

## Editorial

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## Editorial

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Six articles (one in French and five in English) and two book reviews comprise this first 2024 regular issue (27, 1) of the *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*. The papers address the topics of reading development among young learners of French (both in first and second language settings), development and validation of a screening procedure for post-admission language support, native speaker comprehensibility ratings of conventional expressions produced by second language learners, and the role of the language educator as it pertains to their views and ideologies with respect to the students they serve as well as the feasibility of implementing a multilingual project in an English L2 setting.

**Raymond, George, Cadez, Follows, Neveux, Hipfner-Boucher, Genesee, and Chen** report on a longitudinal, mixed methods empirical study that examined the development and implementation of a phonological awareness screening and subsequent intervention among primarily English-speaking kindergarteners enrolled in a French immersion (FI) program in Manitoba. Seen as a key literacy-related skill, phonological awareness was measured to identify the likelihood of reading-related struggles that children could face when learning to read in French. Forty of the participating children, who scored below the acceptable threshold on the screening tool, were offered the phonological awareness intervention that lasted between seven to ten weeks. The results show significant gains in the children's phonological awareness skills and confirm previous research findings that showed a predictive link between phonological awareness abilities in one's first language and their reading levels in languages learned subsequently. The uniqueness of this paper is also noteworthy as it details a collective effort of a multidisciplinary team of professionals to promote access and, later, success of FI learners under their care. Maintaining the focus on the development of reading skills among young language learners, **Lachance and Fejzo** detail the design and validation of a remedial program aimed at promoting prosodic skills, with a specific focus on punctuation in reading, among Grade 1 and 2 speakers of French. Having identified a lack of teaching materials related to promoting reading fluency by way of focus on punctuation, the authors adopted a methodological framework, advanced by Van Der Maren (2003), that allowed them to perform the necessary needs analysis, determine goals specific to the project, design the materials (i.e., a teacher's guide and student's workbook), and have subject matter experts evaluate the results. In addition to the valuable insights on the efficacy of the developed materials, the project also stands to benefit future investigations of prosody and all those interested in developing similar subject-specific materials.

With a focus on post-admission language support of students in post-secondary institutions, **Devos, Nizonkiza, and Lynch** outline the development and validation of a screening-diagnostic assessment procedure to identify learners in need of language support in college technical and business diploma programs. The assessment procedure consisted of a screening portion (that included testing grammar ability and vocabulary knowledge),

diagnostic portion (that measured learners' accuracy and fluency in writing), and a self-assessment portion (that allowed learners to self-assess their language abilities and indicate the likelihood of their willingness to act on the results of the assessment). The paper also considered the effectiveness of the pedagogical support (offered post diagnosis) in augmenting the students' success in program-required communication classes. The results demonstrate that the vocabulary segment of the screening portion might be sufficient in screening language abilities and that the identified learners who choose to attend the remedial language classes achieved higher communication grades than their counterparts. The authors close with a call for a development of additional diagnostic tools that can effectively identify learners' L2 strengths and weaknesses to help them succeed both academically and in the workplace.

The focus of **Bejarano's** study is on the comprehensibility of conventional expressions (i.e., expressions used by more than 50% of L1 speakers in particular speech acts/discourse situations) produced by French L2 speakers. After developing a database of expressions produced by the learners in response to ten pre-determined scenarios, a comprehensibility test was constructed and later administered to Quebec French native speakers tasked with rating the comprehensibility of the items. The results not only confirmed an important role for conventional expressions in L2 comprehensibility, but also demonstrated how nonconventional expressions (operationalised as alternative grammatical forms, sociopragmatic deviances, and interlanguage attempts) can affect native speaker comprehensibility judgements.

The final two full-length papers of the issue focus on the language educator. **Davis** explores the perspectives and ideologies of teachers, principals, and central office staff in selected French immersion (FI) programs in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta in terms of refugee-background students under their care. The use surveys and interviews allowed the author to identify themes underlying the educators' perspectives on the topic and to link them to ideologies that might be shaping them. The paper makes unique contributions to the discussion of learner representation in French immersion programs across Canada (and Prairie provinces in particular) and offers concrete recommendations on how the studied programs could better their support and inclusion efforts with respect to refugee-background students. **Kalthoum**, in turn, adopts the case study approach to examine his stance and actions - and their effects on students, teachers, and the learning/teaching process - towards the implementation of a multilingual pedagogy in an international school in one of Canada's largest cities. After the author's English L2 learners engaged in a multilingual collaborative poetry writing project, they were invited to reflect on the experience via a survey and interview. The analyses of the findings point to the students appreciating the benefits of multilingual pedagogies and detail the author's reflections on the benefits and challenges of such implementation.

The two book reviews conclude the issue. **Mu** evaluated Martyn's (2022) volume, entitled *Discourses, identities and investments in foreign language learning*, that, through an ethnographic lens, explores discourses of identity, gender, language investment, and foreign language education in Ireland. **Ulrich-Verslycken**, in turn, reviewed Griffiths and Soruç's (2020) *Individual differences in language learning: A complex systems theory perspective*, that explores eleven individual differences in second language acquisition from a complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) perspective. The two tomes, praised for their uniqueness and innovativeness, may prove of interest to language researchers and practitioners alike.

In closing, we would like to acknowledge all the authors and reviewers for their outstanding contributions, as well as to extend our appreciation to our editorial team for bringing this issue to fruition. Our most sincere thanks go out to Dr. Josée Le Bouthillier, the French Editor, Dr. Caroline Payant, our Book Review Editor, Jessa Hudson, the Copy Editor, and Alexandra Ross, our Managing Editor. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Payant, who after five years of service as the Book Review Editor has decided to step away from the role, and to warmly welcome Dr. Kevin Papin, who has recently joined the team as the new Book Review Editor. Lastly, we are looking forward to the upcoming special issue on written corrective feedback in first and additional languages, guest-edited by Dr. Marilisa Birello (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain), Dr. Llorenç Comajoan-Colomé (Universitat de Vic, Spain), and Dr. Tania Salguero (University de Vic, Spain). This volume will include a selection of papers presented at the world's first Written Corrective Feedback conference, hosted by the Universitat de Vic-Universitat Central de Catalunya in 2023, and promises the CJAL readership cutting-edge research and noteworthy insights on the topic. This special issue also marks CJAL's first foray into hosting a guest-editorial team entirely from outside of Canada, which, to us, speaks to the Journal's growing visibility and impact.

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Co-editors