

**Call for Contributions**  
**Special Issue of the Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Fall 2020**

**The Canadian Language Benchmarks for English and French Language  
Proficiency: Application, Implications, and Impact**

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Language teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been characterized not only by innovation in teaching practices but also by the use of the broader *standards* (also labeled as frameworks or benchmarks) as a basis for the development of language curricula and course syllabi, the design of teaching guidelines, the elaboration of teaching materials, and the assessment of language proficiency. Also, the use of *standards* offers a ‘metalanguage’ facilitating the discussion of second language teaching and learning processes among the stakeholders. However, for a host of social, cultural, educational, and political reasons, rather than adhering to a single framework, different parts of the world facing high demand for foreign/second language training have developed different national frameworks of reference.

One such national framework, developed in Canada, is the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)/ Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC). Since the creation of the CLB/NCLC in 2000, and following their subsequent updates and validation in 2011, and 2012, a range of teaching tools, materials and on-line resources have been developed to support the practical application of the benchmarks by the practitioners for teaching and assessment of English and French in Canada. Nevertheless, the CLB/NCLC remain widely unknown to the majority of practitioners and policy-makers outside the immigration sector, and, despite the growing need, their use is not prevalent within and across different educational contexts and levels of the Canadian system. There is a need for a deeper understanding of the Canadian national frameworks among applied linguists, educators, and all stakeholders in the field of language teaching and assessment.

In this special issue, we will examine the conceptual and practical issues in the use of the CLB/NCLC, and their significance for teaching and assessment at different levels and in various educational, workplace, professional, and immigration/settlement contexts. We invite data-based (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods) research studies, or theoretical articles (in English or French) with clear implications for practice. The topics include, but not limited to, the following:

- The adaptability of the CLB and NCLC to Grade 1-12 ESL or FSL education, or to French immersion programs
- The use of CLB/NCLC for language training or assessment in higher education contexts
- Issues and challenges in linking curricula and test results to CLB/NCLC
- Government-mandated assessment provisions (e.g., for immigration and certification purposes) based on the Canadian benchmarks

- The implications of CLB/NCLC for high-stakes language test development and curriculum design in Canada
- The appropriateness of the benchmarks' proficiency levels to the learners' needs in different contexts
- Teacher participation in the design and implementation of courses based on benchmark levels
- Comparative studies involving the suitability of the benchmarks vs. other standards (e.g., CEFR, ACTFL, etc.) for the existing citizens and newcomers in bilingual Canada.

In addition to full-length articles, we welcome shorter (2500-3000 word) classroom accounts (practice-based articles) from practitioners in the field.

As a preliminary step, authors are invited to send a 250-word abstract of their proposed contribution to [Shahrzad.saif@lli.ulaval.ca](mailto:Shahrzad.saif@lli.ulaval.ca) and to [Samira.elatia@ualberta.ca](mailto:Samira.elatia@ualberta.ca) no later than **August 1, 2019**. This proposal will be assessed for its suitability to the special issue. The authors will be notified of the appropriateness of their proposal by August 31, 2019.

Authors may then submit a full article (including an abstract in English and French) via the CJAL website where it will undergo the usual review process: (1) in-house review and (2) anonymous peer-review if not declined in-house.

The deadline for full-length and in-the-classroom (practice-based) articles is November 30, 2019.

### ➤ **Proposed timeline**

-Call for papers	June 2019
-Deadline for abstract submission	August 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2019
-Notice of abstract acceptance	August 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2019
-Full article submission deadline	November 30, 2019
-Publication	Fall 2020