Glossary

A

accommodation—any change to the way in which information is presented to students or in how students convey their understanding or skill to the teacher. In some jurisdictions, accommodations are referred to as "adjustments."

affective filter—the idea or theory that students' ability to acquire language is influenced by their emotional state. The lower the students' affective filter, the greater the likelihood that they will approach the language with an open mind and thus acquire it with more ease. Conversely, the higher the affective filter (or the more stressed or closed off to the experience that a student is), the lower the potential for the student to progress in the language.

allophone—someone whose first language is neither English nor French, for example, a newcomer to Canada. The term originated in the Canadian French–speaking world.

anchor chart—a visual aid that helps learners remember when and how to use particular strategies. An anchor chart can also be used as a way to identify and help learners remember the concrete steps needed to complete a task.

assessment as learning (AAL)—designed to help students think metacognitively about their work in the lesson or unit, that is, to reflect on their performance or their prior knowledge. It is considered formative assessment.

assessment for learning (AFL)—used as a checkpoint toward assessment of learning (AOL) to determine how well students are progressing toward learning goals mapped to AOL moments. It is considered formative assessment.

assessment of learning (AOL)—synonymous with evaluation, the point when we stop to judge students' performance against pre-established criteria and assign a score. It is considered summative assessment.

B

baseline techniques—the teaching techniques that are supported by research as being integral to meaningful support and progress within second language learning. Some of these teaching moves may be directly tied to student learning in the classroom; others are tied to how we reflect on our teaching.

basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)—language skills that are more social and less cognitively demanding than cognitive academic language proficiency and are usually used in oral communication. Many students can communicate easily about social and daily living needs within one to three years of starting language study.

Bloom's taxonomy—the six levels that show the progression of cognitive challenge in learning: (1) remembering, (2) understanding, (3) application, (4) analysis, (5) evaluation, and (6) creation. New structures to the taxonomy have been proposed to reflect 21st century education goals.

C

cognates—those words that have similar meanings and forms across two languages (e.g., different/différent)

cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)—language skill that is academic and more abstract than basic interpersonal communication skills. CALP is often framed as "words to talk about other words." Students will take anywhere from five to seven years to develop this level of proficiency.

cognitive space—refers to what learners are expected to do with the language they learn, for example, talk about social events, learn about a particular content area, and solve a certain type of problem. The cognitive space and the physical space are part of the language environment that the learner accesses.

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)—the original framework, proposed about 30 years ago by the Council of Europe, to provide an objective overview of how language proficiencies can develop across the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The language skills are framed in the Can-Do phrasing to provide user-oriented assessment markers.

convergent or divergent questions—questions with either one right answer (convergent) or multiple possible responses (divergent). Convergent questions usually focus on content knowledge, limiting opportunities for language growth, while divergent questions help advance understanding of content.

corrective feedback—comments or directions that are given to students to fix or improve their response to a question or task. Corrective feedback can take different forms, such as clarification request, recast, elicitation, and explicit correction.

COSFILE—the Cycle of Support for Inclusive Language Education, which is a protocol or tool to help teachers navigate situations in which there is a need or interest in providing a more structured system of support to a student. The protocol includes a collection of inventories, reflection tools, and guiding principles designed to help stakeholders facilitate conversations that can lead to more inclusive classroom experiences.

D

differentiation by content—one type of differentiation or instructional practice that creates multiple paths of learning to address multiple student needs. Students consider different dimensions of a concept or different concepts relevant to the overall learning goal.

differentiation by linguistic complexity (DLC)—one type of differentiation or instructional practice that creates multiple paths of learning to address multiple student needs. It is a dynamic process that involves reworking vocabulary choices and language structures to ensure that students can more easily grasp the ideas and content being presented to them.

differentiation by process—one type of differentiation or instructional practice that creates multiple paths of learning to address multiple student needs. Students complete steps that are different in complexity, sequence, mode, or purpose in order to arrive at the learning goal.

differentiation by product—one type of differentiation or instructional practice that creates multiple paths of learning to address multiple student needs. Students create different pieces of evidence of their understanding or mastery of a topic, varying, in particular, format or mode.

differentiation/differentiated instruction (DI)—First, it is an approach to instruction based on students following learning paths aligned to their needs, interests, or readiness. In terms of instructional delivery, it is a dynamic model in which the structure of a lesson typically incorporates whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, collaborative learning, and a variety of independent practice opportunities. Students move back and forth into various learning configurations and instructional events over the course of the lesson, possibly moving in different directions from one another.

discourse markers—transition words, terms, or short phrases that connect and organize ideas within oral and written texts (e.g., however, moreover, as a result, to sum up)

F

first language learners (L1)—students who are developing skills in the language of their home environment

formative assessment—evaluation that takes place during the learning process. Assessment for learning (AFL) and assessment as learning (AAL) are considered formative assessment.

H

high-frequency words—words that are encountered most frequently by readers

I

immersion program—a program that offers students the opportunity to learn subjects such as sciences, language arts, and mathematics within a rich language environment. Immersion programs are designed to offer language choices that are different from the language of the broader school community. Immersion students spend a large part of their day exposed to the target language. Immersion teachers use specialized second language pedagogy to support the learning of the target language and subject-area content.

inclusion—in language education, the term means ensuring that the access to language learning leads to some form of success for all learners involved.

Inventory of Universal Language and Differentiation Actions—a record or catalogue of the ULAs and differentiated practices used by a teacher. It is a useful tracking chart for teachers.

IRE/IRF (teacher Initiate-student Respond-teacher Evaluation/Feedback) pattern—the most common pattern in teacher–student question exchanges in the classroom that allows the teacher to confirm a student's knowledge of a concept. In this pattern, questions usually focus on recall of key details and information. Sometimes, the questions test understanding of a concept or its application to another context; however, few questions address aspects of analysis, evaluation, or synthesis.

L

learning difficulty or disability—in the broadest sense, a challenge or issue faced by a student working in his or her first language to the point that it has an influence on the learning experience. The challenge can be the consequence of a formally diagnosed learning disability that is related to language or any other type of special education need that has an influence on the development and use of language. This latter group of needs can include general speech or language impairments and challenges with executive function, memory, or attention that shape how language is perceived, processed, and expressed. Depending on how a jurisdiction defines these learning needs, this group can include students who have been formally diagnosed with a language-based learning disability (e.g., dyslexia, dysgraphia), students who have general challenges with learning (e.g., processing disorders), and students subject to challenges with attention.

M

medical model—a paradigm, or way of thinking, about learning that focuses on students' deficits and disorders rather than on their strengths or assets. This model views disability, difference, or disorder as a deficit within the individual that has limiting consequences on the person's potential to achieve. This mindset is considered a barrier to inclusion.

metacognition strip—a tool for developing metacognitive skills (students reflecting on their learning); it consists of a piece of paper or card on which a teacher writes a question for the student to reflect on the goal, strategy, and outcome of a lesson.

modification—any change to the grade-level curricular expectation that is made to account for individual learning needs. In some areas, a modification may be possible only if there is official special education documentation.

multimodal teaching/modalities—multiple ways of representing new content and conveying information, which allows for deeper processing of information and helps learners stay focused. Using different modalities to present material creates an enhanced, interactive, inclusive, and more engaging learning environment. Multimodal teaching is part of the overall principle of Universal Design for Learning.

multiple intelligences—a theory of learning developed by Howard Gardner that proposes eight different dimensions of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, musical, naturalist, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal

P

parent/guardian inventory—a questionnaire to be filled out by a student's parent or guardian to gain some information to help frame language education support and be more aware of how the home environment may or may not be supporting language education. It is part of the COSFILE protocol.

R

Response to Intervention (RTI)—a method, or protocol, for identifying students who may be in need of special education services. RTI considers what happens at three tiers of the instructional experience and recommends certain actions at each tier to determine whether a student's response warrants further attention and perhaps eventual evaluation for a special education need. The RTI protocol is an alternative to special education identification processes that call for psychometric assessments earlier in the process.

S

second language (L2) learners—students who are developing skills in another language

student learning profile—a sketch or report, prepared as a form, of a student's traits within an education setting. The profile documents certain dimensions of student needs and behaviours that are relevant to facilitating the greater inclusion of a language learner.

submersion program—a language learning setting in which the learners are not provided with explicit support to help grow their skills in the language or navigate the content in the target language

summative assessment—the evaluation or assessment of learning that takes place to determine how well students are performing against pre-established criteria, usually at the end of a task

T

targeted feedback—specific, timely, and personalized comments on the progress that a student is making toward reaching language learning goals. Effective feedback has been linked to increased learning.

Teacher Inventory of Baseline Techniques (TIB-T)—a self-reporting tool for considering the extent to which a teacher is using certain techniques as a part of his or her pedagogy. The techniques in the TIB-T provide a starting point for good second language teaching.

U

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—an approach to instructional design that proactively considers instructional goals, materials, and teaching actions that respond to learner needs, with the goal being to maximize or ensure student access to the learning experience

Universal Language Actions (ULA)—instructional acts, such as gestures, procedures, and operations, that help create the most favourable and accessible environment in which to learn a language. The four main focuses of ULAs are language comprehension, language production, management of language input, and vocabulary development.

X

"X" language program—a program whereby students learn a second language as a subject. Such a program generally offers less instructional time in the target language than an immersion program does. Different "X" language programs exist to meet different outcomes and objectives. Some examples include programs named for either how the instruction is organized (e.g., Core versus Intensive) or what the language context of the program is (e.g., heritage or foreign language, Indigenous language).