



TEAL News

The Association of B.C. Teachers of English as an Additional Language **Fall 2009**

The Theory Practice Cycle: Perspectives in English Language Teaching

BC TEAL Annual Conference 2009

by Jola Garus Lekich (conference co-chair)

Theory and Practice are two integral aspects of teaching. As an instructor, I focus on the needs of my students and adapt my lessons to best suit their needs. Because I have been teaching for quite a few years now, I “know” when things are going right or when to stop in the middle of the lesson and make some drastic changes. But rarely do I think about the theory behind my decisions. When I was in my TESL class, I spent much of my time studying about Krashen, Vygotsky, and numerous other second language theorists. I worked madly on lesson plans and made sure they had all the appropriate aspects necessary according to a) the textbook and b) my instructor. However, I’m not overly sure these plans had the necessary aspects according to the students in my class! The lessons were, quite fortunately, pretty good; but my confidence to adapt my lessons certainly was not. Thus, the debate begins. This is where the idea for the 41st Annual BC TEAL Conference was born: The Theory-Practice Cycle.

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Photos left to right: Exhibitors' Display; Sylvia Helmer toasting Mary Ashworth; Ayah Ouziel—conference participant and volunteer

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Contributors

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Denise Geiss began teaching at the English Language Institute at UBC in 1981 and has more than two decades of teaching experience in the field of ESL. She has taught in Japan and Vietnam. In addition, she has taught adult basic education classes in the Canadian high arctic. She has a particular interest in CALL.



Irene Ouimet has lived in almost every major city in western Canada, including Yellowknife. She also worked for 5 years in the Bahamas, where she took up scuba diving.

When Irene came back to Canada, she studied for 2 years at UVic and then completed her degree in Linguistics and French at SFU. She has been teaching in the English Language & Culture Program at SFU for 10 years. She never stops learning - from teachers, students, family and friends. That's what life is all about, isn't it?

Message from the President

Letter from the Editor

Dear Colleagues,

After a much-needed summer break, the BC TEAL Board of Directors and the Committees are right back at it with many exciting initiatives in the works. This year is already shaping up to be full of interesting professional development activities, including three TEAL Sessions (Interior, Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island), the annual PD Conference, annual newsletters, membership and advocacy projects.

As always, our sincere appreciation goes out to the members of the Newsletter Committee, all of whom put in so much time and effort to create a professional and relevant document to keep us all connected. I'm glad you have downloaded it; please mention it to your colleagues and make sure you encourage them to read it too.

The 2010 Conference Committee has started its preparations for the big event, which has taken a few interesting twists and turns already. Following the huge success of our last two conferences, we have high hopes that this year's gathering will be on a par if not exceeding the scale of those memorable events.

The Professional Development Committee, which organizes the TEAL Sessions, is always involved in planning our next one-day event, and there are two coming up soon. The TEAL Interior Sessions on October 17 will be held again at Thompson Rivers University, and the TEAL November Sessions at VanWest College will be on November 14. They're short (one day), informative and practical, and they're a great way to stay in touch, network and share in learning with your peers. I will be at both and I hope to see you there.

TEAL members are an important part of a profession which is full of important challenges and opportunities, and the complex balance involved in our work is often staggering. As we all know, managing the teaching and learning of English is a complex task and we always seem to be working within parameters that feel impossibly limited; but we do it. It comes back to me time and again how important and challenging this work is, but how well it is handled by the professionals in this field.

Thank you all again for your on-going commitment to our profession and your Association. As members of BC TEAL you are an important part of a greater network whose dedication to professional development and advocacy is integral to the profession. I send you all my best wishes for a successful and fulfilling school year, and may all your days be good-teaching days.

Sincerely and best regards,



Michael Galli, President – BC TEAL



Dear Readers,

There is something about early September that makes me nostalgic for the "back to school" days of my childhood. The crisp almost autumn air reminds me of setting off for the first day of school with a new outfit and freshly sharpened pencil crayons. These days I see campus hallways and buses filled with students, some with bewildered looks on their faces, and I remember those first days at new schools and with new classmates. Back to school is a time filled with a roller-coaster of emotions, experiences, and opportunities.

There is a certain amount of envy I feel seeing students heading back to school. I want to sit in a classroom and feel the excitement of learning something new, conversing with my classmates, being inspired by teachers. But then I remember how school is also hard work – the homework overload from instructors who forget theirs is not the only class students attend, the studying, the time commitment, not to mention the sacrifices to a social life.

And so for those reasons I am glad TEAL exists to help foster teachers' needs to continue learning. The 2009 Conference at the ELI was a huge success, and as always it was fabulous to partake in a number of workshops and to meet colleagues from across the TEAL community. The TEAL sessions offer similar opportunities, and there are two new sessions fast approaching.

The TEAL News offers yet another venue for us to learn from our community. This issue is chock-a-block with interesting contributions. Nicholas Collins introduces us to Nila Gopaul, the new editor at the Westcoast Reader. Chris Aronson shares with us a piece about a school in Thailand for the children of Burmese migrants, and we have the winning entries from the TEAL Writing competition for both learners and instructors (runners up to be featured in the next TEAL news). We also have the regular features of "the Wired Teacher", "Teaching Tips", and "1 Topic, 3 Takes" (about master's programs).

As always I appeal to you send in your own submissions for the newsletter, comments about what you have read, or suggestions for articles you'd like to see. I'd love to hear from you.

Happy Reading!



Shawna Williams, Editor - TEAL News

Westcoast Reader Changes Editors B.C.'s Iconic ESL Newspaper Makes Huge Change

By Nick Collins

Spring 2009 was an historic time for the *Westcoast Reader*. In its early years it made three significant changes – it changed names (do you know what it was originally called?), hosting institutions, and editors. However, for the last twenty-seven years it has been edited by Capilano's Joan Acosta – the most honoured ESL teacher in the history of Canada. During that time Joan and the "little paper that could" have won innumerable awards. Joan has been to the White House and was honored by both Presidents Reagan and Bush senior; she was the first practicing teacher in ANY discipline to receive the Order of British Columbia from Lt. Governor David Lam at Government House in Victoria in 1994; and for the 20th anniversary of the paper Prime Minister Jean Chrétien sent her a special recognition. Joan is also an honorary lifetime member of both TESL Canada and B.C. TEAL. Now, after 30 years at Capilano, she is going to take a break.

The new editor, Nila Gopaul, also an ESL teacher at Capilano University, has had an outstanding career, owning her own private school in Vancouver, working in China and Qatar, and more recently teaching at Harvard University. These two colleagues have been working together closely over the summer to ensure that there will be a seamless transition.



Nila Gopaul (left) and Joan Acosta (right)

One of the main strengths of the *Reader*, and a major factor in its ongoing success, has always been the strong administrative support it has enjoyed from Capilano. First the then Principal, Paul Gallagher, moved the paper to Cap. and offered the use of his office if space could not be found to accommodate the paper. Next, President Doug Jardine nurtured the paper carefully as readership grew. Greg Lee, the

current Capilano President, has supported the paper all the years it has been at Cap. One weekend he spent rebuilding the complex database after it had crashed.

At Joan's retirement party Doug Jardine sent regrets, while a former V-P and administrator of the paper, Jim Cooke, attended. Likewise, the photo shows the Executive Director of Capilano, two current Vice-Presidents and President Lee. Bobby Lenarduzzi, President of the Whitecaps, also attended, as did dozens of Joan's colleagues from many institutions. Thus the paper continues to have great support from its home base.



Jessica Thoms, Executive Director Capilano Foundation, Dr. Jackie Snodgrass, Vice-President, Academic, Dr. Patrick

A scholarship, set up to endow an annual award in Joan's name, received many cheques from friends and colleagues. TEAL, through its Foundation, contributed \$2500 to be matched by Capilano.

Some statistics from the paper show its incredible influence; they are truly staggering:

- 13 million copies printed
- 125,000 readers of each issue
- 1 million plus readers helped by the paper

From a small Informal Discussion Over Lunch (IDOL) at the TEAL Conference in March 1981, the paper envisioned by Naomi Katz and Jim Smith has flourished under Joan's strong and effective leadership. May it continue to flourish under Nila's editorship.

As Section B of the Whitecaps crowd say after a goal is scored (standing and in unison)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH JOAN ACOSTA!!!

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My Job

Written by Ma Khine, Chiang Mai, Thailand
(with additional reporting by Marti Sevier)
Submitted by Chris Aronson

Chris Aronson is a former BC TEAL member and retired instructor from Malaspina University College on Vancouver Island. He and his wife recently volunteered as EFL teachers in Northern Thailand. Their students were all Burmese migrants who worked as teachers at the Children's Learning Centre, an elementary school for the children of migrant workers from Burma. Chris shared the following piece written by one of his students, Ma Khine, to illustrate the kind of work that is being done in that region of the world.

Burma, which is also known as Myanmar, has eight major ethnic groups and more than one hundred smaller ethnic groups, and most have their own culture, traditions and language. The ongoing educational, economic and social crises in the country have forced people to flee and settle in neighboring countries, where most live and work illegally. Only about 10% of the children of the Burmese migrants in the region of Chiang Mai, Thailand, are legally entitled to live there and therefore have access to education. To begin to meet the need for education for the other, "illegal" Burmese migrant children, the Children's Learning Center was started in April 2008 with 30 students. By the end of that year it had expanded to accommodate a total of 130 students at two locations. Students 2 - 5 years old attend pre-school, 5 - 7 year olds attend Grade 1, and those age 7 - 12 attend Grade 2. Tuition and textbooks are free; uniforms are not necessary.



(Children Learning Center, Chiang Mai, n.d.). Photos by Ma Khine

The school curriculum follows both Thai and Burmese educational guidelines and aims to help students integrate into Thai society by teaching both Thai language and culture; in addition, the students are given a foundation in Burmese language and culture. Emphasis is given to physical, moral and social development as well as critical thinking (Children Learning Center, Chiang Mai, n.d.).

As a teacher of Grades 1 and 2 science, I have a science curriculum that provides an outline of what I will teach, but Internet research at English language websites is required to plan any particular lesson. I must identify a topic or topics appropriate to the curriculum and the level of the students. I must make myself comfortably knowledgeable on the topic and

extract the information I need to plan an interesting lesson. I collect pictures, charts, artifacts and so on, and I prepare group activities, exercise papers, assessment exercises, etc. All of these materials should be suitable for and relevant to the background knowledge and previous experience of the students.

One challenging aspect of teaching at the Children's Learning Center is the fact that *teachers and students do not have one common language*. To further complicate this matter, within a particular language group in a classroom, student *and teacher* speaking and writing skills vary from good to poor. Dr Thein Lwin, founder of the Children's Learning Center, claims that many Burmese teenagers lack even basic literacy skills because of the lack of

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

stability of the education system in Burma and the fact that until recently, parents had to pay for books, school uniforms and tuition fees, rendering school out of reach for their children (Aung, 2009).

Our students are ethnic Shan (the majority), Kachin, Chin, Karen, Burman, Mon and Arakan. In my science classes, vocabulary is presented in the Thai language because about 80% of the students speak Thai, and it is easier for me to explain the lesson and easier for me to monitor student response to the lesson in Thai. Although I translate into the Burmese language to facilitate comprehension by some of the students, I do not write in Thai, so worksheets are written in Burmese but explained in Thai.

The majority of the students are Shan and their first language is Shan. I do not speak Shan, so sometimes I have an assistant teacher in the classroom who interprets for us into Shan.

We rely a lot on pictures!

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- Children Learning Center, Chiang Mai (n.d.). Retrieved 13 August 2009 from <http://www.educationburma.net/CLC%20Statement%202008%20Eng%20pdf.pdf>

[Note: an update on the Children's Learning Center can be found at Thinking Classroom Foundation, <http://www.educationburma.net/CLC%20Weekend%20School%20Statement%202009%20Eng.pdf>]



BC TEAL 2010 Conference

Taking Stock: Teaching and Assessing in a Global Context

We are excited to announce that the 2010 BC TEAL conference will be held April 30—May 1, 2010 at British Columbia Institute of Technology, Downtown Campus. We hope you will make plans to join your colleagues from across the province to take in this stimulating professional development opportunity.

Keep up to date on conference events and changes by visiting our website at www.bctéal.org. The Call for Presentations will be available for download from the TEAL website in early November, and if you are interested in participating on the Conference Planning Committee, please contact the TEAL office, admin@bctéal.org.



BC TEAL Writing Competition—Student Winners

English as a Second Language Week May 3—9th, 2009

In recognition of both the teachers and learners of English as an additional language, the province of British Columbia designated May 3—9th, 2009 as ESL Week. To celebrate, BC TEAL, the UBC Bookstore, and Cambridge University Press were pleased to sponsor a province-wide Writing Contest!

Students submitted poems and stories about their experiences as ESL students and/or newcomers living in Canada.

The Winners are:

Lost in Delta, by Gurmit Sidhu

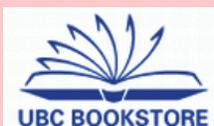
Learning in Kelowna, by Julieta Ileana Obregon Robledo

What Happens When You Follow Blindly, by Jeung Yeun (Ally) Han

The Heartbreak Sonnet, by Kristy Kassie

“Pedagogy of Politics” by L.M. Lemieux, Instructor, English Language Institute, UBC

Copyright in the Classroom, by Jane Wangersky



Benchmark 3/4

LOST IN DELTA

by Gurmit Sidhu

This story is my true life story. I came to Canada on April 18, 2008. That day I was very happy, because that day my life's aim was successful. After three days when I came to Canada, the time was around 9:30 P.M. I was eating dinner. I said to my wife, "I am going for a walk."

My wife said to me, "Don't go out side because you are new and you don't have area information just wait. After I wash the dishes I will go with you."

I said, "Oh no, don't worry. I will walk only around the block, not a long walk."

"Okay," my wife said.

Then I went for a walk, but I went for a long walk and I got lost my home. I didn't have a cell phone. I was going to many different streets. But I don't find my home. I was very sad. I didn't have a wallet. I didn't have any I.D. At about 10:30 P.M., out side it was very dark. I was going to a street and I saw two ladies walking on the street. Then I went near the ladies, but the ladies didn't look at me. I said, "Hi, Please help me. I came to Canada recently. I came for a walk and I missed my home. My home is at 7672-115A Street. Please help me." But these ladies were scared.

They said, "I don't know, I don't know".

I repeated, "Please help me ". They didn't give me an answer. Why, I don't know. They still walked on. I was so sad, so I requested to God, "Please help me" and I still walked on different streets. More cars were going on the street. I said, "Stop." But no car stopped. I was still walking. I saw one more car that came my side. I said, "Stop, stop car".

It stopped and one young man came out and he said, "What's the problem?"

I said, "I came to Canada three days ago. I can't find my home, please help me."

He said, "Don't worry, what can I do for you".

I said, "Do you have a cell phone?"

He said, "Yes."

I said, "Please call my wife and tell her this address".

He said, "Ok." Then he called to my wife and told her husband missed his home.

My wife said, "I will come", and within 5 minutes my wife came there. Then I went home with my wife. I was 11:10 P.M. I am really thankful to that young man.

Benchmark 5/6

LEARNING IN KELOWNA

by Julieta Ileana Obregon Robledo

English is a very important language. If you speak it, no matter where you go, your chances to communicate with other people are enormous, even when you are in a place where English is not the first language. That is one of the reasons that motivated me to learn it.

I was also encouraged by the interest in a better job position and the desire to travel around the world.

Therefore, I planned this trip to Canada with one specific goal in my mind: to improve my skills in English as much as I can, but I never thought it could be such an amazing experience. You can imagine how fun it would be to study abroad when you look at the pictures of the school or the city where you want to go, but nothing compares to the experience itself. I have enjoyed every single moment in Kelowna, even a ride on the bus is interesting, whereas in my country it can be quite an adventure. Anyway, I'm here now and even though I miss my family I know this is something I will never regret.

I will describe a few things to explain why I'm so sure that my visit to Kelowna will be a one-of-a-kind experience. The first thing I can talk about is Canadian people, every native I've met has shown me nice gestures. For example, the family I live with really makes me feel like I'm at home, at the school the teachers are very friendly and in the street everyone says hi, as if they've known me for a long time.

Sometimes it is easy not to be polite if you come from a place where everyone is so busy all the time, running back and forth, thinking about what they have to do or what they shouldn't had done. Kelowna has a nice rhythm. It allows people from different countries to mix together in harmony. I keep learning many things about other cultures that help me imagine what life must be like in other places I've never been to.

Another thing worth mentioning is of course the food. I don't know if it happens to all the people but sometimes food makes me remember good things about my country and the special occasions when my whole family gathers together. Therefore, I find it extremely important to have good meals and truly enjoy them.

Canadian food (at least the meals I eat at my homestay) is very healthy. I love all types of bread and tea there are here. Also, there is this one special salad dressing, "Little Creek", which is made on the west side of Okanagan Lake, that is delicious! I might be taking a bottle of it to Mexico to share it with my family.

You can actually find food from different countries like Japan, China, India, Mexico, etc. So in case you want to have a taste of your own cuisine you can always do it.

And last but not least, *Hockey*. It is such a vital subject for Canadian people, especially for men. This sport is just an example of the many activities you can do while living here. There are of course other sports you may practice or places to visit but if you like hockey, then you certainly have a topic of conversation. Except when the local team is not doing well, in those cases you might want to talk about the weather, it always works... :P just kidding!

I hope you enjoy reading my little story just as much as I did writing it.



Benchmark 7/8

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU FOLLOW BLINDLY

by Jeung Yeun (Ally) Han

In 2005, I was recommended by teachers to spend a year in Texas as an exchange student. Proud as I was, I assumed that I would have no difficulty living in any English speaking country because I thought I spoke English fluently. However, on my first day in my new American school, I could not carry on a conversation beyond saying, "Hello." I even blurted out Korean once hoping that they might understand me. When this failed, I mostly used body language and sounds to express my feelings. I was discouraged and hugely disappointed in myself. Yet, I persevered in learning English the proper way from my host family, especially from April.

April is a perfect example of a Texan girl. She is a full-sized nineteen year old girl with golden brown hair and bulging green eyes. She speaks loudly with a thick Texan accent. While she drives her rickety red truck, she loves to honk, swear and blast her favorite country music. She never forgets to watch "the Wheel of Fortune" every Friday and she never wears anything but her blue jeans and college t-shirt.

I learned real Texan English from April. She taught me to greet people with "Howdy y'all" and to call my friends in school "homies" and "rednecks." For a fifteen year

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old girl fresh from Korea, everything that April taught me seemed right and proper. So I spoke and acted like her.

Slowly and steadily, I found myself sounding like a true Texan thanks to April.

One cool summer evening, I was working on my final speech for my leadership class on the topic, "The most important leadership quality." Everybody was watching a TV program called, "Dancing with the Stars," and about an hour later, I heard April booing and swearing at TV. I went out of my room to ask her what was going on and she said that she was "totally ***** off" at one of the judges for not giving Mario a higher mark. Right after she finished talking, Jason, my host brother, said he was also "***** off" at the same judge. At that moment, a brilliant idea popped up in my head.

The next day, I read my speech and emphasized how great leaders were not blinded by stereotypes and prejudices. I talked about how "unfairness" angers people and used "Dancing with the Stars" as my example to explain how biased and unfair decisions can agitate some viewers. I told them that the night before my host siblings who were huge fans of "Dancing with the Stars," *were totally ***** off* at one of the judges for his biased opinion." I heard a huge roar of laughter from the audience which left me confused and dumbfounded.

We instinctively know that one plus one equals to two but we never ask ourselves whether two is the right answer. In our ignorance, we sometimes blindly mimic words that we hear good because of the powerful way it has said and the fact that someone else says it too.

BC TEAL is excited to offer a day of professional development in Vancouver at VanWest College on Saturday, November 14, 2009. Workshops and networking opportunities will be provided for participants.

Registration details along with workshop and presenter descriptions, location specifics, and directions to VanWest College will be available on the BC TEAL website (www.bcteal.org) under "Conferences" by mid-September, 2009.

The official event poster is going to be available to download from the TEAL website in mid-July, 2009. Please feel free to download, print, and distribute the poster.

The early bird costs will be \$35.00 for TEAL members and \$45.00 for non-TEAL members if registered by November 7, 2009. After November 7, 2009, online registration will be closed and participants need to register on-site on November 14, 2009. Fees for on-site registration will be \$40.00 for TEAL members and \$50.00 for non-TEAL members.

If you have any questions regarding the Fall TEAL Sessions at VanWest College, or would like to present a hands-on workshop at the event, please contact Mike Burri at Michael_Burri@bcit.ca

See you at VanWest!

BCTEAL Writing Competition: Teacher Winners



1st place winner:

The Heartbreak Sonnet, by Kristy Kassie

The boulder, nine years anchored on that hill
is sliding. Reluctant motion but still,
descent, once begun, defies resistance
for this final unchoreographed dance.

Through sun-drenched days and starlit nights she hummed
serenades, butterfly and bird wing strummed.
Amid dancing flowers and grasses green
she spun petal wishes and dewdrop dreams.

She knows no life beyond that hilltop perch;
Splintered purpose ignites a frantic search
for a self voluntarily ignored
in favour of happiness unexplored.
At the base of a hill, progress looms high,
Intangible as a cloudless, blue sky.

2nd Place Winner:

"Pedagogy of Politics" by L.M. Lemieux, Instructor, English Language Institute, UBC

When I first went to Brazil to teach English, I had little experience and this worried me. I did have a newly acquired Master's Degree and teaching terms like 'bi-labial fricative' and 'future perfect continuous.'

My first class would be eight advanced adults who had been together for six months, their former teacher having mysteriously disappeared. My only textbook was a dull-looking grammar book. What to teach? I remembered Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* from school: help students talk about their lives, injustices and the horrors and hopes. So I planned my lesson: *What do you believe in?* I'd write on the blackboard to inspire my class to talk.

I entered a classroom of eight broadly smiling men. None looked oppressed. Despite the heat they all wore expensive suits. I strode in less confidently. 'Please, don't call me teacher; call me Louise,' I smiled. Then, struggling to give the impression of a worldly-wise professor, I wrote *What do you believe in?* 'Discuss this in pairs for five minutes. I'll ask each of

you to stand up and tell the class later.'

I overheard one man say he believed Palmeiras would win the Mercosul cup... not exactly the type of answer I had anticipated. But at the end of five minutes, I asked for a volunteer. A petite man raised his hand. He picked up chalk and drew a circle with rays emitting from it. 'I believe...' he said.

'Yes?' I answered in encouragement.

'I believe in the Revolution.'

A couple of students groaned. He held the chalk tighter and wrote names: Lenin, Stalin, Ché.

'It is hampant ... is that the right word, teacher?'

'I'm not sure.'

'Hampant capitalism?'

'Rampant.'

'Rrrrampant capitalism forced Brazil into its present state. If the imperialist Americans had not supported the military regime in 1964, Brazil would not have the impossible debt it owes to mad-dog money lenders. We would have more sunny lives. Neo-Liberalists are selling Brazil to capitalist world powers. We must rise up from our chains and fight.'

He sat down with a humpphh. I was impressed by his English. 'The comparative adjective of sunny is "sunnier," I corrected.

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'That is a load of *merda*,' someone replied.

'The word for *merda* is "crap",' I said automatically.

'Thank you, teacher ... oh sorry, Louise, *kerap*. Brazil in this mess is exact because of the revolutions. The US became scary, so pulled President Quadros from government. The country was never again run so well. The radicals that try to break up capitalism deserve to be thrown in jail, the key forgotten.'

'You speak well,' I complimented. 'But you need to be careful with-'

'Imperialist pig,' the first student muttered.

'Vargas would have known what to do with you,' retorted his overweight adversary.

A third student rose, beige face, beige suit, beige eyes. 'You are both wrong,' he said complacently. 'Both forms of economy have been prove incorrect. Capitalism and Communism were based on materialism. Get beyond appeals of spending our lives spending. Move from the cities to the land. Down with labels, down with corporations. Down, down, down, down.'

And down he sat.

Wow, they were so advanced! The other two began muttering deprecations, something about *filho*, something about *puta*. I tried to explain that Portuguese was not allowed, but a fourth student had already taken over.

'The world ...' he began dramatically. 'Destroyed.. not by your politic powers but rather losing the true God. Feminists and liberals forced the murder of innocent children, thanks God not yet in Brazil, with their pill; the televisions show nothing but sex. Pray to God, or the world will collapse like the building of Babel.'

'Tower of Babel; *political*, not politic; and *thank* God, not thanks God,' I quickly interjected. However, another suit pushed me aside. 'You are all wrong,' he said loudly, but everyone else in the classroom yelled at him until he banged a book on the desk.

'Thank you, teacher, for your interruption,' he said.

'Her name is *Louise*!'

'Miss Louise agrees the only solution for Brazil is to get rid of all these crazy religions and politics and move to the anarchy of...'

'Revolution!'

'Neo-Liberalism!'

'God!'

'The anarchy of nothingness! Cling to the words Emma Goldman...'

'What was that word? Was it rap? Crap?'

Spiritualism is what we need. To follow the teachings of the great Allan Kardec-

'Chico Mendes!'

'Fidel Castro!'

'Getúlio Vargas!'

'Bastard!'

'Teacher!'

'LOUISE!'

Suddenly, silence. All eyes turned to a little man with white hair, the oldest student in the classroom. I'm still not sure how he'd gained everyone's attention. He cut through the silence: 'Which of them is right, teacher? What do *you* believe in?'

My face burned like a glowing sunset. They stared, waiting for the word of the teacher. I knew there was no answer that would satisfy. But I was their *teacher*! I had to say something.

'I believe ...'

They seemed a riotous mob waiting to love me or to lynch me. 'I believe ...'

I sighed. 'I believe we should move on to the future perfect continuous.'

A student gave me a bi-labial fricative. 'Coward,' he muttered.

'This is an English class, not a political science class.'

'Anarchy!'

'Spirits!'

'And it *isn't* a church. I'm here to teach you English. Please open your books to page...' I quickly thumbed through the ancient grammar book, hands still shaking, 'Page 176.'

They opened their books obediently, eyes filled with disappointment towards the shaking, cowardly woman who wouldn't say what she believed in.

The next night, I only had one student. It was the little, white-haired man. He smiled at me the moment I entered then immediately opened his grammar book to page 177. At the break, I asked him what he believed in.

'I believe I want to learn English,' he said, and we both laughed.

I suggested he read Tolstoy. He told me that he already loved Tolstoy. It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Honourable Mentions:

Mind mapping: An Effective Healthy Technique by Bozena Felsz

What I Learned in the ESL Classroom by Kathy Vance

3rd Place Winner Copyright in the Classroom,

by Jane Wangersky

Since I suffer from copyright scruples – I feel uneasy photocopying anything published, or even using the word “Xerox” to describe what I’m doing – I had mixed feelings when I discovered the ebooklet *Copyright Matters! Some Key Questions and Answers for Teachers* by Wanda Noel and Gerald Breau. (It was published in 2005 by the Council of Ministers of Education, the Canadian School Boards Association, and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation – but, ironically enough, can be reproduced without permission, according to a note just below the copyright notice.)

Maybe, if I read it, I’d discover I was breaking the law every time I made more copies than I absolutely needed, or simplified a U.S. government press release to post on my blog. (Most U.S. government sites say their information is in the public domain – but at anxious moments, I sometimes wondered if that applied in Canada. Or should I, strictly speaking, wait till those government employees had been dead for 50 years and any copyright they had was unquestionably expired here?)

Then again, maybe I’d discover all sorts of legal ways I’d never envisioned to exploit other peoples’ work.

Either way, I knew I should read *Copyright Matters!* The booklet reveals many of the somewhat unexpected rules that govern copyright in Canada, and the two principles that seem to underlie most of them:

1. Ownership of the physical object does not authorize you to do any of those activities restricted by copyright (p. 19).
2. Copying ideas, facts, or information in your own words is not copyright infringement; however, proper citation of sources is

required (p. 1). “Ownership of the physical object” is just what makes copyright violation so tempting, isn’t it? Not even necessarily ownership, but temporary possession. You have in your hands a workbook with a reading or exercise that’s exactly what you need, and no one’s going to stop you from going to the nearest photocopier (or maybe even the scanner attached to your computer) and making as many exact replicas of it as you want, at next to no cost. But the sign over the copy machine tells you you’re breaking the law.

You own a video “for home viewing only”; it cost you \$29.95, but your school media centre would have to pay \$250 for it. (Yes, this happens – it’s the industry’s way of collecting payment for all the extra viewers.) If you take it in to show your class, you’re violating copyright.

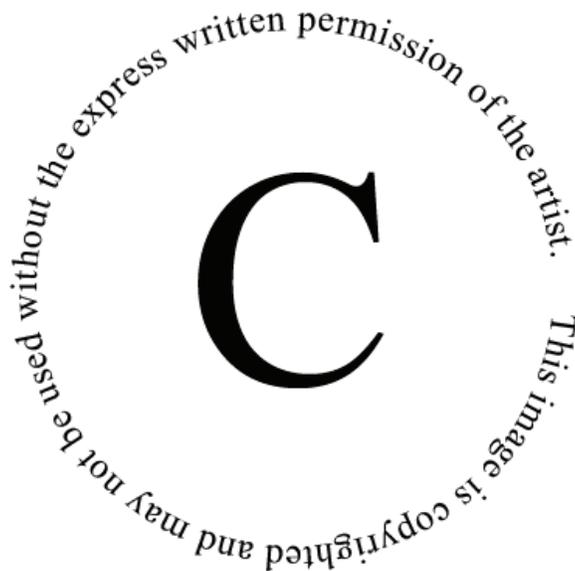
You taped the evening news for your class a couple of years ago and never got around to erasing it. Technically, you owe money to the Educational Rights Collective of Canada.

It’s obvious these rules are largely unenforceable. They may cut down the unauthorized copying of published work, but they’ll never stop it. (They may also help sales of Access

Copyright licences, which allow you to copy significant amounts of published works knowing that it’s all legal.) That’s something creators and publishers have to live with – and though *Copyright Matters!* says “Without copyright protection, there would be little incentive to develop new works”, I don’t think writing and publishing will ever be killed off by copyright infringement alone.

The key to what we can do without violating copyright is in one word that keeps recurring in these rules: “works”. Work is what produces these publications, and the work you put into something is what entitles you to use it.

(Continued on page 14)



(Continued from page 13)

“Copying ideas, facts, or information in your own words is not copyright infringement” (*Copyright Matters!*, p. 1).

Your own words, your own thoughts, your own keystrokes – your own work, in other words.

The newspapers don't own the fact that there's going to be a by-election in New Westminster-Coquitlam. The textbook publishers don't own the plot of *Macbeth* (actually, no one does anymore, but the public domain is a whole other subject). The idea of listening and filling in the blanks doesn't belong to anyone. You can use any of these things to create your own materials for your students – the operative words being “your own”. Just remember to put a brief note in the materials saying where you got your information, if anywhere.

Copyright Matters! goes into all of this in much more detail, as well as telling you about the educational exceptions to the Copyright Act of 1985 and the advantages of having an Access Copyright licence. It's well worth downloading and taking a few minutes to read. You can find it online at:

<http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/12/copyrightmatters.pdf>

(Continued from page 1)

The May 8 and 9th Conference had over 400 participants and a variety of presentations revolving around the theme, The Theory-Practice Cycle: Perspectives in English Language Teaching. The Plenary Panel, featuring Steven Talmy, Tillat Khalid, Joann Chernen, and Kay McAllister discussed their different viewpoints on being teacher trainers in different institutions. The reviews from the audience members during the panel were very positive. Many people commented about how they enjoyed the personal stories of the panel members. One person in particular stated, “Tillat's stories of her students were fascinating – things I was surprised to hear, but appreciated.” Other comments were strongly focused on the impact of the presenters' information: “Kay McAllister made me rethink how we need to help student-teachers to stop being students and truly embrace being teachers”.

Proper teacher training is a necessity to being a good teacher. As practitioners, we know that we are not automatically a good ESL teacher just because we are native speakers. These four speakers helped us realize the difficulty student-teachers face as they struggle to become confident ESL teachers. Just when do these new teachers stop being a “student” and become a “teacher”? We can only hope that over time, the “teacher” will emerge to enact the practice and the “student” who questions the theory will always remain.

Newcomer Finances Toolkit

Accessing, understanding, and using financial services effectively are important components of economic security and successful integration into Canadian society. From day-to-day banking to income tax, investments, insurance, and government support programs, there is a wide range of knowledge and skills for newcomers to master.

The Newcomer Finances toolkit from the Ottawa Community Loan Fund is packed with practical information that newcomers need to know about finances in Canada, along with suggested activities to explain the concepts and put them into practice. Use a whole unit or select a worksheet to address a specific question with your newcomer group. Try out the online practice bank machine and debit card machine! The toolkit is available free from the OCLF website at www.oclf.org.

Comments from toolkit users:

“I feel that the toolkit enables me to handle the teaching of finances and banking more competently.”

“The resource is useful and helpful. The content should be known by each immigrant.”

“It's a wonderful work, user friendly and detailed.”

“They all love the practice machines, especially the debit machine.”

“The instructor's guide is an excellent support with ideas on how to tailor the material to suit the needs of the group; so necessary when dealing with newcomers.”

“Excellent toolkit. Adapted well to newcomer needs, very detailed, great resources. I can't believe how much information there is, and I appreciate its accuracy.”

TEACHING TIPS: TRACKING OR SHADOWING

By Irene Ouimet

Tracking or shadowing is an activity based around a scene from a sitcom or movie and the accompanying script. Students read aloud from the script and use the audio/visual recording of the scene to guide and support them in their pronunciation, emphasis, rhythm, and so on. I do quite a bit of tracking or shadowing in my speaking class. This involves getting the script of a scene from a sitcom that I have on tape and choosing a scene that reflects what I've been working on in class: sentence stress, intonation, reduction, etc. In one class, for example, I used the prologue of an episode of *3rd Rock From the Sun* for a mid to high intermediate level. I love this sitcom because all the characters are so exaggerated and over-dramatized.

I start by giving the script to the students to read through by themselves, after which we discuss any vocabulary questions and then I put them into groups. I'm always careful to choose a scene with as many characters as possible and with at least one or two characters that can be doubled up. This way, when I walk into class and see who is absent, I can adjust the number of characters to fit the number of students in each group.

I have the students read through the script three or four times, choosing a different character each time. Then I show the scene with the sound off. They can observe the body language and facial expressions, which really changes the way they read their lines. They read through it twice more and then I show the scene again, but with the sound on, which allows them to get the full impact of sentence stress and intonation. They practise once or twice again, and as all the reading is going on, I field questions about pronunciation and meaning.

Finally, they're ready to try it with the TV. It sometimes takes a few tries to get into it, but soon they're reciting their lines out loud; imagine 3 Dicks belting it out, trying to keep up to the TV Dick. After they've done it two or three times, I explain exactly why I chose this particular scene and what it is they're practising. For instance, with the scene from *3rd Rock from the Sun*, they practised vocal variety to break out of that monotone drone.

Once they've loosened up, I give them the choice of doing the same character, changing character or doing more than one character. By the end of this particular class, the students were completely engaged, and even the shyest student who hardly ever speaks was yelling out his lines, imitating Sally's sarcasm.

THE TEAL SESSIONS

A day of professional development on Theory Informed Practice
presented by BC TEAL

Saturday November 14th, 2009, 8:30 – 16:30



VanWest College, 200 – 1016 Nelson Street, Vancouver, BC, V6E 1H8

VanWest Sessions are practical, hands-on workshops

Early Bird Registration Deadline: November 7, 2009

Early Bird Fees: TEAL Members: \$35.00 / Non-TEAL Members: \$45.00

For registration details check the BC TEAL website at www.bctéal.org or call 604.736.6330 or fax 604.736.6306

1 Topic, 3 Takes: Graduate Studies in TESOL

As the TESL profession has grown, so too has the number of teachers choosing to pursue graduate studies in the field. This issue's "1 Topic, 3 Takes" hears from three such professionals at various stages of their Master's pursuits: one is finished, one is almost there, and one has recently started on the journey.

"Online Otto" taught English for 18 years before shifting careers into instructional design. He is currently pursuing a Master's from the University of London, Institute of Education (IOE), London England.

"Dancing Star" has taught ESL/EFL for about 10 years. She has worked in various universities, colleges, and not-for-profits around Canada. As well, she spent a number of years teaching overseas in Asia. She has a special interest in immigrant education. She holds a Master's of Education from a well-known university in British Columbia.

"Gita" has always loved culture and language, so is relieved there is a profession that allows her to play with people and words all day long. She is slogging through her MA one course at a time, and worries that one day it will all finish and she'll have just begun. She is in her first year of studies in a graduate program in curriculum and instruction at a university in the lower mainland.

Why did you decide to pursue a Master's degree in TESOL?

OO: I had always wanted to pursue a Master's degree, but for various reasons had never done so. So, in 2006 I thought it was finally time to undertake it. Not only did I want to broaden my knowledge of teaching, but I also wanted to broaden my career prospects. As much as I loved being in the ESL classroom, I decided that I didn't want to spend the second half of my career doing this. A Master's degree seemed like a necessary and rewarding way to make that change. I am interested in how language, learning and technology interact and felt that I needed a stronger theoretical background in order to pursue this. An MA in TESOL seemed like an ideal bridge between my experience in ESL and my future plans.

DS: I wanted to work at colleges and universities in Canada and I knew that I wouldn't be able to do this without a Master's. I also wanted to have a stronger theoretical framework with which to inform my teaching practice.

G: I had always wanted to pursue

graduate studies, and I realized my employment opportunities were only being limited without a Master's degree. Also partially because of employment options, and because my undergraduate degree was in SLA/TESL, I chose a program more general in nature to broaden my future choices. I will be able to take a TESL-specific course as part of my MA, which includes up to date research and development in the field.

What kind of Master's program did you enroll in (e.g., face-to-face, online, distance, thesis-based, course based)?

G: I was accepted to both a local, face-to-face, thesis-based program and an online distance program, but chose the local one in the hopes of developing discussion within my cohort and participating within the profession locally. Due to the broad nature of my program, that hasn't actually happened, but studying locally has given me the opportunity to access my supervisor face to face, as well as interact with the university on a variety of levels.

OO: My MA is fully online with the option of either doing a thesis or a

professional report plus an additional course. It is a part-time program designed for in service professionals.

DS: It was a face-to-face Master's in Education program. I wrote a graduating paper at the end of my program.

What made you choose that program or that institution?

OO: There were several factors, but it came down to a combination of word of mouth, perceived quality and a leap of faith. I had recently completed a certificate in online education at the IOE and was impressed with the overall quality of the program and I also knew colleagues who had attended IOE and they seemed satisfied. I specifically wanted to do an online program as this is an area that I wish to pursue. Contrary to what is sometimes thought, online programs can, and do, provide a rich, varied learning experience and I felt that the IOE, being one of the first institutions to pursue online education, was well-positioned to offer more than the average 'online' program, which often resembles a traditional

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correspondence model. Cost was also a factor, and IOE was a bit expensive, but still affordable. The number of programs in TESOL has mushroomed in recent years and I found it a bit daunting trying to decide where to attend and worried about whether I had made the right choice, but I am happy with the program.

DS: This program was close to my family, and this was very important after being overseas for many years. This program also had a very good reputation.

G: First of all, I work at the same university where I study, so it's pretty easy to get to class after teaching! Second, I had heard good things about both the program and faculty. Third, it offers both MEd and MA degrees, so I can take more courses if the reality of doing a thesis threatens to do me in.

What is/was the duration of the program?

DS: Most people completed the program in two years.

OO: The standard program is two years, though three years is probably more realistic for someone working full time.

G: Welllllll, that depends on how long I take to write my thesis, doesn't it? Some people get it done in two years, but I can't see how they manage to breathe at the same time.

What are the strengths of the program?

OO: The overall design of the program is good and the Institute makes good use of its online format. Unlike some online/

distance programs, there is a requirement that students participate in and contribute to weekly tasks and assignments. For an online program, this is absolutely essential and a deal-breaker for me. Without this structure students miss out on the vital learning opportunities that come from the three fundamental types of interaction: student/materials; student/student; and student/faculty.

The overall level of instruction was also very high. The course tutors are all accomplished ESL professionals with extensive experience, who participated actively in each course, providing continuous, timely feedback. The cohort was reasonable in size, enabling us to develop enough social cohesion to be able to critically evaluate each other's work. The students in my program reside/teach in different parts of the world and come from a variety of ESL teaching backgrounds, so I felt that the contributions by my fellow students were of high quality and most everyone was willing to push beyond the required tasks.

G: Any learning is good. The breadth of the programme inevitably brings variety to the cohort. The programme is research-based and rigorous. The cultural component of coursework has been tremendously interesting and insightful.

DS: I think the strength of the program was its professors. I found many of them to be extremely inspiring and supportive.

What are the weaknesses?

G: Choosing a broad-based, non-TESL specific program has sometimes felt like swimming

upstream, as most of my classmates are K-12 teachers and often fall back on BCTF politics and assume all learners are "kids". Also, because the program allows students to choose their courses, it can be difficult to develop a supportive cohort if you choose courses specific to your field. Some might also be disappointed that the coursework is theory based, so the practical aspects of teaching are rarely explored.

DS: I wished that there had been more classes to choose from. I found the choice of classes in our department to be rather limited.

OO: The administrative systems are a bit outdated. The administrative staff is excellent, but in terms of a student managing his/her program, fees etc. IOE is not really well positioned to do this.

Do you feel the program has better prepared you professionally? Has it made you a better teacher? How?

DS: Yes, this program has given me various theoretical frameworks that inform my teaching practice. It has also given me more confidence in the classroom.

OO: Absolutely. I have gained a much deeper understanding of issues regarding language instruction and acquisition and it has provided me with enough to think about for quite a while. The program is structured for practicing professionals, so in addition to a strong theoretical basis, the program draws heavily upon the teaching experiences of the students, resulting in nice, dare I say it, theory/practice integration.

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G: Being confused about instructor requirements, formatting, institutional policies and academic genre and culture is humbling and worthwhile for every instructor to experience from time to time. It should make for more empathetic professionals. Having the “tables turned” refreshes my perspective on clarifying objectives for my own students. The research and theory has piqued not only my interest, but affirmed and sometimes challenged philosophies and strategies I’ve developed over my professional career thus far.

Would you recommend the program to someone considering pursuing graduate studies?

OO: Most definitely.

DS: Yes, I would. I definitely feel that those two years were very much well spent.

G: With the caveats above, yes.

What is the best lesson you came away with?

OO: I don’t know if there has a single ‘big’ lesson. Rather, it has been a steady progression of challenges and rewards. As with any graduate program, though, there have been extremely satisfying moments and some frustrating, exhausting times. Somewhat ironically, I no longer teach ESL, but the MA in TESOL has given me a stronger foundation in education in general, which has served me well in my new career (which is also education related). Language is such a central component of any education that a strong background in language acquisition and instruction provides a unique perspective on how learners learn, the inherent bias all materials contain, and the types of interactions that foster learning. These are factors that affect all teachers and learners. So, the MA TESOL has provided me with a valuable, more refined lens with which to view the learning process as a whole.

DS: I learnt a lot in my program but I think that I developed a real understanding of the political nature of education and the TESL field in particular. This knowledge has strongly informed my practice especially in working with newcomers to Canada.

G: Still working on it ...

DOES YOUR GROUP NEED A LEGAL SPEAKER?

The **BC Legal Speakers Bureau** can provide you with a qualified volunteer speaker to give a presentation on the legal topic of interest or concern to your group.

You can tap into the legal expertise of a number of reputable BC organizations to provide your group with just the right kind of guest speaker for your group. Our speakers are free or cost a nominal fee.

They will come and talk to your group about a variety of legal topics including:

- Civil liberties
- Debtor protection
- Employment insurance
- Employment standards
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- Human rights
- Landlord and tenant Law
- Mental Health issues
- Power of attorney
- Probating an estate
- Scams to avoid
- Starting a small business
- Writing a will
- And more

We provide speakers to a variety of community organizations, such as public libraries, community centres, seniors groups, schools, service organizations, women’s groups, and immigrant serving organizations. Where possible, we will provide speakers who can present in English, French and immigrant languages.

Participating Organizations

- BC Civil Liberties Association
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- Community Legal Assistance Society
- Nidus Registry
- People’s Law School
- South Fraser Women’s Services Society
- Tenant Resource and Advocacy Centre
- West Coast LEAF

To book a speaker please contact Sarina Rehal at the People’s Law School

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Toll Free: 1.866.331.5400

Email: sarinar@publiclegaled.bc.ca

Web: www.publiclegaled.bc.ca



2008—2009 Annual Reports Submitted at the TEAL Annual General Meeting

President's Report

Submitted by: Michael Galli

Year's Highlights

- Responded to interests expressed by Thompson Rivers University to develop relations with TEAL institutions and professionals in the Interior through increased professional development activity.
- Developed relations with the ESL Settlement Assistance Program, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. This led to a service contract to deliver several one-day Professional Development Workshops to Instructors, Coordinators, and Volunteer Tutors who work in the ESLSAP program.
- Supported the University of Victoria's Resource Fair.
- Acted on the recommendation of the TEAL Conference Committee (2008) to initiate a Three-Year rolling plan for Conferences. Following this direction, the following host institutions have agreed to host conferences:

2009 – The ELI at UBC

2010 – BC Institute of Technology

2011 – Simon Fraser University

2012 – Capilano University has expressed interest in becoming the 2012 host. This will be confirmed in the coming months.

- Initiated dialogue with Languages Canada on establishing closer relations and cooperation.
- Spearhead Initiatives to draw closer ties between the

Interior, Lower Mainland, and Vancouver Island.

- Proposal: to establish Co-1st Vice Presidents in the Interior and Island to be TEAL Board Members who will chair the Policy and Action Committee and lead advocacy initiatives for the Association. Regional representation will ensure that the concerns of all regions are presented to the TEAL Board, and acted upon as deemed necessary.
- Continued efforts are being made to encourage greater unity within the profession, especially between the various sectors; e.g., private and public institutions. The desired outcome is to promote and garner greater appreciation and respect for the profession and the Association of BC TEAL.

Special Interest Group Report

Submitted by: Brett Todd

After sending out an email to the BCTEAL membership to gauge the demand for Special Interest Groups, we received some feedback regarding Global Education. It seemed important to nurture this interest with an eye to future growth. Joel Rhein will act as facilitator for the Special Interest Group in Global Education – setting as the group's goal some sort of involvement (a newsletter, information pack, presentation, table, etc.) at the BCTEAL 42nd Annual Conference in 2010. If interest in Global Education wanes after the 2010 conference, A new call for ideas will be sent out and a second one-year SIG will be instituted to work towards inclusion in the 2011 Conference.

Newsletter Report

Submitted by: Shawna Williams

The TEAL Newsletter has undergone a number of changes during 2008-2009. The first issue of 2008 was overseen by guest editors until a new editor (Shawna Williams) and co-editor (Susan Dobie) came on as of the Spring '08 issue. TEAL News was sent out three times in 2008, and the first issue of 2009 – although later than expected – was published in May. As the newsletter should be sent out three times a year, the goal is to publish a summer issue in lieu of a winter publication.

Establishing a consistent contact for layout has been a challenge. The Spring '08 issue was designed by Great Exposure, under an agreement to exchange ad space for newsletter layout. Unfortunately, Great Exposure found it could not fulfill their commitments, and so the agreement ceased. The Winter '08 and Fall '08 issues were designed by an independent designer, but unfortunately, she did not have access to the publishing programs required to assist with the first issue of '09. Instead the newsletter was designed by the editor using Microsoft Publisher. The committee is still hoping to establish consistent design and layout personnel, preferably within the membership. The newsletter committee lost its long time Advertising Manager, Deirdre Wilson, who was replaced in late '08 by Novi Hamdali. TEAL News has been fortunate to maintain some long-term advertisers, but Novi is working to attract new advertisers. The biggest challenge for the

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newsletter is soliciting sufficient articles to be published. In April '09, the TEAL Board of Directors made a motion that each Board member is to be responsible for one article per newsletter. This would ensure balanced representation in terms of editorial content.

The newsletter continues to be available to the general public on the website. However, its layout continues to be designed with the purpose of being a printed document. The committee will look at whether a design change (i.e., to a web-based newsletter format) is required in the future.

PD Committee Report

Submitted by: Mike Burri

Two successful PD Sessions were held in 2008 and 2009: Thompson Rivers University (TRU) hosted the Sessions in Kamloops in October 2008, and the other event was held at Camosun college in Victoria in March 2009. Thanks to the great efforts of the PD Committee, TRU, and Camosun College, the TEAL PD sessions were expanded in the past year. In fact, the two events became mini-conferences with plenary speakers and publisher displays.

The TRU Sessions were attended by 120 people, and close to 90 attendees were counted at the Camosun Sessions.

Both of the Sessions generated positive revenues for BCTEAL.

TRU will be hosting the 2009 Fall Sessions in October 2009.

The PD Committee had determined that it would be in the best interests of the membership to rotate Sessions between the

private and public sector. We are currently in the planning stages of having a private language school in Vancouver host a fall event in November 2009, and an event on Vancouver Island in spring 2009.

Conference Report

Submitted by: Jola Garus Lekich and Sarah ter Keurs

Venue: The English Language Institute at UBC was the site of the 2009 BC TEAL Conference. We are very thankful for all of the wonderful resources they provided for the use of the conference. With over 400 attendees, it was a pleasure to be in such a fabulous location.

Presenters: Many thanks go out to our keynote speakers – Ken Reeder and Kelleen Toohey. As well, we are pleased to have a special plenary panel – Kay McAllister, Steven Talmy, Tillat Khalid, and Joann Chernen - discuss issues of theory and practice in teacher education. And, a big thank you goes to all the wonderful presenters who volunteered their time to share their expertise and knowledge at our conference!

Volunteers: No large-scale event could ever be successful without the hard work of our volunteers. We had amazing committee members who put this entire conference together: Trish Fodor, Barbara Siennicki, Brian Wilson, Nicholas Collins, Joyce White, Sandra McGoldrick, Layne Kriwoken, Virginia Christopher, Andrew Scales, Eilidh Singh, Susan Dobie, Shawna Williams, Shelley Siegerist, Karen Gunn, Teddy Parnova, Ian Sutherland, Cristina Peralejo, Victoria Brown, and Diane Liu Williams. Thank you as well, to all the ELI student volunteers.

ESL Week; BC TEAL hosted a writing contest during the week of May 3 – 9th for ESL Week! We had many submissions and look forward to reading them all! The deadlines was May 31st.

Website Report

Submitted By: Brian Wilson

Overview

The focus of 2008-2009 was to continue introducing minor improvements and upgrades. The site was stable throughout the year with no major problems reported. We experienced minor problems with the email server in March 2009, which were quickly resolved.

Traffic: The site has experienced sustained and consistent traffic, with predictable and manageable increases whenever a conference is hosted. The capacity of the current hosting plan is sufficient at present to deal with current traffic patterns.

Syndication: We continue to investigate the use of new technologies to enhance our ability to communicate with our members. Recently, we added a Twitter account and badge to the site and have begun to connect with teachers and institutions both here in BC and around the world. We have also experimented with the use of Facebook and will continue to use these tools. Unfortunately, the use of RSS syndication has not grown as hoped, but this is mostly due to the lack of feeds available from other ESL organizations. We will continue to try to develop this area and we continue to provide an RSS feed to anyone wishing to use it.

Upgrades were of a minor nature this year and mostly focused on fixing bugs as they arose. A new

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WYSIWYG editor with better features was introduced to replace the existing interface.

Improvements continue to be made to the administration area in order to better manage membership data. It is hoped that the site will receive a face-lift in the next 12-18 months.

Security is an ongoing matter and the site will continue to be assessed to deal with any security matters as they arise. Users are reminded to keep their software and browsers up to date as many

security exploits occur due to improperly maintained or obsolete software on the user's computer. Users are also reminded to follow best practices when managing their account; i.e. regular changes in passwords and choosing passwords of sufficient strength.

TEAL continues to strive to be a leader in ESL associations. New features will be considered as technologies and membership needs change.

If you know of any glitches or bugs, please forward a description to support@bctea.org

The Wired Teacher: Buzzword by Denise Geiss

What Does an Online Word Processor Have in Common with Butter?

Writing teachers tend to spend a lot of time editing and commenting on student writing. There's the old pen and paper method of course – great if you have long bus rides. Many teachers have some experience with the Track Changes and Comment features in MS Word. Some may have also have tried an online word processor – an application that allows users to create and share documents in real time. GoogleDocs and Zoho are good examples. Buzzword is the online word processor created by Adobe, and it's worth taking a look at. As one user said on [The Acrobat.com Blog](#), *"I must admit Adobe's Buzzword looks like creamy, fattening butter next to trim, healthy margarine GDocs. But I like butter..."*

I tend to agree. I fell in love with the Flash ribbon at first sight. And my upper-intermediate writing students found Buzzword easy to learn; within half an hour they were signed-up and sharing documents. Comments are easy to create, read and print. Documents are saved on the web, so there is no need for USB's, emailing documents or saving to a folder.

That said, there are a few things missing that a teacher would like to have. First, while there is a spell checker, there is no grammar checker or thesaurus. At the time of this writing, users cannot create folders. The lack of folders has not been a big drawback, as student work is displayed under their name. Also, Buzzword is rather simple compared to MS Word, but that might be a good thing. I'm still trying to find where things are in Word 7. For those who might be thinking to try Buzzword out, here are a few tips.

1. The screen is black and takes a few seconds to load. Just wait – it will load. You might need to update your Flash player.
2. When students sign up, they will receive an email from Adobe. They have to verify their account within 3 days or it will be cancelled. If you are in a language lab, get them to verify their accounts right away. Otherwise, they might forget and lose their work.
3. If you and your students are in Buzzword at the same time, as in a classroom situation, turn taking is involved. Just as you are typing a comment in a student's essay, they might save and your comment will disappear. You might ask them not to save for a few minutes while you take a look at their writing.
4. Since there are no folders, smart naming of files is a good idea. For example, have students save a file in this way: mariko_assignment1_draft2. That way, you will be able to find the files quickly on your screen.
5. It can be helpful to let your students know when you will be reviewing their writing, so that they know when they can read your comments and make changes.
6. When you sign up, you are actually creating an Adobe ID. This gives you access to other free Acrobat.com tools such as [Acrobat.com Labs](#), a collaborative tool for creating presentations. The Adobe ID also gives you access to [Adobe Forums](#), where users can find answers to many of their questions.
7. Buzzword recently emerged from the trial version, but the free version is still available. I am assured by Adobe that there are no licence issues with using it in a classroom setting.

2009 TEAL Conference Presenters' Contact Information

Presenters at TEAL did not have their contact information published in the Conference book. Below is a list of Sessions, Presenters, and e-mail or website addresses from those presenters who agreed to share their contact information.

Academic Culture – Vilien Chen vilien_chen@alumni.sfu.ca
 "Barbarians with trifling arts": Western TEFL Teachers in China – Todd Hanson teh6@sfu.ca
 Beginning Level ESL Writing Lessons Incorporating the Writing Process – Donna Price dprice@sdccd.edu
 Beyond Learning to Read: Activities for Studying Literature – Jacqueline Foster pj.foster@shaw.ca
 "Blitzing" for Writing Accuracy – Beth Coleman beth_m_coleman@hotmail.com
 CLB 5-10 Exit Assessment Tasks – Christina Stechishin cstechishin@vcc.ca
 Comparing non-native and native English undergraduate vocabulary in writing – Scott Douglas sdouglas@ucalgary.ca
 Considerations for Teaching English Overseas – LietHellwig liethellwig@shaw.ca
 Constructing Coherence through Paragraph Deconstruction – Katherine Coburn katherine.coburn@ubc.ca
 Critical Reading Connections between ESP Students and their Professions – Andrew Spence & Kathleen Shantz kathyshantz@telus.net
 Enhance Language Training Placement Assessment (ELTPA) 6-10: Information Session – Audrey Bennett abennett@tcet.com
 ESL Settlement Assistance Program – Cathy Cameron-Suchy csuchy@okanagan.bc.ca
 Functional Pronunciation Tasks for Adv. Academic & Professional Levels – Barbara Wakal bwakal@gmail.com
 Game-like Activities to Practice Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing – Donna Price dprice@sdccd.edu
 Genre-based discovery learning – Dirk MacKenzie dirk.mackenzie@yahoo.com
 How Can Instructors Assist ESL Students in Academic Writing? – Jim Hu jhu@tru.ca, Sarah KeunHye Lee-Wiens & Jason Brown
 IELTS preparation: an update on teaching strategies – Marti Sevier msevier@sfu.ca, Sarah Fleming & Ishbel Galloway
 Integrating Technology in the ESL Classroom – Samuel Sheinberg sam@nas.ca
 Interactions in Peer Feedback Activities – Jun Tian jtian@uvic.ca
 Introduction to the Canadian Language Benchmarks – Christina Stechishin cstechishin@vcc.ca & Virginia Christopher vchristopher@shaw.ca
 L2 Learning and Communication Strategy Research in the Classroom – Ivelina K. Tchizmarova ivelina_Tchizmarova@bcit.ca
 Language Learning That's Simply Challenging – Carolyn Kristjánsson kristjan@twu.ca
 Language, Culture and Classrooms: Stories from M.Ed. International – A. Sivia asivia@sfu.ca, Dr. Roumillieva, C. Zhang, C. Suhr, A. Wang & C. Chen
 Leadership Style and Change Implementation – Virginia Christopher vchristopher@shaw.ca
 Learning Beyond the Classroom – Thomas Christensen thomas.christensen@intuto.cahttp://www.screencast.com/t/cjtoQrid
 Linguistic Insights and ELT Materials: Praxis or Lip Service? – Lawrence McAllister lwm@sfu.ca & Kay McAllister
 Listening - Stressed Word Focus Technique – Michael Wicks firejumper45@hotmail.com
 Paraphrasing for Academic Success – Avril Trudeau-Bai atrudeau@sfu.ca & Marti Sevier msevier@sfu.cahttp://www.sfu.ca/~msevier/
 Pearson Longman and Multimedia – Zinta Williams zinta.williams@erpi.com
 Placement testing with the new TOEIC Tests – Contact Anne Heath at heath@etscanada.ca
 Reality check - TOEFL Test preparation that computes! – Contact Anne Heath at heath@etscanada.ca
 Rethinking L1 Use in the ESL/EFL Classroom – James Corcoran jcorcoran@oise.utoronto.ca
 Revealing the Unseen Side of the Iceberg – Craitalbasescu craita_i@yahoo.com
 Song-Games for Literacy & Language Success – Bonnie Davison bonnie@singingenglish.com
 Speaking Activities: from Practice to Application – David Kehe dkehe@whatcom.ctc.edu & Peggy Kehe
 Success in Housing for Literacy – Donna Bowler successintesi@yahoo.ca
 Teaching Communication with Automated Self-help Services – Margaret Chan machansy@hotmail.com
 Teaching Q4 Leadership Skills in Business English Classes – James Peterson jamesgunma@yahoo.ca
 Teaching with a Picture Dictionary – Patricia Nicoli patricia.nicoli@oup.com
 The A,B,Cs of Phonology – Linda Westberg lindawestberg@msn.com
 The Effects of Collaborative and Individual Output Tasks – Jun Tian jtian@uvic.ca & Hoessin Nassaji
 Towards a More Multicentric Approach in the ESL Classroom – Joan Robertson joan.robertson@kwantlen.ca
 UBC Botanical Garden as a Springboard for Writing – Jennifer VandeBogart jennifer.vandebogart@ubc.ca
 Ventures – Donna Price dprice@sdccd.edu
 Vocabulary Acquisition and Dictionary Use – Zinta Williams zinta.williams@erpi.com
 Watch Your Tone! Telephone Skills for Home & Work – Sylvia Ozbalt sylvia.ozbalt@ubc.ca
 Why Didn't I Get the Job? – Barbara Siennicki barbara.siennicki@ubc.ca & Eilidh Singh

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