Response to Intervention (RtI) and evidence-based reading interventions for Tier 2 and 3 ALL/LESLLA learners. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary and a brief explanation of Chapter Three components.

**Essential Skills (ESs)**

What do adult English learners need to know? What is prioritized in the ESL programs? The Government of Canada, along with other national and international agencies, has identified and defined key literacy and Essential Skills (hereafter referred to as ESs) through extensive research. These skills are used in nearly every job and throughout daily life in different ways and at varying levels of complexity. There are nine categories of skills: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking, computer use, and working with others. These skills are significant for people to survive in life and work environments and that is especially true for ALL/LESLLA learners. For example, according to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2001, 2009 & 2015), reading is identified

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as "Understanding materials are written in sentences or paragraphs (e.g. letters, manuals)" (p.3)
and typical applications are: scan for information or overall meaning, read to understand, learn,
critique or evaluate, analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources or complex and
lengthy texts. These applications reflect higher levels of reading comprehension that take
extensive time and effort to develop, especially in light of ESs. Since ESL language levels are
assessed using Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) (CCLB, 2012) which offers twelve
language levels across three stages: Basic levels: CLB 1-4, Intermediate: CLB 5-8 and
Advanced: CLB 9-12, a Comparative Framework (CCLB, 2015a) was developed to relate CLBs
to ESs, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 1

Overview of the Comparative Framework (CCLB, 2015a, p. 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canadian Language Benchmarks</th>
<th>Essential Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Reading Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and Writing</td>
<td>Document Use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 offers a general alignment of the CLBs, which focus on the four language skills:
listening, speaking, reading, and writing, to four of the ESs. It is worth noting that ESs progress
across five levels of proficiency. When relating ESs five levels to CLBs 12 levels, the first level
of ESs begins at CLB5 in oral communication, at CLB 4 in writing, and at CLB 3 in reading and
document use (see Appendix A for details about level correspondence). When planning
instruction towards a CLB level profile of ability while teaching ALL/LESLLA learners, teachers are reminded of the immense impact that limited L1 literacy can have on the learning process. Ontario Literacy Coalition (2007) clarified that:

ESL literacy is different from adult literacy wherein learners already speak a language and are just learning its written form. ESL literacy is different from ESL learning in that adults with literate experience can transfer some of their prior knowledge (both from schooling experience and written language use) of reading and writing to the new language. The ESL literacy learner faces the daunting task of acquiring the oral second language (L2) and written L2 language, while functioning in the new L2 – a seemingly superhuman task. (p. 10)

As stated above, learning to read in a new language, when one has limited exposure to print literacy in any language, is a formidable undertaking. However, such a challenging task might be attainable when ALL/LESLLA teachers develop an in-depth understanding of their learners’ unique characteristics. The next sections describe the context of English teaching and learning.

**Adult ESL Literacy Learners**

Adult ESL literacy learners have been categorized into three similar but distinct types in terms of L1 learning/acquisition, according to *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b): (1) Pre-Literate Learners come from oral cultures where the spoken languages do not have current written forms or where the print is not regularly encountered in daily life. They may not understand that print conveys meaning or realize how important reading and writing are in society; (2) Non-Literate Learners do not read or write in any language, even though they live in literate societies; (3) Literate Learners have some basic reading and writing skills, but are not yet functionally literate.
As Bigelow and Tarone (2004) discussed ESL learners’ literacy levels and suggested a correlation between L1 literacy level and achieving L2 competency, researchers such as Bernhardt (2011) indicated that there are three contributing factors to L2 learners’ performance: 20% L1 literacy, 30% L2 language knowledge, and 50% universal variance. This implies that adult non-literate L1 learners embark on their journey learning L2 already deprived of the 20% devoted to L1 literacy training. In addition, while 30% of ESL learners’ performance is based on their developing knowledge of L2, 50% falls under unexplained variance; e.g., motivation, trauma, and age. Johnson (2018) advised that ESL literacy teachers have control only on L2 language knowledge training by selecting evidence-based literacy methodologies and scaffolding level-appropriate teaching materials. As for the other two variables, Johnson explained that understanding the impact of L1 literacy training destitution and significant learner characteristics can raise teachers’ awareness of their learners’ unique attributes and help inform teachers’ educational decisions and classroom practices. A few of these characteristics, motivation, trauma, and age, will be addressed in the following section.

Motivation and Trauma

Although the construct of motivation has remained a puzzling psychological concept for many years; e.g., L2 Self-Motivational System (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), the construct of investment, introduced by Norton-Peirce (1995), can be seen as a sociological complement to the psychological construct of motivation. Norton-Peirce’s investment theory indicates that a learner’s motivation is tied to their belief that language acquisition will increase their social value, hence enabling them to assert their own identities (1995). More recently, Dörnyei (2020) questioned how to meaningfully enhance motivation in the L2 classroom without resorting to “carrots and sticks” metaphor (p. 53) or stressing the satisfaction of the task as opposed to the
value of the reward. In an attempt to address Dörnyei’s question, Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) explained that learners’ engagement consists of active participation and involvement in the learning activities provided that the activities are related to students’ sense of purpose and their ability to perform the activities with a level of autonomy and mastery. Yet, in the case of immigrant countries like Canada and the US, many ALL/LESLLA learners have been driven out of their countries by wars which led to traumatic experiences that can greatly impact the learning process. In fact, immigration itself is highly disruptive, stressful, and sometimes traumatic as well. Finn (2010) explained that trauma is a barrier to learning because ALL/LESLLA learners are often distracted, suffer from a lower level of concentration, and possibly memory loss. When teachers are aware of the effects of trauma on students’ school behaviors, such as absenteeism, tardiness, and lack of focus, teachers can begin to incorporate trauma-informed strategies; e.g., space out the instruction, repeat the information, and spiral instruction to accommodate their students’ needs (Wilbur, 2016).

Age

In addition to L1 literacy level, motivation/investment, traumatic experiences, the element of age is considered a very important factor for ALL/LESLLA classroom experiences. The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) retains an important hypothesis known as the critical period hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967) which holds that there is an optimal period for language acquisition, ending at puberty. While Young-Scholten and Strom (2006) questioned the validity of the hypothesis when it comes to ALL/LESLLA learners and suggested that the slow linguistic progress of those learners is more likely due to limited exposure to English, Kurvers, Stockmann, & van de Craats (2010) indicated that ALL/LESLLA learners take an average of 1000-2000 instructional hours to reach a basic level of literacy and Boon (2014) asserted that
low literacy learners find learning an L2 to be much harder in comparison to their younger counterparts because “the older the learners, the slower the acquisition process on average” (p. 301).

To summarize, ALL/LESLLA learners have distinctive characteristics that qualify them to be an exclusive group of learners. While they share the target of becoming literate as beginning grades of K-12 students’, ALL/LESLLA learners have gained life learning experiences and faced challenges as immigrant adults’ who are motivated to upgrade their literacy levels to build their lives in the new land. In fact, ALL/LESLLA learners’ level of motivation, traumatic experiences, and age can impact their learning experiences, thus making literacy a difficult and sometimes an unachievable task. To help bridge the gap between ALL/LESLLA learners and their most sought after objective of becoming literate in English, developing a literacy framework might be a step in the right direction to help them become functioning and productive members of their communities. Since this project questions how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners? the next section discusses the proposed literacy framework in detail.

**Literacy Framework**

The proposed framework is explained in terms of reading and writing, second language learning theory, instructional approaches, materials, evidence-based reading assessment tools and intervention plans.
Reading and Writing

Literacy is defined as the ability to read (construct meaning from the text) and write (create a meaningful text). Reading and writing are processes, consisting of specific sub-processes or components operating within individuals. These processes are expressed through literacy practices in specific contexts among individuals (Kruidenier et al., 2002, p. 113).

Focusing on reading comprehension, Wren (2000) developed a framework that emphasizes the cognitive foundations of learning to read. These are language comprehension: background knowledge and linguistic knowledge (i.e., phonology, syntax, and semantics) and decoding skills that range from concepts about print to lexical and cipher knowledge. Although Wren’s (2000) framework introduced the main core of literacy instruction, it did not account for its use for ELLs nor adult ESL learners who have developed limited literacy skills in their L1s and are mostly dependent on their oral language to survive. Lems et al. (2010) found that “the simple view of reading implicitly accepts the idea that oracy is the foundation for literacy. It also helps explain why ELLs need to have listening vocabulary in place before they can comprehend text” (p. 52). Furthermore, Vinogradov and Bigelow (2010) recommended that adult ESL literacy teachers should use their students’ strengths as resources in the classroom. For example, teachers can develop “instructional activities that draw on their oral skills can help learners improve their English literacy Skills” (Vinogradov & Bigelow, 2010, p. 2). This association between oral and literacy skills led researchers to conclude that it is an interdependent relationship, thus making the use of oral skills the starting point in adult ESL literacy classrooms.

Like reading, writing is a complicated process, according to the relatively few research studies on writing for ALL/LESLLA learners (Condelli & Wrigley, 2004; Tranza & Sunderland, 2009). Since writing progresses slower in comparison to reading, focusing on general approaches
that have been relatively successful is recommended. Those researchers recommended writing instruction that: (1) focuses on mechanics such as handwriting and spelling; (2) is taught from the beginning and provides structure, sequence, and repetition; (3) is taught step-by-step at the learner’s level of need; (4) is recycled and spiraled; (5) includes tasks that consider the socio-cultural and contextual needs of the learner; and (6) includes learners using real-world writing tasks outside the classroom (Condelli & Wrigley, 2004; Tranza & Sunderland, 2009). As illustrated, oral communication skills are a precursor for teaching reading and writing skills. Although there are few approaches and recommendations for adult ESL literacy reading and writing skills to slowly and gradually develop, they do focus on learners’ socio-cultural and contextual needs and shed some light on the connection between reading and writing.

According to Shim (2004), arguments for the shared process of reading and writing have gained attention from connectionists who presented models to show how reading and writing are intertwined in terms of cognition. Moffat (1968, as cited in Reid, 1993), Tierney and Pearson (1983), and Kucer (1985) argued for the shared processes of meaning-making by both readers and writers illustrated by double-edged arrows connecting the text, the reader and the writer. Additionally, they claimed that connecting reading and writing is critical to improving literacy skills because (1) reading and writing are reciprocally connected, and (2) reading helps learners become better writers (Moffat, 1968, Tierney & Pearson, 1983, and Kucer, 1985). Every time a learner writes a word, the kinesthetic practice reinforces the connection between sounds and symbols, spelling patterns, and the making of meaning through text, thus aiding memory building skills (P. Egan, personal communication, May 15, 2020). This interrelated and interactive relationship is reflected in a reading class when readers are asked to copy the words...
or summarize a text and in a writing class, learners could be asked to re-read the text to find information or read another text to be able to write about the topic.

So the illustrated reciprocal connection between oral, reading, and writing skills are necessary for teachers to utilize when teaching adult ESL learners and focusing on their socio-cultural and contextual needs. But which learning theory(ies) is/ are most suitable?

**Second Language Learning**

In recent decades, the scholarship around learning theory has shifted from emphasizing psychological paradigms to more emphasis on social learning, such as Socio-Cultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky’s exceptional work seems to have positive implications in adult ESL literacy classrooms (1978). His framework is based on the idea that successful learning and development are embedded within social events and occur as learners interact with other people, objects, and events in the collaborative environment. Moll (1990) and Rogoff (1990) (as cited in Smagorinsky, 2018) explained learning and instruction principles using Vygotsky’s principles. For example, (a) adult modeling and coaching processes, or how to learn something replaces teacher-directed instruction; (b) scaffolding the learning environment, or setting up instructional situations that allow learners to succeed as they advance toward higher levels of understanding; and (c) working within the student’s zone of proximal development (ZPD), which means providing instruction that spans the region in which a learner can advance both with and without help (i.e., gradual release of responsibility). Furthermore, Smagorinsky (2018) offered a different interpretation of ZPD to mean “provid[ing] acculturation to communication practices that teach a form of competency that bypasses conventional means” (p. 256). Therefore, the success of special needs children in one of Vygotsky’s studies (i.e. Vygotsky’s Project) is considered to be a long and complex task that “could maximize their
human capabilities such that they would be able to participate in cultural activities and thus live satisfying lives, affirmed by others as valued and important in building a society over time” (Smagorinsky, 2018, p. 256).

There seems to be a common thread in the discussion of Vygotsky’s approach to learning and adult ESL learners and that is the need for learning to take place during social and cultural activities within a supportive environment. Smagorinsky’s interpretation of ZPD to be “acculturation of communication practices” (2018, p. 256) is in agreement with Vinogradov and Bigelow’s (2010) recommendation for adult ESL literacy teachers to utilize their learners’ experiences and strengths in the classroom. But how can teachers employ students’ practices and make use of their cultural capital in the classroom?

**Instructional Approaches and Methods**

Several literacy instructional approaches have been suggested that lead to success for ALL/LESLLA learners gaining much-needed language and literacy skills. The Language Experience Approach (LEA) is an approach to teaching ESL literacy that uses the language of the learners as a source text for further literacy activities. According to Croydan (2005), LEA involves transcribing what learners say and using that text as the basis for literacy skills development. LEA works on the principle that the learner can learn to read what s/he just said. As an approach, “a principled basis upon which the teacher can choose particular designs and techniques for teaching a foreign language in a particular context” (Brown, 2000, p. 14), LEA does not include quick recipes but encourages an eclectic perspective of L2 methods.

One of the instructional methods that have been recommended for ALL/LESLLA learners is Whole-Part-Whole (WPW) since it combines phonics instruction and topic-based lessons. Vinogradov (2010) explained that practitioners of WPW begin by choosing an
interesting and relevant topic to students’ lives and eliciting words, phrases, and stories from their learners. Once engaged with the topic, learners would examine the keywords and practice alphabetics. Then they continue using those words and phrases in the original context to resume reading and oral language practice. This way, WPW provides a balance between top-down and bottom-up strategies within the cycle of learning, which is to say combining whole-language and phonics to give learners a range of strategies for reading and making meaning. *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b) lists a “cycle of learning” (p. 14) to start with introducing culturally familiar topics, developing oral language, using authentic materials, develop learning strategies, focus on meaning and form, scaffolding (i.e., breaking down the learning concepts/tasks in simpler details) and allowing time to practice (CCLB, 2015b). In an attempt to highlight the slow progression from one literacy level to the next, a progression indicator chart (Appendix B) was developed to illustrate the limited horizontal development from Foundation-L to CLB 4L explained in detail in *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b).

**Materials**

Authentic materials have been recommended for ESL literacy learners (Vinogradov, 2004) so they would resemble what learners encounter in their lives, thus helping to make learning relevant. When learners can see the connection between what they are learning in class in real life, they will be motivated to learn to use it; even when it is new to them, such as reading a set of instructions or filling out an application form. Nonetheless, there are many challenges to using authentic materials because it is hard to find materials that are suitable in terms of language level, literacy level, and learning needs. To bridge the gap from students’ current reading and language proficiency to the ability to manage authentic materials, some educators prioritize developing their own materials to guarantee success in the classroom while being aware that
preliterate learners’ understanding that a printed picture means something might be a “new concept” because connecting the picture of an orange to the real fruit might be beyond the learner’s mental imagery, especially if it is drawings and illustrations that might “elude” them (Marrapodi, 2013, p. 10). Furthermore, Doak et al. (1996 as cited in Marrapodi, 2013) indicate that visual literacy is underdeveloped in preliterate learners and recommend four steps in understanding a visual: (1) deciding to look or read; (2) finding the message; (3) locating and integrating relevant details; then (4) interpreting the information. Consequently, ALL/LESLLA teachers must ensure choosing recognizable and familiar pictures to enhance their visual literacy to aid the learning process.

The discussion thus far has been revolving around answering the capstone question: how might adapting a literacy framework and employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners? As mentioned earlier in this literature review, Wren’s (2000) cognitive foundations for learning to read framework, which targets K-12 learners, has introduced the building blocks for the components of reading, nonetheless, it did not refer to the importance of oracy, the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing, the unique characteristics of adult learners, balanced literacy instructional approaches, visual literacy or socio-cultural and relevant materials. Perhaps modifying Wren’s (2000) cognitive framework to include the above-mentioned adult ESL literacy aspects would make it more suitable for teaching adult ESL literacy learners (see Appendix C for details). In addition, those aspects seem to underscore what Vinogradov and Liden (2009) identify as LESLLA teachers’ knowledge base which is “a place to start thinking about what LESLLA teachers know and what areas of knowledge inform their practice” (p. 11). Those ten areas of knowledge include: the refugees experience, types of literacy level learners, literacy in childhood
vs. adulthood, emergent readers, second language acquisition, key research, components of reading, balanced literacy, approaches to teaching literacy, and connections L1/L2 literacies. In fact, Vinogradov and Liden’s (2009) research established the blueprint for ALL/LESLLA teachers’ knowledge base and opened the door for further research questions and new suggestions to solidify such a base. For example, Marrapodi (2013) brought forward two important questions that experienced ALL/LESLLA teachers grapple with. She questioned some of the well-established reading instruction methods, such as phonics, sight word approach, and the whole language approach as well as their effectiveness while working with “the lowest level literacy learners”; i.e. emergent readers. While the researcher opted for “cognitive task analysis”, a method of examining the discrete skills involved in an activity (Marrapodi, 2013, p. 17), concerns about the cognitive load and traumatic experiences that hinder ALL/LESLLA students’ learning require answers that might not be available in adult learning literature yet.

As illustrated, ALL/LESLLA teachers are presented with a group of learners that resemble no other (Vinogradov & Liden, 2009). They are emergent readers who are learning to read in a new language for the first time. Although a process that resembles that of children, “Adults have more experience and background knowledge about the world and have proficiencies that enable them to function in a society even though their literacy skills may be limited” (Durgunoglu & Oney, 2002, p. 247). Hence, ALL/LESLLA teachers are urged to “pull together knowledge from many areas to do this work well. The LESLLA teacher wears many hats; she is a teacher, a resettlement worker, an adult learning expert, and a language instructor. These four areas of expertise all interact with her critical role as a reading specialist, as early reading instruction is at the core of LESLLA education” (Vinogradov & Liden, 2009, p. 21). Since teacher education programs more often than not prepare instructors-in-training to teach
elementary and secondary school students as opposed to adult ones, exploring reading and writing challenges and possible solutions can be drawn from K-12 research studies, especially when Vinogradov (2013) found that adult literacy teachers crossing contexts into K-12 literacy classrooms can be a successful and enlightening experience. Yet, which proved successful learning interventions or approaches can contribute to answering this project’s question; how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?

Response to Intervention (RtI)

How are emergent young readers similar to adult emergent readers? How might teachers of adult learners benefit from the robust research that has been done with children? Vinogradov (2013) successfully illustrated the similarities between Kindergarten-Grade 2 teachers and LESLLA teachers when it comes to early literacy instruction. Curiosity about these connections among LESLLA educators has opened the door to consulting and possibly borrowing educational theories/approaches that have been proven effective when teaching children to help support ALL/LESLLA learners and teachers. For example, Response to Intervention (RtI) is an educational approach that focuses on providing quality instruction and intervention and using student learning in response to that instruction to make instructional and important educational decisions (Batsche et al., 2005). The researchers explained that RtI is used by educators to help students who are struggling with a skill or lesson; every teacher will use interventions (a set of teaching assessments and procedures) with any student to help them succeed in the classroom—it is not just for students with special needs or a learning disability. Hence, the premise for RtI is that when universal supports are provided consistently for all students, the majority of students will thrive and the underlying goal is to prevent academic struggles and challenging behaviors so
that all students are successful. Batsche et al. (2005) indicated that an effective RtI model should begin with quality core instruction that adequately addresses learners’ needs. If more than 20-25% of the students require additional support than what is provided in Tier 1, most schools/teachers, if/when they have funding, develop tutorial support in the form of small groups (Tier 2) to address the needs of those students. This would entail that interventions should be developed using quality balanced instruction in addition to supplemental support. Tier 3 is a one-on-one support level where the teacher develops Individualized Assessment Plans (IAP) for the special needs emergent learner based on strategy interventions and progress monitoring (Batsche et al., 2005).

A closer look at ALL/LESLLA students in the Canadian context would show that Canada has been welcoming immigrants and refugees for decades and established free language instruction programs for newcomers (LINC) in 1992 for resettlement purposes where instruction revolves around the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) (CCLB, 2000, 2012). As indicated in the first chapter, LINC programs have been split into two streams during the last ten years: CLB and Literacy streams to accommodate the different educational levels among waves of immigrants. While the former is for learners who have 9+ years of education in their L1s, the latter is for immigrants with 0-9 years of education. This entails that ALL/LESLLA learners would be enrolled in ESL literacy–specific LINC programs where teachers receive training in *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b) and literacy instruction to prepare them to address ALLs’ needs. A fact that brings RtI to the table of discussion because ALL/LESLLA learners require interventions to support their literacy learning journey (Marrapodi, 2013). This implies that the CLB stream students would form Tier 1 of instruction and the literacy stream ones constitute Tier 2 students for whom instructional methods and materials, such as Whole-Part-Whole, the
use of authentic materials, and culturally responsive teaching are recommended. Still, ALL/LESLLA teachers, such as the writer of this project, encounter students who do not progress despite the focused instruction in a small group setting. Learners mainly depend on guessing and memorization of information to save face, pass the test, and move up levels, but they are not actually learning (J. Reimer, personal communication, February 17, 2020). To avoid having learners using compensatory skills (Warner, 2001) to get by, Tier 3 intervention plans may provide promising results that can add to the intervention part in this project’s question; how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?

Evidence-Based Interventions for Tier 3 Readers

According to Wixon and Lipson (1991), there are a few models for reading (dis)abilities. While the first two models are “atheoretical” (p. 546) and outdated, the last two are current and have been theorized based on experimental research. The models are (1) the medical perspective that looked at reading difficulties from a neurological perspective; (2) the psychoeducational view that considered reading difficulties to be deficits; (3) the information-processing/cognitive perspective that views reading to be a series of a cognitive process; and (4) the social perspective that considers reading to be a social phenomenon. Both the cognitive and social perspectives (Wixon & Lipson, 1991) will be addressed while discussing Tier 3 learners.

The RtI model, according to Rinaldi and Samson (2008), “integrates a multiter preventive instructional system and specifies the systematic use of a data-driven decision process to enhance outcomes” (pp. 6-7). This highlights the importance of administering diagnostic steps and assessment tools to identify students’ needs. The first diagnostic tool is determining the level of first language literacy, or lack thereof, which can be fulfilled by administering Native
Language Literacy Assessment (NLLA) (King & Bigelow, 2016). This step helps teachers understand and better plan for an extended time of repetition and practice because formal schooling and alphabetic literacy acquisition do not just transmit culture, but also form "a mechanism that changes the physical makeup of the human brain and the way the brain processes oral language" (Bigelow & Vinogradov, 2011, p. 127). This perhaps can explain the slow development of literacy skills among ALL/LESLLA learners and the importance of considering both cognitive and social perspectives of reading, as illustrated in the following table:
Table 2

*Perspectives to Reading, Reading Components, and Proposed Assessment Tools:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Perspective to Reading</th>
<th>Components of Reading</th>
<th>Assessment Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 1: Automatic Word Recognition</strong></td>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>-Beginning Alphabetics Tests and Tools (BATT) (Frank &amp; Perry, 2015);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness</td>
<td>Perry, 2015;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Informal Phonics Inventory /Survey (McKenna &amp; Stahl, 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 2: Oral Language Comprehension</strong></td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>-Stellar Diagnostic Reading Assessment Ideas (ATLAS, 2016);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Word Identification Lists (McKenna &amp; Stahl, 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>- Quick and Easy Adult Reading Assessments: Form A (Rasinski &amp; Padak, 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathway 3: Strategic Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI-6):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Reading (McKenna &amp; Stahl, 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Perspective to Reading</strong></td>
<td>Reading Attitude</td>
<td>Reading Attitude Survey; Interest Inventories (McKenna &amp; Stahl, 2015).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table illustrates several assessment tools; few were developed for adult learners and some are borrowed from K-12 reading assessment literature. Johnson & Frank (2013) report on Student Achievement in Reading Program (STAR), an Adult Basic Education (ABE) program in Minnesota for teachers of intermediate-level readers. The researchers indicate that the effectiveness of evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI) practiced by trained teachers was evident in students’ performance on standardized reading assessment tools. They also explained that the limitedness of research in reading and adult learners’ studies was addressed by Kruidenier, MacArthur and Wrigley (2010) (as cited in Johnson & Frank, 2013) who filled the gap with research findings from K-12 reading, K-12 second language, and K-12 reading-writing. More recently, ABE Teaching and Learning Advancement System (ATLAS) in Minnesota has posted EBRI tools and materials developed specifically for adult ESL literacy learners.

**The Cognitive Model.** The cognitive model to reading comprehension (McKenna & Stahl, 2015, p. 8) highlighted 3 pathways: (1) automatic word recognition, (2) oral language comprehension, and (3) strategic knowledge. In relation to reading components, the *first* pathway (i.e., automatic word recognition) includes phonics and phonemic awareness assessment tools, such as Beginning Alphabets Tests and Tools (BATT) (Frank & Perry, 2015). BATT includes instructional and assessment tools for both vowels’ and consonants’ identification, naming, and writing. As phonics and phonemic awareness constitute the first step in developing reading skills, few ALL/LESLLA researchers have looked into unconventional instructional methods to support emergent readers, especially when auditory processing might be a challenge. Vinogradov (2010) found that LESLLA teachers can benefit from using a multisensory, systematic, and direct approach to reading similar to those used with dyslexia children. Similar recommendations

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5 [https://atlasabe.org/resources/reading/](https://atlasabe.org/resources/reading/)
have been made by Johnson (2018) who used Orton-Gillingham multisensory strategies and materials to teach letter names, grapheme-phoneme correspondence, encoding, decoding, and sight words to a small group of LESLLA learners for six weeks. Johnson found that modifications to strategies and materials that were developed for native English speaking children were required to meet LESLLA students’ needs.

The second pathway (i.e., oral language comprehension) includes reading components of vocabulary and fluency. There are a few assessment tools available: (1) Stellar Diagnostic Reading Assessment Ideas (ATLAS, 2016) which provides word reading test levels A-D to cover GE (1-8); and (2) Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI-6) Word Identification Lists (McKenna & Stahl, 2015). The word identification section consists of word lists, with 20 words in each word list except for the pre-primer 1 which contains only 17 words. The word lists begin with a pre-primer readability level and end with a junior high readability level. When the teacher determines the learner’s independent, instructional, and frustration levels, further assessments might be necessary. Hence, when ALL/LESLLA learners are not performing at the standard indicated by ESL for ALL (CCLB, 2015b), perhaps going back to the basics is required. To illustrate, if CLB 2L learners (working at phrase level) show difficulty with consonant blends, vowel digraphs, vowel diphthongs, and silent /e/ words, administering Informal Phonics Inventory Survey (McKenna & Stahl, 2015) which is a criterion-referenced measure to assess the student’s knowledge of letters and sounds in isolation and in words, is recommended. Kurvers et al. (2006) explained that “illiterate adults, like young children, perform poorly in segmenting words into phonemes. In all studies, illiterates differed significantly from readers in every phoneme manipulation task, such as phoneme segmentation, and phoneme deletion or addition”

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In this case, Marrapodi (2013) explained that the use of phonics, minimal pair activities, visual literacy alone may not be enough because there are 26 graphemes and at least 44 phonemes in English. Alternatively, McCormick (1994) recommended sufficient recognition of internal and external factors is needed for non-readers to become readers. The researcher worked alongside a group of tutors with a monolingual Grade 4 student, Peter, for three and half years to achieve basic literacy acquisition through the use of decoding skills practices in ME/MC (multiple exposure/multiple contexts) in the form of routine to read texts that revolve around the student's interests and appropriate to his stage of word learning, providing reinforcement, multiple response opportunities, and review. McCormick (1994) stressed that repetition and spiral use of words as keys for achieving literacy, "If an incorrect response was made on a word during the chapter reading, the word was included in the next day's targeted set. In addition, after activities were used in a session, they were sent home for additional practice" (p. 167).

The third pathway to reading comprehension is strategic knowledge. The first step in identifying students’ strategy use or lack thereof is to assess their oral reading, which can be done by administering the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI-6): Oral Reading (McKenna & Stahl, 2015). The oral reading section of QRI consists of both narrative and expository passages ranging in readability levels from pre-primer, primer, and first-grade passages through the junior high level. Scores are derived from the number of total miscues as well as the student's ability to answer comprehension questions. Some comprehension questions have answers that can be found directly in the text, and some have answers that require the student to infer information from the text. If the premier 1 level of narrative passages proves challenging (i.e. frustration level due to a high number of miscues), a deeper analysis of oral reading might shed some light on students' strengths and areas of improvement. That can be achieved by administering Running
Records (Clay, 1993) which are designed to capture what learners know and understand about the reading process. As they capture learners’ thinking, Running Records provide an opportunity to analyze what happened (i.e. identifying whether the learner uses meaning, structural or visual cues) and plan appropriate instruction.

If/when students’ oral reading is assessed at grade level, strategic knowledge of reading can be assessed in terms of (1) knowledge of strategies of reading that can be achieved by training in clarifying, comparing and contrasting, summarizing and visualizing; (2) specific purposes for reading that can be enhanced by asking questions that encourage a personal response to the text; (3) general purposes for reading that can be enhanced by asking students the right questions (Beers, 2003) to teach students to critically understand the text and make inferences from it.

To summarize, the cognitive perspective of reading is based on how automatic word recognition, oral language comprehension, and strategic knowledge are tightly woven to unlock comprehension of a text, as illustrated in the following figure:

**Figure 1**

*Strands of Early Literacy Development (Scarborough, 2002, p. 98)*
The figure illustrates twisting ropes which represent the underlying skills and elements that come together to form two braids that constitute the two indispensable components of reading comprehension with the understanding that if a student cannot accurately and automatically recognize words on the page, fluency will be affected and reading comprehension will deteriorate. The alternative is also true, if a student has little understanding of the meaning of the words, reading comprehension will suffer. Students who have success with reading comprehension are those who are skilled in both word recognition and language comprehension (Scarborough, 2002).

The Social Perspective. This perspective highlights the “evaluative” (Wixon & Lipson, 1991, p.556) nature of reading and literacy in a given community. That is the reason it is often recommended to gather information about a student's attitude towards herself as a reader, reading, school, and society because it will assist the teacher's holistic understanding of the students; understating her own abilities. Research suggests different tools to assess students’ attitudes towards reading (McKenna & Stahl, 2015, p.240), e.g., semi-structured interviews to accommodate the student's reading ability of questionnaires, interests' inventories, etc., and classroom observations. The interview questions can include: Do you like to read? Why/why not? Are you a good reader? Why do you think so? Developing a profile based on a student's ability and interest can provide a blueprint of an intervention plan. For example, Jaeger (2015) worked with a Grade 4 ELL student, Sam, who "struggled to understand even simple texts, despite his ability to decode effectively" (p. 285). The researcher triangulated data to know the student as a reader, student, and friend and built a program that was responsive to his needs. The program included goal setting, e.g., making a prediction about the text, and self-monitoring; i.e., identify when did the text click or clunk. Over time, Sam managed to: (1) build a bond with his tutor who
allowed him some control over the reading materials as well as the choice of activities; (2) develop a positive relationship with his peers; and 3) view himself as a "strategic and successful, rather than a struggling reader" (Jaeger, 2015, p. 304).

In conclusion, both cognitive and social perspectives to reading comprehension seem to complement a holistic and inclusive vision of the required cognitive skills and social connections that are constitutive for learning to occur (Vygotsky, 1978) and reading comprehension to develop, irrespective of the learner’s age group. As discussed in Chapter One, in order for students to acquire fundamental reading skills by the end of the 3rd Grade, ILA (2018) recommends that: (1) students need training in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading accuracy and fluency; (2) teachers/reading specialists/literacy coaches must familiarize themselves with state-of-the-art research, such as turning around the focus from skill training to the student her/himself to identify each student's reader identity, fluency and comprehension levels, hence developing reading plans to guide the teacher/reading specialist/literacy coach while supporting the student. These recommendations are endorsed while working with ALL/LESLLA learners because the documented similarities between the two age groups speak to “the universality of the human learning, that perhaps adult learning theory and how children learn are not so different after all” (Vinogradov, 2014, p. 163); humans want to understand the world, develop control over their lives, and become self-sufficient learners. As such, recommendations from adult learning literature and K-12 learning theories have been discussed to answer this project’s question; how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?
Summary

This chapter introduced the readers to the Essential Skills for life and employment purposes in Canada. SLA and learning theory were discussed as they pertain to ESL ALL/LESLLA learners’ unique characteristics to propose a framework for literacy instruction and proposed curriculum, in terms of recommended reading and writing skills/subskills, instructional approaches and materials. Finally, this chapter highlighted important research-driven and evidence-based intervention plans and instructional strategies for Tier 2 and Tier 3 learners under the RtI umbrella.

Next, Chapter Three describes the curriculum project. It: (1) revisits the research discussed in chapter two and discuss the projects’ audience and setting; (2) identifies goals for the project; (3) provides a detailed week by week overview of the curriculum; (4) discusses assessment tools of students’ learning; and (5) evaluates the overall effectiveness of the curriculum. Finally, Chapter Three concludes with a timeline of the project and an overview of Chapter Four.
CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

In this chapter, this capstone project is described in a few steps. First, the relevant research literature on adult ESL literacy is reviewed to guide the research question, how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners? and the curriculum setting as well as the intended audience are described. Second, the goals for the instructional strategies recommended for teaching Adult Literacy Learners/Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (ALL/LESLLA) learners are discussed, a detailed weekly overview of the curriculum is provided, and individualized instructional strategies for Tier 3 ALL/LESLLA possible scenarios to illustrate reading strategies based on meaning, structure and visual interventions are offered. Third, how the learning and the curriculum’s effectiveness can be measured is shared. Finally, the chapter concludes with a timeline for the project and an overview of Chapter Four.

Adult ESL Literacy Research

Throughout this project, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories that investigate how ALL/LESLLA students learn and the recommended strategies for their teachers to implement in their classes have been consulted to modify a literacy framework for adult ESL literacy instruction and intervention. Although ALL/LESLLA teachers’ cognition has been analyzed (Vinogradov & Liden, 2009) for teacher education purposes, developing a literacy
framework and curriculum for both instruction and intervention objectives is rather rare. This limited research, which in turn constitutes a need for an ESL literacy framework and a curriculum project, has emerged in a specific context to support a unique audience of teachers and learners.

**Curriculum Setting**

The curriculum project is intended for a Canadian Language Benchmark 3\(^8\) Literacy (CLB 3L) classroom in a metropolitan city in Western Canada. The educational organization has two schools and one learning center where classes are offered to establish a range from beginning to advanced level (i.e., Foundation-L to CLB 6) classes, including preparation for the Canadian citizenship exam. Also, the intended school offers three instructional shifts: morning, afternoon, and evening shifts. While the morning and afternoon shifts run classes for four and a half hours daily, the evening shift offers 3 hour-classes for three evenings per week. Furthermore, the organization follows an open enrollment policy which allows students to start school all year long. Classes run throughout the year except for 3-4 weeks of breaks during spring, summer, and winter sessions.

**Intended Audience**

Generally speaking, this curriculum project can be a reference for program administrators who may find it a helpful resource when incorporating the federally mandated *Essential Skills* (CCLB, 2015a) and *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b) standards of ESL teaching. Also, fellow ALL/LESLLA teachers may find this sample curriculum and its framework helpful in planning

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\(^8\) The learner can understand, speak and write simple sentences about familiar information related to personal experiences and everyday situations (CCLB, 2012).
their instruction around the five components of reading, a spiral use of vocabulary, and routine tasks to support their students.

More specifically, the intended audience served by this project is a CLB 3L group of learners who are expected to attend school for four and a half hours daily to develop their language skills at a sentence level for comprehension and production purposes. The class usually has a range of 12-18 enrolled students from different parts of the world. While the majority of the students are Somali and Arabic speakers, there are often a few Tigrigna, Swahili, and Nepali speakers as well. Currently, the class is evenly split between men and women with the majority in their 40s except for one who is 22 years old and another in her 70s. Unlike mainstream ESL learners, ALL/LESLLA learners have their distinct needs that prompt their teachers to ask, “Who are adolescents and adults who develop literacy for the first time in an L2, and why are they of research interest?” (Young-Scholten, 2015).

To develop an ESL literacy curriculum framed around a literacy framework, research that examined adult ESL literacy learners in terms of L1 proficiency level and similarity to the target language, motivation, and traumatic experiences, as well as age is highlighted in chapter one. The discussed SLA research studies indicate that ALL/LESLLA learners’ journey of learning the target language is much longer and more complex in comparison to their literate, motivated, and younger counterparts (Bigelow & Tarone, 2004). Such factors were taken into consideration when developing a curriculum project that revolves around the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension (Clay, 1993), and the connection between reading and writing (Lems, Miller, & Soro, 2010). Such challenges are met by planning for ample time for scaffolding and a slow pace when introducing activities, plugging
in wait time for processing information and a spiral use of vocabulary and structures used
(Kurvers et al., 2010; Vinogradov, 2004; Vinogradov, 2010).

The curriculum project was also informed by Essential Skills (Human Resources and Skills Development, 2001) as enabling skills because they facilitate an individual’s ability to perform work functions and to carry out life tasks. Hansen (2009) (as cited in Turner, 2017) indicated that "we should not forget that we are educating these learners for a life in parts of the world where illiteracy is, in fact, a social disability" (p. 103). She went on to recommend developing reading skills as soon as possible: "reading acquisition should [sic] be an educational objective regardless of whether the political agenda identifies L2 acquisition as a humanitarian educational project or a means of integration into the workforce or society in general" (Hansen, 2009 p. 103). That is one of the reasons why the curriculum project focused on developing the ability to read and comprehend nonfiction texts; e.g., a job ad with multiple job abbreviations and the other is job applications to identify availability and skills. Generally speaking, ALL/LESLLA learners find formatted texts; e.g., schedules and charts, challenging to interpret because it is not easy to focus on both columns and rows at the same time.

Goals for Curriculum and Instruction

There are three goals for this curriculum capstone project: (1) the five components of reading, namely; phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary routinely and progressively to develop fluency and comprehension have been addressed; (2) curriculum description is provided in the form of a unit sample that highlights the length of time of Whole-Part-Whole methodology (Vinogradov, & Liden, 2009) for Tier 2 learners; and (3) Tier 3 possible scenarios of fictional learners who require three different intervention plans: meaning, structure and visual are described.
Five Components of Reading

The first goal was to establish a daily routine of explicit instruction of phonemic awareness and phonics that is designed to review the basics before introducing new phonetic rules. The plan was to begin by introducing different types of phonics instruction since the National Reading Panel (NRP) (2000) has produced useful conclusions that systematic phonics has provided significant results in improving emergent and struggling readers’ reading skills: (1) analytic phonics instruction, students compare words to identify patterns and apply this knowledge to new words (e.g., ran/can); (2) analogy-based phonics, students examine word families to make analogies between segments of words (e.g., onset and rime, r-an/c-an/f-an/m-an/p-an); (3) embedded phonics, teaching phonics skills while reading instruction; (4) phonics through spelling, teaching students to spell words phonemically; and (5) synthetic phonics, students blend individual letter sounds together to form words (e.g., m-o-m/mom). That way, phonics instruction would be systematic and targeted to tackle newly introduced vocabulary in a curriculum that is stretched out over four weeks to allow enough time to present, practice, produce and recycle previously learned and newly acquired reading skills.

Wren (2000) explained that students with good phonemic awareness not only know how individual letters and combinations of letters represent the sounds of spoken English but also know how to blend sounds to form regularly spelled words and how to recognize irregularly spelled words by sight. Only then that students are on their way to becoming fluent readers. It is important to clarify that “reading fluency” is not “fast reading” but it is a “reasonably accurate reading, at an appropriate rate, with suitable expression, that leads to accurate and deep comprehension and motivation to read” (ILA, 2018, p.2). Reading fluency is based on accuracy (reasonably accurate that is not below 95%), rate (appropriate rate level is at 50th percentile) and
expression (a suitable expression that includes pitch, tone, volume, emphasis, rhythm in speech or oral reading and skillful reader's ability to chunk words together into appropriate phrases).

Possible ways to assess reading fluency are what Jones et al. (2010) called "Qualitative Fluency Assessment" (p.47) after 60 seconds of read-aloud or using Google's Fluent Reader App which records students reading of a text after it is analyzed in class. Jones et al. (2010) recommended that “non-fluent” and “struggling” readers “don’t offer insight the way a more elaborated description of a students’ oral reading might” (p. 46), thus making the use of running records more informative.

Curriculum Description

This curriculum revolves around developing materials and instructional lesson plans to target emergent readers’ needs at CLB 3L level. As students work at sentence-level in terms of language comprehension and production, adapting Wren’s (2000) cognitive framework for reading to ALL/LESLLA students’ literacy needs included students’ unique characteristics, visual literacy, and writing skills, thus developing a literacy framework for ALL/LESLLA learners (Appendix C) and a curriculum worth of four weeks of instruction, summarized in two tables listing pre-employment and on the job materials:
Table 3

*Employment-Focused Curriculum Overview of Week #1 and Week #2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #1</th>
<th>Essential Skills Targeted</th>
<th>Handouts</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #1: Read the story and decide T/F</td>
<td>Listening IV: Comprehending Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #2 Match the job with the photo</td>
<td>Speaking IV: Sharing Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #3 Read the job ad and copy the correct the answers</td>
<td>Reading III: Getting Things Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #4 Read and fill out a job application</td>
<td>Writing II: Reproducing Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #5 Read job ads online and copy the correct answers</td>
<td>Writing III: Getting Things Done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #2</th>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Interview Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #1: Read and practice the job interview</td>
<td>Listening &amp; Speaking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #2 Read and check Sofia’s availability</td>
<td>I: Interacting with Others,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handout #3 Job interview protocol questions</td>
<td>III: Getting Things Done,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IV: Comprehending/Sharing Information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading III: Getting Things Done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing III: Getting Things Done.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Employment-Focused Curriculum Overview of Week #3 and Week #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Skills Targeted</th>
<th>Handouts</th>
<th>Starting Work Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week #3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Handout #1: Read and answer questions about the story</td>
<td>Listening &amp; Speaking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Handout #2: Read and answer questions about a work schedule</td>
<td>I: Interacting with Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Handout #3: Conversations with co-workers</td>
<td>III: Getting Things Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Use</td>
<td>Handout #4: Conversations with a supervisor</td>
<td>Reading III:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting Things Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Use</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing II: Reproducing Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing III: Getting Things Done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week #4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Handout #1: Read and answer questions about the story</td>
<td>Listening &amp; Speaking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Handout #2: Read and answer questions about an inventory list</td>
<td>I: Interacting with Others,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Handout #3 &amp; 5: Read and answer questions about work memos</td>
<td>III: Getting Things Done,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Use</td>
<td>Handout #4 &amp; 6: Conversations at work</td>
<td>IV: Comprehending/Sharing Information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading III:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Use</td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting Things Done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing II: Reproducing Information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing III: Getting Things Done.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week One. The first week focuses on step one in the Whole-Part-Whole approach (Vinogradov, 2010) by introducing the first story of the employment-focused curriculum. *Veronica, a Caterer, Learns to Read*[^9] is a story about a young woman who wants to be a caterer but she cannot read or write. By focusing on oral communication and visual literacy, a collaborative discussion of possible solutions for Veronica can lead to elicited vocabulary to sound out and spell them on the board. After reading the full story in choral reading with the teacher, students practice reading in pairs/small groups until they are comfortable practicing in front of the whole class. The discussion of basic WH questions, *what, when, where, and who* allows the opportunity to review the skills of identifying both keywords in the questions and the text, which also demonstrates an understanding of meaning. When students learn that Veronica's hard work at English school paid off by being able to read recipes and becoming a caterer, students get the chance to talk about their dream jobs and discuss those job skills. Later in the week, students examine authentic job ads that match their dream jobs and discuss suitability and availability for work. The next activity is examining job applications and practice filling them out using their own information. The use of this real-life task not only contextualizes the information using authentic materials but also stir students’ curiosity about the nature of finding and applying for jobs in Canada.

Week Two. This is the week dedicated to job interview skills. The week begins with The Burger Queen[^10]story which illustrates how an interviewee avoids uncomfortable/illega l questions about age, gender, religion, etc. during a job interview. After listening to the conversation


between Mrs. Rudi and the manager of a burger place, students practice the interview in a role-play to pave the way to a discussion of the basic parts of job interviews’ protocol: tell me about yourself, your strengths, weakness, and availability. If time allows it, a question about future job plans can be added to the protocol. After allowing ample time for practicing all the steps in mock interviews, getting a semi-realistic experience can be helpful. For example, taking a field trip to a local business whose owner is willing to interview the students or inviting a fellow teacher to play interviewer while the students get the exposure of being interviewed by someone else other than the teacher herself.

**Week Three.** During week three, students get the chance to reuse some of the skills developed in the earlier weeks but in a new context. The week begins with Alyia, The Housekeeper, a story developed by the capstone writer to recycle previously learned skills in the first two weeks. After reading and retelling the story, students get to experience some of the job skills and tasks Alyia has to do. For example, they read Alyia’s work schedule and practice talking about it with co-workers and supervisors. During those conversations, students are reminded of the importance of smiling, body language, and intonation when interacting with others at the workplace. Teachers can make the time to practice a few segmental features; such as similar vowel pronunciation in *please, clean* and suprasegmental ones; like the stress placement and intonation in the worker’s part of the conversation. Further attempts can be made to address the */t/ t/as a past tense marker in *washed* and *finished* as opposed to */d/ started*, and the lack of one in *put* as students are expected to have grasped the concept of time and its different representation across regular and irregular verbs. Lastly, students can practice writing sentences about personal ability, specific jobs, and their associated skills. For example, “I can clean. I was a cleaner. I cleaned the offices”. It is possible that the writing activity could be challenging.
because students often confuse the difference between job skills (i.e., can clean), job title (i.e., cleaner), and job history (i.e., cleaned offices) in addition to sentence structure.

**Week Four.** This week introduces Hawa, The Cook, a story developed by the capstone writer to allow students to recycle the previously learned language skills in the first three weeks. After meeting Hawa and understanding her story by answering comprehension questions and retelling the story, students practice their skill of comprehending formatted texts such as Hawa’s kitchen inventory and their math skills by identifying the needed items/amounts. Also, students practice reading work memos and learn to ask for help from co-workers and supervisors. During week four, students have the opportunity to segment beginning and ending phonemes on their own while practicing spelling quizzes to check on their reading and spelling abilities. They also practice conversational turns that allow using the three levels of thinking and comprehension (Costa, 2001). Additionally, students can play a game, a good match, during which students work in groups to match fictional characters/applications with different jobs. This game allows the students to ask questions: “What is the job title?” “What are the applicant’s skills?” “Did s/he work before?” The ultimate goal is that they would be able to match the correct candidate with the right job and justify their choices as it is expected to happen in authentic real-life situations.

While Lewis (1993) called for the learning of vocabulary chunks to boost and speed up the learning process of ESL learners, a balance between focusing on vocabulary and sentence structure for ALL/LESLLA learners is essential, especially when they are working on comprehending input and producing output at sentence level. That is why it is beneficial to administer an assessment tool pre and post-implementation of the curriculum to identify areas of students’ improvement or lack thereof.
**Tier 3 Scenarios and Intervention Plans**

If/when some students are unable to cope with the pace of instruction or simply cannot read whether not fluently or cannot read at all, research has shown linguistic and psychological reasons could be at play. Clay (1993) recommended administering running records which is a formative literacy assessment technique that provides information to help improve students’ reading. Administering a running record involves the student and the teacher sitting side by side so that both can see the text. As the learner reads, the teacher marks each word, reporting the percentage of words correctly read, the self-correction ratio (the ratio of errors + self-corrections divided by the number of self-corrections), and the categories of errors made (meaning, structure or visual). Right after the student finishes reading the text, the student retells the story and answers questions about the meaning of the story. A running record is successfully completed when the student has correctly responded to the questions about meaning and has read at 90-94% accuracy. The level of the passage read and the types of errors made by the student are used to guide subsequent instruction that has been recommended to enhance early literacy achievement (Ross, 2004). The three possibilities are meaning, structure, and visual.

**Meaning (M).** If the learner makes errors with the meaning of words, it is recommended that the teachers direct the learner to mean; e.g., Does it make sense? and encourage the learner to think about the background of the story, information from pictures, or the meaning of a sentence. These cues assist in the reading of a word or phrase (Clay, 1993).

**Structure (S).** If the learner makes errors with the structure of sentences, the teacher can interject by encouraging the learner to consider the structure; e.g. Does it make sense? Knowledge of structure helps the reader know if what s/he reads sounds correct (Clay, 1993).
**Visual (V).** If/when the learner neglects visual information; e.g., the letter in a word and the word itself, it is recommended that the teacher directs attention to visual information. For example, *It makes sense but look at the first letter. It sounds right, but look at the end of the word* (Clay, 1993).

Alongside the cognitive support provided by discussing the meaning, structure, and visual clues in a running record, the psychological front can enhance motivation. Beers (2003) has wondered, *what can teachers do when their students cannot read?* and recommends *creating confidence* to respond to students who lack the motivation or self-efficacy. To that end, teachers are encouraged to create classrooms that motivate students to take risks, make sure students know each other's names, celebrate diversity in the classroom, and not tolerate put-downs if they are in class. It can be argued that every student has unique needs, especially when it comes to facing challenges with the five components of reading. Building skills in administering assessment tools, e.g., reading records, among others (see Appendix D for details) and developing subsequent instructional plans are two necessary steps for ALL/LESSLA teachers to take to be able to develop individualized road maps to support their learners.

**Evaluation of Curriculum**

Several steps can be taken to measure the overall effectiveness of this curriculum. First, comparing the results of pre-post curriculum assessments to check for improvement in students’ performance or lack thereof. Second, collaborating with CLB 3L teachers at the same school to implement and evaluate the curriculum by soliciting their feedback (Appendix E). The documentation of their observation data and field notes collected during the implementation process can contribute to modifying the curriculum for future use. Third, conducting a focus
group to include ESL teachers as well as essential skills and employment specialists to review the curriculum’s implementation data and elicit suggestions for improvement. It is expected that triangulating data, synthesizing results, and reflecting on the implementation process can provide a list of modifications to the curriculum.

**Timeline**

This capstone project has been developed over two courses/semesters. The first three chapters were written and revised in Spring 2020. During the second course, Summer 2020, the first three chapters were revised for the second time and chapter four as well as the curriculum were developed. When the project is completed, the literacy framework and employment-focused curriculum will be implemented in the Fall 2020 session. Feedback on the implementation process will be elicited and modifications will be used to update the curriculum in the Winter 2021 session. A summary of the process of curriculum development, implementation, and modification will be shared with ALL/LESLLA teachers at specialized conferences.

**Summary**

Throughout Chapter Three, the research literature relevant to this project has been reviewed; the context where the curriculum intended for implementation was described; the targeted audience for the project, and the goals for the instructional strategies for ALL/LESLLA learners were discussed. Then, a week by week overview of the curriculum and individualized instructional plans for Tier 3 ALL/LESLLA possible scenarios to illustrate reading strategies based on meaning, structure, and visual interventions were offered. Finally, the timeline for the
project was explained and a discussion of how the learning and the curriculum’s effectiveness could be measured was illustrated.

In the next chapter, Chapter Four, a reflection on the learned lessons throughout the capstone project is discussed through revisiting the literature review, discussing project findings, explaining the project's limitations, and making suggestions for future research to support ALL/LESLLA teachers and learners.
CHAPTER FOUR

Reflection

My capstone project delved into second language learning research literature to answer this question: *how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?* Chapter One included my personal journey leading to the chosen topic and described my professional context in terms of Adult ESL Literacy Learners (ALL/LESLLA) and their Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program in Western Canada. Chapter Two contained a detailed review of the literature on Essential Skills (ESs) in relation to the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs), the social and financial implications of reading and writing for ALL/LESLLA learners in light of their unique characteristics and contextual surroundings. I also synthesized my literature review and project design to make the case for (1) a proposed literacy framework for teachers to use for planning and implementing their instruction; and (2) the potential of Response to Intervention (RtI) approach and evidence-based reading interventions to support Tier 2 and 3 ALL/LESLLA learners. The project was described in Chapter Three and the plans for its implementation in my working context. Finally, in Chapter Four, I reflect on my own learning while developing the capstone project. I highlight information from my literature review that was particularly influential to the development of this project. Successes of this journey are explained in relation to Hamline’s School of Education conceptual framework and limitations of this research are also discussed. There is an overview of Chapter Four’s conclusion at the end.
Capstone Literature Review Highlights

This capstone project has been a learning experience. Although I was aware that I had to specify the main variables in the project and highlight the interconnectedness between them, I did not know how to address learners’ individualized needs. I had always assumed that going back to the early stages of childhood was an important step in understanding literacy development but I was not sure how to adapt skills that are meant for children to adults’ needs. That realization shifted my focus to understating each learner as an “entire person” (Vinogradov, 2001, p. 51) whose distinctive characteristics and abilities should be taken into consideration when developing materials and implementing instruction.

Although SLA research considers developmental sequences of learning in terms of first language transfer, learner characteristics; e.g., motivation and age, and various perspectives of language learning such as Krashen’s comprehensible input hypothesis (1982), it was pointed out that SLA studies have addressed literate ESL learners’ needs; a fact that seems to have created a void when working with pre-literate or semi-literate populations (Tarone, 2010). A few researchers have focused on L1 literacy level and its impact on the learning process. For example, Bigelow and Tarone (2004) emphasized that students’ literacy level impacts the amount of time and scaffolding needed to introduce them to reading passages that should contain familiar content to be introduced using a balanced instruction between bottom-up and top-down reading instruction (skills-based vs. meaning-based). In addition, learning to read for ALL/LESLLA takes an average of 1000-2000 instructional hours to reach a basic level of literacy because they are easily distracted by personal issues that impact their ability to retain learned information (Kurvers, Stockmann, & van de Craats, 2010). Collectively, those factors
emphasize the need to identify each student level, the (i), before embarking on adding a little extra (+1) using Krashen’s hypothesis (1982).

I also did not know how to support the low performing learners who were not meeting the outcome profile of ability. Finding research borrowed from K-12 literacy literature for special needs students was eye-opening. Vinogradov (2010) indicated that LESLLA teachers can benefit from using a multisensory, systematic, and direct approach to reading similar to those used with children with dyslexia. Johnson (2018) found that modifications to Orton-Gillingham multisensory strategies and materials that were developed for native English speaking children were indispensable to meet LESLLA students’ needs. This capstone project proposes adapting Wren’s (2000) cognitive model of reading to develop a literacy framework and a curriculum to enhance instruction of ALL/LESLLA learners and guide intervention when needed using Response to Intervention (RtI) approach.

**Project Successes and Benefits to the Profession**

This capstone project attempted to answer this question: *how might adapting a literacy framework and developing an employment-focused curriculum enhance the instruction and intervention for adult ESL literacy learners?* The question, the research conducted to answer it, and the tools developed as artifacts to illustrate its potential validity were inspired by Hamline’s School of Education Framework.
Hamline School of Education Conceptual Framework

Hamline School of Education Conceptual Framework is grounded in the school’s deep commitment to developing educators and leaders who Promote Equity in Schools and Society (PE), Build Communities of Teachers and Learners (BC), Construct Knowledge (CK), and Practice Thoughtful Inquiry and Reflection (PR). I believe that one of this project’s successes is that it was developed with Hamline’s conceptual framework in mind, as indicated in the following main areas:

**Promote Equity in Schools and Society.** Research studies involving pre-literate and low-literate adult immigrants and refugees indicate a connection between literacy and self-efficacy, and between L2 learning and becoming self-sufficient and financially independent citizens (Vinogradov, 2001). They also provide us with useful information about the nature of ESL literacy programming (Wall, 2018). One of the artifacts for this project is a curriculum that can be used to teach adult ESL literacy learners while incorporating *Essential Skills* (CCLB, 2015a) to prep them for future employment and instill a sense of citizenship. Since active citizenship is and should not be tied to a high CLB level or passing a gatekeeper of citizenship test (Fleming, 2015), an adult ESL literacy learner’s identity is confirmed when she is able to engage in the society where she lives through earning a living and becoming financially independent. Perhaps the tools developed for this capstone project; namely, a meaningful literacy framework for instruction and intervention as well as an employment-based curriculum can engage ALL/LESLLA learners in classroom instruction that is based on equity rather than equality—giving diverse learners what they need, rather than giving them the same thing as literate ESL learners, to reach their potential. When each learner is able to envision herself doing

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11 [https://www.hamline.edu/education/history.html](https://www.hamline.edu/education/history.html)
the job(s) she hopes to do, we will be helping learners not only become literate but also preparing them to become their ideal L2 self (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

Build Communities of Teachers and Learners. This capstone project adds to the corpus of work that ALL/LESLLA teachers can draw from to help their learners. As explained in Chapter One, I was attracted to the field of adult ESL literacy through a teaching opportunity that challenged me to research how to support Tier 2 and 3 learners. While teachers in federally funded Canadian programs have their own community of practice, they face similar challenges to the ones faced by their counterparts in the US. Finding LESLLA organization’s website and reading conference proceedings became my Personal Floating Devices (PFDs) that kept my teaching afloat and funneled my journey to Hamline’s LightHouses, namely, MALEd the program and ATLAS\(^{12}\). Throughout my program courses, I have delved into the field of literacy across different age groups and language proficiencies that led to conducting mini action research and collaborating with classmates from all over the world. I physically crossed contexts by observing K-12 literacy classes where I witnessed similarities and differences from my own practices, thus developing a sense of literacy as a whole (Vinogradov, 2013). I also virtually crossed borders by collaborating with my classmates across the globe and accessing ATLAS’s resources as well as professional development opportunities which enhanced my horizon of possible methodologies and evidence-based assessment tools to support my ALL/LESLLA learners (Vinogradov, 2015). Thanks to Hamline University, I have become a community member and an agent of change (Wenger, 1998).

\(^{12}\) ATLAS is a Center in the School of Education at Hamline University, funded by MN Department of Education. It provides accessible and high quality resources and professional development opportunities to enhance adult education. It can be accessed at: https://atlasabe.org/
Construct Knowledge. As a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), Hamline University gave me the opportunity to carve the most recent construct of my knowledge as an adult ESL literacy instructor and transfer it to my teaching practices. My capstone project and developed tools are learning artifacts of the knowledge enhancement through MAEd’s 34 credits which included readings, field experiences, delivering presentations, and countless invaluable learning activities. Such diversified exposures were goal-oriented, carefully planned, and strategically executed guaranteeing successful learning (Bloom, 1956 & 2001). To illustrate, by the end of my first year into the MAEd program, I was able to not only remember and understand the information learned from my Hamline professors but also to successfully apply it to my own teaching. The second year of the program was spent analyzing, evaluating resources, and developing my capstone project (Bloom, 1956 & 2001) guided by professors and review committee members who share my passion for adult literacy—a project that has the potential of helping fellow ALL/LESLLA teachers and their learners as well as mine.

Practice Thoughtful Inquiry and Reflection. Many educators use KWL activity which stands for What I KNOW, What I WANT to know, and what I LEARNED in their classes to elicit students’ input to develop their course outlines and plan their instruction. From a learner perspective, submitting my weekly reflections has helped me analyze my concrete experiences, list my feelings and impressions to consider what might I have done differently, conceptualize what was taught in the class, and actively consider how to fill in the gaps to do better the next time (Kolb, 1984). As a capstone project writer, I have enjoyed KWL-PLUS (Ogle, 1987) which adds a writing component to this metacognitive process because filling out a KWL chart is a thorough reflection activity. It allows mapping out ideas, funneling objectives towards learning
outcomes, and engaging the writer in the process. In my ALL/LESLLA classroom, I have implemented self-reflection activities. Weekly, my students reflect on what they have learned in terms of content and procedure and on their performance on formative assessments. I have found that having an experience is not enough for learning to take place because “[W]ithout reflecting upon this experience it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost” (Gibbs, 1988, p. 9). I also discovered that implementing reflection activities enhances students’ metacognitive awareness of the learning process and I am optimistic that it will eventually develop their growth mindset and control over their own learning.

**Project’s Limitations**

Most SLA studies have addressed literate ESL learners’ needs as opposed to pre-literate ones, thus creating a void in the field (Tarone, 2010). While this project contributes to the corpus of work dedicated to ALL/LESLLA learners’ instructional needs, there are some limitations. This four-week curriculum is focused on employment as a theme, but it does not extend to job performance reviews which is an integral part of most working environments. There are few ESL teachers who teach specifically for employment purposes and it would be beneficial to connect with them to develop a more comprehensive curriculum for adult ESL literacy learners.

Another limitation is that this curriculum was developed with a specific group of students in mind. Unlike many ALL/LESLLA learners often attending classes mixed with literate ESL learners, the intended audience for this project is a homogeneous group attending a literacy-focused program. Hence, the curriculum is laid out assuming consistent student attendance and lesson delivery, which is not the common culture in ALL/LESLLA classrooms. I am wondering if collaborating with colleagues teaching the same level would result in any changes/adaptations depending on different ethnicities and if the developed language skills are transferable to the next
level. I am hopeful for further collaborative opportunities with instructors teaching lower and higher levels to extend the curriculum to be used across all the four levels offered in the program.

**Future Research**

I am interested in equipping ALL/LESLLA learners with learning strategies to make their literacy journey more productive. While research has shown the importance of strategy training in language learning (Oxford, 1990), I would like to investigate how adult literacy learners can alternate between different reading and writing strategies to achieve a given task (Cohen, 2003). As learning strategies fall under three main categories: managing learning, thinking critically, and working together, Reimer (2008) indicated that ALL/LESLLA learners could benefit from training in metacognitive and compensating strategies. She also advised that teachers need to break down the strategies into smaller steps when introducing them, practice strategy training with known materials to the students, and recycle the strategies across the curriculum. Yet, I keep wondering if there is more that adult ESL literacy teachers and programs can do to help learners achieve *independence* in strategy use. A future research study might investigate how to further cultivate learner-independence.

Working with adult literacy learners has brought to the fore their need for continuous support and effective literacy training not only till they graduate from the second language program or obtain Canadian citizenship (Pothier, 2011), but also until they have “the tools to compete for better-paying jobs, argue for their rights, and participate fully in their communities” (Vinogradov, 2001, p. 15).
Conclusion

The void in SLA studies addressing pre-literate or semi-literate learners’ needs inspired Bigelow and Throne (2004) to wonder “Doesn't who we study determine what we know?” (p. 689). The researchers emphasized that students’ literacy level impacts the amount of time and scaffolding needed to introduce them to reading passages that should contain familiar content to be introduced using a balanced instruction between bottom-up and top-down instructional methods (both skill-focused and meaning-based). Focusing on adult literacy teachers, Vinogradov and Liden (2009) analyzed ALL/LESLLA teachers’ knowledge base and Vinogradov (2013) encouraged exploring early literacy by crossing contexts to K-12 classrooms to enhance their own literacy practices; e.g., adapting Orton Gillingham’s method for adult literacy needs (Johnson (2018). This capstone project attempted to contribute to the ALL/LESLLA corpus of work by proposing tools to support ALL/LESLLA instructors, namely, a literacy framework to guide literacy instruction and intervention as well as a curriculum illustrating essential skills required for successful work and life experiences in Canada.
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### “Appendix A”

**Overview of Initial ES / CLB Comparisons** *(CCLB, 2015a, p. 64)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Oral Communication</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Skill</strong></td>
<td><strong>CLB Speaking</strong></td>
<td><strong>CLB Listening</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>CLB 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>CLB 5, 6 &amp; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>CLB 6, 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>CLB 7 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>CLB 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td>CLB 9 &amp; 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>CLB 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>CLB 11 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(2) Reading Text</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Skill</strong></td>
<td><strong>Canadian Language Benchmarks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>CLB 3, 4 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>CLB 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>CLB 7, 8 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>CLB 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>CLB 11 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(3) Writing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>CLB 4 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>CLB 6 &amp; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>CLB 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>CLB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10, 11 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** As illustrated in Appendix A, relating ESs five levels to CLBs 12 levels, the first level of ESs begins at CLB5 in oral communication, at CLB 4 in writing, and at CLB 3 in reading and document use. As the curriculum developed for this project attempts to enhance reading skills and essential skills for CLB 3L students, the curriculum has been developed to target CLB 3 profile of ability as explained in the *CLBs* (CCLB, 2012) and *ESL for ALL* (CCLB, 2015b) to adapt the materials and instruction to CLB 3L literacy needs.
### ESL Literacy Writing Benchmarks Profiles: Progression Indicator from Foundation L-CLB 4L

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation-Low</th>
<th>Foundation-High</th>
<th>CLB 1L - Low</th>
<th>CLB 1L - High</th>
<th>CLB 2L - Low</th>
<th>CLB 2L - High</th>
<th>CLB 3L</th>
<th>CLB 4L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
<td>The writer can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Form most of the upper and lowercase letters correctly.</td>
<td>-Form all the upper and lowercase letters correctly.</td>
<td>-Write basic personal identification information and a small number of familiar words and simple phrases related to immediate needs.</td>
<td>-Write basic personal identification information and a small number of familiar words and simple phrases related to immediate needs.</td>
<td>-Write basic personal identification information, words and simple phrases to complete short-guided texts of immediate needs.</td>
<td>-Write basic personal identification information, simple phrases and a few simple sentences about highly familiar information related to immediate needs.</td>
<td>-Write simple sentences about familiar information related to personal experience and everyday situations.</td>
<td>-Write short, simple texts about personal experience and familiar topics or situations related to daily life and experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Copy from simple model with some accuracy</td>
<td>-Copy from simple model with some accuracy</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that writing moves from left to write and top to bottom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Almost no strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Almost no strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to understand that print conveys meaning can be related to oral text.</td>
<td>-Begins to understand that print conveys meaning can be related to oral text.</td>
<td>-Begins to understand that print conveys meaning to be related to oral text but needs activation of prior knowledge.</td>
<td>-Begins to understand that print conveys meaning to be related to oral text but needs activation of prior knowledge.</td>
<td>-Has developed some learning strategies; spell from memory.</td>
<td>-Can employ a variety of learning strategies; predict spelling based on spelling rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-May have difficulty being in the classroom.</td>
<td>-May have difficulty being in the classroom.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Is more comfortable with predictable content and context.</td>
<td>-Can write online, with dictionary’s help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Relies on physically modeled instructions: e.g., pointing, circling, etc.</td>
<td>-Relies on physically modeled instructions: e.g., pointing, circling, etc.</td>
<td>-Relies heavily on predictable routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies heavily on predictable routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies on routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies on routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Understands how to do something but needs reminders for more consistent performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Strengths and Limitations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Recognizes that different letters have different sounds.</td>
<td>-Recognizes that different letters have different sounds.</td>
<td>-Understands that print conveys meaning.</td>
<td>-Understands that print conveys meaning.</td>
<td>-Understands that print conveys meaning to be related to oral text but needs activation of prior knowledge.</td>
<td>-Understands that print conveys meaning to be related to oral text but needs activation of prior knowledge.</td>
<td>-Has developed some learning strategies; spell from memory.</td>
<td>-Can employ a variety of learning strategies; predict spelling based on spelling rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Almost no strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Almost no strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Begins to develop a few strategies for learning.</td>
<td>-Is more comfortable with predictable content and context.</td>
<td>-Can write online, with dictionary’s help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-May have difficulty being in the classroom.</td>
<td>-May have difficulty being in the classroom.</td>
<td>-Relies heavily on predictable routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies heavily on predictable routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies on routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Relies on routine and needs additional time to complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Understands how to do something but needs reminders for more consistent performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Relies on physically modeled instructions: e.g., pointing, circling, etc.</td>
<td>-Relies on physically modeled instructions: e.g., pointing, circling, etc.</td>
<td>-Complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Complete modeled tasks.</td>
<td>-Has developed some learning strategies; spell from memory.</td>
<td>-Can employ a variety of learning strategies; predict spelling based on spelling rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When the text is:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Personaly relevant and supported by very familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Personaly relevant and supported by very familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Limited to everyday words and phrases &amp; supported by familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Limited to everyday words and phrases &amp; supported by familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Limited to everyday words and phrases &amp; supported by familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Limited to everyday words and phrases &amp; supported by familiar and consistent visuals.</td>
<td>-Context is non-demanding and supported by familiar visuals.</td>
<td>-Content is relevant and sometimes specialized (i.e. work related) &amp; supported by familiar visuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Single words of up to 2-word phrases.</td>
<td>-Single words of up to 3-word phrases.</td>
<td>-Clear oral/written task instructions are repeated as needed.</td>
<td>-Clear oral/written task instructions are repeated as needed.</td>
<td>-Clear oral/written task instructions are repeated as needed.</td>
<td>-Clear oral/written task instructions are repeated as needed.</td>
<td>-Simple task instructions must be given orally before writing performance can be attempted.</td>
<td>-Task instructions are given in writing and orally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-For a known purpose in a predictable context.</td>
<td>-For a known purpose in a predictable context.</td>
<td>-Text to complete is 3 sentences.</td>
<td>-Text to complete is 5 sentences.</td>
<td>-Text to complete is 5 sentences.</td>
<td>-Text to complete is 7 sentences.</td>
<td>-Write up to 5 sentences, supported by word banks and dictionaries.</td>
<td>-Write a paragraph with complex structures (i.e., introduction, body and conclusion) and some idioms are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Lists to complete (5) items.</td>
<td>-Lists to complete (10) items.</td>
<td>-Lists to complete (10) items.</td>
<td>-Lists to complete (15) items.</td>
<td>-Forms to fill are 10 items.</td>
<td>-Forms to fill are 12-15 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Forms to fill are up 5 items.</td>
<td>-Forms to fill are up 10 items.</td>
<td>-Forms to fill are up 10 items.</td>
<td>-Forms to fill are up to 15 items.</td>
<td>-Sentences to write are 2 words.</td>
<td>-Sentences to write are 12-15 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are up to 10 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are 15-20 items.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forms to fill are 15-20 items.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adult ESL Literacy Framework

“Appendix C”

Individual Differences:
Previous & Current Experiences, Motivation and Cognitive Skills
**“Appendix D”**

**Assessment Intervention Bank**

I am using the cognitive model to reading comprehension (McKenna & Stahl, 2015, p. 8) to suggest intervention strategies to be implemented for 6-8 weeks:

### Reading Comprehension: Pathway 1: Automatic Word Recognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fluency in Context (170-173)</th>
<th>Decoding and Sight Word Knowledge (123-125)</th>
<th>Phonological Awareness (p.93)</th>
<th>Print Concepts (p. 97)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-After measuring students’ oral and silent fluency scale, it is recommended that teachers would ask students to re-tell the passage and practice reading aloud, echo reading, and repeated reading.</td>
<td>-Teach sight word lists and high-frequency words; -Allow opportunities for hearing texts; -Teach students about “Phrasing and Intonation” directly.</td>
<td>-Teach letter-sound relation; -Teach phoneme isolation, identity, categorization, blending, segmentation, -Teach Rime Patterns, Common Syllables, Chunking,</td>
<td>-Teach students book orientation; -Teach about left-to-right directionality and the concept of a letter; -Teach about top to bottom progression; Teach about word boundaries;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Pathway 2: Oral Language Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background Knowledge (p.184)</th>
<th>Vocabulary Knowledge (p. 185)</th>
<th>Knowledge of Text and Sentence Structure (p.210)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Teach students to make connections with the text via a semantic mapping that illustrates what students already know about the text and what they have learned from the text; -Practice using K-W-L chart</td>
<td>-Teach vocabulary in context and in a doable number so students learn from studying them as opposed to memorizing them; -Teach students to use context as a cue to guess the meaning of words instead of having to know the meaning of every single word in a given text;</td>
<td>-Teachers are encouraged to find the “right books” for their students to match the different reading identities in class: books with action plots that start right away, comedy/funny books, mysteries but at the same time be mindful of the proficiency and grade level suitability and reading within independent-instructional levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Teach word parts: pre, in, and suffixes by building vocabulary trees.
- Make learning new vocabulary fun by using word hunt, graphic organizers, logographic, and reading aloud.

**Pathway 3: Strategic Knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of Strategies for Reading (p. 20-21)</th>
<th>Specific Purposes for Reading (p. 230-238)</th>
<th>General Purposes for Reading (p. 230-238)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teach strategies, such as: clarifying, comparing and contrasting, summarizing and visualizing</td>
<td>- Ask questions that encourage a personal response to the text; - Ask questions to encourage reflection about the plot or nature of the text, setting, characters, themes.</td>
<td>- Ask students “the right questions” (Beers, 2003) to teach students to make inferences from the text and question the text to critically understand the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lately, Beers (2003) delves into “creating confidence to respond” in students who lack the motivation or self-efficacy. She recommends creating a classroom that encourages risk, makes sure students know each other’s names, celebrates diversity in the classroom, and not tolerating “put-downs” if they are in class.

**References**


### Curriculum Feedback Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program:</th>
<th>Shift:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor:</td>
<td>Area of Focus(Theme):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Which Objectives / Learning Goals/ Activities worked in your class?**

**Which Activities would you like to try while teaching a different theme?**

**How successful were the evaluation methods?**

**What is missing from the curriculum that could have helped you?**

**Reflections: please share thoughts or ideas that can make this a more effective tool for teachers**