UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES WITHIN AN ENGLISH BUSINESS
COLLEGE FOR NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING STUDENTS

by

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MEd, The University of British Columbia, 2018

A GRADUATING PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION
in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Adult Learning and Education)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
April, 2018

Acknowledgement

My sincere thanks to Dr. Jude Walker for her insightful suggestions for new ideas and advice on how to improve the structure of the paper.

I also want to thank the UBC Writing Centre team for their diligence in proofreading this paper and for suggesting writing materials that have improved my writing skills.

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SECTION 1: Introduction

Student engagement for adults is an increasingly important focus of study, for instructors, administrators, and adult learning institutions more broadly. Leach (2016) opined student engagement to be "important to further and higher education institutions: it is understood to be a proxy for quality teaching and governments attach a proportion of funding to student retention and completion" (p. 24). Gastown Business College (GBC) currently educates around 350 to 500 students yearly from mostly South Korea, China, and Japan. The college, which is situated in the heart of Vancouver, typically groups foreign students in learning group/programs based on their intended work paths and prior educational backgrounds. This grouping determines what business studies subjects students will learn, and the duration of their study at the college. An adult learning academy like GBC, where I teach as a business instructor for foreign students, is seeking diverse ways of ensuring adult students are engaged in the classrooms, from selecting the right instructional tools, confirming expertise of teaching, and also fostering the emotional wellbeing of both teachers and students.

Research into student engagement in further and higher education is usually traced to the work of Pace on quality of effort, Chickering and Gamson on good undergraduate teaching, and Astin on student involvement (Coates, 2006; cited in Leach 2016, p. 23). There has been substantial research since that time indicating that student engagement varies according to the environment created by the school and the teacher, and by the learning opportunities teachers create in their classrooms (Boaler & Staples, 2008; Kelly & Turner, 2009; Nasir et al., 2011, cited in Nguyen et al., 2016). The evidence provided by these researchers and others suggests that the environment and learning opportunities created by teachers influences the engagement of students.

With globalization comes the need for a shift from traditional teaching styles and strategies to "teaching practices that recognize and embrace the increased diversity of student bodies" (Doyle, 2013, p. 6). One of the most dynamic and globalised spaces of higher education is within business schools. Many business schools attract students from all over the world. They offer courses that range from diplomas, to undergraduate degrees, to postdoctoral programs with their main programme most commonly being the MBA. The curriculum of business schools like GBC contains subjects like marketing, finance, operation management, and statistics. Business schools are probably the most energetic and changeable sector of higher education regarding developing new programs, being market-oriented, and having an up-to-date changing curriculum, given the constant changes in the business world. For these reasons, it is becomes important to offer ways and methods of teaching that create a sense of confidence in students, which helps them to analyze and seek goals, and to predict risk and how to deal with it. These programmes aim to create in students an equilibrium between the self-confidence needed to lead others, and the ability to make quick and suitable decisions while being modest and down-to-earth (Iñiguez de Onzoño, 2011). Business schools tend to choose unique and creative strategies in teaching to create a suitable learning atmosphere for students. They now not only use face-to-face methods of learning, but they also use new technologies to facilitate the learning process, such as online courses and video conferences in addition to the traditional classroom setting, especially given the growth of online MBA programs worldwide.

Business schools for speakers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) are a relatively new and growing subset of business schools, and exist in English-speaking countries, like Canada,

for non-native speakers. These colleges teach students English and communication skills that will help them succeed in today's global marketplace. Consequently, the schools adopt different instructional strategies to meet the students' learning needs. As noted by Fleming (2017), for instructing within an EAL classroom to be fruitful, language must be understandable; the content should be delivered without students having to translate what is being learned, so learning is developed and transferred smoothly (p. 1). By combining business and English courses, ESL students are provided with the most effective way to master English in a working environment.

There is currently limited research focusing on the unique context of instructional strategies for teaching in EAL business schools. For this reason, this paper draws on literature on student engagement and instructional strategies more broadly, literature on working with EAL students, and literature about student engagement and instructional strategies for business students. The explored literature will provide insights and practices, enabling others to learn more about student engagement and instructional strategies in this unique setting. This paper will ultimately suggest a framework to consider when choosing instructional strategies for student engagement in this sector. As an international business marketing instructor, I will connect my personal experiences to the findings in the literature with regard to instructional strategies that are optimal for student engagement. Although student engagement has been linked to the relationship between the student and numerous elements of the learning environment – such as the school community, the adults at the school, the student's peers, the instruction, and the curriculum (see Martins & Torres, 2000) – this paper will be focusing mainly on the relationship between a teacher's instructional strategies and student engagement.

Keywords: student engagement, instructional strategies, business college, ESL, education.

Situating the Research

This topic of research is very personal to me. Having been a graduate student for the past couple of years, I find myself deeply researching about a course before enrolling. I do this by asking previous students about the teacher and checking the course outline for a better understanding of the teacher's style, background, and instructional strategies for the course. I understand teaching styles are different; I also understand how important it is for me to feel engaged in a class, not only for commitment in the course but also to develop confidence in myself. Not only am I dedicated to attaining a higher grade, I am also motivated to develop pride and confidence   in   myself   and   my   abilities.

Furthermore, I connect to the experiences of international students. The decision to leave my home country of Nigeria for international study experiences has been based on improving my future and broadening my experiences. My education in learning academic English started when I left Nigeria to study an A-level computer science program in the United Kingdom in 2003. Being an international student and leaving Nigeria for the first time, I was unaware of the circumstances surrounding studying abroad. English is a second language in Nigeria, and the majority of the population have some knowledge of English already, and students learn formal English in schools (both public and private). In spite of this, my mother-tongue [Yoruba and Isoko languages], as with most people in Nigeria, was the medium of communication by default. In my experience studying Business Management in Europe, I had to deal with the realization that there was a gap between my pidgin[1] English and academic English. I struggled with expressing my views clearly in writing and needed to improve my speaking because explaining myself clearly was a challenge. So not only did I have to deal with feelings of alienation and isolation when adjusting to life, I also

had to deal with a new culture and language presented at a new educational institution. Since my first experiences, I have had other opportunities to study in English in my Bachelor and Masters in Business Administration in London. They have all been interesting experiences for me as the teaching environment entailed a wide variety of vocabulary that was different from what I was normally used to learning in Nigeria.

While English is an official language in Nigeria, there are many international students here in Canada coming from non-English speaking countries, to study and to develop skills for living and working here or back in their home countries. Most of these students are not as fortunate to have had exposure to academic English like I did. The majority are students who are not necessarily aware of how to navigate class lessons and translations. This gap makes this paper a moral obligation to investigate instructional strategies that would foster the English language learning experience of EAL students.

As a business marketing instructor, I take it upon myself to check what motivates my students at the start of my class. This enables me to guide students toward setting their own goals, understanding what resources are available for them, and above all, taking ownership of their education. Through my individual conversations with students, I want to be able to understand what their motivation is for taking the course. Something I have come to realize, being both as a teacher and a student, is that teachers' motivation is closely related to a number of variables in education, like student motivation, teaching practice, and teachers' instructional strategies, fulfilment, and well-being.

Student engagement is an increasingly important topic for those with an interest in education. As expressed by Krause and Coates (2008), engagement is "a broad phenomenon that encompasses academic as well as selected non-academic and social aspects of the student experience" (p. 493). According to Nguyen et al. (2016), there are often few changes in the ways in which students are asked to engage with school, and student engagement continues to decline as students enter middle and high schools, with 40-60% of high school students chronically disengaged (p. 3). The same decline can be said of college students; my experience teaching adults at a private school has shown that student interest in a topic or respect for an educator play a large role in their engagement. On the one hand, students' interest in topic could be helpful in my school's pursuit of creating a practicum fit for students. The college takes student lack of interest in a specific business path as a chance to redirect courses to meet the students' practicum[2] purpose. On the other hand, the lack of interest may hinder these prospective students from asking important questions in class. This also goes on to cause learning impediments for students while in class. The above argument by Nguyen et al. (2016) is also a great indicator of the role that instructional strategies play in students' engagement within a set environment, and is an indicator that the environment can shape the level of engagement.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to better understand the effects of instructional strategies on adult student engagement in an English language business school for non-native English speakers. Through this inquiry, I hope to better understand why students become engaged or disengaged in classrooms, and what relation this might have to teaching strategies. In understanding why, we (those with interest in education) can better promote adult student engagement in similar contexts,

and ensure the application of appropriate instructional methods that support such engagement. This paper will be geared toward helping business colleges, business instructors, EAL teachers, and the public, to understand how some applied instructional strategies can support students' engagement in this context (Business Colleges for speakers of English as an additional language). Another intention of this paper is to help readers better understand the relationship between student engagement and instructional strategies more broadly, and to support student engagement in learning through appropriate techniques.

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1. Nigerian Pidgin is an English-based pidgin and creole language spoken as a lingua franca across Nigeria. The language is commonly referred to as "Pidgin" or Broken.

2. A practicum is an unpaid work placement that provides GBC students with real work experience needed to secure their dream job. These practicum placements are based on the industry interest of students, and they give students personalized work experience that coaches them to be highly employable upon return to their home countries. These programs run between six months to one year depending on the business path chosen (i.e. the International Business Marketing (IBM) path, the International Business Hospitality (IBH - CO-OP) path, and the International Canada Individual Skills Training (INCIST) path, are the main options for EAL business students at GBC.

Rationale for Focusing on EAL Business Schools

Business courses for EAL students offer opportunities for international students all over the world (de Onzoño, 2011). Furthermore, some schools have been going steps further by opening greenhouses and satellite campuses all over the world. They help the students to learn, and have a direct connection with their professions by providing more study and work placement opportunities at different locations by means of satellite campuses. These schools use all the means available to cope with globalization, and to teach students internationally. Additionally, governments all over the world have become interested in creating cultures that would support enterprise. Business schools use unique and distinctive strategies to engage students by creating an atmosphere of common understanding of learning purposes. The concepts used are based both in literature and in real-world practices, which the students are preparing to embark upon.

Business schools in an EAL context are private colleges, which are independent, privately funded schools, with their own policies and goals. They are generally smaller in size and population than public colleges. Private schools' budget processes are not based on state and federal aid like public schools, so tuition and advancement are the foundation for fundraising. Teaching in a private school comes with many challenges, a generous salary, and benefits. Considering the cultural diversity of EAL students in this context, and understanding how differently they process information, the selection of instructional strategies is specifically designed to increase students' participation and ownership of their own learning. Learners are encouraged to participate in a variety of strategies developed by teachers. One common goal shared among teachers at GBC is understanding how, when, and why to use different instructional strategies, an action that stands well with the notion that student engagement in the learning process

requires a balance of learning approaches (including passive, active, and reflective learning activities) that provides students' brains with a variety of approaches necessary to promote learning (Jensen, 2005, cited in Marzano et al., 2001, p. 383).

There are variations and extensions of instructional strategies employed by teachers, and more so in the case of private colleges. These variations exist mainly because each private college adheres to its own set policies and goals. Individual teachers may base their instructional objectives on the needs of the students, school, and community. In my experience, most adult students participate in class activities irrespective of the instructional strategies adopted by teachers. Since such students can take the initiative in managing their own participation, they are able to develop a sense of preference, and can decide to actively participate. Consequently, these students tend to build a sense of interest in school, and develop some good relationships with the instructors, and fellow students. Here, choosing an instructional strategy becomes straightforward. However, this is not always the case. Owing to the context of this study, it becomes difficult to pinpoint which classroom practices will be most effective in supporting student engagement. In an EAL business school context, where students learn in a language other than their native language, there is a higher need for connection with many classroom elements; this causes the role of a teacher to shift from a conventional/traditional one to promoting an "emotionally engaging learning environment" (Doyles, et al., 2017, p. 7). Overall, there is the need to better understand instructional strategies and EAL student engagement in a business context and this paper hopes to offer insight into the relationship between student engagement and instructional strategies.

Overview of the Paper

The first section of this paper provides a background into EAL Business schools, instructional strategies, and a review of what instructional strategies are mostly adopted by colleges. The literature review delves deeper into recent research on instructional strategies adopted by business instructors, teachers, and ways of engaging students. Instructional strategies were broken down into three areas: instructional strategies and teaching engagement, instructional strategies in business, and instructional strategies in teaching EAL. The purpose of this categorization is to examine the patterns in instructional strategies. The last section of the paper proposes the prosocial classroom model as a framework for increasing student engagement in EAL business schools. The paper concludes with a series of additional recommendations on instructional strategies and EAL students' engagement in business schools.

Definitions of Terms

Instructional strategy is defined as a "tool that is used by teachers or instructors to impart information to learners effectively, as well as, encourage learners to participate" (Aguiton, 2012, p. 6).

Engagement is the "interaction between two people or more or between a person and an activity that involves emotions, thinking skills, physical skills, and psychological skills as part of the learning process" (Aguiton, 2012, p. 6).

Student engagement is explained as a "type of engagement that is communicative and occurs in an education institution; it is the interaction between students and between students and teachers to help with growth and development" (Aguiton, 2012, p. 6).

SECTION 2: Understanding the Context

International Students in a Canadian Context

Universities and colleges around the world are aiming to increase international student numbers (Kettle, 2017), and the same can be said of Canada. As noted in an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2015) report, most of the foreign students (53% of students studying outside their home countries) belong to Asia, which is a non-native English-speaking region. According to Gopal (2016), having a rise in "global competition and the need to boost Canada's economy have led the federal government to make policy changes in international education, particularly through enrolling talented international students" (p. 22).

Millar (2012, cited in Gopal, 2016) explained that Canadian universities are being urged by the federal government to double international student enrollment from 240,000 in 2011 to 450,000 by the year 2022 as part of its long-term international education strategy. As higher education expands and internationalises, "planning, policy and practice become more reliant on understanding how students think, behave, and learn" (Coates & McCormick, 2014, p. 1). Coates and McCormick (2014) believe that "quality and productivity deliberations are increasingly reliant on the active contribution of learners and teachers" (Coates & McCormick, p. 1). In having teachers accountable for their class actions, Briggs (2003) argued that "while developing content knowledge is important, academics also have a responsibility to develop teaching knowledge" (cited in Kettle, 2017). Teachers and students both become part of an educational journey; one teaching and the other learning. Although teachers can be responsible for promoting engagement, to some extent, adult students' own contributions also account for the existence of engagement.

This ensures that both parties live up to the engagement expectations, which becomes the responsibility of teachers and learners alike.

Healey (2008) explained how globalization of education has caused international students to become an increasing proportion of the student body (cited in Doyle et al., 2013, p. 6). Such change brings into view the considerations of diverse cultures and differences in learning styles of students, and generates the need for "individual teachers to be cognizant of the diverse needs of these students" (Doyle et al., 2013, p. 6). Teaching in an international business college, I have had times where a conventional Western teaching approach such as "group discussion" and "online research" caused students to question why the teacher couldn't just teach by pouring down information "banking style," and to wonder if the teacher did not understand the lessons. There is still not enough understanding of how the role of teachers has evolved to that of a "facilitator helping to guide students through subject material, encouraging the development of knowledge through self-directed learning rather than simply passively receiving information and dumping it into assessment instruments" (Doyle et al., 2013, p. 7). The principal focus in teaching has become preparing students for goal-directed problem solving, and this is especially the case in Canada. Identifying potential strategies that can help solve problems or support students through task completion, leads to learning that goes a long way. It is those little changes that eventually lead to big results.

Teaching in an English Language Business School for Non-native English Speakers

Globalization has led to more business exchanges being carried out across borders, and as a result, there is a growing demand for talented business professionals with high levels of English

proficiency. With more than 350 million people around the world speaking English as a first language, and more than 430 million speaking it as a second language, there are English speakers in most countries around the world (Wil, 2015). With the aim of meeting the need for Business English, many language schools offer Business English courses both in English speaking countries and in non-English speaking contexts. These are in addition to colleges like the one at which I teach, which exclusively offers business courses. Many of the best MBA programs are taught in English, and fluency in English often places someone in the best position to obtain the top training and credentials. Some multinational companies, like Emirates Airlines, where I was fortunate to work as an International Recruiter, require a certain degree of English proficiency from potential employees, leading to many more people seeking opportunities to learn Business English. This is creating lucrative opportunities for colleges in English-speaking countries like Canada, to attract business students who want to improve both their business skills and their English language skills.

Koris et al. (2016) noted that business school graduates see "their purpose not only to replace the existing successful managers and increase the effectiveness of organizations but also to be able to ensure humane, ethical and eco-friendly organizations promoting economic and social welfare and justice" (p. 174). Although these are the main goals of studying in Business College, the focus is shifting slightly for teachers and students who are now pursuing competencies in business studies and language proficiency. My experience teaching in a business school commonly involves the use of PowerPoint presentations during lectures, with the engagement of students obtained mostly through the use of a practical explanation of what was being taught. For instance, a lecture on developing an E-portfolio involves teaching with PowerPoint, followed by instructing on the use of personal laptops or PC rooms for developing E-portfolios with the assistance of the

instructor. Such practical activities aim at empowering students in such a way that they will develop intellectual capabilities that would help them make informed decisions, appreciate the world around them, and contribute maximally to the social and economic development of a business economy.

My experience teaching at a business college, in comparison to corporate training on performance development, shows that teaching in business schools entails a lot more prepping time for courses, and more overall energy in delivering the courses in the classroom. Over the time I have spent at the college, the required time for prepping has been corroborated by my colleagues. To ensure that students make transitions from theory to practice at their practicum companies, and in the business world, our role as business instructors becomes physically and emotionally draining. Teaching in itself can be immensely rewarding, both intellectually and emotionally, but being an effective teacher, irrespective of the context, is crucial to a teacher's role (Doyle, et al., 2013, p. 19). Some factors I hope to highlight here are how such efforts to be an effective teacher can cause other factors to develop, which, in turn, can prevent learning and engagement: the social and emotional state of the teacher and that of the students.

Another contrast in teaching at Gastown Business College, in comparison to other business colleges, includes the use of resources such as students learning to collaborate with each other, and engaging in executive coaching, rather than just lecturing, to encourage students' learning. The main goal of this form of teaching is to promote self-management and ownership of the student experience, as business learners. All these are attempts to bridge the gap between the academic classrooms on the one hand, and the more practical, hands-dirty approach of business management

and personal development – which can create a highly stressful workload for those involved, on the other. Paraphrasing Doyle et al. (2013), devoting a course to students' metacognitive knowledge development entails the use of teachers, students, and resources in an intensive manner (p. 123).

Owing to the number of activities required for delivering business courses to students, and the amount of work needed from students in implementing their newly acquired business skills, ensuring student engagement becomes harder to attain in business colleges. Maintaining learners' attention to the teacher, especially in EAL classrooms, and maintaining the teacher's energy becomes essential. Research by Wang (2015) revealed five factors that affected learners' attention to the teacher in a second language classroom:

> Self evaluation of their language knowledge, the way teachers provided language information, learners' role in language episodes, peer behavior, and learners' concern for 'face.' Specifically, learners paid more attention to teacher talk when they thought they did not understand a language feature, when they were the initiator of a question or at least involved in a language episode, when peers reacted to their mistakes, and when teachers used various techniques to explain a language point. (p. 1)

EAL in Courses for Adults: The Current Link Between EAL and Business Courses

In exploring students' and teachers' ideals of effective business English teaching, Trinder and Herles' (2013) study revealed that although learner and teacher beliefs tend to be aligned in most areas, students' judgements of effective teaching and learning practices in English business

colleges are highly dependent on personal motivation, and specific language use purposes; this difference manifests itself most clearly in teachers' and learners' divergent views on the value of grammatical accuracy and corrective feedback. Teaching International Business Marketing (IBM) in an English business college, I find the most important link between English and business courses to be the communicative approach adopted by teachers. The communicative approach posits that learning of language (in this case, English) is attained by learning the real meaning of a language as communicated by using the language in real communication. This communication approach supports students' interactions with peers and teachers in English business colleges by allowing them to communicate with constructive feedback. Such classroom communication among students/teachers is characterised by trying to produce meaningful communication throughout, and at all levels of course delivery.

A common teaching approach adopted in language schools is referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and has been shown to bridge the gap in language differences for EAL learners. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to foreign or second language teaching that emphasizes the idea that the goal of language teaching is communicative competence. CLT as described Richards (2002), "arose as a reaction to grammar-based approaches to teaching realized in teaching materials, syllabuses, and teaching methods in the 1960s" (cited in Kang, 2007, p. 28). This approach to language teaching has become increasingly common at colleges and universities today. At the college where I teach International Business Marketing (IBM), CLT is considered in both the delivery and the design of course content/curriculum for adult learners. Richards (2002) described CLT as an attempt to "operationalize the concept of communicative competence and to apply it across all levels of language program design, from theory, to syllabus

design, to teaching techniques" (cited in Kang, 2007, p. 29). Teachers' understanding and practice of CLT in EAL business colleges is paramount because it emphasizes different roles for teachers and learners, which are quite different from the traditional classrooms. Cook (1991) stated that with CLT:

> The teacher is no longer a dominant figure continuously controlling and guiding the students. Rather the teacher takes one step back and lets the students take over their activities, making up their own conversations in pairs and groups, learning language by doing. (p. 140)

However, business colleges, like the one I work at, struggle to apply these approaches across all levels of teaching – abdicating control of classrooms appears to be a struggle for many instructors. The lack of understanding of the students' backgrounds stops teachers from helping students take control of their own education. My experience teaching EAL students in Business College is one where students expect, and even prefer, a teacher-centred approach to learning rather than a learner-centered approach. This is the case because the majority of GBC learners are from Korea and Japan, and have shared how teaching is different in their home countries. Being in a new learning environment like Canada, the students feel the teacher should deliver lectures without engaging students. Students have found tasks like research, group discussions, and presentations unorthodox, and have needed reassurance as to why these methods of teaching are utilized.

Helping students take control of their learning should result in helping them find their voices through creative expression, or give them more discussion time to explore and develop their ideas. As an EAL student and instructor of EAL students in a business school, I have witnessed teachers undermining the ability of their students in classrooms, thereby creating a hostile relationship with the students. Students' level of proficiency in English is being viewed by colleagues as a knowledge/ intellectual gauge. The relationship between students and teachers in a setting like this should support/empower students educational experiences, and not otherwise. Goode et al. (2007) stated that academic success and failure are neither the property of the individual students nor of the instruction they receive, but rather lie in the relationships between students and the practices in which they and their teachers engage during their ongoing interactions (p. 3). Unlike conventional business colleges, GBC instructors focus more on grammatical competence and grammatical constructions made by students, ensuring that subject content, as well as expressions, are checked and corrected accordingly. This is highly appreciated by students, as they ask their instructors to assist them with improving their English expressions in other aspects of their lives in Canada. For instance, students approach me for the correction of their personal letter(s) to their part-time employers or their host families. Activities like class presentations or one-on-one conversations are some examples for students that teachers can facilitate and provide opportunities for their own learning. Mgqwashu (2009) shared his personal experience about how one-on-one discussions with an instructor challenged him to learn to reflect consciously later on, and to think critically about his language choices within the context of talking and writing about various literary texts (p. 301). This practice was recently adopted at the Gastown Business College. This includes a 30-minute conversation time amongst pairs, and one-on-one conversations with

instructors, as a medium for students to become more fluent, versatile, adaptable, and confident communicators in English.

A teacher can be a manager and organizer of classroom activities. "In this role, one of his/her major responsibilities is to establish situations likely to promote communication" (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p. 131), and "to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 78). From experience, teachers give students some opportunities to express their individuality by having them share their ideas and opinions on a regular basis. This helps students "to integrate the foreign language with their own personality and thus to feel more emotionally secure with it" (Littlewood 1981, p. 94). Students are actively engaged in negotiating meaning by trying to make themselves understood even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. They learn to communicate by communicating. Since the teacher's role is less dominant than in a teacher-centered method, students are more responsible managers of their own learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Larsen-Freeman also said that in communicative language teaching, the teacher is the initiator of the activities, but she/he does not always interact with the students herself/himself. Sometimes he/she is a co-communicator, but more often he/she establishes situations that prompt communication between and amongst the students. Students interact a great deal with one another. They do this in various configurations: pairs, triads, small groups, and large groups.

Having EAL students learn and understand business courses in a language other than their native dialect is not only challenging for the students, but also for the instructors who have to seek creative means of translating concepts and adjusting their instructional strategies to ensure student

understanding. In an ESL context like GBC, adult learners benefit from business courses designed and delivered with the CLT approach, helping learners to improve their knowledge on business concepts, and also helping them to improve their fluency in the English language. Building a link between EAL and business courses not only provides great rewards for students, but also for the colleges/institutions/teachers. Maintaining this link requires investment in the competency of teachers, the development of effective teaching strategies, continuous adjustment of teaching practices, and practices that foster student engagement and achievement. Savignon (2005) asserted, "The essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication to allow them to develop their communicative competence" (p. 635). This suggests that a concrete curriculum adopting a CLT approach should be aimed at developing learners for "the ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of professional and social contexts" (Savignon, 2005, cited in Koris et al., 2016).

According to Savignon (2005), "The purpose of a business school is to train managers for the practice of management as a profession and to develop new knowledge that may be relevant to improving the operation of business" (p. 5, cited in Koris et al, 2016, p. 175). Definitions like this are diluted and blurry, following the broader areas of business topics, especially in the case of the combination of business studies with EAL. Students are more interested in improving their English language skills than learning to become successful business professionals. For instance, teachers are becoming engaged in the emphasis on simplifying their teachings for easier understanding (given the dilemmas of English proficiency level variation), rather than focusing on the business concepts taught. As a business teacher, I empathise with my students, knowing their

need for extra time to understand the vocabularies of their business courses, and the academic challenges that this presents.

When incorporating EAL into courses for adults, there are other factors other than CLT to be considered for successful teaching. Although what is regarded as success in education can be different from context to context, and from student to student, one thing that is a common take away from a successful education for students and teachers is the relationships established, and student engagement in the attainment of knowledge. From experience as a teacher and a learner (graduate student), this is usually centered on a personal connection both towards the subject and the instructional strategies adopted by the teacher.

SECTION 3: Exploring the Literature between Instructional Strategies, Student

Engagement and Teaching

An Initial Exploration of 'Instructional Strategies' and 'Student Engagement'

I have used the term 'instructional strategies' interchangeably with 'teaching methods.' Kolawole and Sangoleye (2016) described teaching as a combination of interrelated activities (explaining, questioning, illustrating, instructing) designed by the teacher, using resources that are drawn from learners' experiential background to enable the learner to concretize knowledge (p. 76). Their description of teaching confirms that teaching involves the use of a myriad of methods, strategies, and techniques. An examination of existing instructional strategies employed at GBC, for instance, ranges from traditional lectures to teaching and learning using methods such as report writing, reading reflections, concept mapping, and brainstorming. Teaching is not just about content taught, it includes complex processes and the integration of a variety of instructional strategies for students' engagement. The Think-Pair-Share (TPS) is coined as the collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or answer a question on an assigned task, requiring students to 'think' individually about a topic or answer to a question, and then 'share' their ideas with fellow classmates. Such strategy is frequently utilized in GBC classes to help students improve their speaking and listening skills by allowing them listen/read task materials and apply them in communication which also further encourages participation and engagement (shown in Figure 1, SAGE 2YC - Think-Pair-Share instructions, Kraft & McConnel, 2013).

Figure 1. SAGE 2YC - Think-Pair-Share instructions.

The literature reviewed in the process of completing this paper did not provide a uniform definition of student engagement. Although several forms of engagement were noted (academic, cognitive, intellectual, institutional, emotional, behavioral, social, psychological, and many others), this paper focuses on engagement in its broadest sense. Leach (2016) provided a definition of student engagement, which is most relevant to this paper, noting that student engagement is important to further and higher education institutions, and that it is understood to be a proxy for quality teaching; consequently, governments attach a proportion of funding to student retention and completion (p. 1). Krause and Coates (2008) referred to engagement as the time, energy, and resources students devote to activities designed to enhance their learning at university (p. 494). Student engagement focuses on the extent to which students are engaging in activities that higher

education research has shown to be linked with high-quality learning outcomes. Trowler (2010) suggested that student engagement is concerned with the interaction between the time, effort, and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions, and is intended to optimise the student experience, enhance the learning outcomes, development of students, and the performance and reputation of the institution (p. 3). In its most immediate sense, student engagement refers to the contribution that students make towards their learning, as with their time, commitment, and resources (Krause & Coates, 2008, cited in Kahn, 2014, p. 1005).

Teacher effectiveness is critical for students to perform academically, and student achievement has been convincingly linked to student engagement in numerous studies (e.g., Pianta et al., 2012; Ross, 1994; Soodak & Podell, 1997; cited in Shoulders & Krei, 2015, p. 51). An appropriate and effective instructional strategy can be made available by an effective teacher; this is supported by the statement that highly effective teachers tend to use more innovative instructional practices, whereas less effective teachers do not (Anderman, Patrick, Hruda, & Linnenbrink, 2002; Rubie-Davies, 2008, cited in Shoulders & Krei, 2015, p. 52). Since students' engagement leads to students' achievement, and students' achievement leads to student's engagement, it suffices to say that teachers use of more innovative instructional strategies to increase students' achievement will in turn, lead to an increase in students' engagement.

The most crucial factor for deciding the overall quality of the education that the students receive today can be positioned around the quality of their teachers' instructional strategies. This confirms that teachers are important stakeholders in the current education system, but have been mainly on the sidelines of the reform process of education (Collins, Weber & Zambrano, 2014, p.

22). However, modern classrooms, with distractions like digital gadgets (incoming texts, alluring social media, and irrelevant web-browsing), along with passing notes, and whispering with fellow students, presents challenges that are increasingly pulling students' attention away from learning. This means that teachers can no longer take breaks, and must think about the change that is happening, and aim at improving their teaching effectiveness.

In exploring and fostering intercultural understanding for EAL students taking business courses, colleges or institutions have to work harder at designing and developing programs that meet the English proficiency levels of their EAL students. At the GBC, instructors are needed to design and adjust their instructional designs regularly and accordingly, to accommodate the English proficiency level of the students in the class. Such challenges not only cause hindrance for those students who are more advanced than others, they also create challenges for teachers who have the role of recognizing the diversity of students at a given time, and such challenges/adversity creates inconsistency for business school graduates. Interestingly, these inconsistencies were discussed by Crossman and Bordia (2008) who highlighted that there is "little agreement on the best way to design programs to develop international and cultural leadership" (p. 7). They noted the following challenges:

Firstly, curriculum developers are challenged by the cross disciplinary nature of international and cultural learning involving diverse subjects such as politics, economics, and languages for example (Rollier & Nielsen 2004, p. 65). Secondly, there is the difficulty for higher education institutions in designing programs that are sufficiently flexible and dynamic to respond

to rapidly changing organisations (Arpan 2003, p. 27; Rollier & Nielsen 2004, pp. 71-72; Crossman and Bordia 2008, p. 7).

The Connection to Self-Regulated Learning.

The role of teachers encompasses: delivering information or learning materials to students; enabling students to achieve the learning outcomes established in set curriculum; ensuring learner autonomy; and supporting students' self-regulation through strategic actions. It is important here to examine self-regulated learning (SRL) as a key to understanding the connection between student learning, engagement and instructional strategies. By SRL, I mean how students regulate their own emotions (feelings and moods), understanding, behavior, and aspects of the environment while learning. Bjork, Dunlosky, and Kornell (2013) suggested, for example, that college students can control their cognition and behavior to attain academic goals by selecting appropriate learning strategies and monitoring and evaluating their academic progress through active participation. EAL students in business colleges like GBC already come with a number of challenges (adapting to new roles, academic difficulties, language difficulties, financial problems, homesickness, lack of study skills, etc.) that hinder their motivation to learn, therefore, it becomes the role of a teacher (this includes the school authorities) to foster SRL by understanding the challenges that EAL students encounter. Indeed, it is important for teachers to develop awareness of what supports the engagement of students and this includes understanding students' interactions both inside and outside classrooms. Despite the relationship between SRL and student engagement, not all teachers in EAL business contexts recognize the vital role that self-regulation plays in every aspect of student education.

Deb Butler's (2017) integrative model of SRL provides a useful framework for understanding the process of student self-regulation. Butler (2017) defined SRL as the ability to control thoughts and actions in order to achieve personal goals, and to respond to environmental demands. It is a cyclical process, involving the stages of interpreting tasks, to planning, to enacting strategies, to monitoring and constantly adjusting those strategies in order to reach one's goal. The goal of learning is to acquire adaptive expertise. It is the capacity to continuously learn and integrate new knowledge and skills, which goes a long way in helping students to become lifelong learners. These learners learn how to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions to achieve personal goals, and to respond to environmental demands, thus making learning a lifelong process. This model also explores the relationship between what students bring to the learning context and their overall learning. SRL is indeed complex and dynamic; it is situated both individually and socially.

One key point here is that by its very nature, self-regulated learning is self-regulated, not teacher-regulated, or peer-regulated. Nonetheless, teachers can play an important role. Understanding the emotions of those involved in 'population learning' (see table 1) shows the interconnectedness between how self-regulation, or the lack of it, can affect others. There appears that little work has been done on how both learner or teacher emotions related to both engagement and instructional strategies.

One step towards addressing the gaps in the literature has been work identifying simple strategies that can create a sense of responsibility for students inside and outside classrooms. Here,

Kraft and McConnell (2013) were able to suggest the following simple strategies for teachers to incorporate into any type of course:

First, the students reflect on the question independently. Then they discuss their responses with a partner. Lastly, groups of students share their thoughts with the whole class. Practicing retrieval aids in self-observation, and promotes meaningful, conceptual, long-term learning. Adding retrieval practice to class, and promoting it following class, is straightforward and is well supported by cognitive science research (Karpicke, 2012, cited in Kraft & McConnell, 2013). Sorting, "chunking," and organizing information, are other activities that teachers can consider when helping students organize concepts and terminology. This can illustrate how to make sense from information that may otherwise seem overwhelming.

Butler's (2017) book, *Developing Self-Regulated Learners*, discussed several portraits of self-regulated learning that address some of these concerns. Self-regulated learning necessarily leads to, and involves, a learner's engagement in any sort of activity. Such activities can include those conducted inside and outside a classroom. While there is a big gain of SRL for students, its many benefits are utilized with the support of teachers. Teachers can facilitate a sense of responsibility, and help students take control of their learning by taking strategic actions to help the learners to develop their self-regulation. In quoting one of her colleagues, Nancy Perry (a professor in Human Development, Learning, and Culture), Butler (2017) stated that, "autonomy without support can be chaos" (class seminar, University of British Columbia); meaning that self-regulated learning should focus on the active participation of the students in class activities in order to achieve the academic goals, and to demonstrate the ability of the instructor to facilitate such

learning. In an EAL business context, the level of students' self-regulation can help them become more engaged and committed to their own learning. For instance, I have worked with EAL business students who were well in control of their behavior in different situations and hence productive in managing their studying and time effectively. The self-awareness and ability to take control of their learning can refer to students' engagement with the course material, as well as the extent to which activities and class sessions are linked with expected learning outcomes. As instructors/educators look to develop comprehensive understanding of the students' engagement in learning, and strategies to deliver teaching, Kahn (2014) argued that students should take centre stage in their learning, becoming more self regulated and empowered in their own learning (p. 1016).

Instructional Strategies and Student Engagement in Business Schools

There are numerous instructional strategies that are common to teaching in business schools, and have been shown to foster student engagement. Instructional strategies in teaching business can include telling stories, and can improve student engagement by giving greater context to the material, and can help students imagine and visualize how each lesson will relate to the real world. In my opinion, the most important teaching strategy in business schools should be creating opportunities for students to practice and sharpen their understanding of a subject. This encourages innovation and promotes an impactful learning experience for them in the schools and in societies. In the case of the business school where I currently teach, this teaching strategy enables students to successfully make the change or transition from the college to the work environment, and finally into larger society. Storytelling, according to Harbin and Humphrey (2010), is a "powerful and effective teaching tool, yet management professors often overlook its use" (p. 99). A good story

can illustrate management principles such as decision-making, leadership, group dynamics, power, and politics, in a way that captures students' attention and enhances their memory of the material. Pfeffer and Sutton (2006a) emphasized that storytelling is particularly appropriate for all students of business, because "when used correctly, stories and cases are powerful tools for building management knowledge" (p. 67, cited in Harbin & Humphrey, 2010, p. 99).

Research by Michael et al. (2010) on teaching methods used in different business modules in Human Resources Management (HRM) confirmed the adoption of various storytelling, mapping, and dialogue techniques. This research confirmed mapping use in business modules to place students' imagination in a business context, "by mapping it is meant emphasising at the start of the module the lecture programme and continuously reminding students where each lecture fits into the programme" (p. 779). The authors asserted that this ensured that "students do not get lost in their subjective discoveries but places their learning in the context of the learning outcomes of the module" (Michael et al., 2010, p. 779). Storytelling as a means of instruction at GBC is explored by instructors to engage students' interest in classes, especially when introducing a new business concept or illustrating something. The story method captures the real "talk" aspect of dialogue or the "what" of teaching (Brockbank & McGill, 2000, cited in Michael et al, 2010, p. 779). One thing to acknowledge from a common-sense approach is that storytelling is a powerful communication tool, but it is a lot more convincing when there is research evidence to back it up (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006b, cited in Harbin & Humphrey, 2010, 100). "Storytelling" as coined by Pfeffer and Sutton (2006), is a sound instructional method, and a communication tool that supports teaching in business schools, but having research to back this up closes the gap between its hype and practice.

Another instructional strategy in business schools incorporates introducing sessions with one business idea to be explored within teams, and every team must discuss this idea. According to Michaelsen and Sweet (2008), this strategy enhances learning, as all the students focus on a single idea and discuss it in detail. In other words, it provides a common focus for the exercises and discussions of the class in order to help the students learn from each other, and to be exposed to multiple explanations of a single idea. At GBC, using this strategy is common for promoting team-building, not only for the immediate experience of the activities performed by the team, but also for the group skills, communication, and for positive group experiences. In this context, every team is asked to submit their reports in the shape of posters, which are displayed on the walls. Later, each team gives a short verbal presentation about their reports. They are not only asked to do so, but they are also examined on the material contained in the reports that are submitted by the other teams.

Reflective learning, which is known to promote student engagement, is yet another instructional strategy that aids and reinforces learning, causing students to place higher importance on class activities. Soloman (1987) unveiled that reflection is an integrating process of combining past experiences, actions, and the theories received into a new value that is significant to oneself (p. 269). This means that reflection involves the students' ability to re-examine and reorganize established knowledge for their own understanding and meaning; and this can serve as an aid for strengthening their learning. This was also the case with Cathro et al.'s (2017) research findings on understanding skill development through reflective journals, which found that students who engaged with depth and understanding were able to articulate their skill level (p. 433).

As a business instructor and an EAL international student, reflective learning has not only been an acceptable tool to improve my thinking skills, but it has also created an opportunity for other students to improve theirs as well. The US National Survey of Student Engagement Report (2006) stated that reflective learning helps students to integrate diverse ideas and perspectives into their learning (p. 10). Figure 2, shown below, shows how students placing 'Low' or 'High' importance to reflective learning activities plays a vital role in their excelling in specific activities. It becomes important to understand how adult learners' decision making in their learning engagement deepens their understanding. Awareness of self is an excellent instrument for engagement, creating a sense of self-efficacy and capacity for lifelong learning for students.
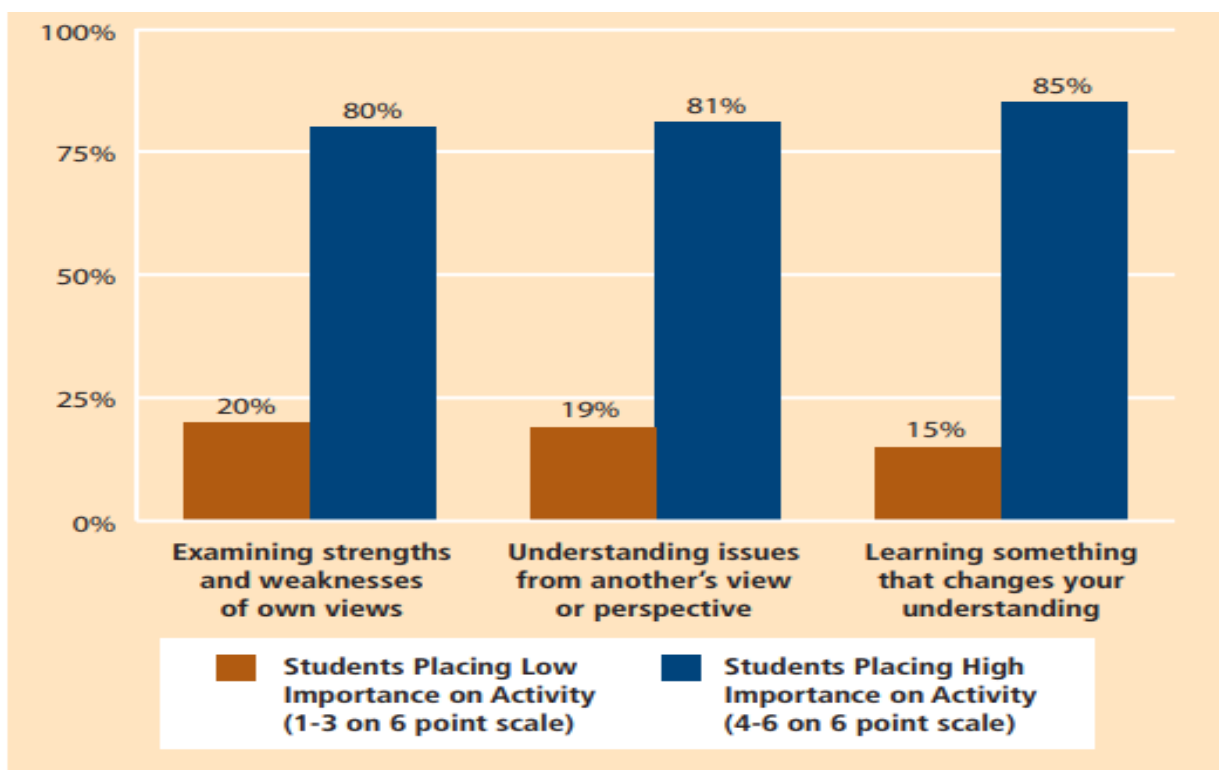

Figure 2. Degree to which New Students View Reflective Learning Activities as Important

Learning and engagement cannot take place without reflection. Promoting students' understanding of the benefits of reflection goes a long way to encouraging its acceptance. Figure 2 shows that students who placed a high value on reflective learning activities did better in examining the strengths and weaknesses of their own views, understanding issues from other's perspectives, and believed that they learned something that changed their understanding.

Another form of pedagogy that can especially support engagement in business schools is enquiry-based learning (EBL). The Higher Education Association (HEA) (2005) defined EBL as forms of learning in which learners engage with a self-determined process of enquiry. The approach is intended to foster collaborative learning and deepen engagement through inquiry, with complex, often fuzzy, problems and issues (cited in Michaels et al., 2010, p. 775). To promote learning and engagement across all levels within the Business School, the Aston Business School in the UK teaches using both EBL and the story method with strategic Human Resource Management (HRM) students. The strategic HRM course provides students with an approach to managing human resources within the context of an organisation's goals by supporting long-term business goals and outcomes with a strategic framework.

In order to explore specific strategic HRM topics in depth, for critical understanding and deep learning, EBL engages students' imagination, but must also be understood and employed properly by teachers in order for students to explore the specific business topics in depth. Investigation of EBL, and the story method used by Aston Business School with their HRM modules confirms that a positive impact was found, with students revealing that this was a deep

approach to studying that helped them to relate meaning in lessons and connect to related ideas (Michaels et al, 2010, p. 782, 787).

In other research, Tham and Tham (2014) found that effective game-based learning was a useful instructional strategy to engage business students, and has proven the effect of games in engaging students: the competitive element provided by games created a lively atmosphere in class – there was enthusiasm, attentiveness, and excitement among the students; and this friendly, lively, atmosphere and the rapport built, set the right mood for the instructor to introduce the subject at the end of the game session (p. 492).

From casual staff discussion, the teachers at GBC have indicated common traits in learners' preferences for learning that is relevant, active, instantly useful, and fun. Teachers are continuously seeking new methods for engaging learners through activities such as games and competitions. Neurologist and educator Judy Willis highlighted the learning benefits of fun. She noted that when joy, comfort, and spontaneity are replaced by homogeneity and conformity, the students' brains are disengaged from effective information processing and long-term memory storage (Willis, 2006, cited in Tham & Tham, 2014, p. 482). Renowned psychiatrist William Glasser, asserted that there is a strong connection between fun and learning. Glasser's Choice Theory (1998) identified fun as a basic need that drives human behavior. Students learn best when they enjoy what they are being taught. They have a strong need to connect and have fun (Glasser, 1998). And this has become a basic foundation for business teaching for ESL students at GBC. Students get the opportunity to play games at break times, taking the pressure from learning business concepts to learning in other ways (vocabulary building with Scrabble or Taboo games; socializing skills from

interaction within groups, etc.). Barrett (2005), in exploring problem-based learning (PBL) and hard fun, had a central argument that 'hard fun is an illuminative threshold concept for understanding learning in PBL' (2005, p 113). He draws upon the work of Papert (1996) to suggest further that: 'Learning can be fun because it is hard, challenging and stretches participants, the fun in hard fun is a fun with laughter, freedom, creativity and enjoyment' (Barrett, 2005, p. 114). Experience with GBC EAL students has shown that students return to classrooms learning feeling refreshed and active in participation after game activities.

EAL students without prior knowledge of business content, struggle to grasp teachings, and understanding this goes a long way when designing instructional strategies. More recently, Willmot, Bramhall, & Radley, (2012) showed that there is strong evidence that digital video reporting can inspire and engage students when it is incorporated into student-centred learning activities through enhanced learning experience and listening and communication skills. Using videos and role plays during lessons are some effective tools adopted by instructors at GBC to foster student engagement. Reading reflections can be designed to encourage students to complete readings before coming to class, to reflect more deeply on the content of the readings, and to make personal connection with the meaning of the material, and to develop their metacognitive skills for lifelong learning. Another new concept being introduced at the GBC EAL College is report writing; students form questions on the reports of the other teams in a further discussion session. This way of group learning helps in enhancing the learning process as students see each other's work, which enriches their own ideas.

The selection of strategies by instructors at GBC is designed to increase students' participation and ownership of their own learning in the context of student diversity in terms of

culture, experiences in formal education, and perhaps differences in information processing. Learners are encouraged to participate in a variety of strategies developed by our teachers. One common detail shared amongst teachers at GBC is that, as teachers, we must also understand how, when, and why to use different instructional strategies. This also includes accepting the notion that student engagement in learning processes requires a balance of teaching approaches, including passive, active, and reflective learning activities that provide students' brains with the variety of approaches necessary to promote learning (Jensen, 2005, cited in Tolley, Johnson, & Koszalka, 2012, p. 383). Teachers implement other instructional strategies such as obligating students to identify similarities and differences, summarize information, create pictorial representations of lesson content, and organize information in advance, which have all been shown to increase students' engagement and learning (Marzano et al 2001, p. 391).

The truth is that there is no single formula for successfully engaging students, and educational institutes that are functioning on bygone instructional strategies can never meet the rising and complicated learning needs of their students. Hagenauer, Haschel, and Volet (2015), in their discussion on moving with change, highlighted that time, along with technology, have changed in so many ways, and the isolated impact will help the students to move in a right direction toward learning (p. 399). Students find such distant or deferred rewards too far in the future to motivate them to learn, and this can, in most cases, cause disengagement from learning. In my experience, teaching in a business school requires having a close relationship with students. Most importantly, having a knowledge of the course and teaching techniques are fundamental aspects of increasing students' understanding and navigation of the business world and business courses (including banking and financial transactions, economic and corporate business topics related to

current events, and personal money management). I also find that it is important to build relationships with students through a thorough understanding of the students' fields of studies/career paths in order to determine the appropriate selection of teaching strategies. This becomes essential when teaching in business schools.

Engagement and Instructional Strategies in Teaching EAL

Teaching EAL presents its own challenges with regard to instruction and student engagement. The difference between classroom learning versus outside practice confirms that teachers have no luxury to assume that students know everything and can practice everything effectively outside of the classroom. It is important to think from the point of view of an English learning advisor[2] as well (Ovando & Combs, 2018), because of their in-depth understanding of students' abilities and struggles, as a result of having an already established relationship with students. It is important to pay attention to in-class strategies and new ideas that will help students outside of the classroom as well. The use of technology has been backed up by studies to show that motivation is a primary and major factor in enhancing the students' ability to learn an additional language. Most EAL students, myself included, find technology (such as videos, films, and digital dictionaries) most useful when translating lessons to their native language and back to English for better understanding. Including the use of technology such as laptops/tablets into teaching, and giving time to look up vocabularies during lectures, helps EAL students improve on their additional language, and helps them to remain engaged, since they are not distracted from class teaching by checking definitions of terms.

Technology for classroom teaching (as a forum for translational needs), or having it as a means of entertainment, are two of the many reasons for teachers to use technology to garner motivation and increase the interest of the students in the second language classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Fellow teachers at the GBC expressed (during a casual conversation) that ESL business students, when given class projects, preferred conducting research online. Technology for classroom learning through online research helps students to understand the business concepts on a deeper level (Ana Maria, personal communication, February 2011). The learners in GBC context engage in use of technology to complete class projects (reflective discussion, report writing, video recording scenes, E-Portfolio development, and business social media platforms like LinkedIn, etc.). The use of technology in learning in this context, is an excellent tool for helping students translate business concepts (more complex instructions) and simplifying classroom teaching. In my experience, simplifying classroom learnings through this strategy is particularly beneficial since complex instructions/business concepts taught can stifle learning by creating confusion, intimidation, and limiting students creative thinking. For teachers, is always worth considering best practices for introducing technology in classrooms since the use of technology can also be can be distracting (causing disengagement) and even foster dishonest work from students.

According to the National Survey of Student Engagement report (2006), positive group experiences have been shown to contribute to student learning, retention, and overall college success (p. 10). In English Business Colleges like GBC, students are asked to work in teams for cooperative learning, where they learn the class material in advance of the session. This strategy helps in creating a motivational atmosphere that encourages students to interact in a productive

way. In the case of GBC, such student interaction and collaboration in English not only guides

learning, but also plays an essential role in student success during their practicum placement in a

Canadian workplace.

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4. An English Language Advisor is responsible for leading in the development, implementation

and evaluation of teaching strategies, programs, projects, and services that enable greater

academic achievement, retention and support for EAL student (GBC role definition).

SECTION 4: Developing a Framework for Increasing Student Engagement in EAL

Business Schools

I have so far put forward many different instructional strategies, from the business education and second-language literature that have been shown to foster engagement and learning. The preceding sections of this paper have shown that wider integration of instructional strategies fosters student engagement and promotes students' empowerment, which, in turn, enriches the teacher/student relationship, supports students' self-regulation, causes an increment in student interaction with peers, and widens students' classroom participation. Indeed, based on literature reviewed, students are more likely to be actively engaged in their learning and to be able to regulate their learning when they are involved in their learning experience, making the teacher's role a crucial one in promoting self-regulated learning.

My experience in teaching EAL business courses shows that one of the underlying factors to consider in choosing an instructional strategy is choosing the most suitable one for the particular course to be taught; and, in so doing, choosing one for the enjoyment of the students – the choice of instructional strategies in the EAL business course then becomes highly dependant on the student profile, the course, and the teacher's expertise. This further shows that the choice of instructional strategy is not necessarily based on students' past educational backgrounds or on their native languages (mother tongue). Students at EAL Business College are there to learn something new and relevant to the business environment (irrespective of the context, Canada or their home country); therefore, instructional strategies should be based on this. Choosing and applying instructional strategies can be difficult in this context, given the diversity of the various things that students need to know. What is best for learners in their specific business programs is considered in the development of a collection of instructional materials. Leach's (2016) study of Massey
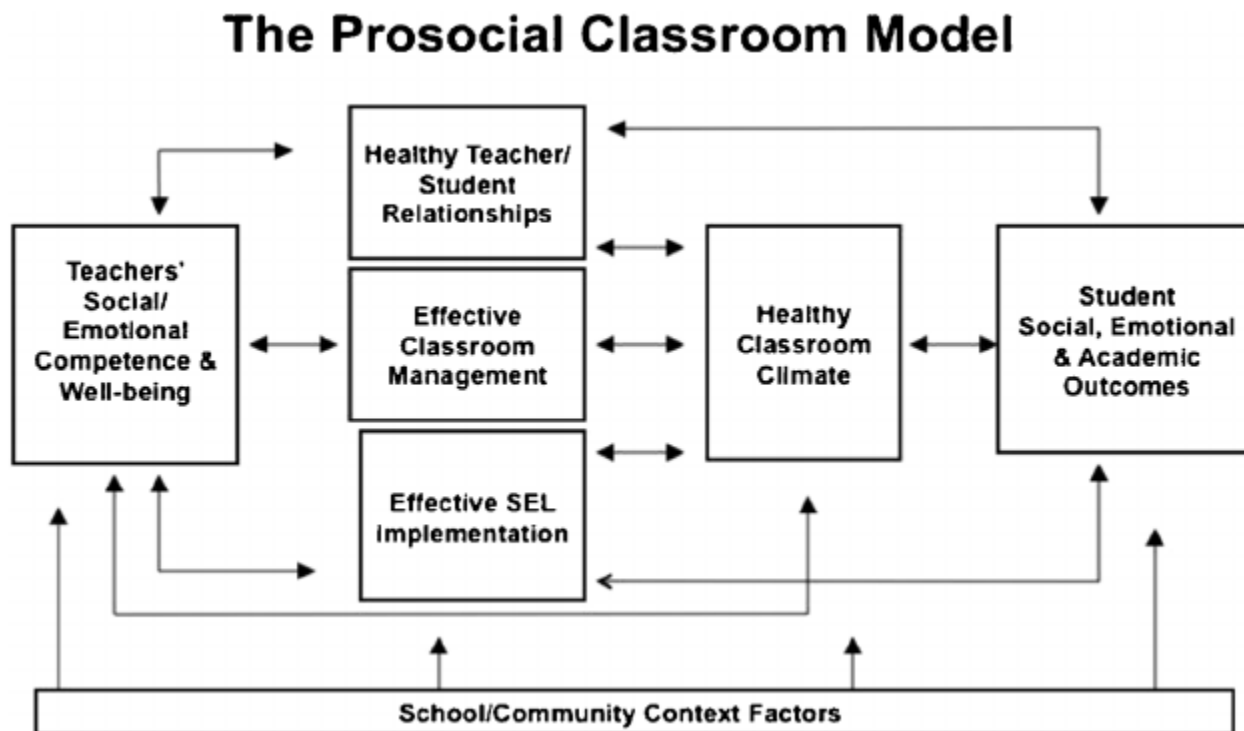
University showed there are different pedagogical approaches and instructional strategies to developing student engagement strategies (p. 41). It becomes evident that to successfully enhance student engagement, institutions must consider a variety of instructional tools. Knowing this, how can we then ensure the different instructional strategies to be adopted with respect to student engagement, meet and consider the students' backgrounds, the nature of the school (business, art, banking, medicine), and how the students' needs can best be met?

In answering the question of how to ensure that different instructional strategies are adopted to meet students' different learning backgrounds, Jennings and Greenberg (2009) developed the "Prosocial Classroom" framework (shown in Figure 3), which is used to show the relationship between teachers and students, and shows how this can contribute to the process of learning, the level of engagement, and a supportive environment. The authors' model of the prosocial classroom highlights the importance of teachers' social and emotional competence (SEC) and well-being in the development and maintenance of supportive teacher-student relationships, effective classroom management, and successful social and emotional learning. The important aspect of this model, which resonates with the content of this paper, is the maintenance of supportive teacher/student relationships, showing how understanding the connectivity of the relationships and the consideration of them in designing some courses/instructional strategies, can better engage students' learning opportunities within classrooms.

Rogers and Horrocks (2010) indicated that the "content chosen and the teaching– learning methods used in the process of promoting learning are inextricably linked" (p. 236). Trinder and Herles (2013) investigated factors that contributed to student engagement, and both studies have

highlighted the learning environment as one of the main factors. Walberg's theory of educational productivity (Walberg, 1969) holds that there are eight factors that influence students' cognitive and affective outcomes: his/her age and motivation, the quality and quantity of instruction, and the psychological climate of the home, the classroom social group, the peer group outside the classroom, and the mass media. These authors recognized that the classroom-wide environment can help teachers improve students' engagement and given that learning methods used in the process of promoting learning are inextricably linked (Rogers & Horrocks, 2010, p. 236), the wider classroom model should be considered when designing instructional strategies.

Following a sample of 495 students who responded to the College and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI) and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), Dorman (2014) explained that improvements in the classroom environment were linked to more positive course experiences, which are being taken as indicators of institutional performance (p. 44). Given the author's recommendation for attention to be paid to the classroom environment, this paper hopes to draw on the prosocial classroom layout as a visual diagram to show the interconnectedness of factors surrounding classrooms. This prosocial classroom diagram offers a clear perspective on how student engagement might be enhanced through interactions in a classroom setting:

Figure 3.

The Prosocial Classroom Model

Healthy Teacher/ Student Relationships

Teachers' Social/ Emotional Competence & Well-being

Effective Classroom Management

Healthy Classroom Climate

Student Social, Emotional & Academic Outcomes

Effective SEL Implementation

School/Community Context Factors

The prosocial classroom model demonstrates the importance of teachers' social and emotional competence (SEC), as well as their well-being in the development and maintenance of supportive teacher–student relationships, effective classroom management, and successful social and emotional learning. Each element in the model is represented as follows: teachers' and students' Social/ Emotional Competence & Wellbeing (SEC), and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) segments of the model focus on supporting more effective classroom management by understanding the dynamics of classroom struggle or other situations. Considering social and emotional dynamics, and attending to one's own emotional competence and wellbeing when designing instructional strategies, helps teachers to learn a great deal about how their emotions relate to students' achievements in classrooms. Several EAL students struggle with learning

business courses, and teachers' understanding of these challenges can be helpful when adopting instructional materials and ensuring that material that encourages positive learning is chosen.

The relationship segment (Healthy teacher/student relationships) of the model is linked and connected to all other segments of the model, which indicates that this is a core element in student engagement. Teachers fostering a healthy relationship with students can impact their effective selection and personalization of instructional tools for their students (e.g., knowledge of students' level of competencies, students' emotional states, etc.), resulting in increased student motivation and engagement. Likewise, students having a healthy relationship with their teachers creates a learning environment of trust, making active participation possible.

The healthy classroom environment is one of many factors affecting learning, and having a healthy classroom climate can provide a sense of belonging, trusting others, and, in turn, can facilitate engagement. Such an environment provides relevant content, clear learning goals and feedback, opportunities for students to build social skills, and strategies to help students succeed (Weimer, 2009). This segment of the model becomes even more relevant in the context of teaching international students who are engaged in learning business courses in a language other than their native language.

In general, Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) Prosocial Classroom appears to provide a relevant framework that may help us gain insight into the issues involved in student motivation, and may aid us in the development of teaching strategies to support student engagement. The Prosocial Classroom Model provides a layout for all components and their connections as they

relate to students. While Jennings and Greenberg (2009) intended the Prosocial classroom model to show teachers' social and emotional competence in relation to child and classroom outcomes, the model is adopted in this paper to show the interconnectedness of classrooms with other components, and to show how acknowledging such connections can target multiple factors that contribute to the betterment of student engagement. I strongly believe that in the consideration of all components, teachers may overlook important factors in the school environment that influence instructional strategy design, which can impact student understanding and their engagement in the classroom.

This classroom model, with its well-defined features, can help teachers to identify the structural characteristics that are instrumental to an effective course design, and can further aid in presenting related instructional strategies for maximizing student engagement. In business school classrooms (as with many other classrooms), there is a high importance placed on combining instructional strategies to bring about student engagement. As teachers, there is a need to recognise that the consequence of incorporating a variety of activities in course design (and the same can be the case when teaching) can hardly be overemphasized.

Another consideration when using the prosocial classroom model as a framework for increasing student engagement in EAL business courses is for teachers to consider their ability to understand their own emotions. This consideration not only provides the teacher with the ability to recognize and understand his/her emotions, but also allows the teacher to understand how their behaviour impacts student behavior, and consequently, the learning environment (demonstrating the interconnectedness of the components of the prosocial classroom model), along with the

application of any designated instructional tool. To attain this, teachers should be encouraged to go beyond their traditional role of providing instructions, and create circumstances in which students become acquainted with, and apply strategies that are appropriate for, the type of learning activities being presented. This not only promotes empowerment and ownership, increases student interaction with peers, and widens participation in higher education, but also enriches the teacher/student relationship.

In defining the context setting, Rogers and Horrocks (2010) mentioned that the institutional setting (social and academic environment) within which the learning programme is located, is all part of the students' learning experience, and teachers need to assess such features and take them into account when planning the teaching/learning experiences (p. 238). Since ultimately tailoring the learning experience to different types of learners is incredibly important, and planning of learning experiences requires choosing appropriate instructional methods, there is a need to consider the classroom context while designing instructional methods.

Conclusions

In teaching international business marketing to EAL students, I have come to recognize the struggles that students have with understanding certain phrases when defining business terms in English, adapting to different teaching instructions, and the struggles faced by teachers unaware of various instructional strategies suitable for EAL business students. By understanding instructional strategies that drive student engagement, and the importance of the classroom environment, along with student self-regulation, we can support business college teachers to

design instructional strategies to enhance student engagement. Overall, we need to take risks, adapt to modern times, and be creative.

Doyle et al. (2013) explained that:

> To engage with millennial generations, educators must move from the traditional model of education, which was predicated on the notion that teachers' role was to provide facts and information to students. With rote learning rendered a relic of a bygone age by the pervasiveness of information technology, the role of an educator has evolved. (p. 7)

The teacher's role has evolved into one where she needs to become aware of the many factors that need to be considered when adopting an instructional strategy. This paper has examined various different teaching methods that can be considered for fostering student engagement, and has argued that adopting a method should be connected with the business course being taught, the uniqueness of the students, the classroom environment, and to fostering self-regulation of the students for lifelong learning. Business college teachers must identify classroom characteristics that can hinder and facilitate students' opportunities to engage. EAL business students study at different paces and at different levels of engagement; these differences must be sorted by teachers through continuous interactions with students in their learning context.

In conclusion, according to Aguiton (2012), student engagement is a type of engagement that is communicative and occurs in an educational institution; it is the interaction between students, and between students and teachers, that helps with growth and development. This

interaction can be regarded not only as the connection among those involved in driving student engagement, but also as those responsible for the implementation of the most appropriate instructional strategies. The adopted instructional strategies of a teacher should reflect upon the characteristics of the students, and of the context (school and authorities). Using the prosocial model, this relationship, and the associated connections, can be better understood as the driving force for students, and can serve as the relationship between instructional strategies and student engagement Simply put, the prosocial model should serve as a scaffold when discussing student engagement; relationships may not be the same in every context, given that every context will exemplify different characteristics of the components in the prosocial model. This paper has shown that engaging students in EAL business schools is a challenge, and as presented in the literature, using strategies of differentiated instruction to increase student academic achievement is highly essential, and can differ from one context to another; hence there is a need for a framework that connects all classroom elements.

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