



# TEAL NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF B.C. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

JUNE 2002



## Meet the 2002—2003 Board!

**W**e at BC TEAL would like to let you know what we have been working on as your board over the last year, and of the exciting challenges and changes ahead. Some of the reports are in this newsletter and the highlights are as follows:

The 2002 TEAL Conference was a success with over 500 people in attendance, and about 100 workshops. Work for TEAL 2003 at the same venue has begun.

We have a new web-site up and running with a new address: <http://www.bcteal.org>. Brian Wilson, our new computer tech/ESL teacher will be introducing new changes formatting, and helping smooth over the change from a paper newsletter to one that is on-line.

BC TEAL will phase out its certificates and adopt the new TESL Canada Professional Standards as of June 1, 2002. BC TEAL certificates will remain valid as issued.

The TESL Canada conference has been confirmed for Burnaby, in November 2003. Stay tuned...

Sarah King is heading a new "Advocacy Task Force" for all providers of ESL.

Sarah Burwood is starting up SIGS (Special Interest Groups), for more information, read on...

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## Join the “Advocacy Task Force” NOW!

As chair of the PAAC (Policy and Action Advisory Committee) I am calling on all individuals and associations in the area of ESL, immigration, and education to establish, with BC TEAL, an Advocacy Task Force. The mandate of this task force is to represent all ESL providers in the province and to provide a united voice to speak to the government about the economic and social impact of their funding decisions. We will work together to create a plan to advocate for the ESL students and teachers across British Columbia.

We have seen ESL services in the province of British Columbia begin to disintegrate due to recent government changes to funding. The cuts are affecting ESL students and teachers across the province in both private and public sectors. Many of the large public post secondary institutions are being forced to lay off their teachers and students will be denied service.

As you may have seen in the recent media coverage, ELSA (English Language Services for Adults) providers were the first to see cuts in funding to their ESL programs. More recently, Vancouver Community College and local public school districts have been forced to lay off their ESL teachers and close programs. It is time that the ESL community united and advocated for the students and teachers who are suffering from the economic and social impact of the government’s funding decisions in the area of English language instruction. Join the Advocacy Task Force and let the government hear the voice of ESL teachers and students in British Columbia.

For updated information about the Task Force, please visit the TEAL website [www.bcteal.org](http://www.bcteal.org) or call Sarah King at 822-4764.

Kwantlen

## TEAL NEWS INFORMATION



# B.C. TEAL

Association of BC Teachers of  
English as an Additional Language

**T**eal News is available through membership in BC TEAL and by special arrangement. It is published three times a year: in February, June, and October.

### Deadlines

December 31 for February  
April 30 for June  
August 31 for October

### Contributors

We welcome copy of general interest to associated members. All material is submitted to the editorial board before being approved for publication. Copy may be edited for length, style and/or clarity without prior notification to authors. Please be aware that submissions may be reprinted.

Copy should be submitted directly to the editor as an email attachment. If this is not possible, it may be submitted to the TEAL office on disk, saved as an MS Word file. Advertising material and inserts must be submitted as a **jpeg**. For information on advertising rates, contact the Advertising Manager or the BC TEAL office.

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*To volunteer to work on a TEAL committee, contact Ali at the TEAL office.*

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## President's Report

I would like to begin my annual report by thanking the TEAL 2002 Conference Committee for making the TESL 2002 Conference, "Professionalizing the Profession" such a wonderful success! A special thank you to our incredible conference chairs, Paul Maher and Lisa Lindall who have coordinated the conference and made it all happen... I want thank you too, the more than 500 delegates who have come to the conference to share their wisdom, to participate in this wonderful professional development event and to visit with old and new ESL friends!

In the next part of my report, I would like to share with you briefly the achievements of the TEAL committees who have served the TEAL membership during this past year.

**Professional Development Committee** – Our PD Chairs, Dasha Semenova and Tammy Slater organized our first fall TEAL Mini-Conference in November 2001. It was very successful and received excellent evaluations. Tammie also collected and edited the fantastic first edition of the TEAL TEASER. This is a brilliant collection of ESL teaching ideas available for a mere \$10 from the TEAL office.

**Professional Standards Advisory Committees** – Past Chairs, Linda Alexander and Sarah Burwood as well as current Chair, Kirsten Bunton continue to provide the TEAL membership with an exemplary set of professional standards that continue to define our profession as well as provide a model for the new TESL Canada standards.

**Teacher Training Recognition Advisory Committee** – Chairs Anne Sandor and Liet Hellwig have done excellent and definitive work in the area of standards for Chairs recognition of teacher training programs during the past year.

**Professional Standards Certification Review Board** – The PSRCB is currently chaired by Jayeson Van Bryce and is responsible for reading and reviewing all applications for certification. Adjudication for certification takes place twice a year on October 1 and February 1 of each year. Thank you to this hard working committee and their Chair: Jayeson Van Bryce for their invaluable work in this important area.

**TEAL Newsletter** – Under its editors, the "TEAL News" has had a great year with inspiring and informative articles on a wide range of topics of real interest to TEAL Members. Plans are now under way to distribute the TEAL News electronically so keep posted or should I say, "keep wired"!

This year's AGM marked the beginning of a new term for the TEAL Board. I want to thank our Nominating Committee, and Chair Virginia Christopher, who have "recruited" a very talented and committed Board for the coming year. I am personally looking forward to working with each and every one of the new members of the Board in the coming year. The AGM marked the last TEAL Board meeting for many of our Directors. Each of the retiring Directors has committed hundreds of volunteer hours to your organization. I would like to thank, on behalf of all members of TEAL, Susan Curtis, our Treasurer, Azza Sedky, our Secretary, Joel Murray, Member at Large, Dasha Semnora, Member at Large, Linda Alexander, Member at Large, Tammie Slater, Member at Large, Elizabeth Tosetti, Member at Large, and Patricia Steiner, Member at Large for their incredible commitment to TEAL over the years. I also wish to acknowledge my gratitude and appreciation for the work of our Executive Assistant Ali McBride. In closing, it has been a wonderful experience to work with this Board and Ali. I have been honored by their intelligence, humour, wisdom and commitment to TEAL!

Jennifer Pearson Terell  
President: BC TEAL

# TEAL 2002 Turn out Higher than Expected

On behalf of the TEAL Board, we are pleased to report that nearly 400 attended this year's conference and participated in over 100 workshops. Many thanks to all the presenters and volunteers who helped make the conference a success. Also thanks to those who took the time to fill out the feedback survey form. Responses were generally favourable and

encouraging. Most participants enjoyed the downtown location, the plenary speakers, the workshops, the publisher displays, and the massive muffins! Several people expressed concern about the size of the classrooms, as many of the more popular workshops filled up quickly. Some people would have liked more workshops on teaching upper level classes. Indeed, we will take these and other useful

suggestions into account when organizing your conference in 2003. Finally, if anyone accidentally (or intentionally) picked up a Samsonite umbrella at the conference, would you please notify the TEAL office. See you next year!

Paul Maher and Lisa Lindal  
Co-chairs@TEAL 2002

Ali at the registration desk greeting the conference goers.



At the publishers table!

# TESOL 2002 in Salt Lake City

by Ishbel Galloway

Salt Lake City is an odd town. Flat, dry and dusty, it's flanked on two sides by mountains and by the stinky, sulphurous lake to the north. At the airport there were throngs of screaming young people waving welcome banners, not for any TESOL luminaries but for Elder DeWit, newly returned from a Mormon mission in Asia. Temple Square dominates the downtown with its enormous concert hall built in the 1800s and where the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, even in rehearsal, is truly impressive.

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*Salt Lake City was, of course, the venue for TESOL 2002, although there seemed to be far fewer people than in Vancouver in 2000.*

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Salt Lake City was, of course, the venue for TESOL 2002, although there seemed to be far fewer people than in Vancouver in 2000. The huge Salt Palace Convention Center easily accommodated us and few sessions that I attended had the overcrowded room problems typical of some past conventions. Here are some of the highlights.

## Literacy Autobiographies

In the Academic Session "Issues in Teaching Academic Writing to Multilingual Learners" the buzz term, new to me, was "literacy autobiography". Paul

Matsuda explained how he sets this as a diagnostic writing task in his EAP writing classes because it encourages reflective learning, and provides insights into the background of students as well as their learning strategies and assumptions about writing. Jack Richards gave a talk about "Competency Based Teaching" which, he claims, is gaining strength internationally because of the current concern with standards. He also discussed the philosophical shift behind this concern – a shift to a more utilitarian focus in language teaching – but, although he did not ignore the criticisms of such an approach, it would have been interesting to have had a response from someone like Alastair Pennycook.

## Academic Vocabulary Development

A number of sessions focused on academic vocabulary development, which, according to Maricel Santos, is an emerging area in TESOL research. She discussed using a freeware program (see the link on Paul Nation's website) that can measure the lexical richness of a text. In "Vocabulary Writing and The L2 Writer", Cheryl Zimmerman showed how subject-specific technical vocabulary, which is central to textual meaning, was not a problem for students. However, general academic words used across disciplines, which tend to be supportive of rather than central to meaning, caused much greater difficulty.

## Widdowson in a Wig

By Friday lunchtime when most delegates were getting to that mind-numbed state when the workshops, like films at a film festival, sessions begin to merge, Henry Widdowson and Dorothy Zemach gave the plenary address titled encouragingly "TESOL and the Humorous Spirit". This was an inspired 45 minutes of Pythonesque hilarity which saw, among many highlights, Widdowson in a curly wig and falsetto voice, revise dialogues from the old '80s *Streamline* coursebook to eliminate their sexual stereotyping. There was also a very funny parody of the now countless items in the *Interchange* series, including the new, for 2002, *Interchange* lunchbox. I hoped Jack Richards was in the audience!

All in all, TESOL is always worth the trip. You get to meet old friends, hear new ideas, compare notes with others working towards similar goals in very dissimilar places. The call for proposals for Baltimore (TESOL 2003) has already passed but there's still time to propose a short work in-progress or a poster session. Check the TESOL website for details <[www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)>.

*Ishbel Galloway teaches in the English Bridge Program at Simon Fraser University. She's interested in contrastive rhetoric and the use of corpora in teaching writing.*

# Report on My Experience at TESOL 2002: Participation in the Community of Practice of ESL/EFL Professionals

*Masaki Kobayashi, University of British Columbia*

With the generous support of the TEAL/Mary Ashworth Scholarship, I attended the 36th Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibition: Language and the Human Spirit, held in Salt Lake City, Utah, from April 9 to 13, 2002. Sessions took place at the Salt Palace Convention Center and at the Marriott Downtown City Center, just across from the convention center. Both places are within walking distance of Temple Square, which is well known for the Salt Lake Temple and Mormon Tabernacle. Throughout the conference, we were favoured with fine weather and beautiful cherry blossoms.

Just like the past TESOL conventions I have attended, TESOL 2002 provided rich opportunities for professional development. In the rest of this brief report, rather than merely providing factual information about the conference, I would like to reflect upon my experience at TESOL, discussing what it means to my learning as a teacher and researcher of ESL/EFL. For this, I use Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participation. According to Lave and Wenger, this notion refers to "the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice" (p. 29). As a graduate student and an individual who believes in life-long learning, attending a conference like TESOL is an essential way to learn and

become socialized as a teacher and researcher, that is, a means to become a fuller participant in the community of practice of ESL/EFL professionals.

One main purpose of my attending this year's convention was to take part in a research colloquium on second language (L2) academic discourse socialization, which was organized by my research supervisor at UBC, Dr. Patricia Duff. As a doctoral student specializing in TESL and applied linguistics, I have conducted a longitudinal, qualitative study on Japanese undergraduate students' language socialization during their yearlong studies in Canada. This doctoral study, from a sociocultural perspective (e.g., Duff, 1995; Lantolf, 2000; Ochs, 1988; van Lier, 1996), examines how exchange students as newcomers to a classroom community develop their linguistic and sociocultural knowledge through repeated observation of and participation in certain types of educational activities and discourse. I presented some of the findings of the study at the TESOL colloquium, focusing on topics such as the role of first language use and peer support in student's completion of L2 academic tasks (Kobayashi, 2002). In our audience were ESL/EFL teachers, researchers, and graduate students who had similar professional interests, and we had a great discussion with this fascinating group of people at the end of the colloquium.

Another important experience at the TESOL Convention, which

brought together a large number of ESL/EFL teachers, teacher educators, researchers, and program administrators from all over the world, was that I was able to attend many informative and interesting sessions related to personal interests such as language socialization, academic discourse, and task-based L2 instruction. Among the many excellent sessions I was fortunate to attend, I particularly enjoyed a researcher/practitioner colloquium organized by Anne Johns, called "Genres and Academic Classrooms." The presenters in this colloquium addressed many important issues related to academic English teaching/learning, such as the relationships between text and context, students as researchers of genre, the teaching of genres for self-promotion, and the socially situated nature of writing process.

I also enjoyed a demonstration by Brad Deacon and Tim Murphey on split-story telling. Tim Murphey started their demonstration by telling the first part of a story (broken into two parts) about a girl who found a blue butterfly and, holding it in her hands, went to a wise man to ask him if the butterfly was alive or dead. He only told the first part of the story and stopped, leaving us in a state of curiosity. This was followed by several interesting demonstrations by Deacon and some pair work for the audience. Referring to Bruner's (1990, 1996) work on the narrative nature of the human mind, Murphey said that people attempt to make sense of their experience by telling stories about it, and

*(Continued on page 8)*

(TESOL 2002...Continued from page 7)

recommended using stories in L2 classrooms. He then ended their presentation by telling the second part of the story about the girl holding a blue butterfly in her hands. Murphey said that the answer the girl received from the wise man was "the butterfly is in your hand," suggesting that it was up to us teachers whether to use the activity in our classes. This presentation was not only informative in that the presenters demonstrated the split-story activity effectively, but also was engaging and inspiring. It was one that I would strive to imitate as a teacher and researcher.

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*...interacting with other conference participants can give us opportunities to share ideas and thoughts and help enhance our sense of belonging to the TESOL community.*

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In addition, my participation in the Convention provided me with valuable opportunities to meet new people as well as to reunite with my former professors, classmates, and colleagues. For example, on the night of April 10th, my wife Emi and I were able to attend the annual alumni reception of our alma mater, the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS), in which we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our MATESOL program and had a great time with our old friends and teachers, talking about our good old days and catching up on our recent activities.

I also met new people during the conference. One day, as we were walking toward Delta Center (during the 2002 Olympic Games, this place was called "Ice

Center," where the world's top figure-skaters competed for the medals) going for lunch, Emi and I had a conversation with a gentleman taking pictures. As it turned out, this gentleman was also attending the TESOL Convention. He told us that he was teaching English in Japan and was taking some pictures of English signs to use in his lessons. We told him that we too had taken pictures of signs ourselves while living in California. He then told us that he owned web pages for ESL/EFL teachers and students and gave us their URLs. Trivial as it may sound, I believe this kind of encounter can be just as valuable as (if not more valuable than) the presentations and poster sessions. Whether it be an academic discussion after a presentation or a causal conversation during a reception or on the street (in this case), interacting with other conference participants can give us opportunities to share ideas and thoughts and help enhance our sense of belonging to the TESOL community. From a language socialization perspective, Ochs (1988) states, "throughout our lives, we are socializing and being socialized by those we encounter" (p.6). A similar argument can be made about the professional development of ESL/EFL teachers, especially those who attend conferences like TESOL.

In conclusion, my participation in the TESOL conference provided me with rich learning opportunities to observe others' wonderful presentations and with a chance to engage in this socially valued activity myself. From the community-of-practice perspective (Lave & Wenger, 1991), I view my attending the convention as a vital opportunity for learning to become a more competent and confident member of the ESL/EFL teaching and research community. However, as an

international student on a limited income, I find it difficult to expand my professional involvement without additional financial support. I greatly appreciate the generous support of the TEAL/Mary Ashworth Scholarship and would like to thank the members of the awards committee for their assistance.

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# TESL Canada Conference 2002

by Karen Tang

This year's TESL Canada Conference in Regina, Saskatchewan, once again provided a stimulating opportunity to hear others' ideas and to participate in discussions. From symposia and workshops, to social gatherings and publishers' displays, there were lots of opportunities to meet colleagues from other parts of Canada. Notably the Learners' Conference, which was held simultaneously with the Teachers' Conference, celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

## BC TEAL Members Honoured

The Wine and Cheese Reception honored a number of people who have made exceptional contributions to TESL Canada. This year Joan Acosta from our own B.C. TEAL, as well as Elizabeth Coelho from TESL Ontario, and Harlan Weidenhammer from SCENES, were honored with TESL Canada Life Membership Awards. Virginia Christopher from BC TEAL was awarded the first certificate reflecting the new TESL Canada National Standards, which were officially launched at this conference.

Thursday afternoon's symposia afforded the opportunity to give input on a number of issues facing us. Among them was a symposium dealing with the establishment of a National Code of Ethics. Discussions centered around why there might be a need for such a code as our profession develops, and what such a code would address. These discussions are at a grassroots level, and all who are interested in giving input into this process are encouraged to do so. Other symposia dealt with ESL Literacy; Ethnic Bias, Race and Prejudice and the ESL Enterprise, as well as The Canadian Language Benchmarks. A fifth symposium addressed the issue of teaching First

Nations languages as "second languages" in order to strengthen First Nations' children's use of their heritage language.

## David Nunan and Virginia Sauve

David Nunan and Virginia Sauve provided interesting perspectives at the plenary addresses. Notably, both of them highlighted the importance of learners coming to view language learning as "a tool for communication" (Nunan) and "language as the medium of our being rather than the end of our instruction" (Sauve) in order for them to be successful. Nunan elaborated on the performance-based approach to instructional design, which focused on the end result. This approach has provided the foundation for many language programs around the world. Nunan gave examples of "can-do" statements which have been developed. These are statements that describe observable language behaviors at different levels written in language that makes the criteria accessible to the students themselves; thus they can self-assess. These descriptors could also be useful for employers who want to know the language level of applicants.

Interestingly, Virginia Sauve's

address focused on process, viewing teachers as "story-weavers" in a holistic education. She advocated that language classrooms provide an environment where students not only learn language, but also feel validated for who they are and develop as persons within our global community. Virginia noted that our relationships, which influence our feelings about ourselves and the way we fit into the world, are the things we tend to remember the most.

Friday and Saturday's workshops offered an array of topics dealing with instructional issues; presentation of resource materials; on-line instruction; national issues related to ESL; and ethical issues facing our profession. All in all, it was a stimulating conference which gave those of us who attended a lot to think about and take back to our colleagues.

*Karen Tang has been working at the UBC English Language Institute for the past thirteen years. She is involved in the Curriculum Committee at her institute and has a special interest in the area of grammar instruction.*

# TEAL Professional Profiles:

## Liet Hellwig

by Catherine Evashuk



This new TEAL News feature profiles different ESL teachers working in BC and overseas. For this first interview, Catherine Evashuk sat down with Liet Hellwig, a BC TEAL Member-at-Large, and asked her how she started her English teaching career.

Liet has had such varied work experience that when I asked her if she could remember the first class she taught, she laughed and said she couldn't. She did, however, remember that she tutored a high school girl in English back in her native country, the Netherlands. She knew from early on that because of her love for the English language, she would probably end up teaching.

After graduating from university, her first job was in Palestine, in the West Bank. She taught at the university in Nablus and remembers a frightening experience when an Israeli soldier came into the university and threatened one of her best students. Liet believes that by speaking English to the soldier, she made him aware that there were international observers present, which might have made him reconsider his actions. However, although most of her memories of Palestine and teaching Nablus university students are wonderful, she doesn't know what has happened to the university today.

Liet then moved to England where she completed her MA. Her research focused on Arabic speakers in England and how their English language skills developed. Later, she went to work in Jordan, at Amman University, where she met her husband, Jean-Luc, from France. However, after only one academic year in Amman, she returned to Holland to look after her terminally ill mother.

One of Liet's life long dreams was to go to Latin America so in 1986 she travelled to Mexico and within two weeks took a job setting up a 4-year TESL program at The University of Guadalajara, the second largest university in Latin America. In spite of poor budgets and resources, the group of people Liet worked with was very enthusiastic and committed. This 4-year university program soon became a state of the art TESL program with a great national and international reputation. Liet says that the university's facilities and financial conditions were the worst she had ever encountered with frequent power outages and shortages of paper for the photocopiers. The 'library' was literally one bookshelf with donated books. In spite of this, Liet explains that this was her most satisfying work experience because of the professional attitude and commitment of the exceptionally experienced teachers she worked with and the wonderful students from Mexico and six other countries who went on to become EFL teachers.

Liet always calls this Guadalajara project her first 'baby' although she now has two 'real' babies, Rafael born in Mexico and Leila born in Indonesia where Liet worked as the manager of the English Language Centre for the British Council in Jakarta. She was excited to work in this rich professional environment, which offered EAP, ESP and teacher training, with a group of colleagues

from around the world. However, the polluted air of Jakarta was a bad environment in which to bring up two young children, so Liet and her family moved to Europe trying to find work first in France and then in Holland.

Feeling professionally unfulfilled and frustrated, the family next considered moving to Vancouver because its multicultural environment seemed appropriate for this multicultural family --Liet's children speak Dutch with her, French with her husband and English among themselves. Also, Liet's sister, Tineke, already lived in Vancouver, which meant that starting over would be a little easier. So, in 1992 Liet came on holiday to visit Tineke in Vancouver for the first time and her visit coincided with the 1992 BC TEAL conference which she attended.

A few years later, in October 1995, the family arrived in Vancouver. Today, Liet is a free-lance instructor, teaching TESL training courses and Business English for international students and executives. In addition, she is a Cambridge University and IELTS examiner, a substitute teacher in different institutions and a BC TEAL Member-at-Large.

*Catherine Evashuk will be profiling different teachers each issue. If you know of a teacher who has an interesting career, please contact Catherine!*

# CANADIAN LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS UPDATE

*Alison Norman*

Lots of things have been happening under the direction of the new Executive Director of the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, Pauline McNaughton.


Last September saw the opening of the CLB Business Centre, capable of distributing CLB resources in Canada and overseas. Over 300 documents were distributed in the first few months of operation. Remember that you can get a copy of Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000 free of charge, the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: A Guide to Implementation for \$45, or Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: ESL for Literacy Learners for \$12.50 (shipping and handling extra in all cases). Order by email at [info@language.ca](mailto:info@language.ca).

The Board of Directors formed a Teacher Education and Professional Development Committee to consider the role of the CCLB in these areas. Certainly there will be partnerships with national, provincial and regional organizations that provide support, materials and training to ESL instructors.

The CCLB Executive Board has given priority to a number of initiatives for 2002. One is the benchmarking of the nursing profession. A feasibility study in 2001 indicated considerable interest from health care professionals across Canada. Benchmarking the profession will be the first phase, followed by the development of a national language assessment tool specifically designed for health professionals. Another initiative is launching the Streamlined Placement Test (CLBPT) that was developed and field tested in 2001. Arrangements are being put in place to train provincial trainers in the use of the test. Expect to hear more about the CLBPT in the near future.

Last month's TESL Canada 2002 Conference in Regina was once again a venue for a symposium on the Canadian Language Benchmarks which included a workshop component on applying the CLB's in teaching and learning as well as an update from the CCLB and a cross-country report on benchmark-related activities.

Do take a few minutes to visit the redesigned CCLB website at [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca).



**The YMCA International College**  
*is proud to announce it is now an approved centre for the*  
**Cambridge CELTA teacher training program**


Led by internationally experienced teacher trainers,  
**Marie Morgan and Tillat Khalid**, this is a world-recognized  
 program providing eligibility for BC TEAL certification.

One-month intensive program including:  
 ▼ supervised practicum ▼ support with job search

***Six sessions per year***

We are currently accepting applications for our next sessions  
 which start **February 18, 2002** and **April 8, 2002**  
 Please apply early as registration is limited.

For more information, or to pick up  
 an application package, please contact:  
**YMCA International College**  
 200 - 1166 Alberni Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3Z3  
 (located near Burrard Skytrain station)  
 tel: 604-899-4161 / fax: 604-899-4162  
 e-mail: [college@vanymca.org](mailto:college@vanymca.org) / [www.vanymca.org](http://www.vanymca.org)



# Beware of Road Surprises #2: Winter Wonderland

by Beth Coleman

Nothing much surprises me anymore. Maybe it's age. Maybe it's experience. However, many things amuse me as I continue as an EAP teacher in the UAE.

Near the end of Ramadan I was invited to join four South African Moslem families for the Iftar meal that breaks the day's fast. The fact the invitation came almost two days prior to the event was unusual in that most planning here is of the spontaneous variety and often invitations come knocking at your door or ringing on your mobile (which I don't have) sometimes only 15 minutes before the occasion. But this sudden inspirational method of planning grows on you and newcomers can easily be spotted by their insistence on trying to plan weeks in advance.

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*We set up on the grass sheltered from the breeze off the water by rows of date palms.*

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Anyway, on the appointed day, off I went with my contribution of bean salad and my beach chair. Yes, beach chair, as the meal was to be a picnic on the breakwaters of Abu Dhabi, under the world's largest national flag. We set up on the grass sheltered from the breeze off the water by rows of date palms. Sweaters came out as many found the drop of temperature from 25 to 19 rather chilly. (Eat your heart out ,Vancouverites.) We broke fast with traditional dates, sweets and juices. Soon the barbecue was

erected, the charcoal glowing, and as the sun set and the Eid lights of red and green shone across the water in the city center, we settled in for our feast and the accompanying conversation. All this seemed quite normal, the huge flag flapping like a gigantic sail far above, the red and green lights, the warmth, even the feral cats circling our camp as soon as the fish, prawns and chicken were grilling. What gave me a cultural fusion grin was that in the midst of a December picnic, at night, during a Moslem celebration, the two primary - school aged girls in our group sang "Sally the Camel Had Seven Humps" alternating with "Away in a Manger". With amused epiphany I realized this was, amid the world's poverty, bombings and death, a treasured moment of tolerance to be savored.

As if to celebrate my moment, many local families arrived as it was now about 10 p.m. and it is at this time until about 2 or 3 a.m. that the energy of Ramadan percolates. Even children bounce about until at least midnight or later to enjoy this family time,

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*With amused epiphany I realized this was, amid the world's poverty, bombings and death, a treasured moment of tolerance to be savored.*

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especially since Ramadan falls in the idyllic winter weather. As we packed up at about 1a.m. and I accepted another invitation to Eid lunch (celebrating the first day of Eid al Fitr which ends Ramadan) I smiled as I realized that no one knew when that was. For despite all scientific instruments, the crescent moon that heralds the start of Eid must be spotted by the Imam before Eid can be officially declared. It might be Saturday, or it might be Sunday. No one knew for sure. Did we work on Saturday? No one knew for sure and here it was Friday at 1a.m. Ah well, another reason to approach life spontaneously. At least in this instance such not knowing was cause for amusement. "Beware of Road Surprises", the road sign that adorns Emirate highways, is a warning that is not nearly as amusing when the waiting for sudden spontaneous decrees is within the workplace. For now, however, as we left the remains of the fish for the feral cats and packed up the cars, I smiled as I hummed "Winter Wonderland" and kicked the sand out of my sandals.

*Beth Coleman, who has a Masters in Language Education from UBC, taught university in Japan for four years and is presently in her second year of teaching university for national women in the United Arab Emirates.*

# Teaching Teens in Brazil

by Jennifer Waymark



Teaching teens in Jundiai, a wealthy bedroom city of Sao Paulo, I learned a few things about teaching. I discovered that everything I learned - in my TESL course and during two years of teaching at an International school in Vancouver - was out the window if I didn't learn class control.

I started my first class nervous beyond belief. I hadn't been around teen culture since graduating from high school some twelve years before. Taking the advice of my director, I prepared a great song activity based on the classic Buddy Holly hit, "Everyday". My students politely listened, but two years later, when these 14-15 year olds were my 16-17 year old students, they informed me that the song had been a major inside joke. While I had been playing Buddy Holly, everybody else was getting the Spice Girls and Aerosmith. Note To Self Number One: when using songs in the language classroom, try to consider what your teenage students are interested in.

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## *My students' politeness was short-lived...*

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My students' politeness was short-lived. Soon after, I had to cope with students shooting spit balls at each other, hiding each other's books, pens, pencils, and whistling whenever I, or another female, bent down to pick something up. I frantically spoke to every teacher in the school but they explained that if the students were not sleeping in class, then they must really like me. Strange way of

showing affection, but I had to listen to my experienced colleagues.

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## *Where was my control? Where was my respect? How could I get them to pay attention to adjective order?*

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Next, I went through an inquisition. "Why are you here?" "Do you have a boyfriend?" "Why not?" "Are you gay?" (peals of laughter). Then the disrespect started - but it was mostly jovial. "Teacher," Thiago innocently asks, "say this word in Portuguese - pora." Innocent teacher, "what does pora mean?" Much laughter since it's a common swear word. "Teacher," young friendly Eduardo asks, "what does (another expletive) mean? I heard it a lot in a movie I rented." "Teacher," Paulo queries, "Are you sure you are not gay?" "Teacher, can we play strip poker?" Oh my. Where was my control? Where was my respect? How could I get them to pay attention to adjective order?

Aha! A game from the Reward series might work since the students like to sit around and chat. "Everyone on the floor - let's play a game," I suggest. I hear laughter, team work, adjectives being used and...what are they doing with the animal markers I gave them to play the board game with? Oh my goodness, all the little animals are off the board and having sex. Note To Self Number Two - no more games with animal markers!

Next class, we try another game. Back on the floor, where

they seem to actually work better (why is this?), I pull out another board game and ask the students to take a coin and place it on the board. Silence. "Teacher," (don't they know I have a name?), "where are the little animals?" Teacher responds that there are no little animals anymore because they disrespected the little animals. Laughter from the girls who think I may have won. Teacher turns around, and teacher's pencil case goes missing. And so it went for months.

This is just a sampling of my experiences in one of the classes of teens I taught in Brazil. Later on, I had to deal with my shoes being stolen, getting locked out of the classroom, my coffee being drunk, and the steamy window drawn all over with various male and female anatomical parts. I learned the value of taking the trouble-makers outside for a talk. "Do I ever embarrass or disrespect you in the class? Do I deserve to be disrespected? No, so don't. I think you are really funny and have lots of interesting things to say, but I will not tolerate disrespect." End of chat, and to my surprise, it worked.

But probably the most important thing I learned was how to get students on side, or in other words, get them to like me. Having a sense of humour was helpful but more important was being able to draw the line at unacceptable behaviour. Five minutes of shenanigans at the beginning of the class, followed by a group chat and warm-up, and then the lesson was the pattern that emerged. I also

*(Continued on page 14)*

(...Teaching Teens...Continued from page 13)

figured out that when Thiago, Paulo or another ring leader was absent, the class went much more smoothly. What most of these boys wanted was attention, so I gave it to them, mostly out of class. Wonders could be achieved when I realized these young students just wanted me to like them. Note To Self Number Three!

Other strategies I learned included: how playing cards could produce amazing amounts of language on a day when it was too hot to learn anything. How teen culture is pervasive and although cheesy, Backstreet Boys and N'Sinc have a lot of vocabulary in their songs. I discovered how the secret crushes affected class behaviour, and not wanting to look dumb in

front of peers was all important. I learned how to recognise learning disabilities and how much extra help meant to these kids. I learned that a lot can be accomplished with a smile and a laugh, and that teens aren't as scary as they seem. They can be fragile, sensitive, warm, cool, smart, fast, witty, mean, cruel and kind just like the rest of us, but without the social finesse.

I also realized I loved working with these Brazilian teens. They brought a lot of laughter to my life and, although they wiped me out physically, I look back on my experience in Jundiai, and smile a warm deep smile. This incredible bunch of energetic kids eventually grew up and got serious as they prepared for their University entrance exams and adulthood. I

was fortunate to have known them in the last stages of their innocence. They gave me the gift of friendship and trust, and earned the respect of a teacher who tried to understand their crazy world.

*Jennifer taught EFL in Brazil for over 2 years before returning to Shane Global Village English Centre. She still misses the hot weather and the cool beer.*

**The UBC Centre for Intercultural Communication**  
is pleased to present an

## **Intercultural Studies Summer Institute**

### **June 24-28, 2002**

Please join us for workshops, presentations and discussions that highlight the awareness, knowledge and skills needed for communicating effectively across cultures.

The week will feature courses from the **UBC Certificate in Intercultural Studies** program [cic.cstudies.ubc.ca/courses.htm](http://cic.cstudies.ubc.ca/courses.htm) and a speaker series that includes:

**'Bridging Worldviews and Cultural Conflicts'**

a workshop with Michelle LeBaron, June 26th from 9:00am – 4:30pm. \$150

**'Learner and Facilitator Perspectives on Intercultural Training'**

an evening presentation with Rhonda Margolis, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. \$5

**'An understanding of Brown'**

a one-woman play & discussion with local actor Lesley Ewen, June 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. \$8

For program details and registration, please call the UBC Centre for Intercultural Communication at 604-822-1437 or email [christine.connell@ubc.ca](mailto:christine.connell@ubc.ca)

# A New Focus on Idioms

by Brad Bentz

As any ELT teacher can attest, most language students consistently state that vocabulary is their main priority as they try to become competent in a English. Thus, it is interesting to note that until recently very little importance was given to vocabulary in modern language teaching. Language teaching models, from grammar translation to the communicative method, neglected the role of lexicon in language acquisition.

## New Attitudes to Lexis

However, today this attitude is being radically rethought as applied linguists and language teachers alike try to find a model of language that more closely resembles how native speakers actually store and use language and one that meets student demands as they struggle to reach proficiency level. Vocabulary is now becoming more central to any English language-teaching program. This attitude is eloquently summed up in Scott Thornbury's statement that 'vocabulary acquisition is the largest and most important task facing the language learner. So, why has there been this sudden shift in ELT theory surrounding vocabulary?

Recent corpus studies have proven that the lexicon of a native speaker is much larger than previously thought. This is a result of a new understanding of how native speakers retain and access language. It has been proposed that adult language users have at their command hundreds of thousands of phrases and expressions and that

the second language learner must develop a similar repertoire that can be accessed quickly and naturally.

These new ideas regarding language and how native speakers actually use it have directly affected ideas regarding idioms. Previously, idioms were regarded as a fairly small part of the total language. However, if we look at idioms as fixed or partially fixed linguistic chunks where the meaning depends on appropriate collocation, it is clear that idioms are a central part of the native lexicon and important for learners of all levels. These chunks vary from traditional fixed idioms such as *once in a blue moon* to fixed phrases such as *I see what you mean* and also include semi-fixed expressions like *to be the tip of the iceberg*.

## Two Challenges for the Teacher

Thus, having identified the fact that the idiomatic lexicon needed for some degree of fluency is much larger than previously thought, the problem for the teacher is how to transfer this knowledge to learners. This presents two challenges: 1) The sheer mass of idiomatic language needed for use and 2) The non-literalness of idiomatic language.

While trying to approach the sheer mass of idiomatic language, teachers can include not only any authentic text that can be analyzed for idiomatic expressions but also straightforward lists of idiomatic language. Any authentic text based on spoken English will

contain a great number of expressions for students to notice and process for meaning. However, this in itself may not be enough. A teacher will have to supplement this authentic material with old-fashioned lists containing various chunks of idiomatic language that students can match to definitions or, perhaps put into meaning categories.

## A Chance to Experiment

After this language has been noticed and processed for meaning, students must have a chance to experiment with its use, and there must be depth to this interaction. They must have a chance to place this idiomatic language in various categories, to match these expressions with other similarly used language, to explore how they collocate in text, and finally to test their use again and again so that use becomes accurate. Although a teacher cannot guarantee what language will be learned or how it will be used, he/she can provide students with the tools they need to deal with this vast, complex and crucial lexis.

The types of activities mentioned above also allow the student to deal with the non-literalness of this language. Idioms must never be removed from the context within which they are used and must never be 'chopped up' for grammatical analysis. Idiomatic language only makes sense in its context and to remove it from that context will only confuse the student and serve to de-motivate.

(Continued on page 16)

(Idioms...Continued from page 15)

Also, it should be pointed out to students that this kind of lexis occurs in their own language. Thus learners will realize that there are 'context dependent' idioms in their L1 and will, hopefully, accept the non-literalness of idioms and treat them as whole lexical chunks and not as bits of vocabulary joined grammatically.

### Learner Dependent

Interest in idiomatic language may be dependent on the learner. Despite its importance, learners studying for academic purposes in their home country may not have as much need for as large a 'spoken lexicon' as students living in an English speaking environment. Moreover, learners studying 'English for special purposes' may not need to explore idiomatic language that does not directly relate to their discipline specific discourse. However, due to our new recognition of the importance of idioms within spoken English, some study should be part of every English language program.

In conclusion, idiomatic language is an important field of study within ELT for one simple reason: an understanding of such language will increase comprehension. Students instinctively know that understanding idioms will give them greater access to the maze of native speaker speech even if they do not instinctively know how to produce this language. As a result, students will be motivated by a class dedicated to idiomatic language and, in this way, can be encouraged to bring skills of language exploration and an understanding of meaning in context to other areas of their English language learning.

Thornbury, S. 1998. "The Lexical Approach: A Journey Without Maps?", MET Vol. 7 Number 4.

*Brad Bentz has been teaching ESL/EFL for five years in Korea, Canada and England. He is currently an instructor at Global Village, Vancouver. In the next TEAL News, Brad will write about different classroom activities that promote idiom learning.*



# Conference Calendar

## October 2002

10th Korea TESOL International Conference,  
*Crossroads: Generational Change in ELT in Asia*,  
Seoul, Korea  
Oct 5, 6, [www.kotesol.org/conference](http://www.kotesol.org/conference)

ATESL *Getting Connected*  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Oct 18-19, [www.atesl.org](http://www.atesl.org)

SPEAQ 2002  
Quebec City  
Oct 24-25, [www.speaq.qc.ca](http://www.speaq.qc.ca)

## November 2002

Exploring Global Issues  
Douglas College, Vancouver, BC  
Nov. 22 [www.bcteal.org](http://www.bcteal.org)

TESOL *Bridges to the Future*  
Toronto, Ont  
Nov 21-23 [www.teslontario.org/conference](http://www.teslontario.org/conference)

## December 2002

24th International Language Testing Research  
Colloquium, *Language Testing in Global Contexts*  
Hong Kong  
Dec 12-15 [www.polyu.edu.hk.aclar.ltrc.htm](http://www.polyu.edu.hk.aclar.ltrc.htm)

13th World Annual Congress of Applied  
Linguistics  
Singapore  
Dec 16-21 [www.aila2002.org](http://www.aila2002.org)

## 2003

BC TEAL 2003  
*Critical Reflection and Reflective Deliveries*  
Shane Global Village English Centers, Vancouver  
Feb. 27-Mar. 1 [www.bcteal.org](http://www.bcteal.org)

TESL Canada 2003 *Connecting Communities:  
Inspirations and Aspirations*, Burnaby, BC  
Nov 13-15, 2003, [www.tesl.ca](http://www.tesl.ca)

# High School Education in Canada and Taiwan

## Part 2

by Ami Yang

*In the February issue Ami compared the relative freedom of high school students in Vancouver and Taipei. In this article, she discusses the role of parents and testing in Taiwanese education and gives some advice to international students who come to Canada to complete their Grade 12 education.*

Taiwanese parents play a very active role in the education of their children. Everyday, they are asked to sign the homework booklet before their children go to school. Therefore they are more familiar with their children's school routine than Canadian parents. Taiwanese parents are encouraged to attend sporting and cultural activities and to visit schools and meet with teachers. Almost every parent encourages his or her children to study hard and participate in the learning enterprise. There is always a pupil who can lead the class when the teacher is absent. Taiwanese parents will spend great sums of money to get their children the best education. As well as going to regular high school, they will also send their children to one of the many reputable cram schools or hire home tutors.

Due to Chinese heritage, educational achievements bring honor and success, not only for the students but also their whole family. Consequently, parents are proud if their children do well or make great progress in academic learning. As a result, the level of academic stress among Taiwanese students is high because Taiwanese people believe that educational achievement is the ultimate measure of success for young people.

## Tests and Stress

Examinations do not play as large a role in the Canadian secondary school system as they do in the Taiwanese secondary school system. Even in academically oriented Grade 12 courses, tests are not given frequently. However, examinations play a major part in the Taiwanese high school and are a further cause of stress. Even in junior high school, Taiwanese students take the Joint High School Entrance Examination, which determines where they will go to senior high school and they take the JCEE to enter universities. In other words, if the students do poorly on these tests, they will not go to a reputable senior high school and attend a prestigious university. In Taiwan, quizzes are given on a daily basis to prepare students for the crucial senior high school examination.

Because of the Taiwanese emphasis of testing, one would expect Taiwanese students to perform better on international examinations than Canadian students. This is indeed the case, as shown in a study of Mathematics by the Educational Testing Service which showed that on an International Mathematics exam, Taiwanese students scored an average of 8-9% above average, whereas

Canadian students scored about 2% below average. Clearly, Taiwanese students are better prepared for tests, but whether their educational experience is superior to the Canadian educational experience is debatable. Perhaps the ideal educational system would combine these strengths: the individualism and freedom of choice found in Canadian schools and the work ethic and test taking skills found in Taiwanese schools. International students should be aware of the differences between Canada and their own countries in order to adjust to the new circumstances and try to overcome language barriers so they will be successful.

## Suggestions for International Students

Foreign students, who want to live up to the high expectations of their parents, relatives and even peers in their country, want to succeed when they are studying in Canada. However, due to the different cultures and the distinct educational environments of Canada, they will discover certain difficulties in studying overseas. When they live in a different culture, foreign students usually encounter common problems such as language barriers, accommodation difficulties,

*(Continued on page 20)*

# BC TEAL is looking for SIG volunteers!

## What is a SIG?

SIG stands for Special Interest Group. SIGs will give members of BC TEAL a chance to meet (literally or virtually, by email or discussion forum), discuss and share ideas on a mutual interest connected to the field of ESL.

## What kinds of SIGs are available?

That's really up to BC TEAL members. In the past people have expressed an interest in Adult Education, Teacher Training, CALL, K-12, Multicultural Issues, Refugees and Immigrants. We will put people with similar interests in touch with each other and then it's up to the group to evolve and develop the SIG depending on the interests reflected by the members.

## IATEFL and TESOL SIGs

IATEFL and TESOL also have Special Interest Groups. The areas of interest in these SIGs are very diverse ranging from Literature, Young Learners, and CALL to Literacy and Multiculturalism. These SIGs are big groups, producing newsletters, running mini-conferences and organizing SIG track talks at international conferences. We cannot be so ambitious given our smaller membership but we can use SIGs as a chance for members interested in the same themes to discuss, debate and raise awareness of pertinent issues.

## What do SIGs do?

SIGs can work in a variety of ways. Some members may choose to use their group as a forum for discussion and sharing of ideas between the group. Others may wish to be more ambitious and organise mini-conferences on their chosen theme. Some may want to submit articles for the TEAL newsletter or to bring out a publication connected to their area of interest.

## Who runs the SIGs?

SIGs are run by the members of the group, reporting back to the BC TEAL SIG coordinator on their various meetings and activities. Each SIG should have one main coordinator who takes responsibility for

organizing the group, reporting back to the SIG coordinator, informing members of meetings and discussion forums, etc. SIGs may also wish to bring issues to the BC TEAL committee for discussion and this can be organized through the SIG coordinator.

## Who can become a member?

Any member of BC TEAL can become a member of a SIG and have access to the discussion groups, meetings, email exchanges, etc.

## Web site chat forum

We may be able to set up a chat forum on the BC TEAL web site, open to BC TEAL members where discussions and the exchange of information can take place.

## How do I get involved?

You should send your name to the BC TEAL office stating your area of interest. All the names will be sent to the SIG coordinator who will compile groups of people interested in similar topics and introduce them to each other via email.

## Keeping everyone informed

The groups will need some time to discuss how they want to organize their group. When they have decided the format of their meetings and the issues they wish to discuss the coordinator of the group should make a summary, keeping the SIG coordinator informed. Summaries or minutes of meetings should also be sent to the coordinator so that BC TEAL is able to keep records of what is going on and make suggestions to new members who are interested in joining a SIG. A summary of SIG activity will be written up in the BC TEAL newsletter, compiled from reports from SIG coordinators. SIG members are also encouraged to submit articles and letters to the newsletter initiating debate and raising awareness.

*Sarah Burwood is Director of Studies at the YMCA International College.*

# TEAL Mini-conference

**Theme: Exploring Global Issues**

**Saturday, November 16, 2002**

Douglas College, 700 Royal Avenue, New Westminster

## What are Global Issues?

Global Issues can refer to concepts such as peace, justice, human rights, world development, social responsibility and international understanding, and to world problems such as war, hunger, poverty, oppression, racism, sexism and environmental destruction.

Today, the links that bind us - more than ever before - stretch from one corner of the world to the next, and from there, into our classrooms.

## How do you explore Global Issues with your students?

- What is a Global Citizen?
- Where do students get their information about current events?
- How do you facilitate more effective cross-cultural communication?
- How did you get your students out of their desks and into the world/community?
- How has the global economy affected your administrative decisions?
- How do you decide which issues are too sensitive to deal with?
- How do you deal with students with strongly conflicting views?

These questions are meant to inspire you! You will find a Call for Presentations in the enclosed newsletter, as well as on the BC TEAL website at [www.bcteal.org](http://www.bcteal.org). Plan to share your ideas through a 75 minute workshop, panel, paper or computer lab workshop.

Deadline for proposals is Sept 6, 2002.  
Presenters will be notified on Sept 17.

Co-chairs: Reema Faris, Stephanie Howard, Janice Penner

*(Taiwan...Continued from page 17)*

misunderstandings, and loneliness. In addition, they face problems in dealing with their newfound freedom.

The faster foreign students adapt to their new environment, the faster they can concentrate on their study. What can international students do to make this adjustment easier? First of all, students who decide to study in Canada should research information about the country and culture in advance. Usually, they can browse websites or books that introduce Canadian life, the educational system and the schools where they want to study. Next, the first problem students will encounter when they arrive in Canada is accommodation. Living in an English-speaking homestay is an efficient approach. It not only helps students integrate into Canadian culture but also reduces the trouble of finding accommodation. Although staying with a family means international students will lose a certain sense of freedom, they can learn quickly how they should adapt to the different manners, behaviors and attitudes of their host country. Otherwise, students from a structured society sometimes discover in Western countries a level of freedom they may not want.

Most Asian students who have had to conform strictly to house rules and school rules may feel confused with the newfound freedom in this new culture. Therefore, it is very important for them to know where they can get help. The International Office is the right place to go when they have any question. Services offered include academic and personal consultation, medical insurance, visa extension, interpretation, and information about clubs and recreation.

Finally, students often encounter difficulties in academic work because they are poor in taking notes, listening to lectures, giving answers and composing essays. They need to improve their ability in listening, in observing, in use of body language and in asking effective questions, to overcome their language barriers and gain more confidence. Students who have problems in English should look for proper help such as a tutoring centre.

In conclusion, going abroad to study is very challenging for foreign students but although

Trinity U.

the new environment includes many difficulties, there are still a great deal of rewards. Students will experience many delights and interesting memories throughout their travel in the different country. Therefore, they should treasure every happy recollection and be brave in facing any setbacks.

*Ami Yang is an international student from Taiwan who completed her Grade 12 education in Vancouver. She finished the English Bridge Program at Simon Fraser University in November 2001 and is now in her freshman year at SFU.*

April 25th, 2002

Dear Colleagues,

As of June 1, 2002, the BC TEAL Certificate Review process will be retired in favor of the TESL Canada Professional Standards. As of this date, BC TEAL will adopt the National Standards and will no longer issue Professional Certificates. Late applicants from the February 01, 2002 deadline, and those who received BC TEAL application packages prior to this notice, will be processed as usual in a final evaluation by BC TEAL, provided the applications are received before October 1, 2002.

Please note that:

BC TEAL Certificates (provincial recognition) remain valid as issued; and BC TEAL Certificate holders may wish to supplement their certification with national recognition by applying to TESL Canada.

For comprehensive information regarding TESL Canada National Certification Standards, please visit the TESL Canada website at [www.tesl.ca](http://www.tesl.ca). or contact the TESL Canada office directly at 604-298-0312 or [admin@tesl.ca](mailto:admin@tesl.ca).

Kirsten Bunton  
PSAC Chair

**BC TEAL would like to congratulate the following people for receiving their TEAL Professional Certificates:**

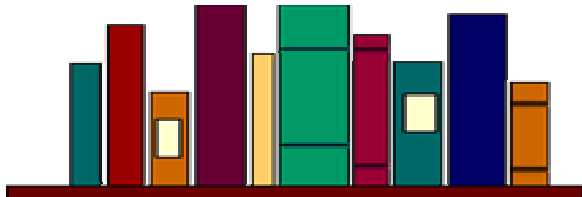
**Level 1**

Celeste Jasmine Folk  
Iris J. Albina  
Jennifer Cowan  
Lorraine Mun Yee Choo  
Bhavani G. Chlopan  
Catherine Feick  
Helen Lambert  
Carol Loncaric  
Thomas V. Rozario

**Level 2**

Stuart K. Culver

# Book Reviews



Title: *On Second Language Writing*  
 Author: Paul Kei Matsuda and Tony Silva (Editors)  
 Publisher: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (2001)  
 ISBN: 0-8058-3516-4  
 Price: US\$24.50  
 Rating: \*\*\*\*

Title: *Academic Writing Programs*  
 Author: Ilona Lecki (Editor)  
 Publisher: TESOL Inc (2001)  
 ISBN: 0-939791-89-7  
 Price: C\$50.25/ US\$25.95 for TESOL members  
 Rating: \*\*\*\*

Last year saw the publication of two very interesting titles for academic writing teachers. The first, *On Second Language Writing*, is a collection of papers (edited by Paul Kei Matsuda and Tony Silva) which were originally presented at the first Symposium on L2 Writing hosted by Purdue University in 1998. Matsuda, a regular presenter at both TESOL and Four Cs (Conference on College Composition and Communication), has been one of the strongest advocates for the need to develop better dialogue between the fields of Composition Studies, which is primarily theory driven, and L2 Writing, which is more practice driven.

The book includes papers from many of the major names in the field including Barbara Kroll, Ilona Lecki, Sarah Benesch, and Joy Reid among others. Topics range from useful reviews of different bodies of L2 research to abstract discussions of poststructuralist critical theory as it applies to EAP. I found Joy Reid's contribution, "Advanced EAP Writing and Curriculum Design: What Do We Need to Know?", especially interesting and relevant. She writes of the importance of needs analysis and discusses some of the research findings in this area. English departments were found to be anomalous both in the nature of the assignments they gave students and in their evaluation criteria. In other faculties, the most common writing tasks given to undergraduates were short-answer questions and the most common purpose for writing was "to display knowledge". She quotes one study that shows students were almost never required to write personal narratives, yet this remains the primary genre that appears in most ESL writing textbooks, including Reid's revised edition of *The Process of Composition*. Reid reminds us that not only institutions but university departments vary in the expectations they have of student writers, which makes her call for the explicit teaching of genres very persuasive. This is both a very readable and thought-provoking book and I highly recommend it.

A volume in the *Case Studies in TESOL Practice Series*, this book describes a wide range of academic L2 writing programs with diverse goals and diverse student populations. The book is divided into three sections, the first focusing on EFL programs in Hong Kong, Oman and Japan and the others on ESL programs in Canada, the U.S. and Australia. Section Two looks at courses that seek to establish linkages between L2 students and their communities, often disciplinary communities, whereas the writing programs in Section Three are more concerned with writing as a tool to examine content issues in the university and in the wider world.

Each chapter follows the same format. An introduction gives some background to the program and then a context section provides the historical and institutional framework in which it operates. This is followed by a program description with what the authors believe to be its distinguishing features.

Finally a "Practical Ideas" section suggests how the program might be adapted to other contexts.

In her introduction, Lecki suggests that the most radical innovation in the book is represented by a program offered by the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research which is part of the Division of Linguistics and Psychology at Macquarie University in Sydney. David Hall describes their English for Academic and Professional Development course which is aimed at overseas students who plan to study in Australian universities as well as overseas or local professionals who need better English skills for their careers. Its innovation is in its adoption of "Talkbase", a student-generated methodology (originated at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok) which seeks to address the major problem in programs like this of how to address content when the range of purposes within the class is so diverse. As Hall explains, "It is the aim of Talkbase that participants should provide their own

*(Continued on page 23)*

(Book Review ...Continued from page 22)

content to the course.” This chapter alone makes the book worth buying.

*Ishbel Galloway has been teaching in Vancouver since 1998. She teaches Academic Writing in Simon Fraser University’s English Bridge Program, an intensive preparatory EAP program for L2 students. She also does curriculum development for BCIT and SFU.*

Title: *Style and Substance: A Multimedia Approach to Literature and Composition*

Authors: Rock, Claudia / Phadke, Suneeti

Publisher: Longman ISBN: 2-7613-1210-4

Published: 2001

Price CAD: \$39.95

Rating: \*\*\*

While there are now a *few* good resources for teaching academic writing to our advanced ESL students, little effort has been devoted to bridging the gap between simple essay writing and genuine literary analysis for undergraduate level ESL writers.

*Style and Substance*, a new text from Longman, aims to fill this gap. To be honest, it is really less of a book than a multimedia package that includes the following comprehensive array of materials: an audio CD-ROM (recordings of poems and a radio play), a teacher’s guide (teaching suggestions, detailed answer key, assessment grids), teaching tools (transparencies), and a Website (more of everything at [www.erpi.com/rock](http://www.erpi.com/rock)) accessible both by instructors and by students.

At the core of the book are ten engaging short stories across a spectrum of styles that range from the classical to the mildly experimental. These include *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe, *The Story of an Hour* by Kate Chopin, *The Veldt* by Ray Bradbury, *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson, *Hills Like White Elephants* by Ernest Hemingway, *The New Food* by Stephen Leacock, *Bread* by Margaret Atwood, *Old Habits Die Hard* by Makeda Silvera, and *Newton* by Jeanette Winterson.

The stories form the basis of a step-by-step approach to literary analysis tailored specifically for ESL students. The issues of plot, setting, theme, narration, point of view, characterization, and style, writing an essay, and making an oral presentation are all addressed in turn and are supplemented by additional exercises at the proprietary website.

Rhetorically, the book is especially strong, having good sections on topic sentences, paragraphs, thesis statements, and different essay modes.

The grammar portion of the text also takes a markedly ESL bent, focusing on sentences and clauses, transitional words, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, euphemisms, clichés, concise language, denotation/connotation, Latin and Germanic roots, prefixes and suffixes, homonyms, parallel constructions, dangling and misused modifiers, agreement, shift in tenses, levels of language, paraphrasing and quotations.

To anticipate one criticism, Rock’s text *is* markedly canonical or traditional but of course, this is exactly what is needed at an introductory undergraduate level.

Another more valid criticism might be that Rock does not address the important issues of research and attribution that present real problems even for the most advanced of our ESL students. Teachers who use her text, therefore, will have to supplement the classroom prep with the more mechanical aspects of teaching literary analysis. Still, the book is very strong and deserves consideration. In the hands of an experienced ESL instructor who loves literature as much as Rock does, it will be a powerful classroom resource.

Giles Slade is a regular contributor to the TEAL News. He has recently returned from a stint teaching in the United Arab Emirates.



**\$10.00 at the BC TEAL office!**

# Teaching Tip: Vocabulary in the Academic Preparation Classroom

By Sandra Slade

As we all know, there has been a recent reassessment in the importance of vocabulary teaching. Clearly, a strong vocabulary is an essential part of academic success, in both oral and written communication; however, how do we help our students acquire such a behemoth?

Norbert Scmitt's article "Vocabulary Learning Strategies" in *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*, Cambridge University Press, 1997 contains several invaluable taxonomies which chart both practice and perceived usefulness in various approaches to vocabulary methodology. While this is an excellent resource for long term planning, classroom teachers are very much on their own when it comes to developing practical and relevant activities for their own classrooms.

Often, suggestions for learning vocabulary, such as vocabulary cards, or student created dictionaries, are successful with mature, motivated students who know how to work consistently and independently. But these activities are on-going projects, so how can we encourage vocabulary acquisition during one class session?

One of the common questions students ask about academic vocabulary is which words to learn. Beyond subject specific vocabulary, is there a core vocabulary I need to know? Fortunately, Averil Coxhead's Academic Word List is a useful

tool. This list of 570 non-specialized words, culled from a range of university textbooks, becomes a kind of defining dictionary for students as they make their way through an academic reading.

The website ([www.vuw.ac.nz/als/staff/averil\\_coxhead/academic\\_wordlist.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/als/staff/averil_coxhead/academic_wordlist.html)) is more user friendly than a list because the words can be viewed in different ways. In the lab, students can work in pairs or groups. Each group, working with either a newspaper article or a text book-type article, looks for words from the AWL and highlights the word as it occurs in the text they are working with. Later, students can look at these sentences and use them as models for writing. It is important that students pay attention to the word in context, before writing their own sentence. Students can display or present the words, along with original sentences they have written. The writing part here can be done collaboratively with an editor using an English-English learner dictionary to check meaning.

Another excellent resource for this kind of activity is the New York Times site (<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/wordofday/index.html>). Here, a word of the day appears in the context of a short article along with a definition, dictionary link and note on how often the word has appeared in recent articles. Using an overhead, the instructor can initially show students the article, without the definition, and

ask them to guess the meaning of the word using a variety of strategies. These strategies include gathering information about the word such as part of speech, is it an adjective noun, verb noun collocation etc. After recording these suggestions and perhaps voting on the best definition, the teacher can reveal the dictionary meaning and students can decide which guess was the closest. This site enables students to use both the in-context, educated guess method, in tandem with the dictionary information. Using this site, it would also be possible to select words and articles that work with a particular theme or topic.

These are just a couple of lab and classroom tasks; perhaps their main value is raising student awareness about a long, complex but ultimately essential aspect of building vocabulary.

*Sandra Slade is a regular contributor to the TEAL News.*

**Do you have something you would like to write about for the TEAL News? Do you have interesting teaching ideas? If so, send them in to:**

**[Ishbel.galloway@sfu.ca](mailto:Ishbel.galloway@sfu.ca)**

## THE TOWER OF BABBLE

what do I remember  
of my teachers' words

I recall they spoke  
many words

but I don't remember  
any

we spoke the same English  
we knew the same alphabet

did I understand  
their words

probably not  
so many words

tongue-worn texts  
in deaf ears

mostly mumbo-jumbo  
prattling gibberish

alien tongues  
without sense

echoes only  
long lost

I did not belong  
in their classrooms

I found no places  
for dwelling in their words

we stacked the words  
a tower of babble

my teachers' words  
not mine

borrowed words  
that didn't fit

one day  
a tower of rubble

now I begin again  
at the end of the alphabet

where other letters  
can be written

## SPELL POETRY

a long time ago  
I saw a birch tree  
hold the late winter  
light of afternoon  
after rain left  
even the ducks  
in the slough  
sopping mad  
like once  
or maybe twice  
I have seen  
lovers hold  
the love  
of the other  
in their eyes  
and now  
in this poem  
I walk the dike  
again, see again  
the birch tree  
holds still  
the late winter  
light of afternoon:

I spell my words  
on the page;  
I am caught  
in the spell.

If I learn  
to spell poetry,  
will I know  
the spell of poetry?

Dr. Carl Leggo was one of three fantastic speakers at the BC TEAL conference. He spoke on "The Redundancy of Creative Writing: All Writing is Creative" and included some of his poems. He is a poet and an associate professor at the University of British Columbia where he teaches courses in writing, curriculum and narrative research. This is just a taste of what he has written!

# News from the TEAL Charitable Foundation

Since our last report, the TEAL Charitable Foundation has seen a few changes in our Board of Directors. Both Ann Talbot and Lesley Hemsworth completed their terms on the board and will be greatly missed by the remaining members. Norma Scobie also has left the board. In addition, we are happy to welcome three new board members: Wedad Keshajiv, Melissa Swanink and Suzanne Rashad.

## **Wedad Keshavji**(2002 - 2005)

Responsibilities: Treasurer

Wedad is a Certified General Accountant, receiving her designation in 1990. She has worked in Public Practice and in Industry as an accountant. She has also taught accounting at Capilano College and more recently, she has taught accounting in Lebanon. Wedad is also a business owner of a retail hardware store in North Vancouver and continues to provide her services wearing different hats, as the need arises! Currently she is employed as an accountant with KeyCurve, a technology company located in Yaletown. Wedad is enrolled in the TESOL Program at VCC and hopes to complete it in 2002.

## **Melissa Swanink** (2002 - 2005)

Responsibilities: the Pat Wakefield Award; and the Nan Poliakoff Memorial Fund

Melissa is an instructor in the Communications and English Language Training Program at BCIT. In addition to teaching, she is also involved in curriculum

development projects. Her teaching career began as a volunteer with Canadian Crossroads International in China. After several years working in China and Taiwan, she moved to Vancouver to continue teaching and to pursue further studies. In addition, to a Bachelor of Education from the University of Toronto, she holds a TESOL In-Service Certificate from VCC and is in the final stages of completing a Masters of Adult Education from UBC.

## **Suzanne Rashed** (2002 - 2004)

Responsibilities: the David C. Lam Scholarship/ AIDS and Health Education Fund

Suzanne is an SFU Communications graduate who has over 10 years' experience within the education and media sectors, both locally and internationally. Suzanne is the Assistant Director of Pacific Language Institute. She has recently returned to Vancouver after having served 5 years as the Assistant to the VP of College in Beirut, Lebanon. She has taught all levels, from Literacy to Advanced and obtained her ESL teacher certificate from UCB.

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## **Report from Last Year's Projects and Awards Fund Recipient: The Multicultural Society of Kelowna**

One of the awards given by The TEAL Charitable Foundation is The Projects and Awards Fund, given twice a year in grants of up to \$3000. This award is given not only to promote the teaching and learning of English as an additional language, but also to help advance the full participation in Canadian society of people with first languages other than English.

The Multicultural Society of Kelowna was one of the recipients last year, and they recently updated us on how the award was used. The Language Department of the Society was able to offer Advanced ESL classes to help fill the gap in ESL services offered in the Central Okanagan area. Of the eight students who enrolled in the class, two gained successful TOEFL scores, enabling them to continue along the path of getting their credentials recognized in Canada. Another two felt confident enough to enter Okanagan University College after spending three months in the program. According to

Farah Lorimer, Executive Director of the Society, "These students have acknowledged that the time spent in our program had a direct impact on their ability to obtain the required scores and confidence required to continue on with their plans for the future."

The Society offered the program again in January, and three of the original students returned for a second term, along with five new students. Four of the students of this class hope to be accepted into Okanagan University College in the future. Farah Lorimer hopes to be able to offer this program on an ongoing basis. Anyone who is interested in helping or in getting further information about this program can contact Marion McCarthy, the Education Coordinator at The Multicultural Society of Kelowna at 762.2155.

*Eilidh Singh and Farah Lorimer*

# TCF Awards Recipients 2001/2002

## AIDS and HEALTH Education Fund (AHEF)

*The Victoria Coalition for Victims of Torture* received a \$2000 award in order to organize and present a two-day seminar for schools and community dealing with issues of psycho-social trauma among refugees.

*The Americans for Democracy in the Ukraine* also received the AHEF award in the amount of \$5000 USD to train 20 teachers in the Ukraine about HIV/AIDS prevention. As we had excess funds available, we made an exception and granted this group more than the approved allowance.

## TEAL/TESOL Bursary

The TEAL/TESOL Bursary was given to three recipients this year.

*June Dragman* and *Marion Yip*, instructors in the Outreach Department - Homefront Learning Program at Vancouver Community College, each received \$850 to attend and present at the TESL Canada 2002 Conference in Regina.

*Brenda Lohrenz*, the BC Provincial Coordinator for ELSA Net, received \$800 to attend TESL Canada 2002 Conference in Regina.

## Mary Ashworth Scholarship

*Masaki Kobayashi* received \$1500 to present at the TESOL conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. Masaki is presently working on his Ph.D. in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at UBC.

## David C. Lam Award

*Jakob Rosicki* and *Lillian Wei* are this year's recipients of the David C. Lam Award. They both will receive a \$2500 scholarship to honour their great achievements in academic excellence and service to others.

Jacob Rosicki came to Canada from Poland two years ago. Since he was a child in Poland he has made it a priority to help children in need. In Canada, he has volunteered at the Polish Language School in Surrey. He will graduate from Riverside Secondary and plans to attend university to become a teacher.

Lillian Wei immigrated to Canada from China four years ago with her mother and her sister. Lillian's goal is to become a child psychologist in order to one day research complicated mental illness and develop new methods of treatment.

## Pat Wakefield Scholarship

*Kerry Johnson* received \$4000 CDN to help with travel expenses to a Commonwealth country.

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# Award Recipient Report

## AIDS and Health and Education Fund

The Access Community through English (ACE) program, an initiative of Vancouver Community Mental Health Services (VCMHS), was awarded the TEAL Charitable Foundation's AIDS Health and Education Fund (AHEF) in January 2002. ACE provides English language and life skills training to adults (age 19-65) in the Vancouver/Richmond area who have a mental illness and a mental health contact. ACE is a regional program open to all mental health consumers whether or not they are clients of VCMHS.

The goal of the program is to provide ESL/Life Skills that includes health, particularly mental health, content and access skills. The model followed is one of supported education so that the program is accessible to people with serious mental illness. The program is staffed by an ESL Instructor and an Occupational Therapist.

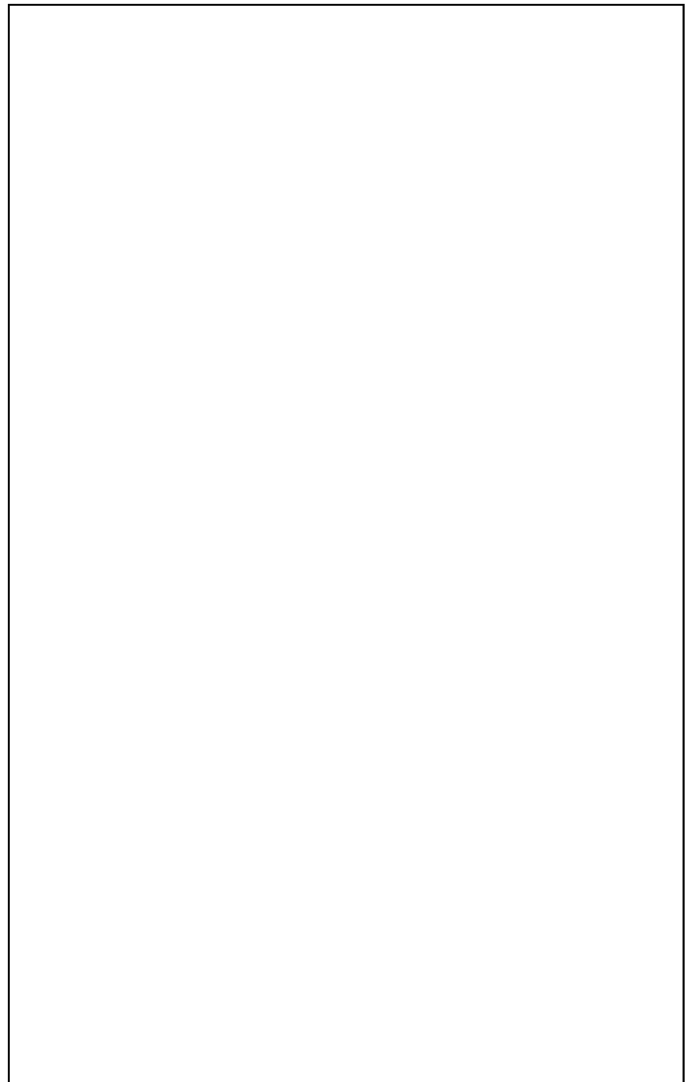
ACE is a unit of VCMHS so has links with all 8 Mental Health teams and other units in the region as well as links to programs of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Partners of the program include Pacific Immigrant Resources Society (PIRS) and Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST). An Advisory Committee to the program includes representatives from MOSAIC, Vancouver Community College (VCC), PACT Employment Services/COAST Foundation, as well as VCMHS Multicultural Liaison Workers.

ACE provides English language/life skills training through classes held at VCMHS units and a community facility spread across Vancouver and in Richmond. The program also provides one-to-one sessions in language and life skills acquisition for those who need it, for reasons of illness and/or learning needs.

At the time of application for the AHEF grant, the program had received over 150 referrals, resulting in large classes and a waitlist. Further funding was sought to provide more classes and open the program at more locations. Delays in opportunities to implement plans were experienced, but ACE is now ready to proceed with plans.

A new class for consumers assessed as in the beginner range of language and access skills is to begin May 2002 in a new location and a further class is in the

planning stages. An ESL Instructor with experience in the area of mental health will teach the class(es) using the ACE curriculum, which has been developed over the year and a half since the program's inception. It is anticipated that access to ACE services will be greatly increased by the addition of a new location and new classes, thereby augmenting provision of accessible ESL/Life Skills training to the Vancouver/Richmond population of persons with mental illness and language and life skills acquisition needs.





# ELSA Net

#208-2525 Commercial Drive

Vancouver, BC V5N 4C1

Tel: 604-876-5758 Fax: 604-876-5709

**English Language Services for Adults Network**

*elsanet@telus.net / www.elsanet.org*

May 14, 2002

To the Board of the TEAL Charitable Foundation

The ELSA Net Board and settlement service provider community would like to extend their appreciation to the TEAL Charitable Foundation in providing funding for our website <http://www.elsanet.org>

We are pleased to announce that the site has been launched to favorable reviews and we are very pleased with the opportunities that it has opened up for us in our communications.

With this tool, clients, potential students, and the public can access contact information for ELSA programs province-wide and find out about eligibility criteria. Links have been made available for our membership and the community at large for English language, settlement, education, community, employment, and government contacts. Finally, with our members only area we have a venue for information sharing and bulletin board discussions.

This has been a tremendous support for ELSA Net, and we sincerely appreciate the TEAL Charitable Foundations contribution to our community.

With much appreciation,

ELSA Net Website Committee Chair  
(on behalf of the website committee)  
Yvonne Chard

ELSA Net Coordinator  
Brenda Lohrenz

# LINC/ELSA/ALT Networking Session at the TESL Canada Conference

By Brenda Lohrenz

Participants had an excellent opportunity to mix and mingle with ESL professionals from across the country at the 2002 'Catch the Dream' TESL Canada Conference held in Regina. Of particular interest for me was checking in with language providers – administrators, instructors, and assessors – working with immigrants through Citizenship and Immigration Canada funded ESL programs.

To provide some background, originally this programming was administered across Canada, with the exception of Quebec, as LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada). Currently agreements are held by two provinces for a federally funded, provincially administered program. In British Columbia this program is called ELSA (English Language Services for Adults), in Manitoba ALT (Adult Language Training).

Communications across provincial borders becomes increasingly challenging and even more imperative in this era of decentralization. Our BC led session at the conference was called 'A National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT Providers', with the objective of looking at avenues for developing a national network of shared initiatives. There was some excellent response to this proposal, and following is a review of some of the thoughts, concerns, and ideas that were offered by participants at the session.

## Information Sharing

Firstly we looked at issues around information sharing. Of key importance is access to project overviews at all stages of development. Receiving notice of projects running in one area of the country may inform other organizations in their long range planning, and have the added advantage of avoiding duplication of efforts. This could include, but is not limited to, curriculum and teaching strategy resources, research involving both language and settlement issues, benchmarked materials and courses that inform eligibility requirements for mainstream programs, sharing of advancements made in client credential recognition, as well as updates on any other progressive initiatives being piloted. In the area of assessment, of interest was hooking-up LINC with ELSA/ALT assessors for data exchange purposes.

In terms of a forum, it was also agreed that a formal network would empower individuals by providing access to a broader audience thereby increasing overall understanding of the issues. Certainly, what works in one part of the country may not be suitable for others, but through dialogue similar concerns might be identified. Regius Brown, a Citizenship and Immigration representative at the session, affirmed that a national language provider network would potentially be a good resource for CIC in determining priorities and addressing common issues.

## Starting the groundwork

The final part of our session looked at ways in which this network might be achieved. It was agreed that TESL Canada, with representatives from across the country, is an ideal starting point. With the intention to bring back this idea to local chapters affiliated with TESL, we hope to start the groundwork of pulling together interested parties. Two promising national venues where face-to-face meetings could be organized are the National Settlement Conference in Calgary and the TESL Canada Conference in Burnaby, both slated for fall of 2003.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more about this initiative, being on the e-mail list, and perhaps playing an active role in planning, please contact me at [elsanet@telus.net](mailto:elsanet@telus.net). Updates will also be forthcoming on the BC TEAL website [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org) and our newly launched ELSA Net website <http://www.elsanet.org>, so stay tuned!

*Brenda Lohrenz is the ELSA Net (English Language Services for Adults) Coordinator for the province of BC. ELSA Net is an unincorporated association comprised of ELSA Service Providers and funded through the British Columbia Settlement and Adaptation Program.*



## TEAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Association of B.C. Teachers of English as An Additional Language

#220 - 3195 Granville Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6H 3K2

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E-mail: [bctéal@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:bctéal@interchange.ubc.ca)

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### What does TEAL do for you?

This professional organization encourages professional development, promotes professional standards for TESL, advocates on behalf of the ESL teaching profession and represents the profession at all levels of government.

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