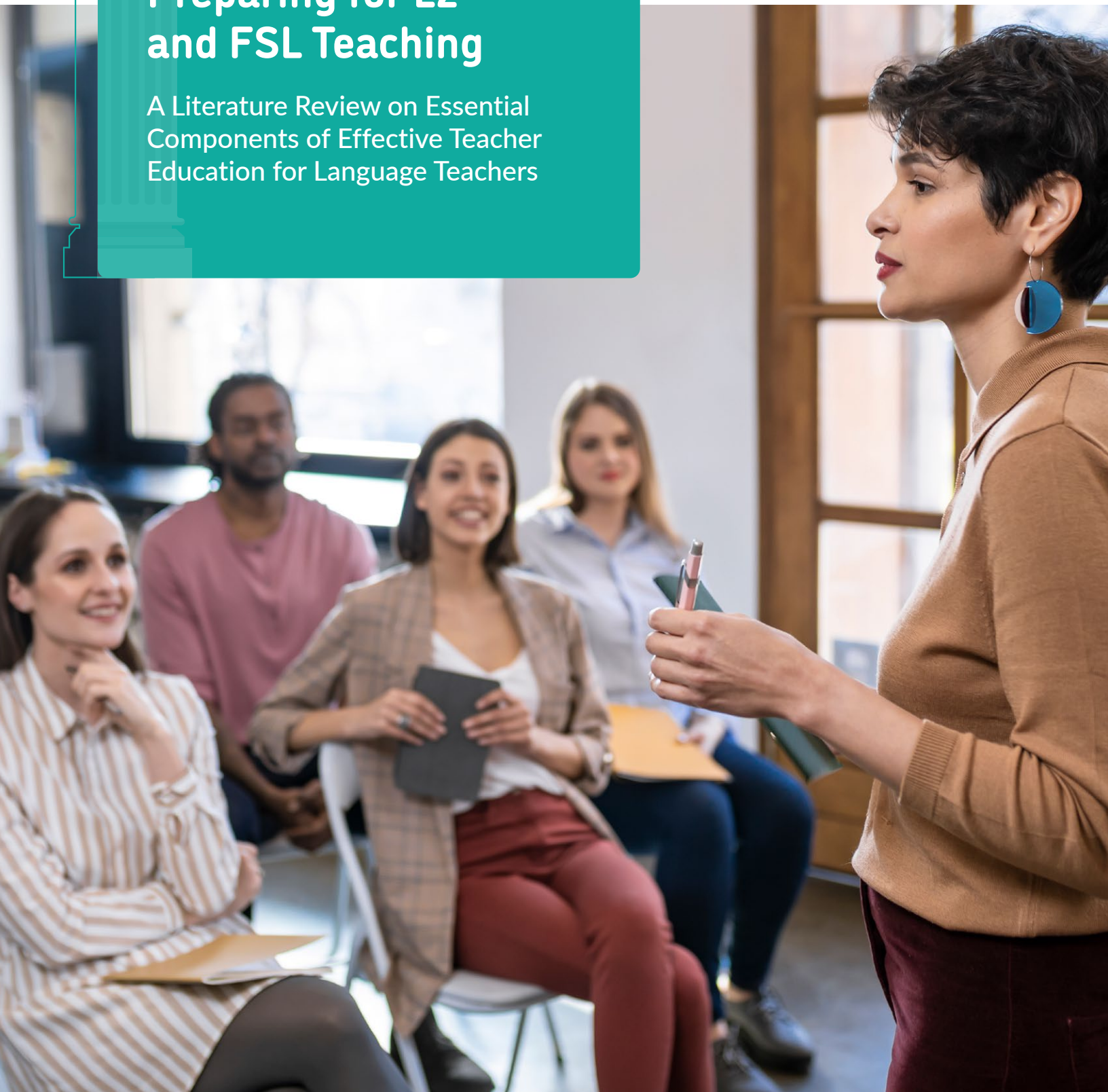

Preparing for L2 and FSL Teaching

A Literature Review on Essential
Components of Effective Teacher
Education for Language Teachers



Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT)

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Preparing for L2 and FSL Teaching: A Literature Review on Essential Components of Effective Teacher Education for Language Teachers

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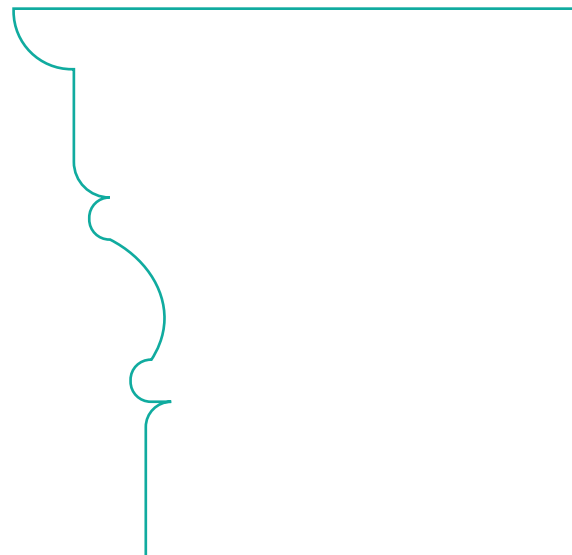
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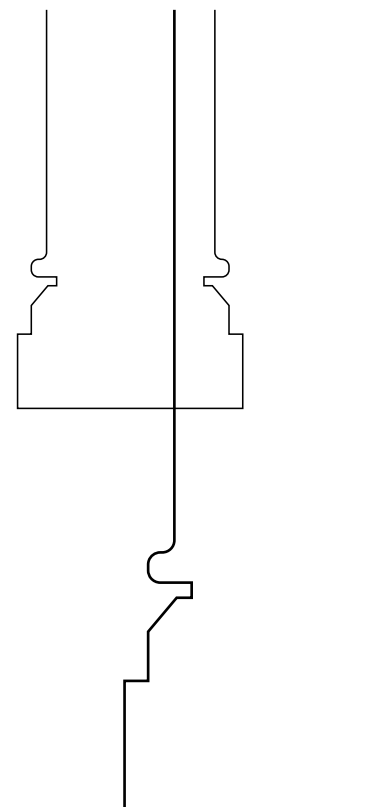
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The logo for the Government of Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small Canadian flag to its right.



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Introduction

CASLT commissioned this report to review research literature about essential components of teacher education for preparing second language (L2) teachers, with a focus on French as a second language (FSL) teacher candidates. The aim of this report is to examine the preparation needed for language teachers to enter the field with strong professional teacher identities and solid grounding for professional well-being in their practice.

Given the complexity of teacher learning and the dynamic process of developing a teacher identity, we see teacher *education* as more than imparting specific skill sets (i.e., teacher *training*). Our conceptual framework is rooted in a vision of teachers as active learners involved in developing different skills, knowledge funds, networks, experiences, and

attitudes within an institutional setting, such as a Faculty of Education (Abboud, 2015; Burt, 2014; Dunn, 2011; O'Neill, 1986; Tchimou, 2011).

In other words, we understand L2 teachers as being “shaped in and through their experiences as learners, the cultural practices of teacher education, and the particulars of their teaching context, all embedded within larger sociocultural histories yet appropriated in individual ways” (Johnson & Golombek, 2016, p. 4). Accordingly, fostering a culture of collaborative professionalism has been fundamental to supporting L2 teachers’ professional practices (Jacquet & Dagenais, 2010; Kristmanson et al., 2011) and a key component of lifelong professional learning for teachers of all disciplines (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016).

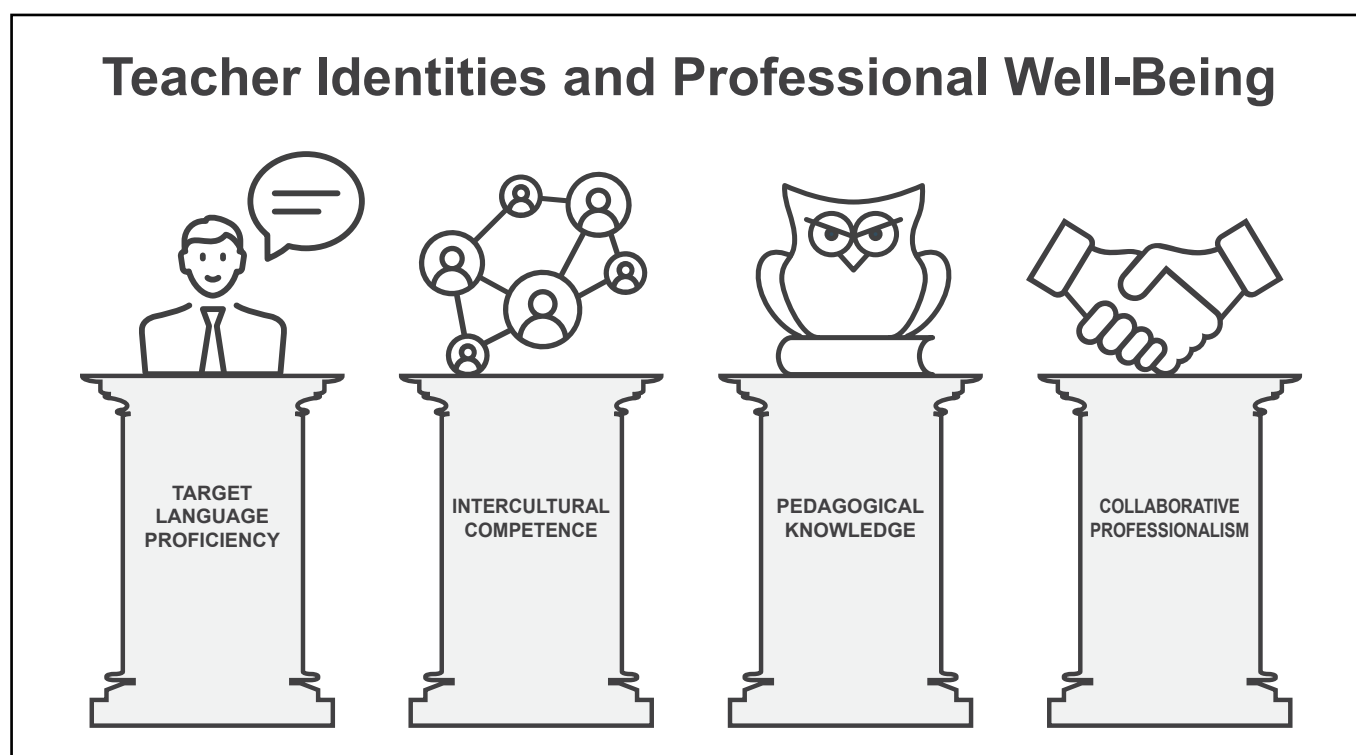
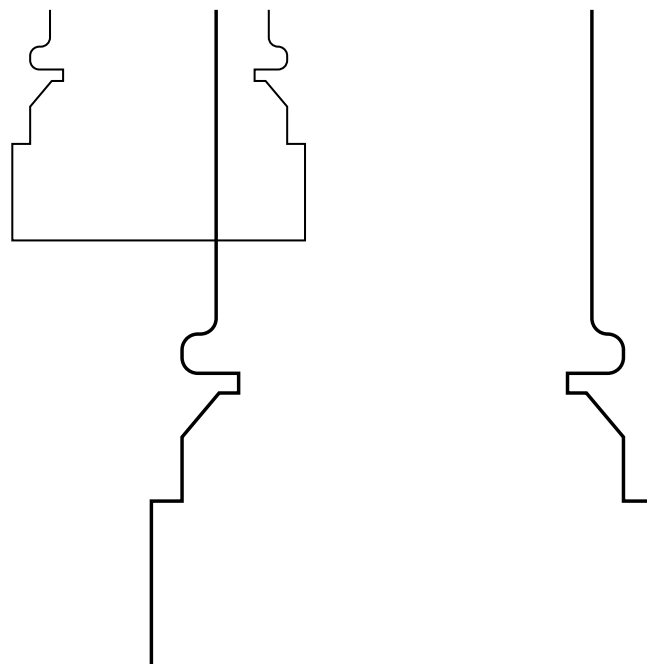


Figure 1. A framework for effective preparation of language teacher candidates in Teacher Education programs.

Executive Summary



Pillar #1 – Target Language Proficiency

Preparedness

1. Language teachers can benefit from immersive experiences during initial teacher education or in-service training to improve their language proficiency (e.g., volunteering, home-stays, study abroad programs).
2. Even if teacher candidates are successful on their entrance exams into teacher education programs, they still need continuous language support and training in specific areas (such as content vocabulary, communicative competence, etc.).
3. Language teachers need to develop their general language proficiency and their classroom language proficiency.

Practice

4. Experience teaching in the target language in the classroom increases language teachers' self-efficacy.
5. Language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs correlate positively with their perceived target language proficiency.

Identity

6. Target language proficiency can influence language teachers' sense of self.
7. Language teachers can be positively or negatively impacted by the language hierarchies associated with the target language they are teaching.

Pillar # 2 – Intercultural Competence

Preparedness

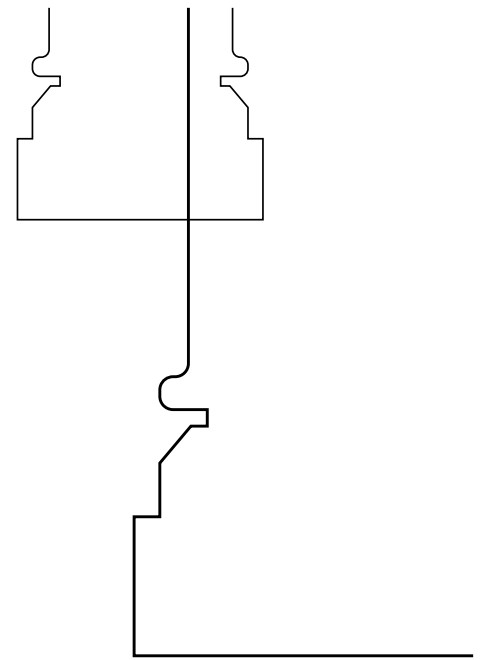
1. Greater emphasis is needed on developing language teachers' own intercultural competence in initial teacher education.
2. There are conflicting findings about whether international study abroad/volunteer experiences can increase intercultural competence and sensitivity (however, the majority point to benefits).

Practice

3. Language teacher candidates need to develop a reflective practice that accounts for the linguistic/cultural diversity in Canadian classrooms.
4. Language teacher candidates experience difficulty in translating intercultural competence as a practice in the classroom and in their ability to teach intercultural competence.

Identity

5. Language teachers can develop and challenge their concept of "other" by developing intercultural competence.
6. Language teachers don't always understand their roles and responsibilities in terms of linguistic and cultural reproducers/models.



Pillar #2 – Intercultural Competence

What Is Intercultural Competence?

It is now accepted that language teachers need to develop their intercultural competence and understand how to teach intercultural competence to their students (Byram, 1997; Byram & Risager, 1999; Corder et al., 2018).

Culture is indissociable from language in that better cultural knowledge is what supports language teachers' sociolinguistic competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain, 1980), which is a key aspect of language proficiency in Pillar #1. However, it is important to note that intercultural competence is distinct from language proficiency in that it is part of a process of communication and understanding that goes beyond language. Cultural proficiency is as important as language proficiency for second language teachers.

While there are several definitions of intercultural competence, in a study that examined the commonalities across different models, Deardorff (2006) identified three key foundational principles: 1) awareness, valuing, and understanding of cultural differences; 2) experiencing other cultures; and 3) self-awareness of one's own culture. Specifically, intercultural competence can be defined as a "combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours which allow a speaker, to varying degrees, to recognise, understand, interpret and accept other ways of living and thinking beyond his or her home culture" (Beacco & Byram, 2007, p. 114). Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) identified commonalities across the intercultural competence models that include motivation (attitude, values, beliefs), knowledge (cultural, theoretical), skills (flexibility, openness), context (relational/conflict management, environment), and outcomes (critical self-assessment, awareness of identity, maintaining relationships). Byram (1997) describes developing intercultural

competence as a set of knowledges, skills, and attitudes that include general knowledge (*Savoirs*), interpretational knowledge (*Savoir comprendre*), critical awareness (*Savoir s'engager*), behavioural knowledge (*Savoir être*), and interactional knowledge (*Savoir apprendre/Savoir faire*).

Why Does Intercultural Competence Matter?

The aim of intercultural approaches is to raise awareness about different cultures by comparing and exploring them. It also aims to raise awareness about how people communicate in different cultures in a way that moves beyond a superficial understanding of culture. Intercultural approaches also seek to address how plurilingual learners find their place while navigating new cultural spaces, such as the "third space" (Bhabha, 2004; a space unique to each learner that sits at the nexus of the different languages and cultures part of their linguistic biographies).

It is important for language teachers to implement cultural education in the classroom without reinforcing a policy of liberal multiculturalism (Kubota, 2004). Liberal multiculturalism often takes an approach to diversity and culture founded on political correctness with little substance (often limited to "celebrating" diversity), an overextended focus on commonalities between cultures, colour-blindness among English as a second language (ESL) professionals (who end up denying or silencing racial and other realities for students), an overextended focus on difference (exoticizing and essentializing the "other"), and obscuring issues of power and privilege.

In contrast, intercultural education seeks to reposition the learner in relation to their own and other types of

pedagogical knowledge is similar to that of experienced language teachers.

Practice

3. Implementation of pedagogical knowledge and the types of pedagogical knowledge that language teachers focus on depend on how long they have been teaching.
4. Pedagogical knowledge, which is complex and multidimensional, develops through a critical self-reflection process and evolves with teaching experience, including practicum.
5. There is a disconnect between theory learned in teacher education and implementation in practice.

Identity

6. Language teachers' identity and personal experiences have a strong influence on shaping practical knowledge.

Research Summaries

Preparedness

1. Language teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs towards their sense of preparedness for teaching have difficulty applying their knowledge in the classroom.

Bigelow, M. H., & Ranney, S. E. (2004). Pre-service ESL teachers' knowledge about language and its transfer to lesson planning. In *Applied linguistics and language teacher education* (pp. 179–200). Springer.

This study seeks to understand why English-speaking pre-service language teachers struggle when applying knowledge from their English grammar course to the lesson plans they wrote in their pedagogy courses. Participants were 22 Master of Education students pursuing a license in English as a second language (ESL). To examine the processes participants experienced as they were learning, six journals and three content-based lesson plan assignments were analyzed.

Findings suggest that participants face many challenges when learning to use their knowledge about language (KAL) to integrate language and content, including overcoming anxiety and learning the technical grammar terminology. Furthermore, the applied features of the course seemed to play an important role in building participants' confidence in learning the material and using it in teaching.

Depaepe, F., & König, J. (2018). General pedagogical knowledge, self-efficacy and instructional practice:

Disentangling their relationship in pre-service teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 69, 177–190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.10.003>

This study seeks to answer two questions: 1) What is the relationship between general pedagogical knowledge (GPK) and self-efficacy beliefs (SE)? and 2) What is the association between GPK and SE and instructional behaviour? GPK refers to “broad principles and strategies of classroom management” (Shulman, 1987, p. 2) and does not encompass second language (L2) teaching methodology or knowledge about the L2. This study collected data from pre-service teachers ($n = 584$) during their Master's teaching certificate at the University of Cologne. Questionnaires and a short version of the TEDS-M (Teacher Education Development Study in Mathematics) paper-and-pencil test were administered. **Findings show that no significant correlation between GPK and SE was observed and a more differentiated investigation of the GPK–SE association revealed that this relationship remains insignificant for three strands of teachers' SE (i.e., beliefs regarding instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement).** Furthermore, there is no linear association between teachers' GPK and their degree of confidence in being successful in performing a diversity of teaching tasks. One possible explanation of these results is that, for pre-service teachers, it may be more difficult to estimate their confidence in their teaching tasks because of their limited experience.

Faez, F., & Valeo, A. (2012). TESOL teacher education: Novice teachers' perceptions of their preparedness and efficacy in the classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(3), 450–471. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.37>

The aim of this research was to examine whether TESOL induction programs are sufficient to help novice TESOL teachers transition into their practice, as well as aspects and content that novice TESOL teachers found helpful from the program. Novice teachers ($n = 115$) filled out questionnaires to assess their self-efficacy beliefs, and eight followed up with interviews. Findings reveal that novice teachers felt prepared to teach TESOL to adults after their program, and even more prepared once they gained teaching experience, as the TESOL program lacks a practicum component. **Specifically, findings revealed that teaching experience provides comfort for students and ways for teachers to find resources for their classrooms to create lesson plans.** Findings suggest that teachers should have larger awareness of expectations in the classroom and the employment terrain. **The researchers stress**

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This report reviews research literature about essential components of teacher education for preparing second language teachers, with a focus on French as a second language teacher candidates. It examines the preparation needed for language teachers to enter the field with strong professional teacher identities and solid grounding for professional well-being in their practice. This report adopts a holistic perspective on developing teacher competence across four key pillars for success: 1) target language proficiency, 2) intercultural competence, 3) pedagogical knowledge, and 4) collaborative professionalism.



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