

Moving Beyond the Page: A Community-oriented Approach to Writing Center Theory and Practice in Additional Language Contexts

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TYCA-PNWCA Conference Schedule

October 22, 2016

Session A1: 10:30-11:20

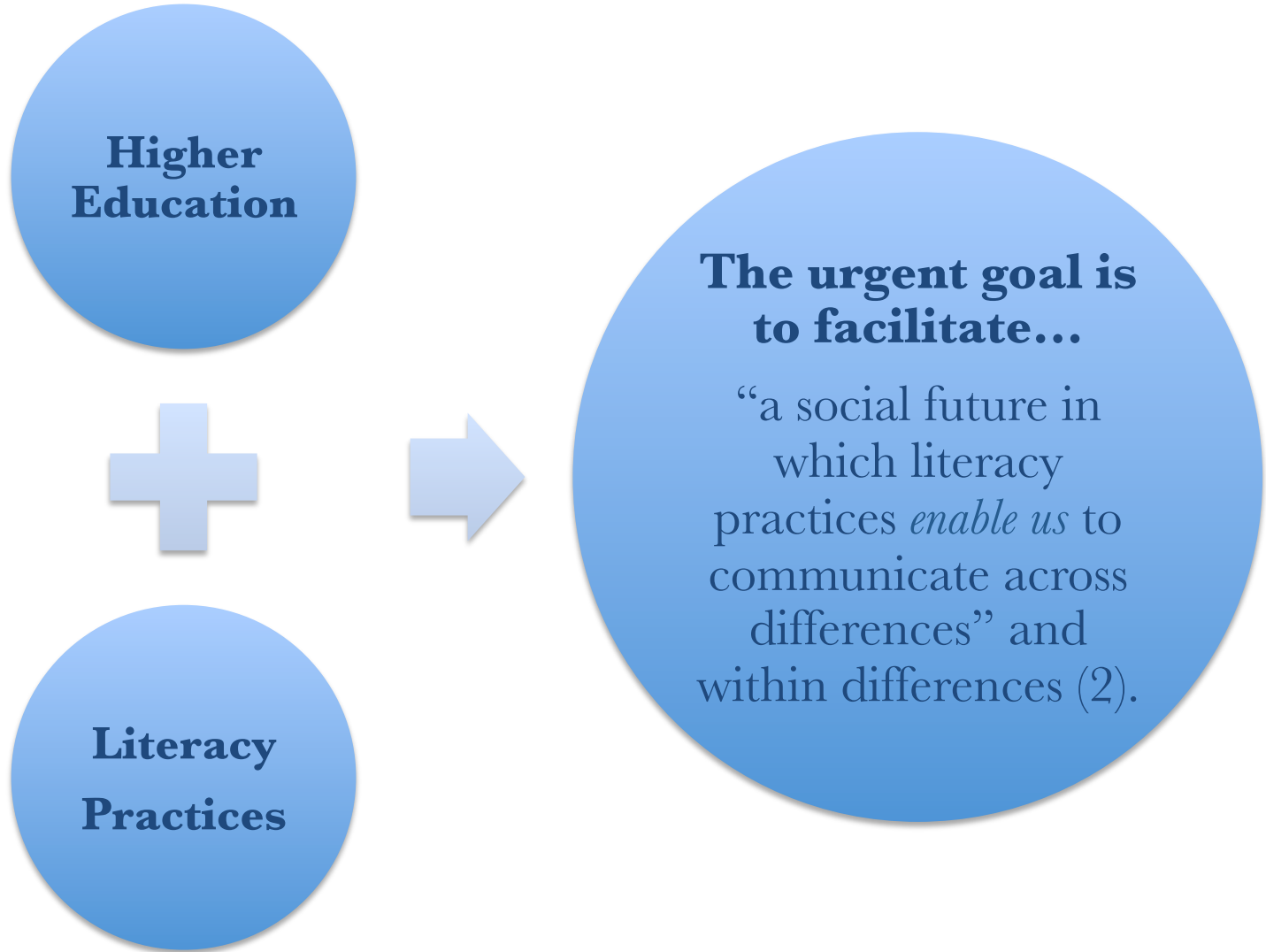
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a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Nancy Maloney Grimm (1999)



FHIS Department

French

- Honors
- Major
- Minor
- Post-graduate Degrees (MA, PhD)

Spanish

- Major
- Minor
- Post-graduate Degrees (MA, PhD)

Italian

- Minor
- Students take courses in Italian and English to complete 18 credits towards a minor

Portuguese

- Program
- Students can take language courses at the 100, 200, and 300 level in Portuguese and/or English

Romance Studies

- Honors Program**
- Students take courses in any 3 of the languages
- Literature and culture courses in RMST taught in English

FHIS Courses

- Students can take elective courses taught in English under the FHIS label and apply them to their degree.

Affiliated Programs: Latin American Studies
African Studies
Medieval Studies

The Evolution of the Centre

2011

Spanish Writing
Centre
(Pilot: Span 220)

2012

FHIS Writing Centre
(Spanish, French
advanced courses)

2014

Overall decline in
numbers.
Brief survey to scan for
overall impressions of the
Centre.

Responses

Misconceptions about Writing Centres

Student Perspective

“**I am a not good at grammar** and my instructor forces me to go to the Centre.” (Edgar, Fren 200)

“The only thing that matters to my professor is my **grammar.**” (Monica, Span 300)

“I’m a very good writer and get A’s on all of my assignments. Even so, my professor **makes me go** to the Writing Centre with my final drafts.” (Kata, Span 400)

What can we do to make the centre more effective for you?

Faculty Perspective

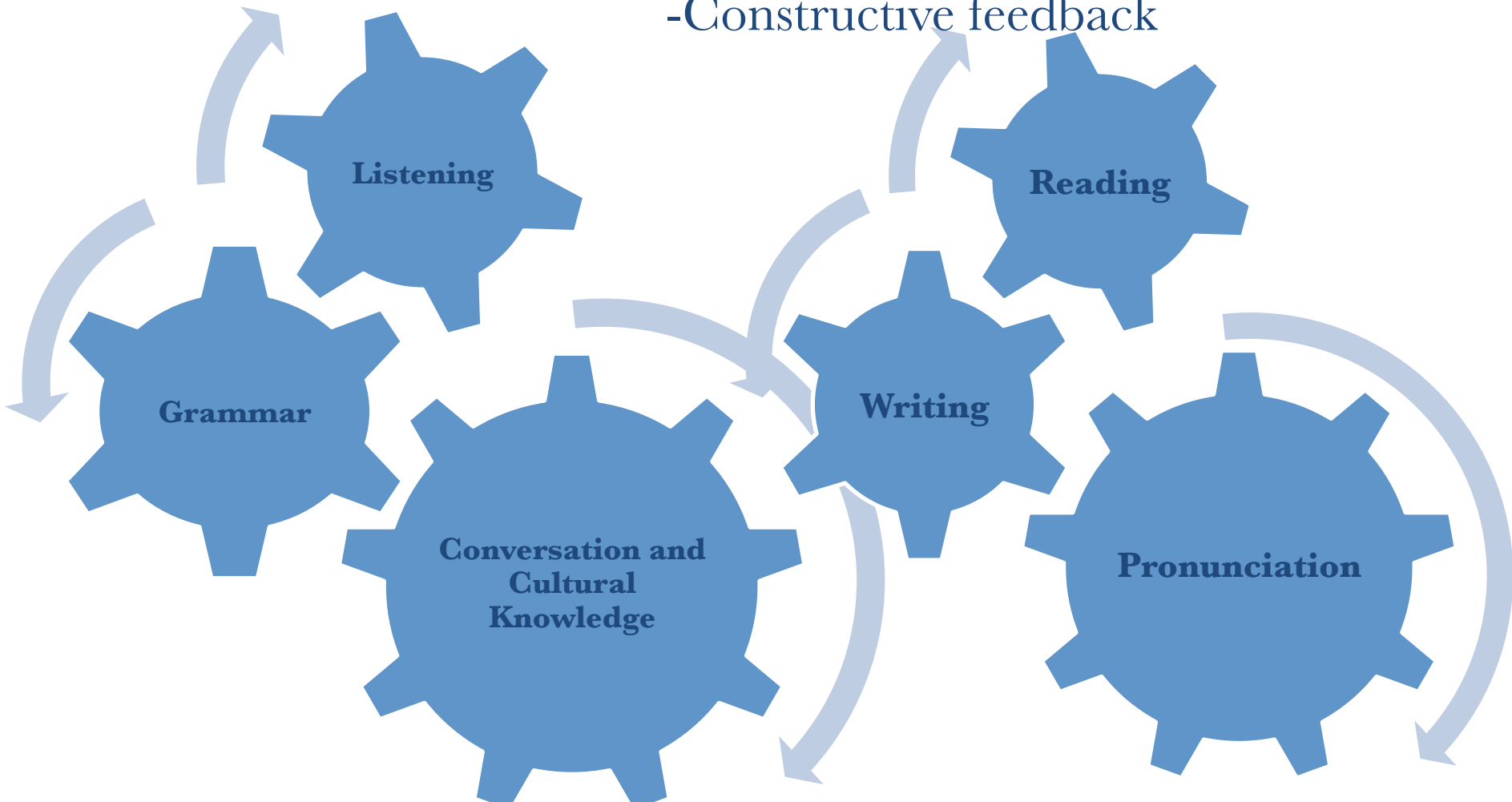
- “The Writing Centre helps me with my “**problem**” or “**weak**” students.” (Span 300)

“The Writing Centre is helpful for my heritage speakers and it teaches them how to properly spell out words” (Fren 200).

Holistic Teaching requires Holistic Learning

What do our students expect from us?

- Community
- Confidence building exercises and foci
- Skill-based learning modules
- Constructive feedback



Literature Review

Writing Centre Studies

- North (1984, 1994)
- Bouquet (1999, 2008)
- Casanave (2009)
- **L. A. Barkas (2011)**
- *The Paradox of Skills*

Community-oriented approaches to teaching and learning

- Fitzgerald (2006)
- K. Buch & Baron (2012)
- R. Barnett (2000)
- **C. Gaudini (2009)**
- **“The Participatory Classroom”**

Skills-based learning

- **C. Merlin (2012)**
- *The Heart and Soul of Language Teaching*
- Stefani (2008)

What is the best strategy for creating a **community-centered (multilingual)** learning centre with a **holistic approach** to teaching and learning in a large R1 university?

The FHIS Learning Centre

2015

New Methodology

2015-2016

Extension of services to
Italian and Portuguese
Language programs

2016

FHIS Learning Centre:
a **free** volunteer-based
service open to all FHIS
students and.

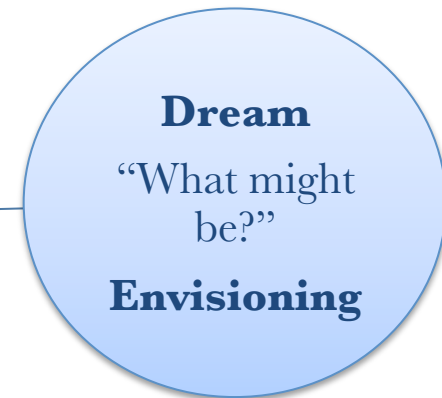
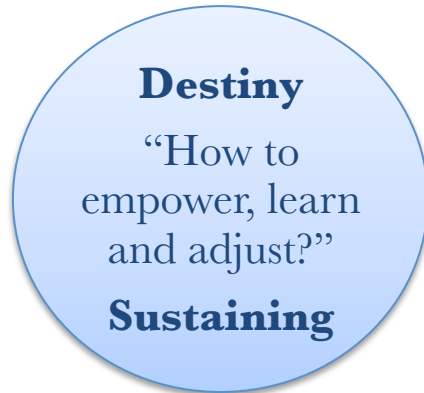
Research Methodology

Appreciative Inquiry

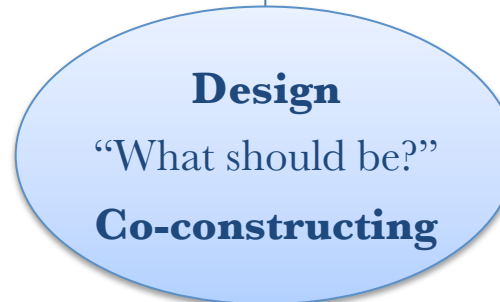


- Evaluate
- Repeat the cycle

- *Surveys* of primary stakeholders (FHIS students and faculty);
- *Participant Counters*




- Ongoing focus groups
- The FHIS Learning Centre Committee




- Peer and internal observations;
- Document analysis (literature review);

The FHIS Learning Centre

Pedagogical Approach



A **holistic**
approach to
language learning



A **community of**
learners housed in
the FHIS Department

- **Volunteer-based:** faculty, graduate and undergraduate student tutors
- **Peer-taught:** everyone benefits
- **Student-centered:** driven by students' personal needs and goals
- **Active and independent learning models:** i.e. grammar modeling, self-correction, listening, reading and writing strategies (summary strategies, group-activities)

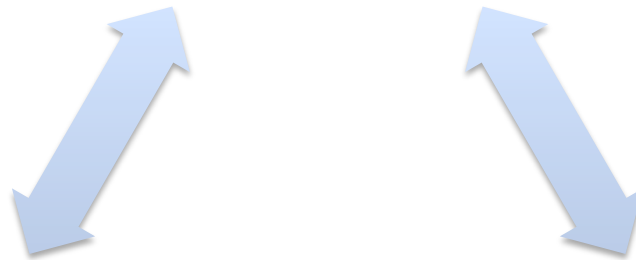
A nexus of empowerment for students and faculty.

Change = Results

- * **Alignment of learning** outcomes with centre practices and course needs
- * **Stronger ties** among students and faculty across our languages
- * **Holistic and community-oriented** approach has motivated students and increased confidence
- * **Positive and (more) supportive collaborative learning environment**

Next Steps

Faculty and student focus groups and surveys (for continual improvement)



Solidify Volunteer system through GTA support



Online scheduling (January, 2017) and further development of web materials

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