Paradigm Shifts, Multilingualism and Linguistic Risk-Taking

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Setting the scene…
(Recent) conceptual frameworks

- Interdependence (Cummins 1979, 1981, 2007, 2017)
- Multi-competence (Cook 1991, 1992, 2009, 2013)
- Plurilingualism (Coste, Moore, & Zarate 1997, 2009; Coste & Simon 2009; Canagarajah 2007, 2009; Dagenais & Moore 2008; Marshall & Moore 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013)
- Superdiversity (Blommaert, J. and Rampton, 2011, Vertovec 2007; a.o.).
- Translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; García et al. 2017; Williams, 1994; 2002)
- Dominant Language Constelations (Aronin 2006, 2016)
- Multilingualism & Social Justice (Ortega, 2016, 2017)

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Impact?

Paradigm Shifts: Multiliterate and Plurilingual Agencies

Move <u>away</u> from:

- native-speaking (monolingual) norms as targets or values for language teaching and learning
- notions of equal proficiency in all languages in bi/multilingual contexts
- strict separation of languages in language teaching, learning and use
- focusing only on 'big' standardized, highly prestigious languages and varieties and ignoring 'small' vernacular languages and varieties
- discouraging (migrant) children from using their home/minority languages at school and in society in general

Welcome / Bienvenue

Ottawa

Shaping our future together
Ensemble, formons notre avenir

Population 900,000
ottawa.ca

STOP
ARRÊT

The University of Ottawa Context: Official Bilingualism

Opportunities

- World's largest bilingual (English-French) university.
- Many courses and programs offered in English or French or in both languages.
- World's first/largest French immersion undergraduate program.
- Bilingual campus services.

and

Bilingual University **does NOT mean that** everybody is bilingual

Challenges

- Easy to remain within one's linguistic comfort zone
- Easy to default to the preferred language (usually the stronger language)
- Language rights/expectations: request information, documents, and services in the official language of your choice.

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Innate challenges of language learning: taking linguistic risks

An authentic, everyday communication task that language learners may shy away from due to various "risk factors" involved:
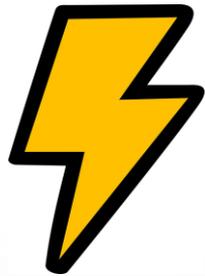
- being misunderstood
- misunderstanding others
- making errors
- changing existing language habits (socialization)
- taking on a different identity
- being judged

Innate challenges of language learning: taking linguistic risks

An authentic, everyday communication task that learners may shy away from due to various "risks" involved:

- –being misunderstood
- –misunderstanding others
- –making errors
- –changing existing language habits (socialization)
- –taking on a different identity
- –being judged

Vous n'avez pas fait le bon accord avec le sujet de la phrase!!!!

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Some Theoretical Constructs

- **Language ego**, lowering inhibitions (Guiora et al., 1972; 1980). Alcohol and Diazepam Studies, Defense Language Institute (US Defense Department).
- **Motivation** (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner, 1985, 2010; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Noels et al. 2000; Dörnyei 2005, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2016; among others).
- **Willingness to Communicate** (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, et Noels (1998; 2011): "state of readiness to engage in the L2, the culmination of processes that prepare the learner to initiate L2 communication with a specific person at a specific time".
- **Language Anxiety** (Gkonou, Daubney, Dewaele, 2017; Horwitz, 1986, 2017; Dewaele, 2017; MacIntyre, 2017; Scovel, 1987, among many others): most widely studied emotion in second language acquisition; approximately four decades of research (MacIntyre, 2017).
- **Linguistic Risk-Taking** (Beebe, 1983; Cervantes, 2013; Dehbozorgi, 2012; Dewaele, 2012)

Drawing inspiration from the above literature…
→ Linguistic Risk-Taking
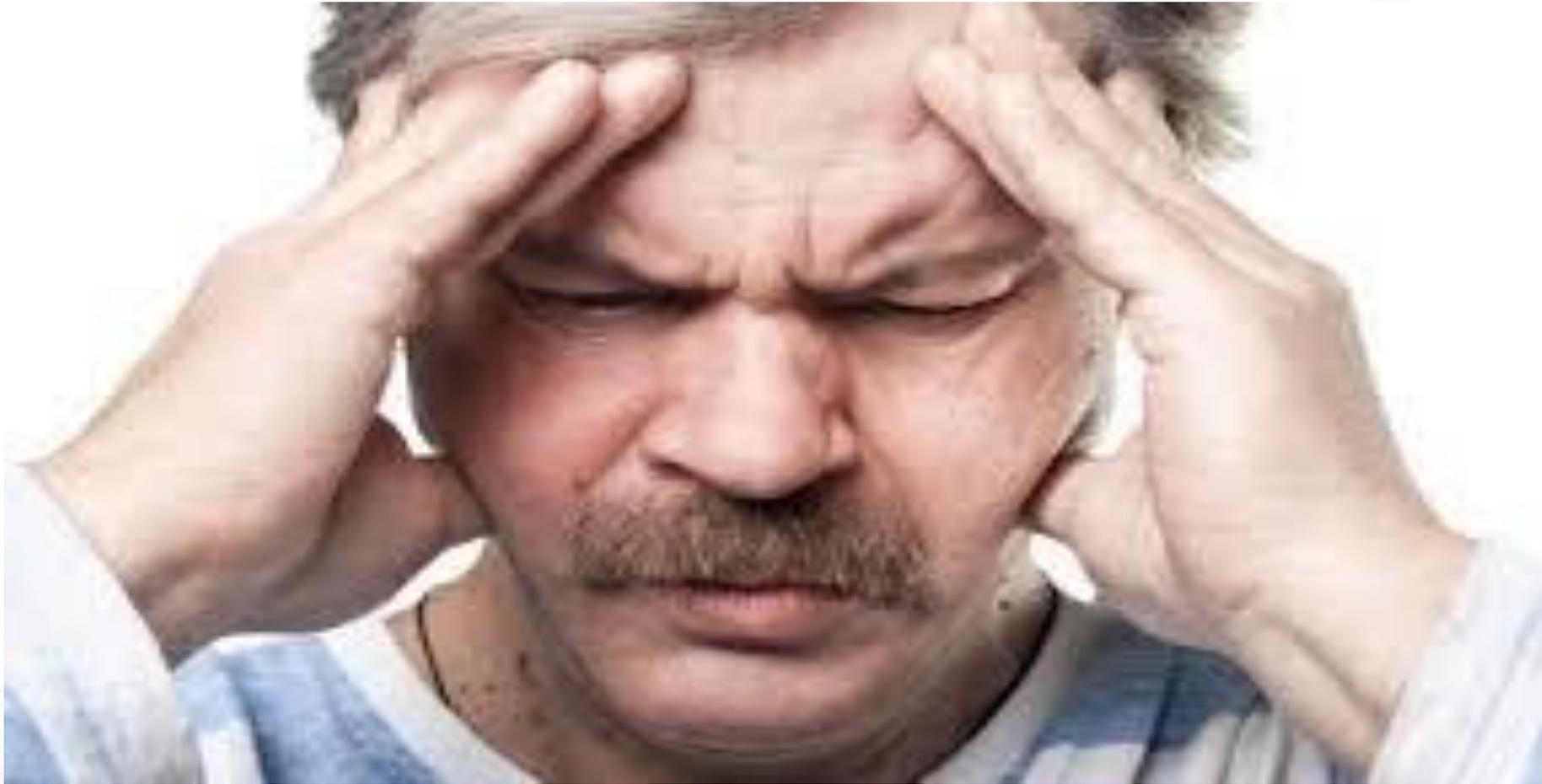
Linguistic Risk-Taking Passport

- Distributed in selected OLBI language classes (French and English version available).
- Students "check off" linguistic risks that are relevant to them.
- Students can pick and choose their risks.
- After a certain number of risks have been taken, the passport may be submitted to enter a draw for prizes.

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LINGUISTIC RISK-TAKING PRISE DE RISQUES LINGUISTIQUES

PASSPORT
PASSEPORT

Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute
Institut des langues officielles et du bilinguisme

TM

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Personal Details Page

- Students write their name and uOttawa email address on the passport details page (in order to enter a draw for prizes).

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND BILINGUALISM INSTITUTE (OLBI)

First name

....

Last name

....

uOttawa email address

....

Submit this passport to enter a draw for prizes!
Submission period: **30 OCT 2017** until **17 NOV 2017**
(For details see Rules of Engagement on p. 5)

P<UOTTAWA<<OLBI<<LING-RISK<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<
17CAN3010456489162VD76414730464<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<12

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Rationale and Rules of engagement

Explanations of the rationale behind the Initiative and the rules for participation:

- What is a linguistic risk?
- Why is it important to take risks?
- How do I participate in the Initiative?
- When can I submit my passport to the draw for prizes?

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WHY LINGUISTIC RISK-TAKING?

A linguistic risk is an authentic, every-day communication task that some language learners may shy away from and may need special encouragement to engage in. Research has shown that some learners hesitate to take risks and do not always benefit from

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

It's simple and it's fun:

- Take as many risks as possible from the list included in this passport.
- Give yourself a check mark for each risk taken:
  - ◊ **Most risks can be repeated up to three times (see number of checkboxes by each risk);**
  - ◊ **Risks can be taken in any order you like;**
  - ◊ **You do not need to undertake all risks listed;**
  - ◊ **Each time you undertake a risk, indicate whether you thought the level of risk was High, Medium, or Low by adding the corresponding letter (H, M, or L) beside the checkbox.**
- Feel free to use the blank passport pages provided at the back to propose additional risks.
- Tally the risks you have taken. After completing at least 20 risks (including repeated ones), submit the passport to your language teacher or to the OLBI reception desk (MHN 130) to enter a draw for prizes.
- Submissions for the draw will be accepted from October 30, 2017 until November 17, 2017.
- If you win a prize, you will receive it in your language class or you will be notified by email.

Examples of risks

- Over 70 risks included.
- Most risks can be repeated up to three times (= about 200 opportunities for authentic practice).
- Students rate each risk as High (**H**), Medium (**M**), or Low (**L**).

8. Je me suis inscrit•e à un atelier de conversation en français au Centre de ressources Julien-Couture.

☑ **M**
☑ **L**
☐ .....

9. J'ai écrit un CV ou une lettre de motivation en français.

☑ **H**
☐ .....
☐ .....

10. Je me suis inscrit•e au cours FLS3500 pour obtenir un certificat de compétence en français.

☐ .....

11. J'ai communiqué avec un agent d'accueil/un membre du personnel sur le campus en français.

☑ **H**
☑ **H**
☑ **M**

12. J'ai écouté 5 chansons d'artistes Canadiens en français.

☐ .....
☐ .....
☐ .....

Commentaires: ....

....

....

8

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Draw for Prizes

- After completing a certain required number of risks (not all risks), learners are able to submit their passports to a lottery to a draw for prizes, including:
  - gift cards
  - event tickets
  - promotional merchandise

- Monetary and in kind donations are sought by LingRisk team members from the university, community partners, and private donors.

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YOUR PROGRESS

Congratulations! You can now tally the number of risks you have taken and participate in a draw for prizes.

Reminder about the submission rules:
*A minimum of **20 risks** (including repeated ones) must be completed before submitting the passport to be entered in the draw for prizes. The submission period for the draw is from **October 30, 2017** until **November 17, 2017**. You may submit the passport to your language teacher or to the OLBI reception desk (MHN 130) within this period.*

I have taken a total of _____ linguistic risks!

I am enrolled in (course code): ESL _____

Term: __ Fall __ Winter

Year: _____

Propose your own risks, provide feedback, stay connected

- Students have the opportunity undertake risks that are not listed in the passport.
- They can also share new risks with others via email or social media.

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PROPOSE YOUR OWN RISKS

Use these blank pages to describe additional risks that you may have undertaken (optional). Please rate each risk as High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L).

1) I called a government toll-free number to request a service and was accidentally transferred to an agent who spoke in English. Rather than hanging up and redialling, or requesting to be transferred to a French-speaking agent, I completed the call. I felt empowered and proud.

2) I love this activity. I used the FLS passport but since I am also taking a Korean language class, I will use some of the risks for that as well.

3) I do not like this activity. It is too childish. It's like we are babies.

Self-Assessment

- The passport contains a self-assessment page where participants rate their learning experience, progress and perceived usefulness of the passport.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

After having completed the passport…

1. I am more comfortable speaking English with strangers.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

2. I am more comfortable speaking English with people I know.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

3. Overall, I am more comfortable taking risks in English.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

4. I am more likely to communicate in English outside of the classroom.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

5. I am inspired to use English more often.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

6. My confidence in English has improved.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

7. This passport has helped me discover new opportunities for practising English.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

8. Overall, this experience had a positive impact on my English skills.
Strongly Disagree - Disagree - Neutral - Agree - Strongly Agree

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Motivational Quotes & Slogans

- At the end of the passport the learners are offered some motivational quotes and slogans to help build their profile of independent, competent and confident second language users.

LINGUISTIC RISK-TAKER PROFILE

I am eager to use my second official language everywhere on campus and beyond!

I am not a native speaker of this language and I am okay with that!

Yes, I may have an accent but that's what makes me unique!

I am not afraid of making errors; they are natural and normal in language use!

I consider myself bilingual in French and English (even if one of my two official languages may be stronger than the other one).

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Research

We collect the following data:

- Number of risks taken per participant.
- Type (category) of risks chosen.
- Level of proficiency.
- Frequency, risk repetition, time span of activities.
- Proposed additional risks by participants.
- Learner self-assessment and perceived usefulness of the tool.

We use the research data as follows:

- Continuous improvement of the initiative.
- Expansion and adaptation of the initiative to new contexts.

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Technology

- The printed passport booklet has certain limitations:
    - –limited reach and scope
    - –printing costs
    - –students may misplace or lose passports

    → paper-based tools may have a low level of impact in today's world of Digital Natives.

    → A *Linguistic Risk-Taking App*^{TM} (Android & iOS) is currently being developed. Beta version is currently being tested.

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How is linguistic risk-taking related to paradigm shifts? multilingualism? plurilingual agencies?

- Innovation, autonomy, mitigates the 'two solitudes' effect, attempt to integrate the two languages and culture on campus, learner agency
- Overwhelmingly positive response (university, federal government, school boards).
- Struck a cord with multiple stakeholders.

However:

- Strict(?) separation of languages
- Values/valorizes official languages (while leaving other languages in the margins)
- Promotes bilingualism, not necessarily multilingualism

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# How is linguistic risk-taking related to paradigm shifts? multilingualism? plurilingual agencies?

- Geared towards English speakers learning French and French speakers learning English (what about international students, who may want to learn both languages?)

- Discourse of Canadian Linguistic Duality (paradoxical, considering the actual linguistic portrait of the country).

- Official Languages of Bilingualism Institute (multilingual professors and staff)

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A Larger Picture

International Partnerships

Government Institutions

NGOs, Community Organizations

K-12 (schools, boards, provinces)

Linguistic Risk-Taking Data Hub

Businesses

Museums, Cultural Institutions

Other Universities

Private Language Schools
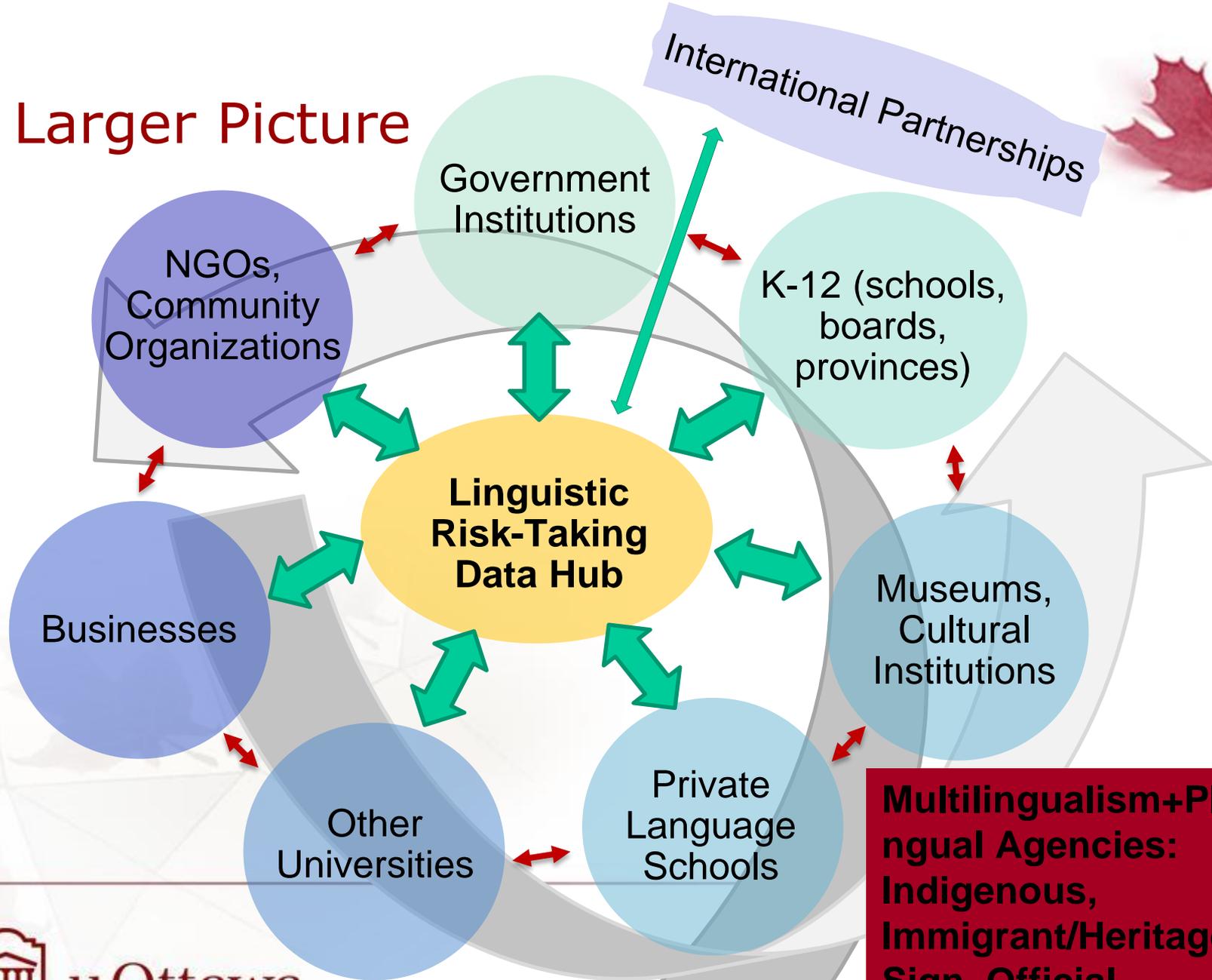
Multilingualism+Plurilingual Agencies: Indigenous, Immigrant/Heritage, Sign, Official Languages

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Conclusion: Linguistic Risk-Taking and a comprehensive approach

- Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

- ANNEX to the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages

- Linguistic risk-taking is an important piece of the puzzle of a comprehensive approach; it fosters:
  - language awareness
  - positive attitudes to linguistic diversity
  - motivation to study languages
  - valuing and supporting the entire linguistic repertoire or a learner
  - a wider range of languages in addition to 'big' languages.

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The LingRisk Team: Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI)

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Vielen Dank!
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Digital Samples?
Scan QR code below:

ccerbal.uOttawa.ca/linguistic-risk/

lingrisk@uOttawa.ca

OLBI's reception desk: MHN 130

f Risque linguistique uOttawa Linguistic Risk

@ILOB_OLBI

LingRisk@uOttawa.ca

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