

FSL for School Administrators

FROM AWARENESS to ACTION

From Awareness to Action is a professional learning publication to support school administrators in the strengthening of French as a Second Language.



ISSUE 11

Digital Second Language Learning Kindergarten to Grade 12

IN THIS ISSUE
the focus is
on the online
language learning
environment.

Transitioning from the Covid-19 school experience has created the opportunity to shift thinking about online learning and the effective use of technology in second language learning. To ensure that technology provides positive outcomes in second language learning, it is important to examine what we have learned and to identify the effective practices moving forward. As with any learning environment, maintaining a culture of high expectations for learning is key, including French as the primary language of instruction. What other elements might be considered in a digital second language approach?

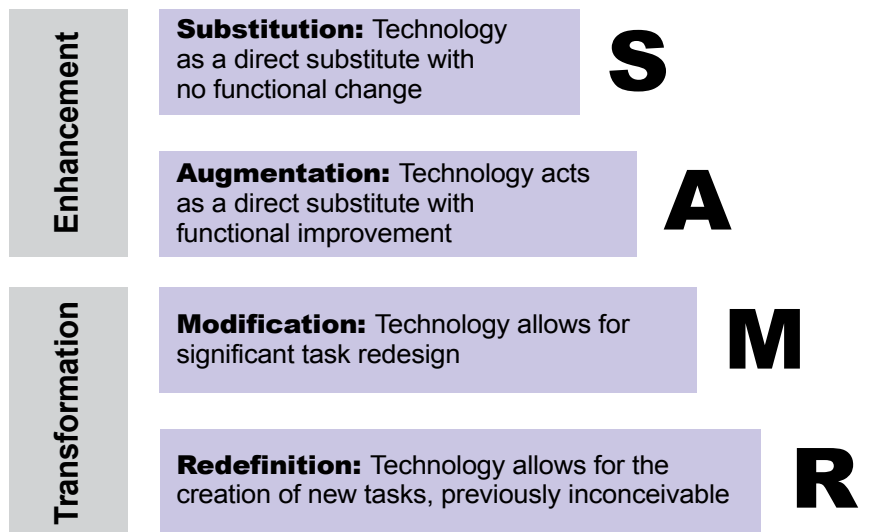
Focus area	Consideration
Focusing on oral language	As languages are learned first through listening and speaking, a focus on oral language is key. Teachers need to ensure that students benefit from interacting with each other. Videos featuring diverse French speakers in various settings beyond a classroom might also be utilized.
Authentic tasks	FSL teachers use a variety of action-oriented tasks set in a context that students could face in everyday life in a variety of situations. These tasks are open-ended and complex, requiring a variety of knowledge and skills, and there are many possible paths leading to attaining the specific end goal. In an online setting, teachers modify learning tasks, as well as texts, for struggling learners to better scaffold literacy learning rather than giving the same assignments to all learners. For example, complex tasks can be shortened, visual aids can be added, language can be simplified, and students could be allowed to use different ways to show their understanding.
Relationship building and supporting parents	Strong communication and partnership between school and home is very important, even more so in an FSL classroom. Regularly updating parents will allow support from home. Involving families with supplementary resources can reinforce classroom goals. Making sure that expectations for any project-based work are clear thereby reducing stress and improving engagement. Digital portfolios are an effective approach to consider.

Although selecting the right tools or resources is fundamental to technology planning in online language learning, using them in ways that enhance the learning goal remains the ultimate purpose.
Smith Arnott 2021 in *Logging in to Learn*, Canadian Parents for French 2021 p. 4.

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Integrating technology – what to consider

As there are many options for teachers when it comes to technology, it can be overwhelming. Ensuring FSL teachers have access to both technology and the opportunities for professional learning and training is key. A powerful tool to reflect on the degree of technology integration in the classroom is the [SAMR](#) model developed in 2010, and still relevant today, by Ruben Puentedura. This model provides four tiers in order of complexity and transformation of technology use in the classroom. The SAMR framework supports educators in understanding how technology supports student learning. Teachers are encouraged to explore multiple tiers as appropriate.



Dr. Ruben Puentedura

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

School administrators will want to investigate this model as it applies to FSL instruction. To assist teachers with selecting the most appropriate tool

to maximize student learning, professional learning and ongoing dialogue are critical to long-term success. Understanding this model can also help school administrators in observing how technology is being utilized to enhance student achievement. In addition, school administrators can learn more about the [Virtual Learning Environment \(VLE\)](#) provided by the Ministry of Education at no cost to Ontario publicly funded school boards. The platform includes a digital portfolio tool, assignments, rubrics, parent supports, lessons linked to curriculum expectations and much more.

Good technology integration isn't about using the fanciest tool; it's about being aware of the range of options and picking the right strategy—or strategies—for the lesson at hand.

A Powerful Model for Understanding Good Tech Integration Youki Teradad [powerful-model-understanding-good-tech-integration](#)



One article to read, one quote to consider, one link to click...

1. Innovations From the COVID-19 Pandemic: Online Learning Strategies This article focuses on innovations and successful teaching outcomes from the pandemic while learning about the challenges that teachers have faced. [Innovations From the COVID-19 Pandemic: Online](#) Dr. Roswita Dressler and Rochelle Guida.
2. “When teaching FSL online, research has revealed an even greater need for clear communication of instructions, expectations and routine. ... Students (and parents) may need extra support to understand the topic, assignments, assessments and the resources associated with a lesson. This also includes reminders about virtual resources (e.g., dictionaries) and general language learning strategies that students need to succeed (e.g., what to do if they are struggling with a word or phrase).” Advocacy Brief-Online Language Education, Smith, Arnott, Canadian Parents for French p. 4.
3. IDELLO- A free website/account for all teachers in Ontario that contains a rich resource library organized by CEFR level. [idello.org/en](#)