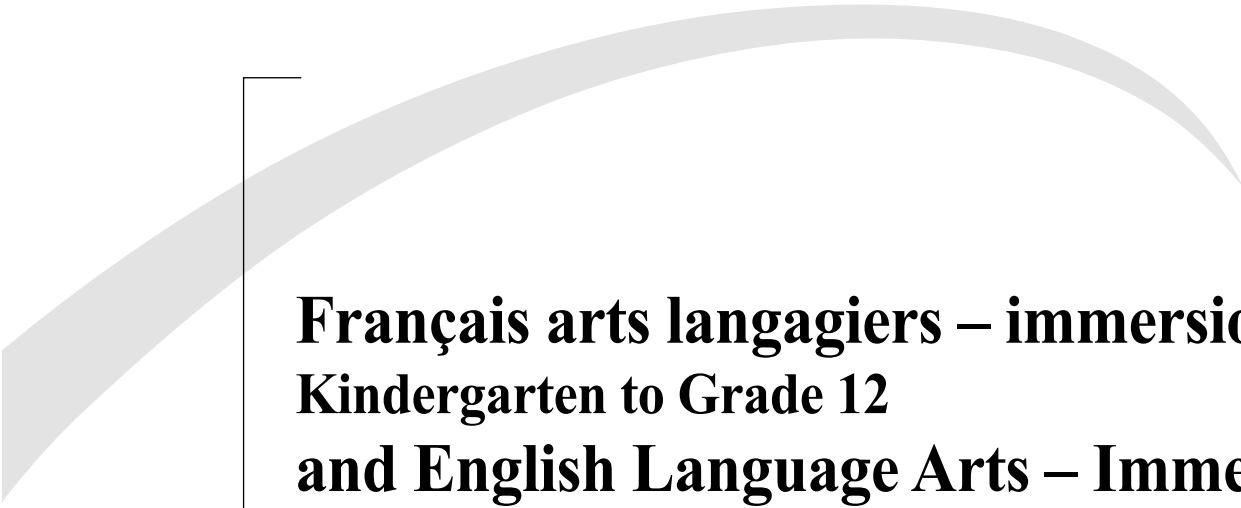# Français arts langagiers – immersion
Kindergarten to Grade 12
and English Language Arts – Immersion
Grades 1 to 12

Language Arts Practices

Orientation Guide

*French
Immersion
Program*

Manitoba

Français arts langagiers – immersion
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Disponible en français.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document is based on the ideas, theories, and practices of the following specialists:

- **Dominique Bucheton**, now honorary professor, was a researcher and a professor of teacher training at the *Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres (IUFM) de l'Académie de Montpellier* in France. She has published many articles and books on the power of reflexivity in language and intermediary writing for encouraging students to think, learn and 'grow'.

- **Michel Sasseville** is a professor at the *Faculté de philosophie de l'Université Laval*, and since 1996 has been responsible for teacher training in the application of philosophical dialogue within K-12 classrooms. This dialogic pedagogy is based on a community of inquiry where students are encouraged to think by and for themselves by questioning and reasoning together.

- **Kylene Beers** is a former middle school teacher who has taught at the College of Education at the University of Houston. Her research is focused on adolescent literacy and on struggling readers. **Robert E. Probst** began his career as a high school English teacher and spent most of his academic career at Georgia State University. Ms. Beers and Mr. Probst have been collaborating for over a decade and both now work internationally as pedagogic consultants specializing in K-12 literacy.

- **Michael Fullan**, former Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto, is now Global Leadership Director with New Pedagogies for Deep Learning. He is world-renowned for his expertise in education systems and his latest work focuses on teacher practices.

Introduction

This orientation guide identifies principles for using dialogue and reflexivity (thinking together) as the preferred approaches for learning language arts. The guide focuses on the language arts student learner and advances 'best' practices leading to 'next' practices – those that are better adapted to meet learner needs, in other words.

This guide provides a framework for piloting teaching practices and their associated theories. This testing process is the first step in the implementation of renewed language arts teaching practices and for subsequent curriculum development.

This guide applies to both French Immersion language arts subject areas, *Français arts langagiers – immersion* and *English Language Arts – Immersion*, given the similar approaches used when teaching and learning these languages. As for their differences, they lie mainly at a cultural level where, according to Sasseville *(La pratique)*, ways to express an idea, a definition or an argument vary from one language and one culture to another. This difference has the advantage of enhancing learners' cultural and language awareness. With French Immersion classrooms becoming increasingly multicultural, this cross-cultural approach further enhances student reflection, dialogue, and mental representation. Cross-cultural awareness also promotes equity and social justice because it further acknowledges the richness of human diversity. Cultural awareness and the development of intercultural competencies are among the student outcomes of the French Immersion Program in Manitoba.

This guide is intended for teachers, consultants, principals, and divisional administrators.

R a t i o n a l e

'Best' practices are predicated on the concept of multiliteracies (see sidebar) as defined in the 1990s by The New London Group [NLG] ("A Pedogogy of Multiliteracies"), which argued that there are many kinds of literacy, and that two key aspects of literacy must be taken into consideration:

1. Cultural and linguistic diversity: The world is an increasingly smaller place, and intercultural and interlinguistic communication is vital to us all.

2. In addition to reading and writing as we know them in the Western education system, literacy also takes other forms that already exist but are made accessible primarily through information and communication technologies.

> Multiliteracies Pedagogy is defined by The New London Group (Drolet *et al.*) as reflecting the needs of learners through various forms:
> "1. Linguistic literacies: understanding language as a meaning-making system
> 2. Visual literacies: images, page layouts, screen formats
> 3. Audio literacies: music, sound effects
> 4. Gestural literacies: body language, sensuality
> 5. Spatial literacies: environmental and architectural spaces
> 6. Multimodal literacies: a combination of two or more of the above" ("Designing").

Therefore, creating a learning environment based on Multiliteracies Pedagogy (more recently known as New Pedagogies), recognizes that learners come to school with:

- life experiences and a concept of literacy that are rooted in their culture, and therefore do not attribute the same meanings to life when reflecting, questioning, or doing
- prior multimedia experience, and therefore the expectation of continuing to navigate in that world

Moreover, according to researchers Fullan *et al.* (*L'apprentissage*), the New Pedagogies approach requires, among other things, a learning environment where learners:

- explore, discover, and learn together through questioning; and in so doing
- work together to develop interpersonal relationships and openness to, and trust in, others develop.

When working together, learners are almost constantly interacting. They question what they read or say and what they and others write or say. They activate their own cognitive pathways and learning processes (and not at the teacher's request at a specific time). This leads to the development of 'habits of mind' that will serve them throughout their lives. The teacher's role is to guide learners TO THINK, TO DO, TO SAY, and TO UNDERSTAND. According to Sasseville ("Re: 1b_document"), by being someone who models thinking, doing, saying, or understanding, the teacher is no longer the one who transmits but the one who fosters creation.

This 'co-construction of learning' (thinking together to learn), where **collaboration, citizenship** and **character** development emerge, promotes the development of **creative** and **critical thinking**, as well as **communication** skills. Sasseville ("Re: 1b_document") also states that we need to talk about **caring thinking** because it is the foundation of Emotional Education. These seven global competencies for deep learning – 6 C's according to Fullan ("New Pedagogies"), but 7 C's according to Sasseville ("Re: 1b_document") – allow learners to live as a community and to develop their identities as receptive, reasonable, and responsible people committed to affirming their points of view and to acting respectfully in society.

Linguistic Literacies — Language

Oral Communication

In French immersion, students' first exposure to and forays into the target language are oral. The immersion environment must offer learners multiple opportunities to hear, see, experiment, and think in the new language. These language skills do not arise spontaneously. Learning activities must be planned and cover vocabulary (what we want to say), phonetics (how it sounds), and grammar (ways of saying it) related to everyday life, learners' experiences, school activities, and subject matter content throughout their school years.

Teachers must therefore:
- be familiar with the building blocks of language, namely phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (how to use language, which vary according to different cultures) that make communication possible
- be familiar with the different voice components of language: pronunciation, articulation, pacing, intonation, etc. (see Manitoba Education and Training) in order to understand how learners create meaning from language

Learners understand more words than they use when speaking and writing, both in their first and second languages. To use a new word, they need to feel confident that they truly understand its meaning in different contexts and to know where to place that word in a sentence. The teacher therefore needs to plan learning activities in which students are willing to risk trying out new words in context; activities where, throughout their education, they have many opportunities to:
- think, explore, and dialogue spontaneously with teachers and with peers in all subjects areas, as these provide different contexts for exploring language
- adapt their communications (content, pacing, etc.) according to context, all while taking into account the social status and level of familiarity with their interlocutors
- read independently and collectively, thus allowing them to enrich and to enhance their vocabulary by acquiring new words and expressions in context

Every day, and in all subjects areas, teachers monitor students' language acquisition and oral expression with the aim of developing learners' mastery of the French language to the point where they feel confident using it in different contexts both inside and outside of school. It is equally important that learners speak English proficiently and value the study and the proper use of languages. Moreover, learners' reading and writing skills are strongly influenced by their oral proficiency.

The work of Roy Lyster (*Learning*) offers solutions to language challenges for French immersion learners as they pertain to grammatical gender, number, verbs, and pronouns. A 'grammar' for French immersion was created explaining how, for example, 80% of the nouns in *Le Robert Junior Illustré* have endings that allow us to predict their gender. Lyster's work has been adapted for Manitoba's French immersion context in the document *La langue au cœur du Programme d'immersion française, Une approche intégrée dans la pédagogie immersive* (Éducation et Enseignement supéreur Manitoba), which constitutes a best practice guide for integrating linguistic accuracy into all school subject areas. Using this approach, Grade 1 learners identify the grammatical gender of articles by observing 'Is *mon* and *ma* the same thing as *le* and *la*?', for example.

Learners' daily study and practice of French language semantics, syntax, phonetics, and pragmatics, as well as pronunciation, articulation, and pacing, are the linguistic skills (as far as form is concerned), that the teacher needs to observe in order to provide feedback to each learner (and their parents at some point) on his or her speaking skills and to better guide their language development.

As for content (function), the teacher provides feedback on the learner's ability to develop his or her thought process and his or her oral statements. These aspects are elaborated in the following sections.

Teachers must allow many opportunities for learners to engage in purposeful and spontaneous dialogue. In the United Kingdom, Tizard and Hughes (8) showed that four-year-olds encountered richer language (grammar complexity and language functions) at home than at nursery school. Wells obtained similar results in a longitudinal study of 32 children from the ages of two to nine years. Even underprivileged children who were thought to have lower linguistic skills had a richer linguistic environment at home than at school. Teachers dominated the conversation and language of all 32 children was suppressed at school (88-89).

Learning Through Listening, Speaking, and Thinking

Speaking requires listening.

Active listening — listening for the purpose of understanding, not for responding — requires truly hearing what others are saying, without adding or omitting anything, since we often hear our own voices and perspectives in the words of others (Zeiderman and Takacs).

When learners listen actively to one another, they come to realize that even though they have experiences in common, they have all taken different paths in this world. Examining this diversity allows them to pursue their own journey with greater clarity and openness to others. Learners who are capable of grasping another person's message and of assessing its value and merit are also capable of developing the confidence needed to continue learning outside of school in ever larger circles (Zeiderman and Takacs).

> During conversation or deliberation, the listener 'understands' the words twice as fast as the speaker can say them. Consequently, the listener's mind tends to wander. A listener's average listening span for a given topic is about 20 seconds. To extend that span, most listeners nod, signal their degree of agreement to the speaker, take notes, anticipate key words, ask questions, visualize, make connections, generalize, and evaluate (Bainbridge and Heydon 99).

All learners — but particularly second language learners, newcomers, learners with special needs, and individuals who have experienced violence, trauma, or bullying (or whose parents have lived such experiences) — need an environment of trust and safety in order to learn. Regular opportunities for learners to reflect together, in a spirit of openness to others and to their cultural habits and practices, foster the development of interpersonal relationships where a sense of trust, belonging, well-being, and social equity develops within the group (Stewart).

> In some Indigenous cultures, conversations can only begin once there is an established relationship between the speaker and the other parties. Speakers take 1.5 second to respond; and, depending on the context, they may take a few minutes to think before speaking.
>
> In contrast, people of European descent, as a gesture of courtesy, will initiate conversation with a stranger by asking a question and then intervening within one second (Bainbridge and Heydon 81).

Teachers must therefore speak more slowly and gently and decelerate the pace of classroom activities. Incidentally, such a learning environment is also necessary for learners who already master the language of instruction. *"It takes a lot of slow to grow"* (Merriam 10).

Sasseville (*La pratique 32-33*) states that dialogue is the tool of choice for stimulating thinking and that dialogic pedagogy's objective is to foster the practice and learning of thinking skills. The socialisation of knowledge is fostered by many interactions between participants, both learners and teachers. Children build on their peers' comments to complete, to add nuance, and to rephrase them. Over time, they internalize the questioning and inquiry model which they practice orally among themselves. To reflect together, to put into words one's understanding of the world is the basis for learning to read and write. Says Carol Walters (qtd. in Bainbridge and Heydon 92), "reading and writing float on a sea of talk".

Research by de Boysson-Bardies (137), and Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek (232) revealed that five-year-olds come to school with an intuitive knowledge of 10,000 to 14,000 words in their mother tongue, but since they can neither read nor write formally, the extent of their oral language and thinking skills is overlooked. In addition, throughout their school years, learners are able to develop much more complex thinking orally than in writing, so this mental capacity must be maintained and further developed in order to enhance learning.

What does it mean to learn in school?

> Learning occurs when we have access to knowledge (information, skills, etc.) that allows us to break with our usual ways of thinking, feeling, and doing in everyday life. In everyday speech, language has a conversational function: it allows people to express opinions [**first** type of language use]. In school, language has a cognitive function: it is used to learn, expand, and reflect [**second** type of language use; language as an object of study] (Plastré 1).

Language becomes an objet to be questioned, analyzed, and commented — a cognitive function called **secondarization**. This cognitive function makes it possible to manipulate speech, languages, forms, and texts much more efficiently for conceptualization. The teacher also needs to create and enter the discursive community to talk about spelling and grammatical analysis (Bucheton "Écriture" 44:48).

Bucheton ("Écriture" 56:00) reminds us that the challenge is to foster awareness among teachers that each discipline has specific ways of speaking, thinking, writing, and representing. Each teacher must reflect on the modes of his or her own discipline.

Languages play a vital role. Teaching and learning are first and foremost a matter of languages. Learners need time to think and to discuss: time to speak [the language of the discipline studied], to write, to read, and to reflect. Languages, in all their diverse disciplinary specificities, are the primary vectors of interaction between learners and teachers, and among learners themselves. They are the determining vectors of the reflexive dimension of the activity. Languages are, for the teacher, 'a window' into the cognitive, social, and psycho-affective activity of learners in the classroom, a window that allows him or her to adjust. We must therefore do everything we can in class to make languages play their various roles to their fullest potential (Bucheton *Postures 2*).

The mental representation that learners develop to understand how languages work is the DIMENSION that all teachers must foster, observe, and nurture, since acquiring the modes of speaking, thinking, writing, and representing specific to each discipline is the first condition of language proficiency. This conceptualization is therefore crucial to the success of each learner.

But what really happens when learners are encouraged to learn through thinking and speaking? What should it look like in the classroom?

According to Chabanne and Bucheton, Sasseville (*La pratique*), Sasseville *et al.*, and Beers and Probst (*Notice & Note, Disrupting*), to learn, one must first commit to thinking, that is, commit to:

- reflecting with others
- co-operating; and
- collaborating.

This 'reflexive' learning (Chabanne and Bucheton; Sasseville (*La pratique*); Sasseville *et al.*) makes it possible to explore words, opinions, and writings in greater depth. To do that, teachers must, among other things:

- create a space that allows learners to think together;
- encourage learners to distance themselves from their life experience (the very definition of reflexivity), so that they may start to reflect in an authentic way (where answers are not predetermined but have yet to be explored) on things and others in ordinary situations. This reflexivity leads learners to:
    - think together, to make room in their speech for the words of others; to deliberate with, and thanks to, others
    - rephrase the speech of others (the central mechanism of reflexivity). Reflexivity develops through the ability to reiterate and to transform what is said and written with ongoing support from peers and the teacher
    - reflect on the means they use to support the validity of what they think so that their thoughts become increasingly critical, creative, and caring — **the ultimate goal being,** according to Sasseville (*La pratique*), **the development of sound judgement leading to equity and to social justice**

Sasseville (*La pratique*) states that discussions must not simply promote the emergence of opinions. They must promote reasoning above all. They must make it possible to discover the meaning behind the words. To do that, a philosophical methodology [a pedagogy of dialogue] is necessary. Its objectives are to seek out:

- the subject to be discussed and its implications;
- rhetorical coherence;
- definitions, assumptions, sophisms, and rationales;
- how we acquire knowledge; and finally
- alternative ideas (119).

Furthermore, Sasseville (*La pratique*) adds that:

- The development of sound judgement is an essential part of educational efforts aimed at fostering intellectual and moral rigour. If the aim is to develop children's judgement, it is important to create situations that will enable them to engage in a deliberative process.

- These dialogues involve the engagement of people who are internalizing:
    - a multiplicity of cognitive skills — the ability to reason, to organize information, and to interpret, which includes even more numerous and specific skills
    - a set of affective [moral] dispositions — respect, listening, mutual aid, co-operation, etc. — whose number, complexity, and orchestration seem necessary if we wish to move closer to achieving our aim of helping children to think by and for themselves (47, 104-105)

According to Chabanne and Bucheton, Sasseville (*La pratique*), and Sasseville *et al.*, this reflexive space (to think, learn, and grow while interacting with others) must be implemented at the beginning of the academic year. Time will be needed to establish a more advanced reflexivity routine where:

- learners make progress because they take risks when speaking, reading, and writing
- reluctant learners are encouraged in all their attempts, however successful those may be, with the benevolent support of teachers and peers
- learners' mental representations are intensified. When learners talk, their mental processes are more transparent, allowing the teacher to 'see' more clearly how each learner thinks; that is, how they are able to reflect on their own activities, to extrapolate rules, and understand it as such (Sasseville *La pratique*)
- all learners develop this mental process and their student identity simultaneously, allowing them to develop their own points of view and to take their place in discussions. Speaking, and even more so writing, is about projecting an image of self and taking the risk of being seen as an individual, hence overcoming the fear of expressing oneself

This fear is dissipated through reflexivity by allowing one to:

- develop one's own point of view about what is happening and what is at stake
- know that what one says is being heard, respected, and considered by others. This makes it possible to build a positive and plurilingual student identity where one sees oneself as capable of success
- understand how others learn and develop an interest in what others can do and who they are
- give meaning to language practices at school and in everyday life

> Through their research, Bucheton ("Écriture"), and Beers and Probst (*Notice & Note*) found that learners with learning difficulties can perform as well as other learners. Yet too often, they are given less demanding tasks. The New Pedagogies allow these learners to engage in the same complex tasks, allowing them to develop cognitive skills. Teachers can then observe their students in action, pinpoint obstacles to learning, and adjust their instructional planning accordingly, therefore promoting learning.

From Speaking to Writing

Speaking and thinking together are the foundation for learning how to read and write.

According to Bucheton and Chabanne ("Un autre regard"), learners are generally more skilled at communicating orally because the codes used to organize and to express spoken messages are familiar and common to several cultures, such as:

- gestures and facial expressions
- repetition and rephrasing
- variations of tone and speed
- silences

In addition, in oral communication, interactions with others impose coherence in speech and enhance thinking.

Bucheton and Chabanne indicate, however, that when it comes to writing:

- all this work, this verbal and non-verbal give and take between interlocutors, is done within the text, complicating the author's task. Authors must therefore:
  - position themselves vis-à-vis their intended message while also taking the reader into account, thus forcing them to:
    - ✓ step back, reflect, organize their thoughts, and then formulate them
    - ✓ commit to expressing a point of view and asserting themselves as individuals

- learn and develop new skills so as to:
  - ✓ communicate a message through codes, as well as semantic and cognitive operations
  - ✓ articulate and play with those elements to form a coherent whole

Authors' values emerge and become visible through their writing, both to themselves and to the reader. By becoming aware of their values, learners as writers:

- assess them
- open themselves up to other points of view
- adjust their points of view, if necessary, thereby 'growing' through their writing. This reinforces the importance for all learners to be assured of a fair and supportive reading of their writing by peers and by teachers

During such readings, teachers must be attentive to learners' mental representations of the written word and doubly supportive in their work as facilitators for learners who are struggling to write. It takes time for learners to comprehend and manage the various aspects of writing. It is no longer just a question of asking learners to plan, to assemble (lexical and syntactic choices, etc.), to transcribe, and to revise texts (Bucheton "Écriture").

> Writing is a much more complicated and less linear process than it appears. It is more akin to a spiral: ideas come as you engage in the writing process. Texts become clearer through reflection, reworking, sharing, and discussion, etc. Writing is a way of solving complex problems. It is a tiresome and time-consuming process (Bucheton "Écriture" 1:03:00).

When learners rework an 'intermediary' text [an embryonic, draft text which leads to a more complex one], they are not 'correcting' it. They are:

- rethinking it
- re-setting its contents and linguistic forms in motion, simultaneously
- rendering its contents and their use of language more complex (Bucheton "Écriture")

Hence, teaching is not about 'presenting' the writing process to learners, but about placing them in learning situations that activate the reflexive process in their minds as they study different genres. This process is punctuated by deliberations with peers and teachers, as well as the reworking of intermediary texts. This process allows them time to think, to dialogue, and thus to produce longer, more complex texts. In this way, learners have many opportunities to return to and FINISH their work. It is no longer enough to give a mark or feedback on an assignment and then move on to another project. Learners must be allowed to complete their work and to grasp the concepts studied.

When giving feedback on a text, teachers:

- start by reading it to see how learners represent themselves and the world around them[1]. A learner's identity as a writer depends on this because the text is his or her creation; and then

- examine the text's linguistic aspects (spelling, grammar, etc.) in order to plan how to better support the learner in his or her writing journey.

Reading, Speaking, and Thinking Together to Learn

According to Beers and Probst (*Disrupting*), reading to understand the world and becoming an informed global citizen requires much more than simply extracting information from a written text. To become responsible readers, learners have to pay as much attention to their own reactions and to their own knowledge as to what is communicated in the text, because they bring their experiences and their understanding of the world around them into their readings.

Responsible readers "need to be flexible thinkers who recognize that there will rarely be one answer, but instead there will be multiple answers that must be weighed and evaluated" (Beers and Probst *Disrupting* 21). Readers need to be curious, to ask themselves what the information presented means to them, and how it could influence them and even change who they are. They must be able to:

- pose questions

- hold multiple ideas in their minds simultaneously

- see a situation from multiple perspectives (Beers and Probst *Disrupting*)

Reading is therefore 'to dialogue' with the text. It is about observing facts, values, and certain text characteristics, then interpreting these observations (Kain). The same is true for oral statements. These observations provide opportunities for sparking discussions in which the teacher's role is to guide learners on a journey of reflection, dialogue, and the study of texts using a few 'dialogic' questions to guide their reading (Beers and Probst *Disrupting*). Through this process, learners become aware that:

- there are no quick and easy answers — everything is debatable

- there are ambiguities and uncertainties in the world, yet we must nonetheless take a stand

- they must search for evidence and justify their positions

- dialogic questions seldom give us the opportunity to label answers right or wrong

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[1] A grade 3 learner, or even younger, who thinks that it rains when angels cry needs to broaden his or her knowledge of certain natural phenomena. The richer our knowledge of self, of others, and of the world around us, the better our comprehension in reading and the richer our writing will be.

The teacher's role is to guide learners toward asking more questions and toward considering the effect a text has on them. The focus is on the interaction between the reader and the text. Through this process, learners develop habits of mind where they pay attention to their own reactions without losing sight of the text.

But what really happens when learners are invited to learn through reading, thinking, and dialogue? What does it look like in the classroom?

Learners become conscious of their prior knowledge and construct new knowledge as they read (Beers and Probst *Notice & Note, Strategies*). Tackling dialogic questions with peers at intervals throughout the reading process engages students, pushing them to look further into the text and into its structure. These dialogic questions prompt students to:

- share and clarify their thinking
- defend their logic
- listen to others
- think and inquire together
- develop hypotheses and arguments
- change their minds

Learners need to realize that fiction invites readers into the author's imaginary world. These texts help us to make sense of our world. They allow us to reflect on human values such as friendship, love, peace, and emotions. They influence our interactions with others and our ability to perceive others' points of view, and they shape our identities. When reading literary texts, we are urged to understand the author's point of view — his or her beliefs and values — and to then compare these with our own. If we are to grasp the author's message, we must also analyse the means used to communicate that message, such as character development, context, conflicts and resolutions, as well as themes (Beers and Probst *Notice & Note, Strategies*). Leaners must also critically appraise the author's values and messages, just as they would do in nonfiction texts.

Authors of non-fiction[2] enter our world to present their point of view, an experience, an idea, a belief or facts. They think for us, writing their texts with a view to convincing us, to discouraging us from making inferences, or simply to share their perspective. We are therefore encouraged to read beyond the information presented and to ask ourselves what the information in this text means to us, to our lives, and to our world.

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[2] Some non-fictional texts borrow fictional structures.

Truthfulness in non-fiction is crucial. Therefore, in order to read responsibly, the reader must:

- be aware that the author offers but one perspective on a given subject
- challenge the information and arguments presented
- question his or her own beliefs and assumptions and get more information on the subject to verify the truthfulness of what is presented in the text (Beers and Probst *Reading Nonfiction*)

All this questioning leads to receptivity and openness to the text, whereby learners:

- reflect more deeply on what they know and what the author is saying
- take responsibility for substantiating, with others, their own and others' points of view, beliefs and values
- develop habits of mind that will serve them throughout their lives

According to Beers and Probst (*Disrupting*), the fundamental reason for reading is to change us, to inspire us, and to push us towards creative solutions to social problems. These authors believe that the main role of the teacher is to guide learners in considering how they can revisit their thinking as a result of reading by asking them:

- How has this text touched you, made you think again about who you are and what you value?
- How has this text changed your thinking?

"Words matter in a democracy, and thus it is vitally important that all members of the society respect them and attend closely to them" (Beers and Probst *Disrupting* 162).

What about text complexity?

A study in the United States analysed the reading portion of a college entrance exam from the American College Testing, Inc. (ACT *Reading* 2) and concluded that text complexity, not the type of questions, was the determining factor between learners who were successful on the exam compared to those who were not. The results of one study are never enough to confirm a hypothesis, but teachers are well aware that most learners give up when confronted with a complex text. It is therefore imperative that learners (and especially those with learning difficulties) work together on texts of increasing complexity so that they may comprehend them despite their more sophisticated concepts, structures and vocabulary. Furthermore, by working together, they will increase their knowledge of the world around them, possibly the most important factor related to the comprehension of complex texts (Beers and Probst *Reading Nonfiction*).

Moreover, dialogic questions incite learners to make inferences and to examine a text critically. Only texts of sufficient complexity afford learners the opportunity to practice these essential skills and to become effective readers. This practice prepares them for sophisticated texts they are likely to encounter in their future postsecondary and/or workplace environments.

CURRICULAR AIM AND GOALS IN LANGUAGE ARTS

Curricular Aim in Language Arts

> Provide learners with opportunities for thinking and learning as they interact with one another while also developing their identities as receptive, reasonable, and responsible people committed to affirming their points of view and to acting respectfully in society.

This curricular aim, brought to life through a dialogic and reflexive pedagogy, creates an environment in which learners are encouraged to develop, on a daily basis, their interpersonal and self-regulatory skills, thus establishing a climate of respect toward others and toward oneself. The goals derived from the curricular aim comprise the components and means for putting this theory into practice.

Learning outcomes will emerge through the implementation of 'best' and 'next' practices as they evolve in response to student needs within the context of Manitoba's French Immersion Program.

LISTENING - VIEWING - READING

GOAL: Develop sound judgment by discerning and examining others' values and perspectives, as well as one's own

MEANS: Construct meaning from others' statements and texts by contemplating what is said and what one thinks

- Reflect upon others' statements and texts to discern their meaning

- Examine one's values, one's point of view, and one's feelings with respect to others' messages

- Substantiate the merits of others' messages as well as one's own

SPEAKING - REPRESENTING - WRITING

GOAL: Express oneself confidently in keeping with one's intent, context, and audience

MEANS: Develop and clearly communicate one's point of view, in different contexts, while engaging in exchanges of ideas as they unfold

- Reflect on one's message and its form while taking into account context and audience

- Express oneself coherently and respectfully

- Incorporate others' feedback to enrich one's messages

communiquer – reflexivity – dialogue
reflexivity – dialogue – reflexivity – dialogue

Students-Learners

THINKING

GOAL: Develop critical, creative, and attentive thinking skills in order to think independently for oneself and with others

MEANS: Engage in a deliberative process

- Question to stimulate reflection on what is said and how it is said

- Reflect on the means used to substantiate one's own and others' viewpoints

- Reconsider one's point of view and one's openness to new ideas

BUILDING CHARACTER

GOAL: Build character through an openness to others and to the world at large

MEANS: Commit to thinking and to interacting in the target language

■ Français arts langagiers – immersion (M-12) and ELA – Immersion (1-12)
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FROM BEST PRACTICES TO NEXT PRACTICES

In general, 'best' practices (once implemented), become 'next' practices (Fullan *et al. La cohérence*) because they are adjusted to better meet learners' needs. Dialogue and reflexivity form the core of these practices, meaning that learners are in almost constant interaction. Instructional planning must allow learners more time to read, to think, to deliberate, to create, and to write.

The planning of a series of tasks must take into account the concept of secondarization (a cognitive function whereby learners reflect on their own words and actions) in order to choose and to adjust instructional tasks based on learner needs. Plastré (2) specifies that the concept of secondarization makes it possible to:

- understand that the main skill required of a teacher is the ability to analyze learners' progress, difficulties, obstacles, and successes
- debunk the myth whereby everything is fine in a classroom if learners are simply occupied: It is not activity that drives development, but rather the awareness of its properties

Bucheton ("Écriture") states that planning does not consist of organizing a multitude of tasks, but rather a few complex tasks that are well-orchestrated by the teacher to allow learners time to think by and for themselves. Planning tasks according to best practices is crucial. Such planning must emphasize the reflective, creative, cultural, and communicative dimensions of language where:

- reading, writing, and speaking are consistently interconnected
- learners deepen their reading and writing skills, but above all gain habits of mind; that is, the ability to think and to rethink by and for themselves

Effective planning takes time and perseverance, both at the preliminary stages and in the classroom, because reflexive teaching requires supporting the gradual intellectual development of learners by allowing them to think, learn, and grow together and to build positive academic and linguistic identities where they feel:

- self-confident and respected for who they are and what they can do
- capable of thinking about their lives, themselves, life around them, life together, and of acting upon those thoughts
- capable of successfully tackling a given topic, whether at school or in society

Linguistic accuracy must be addressed when planning tasks. Learners must make the connection between what they want to say and how to say it correctly. Moments of secondarization should therefore take into account both the usual components of language learning (gender, number, verbs, pronouns, etc.) and the modes of speaking, thinking, writing, and representing specific to a given subject area. In the French Immersion context, *La langue au cœur du Programme d'immersion française, Une approche intégrée dans la pédagogie immersive* (Éducation et Enseignement supérieur Manitoba) demonstrates how to best integrate linguistic accuracy within school subjects.

Adopting 'best' practices necessitates a fundamental change in classroom teaching practices. Teachers must refrain both from doing the work for learners and from repeating instructions (unless truly no one has understood them). Learners are capable of seeking help from others, and of offering assistance in return, during periods of discussion, reflexivity, and secondarization. Teachers are there to guide, to monitor, and to nurture their students' cognitive development and habits of mind. This monitoring, this formative-interactive assessment, takes place over the many moments of reflexivity, reading, and writing of intermediary texts that result in more complex, more sophisticated output. Consequently, teachers are to dedicate the majority of classroom time toward observing the cognitive progress of learners and the accuracy of their oral communication in order to adjust tasks in real time and to plan future tasks accordingly.

Step-by-step procedures and lists of criteria provided in advance are not enough to develop habits of mind in all learners. Bucheton recommends that they not to be discarded either, because those procedures and lists will serve as tools for the maturing text, to see if the text complies with standards, and for learners to examine their creations ("Écriture" 1:45:15).

For learners to be doing and thinking, they must be given topics that are relevant and accessible to them, texts that motivate them to think, read, share, and write. The themes that interest learners most at all grade levels, according to a survey by Beers and Probst (*Disrupting*), relate to social problems such as climate change — problems for which they want solutions. Even the youngest learners are discussing and seeking solutions to these issues. A little probing by the teacher quickly reveals students' preoccupations and areas of interest.

Best practices, be they yours, those of your colleagues, or those from other sources, are worth attempting, adjusting if necessary, and then trying again, hence the expression "going from best to next practices". But first, it is important to respect the best practices' basic principles so that teachers may see where and how to better adapt them to the needs of their students. Next practices must nonetheless prove themselves to be more effective than previous approaches. This should become evident at various moments of secondarization, moments where speech, structures, texts, etc. become an object of study, inquiry, analysis and/or commentary.

The abilities and the knowledge needed to improve our practices are already in the field. This work must be done together – including teachers, consultants, principals, and divisional administrators – and we must share our practices (Bucheton "Écriture"; main idea of work done by Fullan and Quinn).

C O N C L U S I O N

The New Pedagogies advance a model of best classroom practices, one in which learners work in collaboration as they think and talk with one another while reading and writing prolifically.

In language arts, the teacher's role is to plan instruction and to guide learners on their intellectual journey, the ultimate goal being to get students THINKING, DOING, SAYING, and UNDERSTANDING language in all its forms. As they do so, they develop the habits of mind and the linguistic and cultural competencies that allow them to learn to live together while growing as individuals committed to:

- asserting a point of view
- contributing to society
- becoming plurilingual, receptive, reasonable, and responsible global citizens

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