

## President's Message

Marlene Eccles

The end of the school year is fast approaching and everyone is likely counting the days toward having some extended family time and enjoying some relaxing and engaging activities.

Let me leave you at the end of this school year with some of the accomplishments of the ESL PSA - on your behalf. We held our annual Vision Day on May 14, 2010 in Vancouver and were delighted with the number of school districts represented. We had ESL/ESD teachers and coordinators from Williams Lake, Prince George, Kamloops, Vancouver, West Vancouver, Surrey, Coquitlam, Chilliwack, and Campbell River. The purpose of Vision Day is to set goals for the following year and to evaluate accomplishments to date and set new goals for the ESL PSA. [Details about the discussions that took place on Vision Day are elsewhere in the newsletter.]

Since the ESL PSA was formed in 1989, it has had an ESL voice within the BCTF. With all the budget forecasts for the

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upcoming school year, advocacy is particularly critical for ESL learners. One of the goals of the past that we will continue to pursue via our lobbying efforts is the elimination of the five year funding cap. The PSA has always opposed the cap which is effectively a service cap as few districts are able to continue needed support without the appropriate funding. We will continue with our campaign to have the BCTF Representative Assembly advocate for the removal of the funding cap and we will write letters to local papers, and request information from all our members about what you consider to be the most important points you would want us to make on your behalf, what potential solutions might be and what actions you would like us to take on behalf of you and your learners.

This year, the University of BC created the first ever Teaching English Language Learners [TELL] Cohort of elementary teachers in training. The cohort of 36 was also unique in that some of the best known names in ESL pedagogy were involved in their training program. Undergraduates are seldom lucky enough to be taught by the likes of Dr. Lee Gunderson [who is also our keynote at the conference in October], Dr. Margaret Early and Dr. Steven Talmy. The group is in the midst of completing their extended teaching practicum experience in hugely diverse and multicultural schools in Vancouver. Though job prospects for them are rather dim at the moment, going into the classroom with a very realistic understanding of classroom reality - ESL IS in every classroom - is bound to benefit them in the end, and will also benefit our learners. Our very own [Dr.] Sylvia Helmer

[Member-at-large], has been seconded to both teach and help supervise the practicum for this group. The cohort has been a popular choice in terms of elementary teacher training options and will continue this coming year. Registration for the cohort, which runs from July 5, 2010 to June 30, 2011, is full.

As noted in the last newsletter, March 25-27 was spent at the New Teachers Conference in Richmond, an annual event hosted by BCTF. Providing some information for this group of young teachers is critical for the PSA. It is the young teachers who suffer when sent into schools without the knowledge and understandings they need to work with ESL/ESD learners. They want to help and are terribly eager and dedicated, but stress themselves beyond reason as they are not given the appropriate teaching and learning tools to succeed. This is another area of advocacy which we must continue to keep in mind.

In that light, our annual ESL PSA Conference will be held on October 22, 2010 at Churchill Secondary School in Vancouver. This is our 20<sup>th</sup> Conference and one you really don't want to miss. The weekend begins with a performance on Thursday evening. This youth-focused play will delight your heart and send you home inspired all on its own. Friday features our keynote speaker, Dr. Lee Gunderson, and three timeslots for concurrent workshop sessions. As always, there will be our AGM, door prizes, lots of good munchies, "lunching around the world" and our usual wine and cheese to wrap up the day on Friday. There are a number of positions

available on the executive as we try to ensure that we re-elect about half the executive each year. Come to the AGM and DO think about joining the executive as it is an outstanding opportunity to connect with like minded professionals.

A final note and reminder from the last newsletter: the induction ceremony for all new teachers. All new teachers receive a free one-year membership to a PSA of their choice when they participate in an

induction ceremony in their district. If your district has had an induction ceremony and you didn't receive a free PSA membership, contact your local president and request it.

I wish all of you a relaxing, rejuvenating summer and look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Marlene Eccles  
ESL PSA President

## ESL PSA Vision Day Report May 14, 2010



Vision Day 2010 was held in Vancouver and included 17 ESL specialists from nine school districts, representing members across the province from as far north as Prince George and as far east as Kamloops. We chose to focus this event on two main areas that seem to be the constants underlying all our work with ESL learners. We sought input and brainstormed ideas focusing on these three main questions:

1. How do we advocate for ESL learners and their teachers?
2. What professional learning opportunities do teachers working with ESL learners need?
3. How do we support classroom teachers working with ESL learners?

A summary list of key ideas for each of these questions is included here. It is hoped that the thoughts and suggestions of your colleagues will inspire and perhaps motivate you toward some small or large action. We would also be pleased to hear about which ideas you would welcome more information. Please email suggestions and questions to Marlene Eccles, president: [meccles@shaw.ca](mailto:meccles@shaw.ca)

## 1. How do we advocate for ESL learners and their teachers?

- Network
- Create a chapter - one way to learn from each other
- Build community - bring in various types of kindred/support workers [SWIS workers, Multicultural Workers, organizations such as MOSAIC, etc.]
- Collaborate across disciplines/areas
- Build relationships
- Learn from the students
  - Get to know their needs -listen with an open heart and mind
  - Have an open door policy to get to know families and the backgrounds of the students
- Understand/learn about students' cultural backgrounds
- Letting go of our agendas - be flexible to new approaches and ideas
- Learn about and acquire appropriate assessment tools and keep careful data of progress
- Attend cultural specific venues/groups
- Involve parents and give them a voice
- Advocate via your local union, the media, etc.
- Access In-service for classroom teachers (SIOP, academic vocabulary, etc.)
- Professional development - share knowledge with others
- Focus on "Our" students not "mine" or "yours"
- Collaborate with universities - research to support needs
- Read, stay up-to-date and draw on research available
- Communicate issues to 'management'
- Present formally to administrators - e.g. connect the dots for administration between ESL/D support and learner success and graduation
- Continue to lobby to eliminate the 5 year funding cap [NB Related to this issue, the Representative Assembly of the BCTF recently voted as follows: *"That the BCTF urgently request the Child and Youth Advocate formally investigate the impact of budget cuts on direct services to students with special needs and ESL/ESD in districts across the province."*]

## 2. What professional development and learning opportunities do teachers working with ESL learners need?

- Vocabulary development teaching and strategies (contextual)
  - Vocabulary development - supporting classroom teachers
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- Developing academic literacy
- Academic language development
- Explicitly teaching language of content for all teachers
- 1701 documentation - clarity continues to be elusive with each district having its own 'take' on what is 'right'
- Day to day organizational strategies - how to set up a schedule at elementary, complete AIPs, etc.
- Ministry guidelines/specialist recommendations
- Curriculum K-7 / 8-12 - what to teach? (in context), grade level content - IRPs
- Secondary teachers - how to shift from teaching "just content" to supporting diverse learning needs of all their students
- ESL methodology
- Audit workshops
- Ongoing - job embedded pro-d
- Collaborative practices and strategies
- Information about strategies to deal with LD learners
- Identification of ESL/special needs
- Who are ESL learners? Funds of knowledge they bring - Multiculturalism
- Immigration, settlement and adjustment issues
- What is aboriginal ESD? What assessment should we use? What should an ESD program look like at the elementary/secondary level?
- Aboriginal student who qualify for ESD - when is the best time to target instruction - Elementary or secondary?
- How does ESD look in communities where aboriginal students are still embedded in language and culture vs. urban aboriginal Students?
- How can classroom teachers support ESD in the classroom (academic language goal)
- Software to support ESL learners - or is free online best?
- BICS vs. CALP
- Best practices - resources and materials, ESL levels/expectations, assessment, cultural backgrounds, issues and norm

### **3. How do we support classroom teachers working with ESL learners?**

- Share ESL research - e.g. Dr. Hetty Roessingh re vocabulary development
  - Newsletters - with practical ideas
  - Send out resources
  - Share information about new resources [ e.g. Teaching Content to English Language Learners [Haynes and Zacarian, 2009: ASCD]
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- Access new approaches - e.g. SIOP - new software - e.g. NAS
- Create, share good materials - class sets, adaptations, modifications
- Learn more about and get to know your ESL learners - their background (e.g. refugees, second generation), cultural differences re: attitudes towards education
- Teacher development courses - offered by districts, can't be left to the universities
- Speak at staff meetings
- Educate administration about ESL/D
- Teach BICS/CALP and CUP - going beyond
- High quality Pro-D - bring research to practice, ongoing, differentiate instruction to support students with diverse needs, linking assessment to instruction
- Advocacy for caseload limits and administration pro-d
- Side-by-side teaching
- Provide adaptations and culturally representative materials
- Co-planning, team teaching, common materials



# 30 THINGS I WISH I'D KNOWN WHEN I STARTED TEACHING ESL

By Dale Shea

1. Don't mark everything.
2. Don't mark FOR everything.
3. Teach grammar and vocabulary in context.
4. Don't be afraid to call on the quiet ones.
5. Don't nod and smile when you don't understand.
6. READING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL!
7. Peer editing with comments.
8. Daily writing.....journals
9. Writing projects- the autobiography-covers sentence patterns and verb tenses
10. Revising and editing....teach the process....hard and boring , but BIG payoff
11. "You Be the Teacher" ...sentences with ESL type errors "borrowed" anonymously from student work and used to remediate these common errors.
12. Daily public speaking...short to long, informal to more formal
13. Demystify Shakespeare- the times.....simplified version for plot....the original play by Readers Theatre
14. Word Families for vocab development
15. Prefix/Suffix/ Root Word approach to vocab development
16. Drafts get a check mark.
17. Roleplay, telephone dialogues....PROPS!
18. Find ways to get more mileage out of each lesson.
19. Increase student interactions
20. Conference with students while others are working quietly.
21. Make the ESL classroom a safe place to take risks.
22. Valentine's Love Story Contest
23. Hallowe'en Scary Story Contest
24. Allow first language use in class for clarification.
25. Idioms as a warm up.
26. Western allusions as a warm up or daily presentation.
27. Read, write, speak and listen in every class.
28. Focus on one error type at a time.
29. Manipulatives to teach prepositions.
30. Work with phrasal verbs.

Dale Shea  
ESL Coordinator  
SD43 (Coquitlam)

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## Conference 2010 Update

[Sylvia Helmer, co-chair]

***Visions 21: Best Practices Across the Curriculum*** is set for October 22, 2010. It is our 20<sup>th</sup> annual conference but our 21<sup>st</sup> year as an organization. The conference will be located at Churchill Secondary School and will feature Dr. Lee Gunderson as our keynote.

Calls for presentations continue to come in and if you are feeling motivated to share with your colleagues we could still squeeze in some more sessions - but you have to let the workshop coordinators know before the end of July. The Call for Presentations and submission details are online at:  
<http://bctf.ca/eslpsa/conference.html>

Online registration will begin later in the summer [so keep checking in at the website to see if it is ready] but here are a few highlights to whet your appetite.

- Many publishers have already registered to dazzle you with their displays.
- We are creating an 'international' luncheon for you this year, and the usual yummy snacks at coffee break time, of course.
- You will have three session choices, two shorter one-hour workshops

and one longer two-hour session for more in-depth learning time.

A sampling of sessions confirmed:

- Dr. Hetty Roessingh, our keynote from last year, has agreed to come back and facilitate two sessions - one focusing on primary learners and one catering to teachers of older learners.
  - Theatre as a Second Language [TSL <http://www.tslvancouver.ca/>] will be presenting its wonderful ideas for helping ESL learners with language acquisition via theatre.
  - Dr. Sunddip Nahal will facilitate a session for newer teachers entitled 'Help Me! I Need Survival Skills to teach ESL Students'. Having seen her presentation at the New Teachers' Conference in March, I know you are in for a very useful and practical session.
  - Dr. Ying Hoh is back to provide an opportunity - especially for those who could not get into her session last year - to consider the challenges of working with ESL learners who have additional learning needs.
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Meanwhile, do consider submitting a presentation proposal - sharing is a shared learning experience from which

you receive as much as you give - and have a great summer.



You are invited  
to join your ESL colleagues on the occasion of  
the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the ESL PSA  
at their 20<sup>th</sup> annual conference

## **Visions 21: Best Practices Across the Curriculum**

Churchill Secondary School  
October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010.

**Keynote Speaker:**  
Dr. Lee Gunderson,  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Students; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching

### **Workshops include past favourites and new presentations:**

Dr. Hetty Roessingh - Teaching Vocabulary  
Cathy Humphries - Writing Opinions in English and Social Studies:  
Brenda Johnston - Extensive Reading  
Theatre as a Second Language (TSL) - Using Drama in the ESL Classroom  
Dr. Ying Hoh - Special Ed and ESL  
Jane Monchak - ESD in the Classroom  
Oxford University Press will be presenting a workshop on their materials

### **Publishers Displays**

**Connect with representatives of your favourite publishers.**

**Although we have many other workshops, we would welcome your proposals focusing on teaching primary and elementary students. Please complete the call for proposals on the ESL PSA website and forward them to Sydney Dean at [sydney.dean@shaw.ca](mailto:sydney.dean@shaw.ca)**

*"Enjoy a day filled with engaging learning opportunities, thoughtful conversations, a delicious international luncheon and exciting new resources to view."*

**Watch for online registration**

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## CATHERINE LOGAN EDDY SCHOLARSHIP

Each year we award a worthy secondary graduate who is planning to go on to tertiary education. The student must meet the eligibility criteria as outlined on our website. This year again we found ourselves unable to choose a clear winner. All applicants were outstanding candidates but eventually we agreed

that these two young men were so equally deserving that we have split the prize between the two of them. They are Tamim Mohammad Munir from Byrne Creek Secondary in Burnaby and Arman Zamani from Tupper Secondary in Vancouver.

## Vocabulary Study: Part 2

[excerpted from workshop package by S. Helmer]

As explained in Part 1, vocabulary can usefully be sorted into Three Tiers. Here is a list of some useful “academic” verbs learners need to understand and be able to use. They all belong in Tier 2.

acquire	differentiate	introduce
allude to	discuss	inquire
analyze	enhance	investigate
anticipate	enable	justify
associate	evaluate	juxtapose
claim	examine	manipulate
collect	express	pursue
convince	extended	organize
communicate	extract	realize
compare	facilitate	reconsider
contrast	frame	respond
contribute	focus	refer
connect	generate	relate
conclude	hypothesize	represent
create	indicate	sequence
critique	identify	synthesize
describe	inform	summarize

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demonstrate  
determine

integrate

symbolize  
track

All students, but especially students who are learning English, need access to a growing vocabulary and familiarity with a wide array of "how to" say and write things. As text becomes more complex and dense, words move from the Anglo-Saxon base of the English language to the more formalized Latin and Greek-based roots. This creates additional challenges for all, but especially ESL students.

*The shift from the familiar/common to the more sophisticated/educated use of language is reflected in a shift from Anglo-Saxon words toward the French equivalents and finally to the Latin and Greek synonyms.*  
[Akmajian, Demers & Harnish,]

Anglo-Saxon	French	Latin/Greek
ask	question	interrogate
dead	deceased	defunct
end	finish	conclude
fair	beautiful	attractive
fear	terror	trepidation
help	aid	assist
rise	mount	ascend
thin	spare	emaciated

## Building Blocks of Language Learning for Everyone

### SURVIVAL

To internalize, personalize and make 'automatic', learners need to hear these words hundreds of times in a variety of contexts. This language is non-academic and cognitively undemanding:

- simple grammar forms
- high frequency vocabulary - family, clothes, food, money, etc.

- face-to-face interactions
- 'here and now' language - about 1,000- 2,500 words

### BEGINNING LITERACY/READING

- common vocabulary: sports, hobbies, celebrations, etc.
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- writing for personal needs: notes, lists, recipes, group-constructed text such as with Language Experience Approach [do-talk-write-read]
- beginning to integrate grammar and vocabulary: mini "themes": "my lived experience" work well at this stage
- 2,500 to 5,000 words

**TRANSITIONING** [to curriculum related content learning with 'scaffolded' support]

**Shift is from learning to read to reading to learn.**

- Grade 4-7 approximately
- manipulatives to assist comprehension
- visual representations
- thematic learning helps - eg. disasters, blue jeans, heroes, etc.
- need much practice with reading strategies

### BIG IDEAS

- Grade 7-9 and onward
- abstract thought: metaphor, symbolism, idioms, imagery
- extensive use of academic reading and writing [ debates, essays]

## General Tips for Teaching Vocabulary

### Keep language acquisition in mind:

Learners are able to engage in conversational English long before they can cope with academic learning. Receptive skills allow for 'getting the gist' if appropriate supports are in place, though the learner cannot yet express in oral or written form her level of understanding.

1. Teach key terms, not all terms
2. ***Intensive instruction daily but incidental instruction constantly***
3. Notice and make noteworthy the interconnectedness, clusters and relationships among word families
4. Graphic organizers are extremely helpful to map word and/or meaning connections, clusters, etc.
5. Definitions have their place but definitions alone are superficial / short-lived learning. It is important

to help learners know when they need depth of word knowledge and when they need breadth.

6. Link the new with the old - always and often
7. Short, fun, intensive reviews lead to superior retention and ability to use in novel contexts.
8. Maximize the volume of reading as reading is directly related to vocabulary knowledge.
9. Note that if the learner cannot get: one word in 20 [5%], they still 'get it' two words in 20 [10%], they start to lose comprehension
10. Context and structure are keys - make these explicit for the learners.
11. Play with/ note/ use/ reuse multiple meanings of words.

## Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Strategies - Graphic Organizers

There are a variety of strategies that will support vocabulary development from simple word or picture sorts to sophisticated graphic organizers that help learners unpack and repack academic learning in a comprehensible format. One of the best sources for ideas and strategies is Doug Buehl's book, *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*. This book is now in its third edition, is clear and concise and provides examples. His book also cross-

references strategies by category or task, including student activities, cognitive processes and strategies linked to text frames.

Just one example of graphic organizers available online can be found on the website noted here.

[www.saskschools.ca/~qvss/curriculum/goread.pdf](http://www.saskschools.ca/~qvss/curriculum/goread.pdf)

### Vocabulary Activity Ideas: A Sampling

- Clap, Chant, Write - syllables, rhymes, patterns
- Word and/or picture match - words, phrases, sentences [Building From Clues strategy is a more sophisticated version of this]
- Concentration - infinite variations
- Sentence maker
  - using flashcards with a pocket chart works well for beginners and the youngest learners; table groups or individuals to come up with sentences based on recent vocabulary words in use is a nice 'game' format for those more capable
- Continuum of words
- Bingo - hugely versatile - create blank 'grids', mount on card stock and use for whatever the current topic might be
- Word sorts - see how diverse the thinking of your groups can be as they come up with novel ways to sort groups of words
- Fly Swatter - endlessly adjustable to match the ability level of the groups
  - put words under study on board or OHP projection
  - divide class into two teams and organize turn taking
  - two come to board, fly swatter in hand

- call out word or meaning of word and first to 'swat' the word wins a point for their team
- Ten/Twenty Questions
- Opposites Attract
- Graveyard of Tired Words
- Get Rid of Get - and also: big, small, hot, cold, said, bad, good, thing, happy, sad, stuff, etc.
- Melt Down - synthesizing key ideas from notes taken in mini-lecture
- Word Walls -see below for more details

## Word Walls

### TIPS

- Consider cutting words to shape of letters for primary ages
- For visibility, use large black lettering on a pastel background
- Only a handful of new words per week [ 5]
- Be selective about which words go up and be clear about how they are 'sorted' on the wall
- A good starting point for new learners [all ages] is to make their names and pictures the first word wall in the room
- Do something with the word wall each week - something that engages learners actively - kinesthetically and visually
- Begin immediately with the expectation that word wall words are spelled correctly when writing

- Praise efforts to use word wall words in writing and conversation

### POTENTIAL

- makes words accessible for all students - all the time
- makes a permanent record of words learned
- daily opportunity to practice and use
- categories as rich as the imagination
  - ABC walls
  - words we know
  - help me phrases
  - greetings
  - rhyming words
  - patterns and phrases
  - parts of speech
  - same and different
  - opposites
  - AWL words for content topic

See <http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/1138.html> for some ideas and activities.

## Notice of 2010 ESL PSA AGM

The Annual General Meeting  
of the ESL PSA will be held on  
**Friday, October 22, 2010** at our  
Provincial Conference at  
Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School  
in Vancouver.

The agenda includes an election of officers for the ESL PSA.  
Plan to attend the AGM so you can have a say  
in the running of your PSA.

The following positions are up for election:

- ◆ President (2 year term)
- ◆ Webmaster (2 year term)
- ◆ Conference Chair (2 year term)
- ◆ 3 Members-at-Large (2 year term)

If you are interested in running for one of these positions or would like to nominate someone, please email Susan Little at [slittle@sd45.bc.ca](mailto:slittle@sd45.bc.ca)

