



**EAP Preparation Course  
Curriculum Framework  
Written for Keyano College  
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# Curriculum Framework

## Introduction

### English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Preparation Course Overview

The EAP Preparation Program has been designed to meet the English language learning needs of both International and Domestic Students whose primary language is not English. This course will attract English as Another Language students whose goal is to enroll in postsecondary education or training programs at Keyano College. This program will be an excellent choice for domestic English as a Second Language (ESL) students who have completed Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 4 English as a Second Language (ESL) programs such as LINC and are looking for additional language training opportunities that are not offered by Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC).

Once a student successfully completes EAP Preparation, and has achieved a mark of at least 65%, (Canadian Language Benchmark) CLB 4 they will be eligible for the next level, EAP 100 and upon graduation may progress to EAP 300.

The EAP Preparation course will build English language skills that will prepare students with the English language prerequisites for entry into professional and career training programs at post-secondary colleges such as those offered by Keyano College. This course combines four components that incorporate features of the range of programs and courses listed:

- English language training
- Academic training supported by English Language Training
- Work Integrated Learning (WIL) incorporating Essential Workplace Skills
- Workplace applied learning through volunteer, shadowing and/or short-term practicums.

### Target Group

The EAP Preparation Course is suitable for both International and domestic students whose primary language is not English. It is a pathway to the EAP 100 to 300 courses that leads to entry into Keyano College's diploma/certificate programs. The course will also offer essential workplace skills for employment using the Workplace Integrated Learning framework that is available through Niagara

College, Ontario<sup>1</sup>. The online modules available through Niagara college are grounded in the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario's (HEQCO)

## Course Outcomes

Consequently, by the end of the program students will have achieved the following outcomes:

- English language competency of one benchmark level within a 340-hr period
- Develop individual learning plans that will set the direction for their current and future training
- Apply English language skills to access and use everyday technology for the workplace
- Identify career/employment goals increase their cultural competency in addition to language competency

## Prerequisites

A minimum of CLB 4 or IELTS 3.5 assessment results, or equivalent, are required to qualify for the EAP Preparation. Official transcripts are required as proof of language assessment.

## Placement

Students will be placed in the EAP level corresponding to their entrance assessments. Proof of language levels must be verified by a recent official CLB or IELTS assessment, or equivalent, with results received within the last 12 months.

The following chart is a summary of EAP levels, and the length of study designated for each :

Course Levels	CLB (Canadian Language Benchmarks) Equivalency	IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Equivalency	Program Length	Number of Weeks
EAP PREPARATION	4	3.5	340 hrs.	17 Weeks
EAP 100	6	5.0	300 hrs.	15 Weeks
	5	4.0		
EAP 200	7	6.0	300 hrs.	15 Weeks
EAP 300	8	6.5	300 hrs.	15 Weeks

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.niagaracollege.ca/cae/wil/>

## Student Profile

There are several variables that influence the kind of student that is attracted to diverse types of ESL courses. There are those who have varying degrees of formative education from no formal education to those with 12+ years of education to graduate and post graduate degrees in their profession. The students that will be attracted to this EAP Preparation course are the latter group; those with 12+ years of education to graduate and post graduate degrees.

EAP Prep course will attract students who have not reached English language proficiency with strong foundational and functional skills. This level would be equal to a CLB 3 to 4 or IELTS 3 to 3.5

The assessment scores however are not the only factor in considering entrance suitability. An interview that would assess the student's motivation, goals, and a discussion about the education background experience may be required.

Goals are important in the discussion. The realities of life usually lead to the need to not only learn English to build language for academic readiness to enroll in mainstream post-secondary programs of study but also to be able to communicate in the workplace. Consequently, the EAP Prep course curriculum will include workplace preparation units to support the students who would like to find employment during and after the course. Work-integrated learning components will also help the student to guide their academic goals leading to future professional employment.

## Value of International and Immigrant Students for Canada

The current socio-economic realities point to the fact that our Canadian economy will not sustain growth without increasing immigration to fill the employment and population gaps that keep rising.

According to Languages Canada, there has been a significant increase in international student enrollment in Canadian language training programs. Between 2016 and 2017 language training providers reported 10.3% growth in student numbers.<sup>2</sup> The number of international students holding Canadian study permits (as of 31 December) reached 572,415 in 2018, up from 492,545 the year before.

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<sup>2</sup> Canada 2040: No Immigration Versus More Immigration (The Conference Board of Canada, May 15, 2018 22 Aug 2018 <https://monitor.icef.com/2018/08/canadian-language-programmes-hit-double-digit-growth/>)

Roslyn Kunin and Associates (RKA) was commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (currently Global Affairs Canada) to conduct a study to assess the economic impact of international students studying in Canada in 2014 on the Canadian economy. Of the annual total spending by international students, long-term international students accounted for 92%. International education services for these long-term students contributed \$8.6 billion worth of GDP of the Canadian economy and supported 113,100 (equivalent to 95,900 FTE) jobs in the Labour market. International students in short-term language training programs in Canada contributed an additional \$919.4 million per year in total spending to the Canadian economy. This represents about \$697.8 million contribution to GDP and supporting 8,100 jobs (or equivalent to 5,900 FTE jobs).

Canada welcomes and actively seeks out international students so that there will be a significant pool of potential immigrants from those who study in Canada and decide to pursue their professional careers in Canada. Either working while studying or choosing to build their professional careers in Canada after studying are indicators that international students are vital to the current and future economy of Canada.

According to Canada 2040: No Immigration Versus More Immigration (The Conference Board of Canada, May 15, 2018) Report by Kareem El-Assal, Daniel Fields, *“Increasing annual immigration to 1 per cent of Canada’s population by the early 2030s, when we forecast that immigration will account for 100 per cent of population growth, would support modest Labour force and economic growth.”*. 21 out of 53 occupational areas of employment are short of skilled workers. The provincial and federal governments are looking at immigrants to help fill this shortage. Without a sustained level of immigration, Canada's population growth could be close to zero within 20 years.<sup>3</sup>

Changes to the point system have attracted an increasingly greater number of skilled and/or professionally trained immigrants with higher entrance English language competency. However, these skilled, educated immigrants are still finding it difficult to integrate into the Labour market and obtain employment commensurate with their training and education. Settlement language training prepares immigrants for survival in a new country which may include preparation for survival level employment. However, with professions that require Canadian credentials and the need to retrain in alternative or complementary professional occupations, professionally trained immigrants need more than settlement language training programs to prepare them for the

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<sup>3</sup> Population Projections for Canada (2013 to 2063), Provinces and Territories (2013 to 2038) Population growth: Migratory increase overtakes natural increase article by Stats Canada



academic language skills required to achieve successful completion and career readiness for alternative or supplementary professional careers. The EAP Preparation course will prepare foreign trained professionals who seek out recognized professional level training or education at postsecondary to qualify for entrance and successful progress towards completion of post-secondary programs of study.

## Academic Challenges of International and Domestic Students

**EAL students have demonstrated common learning challenges that can be taken into consideration when developing and delivering lessons:**

### **Writing**

- Difficulty with one-page summary of article
- Formulating theses for essays
- Sequencing
- Writing critical book reviews
- Appropriateness of footnote usage in essays
- Taking effective classroom lecture notes

### **Tests:**

- Study skills
- test taking strategies

### **Analysis:**

- Identifying types of arguments in articles

### **Time and Group Management:**

- Time management
- Team/group project interactions

### **Research:**

- Identifying reliable sources and support resources for essays
- Offline research skills for essays

### **Presentations:**

- Verbal summaries of strengths and weaknesses in articles
- Giving oral presentations

- Pronunciation
- Verbally handling criticism in presentations

These challenges have been considered when developing program elements and will be reflected in the instructional methodology and strategies chosen for the implementation of the course material and content.

## Acculturation Challenges of International and Immigrant Students

- Financial planning and sustainability
- Social isolation
- Difficulty adapting to institutional and societal systems.
- Adapting to cultural expectations and norms – cross cultural communication
- Housing
- Adapting to western educational system, methodology and expectations

Best practices identified by Languages Canada<sup>[99]</sup> recommend that college should provide not only educational courses that meet their academic criteria, but also to provide student services that support students to adapt and integrate into the socio-cultural fabric surrounding their academic study experience. In Languages Canada's accreditation criteria there is a requirement for academic support services, housing support services and intercultural support opportunities that orient students to help them navigate institutional systems as well as offering mental health support. recommend that college should provide not only educational courses that meet their academic criteria, but also to provide student services that support students to adapt and integrate into the socio-cultural fabric surrounding their academic study experience. In Languages Canada's accreditation criteria there is a requirement for academic support services, housing support services and intercultural support opportunities that orient students to help them navigate institutional systems as well as offering mental health support.

Specific to the academic needs of international and immigrant Students, the following are the areas that create challenges<sup>4</sup> in developing academic competency that are considered in the

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<sup>4</sup> A Call to Action: Academic Skill Deficiencies in Four Ontario Universities. Contributors: J. Paul Grayson (York University), James Côté (Western University), Liang Chen (University of Toronto), Robert Kenedy (York University), and Sharon Roberts (University of Waterloo)

course development and instructional content and delivery of the EAP Preparation course:

## Workplace Challenges

According to a study by the Canadian government “Which Human Capital Characteristics Best Predict the Earnings of Economic Immigrants?”<sup>5</sup> the predictors of economic success are “language, *work experience, age, and education.*” Economic success brings stability, safety, and socialization. Economic progress brings an individual above the survival level of existence that is identified in *Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs*<sup>6</sup> as stage 1 and 2 (Physiological and Safety) to achieve higher order needs that typically reflect western cultural values. When basic needs are met and secured, newcomers are more able to achieve settlement goals and contribute to society and the economy.

An “important marker of integration” is defined in another study, “What is success? Examining the concept of successful integration among African immigrants in Canada,” as “creating avenues for personal growth and development in a context where immigrants have options and opportunities for advancement”<sup>7</sup>. This is in line with the hierarchy of needs that language, work experience and education will predict economic success for newcomers.

Keyano College is responding to these socio-economic realities by offering the EAP Preparation course that includes a workplace integrated learning component. This additional component will facilitate the development of skills that will provide a pathway from settlement and survival to sustainability and security for both domestic and International students. International students are a significant resource for Canada for whom the federal government has made the pathway to permanent residency a necessary priority. The recruitment of International students will build and sustain a healthy economic future for Canada. Both domestic and International students will have the opportunity to increase their language and cultural capacity in addition to building Canadian workplace employability skills that will bridge to rewarding employment opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series 11F0019M, no. 368 Published August 2015

<sup>6</sup> Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Gain Vital Insights, published by 50 minutes: Pierre Pichere in collaboration with Anne-Christine Cadial and translated by Carly Probert

<sup>7</sup>What is success? Examining the concept of successful integration among African immigrants in Canada  
Emmanuel Kyeremeh ORCID Icon, Godwin Arku, Paul Mkandawire, Evan Cleave & Ismahan Yusuf - Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies Received 10 Mar 2019, Accepted 24 Jun 2019, Published online: 20 Jul 2019.

## Course Model

“.... curriculum is the hook on which to hang language development and vice versa.”<sup>8</sup> (John Clegg p 15)

This statement is a very visual way of summing up the rationale for the curriculum model that is developed for this course. Language development in this EAP Prep course “hangs” onto the content. It supports the application of the language to a curriculum that has a broad scope but is applicable to the context of content that would be useful in an academic or in the case of the workplace units, the world of work.

This EAP course follows a “Form and Function” syllabus – (Robinson 1991) that prescribes to Chomsky's (1965) concept of 'linguistic competence' which considers the relationship between language and the particular situation in which it is appropriate (Campbell and Wales, 1970; Hymes, 1972). The EAP Prep curriculum is focused on English language development in which language acquisition is at the core of the curriculum. In EAP 100 to 300, the reverse is the core of the model; content “hangs” onto language development.

### Learn, Understand, Do

The program model is based on the concept of **Learn, Understand, Do**

#### **“Learn”**

- ESL language training - Foundational English Language Skills

#### **“Understand”**

- Academic English skills development
- Intercultural communication skills

#### **“Do”**

- **Essential Skills**– global essential skills related to common occupational skills areas
- **Applied Skills Component** – Expand vocational and career exploration beyond the

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<sup>8</sup> Clegg, John. Mainstreaming ESL: Case-Studies in Integrating ESL Students into the Mainstream Curriculum. Multilingual Matters, 1996. Clegg, J. (1996). Mainstreaming ESL: Case-studies in Integrating ESL Students Into the Mainstream Curriculum. Multilingual Matters. APA (American Psychological Assoc.)

classroom settings by integrating classroom learning with career-based training

The combination of these three program components is what we believe will provide students with potential to be successful in further education, as well as ultimately finding and maintaining employment in the Canadian workplace.

The Keyano College EAP Preparation course will teach students how to speak English accurately and with confidence while gaining the skills needed to easily transition to post-secondary studies in Canada. With courses scheduled 4 hours per day over 5 days per week, students will learn the key fundamentals of the English language in conjunction with essential study skills for academic success. The WIL components will be modified to accommodate work experience schedules and demands. Experiential learning will give students valuable opportunities to extend their English language skill to real world application of what they have learned in the sheltered environment of online classroom.

## English as a Second Language Skills

To succeed academically, students will need to learn important language skills specific to the curriculum of colleges and universities in Canada. The EAP Preparation course teaches:

English language skills:

- Listening/Speaking
- Reading/Writing
- Pronunciation
- Integrated Grammar

## Academic Skills

The English Language skills will relate to the following academic skill areas:

- Research and using the library
- Lectures/Seminar strategies
- Academic writing style
- Reading critically / evaluating the text
- Exam strategies

- Reporting and narrating
- Organizational skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Notetaking
- Synthesizing and summarizing
- Advanced computer literacy
- Academic Research

## Intercultural Communication Skills

- Learning strategies for Canadian post-secondary education
- Cultural stereotypes
- Change and transition
- Language and culture
- Cultural roadmap
- Cultural bridge
- Cultural value
- Global citizen
- Diversity and inclusion in Canadian cultures
- Intercultural interactions
- Cultural images and symbols in Canadian culture
- Differences and similarities in values and beliefs
- Culturally determined behavior patterns

## Workplace Integrated Learning

- Work essential skills
- Job search skills
- Canadian job interview
- Professional competencies
- Interpersonal skills
- Research and business communication skills
- Goals and career planning

## Principles of Course Delivery

The EAP Preparation course has been built around principles of adult learning and adult ESL education that will give instructors a frame of reference to facilitate student success and support them to acquire and demonstrate the skills needed for academic readiness. These principles are fundamental to the development of the curriculum and delivery model of the EAP Preparation course.

### Adult Learning Principles

Andragogy is the basis of our comprehensive approach to program development and delivery. Andragogy is the practice of teaching adults as opposed to teaching children and therefore addresses the unique learning needs of adults. Brookfield, Knowles, and Rogers attribute their learning theories all or in part to andragogy:

- Adults need to know why specific things are being taught.
- Instruction should be task-oriented and practical instead, learning by doing instead of learning by memorization
- learning activities should be in the context of common tasks to be performed.
- Instruction should consider the wide range of diverse backgrounds of students.
- Discover what students already know and build on that knowledge. Learning materials and activities should allow for various levels/types of previous experience
- Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow students to discover things for themselves, providing guidance and help when mistakes are made.

Student centered theory of instruction (Knowles 1984) emphasizes that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for decisions.

Carl Rogers's theory of experiential learning<sup>9</sup> is integral to our program model design and encompasses the following learning principles:

- The adult student should be encouraged to participate in the learning process and have control over its nature and direction.
- Adult students learn best when confronted with practical, social, personal or research problems.
- Self-evaluation is the principal method of assessing progress or success.

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<sup>9</sup> Freedom to Learn (3rd Edition – Jan 21, 1994 by Carl R. Rogers (Author), H. Jerome Freiberg (Author)

Rogers also emphasizes the importance of learning to learn and an openness to change.

## Principles of Adult ESL Education

Adult ESL education theories are rooted in many of the same principles and best practices of the adult learning principles that guide our program delivery. More specific to language acquisition are learning theories that support our student centered, participatory approach to language.

Instruction. The integration of language, academic, intercultural and work essential skills inform the curriculum development that in turn guides the program delivery objectives.

Learning theories and instructional methodologies that support our program delivery objectives and promote development of language competency within the context of academic, professional, and intercultural and workplace competencies have been incorporated into the instructional methodology of the program.

Cummins theory of language acquisition is another foundational theory upon which we have built our program model and language instructional approach.

## BICS Versus CALP /PLP

According to well know researcher and educator, Cummins<sup>10</sup>, there are two levels of competency in second language acquisition:

**BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills are language skills needed in social situations. It is the day-to-day language needed to interact socially with other people. This is the language learned in ESL classes and learned informally.

**CALP** or Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency refers to the form of academic language learning related to higher order thinking skills such as problem solving, conceptualizing as well as **PLP** (Professional Language Proficiency) industry specific language. This type of language is learned in academic, professional or industry specific settings.

The curriculum framework reflects this distinction between BICS and CALP/PLP by providing a learning context in which language learning is centered on the essential workplace skills,

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<sup>10</sup> Cummins, J. and McNeely, S. (1987) Language Development, Academic Learning, and Empowering Minority Students. In Tikunoff, K. Bilingual Education and Bilingual Special Education: A Guide for Administrators Boston: College Hill



academic skills and competencies related to academic, professional, and intercultural skills and competencies.

## Expected Outcomes

Students are expected to progress one benchmark level within the 17 weeks/340-hour course. The rate of language acquisition will depend on years of first language education, language strand and frequency of instruction.

Students will be in class 20 hours per week but will be expected to work on assignments, study and engage in English speaking activities and events up to another 20 hours a week. It is expected that students will add an additional 10 hours a week for homework, work experience, contact assignments and informal interaction in English to further develop and reinforce their English language learning. Consequently, between classroom and out of class engagement in English communication, students should reach their learning goals.

## Rates of Language Acquisition

The course length was based on a research study that determined the average number of hours that an adult acquires English as a second language based on levels of formative education. The following chart will outline the estimated rate of language acquisition based on a study conducted in 2004 by Deirdre Lake and David Watt<sup>11</sup>:

LANGUAGE COMPONENT	NUMBER OF YEARS OF EDUCATION	NUMBER OF HOURS OF ESL INSTRUCTION	CLB LEVEL INCREASE
<b>Listening/Speaking</b>			
	8 – 12	500	.70
	13 - 16	500	.74
	17 +	500	1.02
<b>Reading</b>			
	8 – 12	500	1.04
	13 - 16	500	1.40
	17+	500	2.01
<b>Writing</b>			
	8 – 12	500	.73
	13 - 16	500	.77
	17 +	500	.54

<sup>11</sup> Benchmark Adult Rate of Second Language Acquisition and Integration: How Long and How Fast, 2004 Study conducted by Dierdre Lake and David Watt, University of Calgary

## Guiding Principles

### Principles of Learning a Second Language

- Language is learned through social interaction and a supportive environment accelerates the process.
- Language is best learned in a functional and experiential context of its use because concepts and cultural capital are inseparable from the nature of the language and are acquired simultaneously.
- Language is always used on purpose and the focus of learning L2 (Second Language Student) is on meaning rather than on form.
- The processes of developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing language skills is not a linear one- all the language skills are interrelated and mutually supportive; the mastery one reveals only in integration with the other three.
- The incorporation of prior knowledge and experience in the process of learning L2 is a powerful tool for accelerating the L2 acquisition.
- Second language learning takes time since language knowledge and skills are developed gradually.

### Factors Influencing Second-Language Acquisition

#### Personal Factors

- Age
- Personal traits and preferable learning styles
- Motivation for learning the language
- Aptitude for learning languages
- Physical and emotional health
- Relations between the first language and the second language

#### Experience Factors

- Educational and professional background
- Language abilities in the first language

#### Socio-cultural Factors

- Length of time of living in L2 social environment

- Previous exposure to L2 socio-cultural environment
- Stage of acculturation and integration to L2 socio-cultural environment
- Attitude toward the traditional values of L2 culture, interest in community

## Assumptions about Effective Learning in Adult ESL Context

- Adult ESL students come to ESL classes with a diversity of native language skills, formal education, diverse cultural backgrounds, and life experiences which impact their learning.
- Adult ESL students come to ESL classes with a variety of motivations, personal educational and career goals and different expectations about the learning process.
- Adult ESL students need to develop language skills that will allow them to articulate their own thoughts and understand the ideas communicated by others in a variety of settings.
- Adult ESL students move through a series of predictable stages in their L2 acquisition, and their progress may be inconsistent from day to day and across the four language skills.
- Adult ESL students will benefit from a classroom community that supports them to take risks in authentic communication practice and that allows them to experience immediately the positive effect of their learning.
- Adult ESL students must make decisions about the extent of their own acculturation to Canadian culture, and they will benefit from learning about cultural norms and institutions in Canada, from knowing how these institutions work and how to engage and advocate themselves within these institutions
- For adult ESL students L2 acquisition is a life-long process and takes much more time than they can spend in an ESL classroom.

## Implications for Effective Teaching and Assessment in Adult ESL Context

- Understanding and knowing the characteristics and language needs and learning styles of each student should guide our teaching practice in the selection of program models, learning materials, teaching strategies and assessment rubrics.
- Our course curriculum should be negotiated with our students to ensure that the framework, the instruction and assessment address students' language needs, their immediate and long-term goals.
- Lesson planning should work towards applying learned language skills that are applied and

practiced in meaningful and real-world tasks that encourage classroom interaction.

- Language skills introduction should build upon the activation of prior knowledge.
- The main goal of any particularly chosen instructional methodology model should be to build skills to become self-directed, independent language students.

## Philosophical Beliefs Underpinning the Curriculum Framework

The framework is guided by the understanding of the complex nature of the language itself, of what constitutes language learning and of what should be done in an EAL classroom to support this learning and the development of vital academic skills for adult EAL students.

As any “subject” or a “school discipline,” the language has its body of a knowledge that is determined by the specific nature of the language. There are many facets and characteristics that make learning a language extremely complicated and complex. As a social activity, language is a tool for communication and interaction, for determining thoughts, for creating, exchanging, and reaching meaning in a particular social context. In the entire, organic, and complex language system, all the language components exist, relate to each other, and realize themselves on a phonological, morphological, syntactical, and semantic level through the meaning they carry. The knowledge of language forms, their appropriate use in each social context, the semantic and functional dimensions of the language, as well as the formation of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and their integrated application enable us to effectively communicate the range of communicative language ability – linguistic, socio-cultural, strategic and discourse competences.

Language carries concepts and to be accessed they require the application of reasoning. We use language to name, describe, sequence, classify, compare, draw conclusions, make decisions, evaluate, etc. (Early, Mohan & Hoper, 1989). These are universalities of thinking based on the analogy of the relationship between different languages and of the relationship between them as processes of thinking and logic. It means that all of these are language functions defined as constituents of literacy or academic language skills when they are carried out with the support of cultivated learning strategies. The language concepts are always culturally bound, and, in this sense, any act of communication is an ongoing process of negotiating meaning, of understanding embedded cultural concepts, beliefs, attitudes and ways of looking and interacting with the world around us. This and the fact that language is much more than just a list of speech acts implies that the process of Second language learning involves learning it as a whole; as an interrelated system of forms, meaning, concepts, cultural capital, and strategies for the application and

acquisition of all of these. The implication of this for instruction is that language should be taught as a system for communication, knowledge formation, self-expression, and acculturation. It logically leads to the choice of a so-called macro linguistic, or integrated approach to language teaching and learning with its micro linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic components. This approach is based on a needs assessment that involves teacher observation as well as student feedback to incorporate the learning needs into the planning and instructional process, to guide the development of program objectives and identification of expected outcomes.

In the framework and scope of our EAP Preparation program, all the language constructs and notions discussed above are considered as a tool for supporting language development along with the development of English language, academic, social, and intercultural skills.

## Communicative Competence Chart

Communicative competence<sup>12</sup> is a linguistic term which refers to L2 student's ability to apply and use not only grammatical rules, but also to form correct utterances, and know how to use these utterances appropriately. The term was introduced by Dell Hymes in 1966 as a reaction against Noam Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance (1965). Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence as shown in the chart:

<b>COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE</b> <i>Canale and Swain</i>			
<b><u>Grammatical Competence</u></b>	<b>Sociolinguistic Competence</b>		<b><u>Strategic Competence</u></b>
knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence- grammar semantics, and phonology	<b>Socio-cultural Competence</b>	<b>Discourse Competence</b>	verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called
<b>words and rules</b>	knowledge of the relation of language use to its non-linguistic context <b>appropriateness</b>	knowledge of rules governing cohesion and coherence <b>coherence and cohesion</b>	into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or

<sup>12</sup> Canale and Swain (1980)

			to insufficient competence  <b>appropriate use of communication strategies</b>
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A study on communicative competence by Bachman (1990) L2 learning into linguistic or "organizational competence," including both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence, and "pragmatic (or functional) competence", including both sociolinguistic and "illocutionary competence". The CLB, 2012 is based on these two models of communicative competence and in this meaning the term is used in this document.

## Academic Skills and Their Relationship to The Canadian Language Benchmarks

The integration of constructivist language instruction with task based (TBLT) instructional approach has been adopted by this framework and is based on analysis of the available body of research into instructional methodology.

### Language Competencies and How They Relate to Academic Proficiency

English language skills development is the foundation of the EAP Preparation course that supports the ability to apply these skills in academic contexts as summarized in the chart below<sup>13</sup>. This chart taken from the work of Bachman and Palmer, is summarized below (Yeld 2001)

<sup>13</sup> The National Benchmark Test in Academic Literacy: How might it be used to support teaching in higher education? Article in Language Matters · April 2015

## Language Knowledge and Specifications

Language Knowledge (Bachman and Palmer 1996)		Language Knowledge Specifications (Yeld 2001)
Organizational Knowledge	<b>Grammatical</b>  Vocabulary Morphology Syntax	Vocabulary: 'unknown' vocabulary (deriving meanings from context); 'known' vocabulary (i.e., no context provided); spelling as it affects meaning  Syntax: understanding the syntactic basis of the language
	<b>Textual</b>	Understanding relations between parts of text (e.g., through devices of cohesion such as pronoun reference, particularly demonstratives, referring to statements/propositions or 'entities,' and/or by recognizing indicators in discourse, especially for introducing, developing, transition and conclusion of ideas, and signaling relations between phenomena).
	Cohesion Rhetorical organization	Skimming and scanning (e.g., using macro features of text such as headings, illustrations) to get gist of passage, locating specific pieces of information
		Extrapolation and application (e.g., drawing conclusions/applying insights derived from texts, seeing trends)
		Inferencing: (understanding ideas/information in a text, implied but not explicitly stated).
		Separating the essential from the non-essential (e.g., main idea from supporting detail, statement from example, fact from opinion, proposition from its argument, classifying and categorizing).
		Detailed reading for meaning, at sentence level and at discourse level

	Functional knowledge  Ideational Manipulative Heuristic Imaginative	Understanding the communicative function of the author with or without explicit indicators, such as definition, exemplification, exhortation, argument/persuasion  Understanding the importance of 'own voice' (including 'ownership' of ideas) and/or creativity of thought and expression
Pragmatic Knowledge		Knowledge of visually encoded forms of information representation (graphs, tables, diagrams, maps, flow- charts)
		Understanding basic numerical concepts expressed in text/numerical manipulations (comparisons, e.g., greater than, smaller than, percentages, basic fractions (e.g., half of, more than double), basic chronological references, sequencing, basic computations
	Sociolinguistic knowledge	Understanding metaphorical expression
	(sensitivity to dialect, language variety; register; naturalness criteria); familiarity with cultural references and figures of speech	Understanding text genre (including audience, purpose etc.)

## CLB Language Benchmarks - Global Learning Outcomes

The Global Learning Outcomes are the final measurable outcomes, or the knowledge and skills a student will be able to apply upon completing the course. To illustrate the student's progress, taking into consideration the student's benchmark at the time of enrollment and the time spent in the program, the Global Learning Outcomes provide a summary of general expectations about the minimum set of competencies that comprise each of the program components for each of the four levels within CLB Stage 1. Therefore, the Global Learning Outcomes reflect not only the



acquisition of specific English language concepts (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking), Academic Skills, Intercultural Skills addressed in the program, but also the student's ability to integrate English language skills and knowledge in performing a variety of more communicatively demanding language tasks with progressively more elaborate, wider social or academic-related contexts and higher expectations about the quality of the communicative performance within and between the indicated stages of language development. The development of English language skills in the application of the language, concerns all aspects of the communicative language ability – linguistic, socio-cultural, workplace essential skills, strategic and discourse competences. The fact that these conventions see the language as “a wider range of semiotic systems that cut across reading, writing, listening and speaking” implies that there is no language skill, which is more important than the other. The suggested design comes as a reaction to the redefined standards for EAL- program organization in the conditions of the new era of communication and information technological advancements and aims at developing all language skills and at providing broad opportunities for their application.

To reach the Global Learning Outcomes stated below, this course aims at contextualizing the language tasks in the Global Learning Outcomes so that students will be able to develop language proficiencies and cultural competence within these contexts.

## Language Skills – Global Outcomes CLB 4

<b>LISTENING SKILLS - CLB 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate understanding of short, learned utterances, chunks, sentences, and longer structures within a context that strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible</li> <li>• Comprehend words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands and courtesy formulae typical for everyday familiar topics</li> <li>• Follow simple formal and informal conversations and short monologues on topics of immediate personal relevance at a slower to normal rate of speech</li> <li>• Follow a simple set of instructions and directions related to everyday context, but with repetition or rephrasing</li> </ul>
<b>SPEAKING – CLB 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate basic needs and relate orally a story about common everyday activities using past, present, and future indicators</li> <li>• Use connected discourse in predictable situational dialogues</li> <li>• Participate in simple formal and informal conversations by using limited everyday vocabulary and</li> </ul>

short sentences with reduced/fragmented structures

- Explain opinion and join ideas using correctly common pronouns and conjunctions (it, and, but, or)
- Give sets of simple everyday instructions
- Ask for explanations and indicate problem in communication

#### **READING – CLB 4**

- Read and understand information from personal notes, letters, e-mail messages, etc.
- Read and understand common every day and more specialized instructions
- Get information from formatted texts – forms, table's schedules, directories, brochures, notices, flyers, etc.
- Identify key information and key details of simple, explicit four to six paragraph texts (e.g., news, articles, content-materials, short stories, etc.
- Use standard reference texts – dictionaries, maps, diagrams, encyclopedias to find specific information

## Academic Skills – Global Competency Outcome

<b>GLOBAL ACADEMIC COMPETENCY OUTCOMES<sup>14</sup></b>	
<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using reasoning and criteria to conceptualize, evaluate or synthesize ideas.</li> <li>• challenging assumptions behind thoughts, beliefs, or actions.</li> <li>• value honesty, fairness, and open-mindedness.</li> </ul>
<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• selecting strategies and resources to move from what is known to what is sought.</li> <li>• analyze situations, create plans of action, and implement solutions</li> <li>• evaluate alternatives and their consequences</li> <li>• approach challenges with creativity, flexibility, and determination.</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGING INFORMATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizing and using information for specific purposes.</li> <li>• access, interpret, evaluate, and share information from a variety digital and non-digital sources.</li> <li>• Practice and demonstrate ethical and effective use and sharing information</li> <li>• valuing reliability, validity, and integrity of information</li> </ul>
<b>CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generating and applying ideas to create something of value.</li> <li>• recognizing opportunities to apply ideas in new ways</li> <li>• open to exploring ideas, taking risks, and adapting to changing conditions</li> <li>• demonstrating optimism, initiative, and ingenuity</li> </ul>
<b>COLLABORATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working with others to achieve a common goal.</li> <li>• Participating, exchanging ideas, and sharing responsibilities</li> <li>• respecting competing views and nurturing positive relationships.</li> <li>• adaptable, willing to compromise</li> <li>• valuing the contributions of others.</li> </ul>
<b>CULTURAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actively engaging with cultural, environmental, political, or economic systems.</li> <li>• Acknowledging diversity and multicultural perspectives when taking action on local or global issues</li> <li>• advocating for the dignity and well-being of individuals and communities</li> <li>• valuing equity and diversity, and belief in their capacity to make a difference</li> </ul>
<b>PERSONAL GROWTH AND WELL-BEING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• managing emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual aspects of living.</li> <li>• Ability to set learning, career or wellness goals and work toward them</li> <li>• Ability to draw upon their strengths to develop interests, skills, and talents</li> <li>• Ability to be reflective, resourceful, and optimistic and they strive for personal excellence</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup> Summary based on Ministerial Order on Student Learning (#001/2013): ALBERTA EDUCATION

## Workplace Skills – Essential Skills

Essential skills are those generic or essential skills that employers expect employees to have along with job-specific technical skills that are necessary to perform occupation specific tasks. Most of the essential skills are also literacy or academic skills acquired during schooling and as such they are prerequisites for both employment and further learning. They provide the foundation for fulfilling every day social tasks, for learning other skills and for being able to adapt to the constantly changing demands of the contemporary workplace:

- Reading Text, Use of Documents, Writing, Oral Communication, Numeracy, Thinking Skills, Continuous Learning, Working with Others and Computer Use are the nine Essential Skills identified by Employment and Social Development Canada (formerly Human Resources and Skills Development Canada).

Essential Skills training aligned with EAL skills development will prepare students with workplace skills and language skills needed to meet the occupational competency standards as well as meeting the language eligibility requirements for post-secondary training programs.

According to the AWES publication *Integrating Workplace Essential Skills into Curricula: A Process Model*<sup>15</sup>, the essential skills address competencies that are not technical skills or “pre-employment” skills but are the skills required to competently perform to the standards of the job. The article explains that developing workplace essential skills are required to:

- “Perform the job
- Maintain the job
- Advance on the job
- Change jobs when desired “

## Relationship between CLBs (Canadian Language Benchmarks) and Essential Skills

Essential skills that are required for NOC (National Occupational Classifications) B occupations are primarily at the CLB 4 level and above. The following is an example of the NOC B occupation,

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<sup>15</sup> (<https://awes.ca/reference-materials/integrating-workplace-essential-skills-into-curricula-a-process-model/>)

Accounting Clerk Essential Skills and comparative CLB competencies that would inform and guide classroom-based sample tasks that an Accounting Clerk would perform:

OCCUPATION: Accounting and Related Clerks				NOC CLASSIFICATION:1431
COMPETENCIES BY CATEGORIES				
ESSENTIAL SKILL	CLB STRAND	ES LEVEL	CLB LEVEL	SAMPLE TASKS RELATED TO ES AND CLB COMPETENCIES
READING TEXT	Reading	3	7	Read internal memos, research reports, government bulletins, computer and policy manuals to obtain information and decide on action
DOCUMENT USE	Reading	3	7	Read labels on files, daily control logs, lists of clients with overdue accounts and price lists, collection of management forms, simple financial statements, etc.; Complete moderately complex forms such as credit approval, application and tax adjustments; Create a variety of tables and schedules
	Writing	3	7	
WRITING	Writing	3	7	Write reminder notes, notes on invoices, short letters to provide information to customers, or outline new procedures; Keep telephone log entries
ORAL COMMUNICATION	Listening	3	7	Listen to and obtain information over the phone or from phone messages on voice mail; Speak with customers to arrange follow up on payments and answer enquiries; Participate in staff meetings to discuss problems, exchange opinions on new policies or current procedures, Interact with colleagues and supervisors to receive instructions or obtain help
	Speaking	3	8	
NUMERACY	Literacy	3	7	Read and write, count, round off, add or subtract, multiply or divide whole numbers, integers, fractions, percents; Convert between decimals and percentages; Use formulae by inserting quantities for variables and solving; Perform measurement conversions
THINKING SKILLS	R/W/L/S	3	7	Use provided procedures for determining the nature of the problem and select available solutions as most information relevant to the decision is known; Determine order of tasks within the constraints of an overall framework; Integrate work plans with work plans of other worker(s) to manage the ongoing integration between these jobs; Select information according to some predetermined criteria
CONTINUOUS LEARNING	R/W/L/S	3	7	Learn new software and work procedures or expand financial knowledge by learning on the work-place from co-workers or through forms of self-study
WORKING WITH OTHERS	R/W/L/S	3	7	Work independently with a partner to complete routine tasks or as a member of an administrative and office support team, working together to ensure that services are provided efficiently
COMPUTER USE	R/W/L/S	3	N/A	Use word-processing, databases, spreadsheets, Internet and communication software to send e-mails, produce and obtain reports, enter numerical data and respond to prompts on the screen

Therefore, EAL students who would be interested in training to become an Accounting Clerk, need to have essential skills levels that are comparable to CLB 7 to 9. To achieve an entry level requirement and competently execute the tasks of an Accounting Clerk, a student would need to take CLB 5, 6 and 7 or complete 1,020 hours of ESL to reach CLB 7. These hours represent class instructional hours and homework assignment hours.

Institutions such as Bow Valley College, SAIT, and Robertson College require CLB 7 entrance requirements for an Accounting Program. There are other institutions that require as low as CLB 5/6 (ERP College)<sup>16</sup> but often predicts the likelihood of failure to succeed in the course work and do their job competently.

<sup>16</sup> (ALIS <https://alis.alberta.ca/occinfo/post-secondary-programs/financial-accounting-and-payroll-systems/erp-college/d9cc14fa-34c2-4f67-a1f0-a67a0097afa2/>)

The EAP Prep and EAP 100 to 300 courses have been developed to bridge English language and academic skills needed to meet the eligibility requirements of post-secondary level course work.

## Materials Selection and Development

The materials and content that are chosen by the teacher as learning resources are vehicles for developing language skills, concepts, and strategies to build language proficiency to communicate effectively, appropriately, fluently, and accurately. They have a primary role in developing language that are used to meet academic performance standards and developing skills that promote authentic, natural use of language and in revealing its socio-cultural and workplace values.

The choice of the material always influences the quality of the classroom interaction because it exposes students to learning tasks in which they must take risks in negotiating meaning, in expressing individual opinions, in determining the intention of the language, in building their own script, or schema knowledge. Good material ensures the design of good learning tasks that are engaging, appropriate for the graded level of students and relevant to their needs and interests and align with curricular outcomes and tasks. Authentic resources and materials offer students a reason for learning the language and motivation for engaging meaningfully with the context of the tasks in which that the language skill is applied. The references that the instructor researches and chooses include authentic and published or teacher- developed materials and e-learning/online learning systems intended to be used at the appropriate level of module delivery.

## Categories of Material

There are four main categories of material:

1. Authentic materials chosen based on their thematic, linguistic, and practical relevance to the curriculum design
2. Authentic materials adapted to meet necessary criteria
3. Original materials created to meet the needs of the curriculum and students
4. Commercial materials created and published explicitly for instructional purposes

The following is a checklist that has been summarized from ATESL (Alberta Teachers of English

as a Second Language) Curriculum Framework<sup>17</sup>. They are guidelines for selecting, creating, or adapting materials that are consistent with the learning outcomes and tasks identified in the course curriculum:

## Checklist Guide for Appropriate Materials

- ✓ Open Education Resources (OER)
- ✓ E – learning vs print material
- ✓ Materials are appropriate for adults.
- ✓ Materials are relevant to the students' future contexts.
- ✓ Materials contextualize language use in a meaningful way through formatting and the appropriate use of quality photographs and images.
- ✓ Materials include authentic language in use or language that has been modified while retaining the properties of the authentic material (i.e., authentic or authentic-like).
- ✓ Materials provide opportunities to develop and practice language skills that are transferable to other areas of study or to professional and leisure pursuits.
- ✓ Materials reflect the students' real-world communicative goals and interests.
- ✓ Materials support the course outcomes and do not guide the direction of the course.
- ✓ Materials are tied in to one or more learning outcomes.
- ✓ Materials are meaningful, intentional and reflect real-world communicative goals and contexts.
- ✓ Materials are related to and organized by the themes, projects, or tasks as identified in the curriculum.
- ✓ Materials support tasks and activities that build skills and have real world meaningful applications
- ✓ Materials support the development of receptive and productive language skills within the context of module task themes.
- ✓ Materials promote both language learning and language use.
- ✓ E-learning materials support the development of digital literacy.
- ✓ E-learning tools and resources provide authentic language in context and expose students

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<sup>17</sup> ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework, 2011 Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language, Wendy Chambers, Sara Gnida, Cindy Messaros, Wendy Ilott, and Kathy Dawson  
Project Manager: Justine Light

to language in use consistent with their real-world communicative needs and goals.

- ✓ As appropriate, materials include answer keys and provide annotations to guide instructors as they plan.

## Instructional Philosophy and Rationale

### Importance of Vocabulary Building for EAL Students

English language skills development is at the core of the EAP Preparation course goals and are fundamental to the development of academic and behavioural skills required for success in the post-secondary academic and training environment. This drives the argument for using a blend of teaching methodology and strategies that are proposed in this curriculum framework. Both explicit and implicit teaching of language skills are required to build the vocabulary and grammatical structural base to the level of a monolingual adult student.

Whereas this program focuses on language and academic strategies necessary for post-secondary study, the international student or new immigrant requires additional socio-cultural/intercultural competencies and workplace essential skills to navigate the cultural differences and behaviors encompassing the learning and working experience. Vocabulary building is an important focus in the language development continuum. It has been determined through research by Katherine Elizabeth Crossman<sup>[OBU]</sup> that first-year university student needs to have an English vocabulary base of about 16,000-word families to understand and manipulate the reading and writing requirements of textbooks and materials. This level of vocabulary bank is the level of vocabulary that has been acquired after 12 years of formal education. However, the average English L1 (first language) Student comes to the post-secondary educational and training system with a vocabulary family of 20,000 words (Nation and Waring, 1997). 16,000 words is the equivalent of 12 years of education in the formative language, English. Therefore, it is a vital goal for EAP Students to build their vocabulary not just through in class learning but to expand their vocabulary development by daily immersion in the English-speaking environment (social and employment) First-year post-secondary students need to acquire the range of English vocabulary of about 16,000-word families to understand and manipulate the reading and writing requirements of academic and workplace materials and to handle oral communication. . This level of vocabulary bank is the level of vocabulary that has been acquired after 12 years of formal education. However, the average English L1 Student comes to the post-secondary educational



and training system with a vocabulary family of 20,000 words (Nation and Waring, 1997). Since 16,000 words is the equivalent of 12 years of education in the formative language, English. Therefore, it is a vital goal for EAP Preparation students to build their vocabulary not just through in class learning but to expand their vocabulary development by daily immersion in the English-speaking environment.

## Instructional Methodology

### TBLT – Task Based Language Training

It is important that academic and language skills are not taught in isolation and separate from real world contexts such as the workplace, community or academic. The constructivist “Presentation, Practice and Performance” (PPP) methodology can be devoid of practical, relevant application opportunities if purposeful tasks are not introduced that will provide the student opportunities to learn not only form and function but also learn in which contexts and how the nuances of the language skill are used in their areas of academic and social interactions. WIL components will offer real world content and context to the learning activities in the course.

Task based instruction takes PPP further than isolated practice to strengthen teaching content and improve language communicative competence. Task based instruction focuses on development, exploration, practice, accuracy and then application of the language skill within a defined real-world scenario that is relevant to the student and their academic and career goals. The approach is meaning-focused instruction and is based on the constructivist theory<sup>18</sup> of communicative language teaching methodology (Ellis, 2003; Long & Crookes, 1991).

TBLT fulfills the following principles that Rod Ellis lays out as requirements of the best practices in Second Language Acquisition planning and instruction<sup>19</sup>:

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<sup>18</sup> Application of Task-based Approach in English Language Teaching, Feng Yufang & Tang Xiaoyan 2004-2006 Introduction to Task-Based Language Teaching NORQUEST COLLEGE Funded by Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education and Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour Date: June 2013 Prepared by: Sara Gnida Rural Routes

<sup>19</sup> Principles of Instructed Language Learning, Rod Ellis, University of Auckland Asian EFL Journal September 2005

## TBLT Best Practices

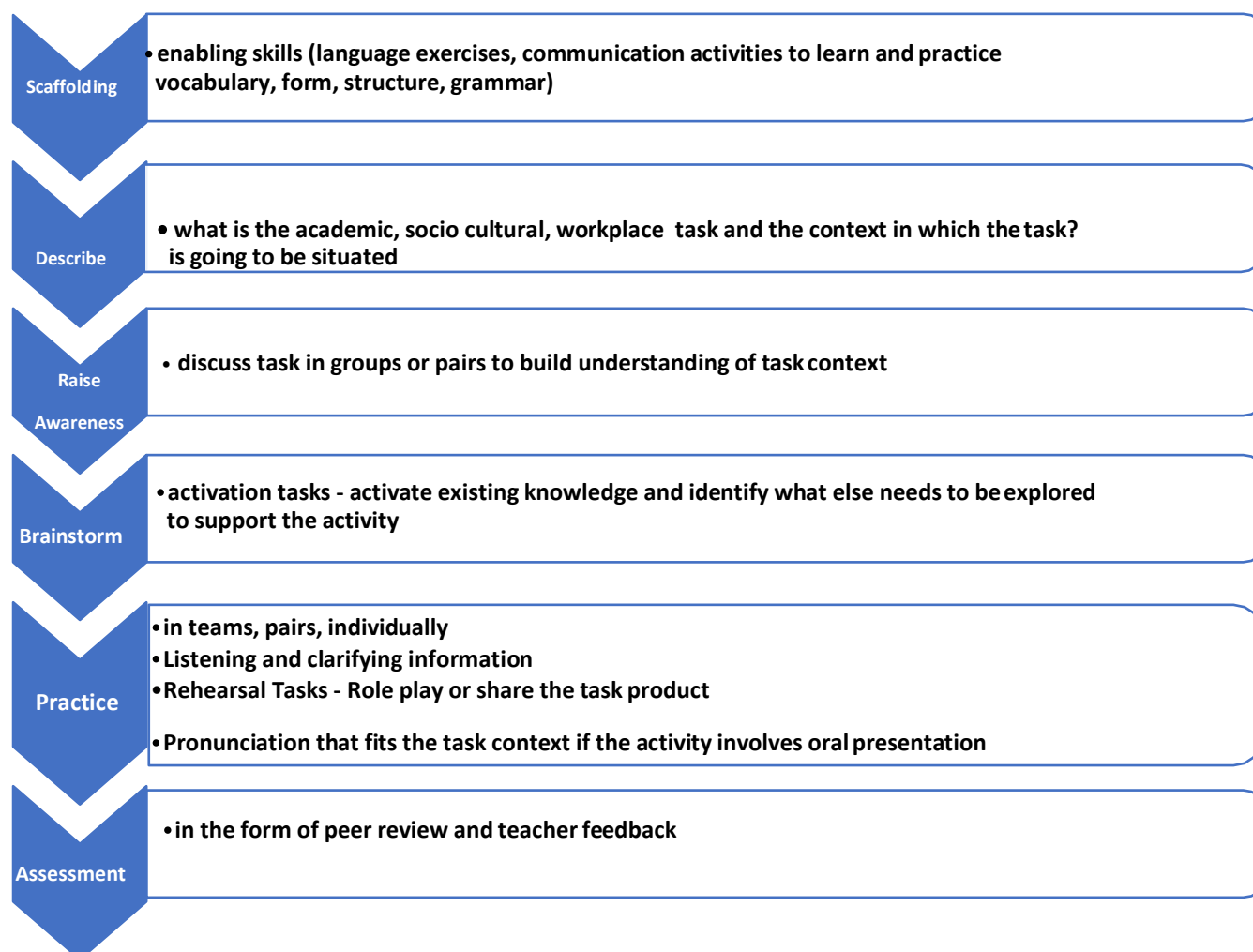
1. Instruction needs to ensure that students develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.
2. Instruction needs to ensure that students focus predominantly on meaning.
3. Instruction needs to ensure that students also focus on form.
4. Instruction needs to focus on developing implicit knowledge of the second language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.
5. Instruction needs to consider the student's built-in syllabus.
6. Successful instructed language learning requires extensive second language input.
7. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
8. The opportunity to interact in the second language is central to developing second language proficiency.
9. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in students.
10. In assessing students' second language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

To fulfill the expectations of these principles, TBLT should contain the following lesson planning and teaching elements:

- Scaffolding
- Task dependency
- Recycling
- Active learning
- Integration of form and Function
- Reproduction to creation
- Reflection on learning

When building a task-based lesson plan and instructional process, the following is the suggested sequence of instructional components that would incorporate the relationships between all elements of the TBLT methodology and adhere to the principles of second language acquisition planning and instruction:

## TBLT Scaffolding Chart



## Intercultural Communicative Competency in EAP Preparation

“Intercultural communicative competence is the ability [in an additional language] to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from other language and cultural backgrounds. This ability involves empathy, respect, tolerance, sensitivity, flexibility, and openness to interacting with people from other cultures and linguistic backgrounds in ways that do not impose dominant or so-called “native speaker” norms.” (Sun, 2014, para.24).

Students in the EAP Preparation course may come from one language and cultural group when working with groups from international locations. The dilemma in preparing EAL students for a Canadian cultural post-secondary environment is in offering opportunities to connect not only with

native English Canadian speakers and cultural experiences, but also to have opportunities to connect with students from a variety of cultural and language backgrounds that is reflective of the Canadian multicultural landscape that students will encounter in the real world of post-secondary study. In this case, it would be beneficial to mix groups of International students with students that are preparing to enter post-secondary training at Keyano College. This is currently a reality only in the virtual world of online learning because of the social distancing limitations. However, work experience that is part of the WIL component will compensate for the limited opportunities to connect with other people. This course is unique in that it attracts adult students who are both international students as well as those who are immigrants and refugees. Their goals for being in the EAP Preparation program are the same even though their origins and circumstances for being in Canada are different. This is a positive as it encourages intercultural communication that the wealth of cultural diversity provides in shaping a well-rounded global citizen.

Communicating in academic, social or workplace environments require a highly developed range of vocabulary that not only elicits the fluent expression words appropriate to a body of knowledge but also communicates nuances of ideas, facts, opinions, and conclusions within a social and academic cultural context.

The challenge in delivering instruction that develops intercultural competency is that it is best integrated into the language skills and WIL components of the curriculum and not taught as a separate content component. Task based instruction allows the application of the skill in a cultural context related to the academic skill.

Byram, Nichols, and Stevens (2001) offered the following guidelines for planning and introducing intercultural competence in the language classroom:

- students should develop awareness of cultural similarities and differences by making comparisons between their own and others' cultures to avoid an ethnocentric approach
- students need to develop skills to analyze and interpret unfamiliar social and cultural information
- students should be encouraged to collect data from beyond the classroom to promote their own intercultural communicative competence development; and
- students should be exposed to literature that promotes an understanding of "otherness" on both cognitive and affective levels

There is a distinct and reciprocal connection between language and culture. Culture shapes and

frames assumptions, beliefs, values, and language express the meaning through vocabulary, tone, and register. Negotiating understanding of what is shared and similar is the goal in building intercultural competency to overcome the barriers to understanding created by Stereotyping, ethnocentrism, prejudice, discrimination, and cultural distance<sup>20</sup>.

## Technology

Online learning is the primary mode of learning in the course. The online learning platform at Keyano College is Moodle. Moodle works well with task-based instruction because the task to which the skill is applied is relevant and practical such as learning the typical applications of software for specific subject and professional areas such as sciences, accounting, humanities, computer technology. Technology in the EAP Preparation classroom encompasses both the skills in using computers and the application of those skills to learn and practice academic skills. International students will most likely bring a high level of technological computer literacy to the classroom and will be expecting a sophisticated environment of computer technology in the program including hardware, software and learning management systems and self-study skills.

There are a variety of ways in which online learning strategies can be used to support English language learning and to develop technical literacy in the EAP Preparation course learning environment<sup>21</sup>:

- Use of internet and Microsoft suite applications for research and presentations, collaborative writing, emails, resumes
- Learning Management System driven online learning (oral and written discussion forums, recorded presentations, etc.)
- Internet, and cell phone, provide opportunities for authentic input and interaction, and communicative ability
- Video sources such as YouTube, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), can provide visual support for authentic language input and can be used to explore diverse topics, which increases Student engagement
- Websites that offer ESL vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation exercises, such as [www.manythings.org](http://www.manythings.org), [www.esl-lounge.com](http://www.esl-lounge.com), and [www.eslpartyland](http://www.eslpartyland.com) that can be used in

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<sup>20</sup> (Bennett, 1998; Byram, 1997; Jordan, 2002; Kramsch, 1993; Sharma, Tam, & Kim, 2009)

<sup>21</sup> Emerging Technologies for Autonomous Language Learning Mark Warschauer, University of California, Irvine Meei-Ling Liaw, National Taichung University, Taiwan

class. Finally, Wordle at [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net) is another particularly useful and versatile website

- Audio podcasts also offer students the opportunity to record their own speech in multiple genres (reports, simulated broadcasts, oral presentations, etc. on Moodle) to share with classmates or others or to review themselves later to reflect on their language learning progress (Warschauer, 2006) podcasting, English Central (<http://EnglishCentral.com>) uses speech recognition to assist second language students in improving their pronunciation and spoken language. The free online site was launched in 2009 with funding from Google. Students choose from popular videos on the site, listen to words or sentences from them at controlled speeds, read and repeat what they have heard, and receive feedback on their pronunciation and syntax
- Blogging is a mode of exploring ideas and expressing opinions and observations and connecting with a wider audience of English speakers through writing and speaking. Free blogging software can be found on the internet (e.g., <http://blogger.com>)
- Wikis provide another medium for self-directed writing, though some wikis, such as Wikipedia, might be at a too-high level for some language students. A simplified version, Simple English Wikipedia

## Assessment and Evaluation

### TBLA - Task Based Language Assessment

The student-centered and task-based approach chosen along with the use of CLB, 2012 as the framework for the process of teaching and learning is also reflected by the process of assessing students' progress and achievement. Since the assessment is a systematic method for gathering data based on multiple evidence about students' performance and since the CLB requires demonstration of language proficiency by the accomplishment of language tasks, the selected assessment strategies would be reliable in providing consistent ongoing feedback to teachers and students only if they are not limited to isolated test scoring. Conversely, such strategies should be task-based, should mirror the actual performance over a range of tasks based on the stated learning outcomes and should serve the formative and the summative feedback about achievement of CLB levels. Formative assessments are ongoing between instructor and students. Summative assessments are given by the mid-point and end the semester.

## Portfolio Based Language Assessment

With this in mind, this framework has adopted an assessment tool in the form of a Learning Portfolio suggested by the CLB Guide to Implementation. The Portfolio is a bank of student work that has been submitted throughout the course identified at the end of each unit module by the instructor. This collection of student “product” is used by the instructor to evaluate the emerging progress of the student towards the expected learning outcomes defined by each module. The Learning Portfolio is an assessment instrument that is not only based on the core principles of assessment, but also creates a cohesive connection amongst:

- Module learning outcomes
- Classroom instructional activities and learning tasks
- CLB competences and levels
- Content and purpose of the course
- Work essential skills

Developed, maintained, and expanded throughout student’s participation in the program, the learning portfolio is a record of learning tasks that a student has performed and that present certain evidence about the learning experiences and progress of this student. With a clear emphasis on the process of learning rather than on its result, the Learning Portfolio is an assessment tool that promotes acquisition rather than achievement because the completion of tasks targeting a specific CLB functional competence demonstrates improvement of language skills and knowledge even though a student may still not be able to cope with all the competences of the class target benchmark.

To be used as an assessment tool, the Learning Portfolio should provide a consistent record of students’ language development throughout their participation in the program. That is why the items to be included in the portfolio are selected based on the same principle for each class level which unifies the process of developing Learning Portfolios. This process is guided by the instructor based on the monthly module planning.

## Linking Research to Practice

The student's initial benchmark and the samples of tasks demonstrating the student's progress during the program in their correlation to the chosen by the student occupation and the entry level skills required for it comprise the contents of the Learning Portfolio. They also link the cycle of teaching and learning to the ultimate purpose of our EAP Preparation program which is to help students develop their full potential in language, workplace and academic skills. Analysis is based on the results current research studies and socio-economical demands help our instructors to make more informed decisions about planning and assessment and respond more effectively to the specific needs of the student population of the EAP Preparation course.

Research shows that the student's progress from one benchmark to another depends not only on the number of instructional hours, but also on some other factors such as levels of formal education, interests, and motivation to reach personal goals. It becomes crucial for students to get instruction that satisfies their personal expectations of access to the Canadian academic post-secondary education or professional training as well as integration into the Canadian workplace. That is what will make them more independent in gaining control of their surroundings and of their personal lives and choices.

In such conditions, the most sensitive question facing us as educators is what should realistically be done in a certain period to provide optimal opportunity for our students' success.

The EAP Preparation course has made a deliberate attempt to give a reasonable response to that question and to better serve the current educational and economical demands of our community by providing language training based on a thorough needs assessment of the specific, immediate, and individual needs of our student population and by linking research to practice. Research findings make these needs predictable. In addition to this predictability, the curriculum instructional model tracks these needs during the whole cycle of teaching and learning. The Learning Portfolio by itself is not only a reflection of this process, but also a proof of our endeavor to promote reflective teaching experiences incorporating the best practices and current research into our everyday professional activities.



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