Narrative and Evaluation Report

Blended Learning Innovation for IRCC Settlement Language Training

June 2016

P. Fahy, M. Sturm, R. McBride, J. Edgar

Table of Contents

The *LearnIT2teach* project provides Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) teachers with the technology tools to implement blended learning in their programs. A four stage teacher training and professional development program is provided to teachers to master the tools. Additional resources assist program administrators to implement Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) and use blended learning in language instruction.

What do LINC teachers, administrators, and learners say about LearnIT2teach?

"I know I am able to provide [learners] with a much richer experience using this method than I would be in any other way." - LINC teacher

"I also have the opportunity to learn about new technology and new ways to interact with the learners." - LINC teacher

"Every teacher who has embraced it has realized the benefits. There's a lot of work up front, but after that it's smooth sailing. All of them feel it helps them be more organized and deliver a more relevant message to the students." - LINC Administrator

"It helps me to define what I need in the 21st Century teacher. So the teachers who come with the skills or who are very willing to embrace the skills; that's the teacher I'm looking for now. Having teachers at all levels with comparable skills makes my job easier." - LINC Administrator

"It gives you the opportunity to review, to listen, to take time to understand as often as you need and want." - LINC Learner

"I like it because I can study and practice language at home and anytime, when I need it or want it. Also, I can find information which I missed." - LINC Learner

Executive Summary

The evaluation of the *LearnIT2teach* Project during the period 2013 – 16 demonstrates that teachers understand the benefits of implementing blended learning and the Edulinc.org LINC learner courseware. Through the training, and as reported in the evaluations, they come to understand: that course content is relevant, safe, and reliable; blended learning reinforces better practices in settlement language training; CLB levels and LINC themes define which of the more than 36 courses they select; learners practice skills grounded in digital citizenship; the courseware responds to individual styles and preferences; Edulinc is flexible and adaptable to the individual teacher and context; anytime-anywhere access adapts to the learner's time and place; for the teacher, contextualizing a course is time consuming first time round, but courses are e-usable with future cohorts; and, Edulinc provides functions and features that support individualized assessment and detailed tracking.

Stage 1 [Face-to-face] findings are reflective of the challenges teachers face before continuing with further stages online: participants were engaged in and satisfied with the *LearnIT2teach* project, and thrived in a face-to-face blended learning environment; however, a significant number of participants did not move on to the next training stage despite their best intentions to do so. The reason may well be that Stage 2 requires teachers to use the courseware with a LINC class for a month and some Stage 1 participants didn't have the local conditions to support implementation. Many agencies and LINC professionals also report a preoccupation with PBLA training and implementation.

On balance, results for Stage 2 were reflective of the response to all training stages:

- Interest in the project had increased (92.8%);
- Participants would recommend the training to a colleague (95.1%);
- Training met participants' expectations (92.3%).

Our evaluations are telling us that teachers don't lack motivation, but many experience barriers to implementation to courseware implementation in their workplaces. Among the necessary pre-conditions for individual learning technology innovation are administrative support, technical support, and access to technology. Currently, availability of these three conditions varies widely from service provider to service provider.

Evaluation in the *LearnIT2teach* project is based on the Participatory Action Research (PAR) model; the PAR model relies for practical purposes on Guskey's (1990), and Kirkpatrick's (1998), concepts and models of evaluation. The core of the PAR model consists of these principles:

- Goals and objectives must be clear;
- It is understood that no strategy for innovation can do everything;
- Strategies should complement each other, not compete with or ignore each other;
- All innovation strategies need to be adapted, through reflection and experimentation by users;
- All participants are potentially evaluators;
- A coordinated group of strategies is more likely to succeed than any single strategy (Guskey, 1990, pp. 25-26).
- Kirkpatrick's model contributed the following analysis of evaluation levels, asking these questions:
- Level 1: reaction - how well did the learners like the program?
- Level 2: learning - what principles, facts, and techniques were learned?
- Level 3: behaviour - what changes in job behaviour resulted from the program?
- Level 4: Results and impact on the enterprise - what were the tangible results of the program in terms of reduced cost, improved quality or quantity or work, reduced spoilage, etc.?

In other words, the evaluation asked, did they like the program? Did they learn anything? Did they take their learning back to the workplace afterwards? If they did take anything back, did it positively impact the enterprise? In this evaluation, questions 1, 2, and 3 are answered; the answer to question 4 needs more time, and the input of program administrators and others in a position to observe and evaluate activities of participants (co-workers and bosses, and the participants themselves) to be answered better.

Teachers want encouragement for professional development in the form of release time for participation, and would be encouraged by higher compensation for those who complete PD stages, or implement innovative teaching techniques. Innovation with learning technology must be treated as important by managers if teachers are to buy in. In spite of challenges in their programs, instructors are progressing through the LearnIT2teach training at a good pace, and with good uptake of the further training stages.

Structure and Purpose of this Report

This narrative and evaluation report, 2013-16, brings together diverse but complementary pieces. The first section of the report, *Professional Development for Settlement Language Training Professionals*, explains the project's foundations in research, evidence, and theory; describes the resources and services provided by the project; provides a review and interpretation of project evaluation data, and a narrative explanation of the evolution of the project; and summarizes progress in the IRCC settlement language training sector as of March 2016. As an evaluation of the *LearnIT2teach* Project, this first section also updates earlier annual reports (especially statistics) and summarizes the three year IRCC project cycle.

Appendix A: *Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Guskey's Model of Evaluation of Professional Development* provides an explanation of the evaluation approach, and explanatory tables for the project's evaluation criteria and approach.

Appendices B and C are illuminating case studies of service provider organizations currently actively innovating to implement LINC blended learning and the challenges they face..

 When participating in the training or as part of interviews and focus groups, LINC teacher and administrators have been routinely asked about the barriers and challenges to the increased use of technology at their programs. In 2015, the project gathered and analyzed results, and produced the final section of this report. *Appendix D: Occasional Report 8, SPO Blended Learning Readiness*, provides a fresh look at the entire settlement language training sector by utilizing data from two sources: a survey of sector professionals by TESL Canada, and the *LearnIT2teach* own surveys of Stage 2 participants in the training. The result is an enlightening portrait of the sector landscape, the sector's readiness to innovate with learning technology generally, and blended learning specifically. The section answers the questions: Where are we now? What teachers say about the *LearnIT2teach* training? What administrators say about technology? and, What LINC and ESL practitioners say across Canada?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SETTLEMENT LANGUAGE TRAINING
PROFESSIONALS, REPORT April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2016:

THE *LearnIT2teach* PROJECT

P. Fahy, M. Sturm, R. McBride, J. Edgar

Introduction and synopsis of the project

This is the evaluation report on the *LearnIT2teach* project to 31 March 2016. It reflects the experience of the project to March 2016, and the central role that evaluation plays in guiding development of the project's products and assessing its impact on Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (*LINC*) programs funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (*IRCC*) in Ontario and other Provinces. The period covered by this report also represented an important opportunity to address issues and comments from participants through fundamental changes in the training strategy. Since June 2014, the LINC learner courseware and teacher training have taken much the same form as from the beginning of the project in 2010, but during this period important improvements were made by the development team behind the scenes. Additionally, important data was gathered from program administrators by way of questionnaires and interviews to further inform the training content and delivery, and to better understand the conditions necessary to support deeper implementation of Technology-Assisted Language Learning (TELL) in general and *LearnIT2teach*'s learner courseware EduLINC[1] in particular.

1http://www.EduLINC.org

On 1 January 2014 a new version of the learner courseware was released, and a new training framework was introduced. In June 2013 the resources became available to update the *LINC* learner courseware to a newer version of the learning management system (LMS). The migration from Moodle 1.9 to Moodle 2.5 changed the look, feel, and functionality of the courseware, thus requiring an update of the teacher training. The maintenance and upkeep of the LMS and the courseware is a core task of the project on a regular basis. Often during this time the opportunity has been seized to make fundamental improvements that the project managers and evaluators feel will impact on the project in the coming years.

A central issue that impeded deeper implementation of the learner courseware and meaningful impact on *LINC* programs was the amount of time it took a teacher taking the training to begin using the courseware with students. Where formerly a teacher needed about 15 hours of training before registering students and implementing the courseware, after modifying the framework it takes only on average six hours to engage students in learning with the courseware. *Stage 2* of the training was transformed in a hands-on experience, requiring teachers to gain experience with using the tools with their students much more quickly. After these important changes took place in January 2014, the impact of the *LearnIT2teach* training on the skill development of the teachers, their comfort with using TELL and the EduLINC courseware in the classroom, and the initiatives of the program administrators to support teachers was re-evaluated and have continued to be an important focus for project evaluators since. In 2015, further improvements to the courseware were undertaken such as adding images to all course units. Also, LINC level 1 activities were developed and added to the courseware. Last but not least, a two-stage course for LINC Program Facilitators was developed and piloted to better inform observers about the opportunities the *LearnIT2teach* project provides to Service Providers and support LINC Administrators in their leadership implementing blended learning in their programs.

Background

Professional development (PD) for teachers has long been seen as an interest and a priority of schools and faculty (Alberta Teachers Association, 1999), needed by teachers (Lachem, Jung, Aoki, & Ozkul, 2007); PD can be very successful (Price, Richardson, & Jelfs, 2007) when the emphasis is on "central issues of teaching and learning" (Ganser, 2000). Yet, educational PD is also often unsuccessful in education, often fails to change the classroom behaviour of teachers, and has

consequently long been the object of calls for innovation and change in practice (McKenzie, 1991; Reeves, 2010; Stanley, 2011).

The *LearnIT2teach* Project was intended to address the needs of adult settlement language learners, teachers, and program administrators in *LINC* programs, initially in Ontario and, since 2013 (see below), in other parts of Canada. Important goals of the project include:

- acquainting participants with the existence and benefits of freely available learning objects keyed to the Canadian Language Benchmark Benchmarks (CLBs) 2, hosted within an open-source LMS developed by and for teachers (Moodle) that LearnIT2teach adapted for language teaching;
- supporting the use of these tools in blended learning environments (defined as some combination of face-to-face learning with guided self-access to complementary online materials) by developing courseware and hosting courses, providing training for teachers and administrators and helping build learner readiness for learning with technology.

As of June 2013, the project has had a mandate from IRCC for the following:

1. Build relationships (and "presence") with IRCC-funded organizations outside Ontario that can support the furtherance of the project's goals regionally and locally.
2. Reduce costs by using technologies to deliver training to both students and teachers.
3. Facilitate technology innovation in settlement language training by:
   - providing opportunities for Canadian newcomer language students to learn online;
   - facilitating the evolution of the blended language classroom by providing support and professional development for teachers and language program administrators.

4. Adopt SCORM as a standard for all materials development3, and *Creative Commons*-type mechanisms for sharing online and print-based curricula4.

---

2 For information on the Canadian Language Benchmarks, see http://www.language.ca

3 Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) is a collection of standards and specifications for web-based electronic educational technology (also called e-learning).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharable_Content_Object_Reference_Model

5. Develop and test a *train-the-trainer* program model, building local capacity in the effort to train teachers to implement a blended learning model and the use of EdLINC courseware.

Because the project extended over time, the Guskey and Kirkpatrick evaluation models (see below) were applied to determine the long-term impact of the project on participants (including program administrators and teachers), the programs they deliver, and the students they serve.

History and context of the Ontario *LearnIT2teach* program

The overall purpose of *LearnIT2teach* is to help teachers to integrate *technology-enhanced language learning* into their classrooms (Warshauer, 1996). While the project focuses on an orienting and training program designed for *LINC* teachers, *LearnIT2teach* also hosts and distributes readily available online learning content (largely based on the activities developed by Algonquin College and the Toronto Catholic District School Board through *IRCC* funding). Although the *LINC* learner courseware is accessed online, it is not currently set up for use as a free-standing distance learning method like the *LINC* Home-Study program. Rather, the courseware enables a blended learning approach (guided access to online learning blended with face-to-face instruction and socialization opportunities for teachers) in or as an extension of *LINC* classrooms. (See below for Ontario, and national, training details.)

In Ontario, some of the central issues of teaching and learning for publicly funded language learning programs are about the integration of technology in the classroom. The *LINC* program provides language training for newcomers in one of Canada's official languages, with the aim of facilitating their economic, social, and cultural integration into Canadian society. Students in *LINC* programs learn in one of more than 200 service provider programs, usually full-time, tuition-free, and often with income support.

The current *LINC* program comprises language courses ranging from Literacy to *LINC* Level 7, and uses the CLB as the descriptive framework underlining

---

[4] Creative Commons (CC) licenses allow creators to communicate which rights they reserve, and which rights they waive for the benefit of recipients or other creators. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_Commons

assessment, placement, and curriculum. These Benchmarks provide a basis for curriculum and syllabus development, lesson planning, materials development, and resource selection.[5] As part of the *LINC* program funded by *IRCC*, online activities were developed by Algonquin College and the Toronto Catholic District School Board based on the *LINC* Curriculum Guidelines during 2008 - 10.

In 2007, the *Fast Forward*[6] report, funded by *IRCC*, provided analysis and background regarding online language training programs and relevant technologies. Examples of different kinds of online distance language programs in different countries were examined, seeking *better* or *best* practices and examples that *IRCC* might emulate in Canada. Among the recommendations in this report, the following were made to support teacher readiness to integrate online learning activities into their classroom:

1. Develop a pilot course covering online teaching for new ESL teachers;
2. Develop a pilot project teaching professionals already in the field to work online;
3. Support the development of Web 2.0 and online learning though workshops and PD sessions at local and provincial *TESL* [Teachers of English as a Second Language] events.

A subsequent 2008 *IRCC* Call for Proposals pointed out that "Recent research in the field of second language training, conference presentations, Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement (*COIA*) consultations, and the deliberations of the *COIA* Language Training Working Group have all strongly recommended the need for increased capacity and competency for instructors of second language training programs in Ontario."

Increasing Ontario *LINC* capacity and competency in online settlement language training is the objective of the *LearnIT2teach* Project. The *LearnIT2teach* Project builds on the above and other *Fast Forward* recommendations.

---

[5] *IRCC* funded settlement language training programs are now migrating from *LINC* levels to levels based purely on the *CLB* levels. Before this change, there were often discrepancies between a learner's *CLB* and *LINC* levels.

[6]Fast Forward: An Analysis of Online and Distance Education Language Training, retrieved from http://wiki.settlementatwork.org/wiki/Fast_Forward:_An_Analysis_of_Online_and_Distance_Education _Language_Training

In January 2010, the *LearnIT2teach* Project, under contract to the federal Department of IRCC, began working to provide both the learner courseware and the teacher training to support the integration of e-learning into Ontario immigrant settlement and language adaptation programs. The scale of the project was and is ambitious: at any one time, there are approximately 6,300 learners in hundreds of **IRCC**-sponsored classes provided by about 150 service provider organizations across Ontario.

National expansion of LearnIT2teach, 2013 -16

In June 2013, the *LearnIT2teach* concept, proven in Ontario, was extended nationally, under a new contribution agreement with *IRCC*. The **project's** mandate for the Ontario Region of IRCC was expanded to the Prairies and the Maritime provinces. In January 2014, the first training events took place outside Ontario. In April 2015, the project began to offer its services in British Columbia. The expanded project built local teacher training capacity and in-service support in the form of local technology coaches – *LearnIT2teach* mentors. This geographic expansion of the availability of teacher and program support was intended to spread the use of *LINC* blended learning, and support the use of the *LINC* learner courseware in all the regions and locales where *IRCC* programs operate. Partnerships were created with lead service provider organizations which were to be the local face of the *LearnIT2teach* Project: Norquest College, Edmonton; Bow Valley College, Calgary; the Saskatoon Open Door Society, Saskatoon; English Online, Winnipeg; the YMCA of Greater Saint John, and the Immigrant Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), Halifax.

Courseware Development, 2015 - 16

The migration of the learner courseware (Edulinc.org) to Moodle 3.0 got underway in 2015 and 2016, requiring extensive revisions to the teacher training.

To encompass CLB levels 1 - 8, the LINC 1 courseware was released in September 2016. Highlights:

- Multimedia glossary (images and audio)
- Many reading activities provide audio support and a larger font than LINC 2 and up
- Activities are generally more visual than other levels, also more audio support

- SCORM activities use a simplified navigation set (they take students directly to first exercise and skip the intro page)
- Courseware includes level-appropriate NanoGong speaking activities and class polls

All of the new LINC 1 SCORM learning objects were made available on Tutela.ca.

As of March 2016, the project had a network of 14 trainers, and face-to-face training had been provided in every province but Newfoundland and Labrador. Ongoing support was provided for teachers working through all stages of the training and for mentors. Live help was available seven hours per day (M-F).

The biggest obstacles to blended learning uptake continued to be lack of paid release time for training and the reality that financial or human resources were being fully consumed by PBLA training and implementation. The project focus going into the new year was to be re-identifying and reaching out to the non-responsive and to non-participants.

In October 2015, the project received a list of training requests gathered by IRCC, containing 411 teachers distributed among 78 SPOs [service provider organizations] in Yukon, B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. By the end of March the project had responded to all the training requests with face-to-face events, online training, or planning for local training in 2016 -17. The support of IRCC officers in soliciting agencies to join the list in 2015 helped emphasize the importance of learning technology innovation in the sector for service provider organizations.

New training materials were added to the Stage 3 course to support teachers who wanted to utilize badges and gamification in their Edulinc courses. Edulinc badges, based on both CLB and LINC levels, were developed and added to a badges repository at the Edulinc site. These badge training resources were adapted into a presentation at the TESL Ontario conference.

Work continued on demonstrating how Edulinc and Moodle could support print-based PBLA. (Further work on this, including training materials to support some of the new applications of Moodle, is required.) With help from a PBLA regional coach, a demonstration course was set up and populated with samples to highlight ways the Edulinc learner courseware might support PBLA. The PBLA demo was used in a presentation at the TESL Ontario conference. Following this presentation and based on feedback at the presentation, the *LearnIT2teach* project developed Stage 3

training materials to support PBLA based on new Moodle features introduced in the demonstration course.

Two six unit Moodle-based online courses in *Learning Technology Innovation Leadership (LTIL)* were delivered in pilot/field testing. The courses were targeted toward English as a Second Language (TESL) professionals currently working in the IRCC-funded settlement language training (SLT) sector who wanted to lead learning technology innovation in a program management or lead teacher capacity.

Participants in the courses focus on: Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) historically and modern Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL). Blended learning as a language training practice; Teacher training options provided by the *LearnIT2teach* project to SLT professionals funded by IRCC; developing personal leadership skills to support learning technology innovation in an SLT program; increasing knowledge of theory, evidence, and better learning technology practices in the SLT sector; formulating arguments and strategies to encourage and enable learning technology innovation within an organization, and with clients and funders; and articulating the outline of a plan for local learning technology innovation.

Three cohorts of about 12 LINC professionals each completed the pilot-field test of Part 1 of the training. The first cohort in Part 2 were nearing the end of their training in March 2016. An evaluation report for both parts will be completed after April 2016.

Needs of language teachers

In 2013, a survey was conducted at *TESL Ontario Conference* of 534 language teachers; 324 useable results (60.7%) were obtained. While the results pertain specifically to Ontario, and more specifically to *TESL* members, they probably also reflect the views of teachers nationally. The following are some of the major results of the survey, especially in general findings. These results were used to direct development of the project.

Length of career: 1 - 3 years = 19%; 4 – 7 years = 24%; 7 – 10+ years = 57%. The majority of the respondents had more than seven years of teaching experience, some much more.

Top 10 most common locations: Toronto = 38%; Mississauga = 14%; Ottawa = 8%; London = 5%; Windsor = 5%; Hamilton = 4%; Brampton = 4%; International = 3%;

Kitchener-Waterloo = 3%; York region = 2%. Most of the respondents were located in one city; 60% came from three cities. Most language training appeared to be centralized in a few areas.

Roles: Seventy-five percent of respondents taught in language training programs, 12% taught in instructor training. (It was also noted that a significant number of the 13% who indicated "other" in response to this item were *unemployed*, and might otherwise have been placed in the *language training* category.)

Type of language training: LINC = 40%; ESL = 17%; college = 7%; English for academic purposes = 7%; all others = 29%. Most students were in a few programs; there were many programs with very small proportions of students.

Interest in PTCT[7] courses: yes = 87%, no = 13%. Eighty-one percent of respondents reported they would not take the course if it were not funded.

Barriers to course participation: lack of time = 42%; financial problems = 34%; travel distance to course = 21%. Clearly, the greatest barrier was the time issue: anything that would reduce the amount of time required would be an advantage to course participation.

Other barriers (originally reported in November 2013)*:*

1. Inadequate Internet connection.

    a. Twenty-one to 51 % of respondents cited this reason for non- or irregular-participation, including lack of access to reliable equipment).
    b. It was encouraging that the same survey showed that 85% of the respondents used a computer for learning.
    c. Also encouraging was the finding that 99% of respondents reported that a computer for learning had been useful to them.

2. Insufficient English skills.
3. Computer not available, or personally deficient computer skills.

---

[7] Post-TESL Certificate Training (PTCT) is an initiative of TESL Ontario that accredits completion by its members in selected in-service professional development and training courses. (http://www.teslontario.net/PTCT-courses)

Recommendations (both content- and process-related)*: instruction for multilevel classes = 48%; designing and developing teaching materials = 48%; teaching pronunciation = 48%; developing curriculum including designing and developing tasks = 43%; teaching English for academic purposes = 42%; assessing learners' needs = 41%; standardized testing preparation (i.e., IELTS, CAEL) = 37%; developing and implementing language assessment for the classroom = 36%; occupation-specific language instruction = 36%; using the Canadian language benchmarks = 35%.* Information exists about the importance attached to specific elements of the curriculum, including delivery systems and devices. Also, the range is not great (from 48% to 35%), indicating that participants would likely be content with any content programs chose to include in training courses. Finally, most of the respondents (77%) indicated that their choices were based on personal interest; priorities might be different if they were compared or discussed with others.

Delivery modes: blended = 48%; online = 33%; face-to-face = 32%. Clearly, online and blended learning, using technologies, were accepted and expected. Face-to-face learning, while preferred by about a third of the respondents, was a minority interest. Also noted in the comments: location convenience of courses was important (courses closer to home were a priority); more institutions needed to offer *PTCT* or *PTCT*-approved courses; funding should be available to all, not just to *IRCC* employed participants; fees should be affordable, and should be as low as possible; language qualifications should impact participants' pay scales; source materials should not overlap materials in mandatory courses for *TESL* certification.

LearnIT2teach PD training and using technology

Keyed to *LINC* curriculum guidelines and standards, and using the *Moodle* open-source and freely available *LMS*, the objectives of the *LearnIT2teach* teacher training followed a detailed rationale and various intentions. Just as new communications technologies are ubiquitous in daily life, they are becoming ubiquitous in all fields of learning, for learners of all ages and backgrounds (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009; Gabriel, Campbell, Wiebe, MacDonald, & McAuley, 2012). Language learners know well that they work and live in the age of online learning, which includes Web 2.0 tools like blogs and wikis, social networking tools, and *LMS*s like *Moodle*. Today, teaching makes use of the advantages and affordances of Web 2.0 tools and Internet resources in both formal and informal learning environments (Anderson, 2004).

As one example, in universities and colleges laptops, wireless networks, and *LMS*s are important ways teachers distribute content and communicate with learners, and that learners communicate with each other. And they are an important way learners submit assignments, research questions, collaborate with each other on projects, and share learning experiences with their peers.

"Students enjoy being able to share ideas with their classmates through the forums, and being able to see and benefit from their classmates' work." - LINC Teacher

As life and work are migrating to the Internet, so is language education. New technology and new software are multiplying in their applications to online learning daily. Cell phones become translation tools. *YouTube* videos become the stuff of classroom lessons. Wikis and blogs become collaboration and sharing tools for language learners. Teachers and students who take full advantage of these emerging tools will participate in more dynamic, immediate, and communicative environments that provide opportunities for meaningful experiences through social constructivist learning (Henriques, 1997).

Through these communication technologies, students can learn with more flexibility in and with more responsibility for their own learning process, and students with similar goals – even if separated geographically – can learn together and support each other. Many language learners have specific, often career-related goals; Web 2.0 tools provide the opportunity to bring them together and create high-quality, efficient, and cost-effective language learning environments.

Most language teachers in the field are not online learning experts, and most did not enter language teaching because of an interest in or a skill with information and learning technologies, but teachers today are facing expectations from learners and curriculum and course developers that they and their programs understand and use new technologies, and that they make use of emerging language training software, Internet tools, resources, and technologies to engage and instruct using contemporary modes and means. Integrating technology into learning, after all, also helps prepare adults for the technology they will encounter in their professional and social lives as newcomers to Canada.

Overall, the *LearnIT2teach* teacher training program focuses on preparing and supporting teachers to use online technologies with newcomers, specifically an open-source *LMS*, and a free suite of language curricula ("learning objects"). Together, the online

"Many of our activities can be linked to the courseware, allowing students to try vocabulary or reading exercises more than once." - LINC Teacher

courseware and its parts support the development of all four English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Mainly through online teacher training, the project assists Ontario *LINC* and *ESL[8]* teachers to develop understanding of learning technology and the skills, to implement online courseware with their learners, and to support them in exploring and utilizing it. Overall, the *LearnIT2teach* project helps second language training instructors improve their educational technology skills, knowledge, and practices, enabling them to better support newcomers in obtaining language skills, and assisting them in meeting their settlement and integration goals, including, ultimately, employment. Professional development specifically designed for program administrators is also offered.

TESOL Technology Goals and Standards

The *LearnIT2teach* project outcomes are consistent with the "Technology Goals and Standards" from *TESOL* (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)*,* the main North American association for ESL teachers. This framework, developed to support English language teachers, teacher educators, and administrators to use technology in and out of the classroom, is based on practice and research undertaken through the National Educational Technology Standards (*NETS*) Project of the International Society for Technology in Education *(ISTE)*, with a specific focus on English Language Teaching *(ELT)*. The framework includes sets of standards for programs, teachers, and learners. These guide the *LearnIT2teach* Project's training foci and approaches (see the section on *LearnIT2teach PD training approach* for more detail).

The LINC Courseware: digital learning objects and the repository

A collection of over 300 *LINC*-based digital learning objects pre-existed the *LearnIT2teach* project. These materials were created during two earlier curriculum development projects funded by *IRCC* (Ontario Region): *The LINC 1 - 4 Classroom*

---

[8] Although "*ESL*" settlement language training is also delivered with provincial rather than federal resources, such programs and teachers do not qualify for professional development and training as they are not *IRCC*-funded. Nevertheless, the *LearnIT2teach* tools and approach have equal potential to assist these programs to integrate blended learning into provincially funded language programs.

Activities books, produced by Algonquin College, Ottawa; and *The LINC 5 – 7 Classroom Activities* books, produced by the *Toronto Catholic District School Board*. These two sets of print materials were released in 2009 – 2010, and are widely used in Ontario and elsewhere. The activity books comprise reproducible classroom activities tied to daily communication in English in Canada. The activity books are organized around the curriculum "themes" and "units" laid down in the *LINC* Curriculum Guidelines[9].

During development of the print activities, interactive exercises were also created by blending dynamic language learning media, text, sound, and images. These exercises were packaged as *SCORM*-complaint digital learning objects. The learning objects are intended to be used by students working independently in a computer lab, or even from their home computers; however, they are normally facilitated by a teacher. Each learning object for LINC 2-4 has a lead-in page to introduce the background language and any prerequisite knowledge. *SCORM*-compliance makes them fully portable to virtually any learning or content management system. The learning objects are a key building block for the project, providing ready-made, benchmarked Canadian curricula.

In addition to these learning objects, which pre-existed the project, the collection has since been expanded by the project to fill in gaps and meet special needs. For example, newer learner readiness materials support the development of learner skill with the courseware and technology.

Initially, the Repository of Online Language Learning Resources (ROLLR) was the project's way of addressing how to host and distribute digital materials, as well as to facilitate the emergence of an informal community of practice for Ontario and Canadian language and settlement teachers through web 2.0 and social media technologies. With the initial 300+ learning objects in hand, and in partnership with the Robertson Library at the University of Prince Edward Island, ROLLR became an integral part of LearnIT2teach PD training, where participants learned how to use the LINC learning objects hosted on ROLLR, with the EdLINC courseware in the LMS Moodle.

The original 300+ learning objects were loaded into each of about 40 *Moodle* courses. Each *Moodle* course was based on a *LINC* language proficiency level and

---

[9]http://openlibrary.org/books/OL19480594M/LINC_Curriculum_guidelines_Language_Instruction_for_Newcomers_to_Canada

one of the *LINC* Curriculum Guidelines themes or units of study into which each level was divided; for example, *LINC* 4, *Telephone, Customer Service and Banking*. This growing collection of *Moodle* courses has been hosted on another key Internet resource in the *LearnIT2teach* Project, called *EduLINC*. Using the courseware, teachers were able to register students in their own closed courses, assign tasks, and track progress. Teachers could communicate with learners through their *Moodle* course, and students in the course were able to communicate with each other.

One key underlying philosophical principle of the project was that all material was shared openly with the Canadian *LINC* community, and that the full community had opportunities to add to the growing collection of learning objects through the repository [now *Tutela*[10]]. Teachers could also customize the *Moodle* LMS to their own needs, and could ingest materials they identified from other sources into their courses (and the teacher training provided the skills to adapt and upload third party material to their own courses).

The learning objects and the *Moodle* open source *LMS* were available to be installed locally in programs and adapted to any specific language program's requirements. Taking up the training and utilizing the learner courseware left programs free to make their own further choices independently; for example, service provider organizations could set up their own their own version of *Moodle* and customize it to meet their own needs. The open source philosophy and the capacity-building aims of the project liberated teachers and programs to adapt and change the materials to meet their own needs, or to choose or to develop (build) their own materials.

I enjoy the creativity of customizing my courseware, and I also enjoy the convenience of being able to reuse the work for each subsequent session of my class." - LINC Teacher

---

[10] http://www.tutela.ca

LearnIT2teach's partnership with LINC programs

Since January 2010, many *LearnIT2teach* PD training events have been organized in partnership with *LINC* programs across the province of Ontario. Local Service Provider Organizations in Ontario, *TESL* Affiliates, and *LINC* PD Day planners were contacted to organize the project's Stage 1 face-to-face training sessions. The reception for the training events and the project tools was overwhelmingly positive, with many *LINC* and *ESL* professionals expressing appreciation for the timeliness of the project and endorsing the need for the training events and the need for the Internet "tools." There were also numerous requests to repeat the training in some programs.

LearnIT2teach PD training stages

The *LearnIT2teach* PD program was designed to support teachers with varying levels of computer skills to learn how to use online language learning resources. An additional training resource was developed specifically with the needs of program administrators in mind. From the inception of the project until January 2014, teacher training was divided into four stages, preparing participants gradually to edit and create online courses and learning resources (initially, the training stages were distinct in that they afforded participants more administrative rights between some training stages): *Stage 1* is a face-to-face introduction to the key elements of the *LearnIT2teach* program; in *Stage 2,* teachers learn to manage the courseware with learners while developing basic course editing in the program's *LMS*, *Moodle. Stage 3* trains instructors in blended language training and more advanced course editing and management using the *LMS*; and *Stage 4* enables instructors to author their own e-learning activities and upload them to a digital repository, for access by other professionals and by students.

Two additional courseware enhancements were completed in 2014 – 15: Courseware Basics in Moodle 2, to help teachers using edlinc (Moodle 1.9) make the transition to edulinc (Moodle 2.5); and, *LearnIT2teach* Train the Trainer, to support mentors in their preparation to support teacher trainees in all areas of the training.

Additionally, Learning Technology Innovation Leadership (LTIL) is being developed to educate them on the value of blended learning and how to manage its integration into their language programs. In an initial phase, administrators in the training had access to *The Administrator's Guide to Integrating & Managing Blended Learning*, and online webinar events. Enhancements resulted in two Moodle-based 6-unit courses

and a requirement of each participant to outline a plan for migrating their organization to blended learning in order to complete the course.

To maintain an up to date learning product and due to web security, it became necessary in 2013 to update the courseware *LMS* from *Moodle* 1.9 to version 2.5. This resulted in a different and better, more secure learning product.

The launch of a *Pre-Stage 2* is perhaps the most obvious of many changes and improvements. An intermediate training stage between *Stages 1* and *2*, called *Pre-Stage 2,* was developed. Before the change, teachers were not up and running with the courseware until they had completed about 12 hours of training (*Stages 1* and *2*). Under the new training framework, *Pre-Stage 2* enables teachers with the basic skills to put the courseware to work with learners after less than six hours of training. Indeed, *Stage 2* now requires teachers to use the courseware with their students for at least a month, resulting in faster uptake of the training, a more hands-on experience for trainees and faster uptake by classes and learners. This change was part of a larger suite of changes and updating applied to both the learner courseware and the teacher training in 2013.

In any case, in both the 1.9 and 2.5 versions of the *LearnIT2teach* PD training, participants were introduced to the *LINC* learning objects within the context of *Moodle*, and received an introduction to the *LMS* at the same time. This training gave participants an opportunity to interact with a variety of online language learning activities. They used basic on-screen instructions to ensure their computers met the minimum technical requirements, which would be the same as *LINC* students trying to access the online activities on a computer. (The *LearnIT2teach* PD training stages, and evaluation results, are described in more detail in the following section.)

Stage 1: Introduction to *LearnIT2teach* PD training

Training participants are introduced to the *LINC* learning objects in the context of the *LMS*, *Moodle* (see also results and discussion, below). This training stage blends interactive and fun learning using language tools to learn basic concepts of Web 2.0,

learning objects, online pedagogy, and *LINC* levels. Teachers attend a face-to-face information session[11] and orientation to become familiar with:

- the project goal and outcomes, assumptions, and conditions for successful integration of online learning (*better/best practices for online learning*);
- the purpose for the use of the *LMS* environment for the *LearnIT2teach* PD;
- the potential of the *LINC* courseware and the learning objects repository, the purpose and the outcomes of the various training stages;
- the steps/options in implementing online delivery of *LINC* programming;
- introduction to the roles of teachers and administrators in successful implementation;
- introduction to key components of the project and the benefits they provide to learning and teaching, including evaluation.

To maximize flexibility in training options, especially for service providers that have already incorporated the courseware into their curriculum, an online alternative to face-to-face Stage 1 training is also available. This has been particularly useful where program managers request access to the training for technically savvy instructors.

In *Stage 1*, training participants attend a hands-on orientation session in a computer lab, to learn about the *LINC* courseware and to experience the *LMS* environment as a student would. The following illustrates the workshop participants' feedback on the usefulness of various functions of the *LMS* (a summary of the survey results is provided later in this report.).

---

[11] An online version of Stage 1 is available to programs that have incorporated the courseware into their curriculum. Program managers who request access to the training for designated, technically savvy instructors are accommodated when it is an operational requirement for that SPO.

Answer Choices	Responses
NanoGong speaking activities	9.21%
Personal Profile	29.33%
Assignments	41.35%
Choices	28.09%
Forums	36.85%
Glossary	35.17%
Resources	46.52%
SCORMs/AICCs	38.20%
Wikis	28.31%
News Forum	23.15%
Keywords	26.18%
Classroom activities	72.58%
LINC curriculum guidelines	32.70%
Learning object standard	22.02%
Learning object audio	23.48%
Polls	23.03%
Discussion forum	26.63%
Blog	27.75%
Wiki	22.58%
Grades	35.96%

While Classroom Activities are clearly judged most useful, *Resources and Assignments* functions of the *LMS* were highly valued. After the upgrade from Moodle 1.9 to 2.5, the addition of *NanoGong* Speaking Activities was also highly valued.

As of March 2016, 2,300 LINC teachers have completed *Stage 1* training.

Pre-Stage 2: Preparing for Stage 2

As noted above, *Pre-Stage 2* was added to the project to smooth the transition of participants from the face-to-face *Stage 1*, to the online *Stage 2*. In addition to this delivery difference, there were content differences in *Stage 2*. The emphasis of *Stage 2* was on how to facilitate the use by teachers of the courseware and some capabilities of the *LMS* (see below).

Some students reported that they had to review portions of *Stage 1* before proceeding to *Stage 2*, because of a time lapse between training sessions. *Pre-Stage 2* was also intended to provide a review of *Stage 1* content, to address this common occurrence.

By March 2016, 337 teachers had completed the *Pre-Stage 2* training reported that their interest in the *LearnIT2teach* training increased (90% agreed/strongly agreed), that they would recommend it to a colleague (91.5% agreed/strongly agreed), and that they intended to complete more *LearnIT2teach* training (96% agreed/strongly agreed).

Stage 2: Basic Course editing

Since the inception of the project, participants in Stage 1 training have stated a high level of satisfaction with the stage. Survey responses indicate that most participants *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that:

- Their interest in *LearnIT2teach* materials is greater as a result of the [*Stage 1*] training.
- They would recommend participation in this training to a colleague.

The following comments were typical: *I enjoy this technology and feel it is important for ESL/LINC students to be proficient in it for future employment and personal satisfaction; I wish I had had this training BEFORE I taught a blended learning course; My mentor is highly reliable and approachable.*

In surveys of *Stage 2* participants, two outcomes were noted:

4. Many participants reported that *workload/overload* accompanied training;
5. Even more participants reported that the *total time commitment* was high in completing the training.

Participants in this course facilitate an e-blended approach to settlement language training using LINC courseware that has been adapted to specific teaching contexts.

By the end of the new *Stage 2* course, participants are able to:

- Facilitate LINC program delivery using the LINC courseware in a blended format
- Deploy new *LINC* courseware and provide student access through their own accounts
- Make selected content available to learners
- Manage the various types of learning activities provided in the *LINC* courseware
- Communicate course events and news using the *LINC* courseware
- Add new elements to the *LINC* courseware
- Create a *Tutela* account and use its browse and search functions to integrate at least one non-*SCORM* resource or discussion group idea in the *LINC* courseware or in a class activity complementing the courseware
- Relate Chickering and Gamson's *Good Teaching Principles* to the *LINC* courseware and their own teaching practice (see below)

Stage 2 is delivered online using the *Moodle LMS*; participants in this Stage *implement* existing *LINC* materials with their classes. Instructors also learn how to create/facilitate blended learning using existing courseware for *LINC* levels 2 to 7. Participants in the new *Stage 2* use the courseware with students for a month, customize the courseware to their teaching context, join and integrate *Tutela* resources into their blended course, and participate in several collaborative idea sharing tasks. When teachers complete this stage, they receive a certificate.

Overall, 357 teachers reported completing the *Stage 2* training as of March 2016 (96.5%). What's more, almost all of the training participants (87.5%) said that they intended to continue with the Stage 3 training.

Stage 3: Advanced Course editing

Participants in Stage 3 facilitate the *LINC* courseware while developing more insight into blended learning, best practices in settlement language training, and Moodle course editing and course management.

By the end of *Stage 3* participants should be able to:

- Facilitate program delivery using the *LINC* courseware while applying best practices in blended learning
- Deploy the *LINC* Courseware using a classroom-centered approach to blended learning
- Manage the *LINC* courseware using at least one advanced feature of *Moodle*
- Extend course communication and enhance course content using *Moodle* blocks
- Enhance blended learning with *Moodle* resource modules
- Develop new content using *Moodle* activity modules
- Search, preview and download a *SCORM* activity from *Tutela.ca* and add it to the courseware
- Identify how the *LINC* courseware supports best practices in settlement language training

Stage 3 is offered and mentored using online technologies. Teachers select learning objects from the learning objects repository, based on students' level, language skill, CLB, LINC Curriculum Guidelines, thematic units, etc., to build their own customized online course. In April 2016 , it was reported that 106 teachers had completed this Stage; the relatively low number was ascribed to two causes: the required time commitment to complete Stage 3; and, the lack of a clear incentive to complete the advanced training to completion of Stage 4 (lack of TESL accreditation).

Here are three typical comments from participants:

> *Overall, I have come to appreciate the EdLINC program for the flexibility and creativity it allows teachers while supplying some useful material geared to the different LINC levels.*

> *Initially, the technology information sounded too daunting, but when I actually started doing Stage 3, I found it very interesting and hands-on.*

> *In the end, I have to say that not only I learned how to work as an editing teacher and use many different features of an open source learning management system, but I also was able to see and be satisfied with the immediate results of implementing my course in a LINC classroom.*

Participants in the new Stage 3 complete a quiz about blended learning, submit a sample lesson plan based on a blended learning template, customize the courseware and add new activities, collaborate with peers on the best practices in settlement

language training wiki, and utilize SCORM content from Tutela. Training participants in 2014 – 15 received a third certificate of completion. In addition, in Ontario in July 2015, TESL Ontario accredited ESL teachers became eligible for Post-TESL Certificate accreditation upon completion, adding the incentive professional recognition for this training stage. (Stage 4 has been PTCT-accredited since 2012).

Stage 4: Creating e-activities learning resources

As of April 2016, 52 teachers were enrolled in Stage 4. Despite barriers to participation and completion, 14 had completed *Stage 4* training. Comments received included:

The main constraints of applying LMS are the resources: the time available in the labs, and the time required to develop new materials. That is why I appreciate the work done by the team who developed the LINC e-Activities and made them available on the EdLINC site.

Concerns that digital technologies might interfere with face-to-face interactions did not materialize. Some students prefer to work online, but they also are encouraged to socialize online, which in turn fosters face-to-face interactions.

I feel that the effectiveness of TELL or my e-activities does not solely lie in how well it is developed but in how I use them to support my classroom teaching to improve the language competencies of my learners.

Trainees in *Stage 4* are trained in the following:

1. Web 2.0 phenomena and their potential for *ESL* instruction (e.g., social media such as Twitter or social bookmarking);
2. Pedagogical principles of e-learning;
3. Principles of designing effective *TELL* activities;
4. Project-based language learning.

Trainees in *Stage 4* acquire the technical skills to do the following:

1. Develop original, self-correcting online student activities using *TELL* authoring software;
2. Create a simple *SCORM* 1.2 package;
3. Utilize *Creative Commons* licensing to acquire and publish digital content;
4. Share this content with the *LINC* professional community via *Tutela*.

Teacher-trainees complete course authoring activities as an editing teacher in *Moodle,* and submit a reflective statement with thoughtful descriptions of the context for using the activities. The training activities include planning and creating a *Moodle* course on a specialized aspect of *LINC* teaching and learning, writing a journal reflective of the development process, uploading learning objects and/or digital content to *Tutela*, and using an authoring tool. Participants received a certificate of completion.

Summary of training results 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2016

The following Table shows training results, nationally and in Ontario.

Table 1: Total trainees in Ontario, and nationally, as of 31 March 2016

Stage	ON	BC	AB	SK	MB	NB	NS	PEI	YT	Total
1	415	241	201	82	64	49	33	24	1	1110
PreStage 2	211	137	117	29	11	26	11	8	1	551
2	179	100	85	22	9	18	8	3	1	425
3	48	46	25	8	7	4	3	2	0	143
4	15	23	3	3	4	3	0	1	0	52
CoursewareBasics	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64

By the end of March 2016, there was a total of 250 training participants from Ontario. There were Stage 1 and Pre-Stage 2 training events in Ontario, all of which were face-to-face training sessions.

The migration to *Moodle* 2.5, which occurred in 2013 and 2014, and was especially a priority in 2014,resulted in *Moodle* becoming the foundation *LMS* of the project and the courseware. Version 1.9 of *Moodle* was still available to teachers for those who wanted or needed it.

The project submitted proposals to multiple events, all of which were approved; the *TESL Canada Conference*, Regina, May 2014; and the 2013, 2014, 2015 *TESL Ontario*

Conferences. These sessions were intended to inform practitioners of the project and its findings, and to provide training opportunities, especially *Stage 1*.

The *Annotated Bibliography*, completed in 2014, and updated in 2015-16, became an important training and promotion element. The *Bibliography* was developed as a resource for teachers, administrators, and policy-makers on better practices in blended learning, and the value and use of technology in blended learning environments, and was used as a training component after development. The Bibliography was distributed at the *TESL Ontario Conference* in 2014, was placed on the project portal that fall, and was shared with *Tutela* in September 2014. The bibliography was the first of its kind in this area, and has been well received by users.

LINC programs were seen as critical to adoption of *LearnIT2teach,* and the *LINC* courseware generally. The project spent considerable training resources to convince *SPO*s to evaluate the readiness of their members, and to convince them to adopt technology in their teaching. *SPO*s are pivotal to adoption of *LearnIT2teach* approach*.*

Nationally, the *Train-the-trainer* training development continued throughout the two years, to expand training opportunities to all regions and potential LINC participants. (The rationale was that, as the project was successful, requests for assistance would increase quickly beyond the capabilities of the project, and that these would be best served by a local training providers in each Province.)

Stage 1, as expected, was the most common stage of training in the project, and was based on a familiar face-to-face training model. This assured that participants received interaction opportunities as well as training in the concepts intended.

Stage 3 of the *LearnIT2teach* training received *PTCT* approval as teacher training in the Post-*TESL Certificate Training* program, a major accomplishment of the project. Certification meant that teachers who completed Stage 3 of project training qualified for Certification credit, as they would for any other training. (Minor changes were made to *Stage 3* and *Stage 4* materials during the project, to comply with *TESL Certificate Training* requirements, and as a result of user observations.)

Newsletters were authored monthly for a distribution list of LINC professionals. Newsletters highlighted project achievements and invited input from project participants. The Newsletters are seen as a way both to disseminate outcomes of the project, and to increase interaction in the field about better practices in language training. The project has also produced an informational brochure about its components, for general distribution.

The *PAR* (*Participatory Action Research*) evaluation model was used in this project, to capture all relevant observations and to assure the evaluation focus was formative (usable) and timely. The *PAR* model proved to be applicable, especially as contained in the work of Guskey (2002) and Kirkpatrick (1994, 1998).

The project portal received numerous visits during the project, logging more than ten thousand unique visitors per month. The portal was also used as a means to distribute project materials to participants.

LearnIT2teach Train the Trainer

This training module supports mentors in their preparation to support teacher trainees in all areas of the training.

Courseware Basics for Moodle 2

 This stage helps teachers using edlinc (Moodle 1.9) make the transition to edulinc (Moodle 2.5).

PD for Learning Technology Innovation Leadership

Development of expanded administrator and lead teacher training was undertaken in 2014, including a pilot with selected LINC administrators. Due to budget restraints the pilot was interrupted after six of the planned twelve weeks. The Administrator training was being designed to help *SPOs* make the transition to *LINC* blended learning. After its completion in 2015, the administrator course was designed to take roughly 18 hours to complete, a time demand considered compatible with the demands of the training and time available to potential participants. It was first designed as a 12 unit Moodle course and after piloting was revised to include two 6-units courses based on the pilot results and feedback from the participants.

Because of their importance to the adoption of the *LearnIT2teach* Project, and their influence over PD training in general for teachers, a training package was developed for program administrators. A print *manual* and a face-to-face workshop for program administrators became available in 2012 - 13. This PD describes to administrators the potential benefits of *LINC* courseware for learners, teachers, and programs. Administrators also gain an understanding of the important role they

have in supporting intelligent and effective technology use within their programs, by teachers.

The *Administrator's Manual* is available free on the *LearnIT2teach* portal (see above) and includes technical information, so administrators understand how they can utilize the reporting capabilities of the *LMS*. To align with the *Moodle 2*.5 version of the training, a new edition of the manual was released in the spring of 2014. In all publications for and interactions with administrators, the intention was to gather information about how training could be advanced.

In a survey conducted in 2013, Administrators reported the following, with implications for the project:

1. More teachers would take PD training if their time in PD was paid.
2. Unionized teachers tend to be reluctant to engage in unpaid PD. Most of the interviewees who use *LearnIT2teach* courseware are not unionized.
3. Systems are going backwards financially, with more and more demands on teachers. Teachers are willing to move with the times, but it's hard when there are obstacles at every turn.
4. The reality of being a teacher in other systems is that effort is recognized with moving up a pay scale. For language teachers, there often is no recognition.
5. Initial input of time to create course material is large. Instructors lack free time.

There were also the familiar reports about lack of working equipment, support, and resources for PD and innovation. These reports concerned language labs (which were often shared among a large number of classes) and in-classroom computers (which were often not properly supported, were not working, did not have broadband access, or were too few in number to have an impact).

In 2015, three cohorts of LINC professionals completed Part 1 of the Learning Technology Innovation Leadership course. As of March 31, 2016, the first cohort is completing Part 2 of the training. An evaluation report for both parts is now underway and is planned for completion in 2016. The evaluation information is already being used.

LearnIT2teach PD training approach

The *LearnIT2teach* teacher training and courseware are consistent with thinking in the language learning community regarding technology. Healy et al. (2011, p. vii) list four goals for language teachers:

1. Language teachers acquire and maintain foundational knowledge and skills in technology for professional purposes.
2. Language teachers integrate pedagogical knowledge and skills with technology to enhance language teaching and learning.
3. Language teachers apply technology and record keeping, feedback, and assessment.
4. Language teachers use technology to improve communication, collaboration, and efficiency.

"The forums and wikis create a collaborative and social learning environment for students. Students can be encouraged to reflect on what they are learning in the SCORM activities, relate it to their own experiences, share opinions, ideas and resources, and collaborate on creating common understanding." -

These objectives are consistent with the objectives of the *LearnIT2teach* program, as this report shows in various places. As well, the project relies on inter-teacher "peer-to-peer" networking, to allow teachers to master, and to begin to implement, Web 2.0 technologies in their teaching. By combining social and task-related objectives, the project attempts to address both needs, to assure participants learn content while developing contacts for ongoing learning and support (Henman, 2003).

The work of Chickering and Gamson (1987; École Polytechnique de Montréal, 2001) also guides the linking of social and task objectives. In their now-classic paper, Chickering and Gamson identified seven principles of "good teaching/training" practice in higher education, applicable to PD:

1. Encouraging contacts between students and faculty;
2. Developing reciprocity and cooperation among students;

3. Using active learning techniques;
4. Giving proper feedback;
5. Emphasizing time on task;
6. Communicating high expectations;
7. Respecting diverse talents and ways of learning.

The authors emphasize the "best practice" for adults of "active learning," as found in activities such as structured exercises, discussions, team projects, and peer critiques, as well as internships and independent study (Dilworth & Willis, 2003). The *LearnIT2teach* Project supports these kinds of activities, and focuses on these types of outcomes. Overall, the *LearnIT2teach* training and PD put a variety of learning strategies to work, from face-to-face and hands-on sessions at conference venues with computer lab access in *Stage 1*, to, in later Stages, online self-directed and mentor-supported learning that gradually leads to more competence, skills, knowledge, and confidence (not to mention more materials and access), and to more opportunities for teaching with ready-made resources and developing e-activities for customized and individualized curricula. Important advantages of this learning approach were documented in an article in *TESL Contact* magazine in February 2014 (Lawrence, 2014).

> *"The LearnIT2teach provided me with a mentor who was infinitely patient and responded to all my queries and questions. The Stages are designed with ESL instructors in mind. It's very methodical, it's step-by-step, there's support every step of the way."*- LINC Teacher

For training participants, the project assumes that learning to use through the same *LMS* that learners use provides an enriched learning experience. Especially, the gradual transition from listening to hands-on learning, putting the courseware to work with learners, and then gradually taking more and more control with all system rights as a teacher in the *LMS* provides invaluable insights in how to learn and teach online that are unique to the *LearnIT2teach* training and PD.

Research methodology

The research component of the *LearnIT2teach* Project has had two main objectives. On the one hand, information was gathered as formative feedback for the developers and facilitators of the professional development training workshops during the piloting stage, and during regular workshop delivery, to ensure

continuous improvement. Further, the research encompassed an assessment of the project outcomes, client satisfaction with and the effectiveness of the training workshops, and the general impact of the training on the way *LINC* instructors used learning technologies in their practice.

To accomplish both objectives, two complementary approaches were used. While *PAR* was applied in the development of the design of professional development, the *Model of Evaluation of Professional Development* (Guskey, 2002) was used to determine and articulate the success of the delivery of the professional development training workshops, in terms of effectiveness. Where *PAR* was especially useful when consensus was the goal, or when results need to be interpreted, providing a model for vetting interpretations and inviting the input of others; Guskey's model was especially useful for assessing impact.

During the first part of the project, *PAR* was mainly used to support the instructional design cycle and provide information for the decision-making process in the planning, development, and piloting stages. As the results were intended for the use in further development of the *LearnIT2teach* training and PD, they were formative, internal to the project, and not necessarily always included in formal reports. The main task of the evaluation was to assure that insights were captured and disseminated, and that the project and its participants benefitted from what had been learned and experienced. Reports, especially the *occasional reports* (of which there have been eight)*,* were designed to be used immediately by participants and planners. The latest Occasional Report takes stock of where we are now in the project with regard to the way instructors and administrators see opportunities and barriers to the uptake of blended delivery of LINC programming (see Appendix E).

For evaluating the quality of the *LearnIT2teach* training and PD over the course of the entire project, data were gathered using several sources. Confidential online surveys completed by participants at the end of each training stage were used to gather feedback with regard to their satisfaction with the delivery format and content of the training, as well as their interest in pursuing further training (see below).

Also, as noted above, some feedback about barriers and challenges of participating in and completing this sort of training were gathered from program administrators and teachers, to inform recommendations about appropriate supports for participants in such training, in turn to maximize the impact of the PD experience on practice. Usage statistics were also developed (some are shown above), to determine users' interests in and preferences for the online tools and resources available in the *Moodle LMS*. Mentors were reminded to ensure that mentees

understood the importance of their comments to development and direction of the project: mentee comments, from training or during implementation, were seen as relevant feedback, and used to make formative changes to elements of the project (changes were often made to materials or procedures as a result of participants' comments, as documented above).

The mentors followed-up with and received comments directly from participants, either verbally or in writing, both of which contributed to a richer and more complete picture of the value of the *LearnIT2teach* professional development training workshops.

Discussion of results of the project to date

Results in Ontario

As noted above, since the beginning of the *LearnIT2teach* project, there have been well over 1600 *Stage 1* participants in Ontario (see "outcome comments," above). For the online delivered training (*Stages 2-4*), hundreds of instructors and administrators received training through the *LearnIT2teach LMS Moodle (*for exact numbers, see above)

In 2015 - 2016 , 14 Ontario face-to-face PD sessions were delivered.

Stage 1 Results

As noted earlier, *Stage 1* is a face-to-face introduction to the key elements of the *LearnIT2teach* program. At the end of each training session, the *LearnIT2teach* trainers asked participants to complete an online questionnaire, designed to gather data for client satisfaction and ongoing improvement of the training.

One of the most important issues in *Stage 1* is to increase the participants' interest in the project overall, their intention to continue the training, and their attitude about recommending participation in the training to a colleague. The following Table illustrates an endorsement of the *LearnIT2teach* training:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
My interest in this project is greater as a result of the workshop.	54.44% 521	40.96% 392	2.72% 26	0.52% 5	1.36% 13
I would recommend participation in this project to a colleague.	56.74% 543	38.77% 371	1.88% 18	0.42% 4	2.19% 21
I intend to complete more training as part of this project.	57.05% 546	35.42% 339	2.40% 23	0.21% 2	4.91% 47

Conclusions about *Stage 1* training were that participants were engaged in and satisfied with the *LearnIT2teach* project and thrived in a face-to-face blended learning environment. However, as noted above, a significant number of participants did not move on to the next training stage (online), despite their stated intention to do so. This realization, and other results from the analysis of available data, prompted an already described redesign of contents and requirements of the subsequent training stages, and an intermediate face-to-face training stage, *Pre-Stage 2*, to support the transition between the initial (informational, exploratory) training to the professional development activities (hands-on, skill-based) in the training S*tages 2-4* of the *LearnIT2teach* project.

Pre-Stage 2 results

Pre-Stage 2 is an intermediate training stage that supports a more seamless transition between the first two training stages and move from the face-to-face *Stage 1* introduction into the online delivered and mentor supported *Stage 2*.

In summary, as already noted, the findings based on the evaluations from training participants in this stage show that 98% successfully completed it all the participants said they intended to continue with *Stage 2* of the training (94% right away, and the remaining participants at a later time). Participants reported that a supportive administration and release time were the main reasons why they did or did not complete the training. Expertise in the use of technology was seen as the

most important barrier in online resources for language learning. The Table on the following page expands on the issue of barriers in using more technology for training and program delivery. Conclusions about the *Pre-Stage 2* training were that its addition would prepare teachers in need of additional face-to-face support to move on to *Stage 2* more quickly, seamlessly, and effectively. By providing on-site supported opportunities to training participants to familiarize themselves with the *LMS* and work though challenges with other participants before continuing the training online, their chance to complete subsequent training stages successfully would be increased.

Stage 2 results

Due to feedback from learners and from PD presenters, *Stage 2* was redeveloped to include more hands-on activities with learners. In fact, as noted previously, since January 2014 the new *Stage 2* has been radically different, and requires teachers to use the *LINC* courseware with their learners for at least a month. The former *Stage 2* was about ten hours of explanation, a "movie" (video), and quizzes.

Stage 2, as presently conceptualized and configured, provides an introduction to the various instructional and administrative tools available in the program's LMS, *Moodle.* Training participants experience first-hand how to manage online courses from a teacher's perspective.

In summary, based on submitted training evaluations, the findings of the project in regard to *Stage 2* training were as follows: over 90% of participants completed *Stage 2* of the training and over 75% of these said that they would continue with the next training stage, while over 20% said that they would continue at a later time. Training participants also *agreed/strongly agreed* that the main reasons to continue the training were the training facilitator/mentor (82.3%), personal technology skills (91.5%), available technology support (87.2%), and a supportive administration (88.6%). They reported that their interest in the project had increased (92.8%) and that they would recommend the training to a colleague (95.1%).   Overall, 92.3% said that the training met their expectations.

As evident in the *Pre-Stage 2* evaluation findings, barriers to implementation, and delivery of online courseware are still plentiful. *Stage 2* training participants, through the evaluation process, identified a number of good ideas for solutions and strategies to overcome these barriers, including:

- When priorities for online delivery are articulated, PD/release time for instructors needs to be provided and prioritized to support it.
- To support teachers using this courseware, it is important to supply funding to the programs to allow a certain amount of teachers within a program to access the training on paid time, and set up as a Train-the-trainer approach in the program. Collaborating within a team (Pod) and having peer support would also help the training not to be too isolated.
- IT departments need to place greater priority on supporting and meeting the needs of instructors and learners to implement and have continuous use of technology in the classroom on an ongoing basis.
- Teachers need to be convinced that there is set up time required, but that there is quality improvement and time savings using the courseware, in the long run. Teachers need to be shown how to blend the technology into their current classroom repertoire. Currently, there is a lot of time required to manage the reports and grades of students, but *LINC* teachers say they are not given paid time to do this.
- Mandatory online *LearnIT2teach* training for all *LINC/ESL* teachers in Ontario so that instructors can obtain both, PD hours and a certificate of recognition.
- All *LINC*/ESL instructors who have completed the *LearnIT2teach* training should be allowed to use the computer laboratory after school hours to prepare lessons for students. If each instructor takes turns in using the computer facility during school hours, students would practice the IT skills they have learned.

Conclusions about *Stage 2* training were that the training participants who successfully moved on from Training *Stage 1* were engaged and passionate about the training and their training outcomes. Most participants saw potential for including online courseware in their classroom instruction, but also recognized a number of barriers that made it harder for them to do so. Some of these barriers may be addressed in the future, but it is a finding of this project that more targeted supports as part of the *LearnIT2teach* project and projects like it, including support from the administration in *LINC* programs and clearly articulated priorities from the program funder, may have more impact on supporting successful practices in implementing and delivering online learning opportunities in the long run.

Stage 3 results

Stage 3 lets instructors deepen their knowledge by selecting and customizing courseware and putting it to work in their own classes. Training participants expand their skills in modifying and adapting the courseware for their learners. Building on Stage 2, they also add SCORM content from Tutela and they can add any type of resource (PDFs, ideas from a forum, portfolio tasks, etc.) in Stage 3. Changes to this Stage were indicated by the evaluation comments of the participants (learners and mentors-facilitators). Due to the advanced nature of the training and the expectation on instructors to use the courseware in their program, additional resources were added to this training stage over time, such as PDF manuals to support the training content and assessment tasks to demonstrate mastery of the training requirements. Participants reported that the manuals and videos were very useful for more complicated steps and great for future reference. Further, they said that working through the assessment tasks was a great way to develop skill in using the existing materials for blended learning and adding activities to the courseware.

The most important change was applying for and receiving Post-TESL Certificate Training accreditation from TESL Ontario. This required modest changes to Stage 3. Approval was received in July 2014. There were only a few months after TESL Ontario PTCT approval before budget constraints required a cutback in project activity. In addition, teachers who might want to re-take the Stage 3 course for PTCT have not, as yet. Also, blended learning training competes for time with mandated training on PBLA.

In summary, the findings of the project in regard to *Stage 3* training were that 64.1% completed this training stage and 79.5% of these said that they intended to complete *Stage 4* of the training immediately, while 20.5% said they would do so at a later time. The reasons to continue were reported to be a supportive administration (80.1% agree/strongly agree), the training facilitators (88%), available tech support (88.5%), and personal technology skills (92%). Those who didn't complete this training stage did not do so because of work overload (90% agree/strongly agree), or the required time commitment (91%); 95% said that they would continue later.

Overall, 91% of *Stage 3* training participants *agreed/strongly agreed* that their interest in the *LearnIT2teach* materials increased as a result of the training and that they would recommend it to a colleague. When asked if the training met their expectation, 90% agreed and one teacher added:

I feel more powerful in teaching with technology as I have supplemental online materials and strategies to teach and meet my students' needs.

To date, the project did not record an increase in interest and/or completion rate in Stage 3 due to PTCT. This may be because, on the one hand, there were only a few months after approval before the cutbacks to programs in Ontario, and, on the other, teachers who could have retaken the Stage 3 course with the PTCT requirements may have not done so for various reasons, including ongoing IRCC cutbacks and PD time demands from PBLA training.

Conclusions about Stage 3 training were that the instructors who took this stage of the training did so with much enthusiasm and investment. Some noted that the more online training demonstrated a positive impact on practice, and that more funding and support would be made available in the future (i.e., participation offered a good return on investment). Instructors needed to showcase the benefits of blended online delivery and more training in online course delivery, to demonstrate that the project produced more skills and comfort in using technology among instructors.

Stage 4 results

Stage 4 enables instructors to create their own e-learning activities and upload them to a digital repository, for access by other professionals and by students. Instructors who have completed *Stage 4* and earned *PTCT* accreditation feel a sense of accomplishment as a result of learning a new set of skills in a course that integrates instructional design and *TELL* theories with hands-on practical skills. This training is highly learner-centred, and many participants use it as an opportunity to develop training materials that are original and address a materials gap at their centre –with assistance of an experienced mentor. Several teachers developed projects that they used and re-used and, in the one case, developed a basic course that was used by literacy teachers in *Stage 2* of the *LearnIT2teach* training. In addition, all teachers completing the *Stage 4* training had to contribute to *Tutela*.

Minor revisions to the *Stage 4* course were ongoing, e.g. maintaining an FAQ section based on participant feedback and revisions. Looking forward, the managers of the project would like to add a *Preparing Learners for Online Language Learning* section, that would train teachers to prepare multimedia (Web 2.0) instructional materials to help students access teacher developed e-materials and improve their online learning skills.

Two teachers who have graduated from *Stage 4* have offered this advice on a *Stage 4* discussion forum:

- *… I felt overwhelmed at the start but I'm happy to report that the feeling subsided as I made my way through the course and have become a little more computer savvy. Step by step.*

- *I found the instructional videos most practical. I would open the video in one window and the assignment in an other. Just by toggling between the windows I'd just ape every step in the video.*

Informal Training and courseware support

Since the inception of the *LearnIT2teach* project, the web portal has been the preferred destination for *LearnIT2teach* training participants, *EduLINC* users, and *LINC* teachers in general, to find resources and support.   In 2013-14, *LINC* and ESL program instructors and administrators received informal training through the use of the web portal. Overall, the website stats show that the *LearnIT2teach* web portal is a significant resource to the *IRCC*-funded programs; the site has received more than 10,000 hits per month, with 80% of the traffic originating from Canada.

Kirkpatrick/Guskey Level 1 findings: Participants' reactions to the PD

Level 1 of the Kirkpatrick/Guskey model concerns learner engagement with and enjoyment of the training. Throughout the project, observed engagement at all levels (teachers and administrators) remained high. This assisted in the conduct of the evaluation, the quality of the data gathered, and the reception of the reports, and also benefited the project by showing, in the high degree of motivation by teachers, students, and administrators, that training and resources were appreciated.

The conclusion is that Level 1 of the model was successful, and contributed to the impact of the project.

Kirkpatrick/Guskey Level 2 findings: Participants' learning

Level 2 of the evaluation model was learning. Here, the objective was to assure that participants acquired useful and relevant knowledge and skills from the project. While the exact nature of the learning was not measured (these varied by teacher

and site, and changed throughout the project as content evolved), it was clear from each stage of the project that participants were acquiring skills, and that those skills were related to their teaching. (If this had not been the case, it was felt that these language teachers would have quickly declined to participate further in the project.) Skills in the use of technologies, and positive attitudes toward metadata, were acquired: individuals learned about the potential impact of new technological devices (common to their students) applicable to acquisition of language skills; participants interacted with one another through face-to-face and technology-mediated methods, and in so doing exchanged ideas for use in the classroom; the teaching of language skills involving technology was advanced.

The second Level of the Guskey/Kirkpatrick model was successfully achieved.

Kirkpatrick/Guskey Level 3 findings: Indicators of organizational support and change

The third level of the Kirkpatrick/Guskey model asks whether the skills acquired were taken back and applied in the workplace. Again, it was obvious that teachers were using their newly acquired skills in their classrooms. Evaluations (interviews and surveys) showed this was happening in classrooms, and documented that teachers were pleased with the impacts on their teaching and their students of their new skills.

It was concluded that teachers achieved the third level of the evaluation model, taking their newly learning skills back to their classrooms.

Kirkpatrick/Guskey Level 4 findings: Evidence of new knowledge and skills in practice

Level 4 of the model asks whether, when new skills and knowledge were used in classrooms (as in the above outcome), the teaching/learning enterprise was positively impacted (students learned more, learned faster, or suffered fewer disruptions in their learning). For the evaluation at this level, the views of employers, and of anyone who has the opportunity to observe the impact of teaching on students, were sought and assessed.

To evaluate the impact of the courseware and the blended mode on learning, a demonstration project was undertaken in October 2015 at Algonquin College in Ottawa, Ontario. The college has adopted the modality in virtually every class. A

research proposal was presented to the college and approved, a class and teacher were identified, and entry interviews and language performance testing was carried out on 20 LINC learners. However, due to funding shortfalls, the demonstration project was cancelled in late November 2015.While a demonstration project would be most convincing, the managers of and the participants in this project feel that this objective is also likely achieved, for the reasons stated above. [Link to next ¶]

Throughout the project instructors have been asked to provide feedback in surveys, reflective journals, and interviews to answer questions such as "Did the participants effectively apply the acquired knowledge and skills in their teaching practice?", "How frequently are these used online?", "What types of teaching activities and content seem to work best?, and "What problems have arisen using technical skills in teaching?". Evidence of the engagement level of instructors and the challenges they have experienced with the implementation of blended learning can be found throughout this report and in the *Appendix E*. The project uses this data to help Service Providers to determine the level of on-site support (personnel, time, expertise) needed to implement e-learning resources and identify potential barriers and to inform the development training initiatives such the Moodle course for LINC Administrators developed in 2015-16.

Guskey Level 5 findings: Participants' learning outcomes

Level five represents Guskey's extension of the Kirkpatrick model to include participants' learning outcomes, focusing on the self-perceived outcomes of the learning experience of the participant. The impact of the training on the participants, the effect the training had on their attitude about the use of e-learning resources, their confidence using them, and whether the training affected their teaching practices are evaluated. Feedback from training participants gathered through interviews and reflective journals are part of the information being evaluated to demonstrate the impact of the training on the participant at various training stages and in relation to their teaching practice in the cognitive (performance & achievement), affective (attitudes & dispositions), and psychomotor (skills & behaviour) domains.

Over forty learners from four *LINC* classes at two service providers were asked about the impact of the courseware on their program. The two case studies based on the results are included in this report as *Appendices B* and *C*.

Other results

PD for lead teachers and program administrators

The 2011 TESL Conference session, previously described, provided relevant information to *LINC* and *ESL* program administrators. Administrative and instructional benefits of the *EduLINC* courseware and the *LearnIT2teach* teacher training were highlighted, explaining resource and participant reporting within the *LMS*. Training for administrators initially took the form of a print/.pdf manual resource and conference introduction sessions to promote its dissemination and use among LINC program administrators. The first edition was released in 2012.

Throughout the project, Administrator Training webinars were delivered on *Tutela* and at the REALIZE Conference. A substantial number of *LINC* Administrators participated. Also, technology innovation leadership workshops have been delivered at the *CESBA Conference, TESL Ontario, TESL Canada and BC TEAL.*

Most program administrators rated the importance of *TELL* and the interest of instructors very high. Also, they indicated that most programs had access to adequate Technology-enhanced learning environments. It is worth noting that the high ratings on these questions, due to administrators who are supportive of use of *TELL* in their programs, means administrators are more likely to attend a training session that is designed with this target group in mind. However, only one in two instructors was perceived as showing actual engagement and having adequate training in using *TELL*. Additionally, as seen earlier in this report, program administrators judged that lack of time, funding for training, poor or non-existent computer upkeep, and low instructor and learner motivation were among the obstacles that prevented instructors from making more effective use of technology in your program. Generally, many instructors commented that one of the main barriers was adequate computer labs. There was a large range in terms of availability and quality of technical support reported, as well as with regard to the need of additional resources to support the delivery of *TELL*.   More preparation time and ongoing training were cited consistently in response to how to get more teachers and students using *TELL* or the *LearnIT2teach* resources in programs.

Further feedback from administrators was gathered. The following summarizes the responses of four administrators.

Instructor training

In response to questions about the present training and readiness of instructors, administrators commented.

1. *Is TELL important to your programs?*

   - **Yes.** Lots of money has been invested on software, and instructors are encouraged to incorporate *TELL* into their teaching; computers are societally and educationally important today; students are technologically savvy; we aspire to being technological college; all our sites have computer labs, using a variety of computer software; *TELL* is used and expected in every college in Ontario – when instructors are interviewed they are routinely asked how they intend to incorporate *TELL* in their teaching. "We see the success in our attendance at this site. Absenteeism is far lower than anywhere else," Diane Hardy at HWDSB about PLC.

2. *Are LINC instructors interested in using technology?*

   - **Yes**, but less than one-third are interested in using *LearnIT2teach* courseware because some are teaching at lower levels and, for example, Literacy and Level 1 do not have courseware for that level; some instructors (especially older) find using computers technically challenging, but younger instructors are usually very keen because they are convinced that it is helping their learners, and it is expected by the learners – use of technology in learning is essential these days; most teachers are at least interested in examining the possibility of using technology.

3. *Are LINC instructors required to incorporate TELL into their course delivery? There was an interesting difference of opinion on this question, as the following shows:*

   - **Yes**: *TELL* is mandatory, 1 to 2 hours per week, in the lab; computer time is scheduled every week; instructors know when they are hired this is the expectation, but some struggle and are hesitant; instructors use a variety of excellent software successfully (not just *EDLINC*).
   - **No:** because this is a union environment, it is not mandated (if it were mandated, the union would require paid training time); to help encourage use, *LINC* program offers mentor and coach instructors.

4. *Do learners provide feedback to administrators on use of TELL in LINC programs?*

- **Yes:** there is feedback to instructors, passed on to the administrator; administrators know what courseware is successful; feedback is not given by students directly to administrators; about one-quarter of student users are not well served by technology, often because they are too advanced and what we're doing is frustrating to them; some are frustrated by instructors' attitudes or poor skills; students may simply leave a program that is not meeting their needs, never giving accurate feedback if asked why.

5. *Do instructors readily engage in teacher training/PD on their own time?*

- **No**; they expect paid PD; their collective agreement stipulates that the Board has to pay for one five-hour PD day/school year, when the school is closed; across the district so far, we have 10-15 instructors who might be interested, because it is unpaid time, and teachers are reluctant to give more of their time unpaid; the TESL Conference, Toronto, has sponsorship for *LINC* instructors - teachers who attend do not get paid for their regularly scheduled classes, which they are missing, but they can go to the conference, their costs (hotel, conference fees) are covered, and there are special incentives if instructors present at the Conference; about 30% participate in PD at conferences, others go on-line to get lesson plans, materials; reasons for non-participation include busy lives, unpaid status of PD, and the "us/them" attitude of the union; the Board provides several types of PD.

6. *Are instructors appropriately trained to use TELL?*

- If instructors are redeployed into a *LINC* position, they may not be experienced with our version of *TELL*, and may need to be guided through it by the *LPO*; they are not specifically trained, but in the lab there is a technologist who will help; there is also free PD in computer instruction at the College, which is unpaid time; we had a full-day session on *TELL* recently; some are and some aren't, as with most innovations; there is some inter-colleague mentoring and coaching, as well; attitudes are changing, instructors are no longer as worried about admitting to students that they don't know the current and newest technologies, as someone in the group probably owns it, knows how to use it, and is willing to proctor those who do not.

7. *How can we get more teachers/students using TELL or the LearnIT2teach resources?*

- A resource person should be brought in to lead training, but this doesn't exist now; we are only at the beginning of the *LearnIT2teach* process; after teachers see the advantages, promotion will be less important; PD should be paid for at Stage II of training and beyond; some faculty and administrators like to learn on their own, some like to learn in a group – the training should accommodate both; IRCC has to push the institution, which has to push the administrator, who has to push the teachers; hard to get people to change - hand-holding, support, and training and needed; conferences can be successful; there should be regular (perhaps monthly) in-service sessions, non-threatening (non-supervised) coaching, and release time.

8. *What type of training would you like to see for administrators?*

- Plans for continue to Stage 3 require a class of students, which is problematic for administrators; Stage 4 would be useful so that instructors approach an administrator about problems with *LearnIT2teach* they have some ideas based on experience; a troubleshooting manual would be useful; instructors in Stage 3 have reported that mentors are good at responding to questions, but sometimes do not respond quickly; at Stage 5, Administrator training needs to be user-friendly and accessible, and geared to the lowest common denominator with respect to skills (we are dealing with SPOs with a wide range of skills).

9. *What aspects of TELL/LearnIT2teach would you like to learn more about?*

- Portfolios; grading; assessment reports; authoring lessons.

10. *Are you interested in using an LMS in your program?*

- Yes.

11. *What types of LMS reports are you interested in?*

- There might be a problem with the union because others can track instructors' use; this, however, makes administration easier – for example, when a learner has not graduated to the next level, someone could view learner reports and see their progress, then talk to the instructor about their plan; we do learner reports (promotions) twice a

year – with LMS we could see what's going on in the classroom and could make a recommendation to the instructor.

12. *Do you want more information/training about TESOL Tech standards?*

- Not at this time – already available.

13. *Do you want to be part of the consultation on the Administration Manual/PD?*

- Not at this time.

Budget issues

14. *Is your funding adequate to support the use of technology with learners?*

- **Yes**, but not at every site: at some sites, the computer labs are small; at some sites, there are more classes than one lab can serve; recently, we have been given permission to use slippage money to upgrade our computers, many of which have warranties that will soon expire (we can buy 150 new computers for the 20 sites of all of TDSB *LINC*); we need more money to support *TELL* and *LearnIT2teach*; we need projectors and screens in every lab; at each site we have one/site, but this is sometimes needed in the classroom - we need one dedicated for the computer lab; some labs are small and installing a projector and screen would be a problem; we've lost a considerable amount of funding recently; two years ago we got the hardware we needed, but the money is not there for support of instructor training; having a resource person to support instructors on the use of *TELL* is necessary to the success of a program like this - would be expensive and there is no funding for support; we have an expectation that our teachers be perceived as professionals and invest in their jobs; this requires an investment of time, effort, and resources. We have to provide them with access and resources; equally, instructors need to understand that to be perceived as professionals, they too require to invest own time for professional development; problems include annual funding, and one-time nature of funding.
- Cut-backs are hurting the capacity for innovation, including *LearnIT2teach*.

With the migration of the Moodle LMS from Version 1.9 to 2.5, revisions were required to the administrator's manual. Concurrently, given the complex demands of technology innovation on the language program administrator, and their central role in driving innovation, the project identified a need for deeper and more

engaging training support for managers. So, the Moodle migration and manual rewrite was also an opportunity to expand the training offered to program administrators into a 12-week Moodle-based course. This was undertaken in 2014 - 15 but work was interrupted due to budget constraints. The project resumed this developed in 2015-2016 and and piloted the new training. Based on the pilot results and feedback from the participants, the course was revised into two 6-week courses.

National Results

In 2013-2014, the *LearnIT2teach* project began expansion outside the Ontario Region using a Train-the-Trainer approach that prepares local or regional TESL professionals to work as LearnIT2teach mentor-facilitators. Four Instructors from Alberta, two each from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia began training as local or regional mentors for instructor trainees in the project. Interruptions in anticipated funding led to suspension of the initiative before Saskatchewan and Manitoba trainers were able to complete but a total of eight *LINC* instructors outside Ontario completed preparation as mentors by March 31, 2014. In the period January to March 2014, face-to-face training events took place in Edmonton (Norquest College), Calgary (Bow Valley College), Winnipeg (English Online), Saskatchewan Polytechnic (Regina), Saint John (YMCA) and Halifax (ISANS).

The 2013-2015 target was that a minimum of 150 teachers and 25 administrators from outside Ontario would participate in the *LearnIT2teach* training: as of 31 March 2016, 695 LINC teachers from outside Ontario have received the training. In April 2014, the B.C. Region was welcomed aboard through a partnership with a provincial settlement language training umbrella organization, LISTN.

Barriers to technology integration and program uptake

Training participants in *Stages 2-4* were asked to reflect on the issue of barriers to technology integration and to assist in developing strategies to overcome them.

In *Stage 2* of the training, participants reported that the greatest barrier to continued participation was *technical glitches*; the next greatest barrier was *skills and knowledge (expertise/experience as teacher/learner/user*, and the third greatest barrier was *access to Internet (lab restrictions/schedules, acceptable use policies*).

Among the main challenges, *LINC* administrators stated that the instructors in their program were facing:

1. Lack of reliable and adequate access to computers
2. *Restrictions to access Web-based services (e.g. YouTube)*
3. Lack of time to get comfortable using technology
4. Information overload and a steep learning curve
5. Lack of training and confidence using technology
6. Minimal and inadequate technical support
7. Lack of access to information and resources
8. Counting attendance for students in computer labs
9. Lack of funding for the upkeep of computers

Early in the project, *LINC* administrators said they felt that technology could play a role in improving the teaching practice and delivery in their programs. However, some pointed out that technology has to be "used systematically and appropriately," and that integrating technology into program delivery also depends on the motivation and ability of the students. One participant reported that using an *LMS* makes things easier, as there was no need to "sift through garbage on the Internet," and another stated that "the more tools [are] in the tool kit, the more flexible and versatile one can be."

Comments from administrators gathered through surveys, interviews, and unsolicited feedback are suggestive:

1. So much good curriculum has been developed by and for LearnIT2teach; there are lots of online learning objects, but what happened with them? What do you do with them? There's been two years of training, a bit of research, some uptake. If you really want full uptake, you need to run it another 5-10 years so it becomes normalized. Is the government ready to invest? I don't know, and I see this as a huge problem.
2. CLB may hold students back, if strictly adhered to, especially if speaking and writing are at different levels. We need to focus on the learners' varying needs. Perhaps they won't need to improve their writing skills in their profession, or part of their day could be spent with speaking instruction at Level 5 and part of the day writing at Level 2. This is important if we are to integrate TELL into our class day.
3. Teachers should be paid for participation – they have busy lives and other priorities; also, teachers close to retirement may have different priorities; further, training and support needs to be ongoing in order to see change; PD is not just orientation or introduction. IRCC only funds the orientation and then washes its hands of it. Then it will be forgotten. It's also about support.
4. LearnIT2teach needs to offer more presence and support to the Stage 1 grads. Go back to them and encourage them. Have the introductory

workshops then supplement these with more training that encourages teachers to see their role in their own training. It's like the problem of paying kids to do their chores. Instead, you need to show teachers that they are partners in their training to be better professionals. This engagement needs time to settle.

5. Funding, support for training, and buy-in from teachers all needed.
6. Questions: Who runs the lab? (Need a full-time lab coordinator.) How many sites with labs? Should have 1 site with 1 lab.
7. Audio capability (live audio and video streaming equipment, access); *Wikipedia*.
8. Lack of projectors, screens, LMS, other equipment at some sites; lack of A-V equipment.
9. All of the following are problems:
   a. Access to technology hardware (in classrooms and computer labs, and at home);
   b. Maintenance/upgrade of technology hardware and software (lack of a current technology plan);
   c. Availability of monetary resources for technology hardware/software (OS and programs); good software, but no resources to coach the use of the software. Need a resource person to help with this.
   d. Mentorship needs to be continued past the end of training. (*LearnIT2teach* mentors do in fact continue to provide mentorship beyond the training).
   e. Access to Internet resources (computer lab restrictions or schedules, acceptable use policies); some programs we can't access. E.g., *Yahoo!* Chat.
   f. Skills, attitudes, or knowledge of staff: includes learners' skills, especially with Literacy and Level 1 (for which *LearnIT2teach* does not have courseware); continuous intake means instructor's attention is distracted from leading lesson to coaching new learners who have poor computer skills; some instructors (often older) aren't interested ("If I were going to be here for another ten years, I would be interested"); some instructors are intimidated by technology, and at least one instructor does not use computers at home, has no cell phone; some instructor are not convinced that technology will add anything important to their teaching; resistance to training: "I don't want to do *Stage 3*, because I found *Stage 2* challenging"; human resourcing of personnel and individual time-management (release time, PD priorities); other challenges or barriers include the technical glitches in *Stage 2* (that have been resolved since).

Learning English with modern technology: students' views

In 2012, the student survey about the use of technology for language learning was developed and used in lessons at various programs. Qualitative data were gathered using online surveys complemented by information provided from teachers using an open-ended questionnaire. Following are selected results; the full report can be found on *Learning English with Modern Technology* on the *LearnIT2teach* website (www.LearnIT2teach.ca). [is this report still there?]

Various reasons for using computing devices were reported by students. Most popular were *searching for information*, and *news and weather* (both used by more than 80% of respondents), but *banking* and *using government resources* also rated high (over 50% of users). *Internet radio* and *podcasts* were used by 20% of language learners, but it was concluded that read-only websites were used more. In another survey, *learning English* was rated highest, followed by the *music, videos*, and *surfing the Internet for hobbies and personal interests* (by over two-thirds of respondents).

Students were also asked about their cell phones. Over 80% of students had a cell phone, over half had a regular phone, about a third had a smart phone, and about a quarter had an iPhone.

Use of programs, web sites, and social networking

The most common uses were of e-mail, *Skype*, and *Facebook*, with other social networking sites being used by about half of the respondents (*texting* and *instant messaging*). Reasons for using these social networking sites including *staying in touch with friends* (about 90%), *sharing photos and videos* (60%), and *chatting online* (52%).

Barriers to using technology devices

Students were also asked about barriers they encountered in using various devices. The most common difficulties were *lack of a computer or Internet connection*, *lack of English skills, a computer not always being available, lack of computing skills, technical difficulties*, and *lack of bandwidth*. These, of course, may change as services become better. About a quarter of students indicated they didn't have any problems at all. It was concluded that many of these barriers were the result of a lack of technology or technology support, but a few of the problems resided in the users themselves.

Computers and learning English

A vast majority (85% of the participants) indicated that they had used language learning materials on a computer at some time previously; almost 99% found these materials either *helpful* or *very helpful*. In comparison with learning from a live teacher, students reported that using a computer was good when combined with watching videos, listening, reading, writing, or speaking (blended learning). About a third of the respondents stated that *speaking and writing* were best done with a live teacher (which meant that 2/3 felt a computer could be used profitably for these purposes).

Participants thought that newcomers to Canada might need more opportunities to learn English, and 93% felt a computer could be used for this purpose. When asked what kinds of computer-based English language instruction might be useful to newcomers, students responded that *LINC* levels 1 to 4 could be. *LINC* levels 5 to 7 were thought to be addressable by a computer (often by self-study) by over half of the respondents. *English in the workplace* and the *Canadian Citizenship Test* might be presented on a computer, a third of the respondents thought. About a quarter of the respondents thought that *preparing for work* and *small business English* could be handled online, as could preparation for the TOEFL test and acquisition of occupational-specific language skills.

Learning preferences

In this study, the stated preference of students who were evaluated was for *using learning materials on a computer in the classroom*, or for *online learning with the support of the teacher*. It was felt that, because all of the students were adults, the design of the language instruction approach might be more successful if it adapted to individual preferences such as these.

Discussion and conclusions

From examination of the available literature, it is clear that online professional development for language teachers is an historic need, and given the current demand for language teachers, and ever more powerful and ubiquitous technologies for delivery, should be a broad, present priority. The *LearnIT2teach* project is intended to draw on the existing literature about language teachers' needs, to develop a quality training experience and accessible technologies, to identify required supports, all translatable into professional development training, materials, and skills language teachers might immediately use with their students.

From the evaluation results, language teachers feel *Stage 1* and *2* training of the *LearnIT2teach* project addresses their present needs, and presents a path for

ongoing training and PD learning. The challenges for the present project, for online PD training and materials repository development and use, and for technology implementation in language classrooms, are:

1. To assure that teachers who self-identify as wanting to do so follow-up on their intentions to enrol in and continue with training beyond whatever training stage they have completed. Research has shown that it is common for educational PD training to be poorly done, to lack follow-up, and for participants to languish in the early stages of ambitiously planned programs. *LearnIT2teach* attempted to avoid these kinds of results, when it was clear that teachers were willing to provide the personal time and energy to continue.

2. To motivate teachers to continue, incentives may be needed. Word-of-mouth reports from training participants and teachers implementing the courseware are currently a primary driver of training participation. We recommend additional incentives for teachers to innovate. Some combination of 1) mandating service providers to implement blended learning, 2) providing paid release time to trainees, 3) wage or salary premiums for completing training stages, and implementing LINC blended learning.

3. To provide technical tools and supports, so that teachers and students wishing to use online resources can do so. The project found that lack of access to technology tools, adequate Internet connectivity and bandwidth, and technical problems, were antithetic to the development of interest in and uses of online resources of all kinds. It was also clear, however, that online training methods were effective, and could either reduce the time required to achieve mastery of skills, or increase the mastery level of skills. Not to use these tools is both contradictory to the potential of the resources, and to the wishes of students, teachers, administrators, and programs.

4. Time, continuity, and persistence in funding were seen as vital to the maturation of online professional development and programming, and to teacher uses of online resources such as repositories. Project participants pointed out that objectives had often changed in the past, when teachers were thinking about adopting certain technologies or methods. The result was that teachers sometimes become cynical, and refuse to move in new directions until commitment to the new directions has been proven. (The funding interruptions of the present project produced some of these reactions in teachers and administrators.) This is contrary to the intentions of this project, and to the healthy development of any innovation. Funders need to provide consistent leadership in these areas, and continue to fund

them, even through times when they may not be totally successful. This approach is completely consistent with innovations theory, and the development history of innovations (Rogers, 1962, 1983; Juran, 1989).

5. The *LearnIT2teach* training *Stages*, while considered adequate and useful, were under constant review and revision throughout the project. The *Stages* went through a radical revision during the project, and were re-launched in January 2014 to coincide with the rollout of a *Moodle 2.5* version of the courseware. The revisions were guided and informed by comments from participants, and the new training framework accelerates the process of getting teachers and learners up and running with the *LINC* courseware. Whether it is the new version or the old one, though, one user's comment seems pertinent. She came to understand the potential value of *LearnIT2teach* methods, and blogged about the stages as follows (Artan, 2013):

- *It takes a lot of work to set it [online tools] up (unless you are only using the LINC material, then it's ready to use). It takes time to work through the Stages of LearnIT2teach; in other words, you need the Stages. You can't just expect to be plunked into Stage 3 and start your course. There is method to the madness.*
- *So, guess what I've been doing? I completed my Stage 1 yesterday and am about to jump into Stage 2. It's not a cakewalk – you have to exercise your brain and pay attention….*
- *My plan is to do the Stages, do them well enough to be prepared to start my courses in September. I'm glad I stumbled onto LearnIT2teach and am kicking myself that I hadn't found them before (I had heard the term, but always thought it had something to do with real IT, as in the computer guys at work who fix stuff).*

6. Complementary to issues identified in the present project are the very positive affirmations provided about the project's strengths. Specifically, surveys and comments of participants confirmed the following as positives of the project, which should be retained in any further evolution:

- *LearnIT2teach* training delivery: the presenters are seen as approachable and well informed, they use understandable language in presenting, contents of the workshops are useful and relevant to the participants, and technologies are accessible, affordable, and overall appropriate.
- The impact of *LearnIT2teach*: Participants say they would recommend participation to a friend, and that their interest in the project, and their

resolve to complete more of the training, are enhanced by the workshops.

LearnIT2teach is an ambitious program in *TELL* and blended learning. Language teachers believe that Technology-enhanced learning can enhance language learning by providing enhanced input, helping in the use of language, and providing increased opportunities for language interactions (Healy, Hanson-Smith, Hubbard, Ioannou-Georgios, Kessler, & Ware, 2011, p. 7). In addition, language learners who use *TELL* can, through uses of various technologies, acquire or enhance their electronic literacy (computer and social interaction) presence and skills (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Anderson, 2005). Opportunities for training for teachers, however, remain scanty, and graduates of teacher preparation programs are often reportedly "dissatisfied with the preparation they received for using technology in language teaching" (Healy et al., 2011, p. 143).

Relevant and accessible teacher training and professional development therefore become critical to addressing teachers' practical needs. *LearnIT2teach* was intended to provide both, and initial indications are that participants in the training perceived it as such.

References

Alberta Teachers Association. (1999).   Technology and education. ATA position
      paper. Author. Retrieved from
      www.teachers.ab.ca/policy/papers/paper20.html

Anderson, T. (2004). Toward a theory of online learning. In T. Anderson and F.
      Elloumi (Eds.), *Theory and practice of online learning* (pp. 33 – 60)*.*
      Athabasca: Athabasca University. Retrieved from
      http://cde.athabascau.ca/online_book/ch2.html

Anderson, T. (2005). Distance learning – Social software's killer ap? Paper
      presented at the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia
      Breaking Down Boundaries Conference, 9 – 11 November 2005, Adelaide,
      South Australia. Retrieved from
      www.unisa.edu.au/odlaaconference/PPDF2s/13%20odlaa%20-
      %20Anderson.pdf

Artan, J. (2013). Got a nod from *LearnIT2teach* (22 December 2013), *Moodling* (30
      August 2013, & Final thoughts (9 August 2013).   [Web log posts]*.* Retrieved
      from http://jennfireblendedlearning.wordpress.com/ .

Canadian Council on Learning. (2009). *Post-secondary education in Canada: Meeting
      our needs?* Retrieved from http://www.ccl-
      ca.ca/pdfs/PSE/2009/PSE2008_English.pdf

Chickering, A. & Gamson, Z. (1987).   Seven principles for good practice in
      undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin,* March, pp. 3 – 7.

Dilworth, R. L. & Willis, V. J. (2003). *Action learning: Images and pathways.* Malabar,
      Florida: Kreiger Publishing Co.

École Polytechnique de Montréal (2001). *Chickering and Gamson - Seven Principles*.
      Retrieved from http://www.erudium.polymtl.ca/html-
      eng/education/education4c.php

Edgar, J., Johnson, K., & McBride, R. (2011). *Framework for Post TESL Certificate
      Training (PTCT*). *LearnIT2teach: Scaffolding Instructors' Online Training Skills,*
      Outline. New Media Language Training, Inc., IRCC Canada.

Gabriel, M., Campbell, B., Wiebe, S., MacDonald, R.J., & McAuley, A. (2012). The role of digital technologies in learning: Expectations of first year university students. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology*, 38(1).

Ganser, T. (2000). An ambitious vision of professional development for teachers. *NASSP Bulletin, 84*(618), pp. 6 – 12.

Garrison, R., Anderson, T. & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *Internet and Higher Education*, *2*(2), pp. 87 – 105.

Garrison, D.R., Cleveland-Innes, M., Koole, M., & Kappelman, J. (2005). Revisiting methodological issues in transcript analysis: Negotiated coding and reliability. *Internet and Higher Education, 9*(1), pp. 1 – 8.

Guskey, T. (2002). Does it make a difference? Evaluating professional development. *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), pp. 45–51.

Healy, D., Hanson-Smith, E., Hubbard, P., Ioannou-Georgiou, S., Kessler, G., & Ware, P. (2011). *TESOL technology standards.* Alexandria, Virginia: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

Henman, L. D. (2003). Groups as systems. In R. Hirokawa, R. Cathcart, L. Samovar, & L. Henman, *Small group communication, theory and practice (an anthology), 8th edition* (pp. 3 – 7)*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Henriques, L. (1997). A study to define and verify a model of interactive-constructive elementary school science teaching. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa, 1997.

Juran, J. M. (1989). *Juran on leadership for quality: An executive handbook*. New York: Free Press.

Kirkpatrick, D. (1994, 1998). *Evaluating training programs: The four levels (2nd edition).* San Francisco: Berrett-Koeher Publishers Inc.

Latchem, C., Jung, I., Aoki, K., & Ozkul, A. E. (2007, August 29). The tortoise and the hare enigma in e-transformation in Japanese and Korean higher education. *British Journal of Educational Technology.* OnlineEarly Articles. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8535.2007.00771.x

Lawrence, G. (2014, February 1). Exploring the Feasibility of E-Learning in Ontario ESL Programs. *TESL Contact*, *Vol. 40, Number 1*, 12 - 18.

McKenzie, J. (1991). Designing staff development for the information age. *From now on 1*(4). Retrieved from http://www.fromnowon.org/fnoapr91.html

Price, L., Richardson, J.T.E., & Jelfs, A. (2007). Face-to-face versus online tutoring support in distance education. *Studies in Higher Education, 32*(1), pp. 1 - 20.

Reeves, D. B. (2010). Transforming professional development into student results. ERIC documents: ED 509309.

Stanley, A. M. (2011). Professional development within collaborative teacher study groups: Pitfalls and promises. *Arts Education Policy Review, 112*(2), pp. 71 – 78.

Warschauer M. (1996). Computer Assisted Language Learning: an Introduction, in Fotos S. (ed.) *Multimedia Language Teaching,* pp. 3-20. Tokyo: Logos International.

Appendix A: Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Guskey's Model of Evaluation of Professional Development

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

PAR articulates a project's results and observations into writing for all to reflect on, invites everyone involved with the project to comment on what is happening, then uses the results of the group's thinking to come up with any needed changes in what the project is doing, or how it is doing it. The cycle repeats throughout the project. PAR was chosen for part of the evaluation because a PAR evaluation emphasizes *capturing* and *thinking about* processes and results, and *making timely changes* based on that thinking. It is also very inclusive: everyone involved is invited to participate in the process. Some evaluation models mainly emphasize results (*summative* models), or focus on processes (*formative* models). PAR evaluations are balanced in terms of both types of outcomes, involving everyone working on the project, throughout the project. The result is constant discussion, even debate, and changes made sooner rather than later. Occasional reports are prepared by the project evaluators for the project team, after significant events or important milestones in the project.

Guskey's model of assessment

Guskey's (2002) *Model of Evaluation of Professional Development* provides an evaluation approach that maps the successful outcomes of professional development activities on five levels. These coincide with the varying degrees that participants are involved with the learning content, and they benefits they feel they derived from the training experience. For this project, Guskey's model was adapted and articulated as illustrated below.

Evaluation Level	What questions might be asked?	How might the data be gathered?	How might the question be evaluated?	How might the data be used?
1. Participants' reaction to the PD *This addresses whether the participants honour the learning experience, and whether they had the potential to stimulate others to explore as well.*	Did they like it? Was the time well spent? Did the material make sense? Will it be useful? Was the PD training environment comfortable? **Do they intend to move on the next training stage?**	**Client satisfaction survey using SurveyMonkey** Client satisfaction survey using print-based surveys, if needed (or face-to-face sessions) Access information from web-based captivate sessions	Satisfaction of the training participants with the delivered product, i.e. face-to-face presentations or online training	Project can use data to evaluate the PD training during the pilot phase and to make improvements to the program design and delivery as needed Data can also be used to document client satisfaction re the project deliverables
2. Participant's learning *This focuses on indicators of successful participant learning.*	Did participants learn what was intended? Did they acquire the knowledge and/or skills presented?	**Participant outcome measures and participation patterns using *Moodle* data**	Participation in the training; training participants' acquisition of new knowledge and skills	Project can use data to improve training design and delivery Data can also be used to report on the successful delivery and impact on the training participants

| **3. Indicators of organizational support and change**

This assesses the context and the impact of PD experiences | Are there adequate resources, materials, and trained personnel to effectively use e-learning resources?

Are there adequate resources, materials, and trained personnel to use the turnkey *Moodle* and LOR learning objects? | Feedback from *LINC* administrators, and training participants

Training participants' reflective journals

Focus group with *LINC* administrators and teachers | The *LINC* program's support and capacity to use e-learning resources, such as the turnkey *Moodle* and LOR learning objects | *LINC* administrators can use data as they develop plans to integrate more e-learning resources

Project can use data to better advocate for the use of the turnkey *Moodle* by effectively addressing barriers and challenges |

| **4. Participants' use of new knowledge and skills in practice**

This addresses the degree to which the new learning is put into daily practice. | Did the participants effectively apply the acquired knowledge and skills in their teaching practice?

How frequently are these used online?

What types of teaching activities and content seem to work best?

What problems have arisen using technical skills in teaching? | Feedback from training participants

Training participants' Stage 4 reflective journals

Focus group including *LINC* administrators and teachers

Participant outcome measures using *Moodle* data

Surveys using SurveyMonkey

Follow-up interviews | Trying to evaluate the transfer of learning from workshop to the classroom | Project can use data to help determine the level of on-site support (personnel, time, expertise) needed to implement e-learning resources and identify potential barriers

Data can also be used to identify any areas or problems teachers are having using technology in their teaching |

| **5. Participants' Learning Outcomes** *This focuses on the self-perceived outcomes of the learning experience of the participant.* | What was the impact of the training on the participants? Did the training affect their attitude re the use of e-learning resources? Did they feel more confident using e-learning resources? Did the training affect their teaching practices? | Feedback from training participants Training participants' reflective journals Focus group including *LINC* administrators and teachers **Participant outcome measures using *Moodle* data** | Trying to evaluate participants' learning outcomes in: Cognitive (performance & achievement) Affective (attitudes & dispositions) Psychomotor (skills & behaviour) | Project can use data to improve program design and delivery Data can also be used to demonstrate the impact of the training on the participant at various training stages and in relation to their teaching practice |

Appendix B: Case Study 1, A school board program with good TELL uptake

The site is a small centre within a large school board, with a resourceful team of dedicated LINC teachers and a supportive administrator. Despite its unionized staff, some technical barriers, and the disruption in LearnIT2teach service in 2013, the teachers are actively using TELL and LearnIT2teach courseware in their four classes on a daily basis.

The Site

The site has four LINC classes, blended with ESL instruction. All classes use edulinc, with one teacher who has completed LearnIT2teach Stage 4 training acting as a de facto internal champion.

Classes run all day, Monday to Friday. Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4/5.

The site has a mobile cart with 20 laptops that are shared between the four classes. For example, the level 3 class uses computers every day 12:45-2:30 pm and the level 4/5 class uses them 2:45-3:00 pm. Class size can be as high as 30, with a waiting list for the CLB 4/5 class. Classes, therefore, have 75 minutes of lab time, five times per week = ~ 6 hours/week.

The computers are suitable for TELL and the site has high-speed Internet.

Attendance tends to be lower in the afternoon according to the teachers, but the administrator said that attendance is higher at this site than at others in with the school board where computers are not used. Because it's a full-time program, they don't have stats about people leaving but the administrator sees it when she is there.

- Administrator: "This is a unique site and we see the success in our attendance at this site. This is one of our best attended sites, morning and afternoon. Absenteeism is far lower than anywhere else."

The demographics of students is varied and seemed older than other sites I've been to. There is continuous intake and students tend to stay a year or more.

Factors contributing to successful use of TELL at the site

A vibrant, cohesive team

This is a vibrant site with a small team of teachers dedicated to using TELL. They are a cohesive group that looks to one teacher as a leader and informal IT support.

- Teacher, commenting on leader's leadership: "Good to have someone ahead of you during training. She is our tech person."
- Administrator: "She makes the atmosphere conducive." "I give the credit to her for that. Teachers see how successfully it's being used in her class. She is an inspiration to other teachers. They've seen the evidence."

Resourcefulness

The teachers are resourceful. If something doesn't work, they figure out a solution as a team, sometimes with their LearnIT2teach mentor's help.

For example, because Nanogong is unavailable to them, the level 3 teacher uses Voxopop (www.voxopop.com) for speaking exercises. She writes a question based on the current theme and records her voice reading the question. Students listen to the question, then record their responses. The teacher then listens to their responses and gives them feedback in writing.

Teachers' attitude

Level 4/5 teacher:

- "I feel comfortable with it and confident enough that I can figure out how to make it work when things go wrong. I feel the need to keep current. Also, I like it."
- "I like learning about TELL and the other teachers could see that. I was there to help them if they got stuck with something."
- "LearnIT2teach training is a free course, giving me free time in my class, and the learners like it."
- "I'm not a tech expert but I am patient. And I always had my LearnIT2teach mentor."

LearnIT2teach support

Two of the teachers made numerous comments about how helpful the LearnIT2teach team is to them. Whenever they've had a problem, their mentor has been there to help them solve it very quickly.

Level 4/5 teacher: "Also our mentor was always available immediately. It was remarkable."

Level 3 teacher: "We wish everyone was like the LearnIT2teach team, so helpful, always there, not intimidating."

Level 3 teacher: "The only bright side is you guys. I remember I sent an email to my LearnIT2teach mentor and within two seconds I got a response. I used Live Chat and it was perfect, amazing. The LearnIT2teach team is really amazing."

Benefits of using courseware and TELL

Level 4/5 teacher: She uses her class time, while students are engaged in TELL on their own to do her administrative duties. Her advice to other teachers: "When the tech is working and everything is going as it should, I could have an hour of free time for marking and prep."

Practical barriers

Infrastructure

IT support is limited. The School Board provides one IT person, but the site doesn't have much access to them. For this reason, the level 4/5 teacher has taken on much of the IT troubleshooting and the members of the team support each other to understand limitations and how to overcome them. Being self-reliant is useful and makes the team feel resilient, but there are issues such as not having administrator privileges that prevent them from doing what they need to do. One teacher indicated that lack of a tech plan (i.e. maintenance/upgrade of hardware and software) is an obstacle.

Some other issues at the site:

- Headphones sometimes don't work; they need to be plugged into a specific USB port or they won't work. This is the sort of trial-and-error process that takes up teaching time and could be done better by IT support.

- Nanogong doesn't work, meaning that speaking activities are not done. Level 3 teacher has found a way around this limitation by using Voxopop software.
- Success for listening activities depends on browser choice, which teachers at times find confusing. Some activities work with IE, others with Firefox.

Interruption in LearnIT2teach service in Spring 2013

The teachers found this very hard. Their LearnIT2teach mentor gave them a course and new logins, for which they were appreciative.

Level 3 teacher: "I was so sad when there was lack of funding." Our mentor sent us the new module and we opened the course, not sophisticated. It was doable. He guided us how to set it up. I did not have access to my LearnIT2teach course. He sent us new logins, which meant a lot of extra work.

Level 4/5 teacher: "All of edlinc disappeared about three weeks ago [in January]. It was gone for almost a week, for no reason. Nobody told us."

Human resources concerns

Lack of release time, PD time, and paid PD. Teachers are not paid for extra work. Many work at home. Interestingly, these teachers are members of the teacher's union. Given lack of uptake at other sites with a unionized environment, this has to be seen as a success story.

When asked why she is willing to do extra work while other union members aren't, one teacher said, "I like it and I use a lot of computer activities with my students. I don't think they [other teachers] know what it is. They also don't understand the link between edlinc and LearnIT2teach."

Confusion between LearnIT2teach and edlinc

Level 4/5 teacher: "Teachers starting this course don't understand the connection between edlinc and LearnIT2teach. This should be made clear from the outset."

Continuous intake

Level 4/5 teacher: Because of continuous intake and the chance that there would be a new student in the class on any given day, even if everything is working well I may not have spare time during class to do my admin tasks.

Learner experience and opinions

Teachers' comments

- Learners like instant feedback on SCORMS. They find it user-friendly and like being able to repeat SCORMs to improve their grades.
- They like the gradebooks since they get to see their grades.
- Level 4/5 teacher: "I have some students who do not like working on the computer. If they like it, they stay. If they don't, they go."
- Level 4/5 teacher: "I have one student who can't come to the class for a while and she participated in the discussion the other day from home."
- Level 3 teacher: "I have a student visiting India and she did a few exercises while she was there."
- "Big learning curve for students. I use it to teach them how to use computers."
- Students can work at their own pace. If they're lagging behind, they can keep up.

Administrator's comments

- The students have a comfort level with the technology. They get their laptop and set themselves up.
- I told the administrator that some teachers at other sites balk at using TELL, saying that their students are computer illiterate. She said, "It's the computer illiterate teachers who see their students to be computer illiterate. It comes from the teacher's degree of comfort with technology and when the teacher gets positive reinforcement from the students and the students feel that they're learning using technology, they respond and they do even more. We're not teaching programming here, we're teaching language."
- I told the administrator about another qualm of teachers, which is that students want to interact with a live teacher to learn language, not a computer. She said, "It's a long day. 9-3 is a long time to sit interacting with

your teacher. Lab time is about connection, it's reinforcement, it's quiet time to learn."

Learner feedback

25 learners from 2 classes at The site were asked for feedback about their opinions and experience of using computers in their LINC class.

Where do you use computers for language learning?

At home	20
At a friend's or relative's home	1
At work	0
On a smartphone	3
At a public library	1
At a community centre	1
At the computer lab at SPO [service provider]	12
Somewhere else	6

- shops, bus (1)
- at school (5)

Skipped question	2

Do you find computer-based teaching materials helpful to learn English

Rate your experience on a scale from 1-5, with 1=Not helpful and 5=Very helpful

1	0
2	1
3	4
4	7
5	13

Compared to learning from a live teacher, is using a computer a good way to learn English?

	Yes, computers are helpful	No, live teacher is best	Both are good	Don't know
Speaking	0	9	15	0
Listening	1	2	22	0
Reading	3	4	18	0
Writing	2	8	13	1

What prevents or discourages you from using computers to learn English?

Lack of computer at home	3
Lack of software at home	5
Lack of computer skills	3
Technical difficulties	6
Computer or Internet too slow	3
Skipped questions	8

Additional comments:
- lack of time (5)
- small kids (2)
- concentrating on other things (1)

Appendix C: Case study 2, A SPO with Motivated Faculty and Technology Barriers

The Site

The overall service provider operates four centres in the GTA. The site in question is the largest and is a growing, vibrant site with 16 instructors teaching 14 LINC and 2 ELT classes. The site is at a large indoor mall that with a lot of vacant space. Although this lends the mall a downtrodden atmosphere, it seems to play in the site's favour, as they have been able to rent spaces throughout the mall for their programs. They have a child minding site, administration offices, an office focusing on job search, and two areas where classes and labs are held, in spaces on all three levels of the mall.

In addition, the site collaborates with other tenants in the building to provide community services. Their partners include:

- Public library, in which they have a room with computers for job search
- Story Garden is a literacy program, geared for children. Children of newcomers who are in class go there to be read to

A large space is also being renovated for the site that will centralize much of what they do. It will freshen up the atmosphere. It reminds me of the Welcome Centres in Toronto and North York.

As noted in last year's report on the site, their previous success in uptake of LearnIT2teach courseware use depended on:

1. An enthusiastic and supportive administrator who sees that TELL will continue to increase whether teachers wants it to or not.
2. A technology champion among the teaching staff who can lead the way, answering questions about IT and courseware use, as well as encouraging colleagues to complete their training. One teacher, who has completed Stage 4 training with LearnIT2teach, led a refresher course for his colleagues this year to get them back on board after the interruption in service.
3. Other teachers willing to undertake Stage 2 and 3 training together.
4. Adequate IT support, by someone who had taken Stage 2 training. As we note below, this situation has changed and now lack of adequate IT support is a big barrier to use of computers at this site.

Barriers - teachers

1. Infrastructure and lack of adequate IT support

This is the biggest barrier to uptake at this site. The administrator remarked that, although many of the teachers are keen to use the computer lab, problems with the technology get in their way. The teachers, in general, are enthusiastic about the possibilities of using the lab, but expressed frustration with all the difficulties they encounter.

The site has a computer lab with 17 desktop computers that are about three years old. Although each workstation is comfortable, it is difficult to move around the crowded space and the instructors find it hard to move from student to student to answer questions or provide help. There is a large screen mounted on the wall at the front of the lab, allowing the instructor to show material to the entire class.

IT support is good, but very limited. The service provider has three other locations with labs and the one IT support person has to service the 85 lab computers, as well as all the other administrative computers in the organization. He expressed not having time to service all lab computers regularly, or at all. For example, he cannot go computer by computer to assess that their software is up-to-date and functional. Teachers are unable to make changes because they lack administrative privileges, but IT support is inadequate to make the changes they need quickly enough. The teachers are willing, and in some cases able, to make these decisions, but are not given administrative privileges to do so. [Note: This is common to other sites, including the other case study in this report, a school board. IRCC needs to recognize that IT support is essential – without it having a computer lab makes no sense.]

In particular, here are some issues I heard about and/or viewed during the level 4/5 lab I visited at the site:

- Of 17 computers, 3 often are not working. Much of lab time is spent scrambling to deal with technological problems.
- Headphones don't work or are missing at some stations.
- Listening activities don't work, audio doesn't show up:
  - "Perhaps they need Quicktime, I'm not sure."
  - For one user, the plug-in was blocked. Once the instructor allowed it and it loaded, they couldn't find headphones. All this took time and this is for one user, one computer. It distracts from teaching.
- Speaking exercises are not possible. Nanogong unavailable on computers.

- Users and teacher have problems with passwords (same as last year). Passwords didn't work with certain browsers (e.g., IE). Needed to open Firefox and try again. Or they changed their password and when they try to login again, they can't. Although this may reflect lack of IT skills on the part of the teacher, many teachers are in a similar position and, without adequate IT support, they have to be able to troubleshoot.
- Jobs Search Workshop training, when it happens, takes up lab for an entire week at a time, bumping LINC classes from lab.
- 11 classes rely on this one lab. They only have occasional access, and no access outside of class.
    - Lab time is limited to no more than twice per week. There is no access outside scheduled lab time. This is detrimental to instructors because it's hard to get in a rhythm with courseware. And when teachers are laid off each year (the length of which increased recently from four weeks per year to eight weeks per year) it means it's harder for them to keep momentum going.

2. Interruption of LearnIT2teach service in 2013

The teacher whose lab I visited had finished Stage 3 and was motivated to move onto Stage 4 training when LearnIT2teach service was interrupted in April, 2013. She had been using a LearnIT2teach course up to that point. Without access, she switched to using courseware from settlement.org and moresettlement.org instead. She finds that, for her needs, this courseware works fine, though she prefers having the ability to add links to activities and create her own activities. She also missed having the gradebook.

She expressed frustration and fatigue with the technological problems she encounters in the lab. Despite this, she continues to use computers because she is concerned that using courseware may become a requirement.

3. Human resources concerns

Teachers expressed frustration that they were expected to train and prepare courses for online work without being paid for that work. This barrier has been well documented.

One teacher said that, though she missed the interactive elements of her LearnIT2teach course, neither she nor her students have time for extra work. She

and other teachers see funding cuts being downloaded on them. For example, they are now laid off for eight weeks each year instead of four.

4. Confusion about why IRCC is promoting both LearnIT2teach and PBLA

One Stage 3 grad who is working in Stage 4 is not using courseware because she is completing her PBLA training. She finds it confusing that IRCC is pushing both PBLA and LearnIT2teach, and said:

"They're pushing binders and e-portfolios on the one hand, and then you have LearnIT2teach on the other. It doesn't make sense to have both. They [IRCC] should make up their minds which one they want to support."

The administrator says this teacher has no time to work on her LearnIT2teach training because of her PBLA training. "I still don't get it, it's really inexpensive and for the future – LearnIT2teach. To me, PBLA is so costly and it makes no sense for the teachers. It's mainly for IRCC to get some outcomes. Not helping professional development of the teachers. It is more like a burden on their already busy time."

5. Learner demographics at THE SITE differ from colleges

Two teachers emphasized that the type of learners at THE SITE fall into two types: those for whom computers are threatening and those who work on them all day and want to have interaction with a teacher to learn English.

One of them used this analogy: If I were going to Spain to learn Spanish and they put me in front of a computer, I'd be frustrated. We have software engineers in our class, they don't want to use computers. They want the classroom experience.

6. Choice of LMS

Another teacher said: "Of all the platforms I've used, some are far more simple than Moodle. When I compare it to these other platforms, I find Moodle more complicated." She wondered why LearnIT2teach hadn't chosen a local product like Blackboard or Desire to Learn. "After using Moodle again for the PBLA course I realized maybe that's why I had so much trouble with LearnIT2teach."

7. Peer pressure not to use courseware

There is a vocal teacher at the site who said to me, "We wish LearnIT would go away." She, and at least one other teacher, insist that learners do not want to use computers, that they want live teachers, and that they (the teachers) didn't sign up to teach with computers. I have heard this all three times I've been to the site. May be a minority opinion, but it appears to affect the atmosphere at the site. I do not know what effect this has on the uptake of courseware and training by other teachers.

The teacher whose lab I visited and uses blended learning extensively said she feels criticized by some of her peers for embracing the use of computers.

8. Privacy concerns

Teacher who uses blended learning has concerns about privacy. "Teachers are being observed, also the students are being observed. We don't know who has access to this data."

Another teacher was concerned that perhaps "who says what on the forums" is being watched by the administration of the centre.

Learner barriers

17 learners, from two classes at the site were asked for feedback about their opinions and experience of using computers in their LINC class.

See raw data in Survey Monkey survey, Use of computers in the LINC classroom – Learner feedback THE SITE.

Where do you use computers for language learning?

At home	14
At a friend's or relative's home	0
At work	1
On a smartphone	6
At a public library	4
At a community centre	2
At the computer lab at SPO	16

Do you find computer-based teaching materials helpful to learn English

Rate your experience on a scale from 1-5, with 1=Not helpful and 5=Very helpful

1   0
2   2
3   3
4   6
5   6
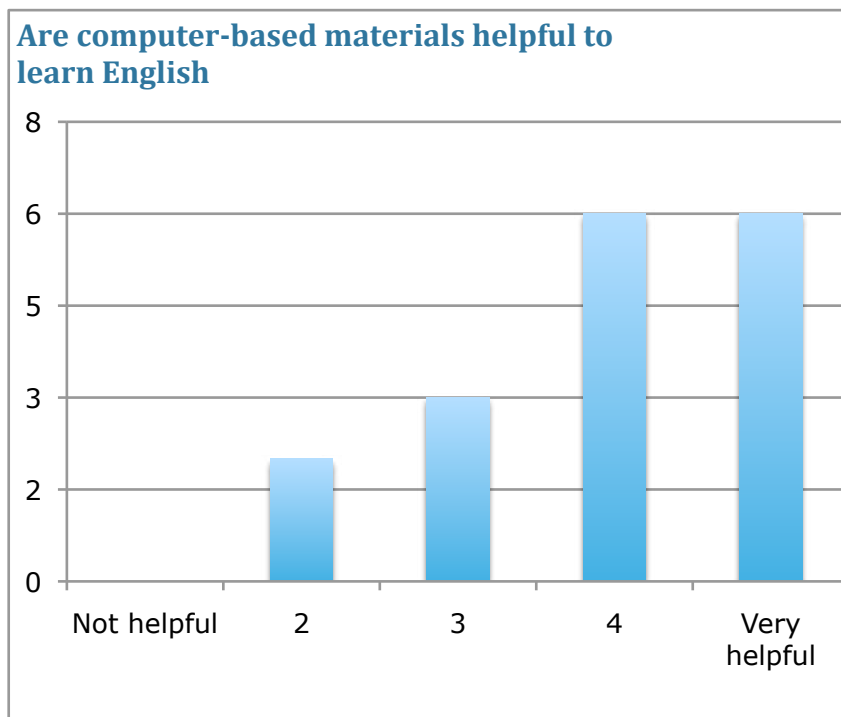
Are computer-based materials helpful to learn English

	Not helpful	2	3	4	Very helpful
Value	0	2	3	6	6

Compared to learning from a live teacher, is using a computer a good way to learn English?

	Yes, computers are helpful	No, live teacher is best	Both are good	Don't know
Speaking	0	8	7	0
Listening	3	3	10	0
Reading	6	0	11	0
Writing	3	1	11	1

What prevents or discourages you from using computers to learn English?

Lack of computer at home	1
Lack of software at home	3
Lack of computer skills	3
Technical difficulties	3
Computer or Internet too slow	2
Skipped questions	6

Additional comments:

- I need WiFi in classroom
- Lack of time (3)

A model for technology uptake

As we noted last year, the administration and some of the staff at the site are enthusiastic about the possibilities of TELL, with a few (very vocal) exceptions.

For successful technology uptake and use of TELL in LINC classrooms, a service provider will benefit from:

1. An enthusiastic and supportive administrator
2. Teacher(s) on staff who will champion the use of technology in teaching and demonstrate to their colleagues the benefits in practice
3. Cooperative learning among teachers, along with administrators and IT staff
4. Appropriate and adequate hardware and software resources, along with timely and regular IT support

However, the technology barriers at the site are getting in the way and overcoming them requires a different tack. Whether they had more computers or a mobile lab with laptops, the issue of servicing these computers would remain. It seems essential that funding needs to exist for IT support.

When all four of these components come together it can be a winning strategy for any LINC service provider.

Appendix D: Occasional Report 8

**Occasional Report 8
SPO Blended Learning Readiness**

Evaluators: Matthias Sturm, Patrick J. Fahy

6 March 2016

Where We Are Now

What teachers say in the LearnIT2teach training

What LINC administrators say about technology

What LINC and ESL practitioners say across Canada

Recommendations

What teachers say in the LearnIT2teach training

During the course of LearnIT2teach training, teachers are routinely asked about what barriers and challenges are their main concerns with regard to the increased use of technology at their programs. Methods to gather information on barriers and challenges include evaluation surveys at the end of each teachers training stage, surveys of program administrators, and interviews with selected teachers and administrators.

Training evaluations from the Pre-Stage 2 training, which was created to bridge the Stage 1 training delivered face-to-face with the online Stage 2 training and to increase its uptake, show that barriers to implementation and delivery of online courseware are plentiful. While 61% of respondents said that the skills and knowledge of teachers are still the main barrier, there are many other barriers that a third to half of respondents identified, some technology-related and some training/support-related as illustrated by Figure 1 on the following page.

Additional barriers mentioned were barriers that underlined the results in Figure 1. More specifically, a respondent stated that the voluntary time investment on part of the teachers is too great, and that there is a lack of buy-in to see the usefulness of blended learning. Other respondents explained that, on the one hand, there still was a lack of skills on part of teachers and students, and on the other hand, many students believed that they "could do this at home" and that they should be learning directly from the teacher in class time. Another teacher mentioned that an up-to-date curriculum for low level learners, who have never used technology or who don't have access to technology, was needed, and that teachers needed support to gradually teach these learners with these barriers.

In Stage 2 of the training, where teachers are required to use an EduLINC online course with their students for a minimum of four weeks, participants reported that the greatest barrier to continued participation was technical glitches; the next greatest barrier was skills and knowledge (expertise/experience as teacher/learner/user, and the third greatest barrier was access to Internet (lab restrictions/schedules, acceptable use policies).

Respondents identified a number of solutions and strategies to overcome these barriers:

- When priorities for online delivery are articulated, release time for teachers needs to be provided and prioritized to support it.
- Collaborating within a team and having peer support would also help the training not to be too isolated.
- IT departments need to place greater priority on supporting and meeting the needs of teachers and learners to implement and have continuous use of technology in the classroom.
- Teachers need to be convinced that there is set-up time required, but that there is time savings using the courseware in the long run.
- Teachers need to be shown how to blend the technology into their current classroom repertoire.
- Mandatory online LearnIT2teach training for all LINC/ESL teachers in Ontario so that they can obtain both PD hours and a certificate of recognition.
- All LINC/ESL teachers who have completed the LearnIT2teach teacher training should be allowed to use the computer laboratory after school hours to prepare lessons for students.

Figure 1: Barriers in using more technology for training and program delivery - PreStage2 training evaluation, January 2014-November 2015

Answered: 299   Skipped: 30

Barrier	Percentage
Alteration of resources	19%
Advertising on websites	15%
Less free functionality	11%
User-restricted access	11%
Management of logins	16%
Attitudes re technology	33%
Technical glitches	44%
Lack of tech support	38%
Lack of PD funding	41%
Availability of PD	41%
Access to technology	46%
Maintenance & upgrade	44%
Funding for tech puchases	38%
Access to Internet	36%
Skills and knowledge	61%
Human resourcing	41%
Other barriers	12%

What LINC administrators say about technology

Early in the *LearnIT2teach* project, LINC administrators said they felt that technology could play a role in improving the teaching practice and delivery in their programs. However, some pointed out that technology has to be "used systematically and appropriately," and that integrating technology into program delivery also depends on the motivation and ability of the students.

One training participant reported that using an LMS made things easier, as there was no need to "sift through garbage on the Internet," and another stated that "the more tools [were] in the tool kit, the more flexible and versatile one could be."

In 2012, the *LearnIT2teach* project conducted a survey of LINC administrators in workshops at the LINC Administrators Conference (see Appendices).

Nine out of ten of the 71 respondents reported that technology was used at their centre. Three quarters said that access of language classes to computer labs was excellent/unlimited (23%) or good (51%), while one quarter said it was fair/limited. Sixty percent had high speed Internet, while less than 20% said that their internet was either not high speed or unreliable.

Figure 2: Advantages to improving access to learning technology
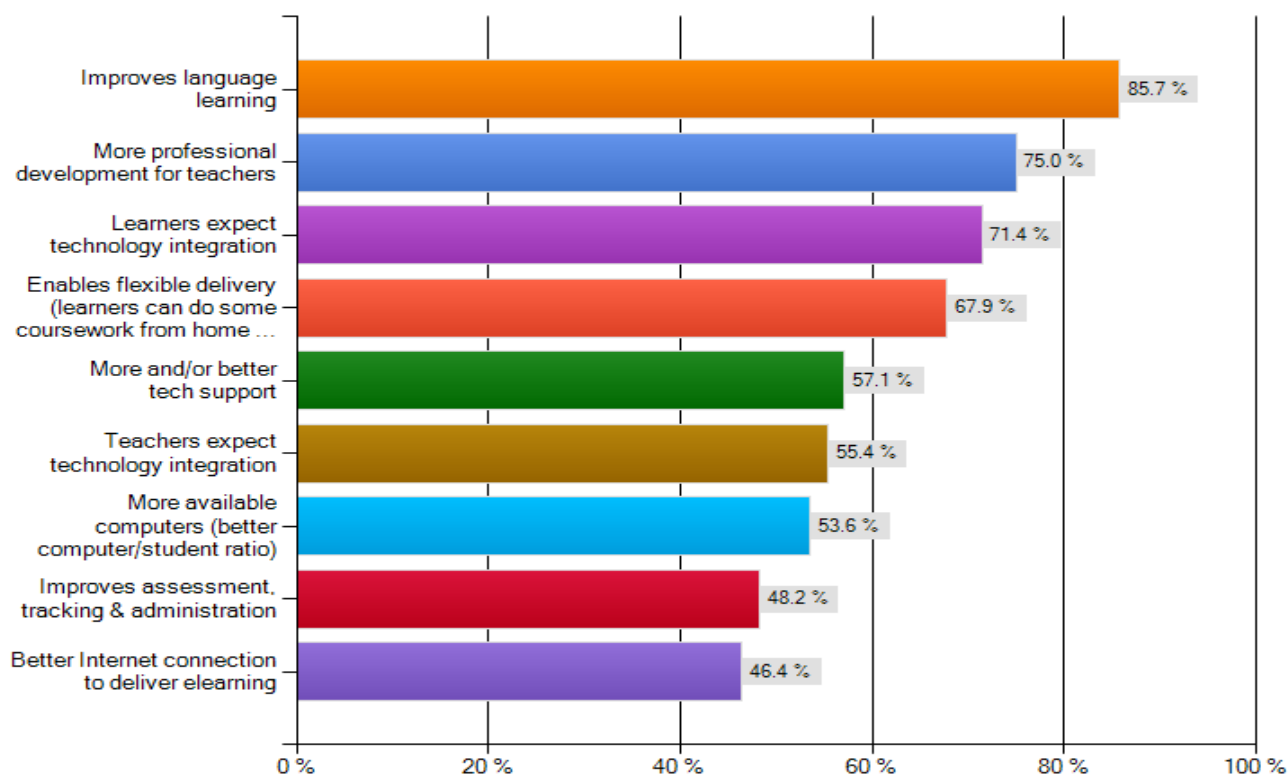
When asked about advantages of improving access to learning technologies at their centre, 86% reported that it improved language learning and 68% said that it enables them to provide more flexibility in the delivery of their program by offering learners the opportunity to do some coursework outside the classroom. Figure 2, above, illustrates these findings, and also underlines the need for the integration of technology further. 71% of LINC administrators surveyed said that learners expect programs to use technology and that 55% of teachers have the same expectation.

Respondents were also asked their views about how suitable the computers at their centre were for e-learning (e.g., the ratio of students per computer and the number of computers with a reliable connection, up-to-date software, and the capacity to access audio with headsets or speakers). Two thirds reported that they were excellent or good, while one third rated them as fair. Only one-quarter of respondents reported adequate tech support, while half of the respondents had tech support that was not available all the time and the remaining quarter did not have adequate tech support at all. While hardware and software maintenance can be

dealt with on an infrequent basis, it is adequate tech support that is often available on an irregular basis but needs to be provided when needed to ensure successful program delivery.

When asked about what LINC administrators saw as the barriers to increasing learner access to technology and what obstacles prevented teachers from making more effective use of technology, their responses with respect to barriers to learners appeared to be perceived as more related to the access and quality of technology infrastructure and its maintenance while the obstacles that are thought to prevent teachers from using technology-based resources are largely a reaction to the lack of skill, time, and support. This suggests that adequate access to reliable technology is an essential need for service providers to support the integration of technology and provide online learning opportunities to students; however, the instructors' needs clearly relate to building of skills and knowledge, and to creating a sense of self-efficacy that is supported by funding for professional development and on-demand technology support. Figure 3 and Figure 4, below, illustrate these findings.

Administrators also identified these main challenges that the instructors in their program were facing that can be viewed as a shortlist of issues to keep in mind:

- Restrictions to access Web-based services (e.g. YouTube)
- Lack of time to get comfortable using technology
- Information overload and a steep learning curve
- Lack of training and confidence using technology
- Minimal/inadequate technical support
- Lack of access to information and resources
- Counting attendance for students in computer labs
- Lack of funding for the upkeep of computers

Figure 3: Barriers to increasing learner access to technology
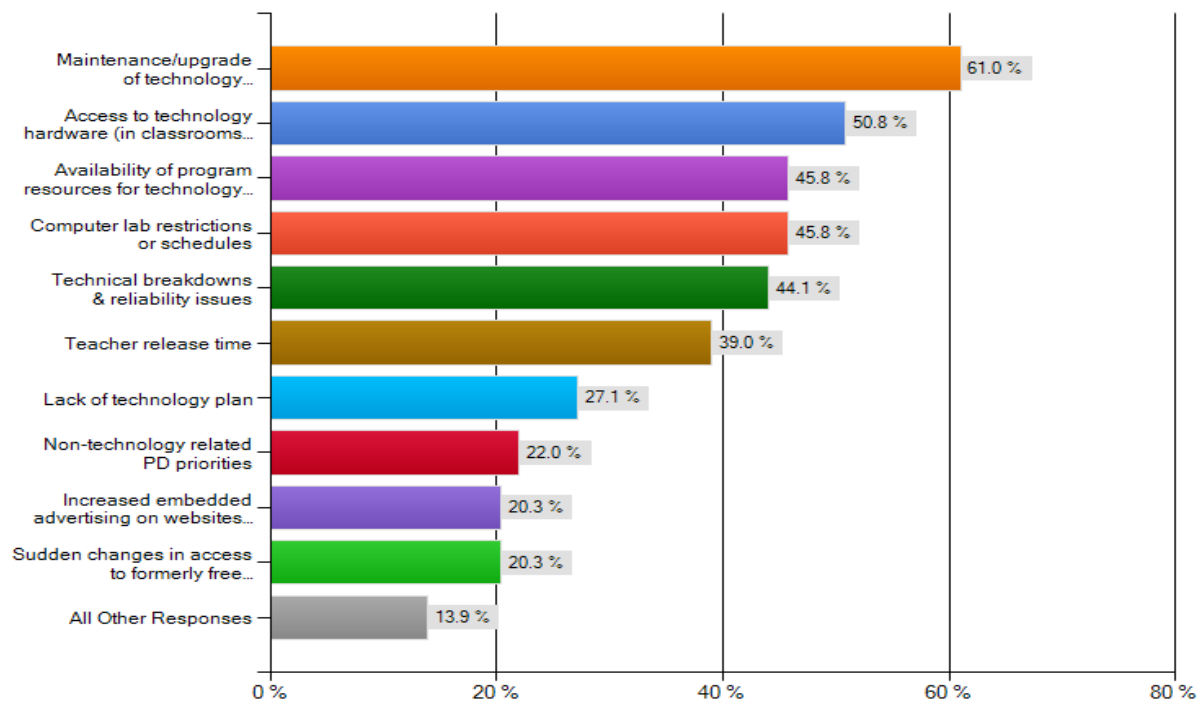
Figure 4: Obstacles preventing language instructors from making more effective use of technology
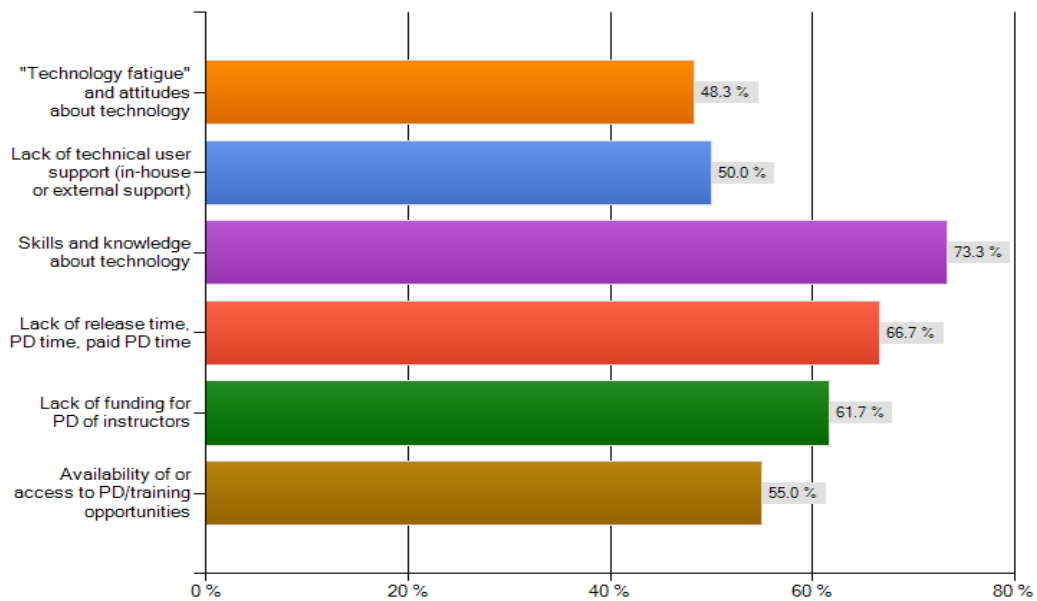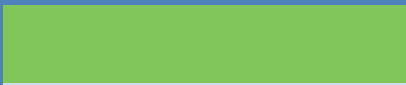
What LINC and ESL practitioners say across Canada

A survey of subscribers to the Settlement Language National Network (SLNN) organized by TESL Canada was conducted in June 2015 and includes respondents from IRCC and non-IRCC settlement language training service providers. The questionnaire completion rate was 97.16% and there were close to 600 respondents.

The survey revealed an increase in requests for flexible class time options (32.8%) and for online options (9.4%). Students need more flexible options to attend course while continuing to work, opportunities to complete assignments, and an environment that is less conducive to actual teaching (as opposed to online presentations). Figure 5, below, illustrates the findings.

Figure 5: Top three requests from students that apply to the classroom

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Increasingly higher level (CLB 5 plus) learners		48.9%	280
Increasingly lower level literacy or CLB stage 1 learners		27.9%	160
Increased number of learners with high needs and/or disabilities		23.6%	135
Increase in requests for flexible class time options		32.8%	188
Increase in requests for online options		9.4%	54
Increase in requests for employment and/or profession specific language instruction		29.8%	171
Difficulty with student retention (employment, personal circumstances, etc.)		39.1%	224
Other (please elaborate)		18.0%	103
	Total Responses		**573**

An increasing number of teachers (18%) identify blended / online learning as among the top three most important concerns the sector is facing in terms of organization capacity, teacher training, and support.

One-quarter use a blended approach for program delivery, combining face-to-face classroom and online components. While the term blended learning may have not be understood and applied consistently by all respondents, this finding indicates there is some technology use in these programs although of varying types and degrees. Online Instruction (i.e. everything is in an online environment) is provided by just under a tenth of programs. Figure 6, below, illustrates the findings.

Figure 6: Type of program delivery
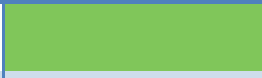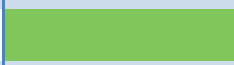
Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Face-to-face instruction (i.e. everything happens in the F2F classroom)		86.6%	506
Blended approach, face-to-face classroom approach and online components to the same course		25.0%	146
Online Instruction (i.e. everything is in an online environment)		8.9%	52
Other (please elaborate)		7.5%	44
	Total Responses		**584**

Figure 7: Instructor use of technologies
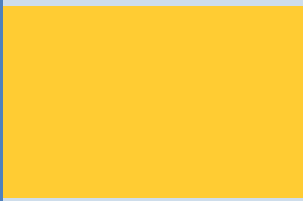
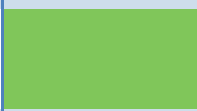| Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
CD players/Tape recorders		84.7%	497
Digital voice recorders		41.7%	245
Overhead projectors		55.0%	323
Document projectors		25.9%	152
LCD Projectors		48.9%	287
Smart Boards		35.1%	206
Teacher dedicated computer in classroom		58.9%	346
Classroom computers or a COW unit (computer on wheels)		28.6%	168
Computer lab		68.5%	402
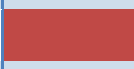
Internet / Wifi access		86.2%	506
Other (please elaborate)		15.7%	92
	Total Responses		**587**

The availability of adequate resources is important. The survey also showed that instructors have access to a vast array of technologies, e.g. Internet/Wifi access (86%), CD players (85%), and teacher-dedicated computers in the classroom (59%). While more two-thirds have access to a computer lab, less than one-third have computers in the classroom or on wheels. Figure 7, above, illustrates these findings.

Many teachers are comfortable using technologies, i.e. over three-quarters use processing tools, email or other online tools to communicate, and access websites to accompany classroom materials. Less than a quarter use an organizational LMS to deliver learning content and less than a tenth use the full spectrum of Web 2.0 tools. Only 5% report that they struggle with basic technology-related activities. Figure 8, below, illustrates these findings.

Figure 8: Instructors comfort level with technologies

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Struggle with technology (i.e. attaching a document to an email presents challenges)		5.5%	32
Use MS office or other word processing tools to create handouts and presentations		78.5%	460
Use email or other online tools to communicate with learners and/or peers		80.5%	472
Access various websites to accompany classroom materials or deliver teaching content (i.e. publisher produced online supplementary modules, online flashcards, reading comprehension websites, etc.)		79.7%	467
Have created an online group to communicate as a class (ie. Facebook, google folder)		23.7%	139

Use an organizational LMS to deliver programs (i.e. Moodle, D2L, LearnDash, etc.)		21.7%	127
Integrate a full spectrum of Web 2.0 tools in working with learners (i.e. blogs, newsletters, microblog, social bookmarks, collaborative documents)		8.4%	49
Author Scorm compliant assets / design online courses		3.9%	23
Part of a larger community of practice for online teaching / learning		17.4%	102
A full range of the above		11.3%	66
Other (please elaborate)		8.2%	48
	Total Responses		**586**

Recommendations

The surveys summarized above contain information that is unlikely to change quickly. The research undertaken as part of this project and the strategies that were developed to address the issues identified by it - some of which are already in place and others that still need to be implemented - are the basis for the following recommendations.

Put the following strategies in place:
- Provide technology infrastructure in the form of appropriate hardware, good Internet connectivity and ready access to technical support;
- Identify an early influencer in the person of a teacher who first recognized the potential and then put it to work with her learners;
- Create opportunities for positive responses to program innovation from learners and gather evidence of technology integration;
- Form a secondary group of teachers who demonstrated readiness to innovate;
- Identify a program manager who supports technology integration and provides professional incentives to teachers;
- Articulate leadership in program innovation by senior management in the faculty.

Support the development of skills and knowledge
- Deliver quality p.d. to build capacity of teacher skills and knowledge

Support the use of web-based resources
- Promote of blended learning and the use of TELL resources
- Promote the use of EduLINC courseware

Support the integration and upkeep of technology
- Lobby for more funding for tech maintenance/upgrade/support and PD
- Identifying champion programs

Support the building of leadership and support of administrators
- Building of awareness of the value of administrative leadership
- Deliver LINC Administrators course

Gather information to evaluate the state technology integration
- Survey p.d. participants about the state of technology integration
- Survey service providers through national and provincial surveys
- Collaborate on surveys with national organizations (e.g. SLNN)
- Evaluate results gathered from LINC Administrators course