Linguistic diversity in the classroom: from obstacle to opportunity!

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In an increasingly global world where student mobility is expected:

• uOttawa is welcoming more and more students whose first language is not the language of their program of study.

• Linguistic diversity is now the norm in our classrooms.

• Are you wondering how to include students taking courses in their second or foreign language?
Who are you? Where are you from?

- Affiliation
- Language(s)
- Expectations
Non Anglophone in attendance

- Are there English as a additional language (EAL) students in your classes?

- Is the presence of EAL students a source of challenges?
  - What challenges?
International students

- Are there non-Canadian Anglophone students in your classes?

- Is the presence of non-Canadian Anglophone students a source of challenges?
  - What challenges?
A few stats!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Status</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled Full-Time</td>
<td>30,826</td>
<td>36,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled Part-Time</td>
<td>7,096</td>
<td>5,630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language in Use</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>26,304</td>
<td>29,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>11,618</td>
<td>12,555</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22,875</td>
<td>24,293</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15,047</td>
<td>17,144</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>819</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration Status</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents</td>
<td>35,993</td>
<td>35,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>1,929</td>
<td>7,150</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration Status by Language in Use</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>24,844</td>
<td>24,630</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>11,149</td>
<td>10,476</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1,460</td>
<td>5,071</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>2,079</td>
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</table>
How can we include these students?

Objectives - This workshop will:

- Present the characteristics of these new audiences
- Explore ways to use linguistic diversity as a pedagogical driving force
- Suggest strategies to make your teaching more efficient and improve the quality of your students’ experience.
Definitions

- **Diversity** is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities and characteristics we all possess;

- **Inclusion** is about the collective. It is about creating a culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects, accepts and values difference;

- **Accessibility** is about creating communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers.
Getting to know these audiences

- Language(s)
- Academic literacy/ culture
  (codes, rules, usage – explicit or implicit)
- Culture/ tradition
- Affect
- ...

How to address them?
Turning obstacles into opportunities

• From « They will not get it »
  to « They will provide a new perspective on the subject »

• From « Why don’t they just take the course in French? »
  to « This is a great way to promote bilingualism
  AND the English culture! »

• From « I am a content expert, not a language teacher »
  to « Here is my chance to improve my communication
  skills »

• From « I am not going to redesign my course for them »
  to « Now is the time to broaden my references
  and my examples »

Enseigner sur un campus bilingue/ Teaching on a bilingual campus
Turning obstacles into opportunities.

• From « They will slow us down » to « How can I give all my students more chances to succeed? »

• From « I don’t have time for them » to « Which resources and services can I direct them to? »

• From « They don’t understand the system » to « How can I explain this simply? »

• From 😞 to 😊
How can I improve my teaching and their learning?

Equality | Equity | Justice

Enseigner sur un campus bilingue/ Teaching on a bilingual campus
Strategies to improve inclusion:

- Share lesson outline before class to allow, for example, students with learning disabilities to prepare for note taking
- State learning outcomes and session outline at onset
- Regularly move in the room to reach audience
- Use a microphone; speak facing the audience
- Communicate messages in multiple formats
- Repeat questions and summarize answers from learners for everyone to hear

Source: [15 things you should know about accessibility](https://example.com)
Strategies to improve inclusion 2:

- Contextualize, summarize and reframe content (e.g. use transition slides, wrap-up before switching topics, introduce and situate theme within course)

- Use images and graphics

- Use contrasts and colours to highlight key ideas (words)

- Ask for feedback and adjust (e.g. look for non-verbal cues)

Source: [15 things you should know about accessibility](https://example.com)
Strategies to improve comprehension / communication:

• Speak slowly
• Rephrase, don’t (just) repeat
• Demonstrate, don’t (just) explain
• Use a variety of examples from a variety of contexts
• Post your PowerPoint before each class
• Use visual aids
• Write key words/ concepts/ names on the board
• Check the level of difficulty of required readings
• Check the readability of your documentation
Strategies for assignments, tests and exams:

• Make your instructions short and simple
• Give an example illustrating what each question means / requires
• Use simple, common vocabulary in the questions / instructions
• Read aloud each question and ask if clarifications are needed
• Do NOT penalize language errors
Let’s try it!

- Syllabus
- Assignments / exams
- Course delivery
- Communication / Documentation
- Other?
Questions?

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Notre mission

Promouvoir l’excellence et l’innovation en matière de bilinguisme et d’acquisition des langues.

Our Mission

Promote excellence and innovation in the fields of bilingualism and language acquisition.