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Principled Approaches in Online Teacher Education: Migrating SIT's Masters in Teaching Program

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Principled Approaches in Online Teacher Education:

Migrating SIT's Masters in Teaching Program

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Abstract

Delivery methods for teacher education at the post-graduate level are changing to accommodate in-service professionals and take advantage of technology. To shift the SIT Graduate Institute's Masters in Teaching program to a low-residency format, an evaluation of underlying principles in teacher education, online education and the MAT program itself is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of the program and ensure success in this new format. Within the context of these principles and an analysis of a sampling of program areas, recommendations are provided.

Keywords: teacher education, humanism in language teaching, online education

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

Distance Education. English Teacher Education. Higher Education. Learning Theory.

Online Courses. Teacher Education.

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Principled Approaches in Online Teacher Education: Migrating SIT's Masters in Teaching

Program

The School for International Training (SIT) Graduate Institute has offered a Masters in Teaching (MAT) program specializing in second or foreign language teaching, continuously since 1968. The SIT Graduate institute was founded in 1964 as a part of the Experiment in International Living, an American educational program founded in the 1930s with the mission of building understanding between cultures (School for International Training, 2012). The founding and development of The Experiment was heavily influenced by educational theorist John Dewey's writings on the integral role of experience in education, and also the idea of education through "not of relations between states but of relations between individuals of different cultures" (Watt, 1967). Although the Graduate Institute was originally intended to provide educational opportunities for Peace Corps volunteers, and this relationship with the Peace Corps remains an integral one, the Institute now provides post-graduate educational opportunities for a variety of American and International students (School for International Training, 2012).

The philosophies which underlie the MAT program are consistent with this vision, and are grounded in the humanistic language teaching approaches that were popularized in the late 1960s and 1970s. This focus of humanism is a unique feature among Masters programs in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, which traditionally focus on more mainstream language teaching approaches, with a basis in Situational Language Teaching and the Communicative approach. Another differentiating feature of the MAT program is that courses have traditionally been designed and delivered primarily utilizing work that has grown from Dewey's ideas and theories, namely the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984), discovery learning (Bruner J. S.,

1961) and Reflective Teaching (Schon, 1983) with a focus on modeling task-based teaching

(Prahbu, 1983).

The MAT program has traditionally been offered in two formats – an academic year

program and a low-residency program in which students study on campus for two 8-week

periods in the summers and complete coursework in a distance-learning framework in the

months between the two summers. The academic year program (AYMAT) is currently geared

primarily towards pre-service teacher training, whereas the summer program (SMAT) is designed

to provide in-service teacher training.

In recent years, the market for in-service teacher education in language education,

specifically Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL), has become increasingly

competitive. As the global trend towards English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as a

language of business is increasing, the demand for qualified English language teachers (ELTs) in

the international market has also increased. In response, leading universities in the field such as

the University of Manchester (England), The New School (New York), and Macquarie

University (Australia) have started offering their Masters in TESOL programs in an online

distance education format.

At the same time, the SMAT program has found enrollment numbers decreasing. The

program has thus been re-visioned in order to remain competitive in the in-service teacher

training market. This re-visioning has resulted in a significant change to the format of the SMAT

program. Where students had previously studied on-site for 16 weeks, over two summers,

completing the bulk of their coursework on the SIT campus, in the new SMAT low-residency

program, students will study on-site for 6 weeks, over 2 summers, and complete the bulk of their

coursework in online courses which will be integrated with or independent of the on-site studying.

The question that now faces the program, its instructional designers and professors, is: how can the SIT SMAT program be effectively transferred to a primarily online instructional format while maintaining the integrity of its own instructional philosophies, which have been so grounded in the intensive, cohort-building, face-to-face format?

SIT is not the first educational institution to face this question. However, its commitment to experiential learning and community-based learning create a unique set of issues that need to be investigated and addressed.

The SIT MAT program's foundational pedagogical principles can be divided into two distinct categories: teacher training principles and language teaching and learning principles.

Foundational Educational Principles of SIT's MAT Program

Educational principles that the MAT program utilizes in all courses include the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984) and discovery learning (Bruner J. S., 1961). Reflective practice and task-based learning are also cornerstones in MAT course design and delivery.

The Experiential Learning Cycle

With its roots in constructivist learning theory (discussed on page 34), David A. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle posits that learning is based first on an experience that the learner has. From this experience, the learner reflects on what has occurred and makes observations. These observations are then abstracted, into a rule, or hypothesis, for example, which is then tested by the learner through active experimentation. Specifically, Kolb outlines this as:
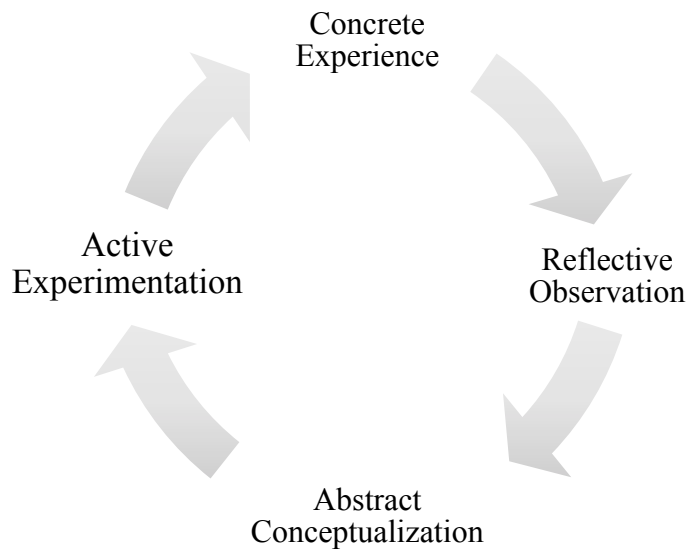
Figure 1. Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984, p. 42)

Kolb is clear that the experiential learning cycle is not intended to replace other learning theories, such as cognitivism and behaviourism, but instead it should be considered "a holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, perception, cognition, and behavior" (Kolb, 1984, p. 21). In this model, ideas are not fixed concepts that remain unchanged and unchangeable, but are instead continually revisited and revised in order to reach a greater understanding. Constructions of knowledge and facts are based on the reality experienced by the learner, and are thus subject to change as the learner's experience base grows, through reflection, hypothesizing and experimentation. Learners must negotiate between different truths and realities they experience, and this does not occur in isolation (Kolb, 1984).

Discovery Learning

Jerome Bruner brought the concept of learning through discovery to the forefront in his 1960 work *The Process of Education*. In this work, Bruner began the exploration of inquiry-based learning as an ideal means of achieving the internalization of information through

experimentation and developing patterns or rules that can be applied in a number of different situations. The crux of Bruner's theories in this and later works is that if learners discover information through experimentation, they are able to then take this discovery and apply its consequences or results to other similar situations. This differed from the more prevalent teaching ideals of the time, which emphasized memorization of facts and of hypotheses. Bruner contended that by memorizing concepts, without having discovered or interacted with the underlying principles, learners are unable to transfer these concepts (or principles) to other situations. What Bruner's discovery learning posited was that if learners created hypotheses through discovery, the learners would be able to apply these hypotheses to similar situations much more effectively. This theory forms the premise of discovery learning (Bruner J. , 1960).

Bruner also "believes that as the child discovers the solution to problems, he will rely less on the external motivation of parents and teachers and will become self-motivated to solve problems" (Hermann, 1969, p. 59). Practice is key to the ability to draw hypotheses from discovery, and Bruner theorized that discovery enables memory and long-term retention of information (Hermann, 1969). In discovery learning, the instructor acts as a facilitator for the discovery process rather than a sage, who teaches known facts to students without contextualization or true interaction and engagement with this information.

Reflective Practice in Teacher Education

Reflective practice was written about comprehensively by Donald Schon (1983) Whether regarded as a skill in the teacher's toolbox or as an underlying educational approach, teacher reflection is an area of study that complements the underlying principles of SIT's teacher education. Schon was not writing specifically about teachers and teacher education in 1983, but the principles he wrote about were clearly applicable to education and educators across many

fields. At the crux of his writings were the concepts of 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action' (Schon, 1983). The former applies to thinking about situations in the moment, as they are taking place. This kind of reflection requires analysis of the situation using past experiences and beliefs to influence current actions. The latter, 'reflection-on-action' is the kind of analysis done after the situation has occurred. In this reflection, decisions and hypotheses formulated are analyzed and this analysis then informs future decision-making (Schon, 1983).

In the context of language teacher education, the concepts addressed in reflective practice can be summarized by the following questions:

- How can I collect information about my own teaching?
- What are my beliefs about teaching and learning, and how do these
- beliefs influence my teaching?
- Where do these beliefs come from?
- What kind of teacher am I?
- What beliefs do my learners hold about learning and teaching?
- How do these beliefs influence their approach to learning?
- What learning styles and strategies do my learners favor?
- What kind of planning decisions do I make use of?
- What kind of on-the-spot decisions do I make while I teach?
- What criteria do I use to evaluate my teaching?
- What is my role as a teacher?
- How does this role contribute to my teaching style?
- How do my learners perceive my role as a teacher?
- What form or structure do my lessons have?

o   How do I communicate goals to my learners?

o   How effectively do I utilize learning opportunities within a lesson?

o   What kinds of interaction occur in my classroom?

o   What interactional styles do my learners favor?

o   What kind of grouping arrangements do I use and how effective are they?

o   What kind of learning activities do I employ?

o   What is the purpose of these activities?

o   What patterns of language use occur when I teach?

o   How do I modify my language to facilitate teaching and learning?

o   What opportunities do learners have for authentic language use in my lessons

(Richards & Lockhart, 1996, pp. 1-2)?

These questions encourage reflection by teachers on their practice in the classroom and outside of the classroom, and give teachers the framework to analyze what is working, what is not, and how their own beliefs and actions influence learning situations and outcomes. These questions are also a part of the framework for several courses in the MAT program, and thus form a critical part of the teacher education.

Teacher Education Methodologies in Use in the MAT Program

One of the fundamental principles in the MAT program is to continually model holistic teaching approaches and methodologies. While the course content is central to the learning process, the experience of learning through the foundational pedagogical principles is also given significant consideration. This model is not dissimilar to the language teaching model of Content-Based Instruction, where the non-language related content (i.e. science) drives forward the language goals of the course. In this case, however, the method of delivery and the content

are intertwined and overlapping. It is the teaching and language theory goals that are used as a vehicle to deliver teaching and language methodologies and approaches.

Each course utilizes the above-outlined pedagogical principles in different ways.   The courses have been traditionally heavily reliant on face-to-face interaction in using these principles. For example, in beginning to explore educational psychologist Lev Vygotsky's theories, an entire Second Language Acquisition class is focused on evoking memories and prior knowledge of Russia in the 1920s, when Vygotsky and his colleagues were formulating their ideas. The class provides context for the ideas in a way that allows students to reflect on what was happening in different areas of culture and academia in Russia through photographs, music, and guided discussion of the political and intellectual climate at the time. In introducing Vygotsky in this manner, students are not only able to understand the theories themselves, but also are able to construct a greater context for these theories through group discussion and experiences.

In the same course, discovery learning is utilized frequently to activate schemata and create familiarity with upcoming lecture topics. Handouts are given at the end of class, with a list of guiding questions for web-quests and strong encouragement for students to allow themselves to follow what interests them, rather than concentrating on finding 'the perfect answer' while researching these questions.   In the following class, these questions are then asked to the group, and the group works together to construct comprehensive and meaningful answers to the questions.

The Intercultural Communication for Language Teachers (ICLT) course utilizes reflection in order to discover nuance in cultural experiences, and in order to facilitate the development of hypotheses, as well as relate theoretical readings to real-life experiences and situations. While

these reflections often begin as personal written reflections, they are later shared in small groups or with the entire class, in order to further learning and understanding and co-construct knowledge. This reflection (personal and shared) encourages students to revise their hypotheses and gain greater understanding of how the cultural experiences and theories are relevant on both a personal and individual level.

In the Four Skills class, reflection is used in a less personal manner. Demo lessons taught by the course instructors are reflected upon by students in smaller groups, in order to discover the underlying structures of the lesson, as well as what was effective in delivery, materials and organization for the group, and the individuals in the group. This kind of collaborative reflection serves to raise awareness of different learning styles and preferences without the course instructors needing to overtly state what kinds of learners are being served by different parts of the lesson.

The Curriculum Design and Assessment course demonstrates the task-based teaching method often used by the MAT program in course delivery. The course, in its entirety, is a series of tasks that cumulatively become a fully designed course curriculum, including an assessment plan. Students work independently to develop their curriculum projects; however, in each class they also work in small groups in order to reflect upon their own work and provide feedback on the work of others.

It becomes apparent when reviewing a few examples of how SIT MAT courses utilize discovery learning, the experiential learning cycle, reflection and task-based teaching that all four overlap greatly in their applications and feed directly into each other. It also becomes clear through these examples that cohort building and co-construction of ideas, experiences and reflections are vital to the learning process in these courses.

Language Learning and Teaching Principles in SIT's MAT Program

The SIT approach to language teaching and learning is based in humanism and its underlying principles. The approaches that are explored most thoroughly in the SIT coursework include The Silent Way (Gattegno, 1972), Suggestopaedia (Lozanov, 1978), Community Language Learning (Curran, 1993) and the Participatory Approach (Freire, 1970). A further approach that SIT emphasizes is that of the reflective practitioner (Schon, 1983), which is outlined on page 11. One of the SIT MAT program founders, Earl Stevick, outlines humanism as including at least some of the 5 following characteristics: feelings; social relations; responsibility; intellect; and self-actualization (Stevick, 1990). Each of the approaches that underlie the SIT program design and coursework employ different means of engaging with the language and the learner, however, all fit within these broad definitions. To understand the underpinnings of the MAT program, it is important to explore each of these approaches in more detail.

The Silent Way

In the 1960s, educational designer Dr. Caleb Gattegno proposed the Silent Way as a language teaching and learning approach that takes into account the human element in the learning process. The Silent Way has a basis in constructivist learning theory, encouraging learners to use their own experiences and perceptions to inform their language learning process through trial and error, experiment deliberately, and create and revise hypotheses (Gattegno, 1972). Gattegno's educational philosophies were developed through work in the teaching of mathematics and native language literacy in the 1950s and 1960s. The guiding principle that underlies the Silent Way is Gattegno's principle of Subordination of Teaching to Learning (Educational Solutions Worldwide Inc., 2011).

The Subordination of Teaching to Learning is exactly that – the process of learning, cognitive and affective, takes precedent over all other considerations. The student must take agency for their own learning and utilize their own experiences and internal concepts in order to construct meaning from the language and the language learning experience. Self-awareness, on the part of both the student and the teacher, plays a vital role, as does the highly restricted feedback and verbal guidance from the teacher. Following this principle, the classroom is not about the teacher delivering the information to the student, but instead about the student constructing the information for themselves.

The classroom realizations of the Silent Way include the use of cuisenaire rods (small coloured blocks varying in length), functional vocabulary charts, and Fidel charts (colour-coded pronunciation charts). The students are encouraged to take agency in their learning and participate only when they feel they are prepared and ready to do so. It is thought that exposure to the rhythm and intonation of the language will help students in their understanding, as these features are key components of language meaning-making. While repetition of concepts does feature in the classroom, rote drills, and structured "repeat-after-me" exercises are at odds with this approach.   In discussing the rationale for this approach to teaching, Gattegno states:

> Whatever language is, it is certainly a substitute for experience, so experience is what gives meaning to language. Language becomes functional only when it carries meaning to the hearer. And its meaning is carried first through intonation, intensity and other melodic elements besides words (Gattegno, 1972, p. 21).

With Silent Way teaching, the syllabus is still a structural syllabus, and the teacher's role, though minimized in the actual classroom, is significant in the planning and orchestration of the lessons. By Gattegno's own admission, it is by no means a "natural" approach for language

learning, but instead it is highly structured, highly controlled and rather "artificial". The teacher speaks very little, and in fact, once they have introduced the concept, does not interfere with the students' learning process.

To say that Silent Way classroom techniques, specifically the methodology utilizing cuisinaire rods and Fidel charts, is a significant component of many international mainstream teacher training schemes (for example, Cambridge University's Cambridge Assessment CELTA, DELTA training schemes) would be inaccurate; however, Gattagno's theories and also methodologies are included for study in the industry standard textbooks for teacher education (Richards & Rodgers, Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, 1986) (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Also, there are educators and entire programs around the world who are dedicated to delivering teacher training and language education exclusively within the philosophical frameworks of Caleb Gattegno, the Silent Way and his principle that Teaching is Subordinated to Learning, for example, Une Education Pour Demain, based in Lamod, France. SIT has a long tradition of providing its MAT students with education reflecting Gattegno's philosophies and approach. Prior to his death in 1988, Gattegno's personal association with the school had involved being a founder of the MAT program, guest lecturing and providing specific training seminars for MAT students and faculty.

Community Language Learning

At the intersection of Charles A. Curran's approach to learning rooted in counseling techniques (Counseling-Learning) and the field of second language learning, Curran and his colleagues developed Community Language Learning. Counseling-Learning utilizes the affective factors of the individual learner and the individual within the group of learners, and recognizes the "relation of the conflict, hostility, anger and anxiety to learning" (Curran, 1993, p.

147) as a starting point. This is strongly related to the role of the teacher or expert in the process.

Counseling-Learning endeavours to create a paradigm where the student has full agency over their

learning and the instructor is present as a tool to be used by the learner. The relationship is

similar to that of counselor and client, where the counselor listens to and restates what the client

has said, in the target language, with the learning or discovery coming through reflection upon

the interactions (Richards & Rodgers, Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, 1986).

Initially, dependence upon the instructor or expert is great, but as the student gains more

knowledge and ability, the role of the instructor becomes more refined, until the point is reached

where the student is in complete control of the learning situation and thus becomes an expert or

instructor themself. In comparison to the Silent Way's Teaching is Subordinated to Learning,

this may be expressed as the teacher is subordinated to the learner.

Curran and his associates applied Counseling-Learning to the field of second-language

learning using a unique classroom model, where learners are seated facing each other, with the

goal of communicating in the target language with each other. In an introductory-level class, the

role of the counselor-instructor is most crucial to the process of language learning; however, their

presence is still completely minimized. Either through a phone, or through counselor-instructors

in the room (who behind the circle), the learners can communicate their intended messages in the

L1 and the counselor then provides the message in the target language. The learner then repeats

the message in the target language to the other learners. The other learners listen to the whole

process, in order to understand in the L1 what the intent is, and in order to also reflect upon the

target language that is spoken (Curran, 1993). The content of language class is completely

learner-generated, and the students are motivated by their desire to communicate with their

fellow learners.

Community Language Learning specialists often teach demonstration lessons in the AYMAT and SMAT programs, and the theoretical basis and practices of Community Language Learning are considered a part of humanistic language learning methods and techniques which form the backbone of the SIT MAT program.

Suggestopedia

Suggestology forms the scientific basis of the Suggestopedia language learning approach pioneered by Bulgarian psychiatrist Georgi Lozanov. In a report commissioned by UNESCO, Lozanov writes: "Suggestology is the science of tapping man's reserve capacities in the sphere of both mind and body. Consequently it is the science of the accelerated harmonious development of man and his manifold talents" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 8). Its intent is to harness the memory power and openness of the subconscious that is revealed in hypnotic states, in a stable, non-hypnotic state, through the use of suggestion. In order to do this, Suggestopedia creates a classroom environment that is concerned with both relaxing and focusing the student (Richards & Rodgers, Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, 1986).

The method, as used by Lozanov in his Bulgarian classroom, involves yogic breathing exercises, colourful classroom decoration that creates awareness in the learners, comfortable recliner-style seating, and most notably, the use of rhythm and classical music while texts are read. The classroom is a teacher-led environment; however, the teacher is not an authoritarian. The role of the teacher in Suggestopedia is as an authoritative source who also utilizes acting skills, singing, voice control, movement and general positivity in the classroom. It is important that the teacher maintains an air of authority, in order to encourage and facilitate the memorization process (engaging with students' prior constructs and expectations of learning); however, the classroom must stay a relaxed and comfortable environment for the learners

(Bancroft, 1975). This is vital to the learning process and to developing ideal conditions for suggestion.

Suggestopedia falls within the humanistic language learning methods as it takes into account the learner as a whole person, by stressing the lowering of affective filters in the classroom environment, in order to open the student up to the learning environment. The methodology is not consistently overtly taught in the SIT MAT program, however, it is referenced by instructors and is discussed in the Second Language Acquisition course.

The Participatory Approach

Developed as a reaction to social, political and economic conditions in Brazil, the Participatory Approach is, at its heart, education for empowerment within society. This approach is, in part, founded in the idea that teaching is a political act, and the foundations of the approach were first expressed in the 1970s in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The idea that all teaching is values-based in some way caused Freire to shift the values of the education system from those of the educator to those of the students, in a student based curriculum reliant upon dialogues with students and 'problem-posing' or the use of 'codes'. The problems and codes given to learners are catalysts for learning and may take the form of pictures or real issues that the learners are encountering in their daily lives. This method and pedagogical ideal originated within Freire's work teaching underprivileged Brazilians native language (L1) literacy skills. By learning to read their L1, Freire's learners were also becoming empowered within their society on a micro and a macro level (Freire, 1970). The critical thinking skills and analysis of socio-economic situations that Freire engaged through his work were a vehicle for engagement and empowerment in the learning of L1 literacy and also gave practical use to the knowledge that the students were gaining. The curriculum was, in large part, student-centered, as the learners

determined what the content of the learning would be and the way it would progress. Freire facilitated the learning of literacy in the students' L1 based on their needs and based on the desires expressed to him, and determined through the codes and 'problem-posing'.   Freire's problem-posing was often about empowerment against a government or system that was oppressing the illiterate learners, thus the title of his seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Educators such as Elsa Auerbach took Freire's work and adapted it to an English as a Second Language (ESL) context in North America. Auerbach's textbook *Making Meaning, Making Change* (Auerbach, 1992) was based on a soft version of Freire's theories and adapted to learning literacy in English as a second language, where English is the primary language in the students' external environment. Empowerment for ESL learners living in North America often involves being able to handle the issues that arise in day-to-day life, such as getting a bank card, or dealing with issues with the municipal government or their children's schools. A concrete example of using the soft version of Freire's methodology experienced by the author of this thesis is the loss of a bank card. With the instructor having lost a bank card, this was the problem-posing that was the catalyst for a student-centered language exploration. A student, having had a similar problem, had gone to the bank to replace her card, but could not make herself understood, and thus had not been able to replace the bank card. For an independent adult, this kind of situation is demoralizing. It is not the cognitive aspect of the situation that the learner cannot deal with; it is the linguistic requirements. The instructor was able to facilitate communication by working with the students to find solutions and eventually to create dialogues that were appropriate for the situation and would achieve the needs of the students. The following day, when one of the students came to class showing off her new bank card with a

proud smile, the effectiveness of this kind of lesson, not only in its language goals but in using language to empower students, was evident.

In their approach to teacher education, as well as the content of this education, SIT is committed to Freire's socio-cultural approach to teaching language. In the SIT MAT program, the Participatory Approach is a unique approach in language learning, as its precepts are used in educating teachers, as well as being taught as an approach to language education.

Task-based Learning

Task Based Learning is centered on the premise that learners learn best when discovering and using language to achieve a purpose, rather than studying language as a subject itself. According to this methodology, "classroom tasks which involve negotiation of meaning should form the basis of the language teaching curriculum, and that tasks can be used to facilitate practice of both language forms and communicative function" (Richards, 2002, p. 20). In the MAT Approaches class, task-based teaching is addressed, but not given the same priority (time-wise) as other humanistic methods like Silent Way and CLL. The methodology resembles many of the principles that SIT embraces in their teacher education, namely those which fall under the umbrella of constructivism such as experiential learning, discovery learning, and the co-creation of knowledge, and so MAT students are exposed to task-based teaching throughout their work at SIT through modeling within various classes, rather than explicit theory or technique-based study.

Humanism in Language Teaching in Current MAT Courses

The current MAT courses holistically embody and embrace humanistic language teaching. The framework used to discuss teaching approaches and methodology throughout the MAT courses is David Hawkins' 'I, Thou, It' (Hawkins D. , 1974). Hawkins' theory is not a

methodology so much as it is a reflective practice that teachers can apply to different situations. The 'I' is usually the teacher, the 'thou' is the student(s) and the 'it' is the subject material and can also be a number of other things. This framework stresses the importance of relationships between the individual(s) and the other(s), and the individual and the subject that is studied. Hawkins' premise is that:

> …people don't amount to very much except in terms of their involvement in what is outside and beyond them. A human being is a localized physical body, but you can't see him as a person unless you see him in his working relationships with the world around him. The more you cut off these working relationships, the more you put him in a box, figuratively or literally, the more you diminish him (Hawkins D. , 1974, p. 50).

Although Hawkins' 'I, thou, it' is a thread running through all coursework in the MAT program, it is most overtly introduced and discussed in a specific course teaching language learning approaches and methods, which SMAT students have traditionally taken in their first on-site 8-week intensive. The individual approaches receiving strong focus within this course curriculum are: the Silent Way, the Participatory Approach and Community Language Learning. In some years, focus has also been given to Suggestopedia. This focus includes experiencing the approaches as language learners, studying the theory underlying the approach, and then teaching demo lessons within the particular approaches. Non-humanistic approaches such as the traditional Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) and Situational Language Teaching (SLT, the predecessor to the popular 'Present-Practice-Produce' model) are not individually focused upon in the coursework; however, they are addressed as foils for the more holistic and humanistic methods. Generally, approaches like the ALM and SLT do not fare as well when evaluated reflectively within the 'I, thou, it' framework. This is because the more rigid roles and

assumptions that are assigned to learners, teachers and the subject matter do not leave as much room for reflection and interpretation.

Outside of the students' initial introduction to (humanistic) approaches and methods, in the Approaches course, this use of and reference to humanistic approaches above all others, is common. As a brief example, the Four Skills course utilized Silent Way teaching techniques in demo lessons in the latest summer session and the Second Language Acquisition course strongly referenced Suggestopedia when discussing various theories of language acquisition. Reflection is a theme that runs throughout all courses in the MAT program, regardless of subject-matter.

The First Module Courses

The credit courses proposed for the first module of the Low-Residency MAT program, which will take place prior to the first on-campus session, are some of the same courses that were studied in the first summer in the former SMAT program, but in slightly different forms. These two courses, Approaches and Intercultural Communication for Language Teachers (ICLT) will be offered in blended format and continue in a face-to-face format during the first summer on-campus session. To understand the importance of the SIT MAT teacher training approaches and the humanistic language teaching and learning methods used, modeled and taught in the MAT program, these two courses will be assessed individually with regards to course goals and objectives, key projects, key lessons and experiences and learning assessments.

Approaches

The goals of the SMAT Approaches course, current to the final cohort (2011) are for students "to further develop [their] personal approach to teaching through the reflective examination of…past and present teaching and learning experiences [and] the experiential and

formal study of the teaching/learning process and various approaches to language teaching"
(Barduhn, 2006, p. 1).

The students will have achieved the following objectives at the end of the course:

- To become more aware of your own teaching and learning process, and your attitudes towards teaching, learning, and language

- To be more knowledgeable of and be able to identify and discuss key issues, principles and practices in language teaching

- To have become more aware of the role of the group and the individual in learning

- To have gained skills in working in small groups

- be able to articulate the key principles and practices of your evolving approach to teaching (Barduhn, 2006, p. 1).

Key projects which are assigned and assessed in this course include reflective writing about the individual student as a language learner, a statement of beliefs, critical (reflective) examination by the student of their language teaching views and practice, demonstration lessons taught within assigned (humanistic) language teaching methodologies, and a final reflection on and articulation of the individual student's teaching approach, synthesizing the theory and experiences from the course, as well as the individual's own values and beliefs (Barduhn, Approaches to Teaching Second Languages (Syllabus), 2006).

The goals and objectives are clearly influenced by the Experiential Learning Cycle, discovery learning, and reflective practice. Co-construction of knowledge is a cornerstone of this program, as is focusing more inward for construction of an individual approach to teaching and learning.

As stated, one of the core components of this course is the experiencing of humanistic teaching methods and approaches through demonstration lessons taught by the instructor or specialist guest instructors. Following the demonstration lesson, the students deconstruct it on theoretical and experiential levels, with the experts providing guidance and facilitating the discussion. The emphasis is on exploring, discovering and co-constructing meaning. Students read about the theories behind the method and then design and teach demonstration lessons to their peers. These student demo lessons take advantage of the students' prior experience. Students are grouped by the languages they speak (or do not speak), so that each student in the group has knowledge of at least one unique language. This is to allow for more authentic language learning and teaching experiences. In the 2011 SMAT program, the demo lessons experienced and student-taught were in the areas of the Silent Way, Community Language Learning, the Participatory Approach and a choice between Task-based Teaching, Communicative Approach and Content-Based Instruction. Other methods and approaches received little, if any, attention in the coursework or readings.

In this brief discussion, it is apparent that the SIT SMAT Approaches course combines the pedagogical teacher training methods and approaches that SIT values in the teaching and experiencing of humanistic language teaching and learning methods and approaches. Sections two and three of this thesis will address how this course, reliant on face-to-face discussion and demonstration, can be migrated online while maintaining the integrity of the teaching and learning experience within the current values, methods and approaches.

Intercultural Communication for Language Teachers (ICLT)

The goals of the MAT Intercultural Communication for Language Teachers (ICLT) course, current to the final cohort are for students "to further develop their intercultural

competence as language teachers by examining the theoretical aspects of language and identity;

issues of diversity and commonalities among human beings; and implications and applications

for the classroom situation and for oneself as a language teacher" (Barduhn, 2013, p. 1).

The students will have achieved the following objectives at the end of the course:

- To define culture as it pertains to [their] work as a teacher

- To describe who you are as a cultural being and implications it has for you as a
  teacher of English

- To describe how you learn/engage with culture

- To prepare lessons that have culture as their main focus, are based on multiple
  perspectives, and are designed to facilitate cultural communication and understanding

- To describe [their] own approach to helping [their] students engage in learning culture
  (Barduhn, 2013, p. 1).

Key projects which are assigned and assessed in the AYMAT course include reflective

writing about the individual's relationship with culture, interviewing classmates and reflecting

upon these interviews, completing a cultural autobiography, an ethnography reflection paper, and

final reflection in the form of a personal manifesto (Barduhn, 2013).

This course takes into account, through its goals and objectives, the socio-cultural aspect

of teaching language, and of language teacher education. Reflective practice and discovery

learning play a large role in the projects and learning undertaken. As with the Approaches

course, mentioned above, the goals and objectives of the course are achieved through co-

construction of knowledge in classroom discussion and in the completion of the course

assessments. Because of the personal nature of the assignments, and the mining of personal

experience to inform the learning process, the experiential learning cycle is also a significant contributing factor to the achievement of course goals and objectives.

While this course does not focus specifically on teaching methodology, nor does it teach language, the usage of problem-posing and codes, as outlined by Freire, are a significant part of the delivery of this course. Students are presented with codes in the form of academic texts, cultural biographies or even concepts (like 'home') and their reactions to these codes form the basis of knowledge co-construction and discussion.

The very inclusion of an entire course in intercultural communication for language teachers demonstrates the commitment of SIT's MAT program to educating teachers to teach using humanistic methods. This course demonstrates the importance of considering the whole learner in the language classroom, rather than concentrating only on specific language and grammar points when teaching. It, like the Approaches course, combines the pedagogical teacher training methods and approaches, that SIT strongly values, in the teaching and experiencing of humanistic language teaching and learning methods and approaches. The second and third section of this thesis will address how this course, reliant on face-to-face development of relationships to facilitate discussion and co-construction of knowledge, can be migrated online while maintaining the integrity of the teaching and learning experience within the current values, methods and approaches.

Educational Foundations of Online Instruction

Online instruction has its roots in distance education. The evolution of distance education has, in fact, continually embraced and integrated technological developments. This integration of technology has required shifts and adaptations in pedagogical practices in order to best utilize the advancements. Initial distance education courses were offered by mail, with the

student working independently, sending in assignments, which the instructor would then grade and comment upon, returning the assignment to the student by mail again. Exams were also a critical component of traditional distance education courses. The teacher therefore took on the role of 'sage on the stage' with regards to assessment; however, due to the nature of independent learning, students also were required to take a good deal of initiative in their own learning, reflecting the more constructivist ideal of the teacher being the 'guide on the side' (King, 1993).

As distance education has evolved and online education has become prevalent, the distinctions between 'sage on the stage' and 'guide on the side' have become increasingly important in all aspects of course design and delivery. The 'sage on the stage' model harkens back to what Dewey outlined as the traditional education model, with the student as the receptacle, receiving information, and the teacher delivering this information. In this model, the teacher is seen as the expert, passing on wisdom from those more learned, and the students' experiences are not seen as a part of the educational process. The shift to 'guide on the side' reflects the embracing of what Dewey considered to be a more progressive model of education, where the students' experiences within the world, and their experiences in discovering and processing information are where the crux of the learning process lie. The 'guide on the side' model of instruction sees the teacher acting more as a facilitator (King, 1993), who acts as a partner in learning and discovery, and who encourages students to utilize critical thinking in order to gain knowledge. This is the foundation of constructivism learning theory, and is an effective model for designing and delivering online education (Harasim, 2012).

Although constructivism is the preferred foundation for much online learning pedagogy, it is important to recognize the roles that other theories of education, such as behaviourism and cognitivism, play in the design and delivery of online learning.

Behaviourism and Its Role in Online Learning

"Classical behaviourists believe that all learning conforms to observable scientific laws governing behavioural associations and patterns; the learner simply responds to external stimuli in a deterministic manner" (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008). Essentially, classical behaviourism assigns no importance to what occurs in the brain between a stimulus and the corresponding response, taking the view that the brain is a black-box and the stimulus-response model is automatic, with little determination by cognition (Harasim, 2012).

When one considers behaviourism, the theories of Ivan Pavlov (classical conditioning), Edward Thorndike (reinforcement) and B.F. Skinner (operant conditioning) are often at the forefront. While Pavlov and Thorndike posited theories that relied mainly on external determinations of behavior, education-focused neo-behaviourists such as Skinner, John B. Carroll and Benjamin Bloom also factored in cognitive aspects, including motivation (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008). It is the work of these, and other neo-behaviourists that plays a significant role in online learning design principles.

Bloom's taxonomy of learning, in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, heavily influences curriculum planning, with regards to the step-by-step, sequential approach that is taken. The cognitive taxonomy is based on higher order and lower order thinking skills. As illustrated in Figure 2, the top of the pyramid (evaluation) is the highest order thinking skill and the bottom of the pyramid (knowledge) is the lowest order thinking skill.
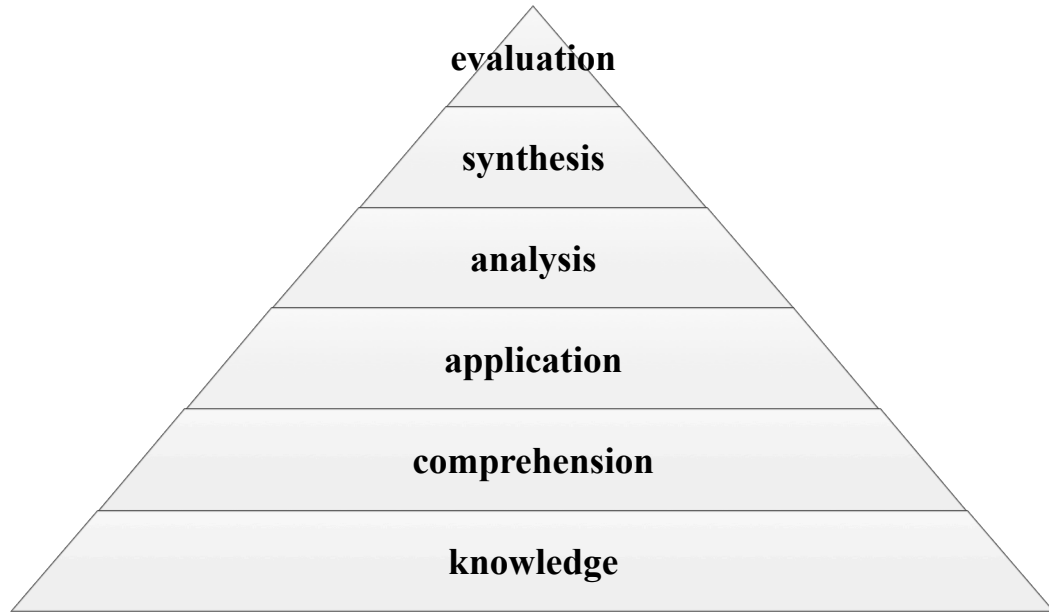
Figure 2. Bloom's (Cognitive) Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956).

In outlining activities within lessons, as well as goals for lessons, Bloom has provided a framework with which teachers can scaffold sufficiently while moving students along to higher-order cognition in the target content area.   In the 1990s, Bloom's taxonomy was reviewed, which resulted in a switch of positions of synthesis and evaluation, and also to revise the names (and in part, concepts) of each part of the taxonomy. The revised names, from highest order to lowest order are: creating, evaluating, analyzing, applying, understanding and remembering (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

The concept of identifying and communicating learning outcomes is also influenced by neo-behaviourist theory, and plays a key role in lesson planning, curriculum planning and assessment.

Cognitivism and Its Role in Online Learning

Cognitivist learning theory, in contrast to and as a reaction to behaviourist learning theory, shifts "the emphasis from external behavior to a focus on the internal mental processes

and to understanding how cognitive processes could promote effective learning" (Harasim, 2012, p. 47). Cognitivism focusses on the concept of the mind as a computer and is concerned with the mental processes that are engaged in between behaviourism's two key learning factors of stimulus and response. These mental processes include: memory, sensation, encoding, attention and perception (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008). Schema theory, based in the mental process of encoding, considers the importance of background and pre-existing knowledge (in various forms and realizations) in the processing and learning of new knowledge. It also determines how we contextualize information and experiences, and how we seek new information and experiences, and it is one of the concepts prevelent in online learning (Harasim, 2012).

The work of educational theorist Robert Gagne is also highly relevent to online learning, especially in the area of instructional design. Instructional design is the devising of the structure, sequencing and delivery of content for training modules or a course based on explicit competencies and objectives. An instructional designer takes content provided by the expert and designs it into a course that meets the required competencies. As online and distance learning become more popular in higher education, many larger universities employ instructional designers to help migrate existing courses to a blended or fully online format or develop new courses in these formats. Instructional designers are also common in the corporate world, working with companies to develop training that is based on industry-specific or company-specific content.

Gagne posited the development of a taxonomy of learning outcomes, conditions for each outcome, and events of instruction, all of which provided a framework for designing courses based on the skills identified as necessary for the learner to acquire (Harasim, 2012). This taxomomy and the ordering of the objectives within this taxonomy were key in his work in

instructional design. Gagne's work was heavily influenced by behaviourism in the initial

development of his own taxinomy, but shifted more into the cognitivist realm as his theories

developed. Gagne also examined the role of the trainer in the process. "Gagne's notion [was]

that instruction comprises facilitating information processing for the purpose of developing

human capabilities" (Ertmer, Driscoll, & Wagner, 2003, p. 311). Gagnes's Theory of Instruction

forms the basis of instructional design theory, but theory itself, was also heavily influenced by

behviourist learning theory and was structured with a prescriptivist instructional model, which

thus shares similarities with Bloom's taxonomy (Harasim, 2012). Instructional design theory

provides a general framework which is often followed by online course designers in some

variation, yet cognitivism does not take into account social aspects and individual aspects in

learning, outside of the cognitive mental processes, which are aspects considered important to

online learning design.

Constructivism and Its Role in Online Learning

Constructivism is a family of theories of learning, prevalent in adult education as well as

online education. In many senses, it developed from cognitivism and it considers "learning as an

active process through which learners 'construct' new meaning" (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008,

p. 68). Co-constructivism, where learners work together to construct new meaning, is also an

important part of online learning. Educational theorists associated with constructivism include

Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner. The work of Paulo Freire, originating with

Pedagogy of the Oppressed in 1970, also fits within constructivism (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack,

2008).

The work of Jean Piaget is often referred to as the foundations of constructivism. The

foundation of much of Piaget's work was that education was comprised of "…on the one hand

the growing individual [and] on the other hand the social, intellectual and moral values into

which the educator is charged with initiating that individual" (Piaget, 1970, p. 137). From this,

learners construct and re-construct hypotheses and knowledge, alone and in groups. This

transformation of knowledge is based on exploration, experimentation and discovery, as well as

through knowledge transfer. Building off of the work of John Dewey (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack,

2008), who focused on the idea of experience playing a key role in knowledge acquisition, Piaget

believed that "children must go through the process of reconfiguration of their own mental

schema for themselves", (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008) rather than through direct knowledge

transfer, although transfer of norms and knowledge is an important place to begin from (Smith

L. , 2001, p. 40).

Jerome Bruner took the work of Piaget further, in forming his theory of discovery

learning and his theory of instruction. The crux of Bruner's earlier work is that education should

be based in problem-solving, rather than in providing facts and formulas for memorization.

Engaging learners in problem-solving allows for deeper understanding of the subject matter and

develops in learners the tools needed to approach a variety of issues, rather than having the rote

solution to one taught issue. For example, if a learner is taught a scientific fact such as at what

angle an earthworm climbs vertical surfaces, this fact is isolated and applies only to this

particular situation. Should the learner discover this information through problem-solving, they

have developed underlying investigative tools that allow them to further investigate and

extrapolate how this may apply to other creatures in similar circumstances. By having the

opportunity to discover, the learners understand the process by which the fact itself was

discovered and then have the ability to apply this elsewhere to discover further knowledge

(Bruner J. , 1960). While initially, this was seen as an individual process, Bruner later recognized social and cultural contexts as being central to the process of knowledge construction.

The area of social constructivism was pioneered by Lev Vygotsky, who recognized in his work the importance of social interactions in constructing knowledge and views. The constant interaction with both environment and the people in the environment were expressed to be crucial components of learning, and the guidance of teachers and other authorities was assigned a strong role, unlike Piaget's assessment, where the learning and experimentation process of students must be explored independent of teachers and other authorities (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008).

The work of Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky and others within the area of constructivism is vital to theories of online learning. It can be seen throughout best practices in instructional and materials design. For example, readings assigned are often discussed by students in discussion forums, allowing students to co-construct meaning. Where students stray from the task at hand, or construct meaning based on false premises, the instructor will intervene with a series of guiding questions for consideration, rather than providing an outright correction or interpretation of the materials. The experience of the learners in online learning is an important part of the construction process and the value of the discussion process is equally as important as the (final) knowledge that is constructed from it. Final course assessments (grades) are usually inclusive of participation in the discussion process.

Projects assigned in online learning often require the learner to take into account their experience, context and prior knowledge in the completion of the project. The process of assignment submission can be public (for example, submitting an assignment through a

discussion forum), allowing students to learn from each other and continually construct and re-construct their own knowledge.

Online Collaborative Learning Theory

A specific branch of constructivism that is focused on learners co-constructing knowledge in the online realm, Online Collaborative Learning theory (OCL) is emerging as an important influence in the design and execution of online education and training. "A key to OCL is collaborative discourse that supports and advances knowledge-construction activities" (Harasim, 2012, p. 81). Rather than the teacher acting simply as a facilitator, as often occurs in standard constructivist learning, in OCL, the teacher is focused on scaffolding the students into developing their own knowledge discourse in discussions and through collaborative activities, and "mediating between the learners and the knowledge community, which serves as state of the art in that discipline" (Harasim, 2012, p. 83).

Within OCL, Harasim identifies what she refers to as three key intellectual phases: idea gathering, idea organizing and intellectual convergence. Idea generating is essentially a brainstorming process, where learners share their own opinions and ideas and process the opinions and ideas of their classmates. Idea organizing involves the reflection on, interaction with, and evaluation of various ideas and opinions, drawing connections and accepting some ideas, while rejecting others. This collaboration leads into the final phase, intellectual convergence. At this point, the group is co-constructing knowledge and with the outcome of shared group understandings, which may take the form of hypotheses, theories or any number of other more tangible and succinct outcomes (Harasim, 2012). It is important to be aware that Online Collaborative Learning has been the subject of several studies that have indicated students' frustrations with this general approach, due in large part to learner-based factors such as

unshared goals, levels of commitment and effort, as well as communication and negotiation-based issues (Capdeferro & Romero, 2012).

Foundational Principles in Adult Education

Theorists such as Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky based their initial work primarily on the learning processes of children. Teacher training programs such as SIT's MAT program, however, are educating adults. The concept of andragogy, emerging in the 1950s and first comprehensively described by Malcolm Knowles in the 1970s, creates a distinction between the study of adult learning (andragogy) and the learning of children (pedagogy), and includes core principles for adult learning that differ from principles of child learning (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).   In 1926, Edouard C. Lindeman identified what Malcolm Knowles calls "key assumptions about adult learners…[that]… constitute the foundation of adult learning theory" (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 39). They are, as summarized by Knowles:

1. Adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy.

2. Adults' orientation to learning is life-centered.

3. Experience is the richest source for adult learning.

4. Adults have a deep need to be self-directing.

5. Individual differences among people increase with age. (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 40)

Further to this, the field of adult learning recognizes that children and adults have different reasons for pursuing learning. Research conducted by Cyril O. Houle categorized the motivations for adults pursuing learning into three general categories. The first category is goal-oriented learners, who undertake learning for specific reasons and with specific desired outcomes

or objectives. The second category is activity-oriented learners, who view courses and education

as something to do to keep occupied, often for social reasons, and are not necessarily learning to

forward their own knowledge. The third category is learning-oriented learners, who are life-long

learners looking at their overall growth. They are not seeking knowledge to fulfill a specific,

acute objective, but instead as a means of self-improvement (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson,

2005). Also key to the discussion of andragogy is the set of core adult learning principles set

forth by Knowles et al., as outlined in Figure 3.

ANDRAGOGY IN PRACTICE
(Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 1998)

- Goals and Purposes for Learning
- Individual and Situational Differences

Andragogy:
Core Adult Learning Principles

1 Learner's Need to Know
- -why
- -what
- -how

2 Self-Concept of the Learner
- -autonomous
- -self-directing

3 Prior Experience of the Learner
- -resource
- -mental models

4 Readiness to Learn
- - life related
- - developmental task

5 Orientation to Learning
- - problem centered
- - contextual

6 Motivation to Learn
- - intrinsic value
- - personal payoff

Institutional Growth

Subject Matter Differences

Situational Differences

Societal Growth
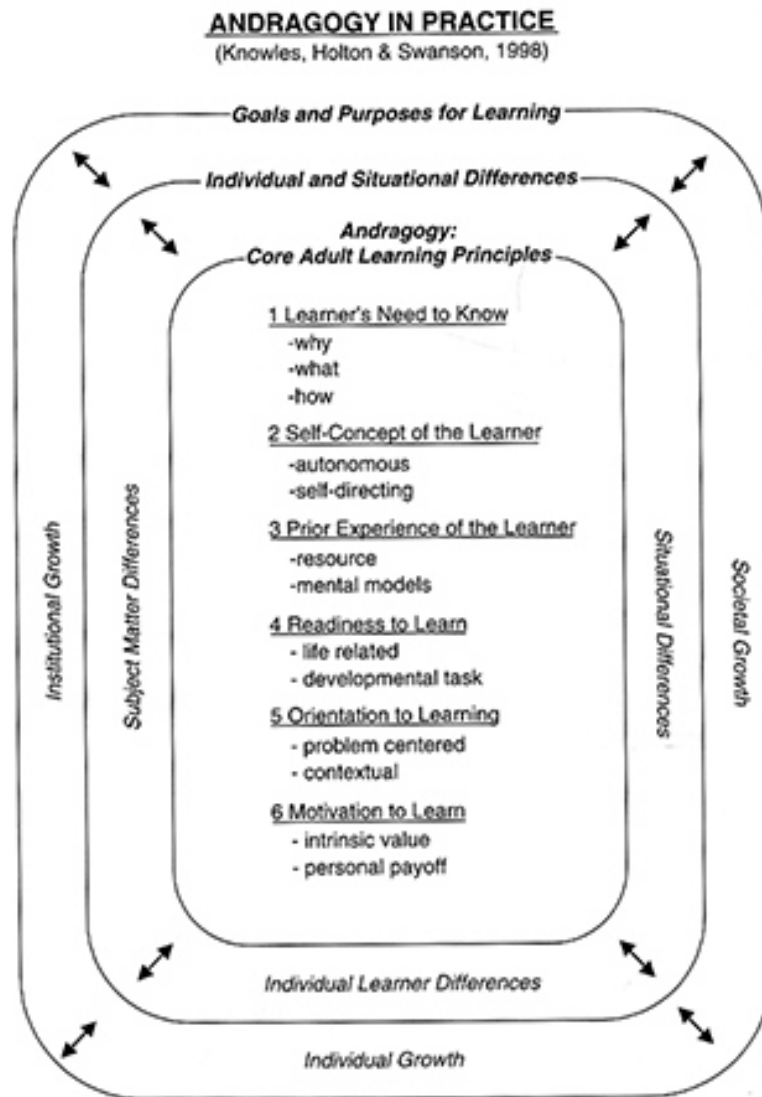
Individual Learner Differences

Individual Growth

Figure 3. Andragogy in Practice (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 4).

Taking into account the field of research in andragogy, as well as more general educational theory, Knowles' principles specifically address adult education situations. For instance, the first principle, the learner's need to know, is exemplified in Freire's work, through the substantial "consciousness-raising" that he did with his adult learners in Brazil, to engage them in the process (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). The second principle, the learner's self concept, acknowledges that adult learners are responsible and self-directed outside of the classroom, and that by creating a classroom situation where the teacher holds all authority and decision-making power within the educational experience, students will often disengage or revert to submissive and cynical learning attitudes (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). Knowles' third principle, the prior experience of the learner, recognizes that learners come to the classroom with a breadth and depth of external past and present experiences that shape their learning experiences. This can be both a positive and a negative factor in the classroom. Often learners may have direct experience they can apply to a situation, for example, a marketing student who has been working in marketing and learning on the job prior to taking courses. In this case, the student has valuable resources in their own past experience that can benefit themselves and their fellow learners, and aid them in drawing conclusions and contextualizing learning (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). On the other hand, students may also bring negative or ill-formed hypotheses to the classroom, based on their experiences, which can bias or create issues with learning. An example of this would be an adult learner who has struggled in the education system previously, and who is required to be in a high-stakes testing situation in order to achieve their educational or professional objectives. In this case, the prior experiences must be acknowledged, as they can be detrimental or form a barrier to learning (Mitchell, 2004). The fourth principle, readiness to learn, addresses where the learner is in their life development, and

if this information is relevant to their current or near-future situation (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). Where a learner who is living at home with a family who cooks for them may have no interest in learning basic cooking skills, should this same learner move into a situation either independently or with a partner who does not cook, the readiness of the learner to acquire these skills is likely to increase. The fifth principle, the orientation to learning, considers the relevance of the learning to current situations (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). For example, the marketing student mentioned above may be more likely to take a course entitled Market Research Applications than one called Introduction to Marketing, as the relevancy of the course to life and job requirements is more clear. The title of the course alone presents more of a direct relationship to real-life situations. The sixth and final principle is the motivation to learn. These are the internal and external motivating factors, like a desire to improve one's self or the need to achieve qualifications in order to get a promotion (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

It is also noted that in some situations with adult learners, pedagogical considerations may be more relevant, and in some situations with children, an approach more based in andragogy may be more appropriate. It is often up to the educator to determine what approach would benefit learners more, and what kind of role and decision-making responsibility the educator should take in the learning situation (Knolwes, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

Whether mindful of Knowles' principles or not, teacher education utilizes many of the principles he identifies. This can be seen in pre-service and in-service teacher certification programs that require the completion of teaching practicums concurrent with the educational program. These practicums speak to several principles, most notably the first principle (learner's need to know) and the fifth principle (learner's orientation to learning). Where a student-teacher finds themselves in a classroom teaching situation, the 'why' and 'what' of their formal teacher

education becomes more apparent. In addition, by being able to relate experiences during their practicum directly to their classroom learning (and classroom learning directly to their practicum experiences), the formal learning is contextualized. Courses in areas such as assessment and testing may seem highly theoretical until the student is in a practical situation where this knowledge is needed in order to complete assigned duties within a practicum.

In analyzing second language teacher education concepts, Donald Freeman and Jack C. Richards point out "research on teacher learning suggests that the foundations of an individual's ideas about teaching are well established through the experience of being a student…" (Freeman & Richards, Conceptions of Teaching and Education of Second Language Teachers, 1993, p. 210). This speaks directly to Knowles' third principle, regarding the learner's prior experience as both a resource for and an influence over their learning. They also note the idea of teachers having a professional life cycle, implying that different conceptual approaches in teacher training may be more relevant or effective, depending on where the learner is in their professional life cycle (Freeman & Richards, Conceptions of Teaching and Education of Second Language Teachers, 1993), which correlates directly with Knowles' fourth principle of the learner's readiness to learn.

Best practices in online learning also often utilize Knowles' core adult learning principles, in order to effectively attract, retain and educate students. An example of this can be seen in standard course design templates that set forth the work to be completed by learners within particular subject areas and with specific deadlines, but also require learners to be self-directed in both their exploration of materials and also in their management of time and projects. As online learning is often based in constructivism and collaborative learning, it utilizes problem-posing as a basis for knowledge construction or co-construction.

Issues in Second Language Teacher Education: Context, Theory and Practice

Higher education in second language teaching serves a unique clientele of students. The job market for English language teachers is a global one, and many teachers begin their ELT careers by finding a teaching position in a private or public school, teaching young learners in a relatively unregulated market. For native speakers working abroad, minimum qualifications for these kinds of positions are often an (unrelated) undergraduate degree and a passport from a native-English-speaking country. Teachers may work in the field for a few years, before pursuing any formal education in second language teaching.   This differs significantly from K-12 (primary to secondary school) classroom teachers who are certified to teach in the public school systems in Canada, the United States, England and other countries, where the completion of pre-service teacher education and certification is a requirement prior to holding most full-time teaching positions. Instead, teacher education in the field of English language teaching is often in-service teacher training, and through distance learning available at many universities for Masters degrees in Applied Linguistics or Teaching English as a Second Language, teachers are working in the classroom while concurrently completing their initial university-based teacher training.

The teachers' experiences, both as a student and as a teacher, play a significant role in their learning in any ELT teacher education program. In fact, this difference in experience between pre-service and in-service teacher education programs may manifest itself in such foundational areas as a strong divergence in beliefs about language teaching and learning. It must, thus, be recognized, that with accordance to the principles of andragogy, the learners and learning within a second language teacher education program at the Masters level may be very different from that of pre-service teacher education program for K-12 teachers.

The scope of second language teacher education has proven difficult to define in a static manner. It has evolved and broadened throughout the field's history.

L2 teacher education programs no longer view L2 teaching as a matter of simply translating theories of second language acquisition (SLA) into effective instructional practices, but as a dialogic process of co-constructing knowledge that is situated in and emerges out of participation in particular sociocultural practices and contexts (Johnson, 2009, p. 21)

The scope has grown to include the concepts of substance, engagement and outcomes/ influence, which intersect and overlap with each other in three areas (Freeman, 2009). These concepts, identified and plotted on an axis by Donald Freeman, are reflective of the development of broader models in general teacher education. The knowledge and skills model, teaching as a moral endeavor, relationships between the personal and professional (and the development of professional identity), and reflection in teaching are all areas that have been identified to be within a broadening scope in general teacher education (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997).
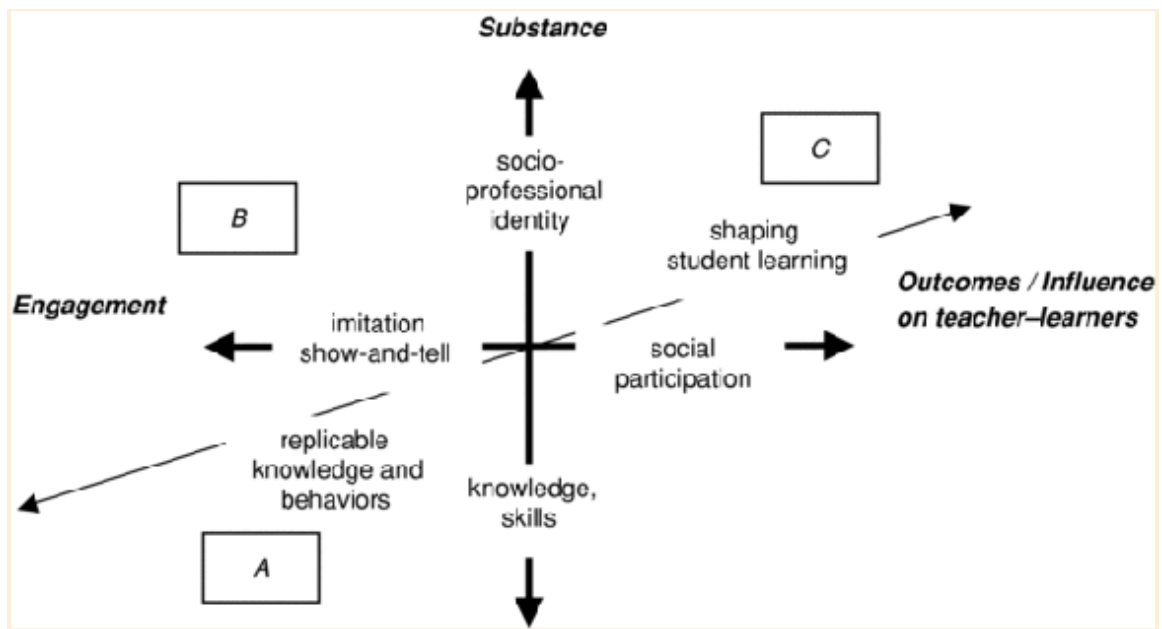

Figure 4. Dimensions of the Scope of SLTE (Freeman, 2009, p. 16).

The first area of conceptual overlap identified on Freeman's axis is traditional knowledge, where second language teacher education is based in part on "replicable knowledge and behaviors" (Freeman, 2009, p. 16). The second area of overlap involves learning through participation and social contexts. This is essentially learning through experience in the classroom. The final area addresses more formalized learning-in-context, utilizing situations such as mentoring and team teaching with "social and intellectual scaffolds" (Freeman, 2009, p. 17), to develop professional identity. (Freeman, 2009). Through recognizing and addressing this expansion of scope, second language teacher education can continue to progress forward in meeting the needs of the field.

Further to the identification of the scope of second language teacher education, sociocultural factors, in a variety of senses, are also a vital part of teacher education and language teaching. These factors inform the knowledge base of language teachers, which is "the basis upon which we make decisions about how to prepare L2 teachers to do the work of this profession" (Johnson, 2009, p. 20). This includes what teachers need to know about the subject matter, pedagogy and also how the teachers themselves need to be educated (Johnson, 2009). It has also been noted that socio-cultural factors are important in teacher education with regards to preparing teachers to teaching praxis, the contexts of language with a social justice orientation, and the language appropriate for differing contexts (Hawkins & Norton, 2009), as well as awareness of the cultural and socio-economic communities in which teachers are working (Franson & Holliday, 2009).

The MAT program at SIT already takes into account socio-cultural education through the ICLT course, in which students study their own cultural beliefs, but also read texts and co-construct knowledge regarding socio-cultural issues outside of their own personal belief systems.

In the same course, language as a tool for change and also for dividing society into groups is discussed, through readings and presentations and discussions. In the Approaches class, time is given to the Participatory Approach, which focuses on language as a tool that can be used to empower or to oppress, and the different socio-cultural contexts of language in that sense. While this has traditionally been studied primarily in a face-to-face (on-site) learning environment, with the new Low-Res MAT, these will become fully blended courses, with more than half of the coursework taking place online.

Programs such as SIT's SMAT, and now Low-Res MAT programs, designed specifically for in-service teacher education concurrent with the learners' own teaching employment, are well-placed to address what is commonly referred to as a knowledge gap between theory and practice, due to the experience of their incoming cohorts. This knowledge gap is identified as crossing several strata. In general teacher education, it has been acknowledged through the dissatisfaction of pre-service student-teachers with the applicability of teacher-training program content in the real-world classroom (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997).   In second language teacher education, it can be a difference between language theory and classroom teaching activities (Widdowson, 2012), and can also take the form of classroom teaching practices in theory, such as the concept of group work, vs. what actually works within the classroom, which focuses more on the realistic and effective application of group work tasks in the classroom (Tsui, 2012). Bridging these kinds of knowledge gaps can be facilitated by taking into account and drawing upon the classroom teaching experiences of the learners, as well as recognizing where teachers are within their professional life cycles and utilizing this to inform classroom discussions.

Trends in Teacher Education and Higher Education

The direction of discourse in field of general teacher education, as well as second language teacher education, is continuing in the areas outlined above.   In this respect, the SIT MAT programs are well-positioned to address the concerns raised within this discourse, as the program's underlying educational philosophies (reflection, discovery learning, experiential learning cycle, task-based learning) and the focus on co-construction of knowledge and cohort-based education. Using these educational methods to deliver academic instruction allows for broader thinking within the classroom and also addresses the knowledge gap issues that are pervasive in teacher education.

UNESCO has identified a trend towards the globalization of higher education. This globalization, which takes the form of partnerships and cooperation between governments, academics and educators, universities and private companies based in different countries (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009), will certainly affect second language teacher education programs. Partnerships are often in English (as a lingua franca), which increases the demand for trained English teachers. Further to this, a trend in increased student mobility is affecting university program intakes, as students are willing and able to travel outside of their home countries for higher education, or access higher education online, based outside of their home countries (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). This is, in part, due to the increased quality, quantity and acceptance of online distance education programs for undergraduate and graduate studies. In fact, the trend towards further development of online distance education programs in higher education is expected to continue with strength (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). The well-established international nature the SIT Graduate Institute programs, and the low-residency MAT option place SIT in a strong position to take advantage of this trend.

Best Practices in Online Learning Design

The practical aspects of online design will affect the design and delivery of the MAT courses being migrated or partially migrated to the online format. There is a wealth of best practices available for reference, as online course delivery is utilized in contexts as diverse as K-12 curriculum-based learning, higher education, and corporate training. Many of the practical aspects of course design and delivery overlap in each of these sectors, and it is these fundamental best practices that will be reviewed.

Face-to-face (f2f) learning benefits from the instructor being able to gauge the learners' understanding of content and assignments based on facial expressions, body language and also questions posed in the (synchronous) classroom learning environment. Online learning is often asynchronous, meaning that the information and communications can be accessed and completed at different times for all learners, and learners are not required to be completing tasks or accessing content at the same, set times.

A key element in online course design is procedural scaffolding. This consists of three main focus areas, and is intended to give the learner the tools and support for continued motivation and success in online learning (Stavredes, 2011). The first of these scaffolds, orientation scaffolding, deals with helping learners to become comfortable and competent in the online course by orienting learners to the technology and logistics involved in online learning. Where there is a learning management system (LMS) involved, like SIT's moodle LMS, learners will need an orientation that explains where to find content, administrative tools and administrative course documents like the syllabus (Stavredes, 2011). In addition, this navigational orientation should also include usage of tools that learners will be expected to use throughout the course. For example, if learners will be participating in weekly discussion

forums, it is important at this stage for the learner to be directed on how to find the discussion forum and also how to post comments and create new threads.

Expectation scaffolding is the second kind of scaffolding recommended at the beginning of a course to aid student retention and academic success. This kind of scaffolding includes giving the students a clear schedule for course assignment deadlines and a week-by-week (or module-by-module) breakdown of the work required, such as readings and discussion board comments. Further to this, administrative expectations, such as a plagiarism policy, assignment submission requirements (for example, file-naming requirements), and late-submission policies should be made clear at this point (Stavredes, 2011). Expectation scaffolding also includes clearly modeling and setting forth requirements for discussion board posts, so that learners understand what makes a good post, what is not considered a meaningful comment, and what kinds of posts they will be receiving credit for. At this point, basic netiquette may be addressed, and so might ways to contact (and not contact) the course instructor. The course instructor should be clear about what average response times to correspondence with the instructor will be, as well. In addition to these, there are a number of other areas where expectations exist that need to be clearly outlined and made available to the students. Expectation scaffolding should be carried throughout the course. Each module or week should explicitly state at the beginning of the coursework what the goals and objectives of the unit are, what is required of the students with regards to readings, postings and online work, as well as any assignment deadlines (Smith R. M., 2008). Instructors and instructional designers should work together to determine the more implicit expectations in order to make them explicit for the students.

The final area of scaffolding is resource scaffolding (Stavredes, 2011). While this is seemingly straightforward, it is an area that requires much thought and planning. The resources

that the learners will require on an ongoing basis need to be identified and the way that these

resources are located within the LMS course shell need to be planned in a logical and easy-to-

access way (Stavredes, 2011). For example, resources that the learners will be required to

continually reference, like the Core Competencies document for the SIT MAT peer mentoring

program, need to be located in an area that is independent of individual weeks or modules, so to

save the students the frustration of flipping through different course weeks or modules looking

for the document.

Consistency in formatting and course layout is also a factor in creating an online learning

experience that learners will thrive in. In the case of an online program, rather than an isolated

online course, it is important to maintain consistency across all program courses with regards to

formatting and layout, major expectations and kinds of technology used. This kind of

consistency will ensure that students will not require major re-orientation for each course they

take, and it can also act as a quality-control checklist to ensure that each instructor is following

the design principles that the school has agreed are ideal. Using a rubric like the one developed

by Quality Matters can also monitor consistency and quality. The Quality Matters rubric focuses

on alignment and looks at "critical course components Learning Objectives, Assessment and

Measurement, Instructional Materials, Learner Interaction and Engagement, and Course

Technology" (MarylandOnline, 2010).

The role of the instructor must also be well defined, for both the instructor and for the

students. In online education, the instructor often functions as a facilitator rather than a

traditional lecturer. In this role as facilitator, it is important for the instructor to neither praise nor

criticize learners publically. Withholding praise seems counterintuitive to many instructors used

to a f2f environment, however, in the online environment, praising students can lead

inadvertently to isolating other students, or the appearance of favoring some students over others. Students who do not receive praise may wonder if they are not meeting expectations, or begin to feel self-conscious about contributing to the group. In an online environment such as a discussion forum, students are also able to compare the comments they have received from the instructor, to the comments others have received. Without the advantage of reading body language and facial expressions, and being able to 'sense the mood of the room' like an instructor can do in f2f courses, praising and criticizing students can cause damage to the overall cohesiveness of the cohort. Often, in conversations in the discussion forums, the best participation from instructors is minimal participation, focusing on guiding students, eliciting further analysis and discussion, and keeping students on task by posing questions.

One final general design factor that bears mention is varying the media used to deliver content and materials. While document formats and file formats should remain standardized, it is important to take into consideration the flexibility that technology offers in being able to access different learner styles. Visual learners may benefit from posted readings, however, auditory learners can benefit from videos and audio files being used to deliver content. As well, for discussions, programs like Voice Thread can allow students to record their comments as an audio file and upload it to the course Voice Thread site. Programs like Glogster, which is a virtual interactive poster creation program, allow students to express themselves in a variety of media and tie these together through text and graphics. One caution to course designers is not to include technology for the sake of technology, and not to include too many different kinds of technology (especially without orientation for the learners), as it can be confusing to the learners. While variety is important, consistency is as well.

Migrating the SIT Summer Masters in Teaching English as a Second Language

Coursework into a Low Residency/Online Format

In reviewing the underlying teacher education principles of the MAT program and the guiding principles for online learning course and curriculum development and delivery, several overlapping principles are clear.   Both utilize instructional and design principles founded in constructivism, although the MAT program more specifically focuses on the techniques employed in the experiential learning cycle, discovery learning, reflective learning and task-based instruction. With regards to collaborative and cohort-based learning, the MAT program's methods form a clear match with the online learning theory of online collaborative learning. If moderated appropriately, the online discussion forums can afford the same discussion opportunities and knowledge co-construction as face-to-face discussions, thus achieving the desired outcomes without sacrificing the program philosophy.

Where some issues may arise in the migration of the coursework from a face-to-face to a blended or fully online format is where online learning draws its best practices from behaviourist and cognitivist learning theories. Traditionally, the MAT program has directed itself away from the kind of strict structural parameters for learning and curriculum design that online learning draws from these two areas. For example, setting forth prescriptive parameters and strict deadlines for assignments are considered good practice in online learning, as this kind of clear communication is necessary when there is no face-to-face synchronous opportunity to ask questions or ask for clarification. Although this kind of rather rigid structure can seem in opposition to the more student-centered knowledge-construction of constructivism, when viewed in the context of Knowles' core adult learning principles, a more clear connection can be seen.

In providing the learner the information that they need in order to structure their time and workload, Knowles' second principle, regarding the autonomy and self-direction of the learner.

This example brings to light another point that must be recognized. This kind of teacher-centered imposition of structure is the kind of small compromise that may be required in the Low-Res MAT program in order to facilitate the smooth running of the program for both teachers and learners. Without firm deadlines and clearly structured assignments, a number of situations could occur that are particular to the online or distance learning environment. The instructor may find herself inundated with repetitive email queries from students who, without the context of the face-to-face introduction of the assignment, feel unready to tackle to task. This kind of individual communication demand can make the workload difficult to manage for the instructor, especially if students are expecting or needing quick responses. Learners who are unsure of how to approach the assignment or unsure of expectations may become frustrated, intimidated or feel lost or abandoned. This can lead to disengagement from the course, or learning objectives not being achieved. These learner reactions all speak to the humanistic nature of SIT's teacher education, though, and despite needing to compromise teaching philosophies by not allowing for open interpretation of assignment expectations, by providing more concrete structure, the instructor is actually addressing the affective needs of the students.

Using the experiential learning cycle in the same way that it has been used in past courses may present difficulties in an online format in some situations. For example, the usage of the ELC in the introduction of Vygotsky's theories will be a challenge, as the instructor set a mood in the room using props including posters, and music that set the scene for exploratory discussion of the environment that Vygotsky developed his ideas in. This understanding then informed discussion of Vygotsky's theories and ideas in which students could co-construct ideas based on

experiences and prior knowledge, with the facilitation of the instructor. This kind of experiential

immersion activity would be difficult to replicate in an online environment, especially an

asynchronous one.

In some cases, the experiential learning cycle, as used in past courses, will transfer easily

to the online environment. In the Curriculum and Assessment Design course, students

experienced different styles of assessment models with each draft assignment submitted. In

experiencing these assessment models as learners, and needing to produce a final draft based on

the feedback from the assessments, the learners have the opportunity to engage with different

kinds of assessments and co-construct knowledge about appropriate assessments for different

situations and different student needs. This kind of experiential learning could be migrated to an

online format with few changes. The learners could discuss the various forms of assessment in

online discussion forums, and co-construct knowledge with the instructor acting as both a

facilitator and a mediator providing connections to the greater knowledge community, as per

online collaborative learning theory.

In the same course, Curriculum Design and Assessment, learners work to design a

complete course, from the pre-planning to the post-course assessment. The assignment is broken

down into sections and these tasks all come together to form a complete and coherent course that

is submitted as a final draft. This is reflective of the task-based teaching method, which the MAT

program utilizes in its own teacher education design but also models for learners, with the

intention that learners will gain sufficient knowledge and experience with it that they will be able

to go forth and use this method in their own classrooms. The series of tasks that form the term

assignment can easily be completed in an online learning situation. Learners place themselves

into support groups based on the type, subject or level of their theoretical course, and these

support groups can easily be migrated into an online environment as well. The support groups

are small (3-4 students) and so it is much more possible that synchronous discussions of the tasks

can occur. In addition, email, a/synchronous chat programs and dedicated (private) discussion

forums can be used to communicate about the tasks.

Not all task-based learning assignments can transfer as easily to the online format. In the

Second Language Acquisition course, one of the major final assignments was a poster session,

where learners were required to prepare a poster on an SLA topic of their choice. The poster

itself would qualify as a task, with the dual objective of expanding learners' depth and breadth of

knowledge in specific topics in SLA, and also developing learners' professional identities and

skills, by simulating a conference professional development opportunity. The effectiveness of

this process, especially with regards to developing learners' professional identities and skills

(with regards to gaining knowledge of how to prepare and present at a poster session at a

conference) would be lost, should the project not be significantly changed for the online format.

Instead of a poster session, the instructor may consider having students present a short pre-

recorded webinar about their chosen topic. This addresses the same goals as the initial poster

session with regards to professional identity development, as webinars are becoming a more

common way of delivering professional development, and does so by adjusting the task into

something that is more appropriate and realistic in an online learning environment.

SIT's foundational pedagogical principles can clearly be integrated with online learning

pedagogical principles, and informed by teacher education and adult education principles to

develop and design a low-residence MAT program without any major sacrifices to principles. It

is important that all content and activities are evaluated within the parameters of effective online

delivery, in order to determine how they can be delivered successfully while addressing all of the

foundational areas, and this may require compromise in some areas, such as firm structure and deadlines, in order to facilitate overall success.

Pre-Planning for Successful Learning

Prior to any online course development, pre-planning and analysis must be completed. An analysis of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats (SWOT analysis) within the framework of technology, time and knowledge is a useful starting point for determining the needs, requirements and limitations of the course, institution and learners. This SWOT analysis plays a significant role in the shaping of the course.

The first course that the new Low-Res MAT cohort will take is an online introduction delivering one credit of Approaches and one credit of ICLT. Both courses were described in section one. These are each 3-credit courses that will continue on to the face-to-face summer session. In the summer session, the remaining two credits for Approaches will be earned, and one credit of ICLT will be taken. The remaining ICLT credit will be earned in the online spring term. This SWOT analysis is a brief analysis of the proposed introductory online module, which combines an Approaches credit, an ICLT credit and an introduction to the peer mentoring program.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Time	- 2 credits of content to be delivered in an 8-week slot (which is generally for 3 credits) so time allowed for adjustment and for introduction to non-credit areas like peer mentoring - pacing the course content can be a bit slower to allow students to adjust to managing online learning - distance education allows for students to complete independent work prior to arriving on campus, so campus-based coursework can be more	- international nature of cohort means that students will be in different time zones, possibly on different sides of the international date line, so group work may face challenges - instructor may have difficulty managing time because of differences between online courses and f2f courses - students who have never studied online before may have difficulty planning their independent

	cohort-based	and group work time for the course
Technology	- additional time in the schedule will allow learners to iron out any tech issues and familiarize themselves with the tech before the courses really get underway - support available to instructors and students through the SIT technical support mechanisms - students will require, at minimum, a computer with internet access, which is standard issue in most offices for teachers these days - instructional designer with experience and training is working with SIT to design the course - students used to social interactions online will find the cohort-building activities easy to engage in	- learners may be unfamiliar with the technology and feel overwhelmed, frustrated or discouraged - no f2f support available until after the course is completed - use of technology for technology's sake in the coursework - remote teachers may not be able to meet the technical requirements consistently (for computer access and internet access) - instructors will be tackling a full online course for the first time and may encounter issues with moodle or other technology - students who are not used to social interactions online (no facebook accounts, twitter accounts, commenting on articles online) may find the cohort-building to be impersonal - students may transfer habits which may be inappropriate from social media interactions (including language style and rules of engagement) to online course interactions
Knowledge	- instructor has taught the courses before and the content is relatively established - instructional designer has taken the courses (as a SMAT) so is familiar with content as well as technology - students will be in their teaching contexts so able to relate new knowledge to current circumstances - technical staff at SIT has experience with a Low-Res program in another degree program, and so may be able to anticipate problems, is in a good position to advise	- students will be working on material from two or more courses in first module (ICLT and Approaches), and may find this confusing - planning for delivery of 2 different subject matters in the same course will be complicated to do seamlessly - students may be unfamiliar with the different subject matters, as well as the style of delivery, and this may overwhelm or frustrate students - students may be unfamiliar with the kind of independence in learning that is required for online/distance education

	Opportunities	Threats
Time	- students' work schedules and personal commitments should not conflict with asynchronous course work - some course books are available for purchase as e-books	- the US student visa process requires very specific paperwork; students will be preparing to travel to Vermont for the summer, and for international students, this may involve trips to the doctor, embassy, etc. - course books may need to be purchased through international book-selling websites, so may be costly for shipping or may not arrive in time for the students to do readings where assigned
Technology	- cohort-building and community learning are recognized as key areas in online learning, so there's a lot of support for SIT's vision on this - international book selling websites ship to most, if not all, countries where students will be studying - moodle is equipped to handle this kind of course and will require little modification - many best practices regarding planning online courses are available for reference, for the course planners	- reliability of internet connections internationally varies greatly - program usage or content may be blocked by firewalls in countries that censor the internet (Korea, China, Saudi Arabia to name a few)
Knowledge	- internet has vast resources for providing technical support and supplementary course related information for students	- supplementary information on course content on the internet may not be from reliable sources or may not be accurate

Based on this SWOT analysis, it is clear that technology is an area of concern.

Ways that this can be addressed in the shaping of this course to include having a first week that is

focused on orientation to the moodle learning management system and introducing core types of

technology (for example, streaming video) that will be used later in the course, and for the

duration of the Low-Res MAT program itself. By not introducing content-based coursework in

the first week, this allows for students and instructor to familiarize themselves and troubleshoot the technology without falling behind in school work if there are technological issues.

By beginning the course with a week of orientation to the course, distance/online learning and to the program, this addresses another concern – that students may not be able to obtain the required texts by the beginning of the course. The texts will not be needed for the first week of study, giving students additional time to obtain the books. Including orientation to distance/online learning will allow the instructor to set parameters and clear expectations, thus decreasing their own workload once the course is underway. Addressing issues before they become issues also helps the students to succeed in the online/distance learning environment. This orientation can also provide students with best practices and suggestions for time and work management in online courses, which addresses the concern that students may not have taken part in online/distance courses before, and thus may not have ideas about how to structure their own time and learning.

Through the SWOT analysis, it is apparent that the students will be preparing to travel to Brattleboro, Vermont, and consideration will need to be given regarding the amount of time that some students may spend lining up the paperwork for their visas and permission to study in Vermont (such as tracking down immunization records, submitting medical reports, securing financial proof of support and completing various forms, and for some students, interviewing at the US embassy or consulate). For this reason, it's recommended that the shape of the course include tapering off of activities and workload for the last week, perhaps assigning independent tasks that are due in the face-to-face course module that directly follows, rather than within the last week or two weeks of the online module.

The SWOT analysis has drawn attention to the idea that having materials and

assignments from two different courses delivered within one module may be confusing for the students. Being aware of this will allow the instructors to make decisions on both content and content delivery to minimize this. It is suggested that instructors and the instructional designer look closely at how technology can help to delineate the two courses. Perhaps a solution can be to utilize certain kinds of technological tools only for one subject. For example, it is possible to keep the use of the discussion forums solely for cohort-building and ICLT course-work and utilize blogging features and the wiki feature for Approaches coursework. As mentioned in section one, the knowledge co-construction in ICLT is dependent upon a strong cohort bond engagement between individuals to construct agreed upon understandings and knowledge. Approaches is also dependent upon the cohort-learning structure, and co-construction of knowledge, but the personal relationships and direct engagement may not be as vital to co-constructing knowledge in the content areas of the course. A second option to differentiate between courses is to not deliver the content and assignments concurrently, but instead to have one follow the other. Separating the course into mini-modules could help students to see the courses as different subjects, and avoid any confusion in future course modules.

It is clear from this brief SWOT analysis and the extrapolations from the analysis, that pre-planning, in terms of SWOT analyses, as well as discussions with stakeholders (instructors, administration and technical advisors, and current or past students, where possible) is important to the process of determining how the content is to be delivered most effectively for all involved.

Concluding Recommendations for the Low-Res MAT Program

The Low-Res MAT program is a necessary step for SIT, in order to remain competitive in the market for graduate-level teacher education. In reviewing the underlying educational theories of SIT's MAT program, language learning theories concentrated upon, theories in online

educational pedagogy, adult education theory (andragogy), and best practices in online course delivery, and with reference to the current MAT course construction and content, as well as the SWOT analysis of factors that will present challenges and advantages to the program, several recommendations can be made.

1. Careful pre-planning for the program must be undertaken, in order to ensure a smooth orientation and start to the online program.

2. Instructors must receive training in successful online facilitation and mediation. Where possible, instructors should take a credit-course online and reflect upon their experiences as students.

3. Instructors must receive technical and design support so that they are able to concentrate on delivering and facilitating courses, rather than being concerned with the details of online delivery and technology.

4. Learners must receive appropriate orientation to online learning in general, the program, technology and also the underlying principles of the program.

5. Current courses must be evaluated in terms of f2f delivery so that portions of the delivery that can be successfully migrated without major changes are identified, and portions of the delivery that will not work in an online format are identified and reworked so that they achieve the same objectives, while taking advantage of tools and formats available in online learning.

6. Consistent standards in delivery, design, quality and instructor roles must be developed to ensure a cohesive program.

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