



A Message from the Editorial Team

Evidence-informed practice spans all domains of education, and in this issue of *RiaN*, our contributors provide guidance on four domains of increasing importance for our professional practice.

Sincerely, Stephen MacGregor and Lindsay Mainhood (RiaN@queensu.ca)

How do teachers become assessment capable?

Andrew Coombs, PhD Candidate

Why is this topic important?

- What it means to be an assessment-capable teacher is evolving in response to accountability and assessment mandates; theoretical developments in assessment, teaching, and learning; and an increasing focus on equity and diversity within schools.

What did this research uncover?

- This paper analyzes assessment education within teacher education policies, programs, and practices across four country contexts: Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand.
- Consistent, interconnected findings regarding how teacher candidates develop assessment capability were identified across national contexts including:
 - Assessment education is situated in intersections of knowledge (e.g., cultural, historical, political);
 - Practicing assessment is the foundation of assessment learning;
 - Assessment education is highly integrated within teacher education but appears to be misaligned with the classroom experiences of teacher candidates, teacher educators, and practicum mentors.

Why do these findings matter?

- Teacher candidates need to know that to be an assessment-capable teacher is to ensure they are able to understand and contend with the assessment context *that was, that is, and that will be*.

DeLuca, C., Willis, J., Cowie, B., Harrison, C., Coombs, A. J., Gibson, A., & Trask, S. (2019). [Policies, programs, and practices: Exploring the complex dynamics of assessment education in teacher education across four countries](#). *Frontiers in Education*, 4, 1–19.

How do teachers decide which financial literacy resources to bring into their classrooms?

Jen McConnel, PhD Candidate

Why is this topic important?

- Financial literacy is integrated into the Ontario elementary and secondary curriculum across content areas, but teachers don't always know where to look to find credible resources to support their instruction.

What did this research uncover?

- Teachers are looking for financial resources that are teacher- and kid-friendly: free, connected to curriculum, and engaging.
- Many teachers in this study felt that banks produced particularly trustworthy information when it comes to integrating financial literacy in the classroom, while a minority of teachers in this study expressed concern over the bias banks might introduce in these materials.

Why do these findings matter?

- Financial literacy resources are increasingly available online, including those in the Canadian Financial Literacy Database (<https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/financial-literacy-database.html>), but teachers need to critically engage with these resources to consider usability, content, and potential bias before integrating these materials into their classrooms.

Beach, P., Henderson, G., & McConnel, J. (2019, June). *Examining elementary teachers' learning experiences as they use the Canadian Financial Literacy database*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, Vancouver, Canada.

What is academic language and why do teachers need to know about it?

Wei Yan, PhD Candidate

Why is this topic important?

- English Language Learners (ELLs) are estimated to form 20-50% of the general student population in urban K-12 systems across Canada.
- Across Ontario, 72% of English elementary schools and 55% of secondary schools have ELLs; in the Greater Toronto Area, the figure increases to 85% in elementary schools.
- Language proficiency is an essential factor for ELLs' academic success in schools.

What did this research uncover?

- Academic language is an important sub-construct of second language teaching and learning, and the development of it needs support from subject teachers.
- ELLs' social language skills are very important in terms of seeking help from peers and teachers to achieve intended learning outcomes.
- Teachers and schools providing accommodations is another key to ELLs' academic success.

Why do these findings matter?

- Teachers need to understand that academic language is a different construct, and even native speakers of English need support to develop it.

Peng, Y. & Yan, W. (2019). [Walking the garden path towards academic language: Perspectives from international students in Chinese higher education](#). In H. Tao, & H. J. Chen (Eds.), *Chinese for specific and professional purposes*. Singapore: Springer.

How is 'gender expression,' a new and nebulous human rights construct, taking shape in Ontario school board policy documents?

Jacob DesRochers, PhD Student

Why is this topic important?

- In 2002, jurisdictions across Canada began adding two new protected grounds to their human rights laws: gender identity and/or gender expression.
- Gender identity protections generally apply only to transgender people, whereas gender expression protections may apply to all Canadians in places like K-12 schools.

What did this research uncover?

- Initial findings from a qualitative study of how 'gender expression' is being constructed by policy documents produced by Ontario's publicly funded school boards.
- Presently, over half of Ontario's 34 English public secular boards have no publicly available policy to guide school staff in implementing gender expression and gender identity protections.

Why do these findings matter?

- Understanding this issue at a policy level is critical to assisting K-12 students and their families in invoking protections that they have but may not know about, and to assist school staff in understanding their responsibilities in relation to gender expression protections.

Airton, L., Kirkup, K., McMillan, A., & DesRochers, J. (In Press). [What is "gender expression"? How a new and nebulous human rights construct is taking shape in Ontario school board policy documents](#). *Canadian Journal of Education*, 42(4), 1154-1182.

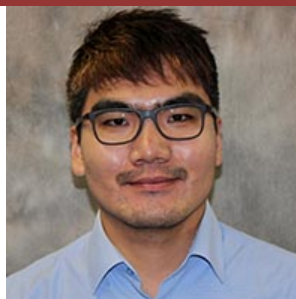
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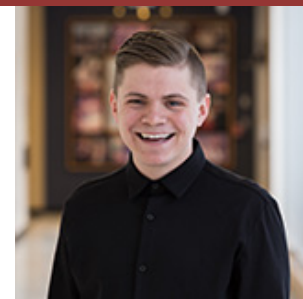
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