Notes for BILC presentation – Danielle Bérubé

(3) In the Canadian Forces, French training is provided in more than 20 learning centers all across Canada. The curriculum is comprised of 11 progress levels.

My current objective is to modernize the actual curriculum that was developed in the 80s.

We just released the first modernized level, Progress Level 4 (End of level A of the Canadian Government language proficiency scale) and we are currently working on levels 5 and 6 (level B).

(4) Some critiques form users about the current curriculum:

* Images, uniforms, ranks, or name of trades are outdated;
* Texts and topics not aligned with today’s views and do not necessarily align with current politics;
* Hard to navigate : different books, sections with letters and numbers;
* Vocabulary issues (selection and quantity).

(8) Not everything is called into question in the current curriculum.

* Progression in learning is recognized as efficient
* Every level is assessed through 3 tests and, at least for the A and B levels, these tests are good predictors for the final test (Provided by the federal government and of which we don’t know the content).

(9) Some of the parameters we have to consider when we develop new material:

* Different types of training;
* Documents need to be more accessible but also easier to correct and update. (We now have the possibility to make changes in the documents and put them online for immediate access);
* “Train the trainer” material for teachers and pedagogical advisers with the new pedagogical orientation.
* Many new teachers joining the schools all year round, but also experienced teachers with great knowledge of program and goals. Product has to give support to both clienteles.

(10) Theoretical and pedagogical orientation

* Principles of Andragogy are respected;
* Better understanding of challenges that can impact language learning (PTSD, learning difficulties and duty to accommodate candidates facing learning disabilities);
* Reflect the reality/evolution in the field of language education: Although the current approach is declared as the communicative approach, teachers use a variety of approaches. Therefore, the official new pedagogical orientation is differentiated pedagogy.

(11) Differentiated instruction prevents us from favoring the same students, those for whom a unique or particular approach works best. Using this same particular approach may be to the detriment of the other students. Therefore, we encourage the teachers to use a variety or approaches and techniques that will help all the students meet their maximum potential in learning their second language.

(12) Nine approaches are presented in the teacher guide. For each approach is presented a small explanation of the basics, pros and cons for our clientele, and a limited bibliography guiding teachers who would like to know more about a particular approach.

(13) Best practices are briefly discussed (use of talk time, flipped classroom, corrective feedback, etc.). Subjects are proposed to initiate deeper research or discussions in the schools.

(16) Questionnaires and feedback sessions were used with different groups of users in the trial. Results of feedback are promising. Success rate was similar to the previous curriculum at that level.