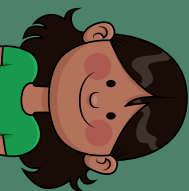


Learning Toolkit+ Newsletter SPRING 2019





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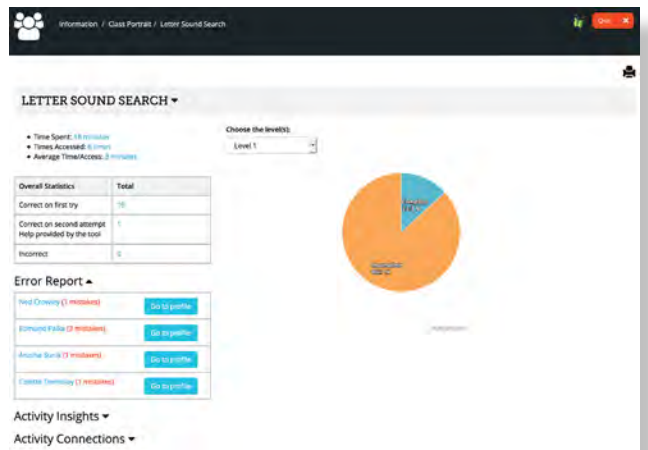
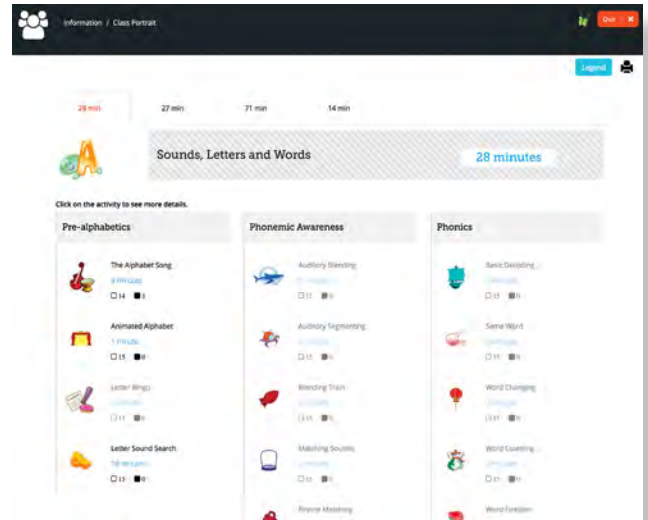


LTK+ Releases

DECEMBER 2018

With a generous donation from **TD Bank**, the first iteration of ABRA's *Teacher Assessment Report* feature was released in December 2018. All student progress in ABRA is saved and compiled in the Assessment feature. Teachers can choose to examine the scope of what their whole class has accomplished, or focus on one particular student. Teachers can view an array of information such as which activities have been accessed, how long students have spent in these activities, which ABRA stories have been read, and details of the types of errors made. To further support teachers, practical tips and suggestions for reinforcing skills are embedded within this feature.

By August 2019, the CSLP aims to optimize this feature by improving the error reports, filtering student data by which level was accessed, and compiling and acting on teacher feedback about the first version.



To find out more about this feature, please visit our Teacher Resources webpage:

<http://grover.concordia.ca/resources/abra/teacher/en/>

Please send us an email (ltkdemo@education.concordia.ca) if you wish to receive future upgrade notices.



AUGUST 2019

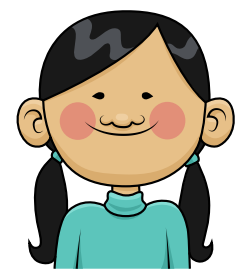
GLOBAL STANDARDS

The CSLP team is working to ensure the LTK+ tools evolve alongside global standards. For example, developers are addressing the need to replace the LTK+'s ubiquitous recorder, currently programmed in Flash. Associated with this upgrade is the need to accommodate Local Area Networks and 'offline' uses of the LTK+, such as those in the remote regions of Kenya. We are also working to ensure that the LTK+ meets current standards for security and privacy.



TABLETS

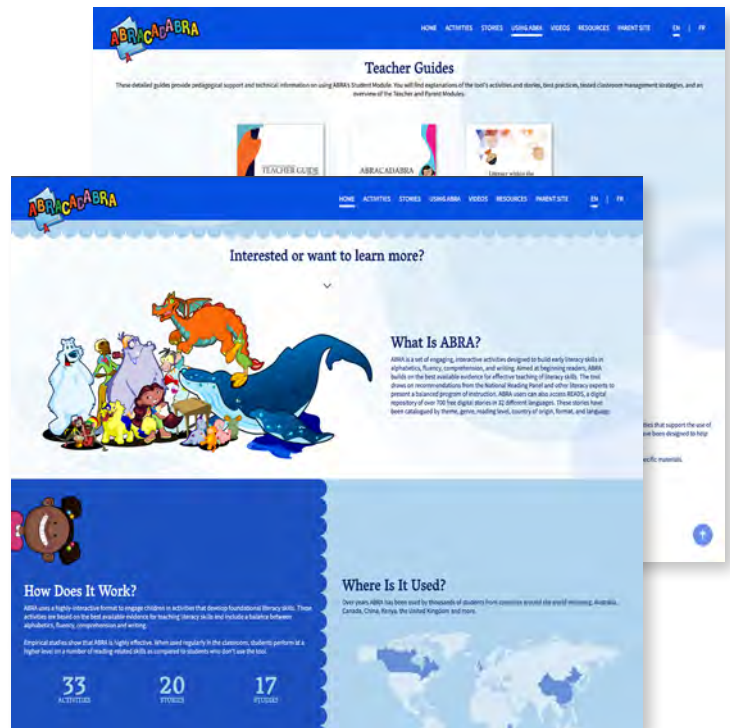
The LTK+ team has been working towards making our tools functional across different mobile devices. Although we are not fully supporting tablets with iOS and Android, in this release we will have made large strides in developing better compatibility across the two platforms.



Teacher Resources

ABRA

The CSLP is excited to announce that the English version of ABRA's **Teacher Resources** has been redesigned. The site provides an in-depth look at each activity and story, as well as access to multi-media and paper-based resources for classroom use. This includes technical and pedagogical teacher aids, suggested classroom activities, student worksheets, videos on incorporating ABRA in the classroom, posters and other classroom resources. In addition, there are a number of country-specific resources that focus on the particular needs and curriculum of the region.



READS

The CSLP is in the process of developing teacher support materials for READS. To this end, teacher aids focused on the use and navigation within READS, along with a number of suggested classroom activities to support the development of comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and writing skills, have been developed.

The CSLP is collaborating with **I Choose Life** in order to support the development of literacy skills in remote areas of Kenya. READS is being implemented in these regions with older students who have under-developed literacy skills. To help

teachers with this task, the CSLP is identifying appropriate books, suggesting a number of classroom activities and developing worksheets that may be used alongside the activities.

Following this pilot, these resources will be made available on a **Teacher Resources** site for widespread use. This site is in development with the anticipated release date sometime in 2019. If you would like to obtain these resources in the meantime, please contact info.ltk@concordia.ca.



ABRACADABRA Français

L'année 2018-2019 a été fort occupée pour l'équipe de recherche et des partenaires de la version en français d'ABRACADABRA.

En effet, après plusieurs années de développement et de programmation, une étude pilote a été menée auprès de 3 classes de 1ère année d'une commission scolaire francophone partenaire d'ABRACADABRA au cours du printemps 2018. Cette expérience a permis de bonifier la formation qui est offerte aux enseignantes qui utilisent ABRACADABRA ainsi que d'identifier les moyens à privilégier pour une implantation réussie de la ressource dans le cadre de recherches qui seront menées ultérieurement auprès d'un nombre plus important d'élèves.

L'année scolaire 2018-2019 marque la toute première recherche visant à évaluer l'impact de la version en français d'ABRACADABRA, lorsque celle-ci est utilisée par l'enseignante en

complément des pratiques pédagogiques habituelles, sur l'apprentissage de la lecture et de l'écriture d'élèves de 1re année scolarisés en milieu socioéconomique moyen ou défavorisé. Pour ce faire, les enseignantes de la condition expérimentale ont participé à 3 journées de formation au cours de l'automne 2018 et de l'hiver 2019. Dans le cadre de ces journées, celles-ci ont été initiées aux fondements scientifiques d'ABRACADABRA ainsi qu'aux modes de fonctionnement de la ressource proprement dite et du module d'évaluation.

Le module d'évaluation, développé depuis 2015 en collaboration avec les chercheurs de l'**UQAM** et du CEAP, ainsi que les programmeurs de l'université Concordia, permet aux enseignants d'accéder de façon continue aux données de pistage des progrès générées sous forme de portrait de leur classe ou de portraits d'élèves. Ainsi, pour chacune des activités, l'enseignante peut suivre l'évolution de la performance de l'ensemble de la classe et de chacun des élèves, et observer l'intensité et la nature des mesures



ABRACADABRA Français

d'aide que la ressource ABRACADABRA a fournies à chaque élève lors de la période de jeu. L'ensemble des informations obtenues par le module d'évaluation permet de guider et de soutenir les décisions pédagogiques des enseignantes telles que, par exemple, établir des sous-groupes de besoin, refaire l'enseignement d'une habileté, diriger les élèves vers des activités visant le développement d'habiletés plus simples ou plus complexes en fonction de leur profil, etc.

Depuis le début de l'implantation d'ABRACADABRA dans les classes expérimentales, les enseignantes ont pu échanger et être soutenues par des membres de l'équipe de recherche ainsi que par les autres enseignantes impliquées.



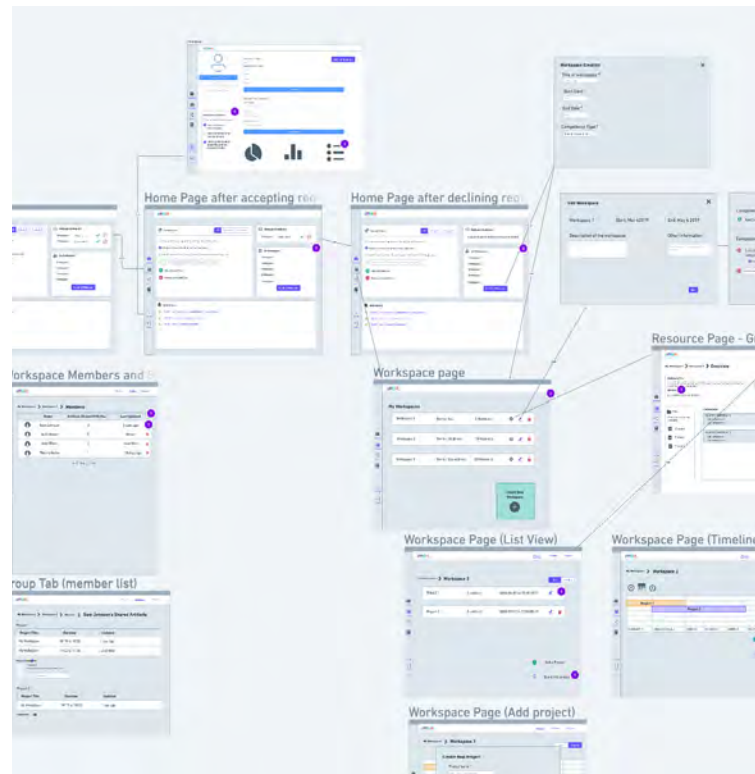
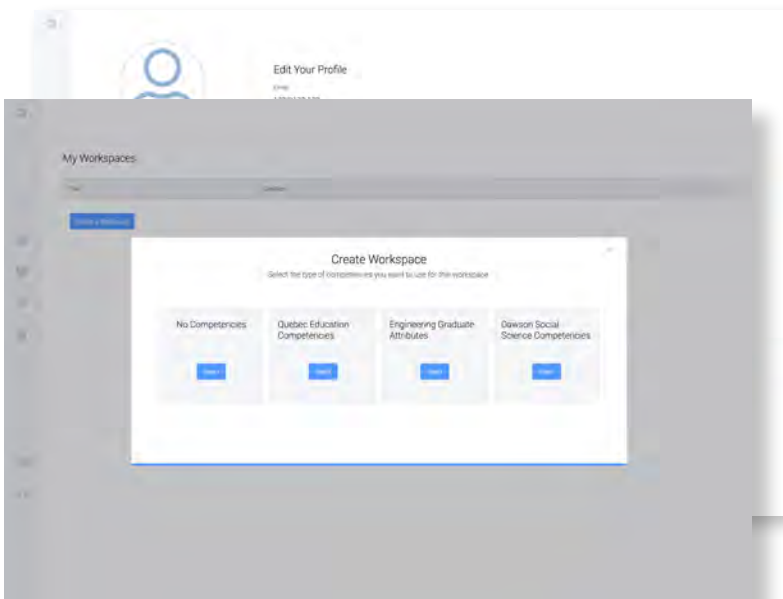
Par ailleurs, le sous-comité de formation composé de chercheurs de l'UQAM, de conseillers pédagogiques de différentes commissions scolaires et organismes partenaires de la version en français d'ABRACADABRA, ainsi que des représentants des deux syndicats de l'enseignement a poursuivi ses opérations et a collaboré à l'élaboration des trois jours de formation offerts aux enseignants participants.

ePEARL 4.0

TO LAUNCH IN 2020

ePEARL 4.0, our latest electronic portfolio designed to encourage deep, meaningful learning at the post-secondary or adult level, is scheduled to launch prior to yearend. This follows a pilot project carried out in 2018 with CEGEP (college) and university students.

Based on user feedback, we have streamlined the interface, making it easier for students to set goals, upload or create work, link work to professional competencies, and reflect on their learning. Users will now organize their work into project folders and they can view work either in a timeline (calendar) or list mode.



Users will be able to control who can see and comment on different parts of the portfolio. For example, a person may share an initial draft of work with a few peers, but then share the final version with just a teacher.

ePEARL 4.0 will feature a simple account creation and log-in system, allowing anyone to create and access an account whenever Internet access is available. Once in the tool, users will easily be able to find and join classes (called groups) in order to view any uploaded course documents, to share work, and to get feedback. Within-tool text editors will allow users to create work from inside ePEARL 4.0.

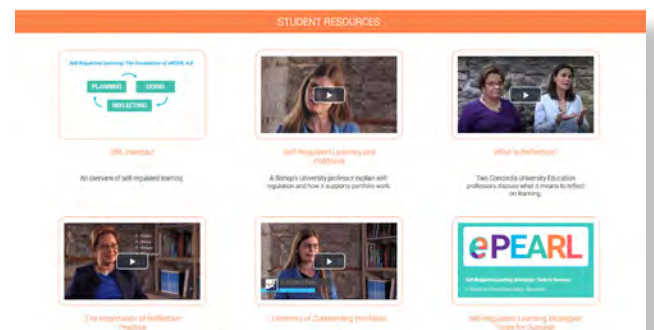
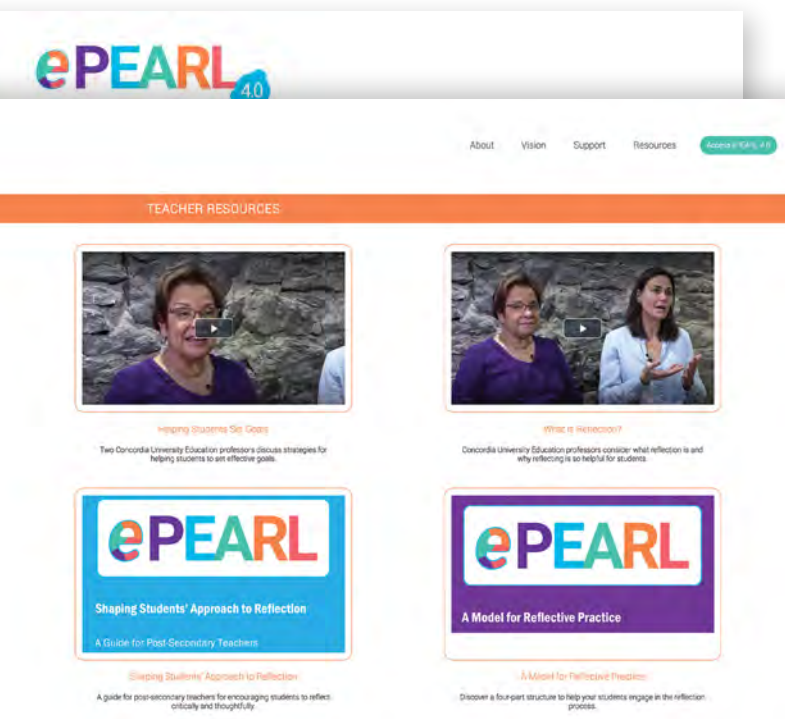
The CSLP has received multi-year funding for ePEARL 4.0 from the **Entente Canada-Québec relative à l'enseignement dans la langue de la minorité et à l'enseignement des langues secondes** (ECQ). Our project partners are Concordia University's Centre for Teaching and Learning, Dawson College's Office of Academic Development, Bishop's University, and most recently McGill's Teaching and Learning Services. For more information, visit [About ePEARL 4.0](#).

ePEARL TEACHER & STUDENT RESOURCES

The CSLP always provides support materials for its tools and ePEARL 4.0 is no exception.

Last year we launched our ePEARL 4.0 **Teacher Resources**. The site includes videos in which university professors talk about helping students to set goals and to reflect effectively. There are also written guides and handouts on these topics, as well as a portfolio implementation guide addressing the common issues faced by CEGEP (college) educators wanting to integrate portfolios into their teaching.

In June 2019, we'll offer an update to those resources. The site will include more instructional videos focusing on topics such as how portfolios support self-regulated learning, different strategies for encouraging portfolio use, and ideas for improving how student's give peer feedback. Teachers will also find tip sheets and information on the best practices in portfolio integration.



In June 2019, look for the launch of ePEARL 4.0 **Student Resources**, which will include an array of multimedia materials to support students as they use the tool to deepen their learning. There will be videos, guides, tips sheets, and handouts to support and guide students to successful and long-term use of a learning portfolio.

International Projects Update



Congratulations to Dr. **Maina WaGioko**, our LTK+ African Coordinator who was in the top 50 contenders for the **Global Teacher Prize**.

He was also awarded the **Aga Khan University Citation on Leadership Recognition**. A busy year for Dr. WaGioko!



A huge congratulations to Ms **Linah Anyango** and her four students from **Changamwe Secondary School** who received **first prize** at the **Nakuru 2019 National Science Fair** for their project entitled **Bioethanol from Vegetable Garbage**. Using **ePEARL**, the students developed a research work plan and used the plan to set goals and carry out various activities according to the work plan. They also attached photos of each of the steps in their portfolio, from sample collection, preparation, distillation and product analysis at the government chemist. In addition, they also had a physical presentation portfolio, known as the data file.



The students were presented with a trophy, \$25,000 KSh, and a trip to California or South Africa.

The following projects would not have been possible without funding by **Canada's International Development Research Centre** and the **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council**.

SELF-REGULATED LEARNING (ePEARL) IN KENYA

The Kenyan Ministry of Education's Vision 2030 expressed directives that resulted in the design of a new student-centred, competency-based curriculum designed to foster "independent, confident, co-operative, and inspired learners" capable of succeeding in the 21st century. Such a curriculum is well aligned with the CSLP's electronic portfolio, ePEARL which is designed to support deep meaningful learning by guiding students through the processes of planning, learning and doing, all hallmarks of self-regulated learning.

Last year, under the coordination of Dr. **Larysa Lysenko**, a pilot project unfolded in a handful of secondary classrooms in Mombasa, designed to test the feasibility of teaching and learning with ePEARL. Over three days, **nine teachers** were trained on the importance of self-regulation development in children and the integration of ePEARL to support this development. One teacher, and his Business Studies class used the tool on a frequent basis. The results of this pilot study suggested benefits for those students who used ePEARL to complete their class assignments. In the class where ePEARL was more frequently used, the students' perceptions of their self-regulation skills significantly improved overtime as did their exam scores.



2019 pilot: A grade-two secondary student working in ePEARL to complete a Biology assignment/task

Moreover, more frequent use of ePEARL and more comprehensive use of its features to complete a task also translated into higher student achievement as measured by the end-of-year exam scores.

This study yielded a list of recommendations that have informed the larger-scale ePEARL pilot currently unfolding in five secondary schools in the Mombasa area.





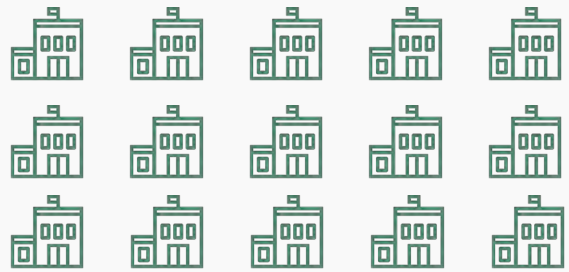
2019 ELM class in St. Augustine primary school

NUMERACY: USING ELM IN KENYA

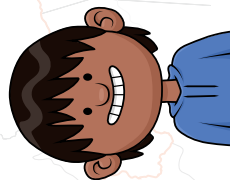
As a result of the promising results we obtained in our small pilot study, this year we decided to look more carefully at the use of ELM in Kenyan classrooms. Teachers and **1,100** grade-one students from **15** elementary schools in Mombasa have been using ELM as part of their Mathematics lessons. Our local team of LTK+ Coordinators, Ambassadors and School-based Ambassadors will continue to train and support the teachers as the school year unfolds.

At the end of the school year (Nov. 2019), the Math achievement of students using ELM will be compared to the achievement of students in non-ELM classrooms. Classroom visits, observations of Math lessons, teacher reports, and use-data generated by the software will help us monitor the implementation as the school year unfolds.

15 SCHOOLS



1100 GRADE-THREE STUDENTS





LITERACY: USING ABRA AND READS IN KENYA

Led by Dr. **Phil Abrami**, last year's literacy project consisted of **3,600** students from grades 1-3 in **27** primary schools across Kenya (Mombasa, Kirindon, Meru and Laikipia) learning how to read using stories and activities from ABRA and READS. One third of these students (N= 1,285) participated in a research study where students in classes using ABRA-READS were compared to those in non ABRA-READS classes. Student achievement data (using the GRADE standardized test) was collected, along with teacher surveys about their literacy instruction before and after implementation. Implementation was monitored through



Kenyan classroom using ABRA

classroom observations, teacher reports, and ABRA-generated trace data. The Kenya team continued to facilitate the ABRA and READS training of teachers and the provision of classroom support.

One new element was introduced to the existing framework of support--the **School-based Ambassador (SBA)**. This was done as a means to transfer ownership of the project over to the schools to ensure the uptake and sustainability of the programme. Schools were asked to select an SBA who would serve as the in-house LTK+ expert. While the use of the LTK+ Ambassadors continued, they served at arms-length to the classroom teachers—providing instead, regular support to the SBA. Biweekly planning meetings were held for the SBAs, who then facilitated regular in-school meetings with the implementing teachers.

Another change that occurred in last year's project was that for the first time the LTK+ tools were accessed not only by lab desktop computers, but also via the tablets that were distributed, as part of the Digital Literacy Programme (DLP), an initiative of the Kenya government. The use of the software supported the mandatory early grade reading program, TUSOME (Let's Read), that has been implemented in grades 1-3 since 2015.

We look forward to the analysis of the rich data we collected in 2018 so that we can learn more about this evolving implementation model.

SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALE UP OF THE LTK+ IN KENYAN SCHOOLS

The past six years of our literacy research in Kenyan schools has revealed that used regularly, ABRA can have significantly positive impact on the development Kenyan children's literacy skills. So how can we successfully expand use of ABRA across the nation? And what happens after the funding ends? How can we ensure that these tools will continue to be used, especially given so many externally funded educational initiatives in the developing world are short-lived? To explore these questions further we spoke to a range of stakeholders associated with the LTK+ projects over the years. **Forty-three interviews** with schoolteachers, ambassadors, school principals and representatives of partner organizations were completed.

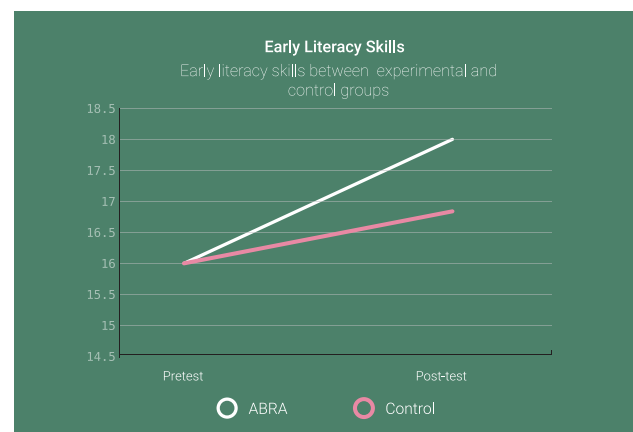
Interview/survey questions were formulated according to research on sustainability and scale-up of educational interventions. The framework of ideas offered by this research, as well as ideas emergent from the interviews are currently being used to analyze the narratives. We plan to present the results of this analysis in the summer of 2019.



Working session and presentation in Kenya.

ABRA IN HONG KONG AND CHINA

For the past five years, under the leadership Dr. **Alan Cheung** and the coordination of Dr. **Sunny Kwo**, we have collaborated with teachers in select Hong Kong and Chinese classrooms with the objective of improving English teaching and learning. Our project has involved the integration of our literacy tools in English classes resulting in **consistent and significant improvements in students' English literacy skills**, along with **improvements in English instruction**.



Results from Dr. Kwo's dissertation on the use of ABRA in China's Hunan Province (2017-18).

ABRA MINI CONFERENCE | OCTOBER 28-30, 2018 | AT NANJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY

Hosted by Dr. **Ji Jun Yao** (Chair Department of Education Administration and Policy, School of Education Science, Nanjing Normal University) and Dr. **Alan Cheung** (Lead ABRACADABRA Researcher, Professor, and Director of the Centre for University and School Partnership, Chinese University of Hong Kong), this conference entirely dedicated to the use of ABRA in Chinese classrooms, was attended predominantly by Nanjing teachers and NNU faculty, as well as by Concordia University's Provost and Vice President, **Graham Carr**. LTK+ Leader **Philip Abrami** and CSLP/SSHRC Partnership Manager **Anne Wade** served as keynote speakers.



ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The CSLP is creating a set of flexible LTK+ online training modules for use either in a face to face, blended, or fully online environment. Beginning with ABRA, the multimedia materials will allow teachers to study and review important literacy concepts such as alphabets and fluency, while testing their knowledge through interactive quizzes and games. Teachers will be encouraged at every step to consider how best to incorporate ABRA into their lesson planning and teaching. They will also be able to network and share ideas with other teachers.

This new teacher professional development program will be available in many different formats for use both on and off-line.

Several ABRA modules will be ready by **December 2019**, with the more complete ABRA training launched in **August 2020**. Additional modules may also be designed for the other tools pending further funding.





Learning Toolkit
www.concordia.ca/ltk

CSLP
www.concordia.ca/cslp

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