

Evaluation of the Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA)

Final Report

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Benchmarks

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1.0 Introduction

It has been seven years now since the method for testing the language acquisition of newcomers to Canada began to transition from standardized testing to a more holistic assessment of skills through a collaborative approach between instructors and learners. The development of PBLA was undertaken as a priority of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in response to recommendations in several pivotal studies on language. PBLA transformed how federally-funded English language training is assessed, and is now implemented nation-wide through Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) programs.

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) is conducting an independent evaluation of PBLA in LINC classrooms and this mandate was entrusted to Goss Gilroy Inc.

1.1 Evaluation Objective

The objective of the present evaluation is to gain insight on:

- The efficiency of PBLA in LINC programs;
- The ease of application of PBLA;
- The impact of PBLA; and
- The future evolution of PBLA.

This report presents findings about the value and efficacy of PBLA and suggested recommendations to support the evolution of PBLA over the coming years.

2.0 Methodology

The independent evaluation of PBLA was two-fold, beginning with qualitative data collection to support the design of the quantitative data collection tool (i.e., online survey of stakeholders).

2.1 Stakeholder Consultations

The objective of the stakeholder consultations was to identify major themes related to PBLA that would be further explored in the survey.

An online focus group discussion was conducted with ten (10) participants using the Zoom video communications platform. In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with two (2) experts with in-depth and long-term knowledge of PBLA design and delivery.

2.2 Online Survey

An e-mail invitation to complete the online survey was sent by the CCLB to 312 **administrators** and 420 **lead teachers** from LINC program organizations across Canada. The regional distribution of LINC program organizations is focused in Western (British-Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba) and Central (Ontario) regions of Canada.

The e-mail invitation requested that administrators and lead teachers forward the survey link to **classroom teachers**. It is important to note that it is not possible to determine the exact number of classroom teachers that would have received the survey link from the administrators or lead teachers that were contacted by the CCLB.

The online survey was in the field between January 11th and January 29th, 2021.

A total of 814 respondents completed the survey.

3.0 Findings

This section of the report summarizes the findings from the online survey, as well as the focus group and interview consultations.

In instances where differences are noted, the survey results are compared by regions of Canada (Western, Eastern, and Central), LINC program size (small, medium, and large), and whether respondents are employed by a unionized or non-unionized organization.

3.1 Stakeholder Consultations

The focus group discussion was conducted with six (6) administrators, one (1) lead teacher and two (2) classroom teachers. The following are major themes that were identified from the interviews and focus group discussion.

3.1.1 Benefits, Challenges and Suggestions for Improvement

Benefits

- ***PBLA is appropriate for higher CLB level learners.*** Focus group participants agreed that higher CLB level learners benefit from PBLA. According to one participant, PBLA is organized in a way that is easily understood by learners with higher and more formal education.
- ***PBLA enables learners to be accountable for their own learning.*** Focus group participants agreed that learners have an increased sense of ownership over their learning since PBLA puts the onus on learners to be responsible for their own progression. PBLA allows learners to easily and accurately track their progression and their status according to Canadian Language Benchmarks benchmarks.
- ***The PBLA needs assessment component is essential to its success.*** Focus group participants agreed that the needs assessment component allows for learning modules to be developed according to the needs of learners and enhances the structure of the program.

Challenges

- ***PBLA is not appropriate for low literacy learners.*** The language companion binder is not inappropriate for literacy learners and a modified approach of PBLA is often taken with literacy learners.
- ***Emphasis on assessments detracts from learning.*** The need for learners to present a certain number of assessments/obtain a certain number of artefacts as evidence of learning can cause stress and anxiety and slow down their progression.
- ***PBLA is not applied consistently across the country.*** There is no standard application of PBLA at the national or jurisdictional level and contextual differences, such as the size of a

program/organization (i.e., smaller vs. larger centres) and related challenges (e.g., lack of support) result in differences in how PBLA was applied.

- **Professional development and training opportunities are limited.** Teacher training is insufficient and that classroom teachers require more training opportunities and appropriate feedback on their work.
- **A lack of time is exacerbated by high administrative burden.** Classroom teachers are not adequately remunerated for non-instructional time and that the successful administration of PBLA requires support from administrators and lead teachers.

Suggestions for improvement

- Additional tools and resources are needed to support the administration of PBLA both in class (e.g., curriculums, texts books) and online (e.g., a guide for successful online implementation; access to online course work).
- More flexibility and accommodation are required for specialized classes (e.g., reduced number of artefacts required per skill).
- PBLA materials, such as the language companion, should be updated.

3.2 Online Survey

3.2.1 Profile of Survey Respondents

Survey respondents were queried about their current role (position in their organization) and when they began working in their current role; the Canadian region in which they are located; the type of organization that best describes their place of employment, whether it is unionized or not, and whether it is located in a mainly urban or rural areas or both; the size of their organization's LINC program and whether the program offers continuous intake.

Of the 814 respondents that completed the survey, the majority (73%) are classroom teachers; most (41%) had been in their current role since before 2014; half (50%) are located in Western Canada and a little less than half (45%) are located in Central Canada; more than half (56%) are employed by a settlement organization; the majority (61%) work in a non-unionized environment and greater than four-in-five (87%) are located in a mainly urban area; approximately half (51%) are in a medium size LINC program; and most (93%) of respondents' LINC programs offer continuous intake.

Current Role and Years of Experience

Respondents were asked to identify their current role and indicate when they began working in this role. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents are classroom teachers while 15% and 11% are lead teachers and administrators, respectively.

Table 1: Respondents' current role

Role	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Administrator	93	11.4%
Lead teacher	122	15.0%
Classroom teacher	597	73.3%
Regional coach	2	0.3%

Overall, over half of respondents (52%) had been working in their current role either since 2014-15 (12%) or since before 2014 (41%). A little over one third (36%) of respondents had been working in the current role between two and six years (i.e., began working between 2015-2016 and 2018-2019), and 12% of respondents had only been working in their current role for approximately 1 year (i.e., since 2019-2020).



Table 2: Respondent’s years of experience in their current role

Role	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Prior to 2014, including pilots	334	41.0%
Sept. 2014- June 2015	94	11.6%
Sept. 2015- June 2016	55	6.8%
Sept. 2016- June 2017	92	11.3%
Sept. 2017- June 2018	89	10.9%
Sept. 2018- June 2019	54	6.6%
Sept. 2019- June 2020	96	11.8%

Region

Respondents were asked to select the Canadian region in which they are located. Half (50%) of respondents are located in Western Canada¹ and close to half (45%) are located in Central Canada. The remaining 5% of respondents are located in Eastern Canada.²

Table 3: Canadian region where respondents are located

Canadian Region	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)	406	50.0%
Central Canada (Ontario)	368	45.3%
Eastern Canada (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	38	4.7%

Place of Employment: Type of Organization and Area

More than half (56%) of respondents are employed by a settlement organization. Nearly one fifth (19%) of respondents are employed by a school board and more than one-in-ten (15%) are employed by a college or university. Only 4% of respondents are employed by a private language training provider.

Of the 48 respondents that selected the “other” category, less than half (40%) indicated that they are employed either by a not-for-profit organization (23%) or by a community organization (17%), and nearly one-quarter (23%) indicated that they are employed by a LINC

¹ This may be indicative of the regional distribution of LINC program organizations as described in section 2.2

² Excludes the 2 respondents who indicated that they are located in Northern Canada (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut)

program/organization. Other more common responses included Adult Learning Centres and the YMCA.

Table 4: Respondents' current place of employment (type of organization)

Type of Organization	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
School board	155	19.0%
College/University	120	14.7%
Private language training provider	31	3.8%
Settlement organization	460	56.5%
Other	48	5.9%

The majority of respondents (61%) currently work in a non-unionized workplace.

Table 5: The structure of respondents' current place of employment

Place of Employment	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Unionized	321	39.4%
Non-unionized	493	60.6%

Most respondents' (87%) work in a mainly urban area.

Table 6: The type of area in which respondents' place of employment is located

Area	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Mainly urban	711	87.4%
Mainly rural (including a smaller community)	53	6.5%
Both urban and rural	50	6.1%

LINC Program Characteristics

The size of respondents' LINC programs varies, with more than half (51%) of respondents reporting their class sizes are of a medium size, close to one-third (30%) stating they are small, and a little less than one-fifth (18.5%) indicating they are in a large LINC Program.³

³ Excludes the 7 respondents who indicated that they do not work in a LINC program.

Table 7: The size of respondent’s LINC program

LINC Program Size	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Small (1 to 10 classes)	242	30.0%
Medium (11 to 40 classes)	416	51.5%
Large (41 classes or more)	149	18.5%

Most (93%) respondents report that their LINC program offers continuous intake.⁴

Table 8: LINC Program format

Continuous Intake	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Yes	744	92.7%
No	59	7.3%

3.2.2 Effectiveness of PBLA for Learners

Survey respondents were asked to rate the level of effectiveness of PBLA when used with learners with various CLB levels.

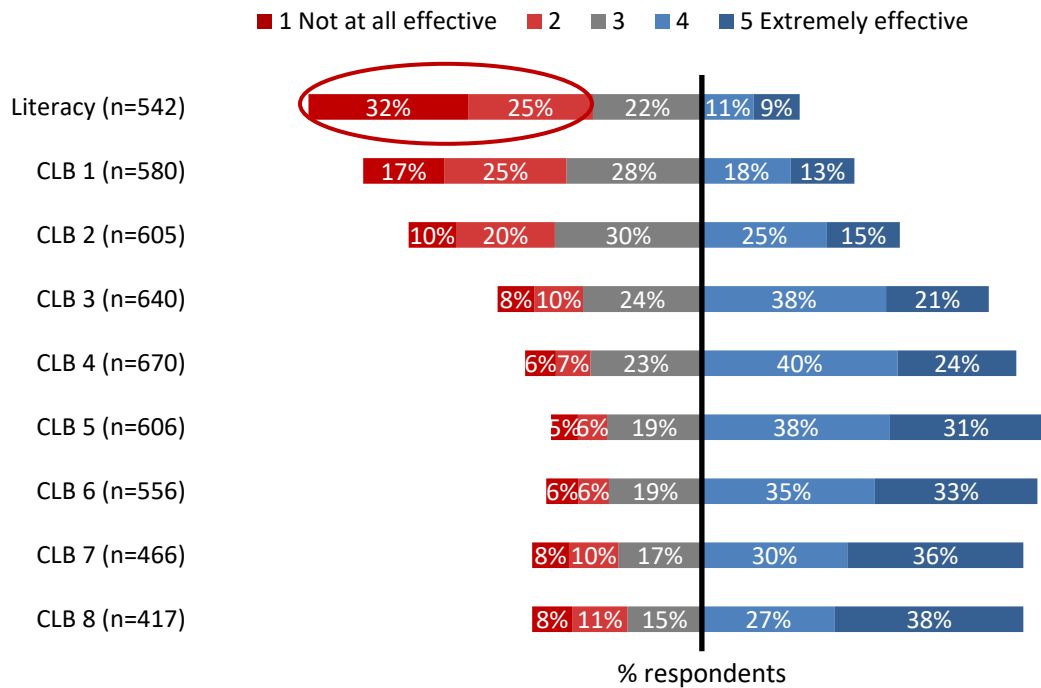
Survey results indicate that most respondents (59-69%) believe that PBLA is effective (rating of 4 or 5) when used with CLB level 3 to level 8 learners. PBLA was found to be somewhat less effective when used with CLB level 1 and level 2 learners (31% and 40% of respondents rated PBLA as effective with CLB level 1 and level 2 learners, respectively). Notably, more than half of respondents (57%) indicated that PBLA is not effective (rating of 1 or 2) when used with literacy learners (only 20% of respondents rated PBLA as effective when used with literacy learners).

It is important to note that between 18% and 49% of all survey respondents selected “Don’t know/Not applicable” when asked to rate the effectiveness of PBLA across all CLB levels.⁵

⁴ Excludes the 11 respondents who indicated that they do not work in a LINC program.

⁵ “Don’t know/Not applicable” responses are excluded from the results presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Effectiveness of PBLA when used with learners with different CLB levels



3.2.3 Benefits of PBLA for Teachers and Learners

Survey respondents agree (strongly agree/agree) that PBLA improves teachers’ assessment of knowledge and skills as well as their knowledge and use of CLB (67% and 72%, respectively); however, these positive outcomes are less pronounced with respect to improving consistency of training and outcomes for learners (49% and 48%, respectively). Notably, one quarter (25%) of respondents reported being undecided (i.e., “neither agree nor disagree”) about whether PBLA improves the consistency of training and outcomes for learners.

Table 9: Benefits of PBLA for Teachers and Learners

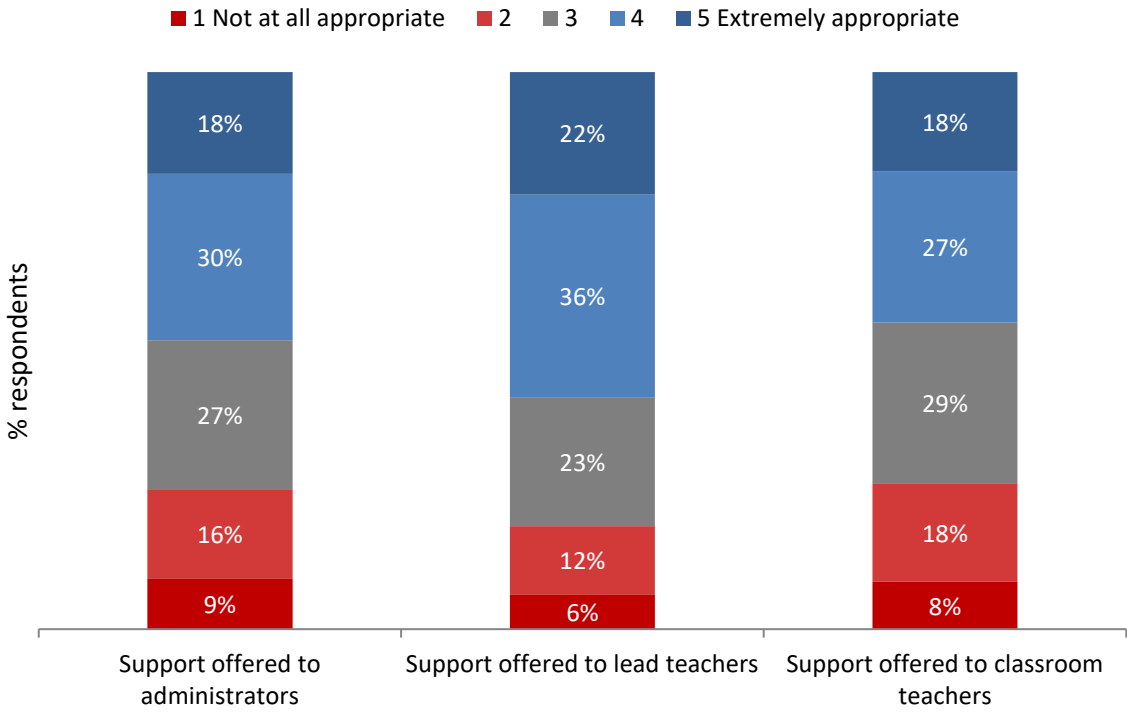
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	<i>Top Two Responses</i>
Benefits for teachers						
PBLA has improved teachers’ knowledge and use of the Canadian Language Benchmarks (n=798)	3.5%	6.1%	18.2%	43.9%	28.3%	72.2%

PBLA has improved teachers' assessment of knowledge and skills (n=800)	5.4%	8.9%	18.4%	43.1%	24.3%	67.4%
Benefits for learners						
PBLA has improved the consistency of training for learners (n=786)	10.8%	14.6%	25.4%	31.8%	17.3%	49.1%
PBLA has improved the consistency of outcomes for learners (n=788)	11.0%	16.2%	25.0%	31.7%	16.0%	47.7%

3.2.4 Support Offered to Staff

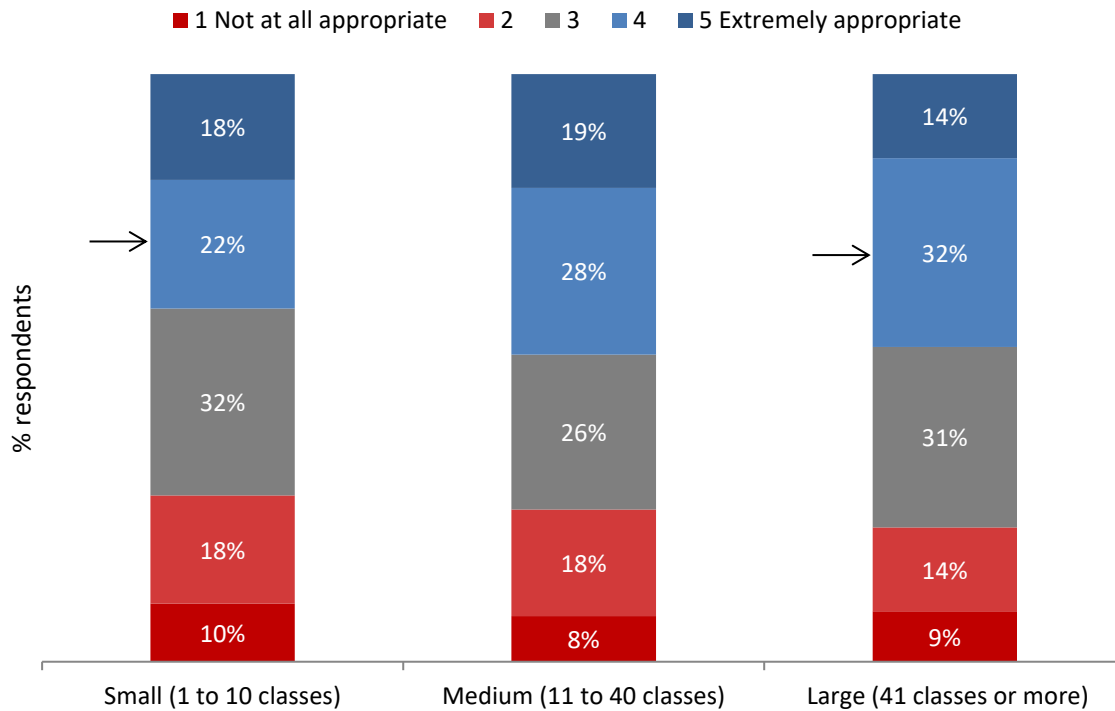
Overall, more than half (58%) of respondents indicated that the level of support offered to lead teachers is appropriate (extremely appropriate/appropriate), whereas less than half (45%) of respondents rated the level of support offered to classroom teachers as appropriate (extremely appropriate/appropriate).

Figure 2: Perceived level of support, overall



Of note, respondents in a large LINC program (32%) were more likely to rate the level of support offered to **classroom teachers** as “appropriate” (rating 4) compared to respondents in a small LINC program (22%).

Figure 3: Perceived level of support for **classroom teachers**, according to the size of respondents’ LINC program



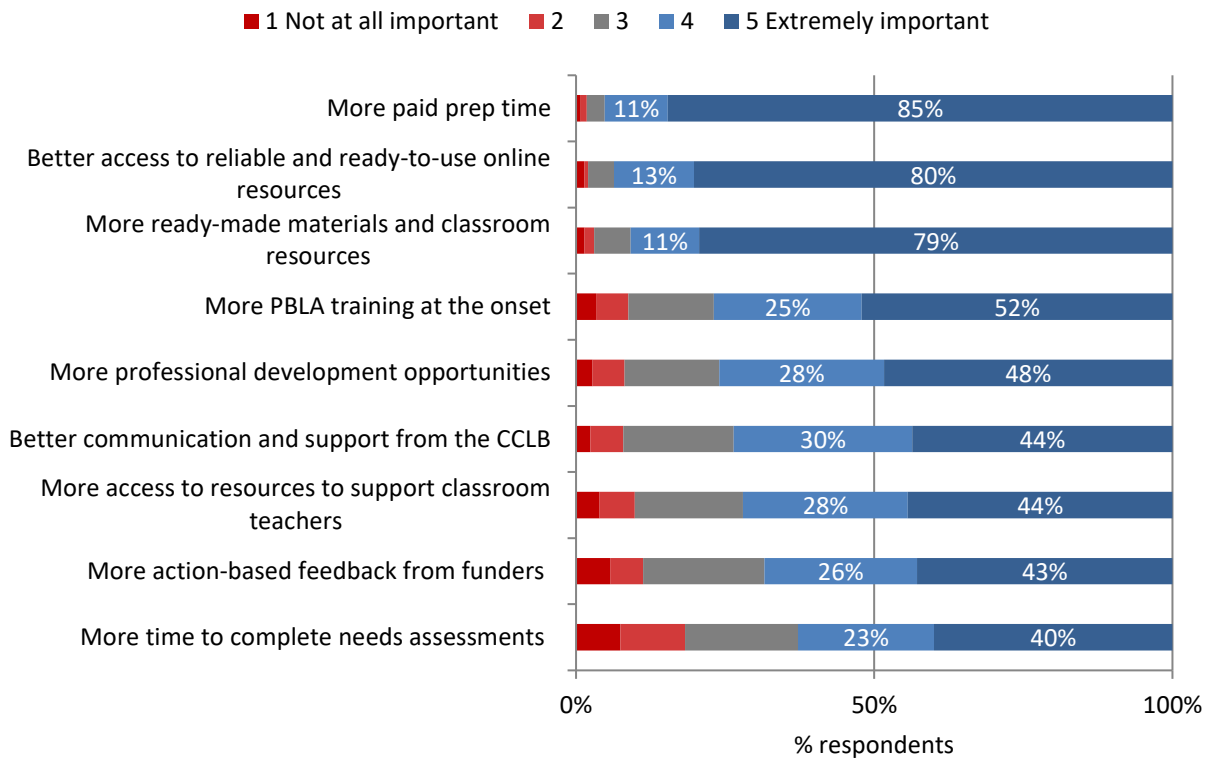
Supporting classroom teachers’ ability to successfully administer PBLA

The top three most important suggestions (rated as important or extremely important) for improving classroom teachers’ ability to successfully administer PBLA are:

- 1) More paid prep time (96%);
- 2) Better access to reliable and ready-to-use online resources (93%); and
- 3) More ready-made material and classroom resources (90%).

See Figure 4 below and Appendix A for more details.

Figure 4: Rated importance of suggestions for supporting the successful administration of PBLA



3.2.5 Overall Satisfaction with PBLA

Less than half of respondents (43%) reported being satisfied (very satisfied/satisfied) with PBLA overall.

Table 10: Overall Satisfaction with PBLA

Level of Satisfaction	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	<i>Top Two Responses</i>
Overall, how satisfied are you with PBLA? (n=814)	12.5%	19.0%	25.4%	33.7%	9.3%	43.0%



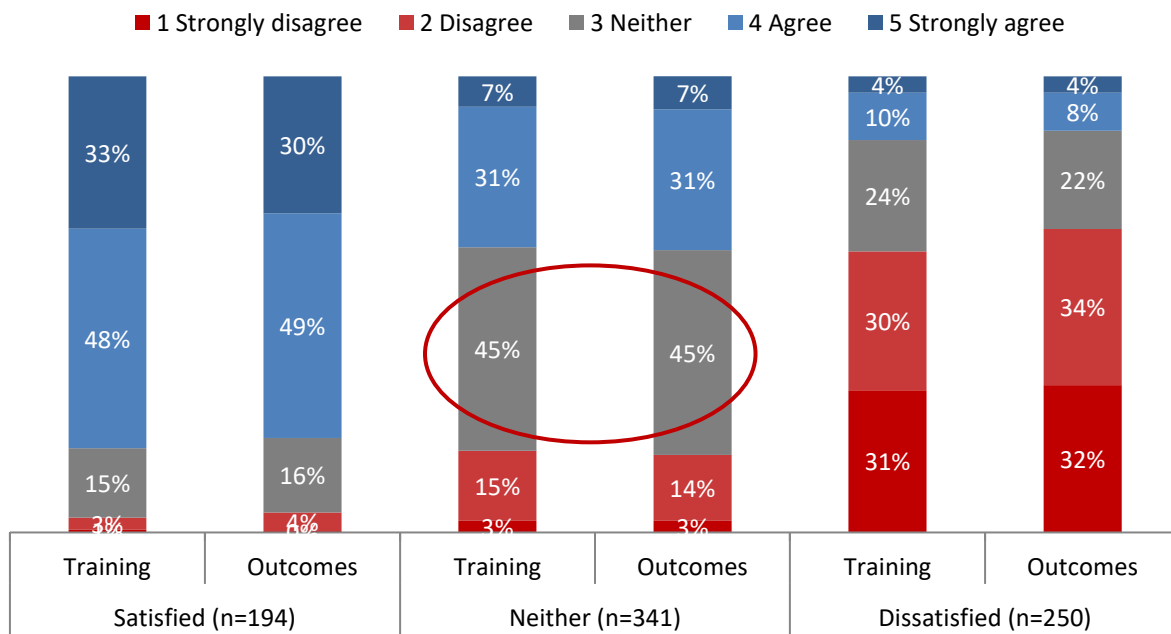
Profile of respondents

Of the 350 (43%) respondents that reported being **satisfied** (very satisfied/satisfied) with PBLA, more than half (56%) are located in Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba), only a little over one-third (35%) have been in their current role since before 2014 and more than half (53%) since 2015-16, and most (69%) work in a non-unionized workplace.

Of the 257 (31%) respondents that reported being **dissatisfied** (very dissatisfied/dissatisfied) with PBLA, more than half are located in Central Canada (Ontario, Quebec) and have been in their current role since before 2014 (both 54%), and half (50%) work in a non-unionized workplace.

The profile of the 207 (25%) respondents that reported being **neither** satisfied nor dissatisfied with PBLA is similar to the overall profile of the survey sample (see section 3.2.1). Notably, these respondents were also mostly unsure (i.e., “neutral”) about whether PBLA has improved the consistency of training and outcomes for learners (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5: Benefits of PBLA for learners, according to respondents’ satisfaction (i.e., satisfied, neither, or dissatisfied) with PBLA overall



*Note: “Training” and “Outcomes” refer to improved consistency of training and outcomes for learners, respectively.

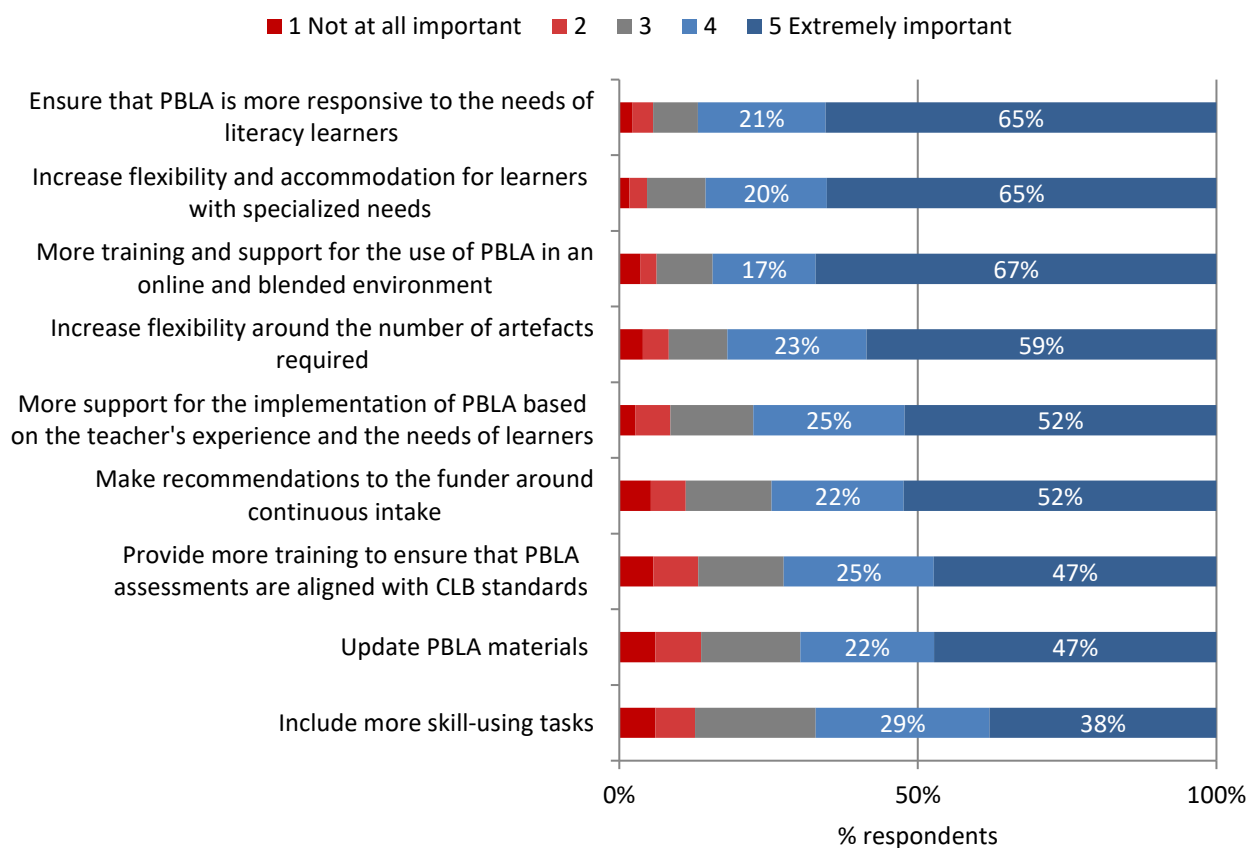
3.2.6 Supporting the Evolution of PBLA

The top three most important suggestions (rated as important or extremely important) for improving the future use of PBLA are:

- 1) Ensure that PBLA is more responsive to the needs of literacy learners (87%);
- 2) Increase flexibility and accommodation for learners with specialized needs (86%); and
- 3) More training and support for the use of PBLA in an online and blended environment (84%).

See Figure 6 below and Appendix B for more details.

Figure 6: Rated importance of suggestions for improving PBLA in the future



4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The consultations with stakeholders (i.e., PBLA administrators, lead teachers, and classroom teachers) have provided many valuable insights on the benefits and challenges of PBLA in LINC programs.

Firstly, it was found that stakeholders recognize the benefits of PBLA for teachers. For example, many indicate that PBLA's needs assessment component enhances the structure of the program and allows for learning modules to be tailored to the needs of learners. Notably, the majority of stakeholders suggested that PBLA benefits teachers by improving their assessment of knowledge and skills and their knowledge and use of Canadian Language Benchmarks. Despite these benefits, stakeholders also identified gaps in training and supports offered to classroom teachers. It is suggested that there is a need for improved training and professional development opportunities, and that classroom teachers also require additional support to offset the administrative burden of PBLA. It is further reported that classroom teachers in smaller LINC programs are less likely to perceive the level of support offered to them as appropriate.

Secondly, it is suggested that stakeholders recognize the benefits of PBLA for learners, for example, by allowing learners to easily and accurately track their progression, increasing their sense of ownership over their learning. Notably, while most stakeholders agreed that PBLA has improved the consistency of training and outcomes for learners, some remain undecided about whether these benefits were present. Similarly, there is a higher-than-expected propensity for respondents to report being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with PBLA overall. These findings suggest that many stakeholders may be uncertain about the benefits of applying PBLA in a LINC program classroom, providing an opportunity to enhance PBLA-related communications and resources and increase satisfaction.

Finally, while stakeholders recognize the benefits of PBLA for learners and their progression, particularly for learners with CLB levels 3 and up, these benefits appear to be less apparent when PBLA is used with literacy learners.

4.2 Recommendations

The following are recommendations to support the evolution of PBLA over the coming years based on the findings of the evaluation.

Recommendation 1: Invest more efforts in outreach and communication strategies to better respond to the needs of administrators, lead teachers and classroom teachers in order to increase overall satisfaction with PBLA.

Recommendation 2: Further investigate the main challenges experienced by classroom teachers when implementing PBLA with literacy learners.

Recommendation 3: Identify training, resources, and other supports to help classroom teachers better incorporate PBLA in classrooms with literacy learners and learners with specialized needs.

Recommendation 4: Provide more paid preparation time, better access to reliable and ready-to-use online resources and more ready-made materials and classroom resources to help improve classroom teachers' abilities to successfully administer PBLA in an online and blended environment.

Recommendation 5: Build on the experience and best practices acquired since the onset of the program to identify additional professional development opportunities, training and supports for administrators, lead teachers and classroom teachers.

Appendix A

Survey respondents' ratings of suggestions to support classroom teachers' ability to successfully administer PBLA.

Level of Importance	Sample size (n)	1 Not at all important	2	3	4	5 Extremely important
More paid prep time	773	0.78%	1.03%	2.98%	10.61%	84.61%
Better access to reliable and ready-to-use online resources	803	1.37%	0.62%	4.36%	13.45%	80.20%
More ready-made materials and classroom resources (curriculums, text books, etc.)	785	1.40%	1.66%	6.11%	11.46%	79.36%
More PBLA training at the onset (i.e., at the time of hiring)	775	3.35%	5.42%	14.32%	24.77%	52.13%
More professional development opportunities	800	2.75%	5.38%	15.88%	27.63%	48.38%
Better communication and support from the CCLB	745	2.42%	5.50%	18.52%	29.93%	43.62%
More access to resources such as lead teachers to support classroom teachers	782	3.96%	5.88%	18.16%	27.62%	44.37%
More action-based feedback	719	5.70%	5.56%	20.31%	25.59%	42.84%

from funders to support PBLA programming						
More time to complete needs assessments (to promote better identification of learner needs)	793	7.44%	10.84%	18.92%	22.82%	39.97%

Appendix B

Survey respondents' ratings of suggestions to support the evolution of PBLA.

Level of Importance	Sample size (n)	1 Not at all important	2	3	4	5 Extremely important
Ensure that PBLA is more responsive to the needs of literacy learners	773	0.78%	1.03%	2.98%	10.61%	84.61%
Increase flexibility and accommodation for learners with specialized needs (learners with trauma, low literacy, learning difficulties or disabilities, etc.)	803	1.37%	0.62%	4.36%	13.45%	80.20%
Provide more training and support for the use of PBLA in an online and blended environment	785	1.40%	1.66%	6.11%	11.46%	79.36%
Increase flexibility around the number of artefacts required to demonstrate proof of ability	775	3.35%	5.42%	14.32%	24.77%	52.13%
Provide more support for the implementation of PBLA based on the teacher's experience and the needs of learners	800	2.75%	5.38%	15.88%	27.63%	48.38%
Make recommendations to the funder	745	2.42%	5.50%	18.52%	29.93%	43.62%

around the continuous intake of learners in LINC programs						
Provide more training to ensure that PBLA assessments are aligned with CLB standards to promote a common understanding and consistency in the administration of PBLA across classrooms	782	3.96%	5.88%	18.16%	27.62%	44.37%
Update PBLA materials (Language Companion, etc.)	719	5.70%	5.56%	20.31%	25.59%	42.84%
Include more skill-using tasks	793	7.44%	10.84%	18.92%	22.82%	39.97%

Appendix C

Focus Groups Discussion Questions

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLCLB) has hired Goss Gilroy Inc. (GGI) to conduct an independent evaluation of Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) in Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classrooms. The goal of this evaluation, and today's discussion, is to gain feedback and insights on:

- The efficiency of PBLA in LINC programs
- The ease of application of PBLA
- The impact of PBLA
- The future evolution of PBLA

We're also hoping to use today's discussion to help us design a survey that will be sent to a wider range of stakeholders. Your participation is both voluntary and confidential, and your comments will not be attributed to you in any reporting. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Introduction

1. Please introduce yourselves. How familiar are you with Portfolio-Based Language Assessment? How do you use it in your work?

Classroom experience

1. In your view, how does PBLA affect the experience of learners in the classroom? How does this differ from other forms of assessment you've used or seen in the past?
2. How and in what ways does PBLA impact the progression of learners through language classes and levels?
3. Do these experiences differ based on the context or environment of that classroom?
(prompt for: regional or schoolboard differences, rural versus urban, which language program, union vs non-unionized environments)
4. Are there other ways in which PBLA impacts the day-to-day experiences of learners? Other stakeholders?

Administration of PBLA

5. What about PBLA standards have you found the most useful or effective? The most challenging?
(prompt for: class size and organization of classes; compensated prep time; use of the Language Companion; assessment that is based on learner-identified needs and goals; ensuring PBLA assessment is aligned to the CLB standards; professional development for teachers; annual self-assessments, etc.).



6. What about PBLA Assessment for Learning principles⁶ and protocols have you found the most useful or effective? The most challenging?

(prompt for: clarify learning intents and criteria for success; incorporate classroom activities that elicit evidence of learning; provide action-oriented feedback that moves learners forward; activate learners to become instructional resources for one another; activate learners to become owners of their own learning)

7. For those of you who are involved in the operational management side of PBLA, what does this entail? Are there improvements to the process that should be considered?

8. Are there other ways the administration of PBLA could be made more efficient?

Training & support

9. How would you describe the type of level of support that teachers receive in administering PBLA?

- a. Is it appropriate? Enough?

10. Are there others (learners, administrators, support staff etc.) who require more support? How so?

Suggestions for the future

11. As you know, PBLA is relatively new, and will continue to evolve into the future. What do you think language assessment might look like 5 or 10 years from now? What might influence these changes?

12. Do you have any other feedback on PBLA? And other suggestions that you think would be useful for the evaluation to know?

Thank you very much for your time and input.

⁶ Focused on integrating assessment for learning into all assessment



Appendix D

PBLA Evaluation: Survey

Introduction

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) has hired Goss Gilroy Inc. (GGI) to conduct an independent evaluation of Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) in Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classrooms. The goal of this evaluation is to gain feedback and insights on:

- The efficacy and efficiency of PBLA in LINC programs
- The ease of application of PBLA
- The impact of PBLA
- The future evolution of PBLA

This questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete and is being administered by GGI on behalf of CCLB. If you wish to expand on any of your responses, please do so in the optional comments sections. The information collected from this questionnaire will be kept confidential and we will not associate responses with a specific individual. You will not be asked to provide any identifiable information and no personal identifiers will be used in any reports.

If you have technical questions about the questionnaire, please contact Pina Pejovic, Partner at GGI ppejovic@ggi.ca

If you have questions about the independent evaluation of PBLA, please contact Kathy Hughes, Project Manager at CCLB pbla@language.ca

Please complete this survey by January 29, 2021.

Respondent Profile

1. What is your current role?

- [1] Administrator
- [2] Lead teacher
- [3] Classroom teacher
- [4] Regional coach

2. When did you begin working in your current role? (please select only one option)

- 1. Prior to 2014, including pilots



2. Sept. 2014 - June 2015
3. Sept. 2015 - June 2016
4. Sept. 2016 - June 2017
5. Sept. 2017 - June 2018
6. Sept. 2018 - June 2019
7. Sept. 2019 - June 2020

3. In what region are you located? (please select only one option).

- [1] Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)
- [2] Central Canada (Ontario, Quebec)
- [3] Atlantic Canada (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)
- [4] Northern Canada (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut)

4. Please select one of the following options that best describes your place of employment?

- [1] School board
- [2] College/University
- [3] Private language training provider
- [4] Settlement organization
- [5] Other (please specify)

5. What size is your organization's LINC program? (please select only one option)

- [1] Small (1 to 10 classes)
- [2] Medium (11 to 40 classes)
- [3] Large (41 classes or more)
- [4] Not applicable (I do not work in a LINC program)

6. Is your program unionized or non-unionized?

- [1] Yes
- [2] No

7. Please select the area which best describes your workplace location.

- [1] Mainly urban
- [2] Mainly rural (including a smaller community)
- [3] Both urban and rural

8. Does your LINC program offer continuous intake? (please select only one option)

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Not applicable (I do not work in a LINC program)

Classroom experience



9. How effective is PBLA when used with the following Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) learners:

[Format in grid]

[Rows]

- [1] Literacy
- [2] CLB level 1
- [3] CLB level 2
- [4] CLB level 3
- [5] CLB level 4
- [6] CLB level 5
- [7] CLB level 6
- [8] CLB level 7
- [9] CLB level 8

[Columns]

- 1 Not at all effective
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extremely effective
- 6 Don't know/ Not applicable

(Optional) Please expand on your selections. Why do you think PBLA is or is not effective with different CLB learners?

10. Below is a list of suggestions that the CCLB received from users to support the evolution of PBLA. Please rate each by level of importance, where 1 means the suggestion is “not important at all” and 5 means the suggestion is “extremely important”:

[Format in grid]

[Rows]

- [1] Include more skill-using tasks
- [2] Increase flexibility around the number of artefacts required to demonstrate proof of ability
- [3] Provide more support for the implementation of PBLA based on the teacher's experience and the needs of learners
- [4] Increase flexibility and accommodation for learners with specialized needs (e.g., learners with trauma, low literacy, learning difficulties or disabilities.)
- [5] Update PBLA materials (Language Companion, etc.)
- [6] Provide more training to ensure that PBLA assessments are aligned with CCLB standards to support a common understanding and consistency in the administration of PBLA across classrooms
- [7] Ensure that PBLA is more responsive to the needs of literacy learners
- [8] Make recommendations to the funder around the continuous intake of learners in LINC programs



[9] Provide more training and support for the use of PBLA in an online and blended environment

1 Not at all important

2

3

4

5 Extremely important

6 Don't Know/Not applicable

(Optional) Please comment on the above suggestions and/or provide additional suggestions for improvement.

11. How appropriate is the level of support offered to administrators, lead teachers and classroom teachers by the CCLB?

[Format in grid]

[Rows]

[1] The level of support offered to administrators

[2] The level of support offered to lead teachers

[3] The level of support offered to classroom teachers

[Columns]

1 Not at all appropriate

2

3

4

5 Extremely appropriate

6 Don't know/ Not applicable

(Optional) Please comment on the level of support currently offered and the amount that is needed.

12. Below is a list of suggestions that that the CCLB received from users to support classroom teachers' ability to successfully administer PBLA. Please rate each by level of importance, where 1 means the suggestion is "not important at all" and 5 means the suggestion is "extremely important".

[Format in grid]

[Rows]

[1] More PBLA training and support at the onset (i.e., at the time of hiring)

[2] Better access to reliable and ready-to-use online resources

[3] More access to resources such as lead teachers to support classroom teachers

[4] More professional development opportunities

[5] More time to complete needs assessments (to promote better identification of learner needs)

[6] More ready-made materials and classroom resources (curriculum, text books, etc.)



- [7] More paid prep time
- [8] More action-based feedback from funders to support PBLA programming
- [9] Better communication and support from the CCLB

[Columns]

- 1 Not at all important
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extremely important
- 6 Don't Know/ Not applicable

(Optional) Please comment on the above suggestions and/or provide additional suggestions for improvement.

13. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- (1) PBLA has improved teachers' knowledge and use of the Canadian Language Benchmarks
- (2) PBLA has improved teachers' assessment knowledge and skills
- (3) PBLA has improved the consistency of training for learners
- (4) PBLA has improved the consistency of outcomes for learners

[Columns]

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 6 Don't Know/ Not applicable

(Optional) Please comment on the statements above.

14. Overall, how satisfied are you with PBLA?

- 1 Very dissatisfied
- 2 Dissatisfied
- 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 Satisfied
- 5 Very satisfied

15. Do you have any further recommendations on the evolution of PBLA? (Please specify)