



Centre for Research  
in Education



**CERLL**

Center for Educational Research  
on Languages and Literacies



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
OISE | ONTARIO INSTITUTE  
FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

**In collaboration with:**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WATERLOO**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**  
MISSISSAUGA



## **Two-day Symposium Rethinking Languages and Literacies Education**

The Centre for Research in Education at Niagara College and the Center for Educational Research in Languages and Literacies (CERLL) at OISE - University of Toronto

In collaboration with:

The Department of Languages and Cultures at Western University;  
The Faculty of Education at Western University;  
The Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics and the Faculty of;  
Education at York University;  
The Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies of the University of Waterloo;  
The Language Department of the University of Toronto Mississauga

are pleased to announce the sixth **Symposium of Southern Ontario Universities (SSOU)**.  
The Symposium will be held in a hybrid mode at Niagara College's DJP Campus in  
**Niagara-on-the-Lake and online**

**on October 24-25, 2025**

*Registration will be free for all participants and presenters.*

**EXTENDED SUBMISSION DEADLINE: July, 15<sup>th</sup>**

**ALSO NEW: [Click here](#) to see our 2025 Symposium video!**



## **Theme of the 2025 Symposium:**

### **From Silos to Solidarity: Rethinking Languages and Literacies in Education through collaboration and care**

In a world that has increasingly become marked by tensions and divisions, breaking down silos and overcoming isolation is more important now than ever. Whether our work focuses on bridging boundaries, dismantling disciplinary silos, or fostering reciprocal relationships with others, a sense of belonging to the human community remains at the very core of all these endeavours, bringing us together in solidarity and resistance. The 6th Symposium of the Southern Ontario Universities (SSOU) invites scholars, students, and practitioners to share and critically reflect on the role and impact of collaboration and care within the field of languages and literacies in Education.

The Symposium of the Southern Ontario Universities will be in its sixth edition this year and is the result of ongoing collaborative efforts between different universities and post-secondary institutions in the region. The symposium seeks to continue building community not only between participating institutions but, more importantly, among students, faculty, practitioners and all those interested in language and literacies education. By creating a supportive environment for all participants, the symposium challenges traditional academic hierarchies, encouraging meaningful connections and learning from one another. Following traditions of previous years, the symposium will feature two keynote speakers, one from a local and one from an international context respectively, to further strengthen discussion and dialogue not only within Ontario but also beyond. As a new addition to this year's symposium, there will be an initiative to specifically support first-time attendees through mentoring and pre-symposium workshops, aiming to demystify what it means to attend or present at an academic symposium.

We are excited to announce that the sixth Symposium of the Southern Ontario Universities will take place **October 24-25, 2025 at Niagara College's DJP Campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake**, and we invite you to submit contributions to one of the three different strands (presentations, roundtable discussion, poster presentations) in which participants will discuss new research avenues, including:

- bi-/multi-/trans-/plurilingualism in language education
- multiliteracies and multimodalities
- teachers' and students' agency
- mobility, migration and inclusion
- impact of language policies
- innovation in language teaching methodologies and assessment
- artificial intelligence in language education
- language acquisition and language use
- technology-assisted language learning and teaching
- online learning and distance education
- antiracism, decolonization and social justice in language education
- newcomer language education
- indigenous and heritage language education

The Symposium offers a valuable opportunity for scholars, including faculty members, graduate students, activists and practitioners, engaged in languages and literacies education to connect,

share insights, and discuss their research. It serves as a platform to establish and expand opportunities for academic networking for future collaborations.

Now in its sixth edition, the Symposium is hosted by Niagara College's Centre for Research in Education and is jointly organized by the Center for Educational Research on Languages and Literacies (CERLL) of OISE-University of Toronto and Niagara College. The University of Toronto at Mississauga, Western University, York University, the University of Waterloo and Glendon College are also major collaborators in this initiative. The Symposium provides a unique opportunity to further strengthen collaboration and cultivate community both within and across institutional boundaries. The hybrid format will once again allow for broader participation, welcoming both national and international audiences, as was successfully achieved in previous editions. With a diverse program featuring plenary sessions, presentations, roundtable discussions, poster sessions, and social events, the Symposium offers participants from Ontario and beyond an excellent opportunity to engage with the wider academic community in language and literacies education.

## Symposium Structure

The two-day event will consist of two plenary sessions as well as interactive thematic sessions that aim to engage multiple perspectives. **The two plenary sessions will be addressed by:**



### **Sarah Mercer**

Professor  
Foreign Language Teaching  
University of Graz

**Title of plenary:** Language Education is Interdisciplinary: Exploring the Example of the Psychology of Language Learning and Teaching.



### **Geoff Lawrence**

Associate Professor  
Department of Languages, Literatures  
and Linguistics at York University

**Title of plenary:** Reaffirming 'Heart' in Language Education: Critical Reflections on Affect, Agency and Community in Digital Teaching.

**Please find more information about the presenters and plenaries [here](#).**

The Symposium will be comprised of three strands:

- **Strand 1: Presentations and Plenary Sessions**

This strand includes the two Plenary sessions and the presentation sessions. Three presentation sessions will be organized which will feature individual presentations related to the symposium theme. Each presentation will be limited to 20 minutes (15 minutes presentation + 5 minutes discussion). According to the number of submissions that are received, there may be parallel sessions. While presentations about work-in-progress may be considered for acceptance, please note that presentations about completed research will be prioritized in this strand.

- **Strand 2: Roundtable discussions**

Recognizing that presenters might want to share their work at different stages of the research process (e.g., conceptualization, pre or mid-data collection, analysis), we encourage all presenters who have not yet completed their research project to apply for this new strand of the symposium. The roundtable discussion will feature multiple presenters. Each presenter will have 5 minutes to present, followed by 10 minutes of discussion at their table. Roundtable discussions are ideal for presenters who wish to receive suggestions and feedback from the audience for their on-going work.

- **Strand 3: Poster sessions**

Poster sessions will also be featuring at the symposium as this will encourage exchange and networking. Participants will be able to put up poster displays describing their work and projects and distribute relevant information during the event. Posters can outline projects that are either completed or still in-progress. Poster sessions will take place during the break (30 minutes) and presentation length will vary according to presenters' and audience's own pace. The poster sessions will allow close and personalized contact between the presenters and the audience.

The Symposium is now accepting proposals for paper, roundtable and poster presentations. Please submit your abstract through [this abstract submission form](#) **by July 15th, 2025 (extended deadline).** You are also welcomed to build on a previous presentation delivered elsewhere.

### Instructions for submitting the abstract:

1. Click on the submission link provided.
2. Create an account using any email address or sign up quickly using your Google or LinkedIn account via Single Sign-On (SSO).
3. Follow the on-screen instructions to enter and submit your abstract for a presentation, roundtable discussion or a poster.

If you have any questions or encounter any issues, please contact [asadz.iqbal@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:asadz.iqbal@mail.utoronto.ca) for assistance.

Sixth Symposium of Southern Ontario Universities  
2025

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## Tentative Symposium Timeline

*Time	Friday October 24, 2025	Saturday, October 25, 2025
9:00-9:30 am	Joining, registration & coffee	
9:30-9:45	Welcome and Symposium Opening	Joining & coffee
9:45-11:00	<b>Plenary</b>	<b>Plenary</b>
11:00-11:30	Coffee break and poster session	Coffee break and poster session
11:30-13:00	<b>Presentation Session 1A -1B</b>	<b>Presentation Session 3A - 3B Roundtable Discussions</b>
13:00-14:00	Lunch break and poster session	<b>Closing panel discussion</b> Followed by informal sharing and reflecting over food and drinks
14:00-15:30	<b>Presentation Session 2 A- 2B</b>	

\*Times are tentative and subject to change.

## Important dates

Deadline for submission of abstracts:	<b>July 15th, 2025 (extended deadline)</b>
Notification and confirmation of acceptance:	August 2025
Registration closes (presenters):	early September 2025
Registration closes (general):	late September 2025
Conference Dates:	24-25 October, 2025

## Scientific Committee

The scientific committee of the symposium consists of faculty members from the participant universities.

Ana García-Allén (Western University)  
Le Chen (Western University)  
Giacomo Folinazzo (Niagara College)  
Hang-Sun Kim (University of Toronto)  
Ibtissem Knouzi (York University)  
Geoff Lawrence (York University)  
Faith Marcel (Niagara College)  
Ashley Moore (OISE)  
Enrica Piccardo (OISE)  
Gail Prasad (York University)  
Barbara Schmenk (University of Waterloo)  
Shelley K. Taylor (Western University)  
Shawna-Kaye Tucker (OISE)  
Marlon Valencia (Glendon College)  
Zhaozhe Wang (UTM)

## Organizing Committee

The organizing committee of the symposium consists of faculty members and graduate students from the participant universities.

Catherine Bayless (OISE)  
Giacomo Folinazzo (Niagara College)  
Umme Kulsum (OISE)  
Lisa Lackner (OISE)  
Faith Marcel (Niagara College)  
Asad Iqbal (OISE)  
Enrica Piccardo (OISE)

## Submission process

Abstract will be submitted online through [this abstract submission](#) form and blindly peer-reviewed.

Title: 15 words

Abstracts: 300 words (for posters, roundtable discussions and presentations)

Criteria (please also see the abstract selection criteria on the next page):

- Relevance to the topic of the symposium
- Effectively grounded in relevant research, theory, practice and/or policy
- Comprehensive design and analysis i.e., research question, sources, methodology and analysis for an empirical study; currency of supporting literature for a conceptual piece or systematic literature review. (If research is not completed yet, please indicate your current thoughts and ideas regarding each of the points listed above.)
- Quality of the proposal (as indication of a coherent, well-prepared presentation)

In case the link to the submission form is not working, please copy and paste this link here:

<https://auth.oxfordabstracts.com/?redirect=/stages/78659/submitter>

## Languages of the Symposium

Official languages of the symposium: English and French.

Linguistic diversity is encouraged in all strands. If you are planning to present in another language than English and French, we kindly ask you to prepare English/French slides. We will indicate the language you decide to present in our program once we finalize it. In case you have questions regarding the symposium, please reach out to Lisa Lackner (University of Toronto) at [lisa.lackner@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:lisa.lackner@mail.utoronto.ca)

# Symposium Abstract Selection Criteria

Criteria	Exemplary	Acceptable	Needs Improvement
<b>Clarity</b> The abstract is clear, concise, statement of purpose and aims is justified			
<b>Rationale or background</b> The study is significant (the study addresses an important problem) and grounded in relevant research, theory, practice or policy			
<b>Methodology: Design &amp; sample (for empirical studies)</b> The design and/or analysis is comprehensive (i.e., research question, sources, methodology and analysis for an empirical study; currency of supporting literature for a conceptual piece or systematic literature review)			
<b>Results: (for empirical studies)</b> Clearly stated in relationship to stated research question(s), hypothesis(es), and/or purpose(s)			
<b>Depth and breadth (for conceptual/theoretical studies)</b> State-of-the-art review paper, literature review, discussion of concepts, reaction/response papers			
<b>Relevance and Originality:</b> Relevance to current issues in research, education, practice, policy, theory, methodology, originality of results, innovativeness of approach and/or findings			
<b>Implications for practice, education, research, or policy</b>			
<b>Overall quality:</b> Quality of the proposal (as indication of a coherent, well-prepared presentation)			