



# TEAL NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF BC TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE SPRING 2008



## Honouring the Past Embracing the Future

## Celebrating 40 Years of Professional Development

"Professionalism is knowing how to do it,  
when to do it, and doing it." Frank Tyger

B.C. TEAL 40th Annual Conference  
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### Contributors

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## BC TEAL NEWS

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ASSOCIATION OF BC TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS AN  
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# Staying rooted, together

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Momentum is building as we lead up to the 40th anniversary BC TEAL Conference, and the TEAL Board of Directors is putting in a great deal of time and effort to ensure that this is an event that will live up to its title of “Honoring our Past and Embracing the Future”. The Conference Committee, lead by our joint chairs, Robin Russell and Jola Garus Lekich, began its task at least 6 months ago. There are many minor and major tasks that must be addressed, and their job requires a great deal of dedication and attention to detail to bring it all together. I do hope the membership is conscious of this and fully appreciative of the huge contribution these and other volunteers are making. All who are involved in the organizing of the Conference and the TEAL Sessions demonstrate a true commitment to their profession.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the exemplary work of Noreen Cross, our TEAL Sessions organizer. Noreen has done a truly magnificent job of coordinating the Sessions. We are especially pleased to have been able to deliver the Sessions in Victoria on February 16. Global Village Victoria hosted the event, and it was a well-attended professional development opportunity that many benefited from. I’m sure the students of the teachers who attended are reaping the benefits.

In view of the extraordinary effort being made to bring about the TEAL Conference, I would like to make sure that as many members attend the conference as possible. This will be an event you should not miss. Both plenary speakers are well-renowned, and the plenary panel will surely challenge us to consider what it means to call ourselves ‘professionals’. The workshop submissions are being reviewed and selected at this time, and there

The energy and networking that occurs reminds us that we are part of a profession that has deep roots.

are many exciting and interesting choices that apply to various areas in the field of English language teaching. You will have no trouble finding something interesting and useful. I hope that all levels of practitioners involved in English language teaching, (e.g. instructors / teachers, supervisors, administrators, etc.) will avail themselves of this opportunity for professional development. As someone who has been involved in the field for over 18 years, I feel very strongly that we must all share in the responsibility of providing the opportunity for professionals to share our knowledge and learn from our peers.

The TEAL conference is the only opportunity in the province to engage with colleagues on such a large scale. The energy and networking that occurs reminds us that we are part of a profession that has deep roots. For forty years this association has been pulling together to meet the needs of our learners, and address the changes that have challenged us. This is an association that has served so many, and that so many have served. We need to make sure we look back and honour those who laid this groundwork for us, and also ensure that we keep the torch burning. The professional contacts I have made since coming to BC have been very encouraging and I have sensed a degree of professionalism that encourages and challenges me to be my best. I hope that all of our members feel this same driving force, and respond with increased commitment to the profession. I look forward to seeing you in April.

**Michael Galli**  
President – BC TEAL

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# English as a Second Language Week

April 20 – 27, 2008

We are pleased to announce that the province of British Columbia has agreed to designate April 20-27, 2008 as **ESL Week** in recognition of both the teachers and learners of English as an additional language in British Columbia. This proclamation will coincide with BC TEAL's 40th annual conference, "Honouring the Past; Embracing the Future" to be held in Richmond, BC, at Kwantlen University College on April 25-26th.

We invite all institutions and workplaces in the province to celebrate with us by hosting various events and activities to mark ESL Week. We especially encourage instructors and teachers to participate by planning special activities in your classroom or organization.



## Events and activities can include:

- Hosting a writing contest (story and/or poetry)
- Giving students a special project or assignment related to ESL Learning
- Collecting recipes and publishing an International Cookbook
- Creating "dual language" books
- Putting together an art Exhibition/Display
- Hosting an International Film Festival

For more information on ideas for events and activities, please visit [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org).

## ESL Week Writing Contest

We invite both ESL learners and instructors to submit poems, articles, and stories related to learning and teaching English.

We will publish the winners in the next TEAL NEWS. Please email your submissions to [admin@bctéal.org](mailto:admin@bctéal.org). Closing dates for entries is **April 27th, 2008**.

### Categories for ESL Learners:

- Poetry
- Stories from Beginner level students (up to 200 words)
- Stories from Intermediate and Advanced level students (up to 500 words)

### Categories for ESL Teachers:


- Poetry
- Stories (up to 500 words)



## Facing the table

Finding professionalism in English language teaching

Jolanta Garus



Grilled shrimp, smoked salmon, baked brie...the Christmas party of a multinational corporation. Perhaps if I stayed at the buffet table all night, I could avoid the people at our table. My husband's co-workers are wonderful people, but -- I used to dread those first meeting questions:

"So what do you do?"  
"Oh, I'm a teacher."  
"What grade do you teach?"  
"I, uhm, teach adults ESL."  
"Hmm, so you're not a real teacher."

I never really expected that this is what I would be encountering every time people asked me what I did for a living. I just thought people would nod their heads, pretend to be interested and move on to other topics of conversation. Prestige is not an added bonus of a TESL certificate. In fact, in my experience, the only thing that came with being certified were my friends asking me, "ESL, fun! So when will you get a real job?"

As far as I know, teaching English as a second language is as real as it gets. I, like most teachers, spend hours of my day preparing and creating lesson plans. I teach grammar and communicative skills. I mark exams. I write report cards. Yet, because I do not have a Bachelor of Education, I have felt less than 'qualified'. In fact, I originally applied for the B.Ed. program but quickly

As far as I know, teaching English as a second language is as real as it gets.

realized that I had no desire to teach children. Adults are self-sufficient, respectful, and rarely

throw spitballs. Yet, as a teacher of English to adults, my colleagues and I are seldom given recognition for what we do.

Bill Johnston, in *Values in English Language Teaching*, argues that much of society believes that "if you can speak the language, you can teach it". This leads to a marginalization of the teacher's knowledge of pedagogy, content, and teacher-pupil relations. It is only when I tell people that I use Cuisenaire rods to introduce the subjunctive that they may finally acknowledge not everyone could teach ESL. My students pay a great deal of money to be educated in English; therefore, an answer like "I dunno, we just say it like that" would probably not go over well. Unless more information is known about language teaching, ESL teachers will never be deemed as equals with teachers of other subjects.

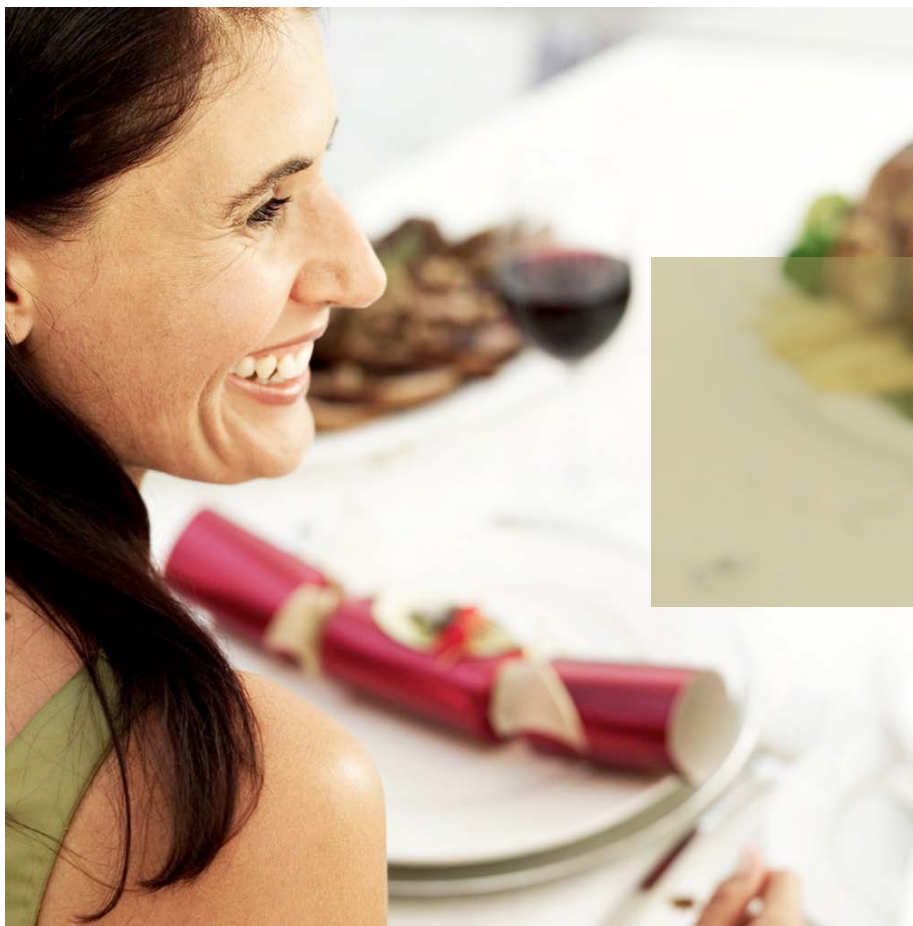
“**B**ecome TESL certified in one month and teach the world!” Sounds good to me, I thought when I first got back from Ukraine. With a B.A. and no formal teaching qualifications, I had simply fallen into teaching. But as time went on, I realized

later, I got another diploma –this one from a recognized TESL Canada school. Did my teaching improve? Marginally, but it was my confidence and career aspirations that developed. Thus, even though I am a child of the three-month

a professional program in which a degree and teacher certification is granted. I do not believe that short programs equal bad programs; unfortunately, when all other teachers need at least one year to be able to work within a school setting, perhaps language teachers should start to reconsider appropriate qualifications in the future.

**W**ith such negativity plaguing me, at least I can say that ESL teachers make a lot of money,

What I can change are my own views, and start to see for myself that ESL is a profession, and that I must treat myself as a professional.



it was something I wanted to continue as a career. So, \$1000 and 120 hours later, I received my TESL certificate and could now teach anywhere, or so I thought. Alas, not all language certificates are the same: Bob and Eileen’s School of English TESL diploma does not compare to the Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults. Mine was somewhere in the middle. A few years

fast track to ESL teaching, I do believe that in order to gain more credibility within the field of teaching, teacher education for TESL needs to be taken more seriously. When people think of “professions”, many will think of law or medicine –both of which need specific training– training that takes much longer than one to three months. Even the Bachelor of Education, which is one year, is

right? What about those benefits? And, let’s not forget job security. Sadly, for many teachers, the answer to these questions is ‘no’. Perhaps by having more educational bodies, such as TESL Canada, establishing rules and regulations in regard to adult ESL instruction, teachers will have more job security, as well as a more appropriate salary. I can do little to change society that I live in or the rules that govern the ESL profession. What I can change are my own views, and start to see for myself that ESL is a profession, and I must treat myself as a professional. I have a moral obligation to teach my students in the most capable

and professional manner possible.

But being morally obligated to my students is not enough on its own. As Bill Johnston states, “although many teachers strive as professionals, their aspirations are not reflected in the way their work is perceived by those around them” (2003, p.108). I decided that in order to feel like a professional, I needed to associate myself with like-minded people. As a result, I am now in TESL Canada, take part in national and provincial conferences, and most importantly, finished my Masters in Second Language Education. By being around people who take

I decided that in order to feel like a professional, I needed to associate myself with like-minded people.

their job in English language teaching seriously, and more importantly, work with an administration that supports their views, I have been inspired to continue in my chosen career path. I have felt empowered to do more in my career and to advocate that teaching ESL is a profession that needs to be valued in the society we live in. So I hope next year, all ESL instructors can look forward to their next office Christmas party.



#### **40th Annual BC TEAL Conference**

*BC TEAL 2008: Our 40th Anniversary Celebration  
HONOURING THE PAST; EMBRACING THE FUTURE*

Jola Garus Lekich and Robin Russell, conference co-chairs, have assembled a conference committee dedicated to making the 2008 conference a tribute to the forty years of service that BCTEAL has offered to the teachers and learners of British Columbia.

Our theme this year is, ‘Honouring the Past; Embracing the Future.’ We plan to make this a celebratory conference that does indeed honour the past. We will be offering a Champagne Toast on Friday evening and are planning a great and very merry evening for BCTEAL members past and present. Of course we also want to peek into the future a bit. For this we are putting together a plenary panel that will discuss the topic of challenges to ESL professionalism. We think that this plenary panel, which will be composed of well-known local ESL scholars and practitioners, will stir up some controversy and kick-start our activities for the next forty years.

ESL professionals, come join us for an opportunity to take in the wisdom of plenary speakers and for a weekend of insightful workshops.

We plan to usher in the next decade with style, so do plan to be part of this 40th anniversary conference.

The conference will be held April 25-26, 2008 at Kwantlen University College, Richmond Campus in Greater Vancouver, British Columbia.

from [bctéal.org](http://bctéal.org)

You're Invited!  
to the

## B.C.TEAL Friday Night Anniversary Party

*A tribute to those who have contributed to the past and present,  
and a merry look into the future*

A special celebration of the  
40th Annual B.C.TEAL Conference

Come out and enjoy

- A Champagne Toast
- Wine and Cheese
- A Silent Auction



April 25, 2008

5:15 - 8:00

See You There!

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# BC TEAL's 40th Anniversary Panel

Challenges to ESL professionalism in the 21st century

**B**C TEAL is celebrating its 40th anniversary by hosting a special panel discussion this year. The panel will take place on Friday, April 24th at 4:00pm with a Champagne Toast following.

**A**ll conference participants are invited to come and enjoy this fascinating discussion about the future of our profession and the challenges that lie ahead in the 21st century. We are honoured to have the following four speakers take part in the discussion entitled, "Challenges to ESL Professionalism in the 21st Century":

**Diane Larsen-Freeman, PhD** is a Professor of Education, Professor of Linguistics, and Director of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan, and a Keynote Speaker at this year's BC TEAL Conference. Dr. Larsen-Freeman's areas of interest include: second language acquisition, language teacher education, English linguistics, and language teaching methodology. Dr. Larsen-Freeman will be discussing Challenges to ESL Professionalism in the 21st Century faced by ESL professionals teaching internationally.

**Kathleen Graham, MA** is the Senior Program Manager of Language Training for the

not-for-profit multicultural immigrant service organization S.U.C.C.E.S.S. For the past five years, Kathleen has been involved in providing English language classes to immigrants, first as an ELSA teacher and more recently as a Senior Program Manager. Kathleen currently manages the 56 government funded ELSA classes offered by S.U.C.C.E.S.S in Greater Vancouver. Ms.

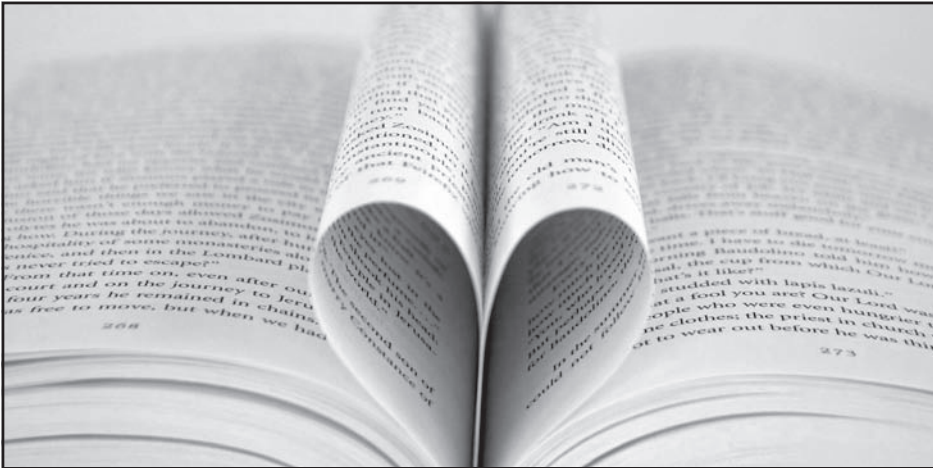
graduate courses in second language reading, language acquisition, literacy acquisition, and teacher education. His outstanding long-term research on the academic and language achievement of immigrant students as well as his current research on the long-term success of immigrants who arrived in Canada as 5 to 8 year-olds is highly respected both nationally and internationally. Dr. Gunderson will address Challenges to ESL Professionalism in the 21st Century faced by Kindergarten to Grade 12 ESL teachers in Canada.

**Wendy Royal, MA** has taught EFL/ESL in Germany, Spain, South Africa and Canada. She is currently a faculty member in the English Language Studies Department at Kwantlen University College. Her areas of special interest include critical language pedagogy, curriculum development and teacher training. She co-authored the text, *The World around Us: Canadian Social Issues for ESL Students*, as well as "Revitalizing a Curriculum: The Long and Winding Road" (TESOL, 2007). Ms. Royal will focus on Challenges to ESL Professionalism in the 21st Century faced by ESL professionals teaching in post-secondary institutions in Canada.

Graham will be speaking about Challenges to ESL Professionalism in the 21st Century faced by ESL professionals teaching in government funded ELSA classes in Canada.

**Lee Gunderson, PhD** is Professor and former Head of the Department of Language and Literacy Education at UBC. He teaches undergraduate and





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TECHNOLOGY  
CHANGES  
EVERYTHING



## Inspiration and sharing in Victoria

The TEAL sessions were held in Victoria for the first time on February 16, 2008 with 52 attendees from Vancouver Island, Vancouver, Prince George, and the Okanagan Valley! It was great to see such positive energy radiating from the presenters and participants. Cathy Ebert did an amazing job at finding seven very diverse, interesting, and inspiring workshops offered including: Vocabulary Building: Beyond Lists by Jennifer Walsh Marr, Storytelling by Mary Mahoney, Promoting Project Work in ESL-Finding a Path by Cristina Petersen, Intercultural Language Teaching by Kathleen Bortolin, Participatory Novels by Laura Nimmon, and It's Getting Hot in Here: Warming Things Up by Cristina Peralejo and Noreen Cross.

I would like to give a big thanks to the presenters for taking the time to create and share these workshops and useful ideas, which many teachers probably were able to use in their classrooms the next week.

The staff at Global Village, Victoria were such gracious hosts and really helped make this TEAL Sessions run smoothly. They also very generously sponsored the breaks with delicious food, coffee and tea: kudos to Paula Jamieson, Nancy Ami and Scott Wilson.



The TEAL Sessions is generally a quick one-day conference where teachers can come and participate in practical workshops with ideas they can immediately use in their classrooms. The evaluation



surveys indicated that many teachers who attended this event in Victoria really value these

hands-on, practical workshops. There was some great feedback on what kinds of workshops people would like to see at future TEAL sessions. Here are some of the topics which were mentioned: using technology in the classroom and hands-on tech “stuff”, pronunciation ideas, vocabulary building and recycling, creative error correction techniques, drama activities, using visuals in the classroom, problems in teaching night classes, reading lessons, and using music in the class. If you or anyone you know has expertise or interest in these areas, and would like to present at the next TEAL Sessions, please contact [admin@bctea.org](mailto:admin@bctea.org). We want to keep sharing the inspiration!

Noreen Cross  
TEAL Sessions Chair



## Taking the bull by the horns

Learner autonomy and self-awareness in the ESL classroom

Beth Fawcett

You've spent your week on future forms, moving from function to form and back to function. You've explored everyone's plans and dreams, corrected the use of auxiliaries, and practiced the pronunciation of reduced sounds. You've warmed them up, helped them, and put the language into meaningful contexts. You've done it all, or so you think. And then, at the end of the week, when you casually ask what everyone plans to do for the weekend, your students reply "I'm go to Whistler", "I don't go out" and "What you will do?"

I am teaching, but are they learning? You go through the mental check list: you've got an excellent rapport with your students, a pace everyone is comfortable with, interesting material, and a communicative approach. The students are engaged, and you are actively monitoring and error correcting. What's missing? What else can

you do to help your students to retain new material?

Over the years I've come to recognize that there are some simple ways we can help our students to become more self-aware learners. Though obvious to us as educators, if one has never really focused intensively on language

**I am teaching, but are they learning? . . . What's missing? What else can you do to help your students retain new material?**

study before, one likely does not know how to go about it. This is especially true of younger students who haven't developed their own study habits, or students who haven't been in a classroom environment in a long time. This may also be true for students who have hit a slump and are unable to see their own progress.

A good starting point is to assess your students' current level of learner self-awareness. I like to use a questionnaire for pair work or small group work. The questionnaire might look like this.

**1. What do you do in class that you think helps you to improve your English?**

**2. How do you keep track of the information you learn in class? Show your partner an example in your notebook and compare your systems.**

**3. How do you remember new vocabulary?**

**4. When you learn new words, how do you record them in your notebook?**

**5. Do you know any good ways to record or memorize new vocabulary?**

**6. Do you have goals for your English study? What are you doing to meet them?**

**7. After school, what do you do that helps you to improve your English?**

**8. Do you ever try to mimic people you know (teacher, friend, homestay family member)?**

**9. Can you think of 3 mistakes that you often make?**

**10. How often do you talk to people you don't know in English? Think of some examples. If you don't do this often, why not?**

By initiating a discussion like this, students can start to think more critically about themselves as learners. Not only do teachers make the assumption that because they are teaching, students are learning, but students make the same assumption. Through a discussion like this, some of those assumptions can be broken down, and positive habits issuing from both the teacher and the students themselves can be discussed. What will hopefully result from the new bag of tricks is a sense of shared purpose and a motivating boost.

There are some key elements that would likely arise through such a discussion that I have identified: note-taking, recording vocabulary, conscious activation and goal setting, active listening, taking risks and review. I will discuss each one briefly and include some practical tips.

#### • Note taking

Note taking provides the opportunity for individual reflection. Point out that while taking notes, students should be thinking about what they are writing, and actively checking in that they understand what they are writing down. Recording notes with examples, quick translations or other "side" notes may help to clarify any confusing points when they are doing self-study. Keeping neat notes, with colourful titles, highlighted key points or any other method of bringing attention to the page, will make

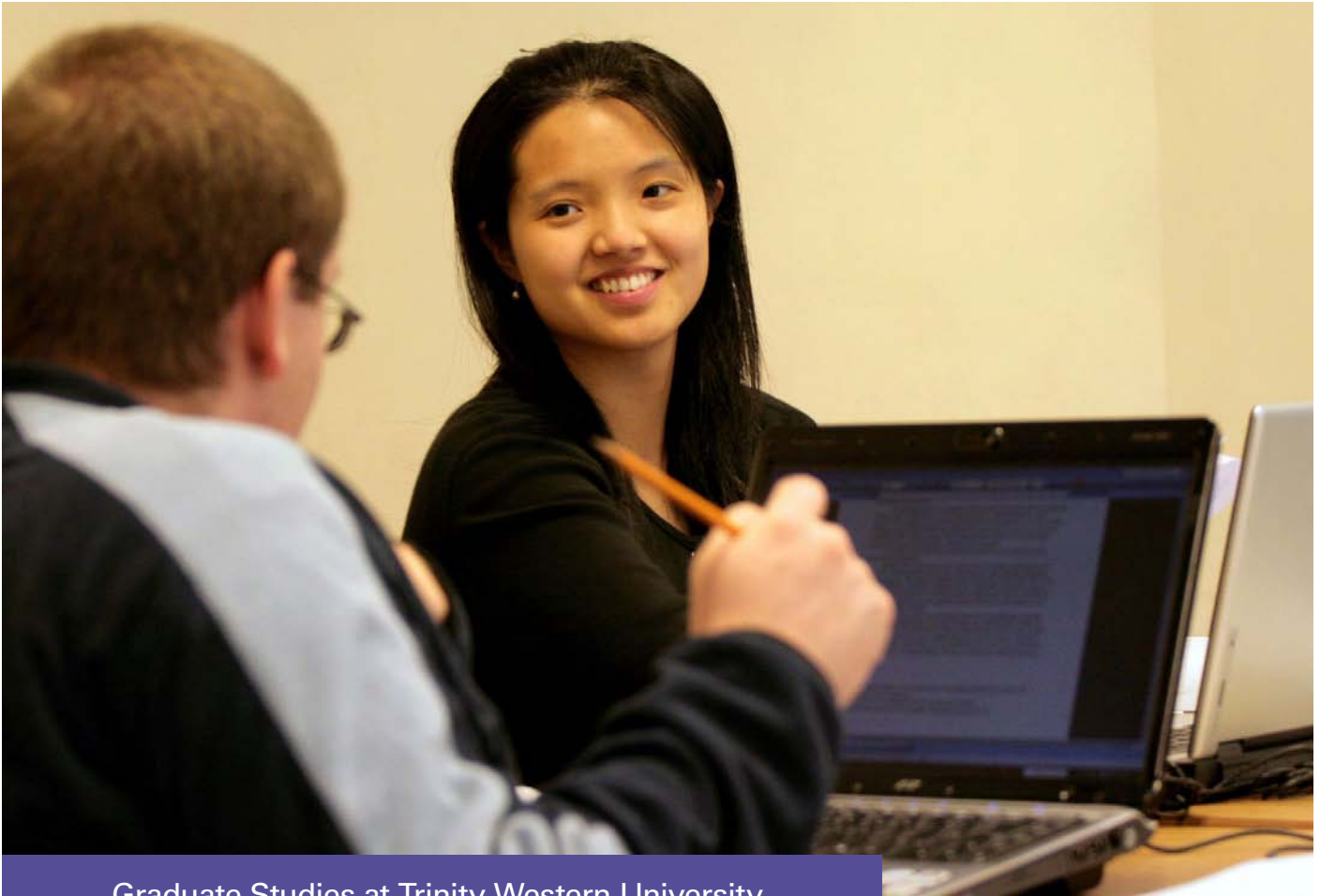
review easier and more attractive.

As a student of German, I used two notebooks. One was my scribble book for classroom use, where I wrote notes to myself, new words, grammar notes, or any other information that I thought was worth recording. That book was an absolute mess. The second was my neat book where I transferred the scribbles. This acted as my reference, with organized grammatical notes, and a section for new vocabulary. I bring these books into class to show my students examples.

#### • Recording vocabulary

What to record:

Some students record everything and others record nothing. Students need to be aware that some words and expressions are more useful or highly used than others and they need to actively choose what they need. For example in a vocabulary class on sports, a sports buff is going to write down all the equipment needed for a variety of sports because that information will benefit him/her in conversation. Another student might make note of the key words needed to passively discuss sports: "match, points, tie, cheer, stands etc." Though perhaps all of this vocabulary arose in the class, two different people will walk away with very different records. Many students don't realize that they are responsible for differentiating between what they need and what they don't.



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How to record vocab:

There are many different ways to record vocabulary, so it is worthwhile spending some time with your students to show them options. Here are some examples:

- **mind maps:** *Crime – punishment, court, commit, lawyer, guilty, go to jail, be sentenced for a crime etc.*

- **straightforward translation – an opinion (n) :** *Meinung*

- **word families –** *excite (v), excitement (n), excited (adj), excitable (adj-personality), excitedly (adv)*

- **common collocations –** *make a friend, make an appointment, make a plan, make a date, make a meal, etc.*

Students might want to adopt a star system sometimes found in learners' dictionaries giving expressions or words stars or checkmarks for how useful they might be to activate.

### • **Conscious Activation and Goal Setting**

Students need to become aware of their own errors and need to consciously take responsibility for fixing them. Helping students develop a personal mantra can be helpful. I have danced around my classroom singing silly songs about do and does enough times that I only need to give them wide eyes and they switch from "You live in Vancouver?" to "Do you live in Vancouver?"

Outside of class, ask your students to pick a grammar focus that they will spend the whole day trying to use. For example, if they need to focus on question formation, encourage them to play 20 questions with a friend on the bus on the way home. Or if the lesson of the day focused on hypothetical vs. real conditionals, get them to phrase everything they do, did or will do in a conditional for practice. It may seem silly or unnatural, but remind them that they are learning and nothing will come naturally until they force it into their active language base. This might be an example you could show your students.

**"Hey Rie, do you want to go for coffee?"**

**"Sure. That sounds good. If I had enough money, I'd buy a mocha latté, but I only have enough for a regular coffee."**

**"Okay. When shall we meet?"**

**"If you want to go after class, I'll meet you in the computer lab."**

**"Okay, I'll see you then."**

**"Okay. If there is any problem, I'll call you on your cell phone."**

### • **Active listening**

Students need to be aware of not only what they are saying but what they are hearing. Challenge your students to write down 2 new expressions a day that they hear people use that they didn't know or don't actively use. They can check in with you to see what they mean or how they are used. If useful, they then should try to activate

them when possible.

Students also need to be aware of what kind of first language utterances they use, and what kind of utterances native English speakers use. By actively trying to mimic simple utterances such as "uh huh", "really?", "right", students can suddenly jump leaps and bounds in how fluent they come across in conversation.

### • **Taking risks**

Risk taking is very much connected to personality. However, in order to be able to speak a language fluently one needs to be prepared to take risks. Many students will sit at the library with their noses in books without realizing that they in fact need to do just the opposite to get the fluency they desire. Talking to bus drivers, shop keepers, cashiers and wait staff are easy ways to get started. The risk of embarrassment is relatively low. The next step might be someone on the bus, at a bus stop or in a coffee shop. Making friends with students from other countries or having a strict English Only policy when speaking with friends from the same country will all help. One way or another, learning a language is often painful and embarrassing. Being able to accept that fact and forge on regardless is necessary. Empathy and encouragement help students to take those risks.

### • **Review**

Finally, the classic in any field

of study; review. Students need to be reminded that they take notes for a reason. Notes should be read and re-read. They should be read from beginning to end once a day. They should be read before starting any kind of homework and then again afterwards. Vocab/expressions/phrases need to be put on flash-cards for self-study and self-testing. Students who consistently review as they move forward will take what they know with them and not forget it along the way. We teach language in progression, and without what came before, it is often impossible to move on.



I'd like to conclude by mentioning some excellent resources for the teacher who would like to broach the subject of study habits, recording vocabulary, dictionary use or language awareness in their classes. The *Cutting Edge* series has some excellent "student habits" resources in their teachers resource packs. The series is available from elementary to advanced levels and has "learning to learn" material tailor-made for each level.

**Beth Fawcett**

*Beth has been involved in ESL in a range of positions, in a variety of different locations for the last 10 years. She is currently working as the Director of Studies at Global Village Vancouver and doing her Masters in Adult Learning and Global Change through UBC.*

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Top of the FT's league table for taught postgraduate education in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Tell me and I'll forget.  
 Show me, and I may not remember.  
 Involve me, and I'll understand.  
 Native American Saying

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# THE TEAL CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

*presents*

The 4th Annual Fundraising  
Golf Tournament and Barbecue  
Saturday August 9th  
Mylora Golf Course on #5 Road, Richmond

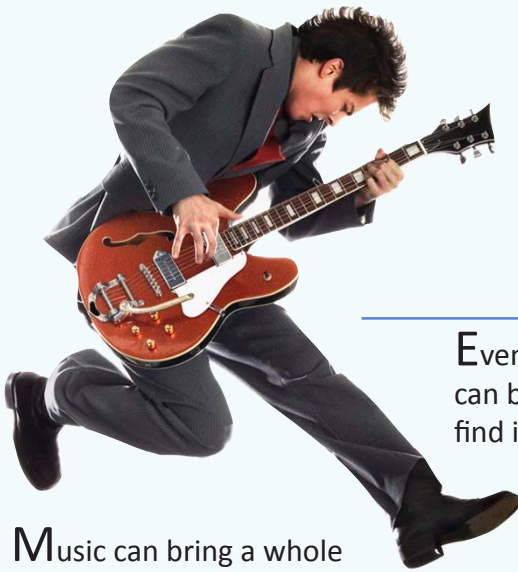
- Your \$50 fee includes 18 holes of golf, a tasty barbecue meal (steak, chicken, or vegetarian) and prizes.
- “Dinner only” is \$20; spaces are limited
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- Registration opens in June
- (late registration is \$60 and spots cannot be guaranteed)



## When sounds speak

Using songs in the ESL/EFL class

Noreen Cross



Music can bring a whole new dimension to class. Even using a song as filler can be motivating to students who really enjoy music - I don't think there are too many students out there who don't enjoy listening to music! Songs provide language input, which is an essential element in language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Songs also reflect culture, which plays a significant role in language learning. They usually contain themes surrounding a topic or issue that provide context for learning vocabulary. Songs have been known to be a negative source of content for learning grammar; however, if well chosen, songs can be a valuable source of grammar reinforcement. Listening skills can also be enhanced through songs as they provide students with practice in listening to varying forms of intonation and rhythm, which is very important in language acquisition. Being a form of discourse, songs naturally extend speaking into a new context through the sung word. (Murphey, 1992).

Even though musical tastes can be quite varied in a class, I find if you identify the purpose behind using the song, the students will look beyond the style of the music. Whether it be learning contrastive adjectives, practicing second conditionals, talking about the theme of aging, or practicing sentence stress, students naturally get into the song through the language point. Some ideas I have used with young international upper beginner to upper intermediate adult students are:

- **Hand in My Pocket** - Alanis Morissette. The song consists of many contrastive adjectives such as "I am young, but I'm wise", "I'm broke, but I'm happy", "I'm free, but I'm focused," etc. This song actually fits the cloze type exercise of which I take out part of the contrastive pair. I write all the missing words on the page around the song. I usually do this song as a discovery activity where I don't give them meanings of the words, but let them try to discover the meaning through the context of the contrastive adjective as we listen to the song. After the students have listened

a couple of times, I let them check with each other to compare their answers. Then we go over the answers and check general understanding of the words. I then give them a matching exercise with all the words I think they might have difficulty with to reconfirm the meanings. We then listen to the song again and sing it. After the song, I get the students to talk about themselves or people in their lives and what kind of adjectives from the song would describe themselves at the moment.

- **If I had a Million Dollars** - The Barenaked Ladies. I use this song in two respects-as a listening activity and for practicing second conditionals. I choose ten or so words from the song and write them on the board along with four other words which are not in the song. The students write down the words in their notebooks. I then play the song two times and students are to circle the words they hear the first time and then put them in the correct order the second time. After that, we go over the meanings of the words/expressions/concepts that might be difficult. Then,

I have the students write down 3 things they would like to do if they had a million dollars and share them with the class/small groups. Finally, they choose one of their ideas, we listen to the song again and when we get to the chorus parts the students insert their own ideas. So, the whole class would sing: "If I had a million dollars, I'd travel around the world., etc. The students always have a laugh and after a couple of students, I turn off the music and the students all continue until everyone has had a chance to say their idea.

• **100 years** - Five for Fighting. This song has a great melody and portrays the various stages of life and ideas associated with them. It starts with the age 15 and goes through various ages of life up to 99 years. I first do a listening activity where the students are given a verse of the song (students can pair up). The students are to listen to the song and stand in the correct order according to their verses. A couple of the verses are almost exactly the same, so I tell them to listen carefully. After ordering the song, I give the students a set of discussion questions related to aging. Example: At what ages did you expect to get married and have children when you were young? Have your ideas about marriage

and children changed since then? The singer sings about a mid-life crisis when he's 45. What is a mid-life crisis? Etc. I then extend this into discussing the meanings of different age-related expressions like "coming of age", "the information age", "in ages", etc.

• **Tom's Diner** - Suzanne Vega. This song is good for emphasizing sentence stress. The



song is about a woman in a diner telling the story of what's happening in the diner that day. There are a lot of prepositions and articles. A sample line of the story is: "I am sitting in the morning at the diner on the corner." The prepositions are taken out and students have to listen and fill in the blanks. After listening a couple of times and checking the answers, students can then listen to the words that are stressed in the sentences. This would be a good time to talk

about sentence stress and ask students what kinds of words they think are usually stressed in sentences. (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.).

Songs can be a useful and very enjoyable tool in teaching English, but they aren't for every class. Choosing songs that are comprehensible with fairly straightforward themes is better than obscure and complex songs. Of course, this also depends on the level of your students. You are not always trying to find the meaning of the song, but it is good for the students to have some sense of the song to make it more meaningful. Another way to extend the use of songs in class is to talk a bit about the background of the musical artist(s) behind the song. It can take the students to another level of culture and English outside of the class.

You can adapt and extend these ideas to suit your own needs. There are so many ideas for using music in class. A book I highly recommend is Tim Murphey's *Music and Song*, which I have referenced below.

#### References

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition in the Classroom*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Murphey, T. (1992). *Music and song*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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# News from the TEAL Charitable Foundation

## About the Foundation

The TEAL Charitable Foundation (TCF) provides awards, scholarships and bursaries to support ESL teachers, students and programs. Awards range from \$1,400 to \$4,000. The application process is a relatively simple one. There are application forms available online for each of our awards. Simply print one and answer the questions on the form. We ask for basic information about the project/conference/travel etc. as well as two letters of reference and a resume. The Board reviews each application and selects the applicant that most closely matches the criteria for the award. The winners of these awards are regular teachers, students and program staff just like you. Please take the time to review the details and criteria for each award on our website at [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org). Look for the TEAL Charitable Foundation tab on the left hand side of the home page.



## The Board of Directors

**Anita Irani** has taken over as Chair from **Simon Turner**. Anita has been with the TCF since 2005 and currently works as an academic counsellor for a private school in Vancouver. She looks forward to the challenges her new position will bring.

Both **Lenard Langlois** and **Yasmin Jamal** recently resigned from the Board. Their expertise will be missed. Also, **Cheryl McNicol** concluded her role as Past President. Fortunately, new members **Jean Haley** and **Lisa Topolniski** will bring fresh ideas and energy to the Board. We look forward to their contributions.

Current board members **Steve Bryden** and **Lisa Vernon** are thanked for their dedication and commitment to the Board.

Keep Those Applications Coming!

We at the TCF hate to see funds go un-awarded but we can't give them away unless you apply. Keep an eye on [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org) for deadlines and details.

## 4th Annual TCF Golf Tournament and Barbecue

The 4th Annual TCF Golf Tournament and Barbecue is slated for August 9th this summer with details to be sent out in the late spring. This event has raised roughly \$1500 over the past three years and has provided a lot of memorable moments for all involved. Don't be afraid to get out for a good bite to eat, a round of golf with friends (old and new!) and some beautiful scenery. Mark it on your calendar because it is not to be missed!