



NEWSLETTER

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From The Chair

I hope everyone had a wonderful and warm Thanksgiving. The change of season has again brought a new member to the TESL Sask Board of Directors. At this time, it is my pleasure to introduce our newest board member, Darren Gordon. Darren, who is based in the Caronport area, is our second rural representative on the Board. We are excited to have him join us, and we look forward to accomplishing a lot in the coming year.

Speaking of rural representatives, the Board of Directors is still seeking a third rural representative. We encourage all rural members to consider applying for the Board or nominating a friend. Our organization's success depends on active engagement from our membership.

With our newest Board member, the TESL Sask Board of Directors met last month. During that meeting, we narrowed down the dates for the TESL Sask 2017 Conference, which will be held in Saskatoon. We will announce the dates and place on our webpage www.teslsask.com in the coming months. If you would like to help with conference planning, we would love to hear from you. As with Board membership, the success of the conference depends on member participation and engagement.

At this time, I would also like to give our membership a friendly reminder that, as of October 1, 2016, our new membership renewal fees have taken effect. Along with the new fees, the Board has decided to have one renewal date, as opposed to quarterly renewal billings. This will make the renewal process easier for our membership, as well as for our administration. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact us at teslsask@gmail.com.

I would like to wish everyone a joyous remainder of 2016. Happy holidays to you all. Keep warm and stay safe.

Mina Oh-Tannouri

Contents

Articles

From The Chair	1
Face of TESL	2
Accreditation Updates	2
Contact Us	2
Critical Pedagogy in ESL	3
Art Education in ESL	4
TESL Canada Update	5
Language Intimacy	6



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Find us on the Web:

<http://www.teslsask.com/>

The Face of TESL Saskatchewan

We would like to introduce your new board members along with the zones they represent. We look forward to serving:

Saskatoon

Nadia McBoo
Liliana Dominquez
Imran Mahmood

Regina

Mina Oh-Tannouri
Ricardo Arisnabarreta
Vacant

Rural

Katie Burham
Darren Gordon
Vacant

Board Assistant: Lisa Morhart, Regina

TESL SASKATCHEWAN'S MISSION

THE PURPOSE OF TESL SASKATCHEWAN IS TO FACILITATE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACCREDITATION OF "ENGLISH AS A SUBSEQUENT LANGUAGE" EDUCATORS.

If you are interested in joining a committee or board please feel free to express your interest by contacting the office at teslsask@gmail.com

TESL Saskatchewan Accreditation Updates and Changes

The Accreditation Committee would like to inform you about a few changes in your accreditation certificates. The changes in the certificate will be for both, the new accredited members and previous accredited members. One of the main reasons why we are making these changes is to help you remember the date for your re-accreditation. Keep in mind that all accredited members must renew their accreditation every five (5) years after having proven twenty-five (25) hours of continual learning/training in EAL/ESL/EFL/ESP. These twenty-five (25) hours of continual learning/training can be accumulated during five (5) years (since your accreditation certificate was issued).

All accredited members will be issued new certificates. The new certificates will have an expiry date. The certificates will be sent to the address provided to TESL Sask. (or the last email address we have in our records). Should you want to have your certificate sent to a different address, contact TESL Sask. at teslsask@gmail.com. Please advise as to whether this new address should be kept in our records for future mailing purposes. In addition, we ask that you inform us if you have made any changes to your legal name or the name you want to have on your certificate.

In order to make these changes as smooth and timely as possible, TESL Sask will aim to follow the following schedule.

- August 2016: members can update their mailing addresses and certificate information - name (deadline – August 31, 2016).
- September 2016: TESL Sask will update mailing and certificate information (deadline – September 31st).
- October and November 2016: certificates will be sent to accredited members (deadline November 30th).
- December 2016: member can contact TESL SK to the email provided above to discuss any problem with your certificates (e.g. spelling errors, non delivered certificates).

We, the accreditation committee, are working to help TESL Sask. continue growing as an institution. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Ricardo Arisnabarreta, Accreditation Chair

Critical Pedagogy in ESL Classrooms

Critical English language teaching is a pedagogical approach to engaging English language students in discussions of discriminatory practices, social inequality, identity negotiation and issues of power (Chun, 2015; López-Gopar, 2014; Motha, 2014). From this perspective, talking and teaching about controversial issues is an unavoidable aspect of English language teaching (Kubota, 2014). One way to enroll students in the project of discussing contentious issues in ESL classrooms is by connecting the “everyday concerns of students” to broader societal issues of social justice (Fleming & Morgan, 2011, p. 39). Simone Hengen, an ESL instructor at the University of Regina, and I recently contributed a chapter to a forthcoming book on the topic of critical pedagogies in English-language teaching (Sterzuk & Hengen, under review). Drawing on findings from a research project initiated and conducted by Hengen, the chapter presents responsive pedagogy which illustrates how everyday concerns of students can provide an entry points to discussions of controversial topics in ESL classroom.

In Hengen’s research, ESL students in Saskatchewan describe encounters with stereotypical messages about Indigenous peoples in Canada. What quickly emerged in this study was that the learners had many ideas about Indigenous peoples; some encounters that left them confused, curious, and with partial understandings of colonialism; and many unanswered questions. As a response to the study results, the chapter also presents a pedagogical activity designed to introduce alternative discourses around Indigenous peoples in Canada. Through inquiry-based activities, students confront, interrogate and negotiate societal messages about Indigenous peoples, non-Indigenous peoples and Canada’s past and present. Because ESL classrooms are often a first stop for many Canadian newcomers, ESL teachers have a role to play in helping language learners recognize and critically examine these stereotypical representations of Indigenous peoples. Left unexamined, these messages have the potential to shape learners’ dispositions towards and relationships with Indigenous peoples. This local pedagogical example illustrates language teachers’ responsibility to give students tools to recognize and critically examine societal inequity.

Submitted by Andrea Sterzuk.

References

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- Fleming, D., & Morgan, B. (2011). Discordant anthems: ESL and critical citizenship education. *Citizenship Education Research*, 1, 28-40
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- López-Gopar, M. E. (2014). Teaching English critically to Mexican children. *ELT Journal*, 68(3), 310-320.
- Motha, S. (2014). *Race, empire, and English language teaching: Creating responsible and ethical anti-racist practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sterzuk, A., & Hengen, S. (under review). “When I came to Canada like I heard lots of bad stuff about Aboriginal people”: Disrupting Settler colonial discourses through English language teaching. In M. López Gopar & W. Sughrua, *International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT* (13 pages). Basingstoke, UK : Palgrave MacMillan.

Art Education in the ESL Classroom

WHY?

To examine Art Education's potential is to realize that it links to almost everything that as a nation we say we want for our English as a Second Language (ESL) students; academic achievement, social and emotional stability, civic awareness and engagement, plus, equitable opportunity. *The Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 2000 Guide to Implementation*, uses a methodology that requires a practice of language instruction that teaches the "discrete elements, rules, and patterns of the target language" pp60. The CLB Guide notes that achieving this is a real challenge! Incorporating Art Education into the ESL classroom provides tools that support the desired CLB outcomes of communicative competence, in a non-threatening and engaged classroom environment...Is that not the goal ESL Educators'?

Art Education Discovered!

My realization of the value of Art Education has been catalyzed by an epical event in my life. Due to health reasons, I have assumed a new career path and similar to the ESL students, I returned to school to learn a new language. This is the language of technology or should I say learning in a Cyber Classroom. I enrolled in an Online Graduate Studies program and for two and a half years, I shared my learning journey with twenty students and various doctorate level professors, from both Canada and the United States. Before taking this program, my experience with computers was limited to email and writing on a word program. I had been a Recreation Instructor within a college and every ten weeks', with much reluctance and trepidation, I would create an Intramural Schedule on the word program. And that was the extent of my ability to use the computer! Therefore, when I enrolled in an online graduate study program, I was terrified! In the same way a novice public speaker becomes unnerved by the audience, I feared posting my work for others to read. My inner voice kept plaguing me with concerns; "Others sound so knowledgeable!" - "What will they think of the content of my posts?" - "What will they think of me??"

This was a huge hurdle that I had to jump on my transition path! In retrospect, I am glad for this challenge. It has brought me up-to-speed with technology. I am also pleased with my growing appreciation and awareness of the value of Art Education. I now experience a new and creative way of learning which has resulted in the healing of internal scars that life events can produce!

Art Education Heals.

Anyone experiencing dramatic change in their life, needs a means to vent and heal. Often human choices are misguided and misinformed resulting in negative outcomes. Educators of Adult ESL students need to provide healthy and educational learning opportunities that present required content in a creative and effective manner. Transitions in life involve exposure to new information and that catalyzes change. My recent learning journey represents a small parallel to the huge transition required by the ESL students. My level of anxiety created by the demands of learning a new language, a new work culture, for the sake of survival in a new environment, is the comparison or parallel being made. I have lessened my anxiety, experienced both physical and psychological healing benefits, by applying to the theory of Art Education. I have joined a fine art program that teaches an introductory level through various mediums and now I'm hooked! I had not been involved with painting or pencil colors since Elementary school. As an adult student, I have been able to experiment with both Graham and Rembrandt water color paint, explore the fundamentals of drawing with colored pencil and lastly, I have used artist-grade ink pens to create a landscape on archival rag board. Learning different layering techniques, how to build color, as well as blending and burnishing methods has allowed me to produce art work at quality beyond my expectations!

I have decided to embrace this art education experience and to conscientiously devote my recreation time to the creative side of my brain! I do this in an effort to examine the healing powers of Art Education that theory dictates. I do this to deal with the reality of my own life challenges for pursuing the study of art is not necessarily a means of escaping reality, but a means of holding on to the real when everything else is flaking away. Art allows you to hold a sense of your individual human dignity and once you have that, you are back in the game!

Written By ; Debra Gale
BPAS, TESOL Certification, M.Ed

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Publication and Distribution – Alberta Learning and Citizenship and Immigration Canada

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TESL Canada Update

Highlights

- The Final Draft of the Accreditation Committee has been submitted to the Executive. It will be approved and presented to the membership soon.
- Claude Lloyd has been appointed as the new Executive Director. He will be located in Ottawa while the Admin office will continue in Calgary. His CV has circulated by email. The idea behind having an ED in Ottawa is to be lobbying the Federal government and to have a stronger presence nationally.
- TESL Canada has secured Ms. Tyers and her team to be in charge of the organization of TESL CANADA Conference 2017. The Executive has decided that TESL Canada will held a conference every year in June and organized by itself. Therefore, it is crucial that the 2017 conference in Niagara Falls would be successful.
- The Call for Proposals will be posted soon.
- ATESL will host the TESL Canada AGM on October 14th in Edmonton during the ATESL Conference. Check their website if you wish to attend.
- The new Provincial Committee has submitted the draft Memorandum of Understanding for approval to the Executive. It was discussed that once approved will be shared with B.C. TEAL and TESL Ontario to explore their comeback to the Association.
- The Admin Office has hired a part time staff to send emails to all the Ontario and BC members whose membership is near the expiry date. This is a new marketing tool to keep them as direct members.
- There is no PD Committee Chair. It is expected that a member will put his/her name forward at the upcoming AGM in October.
- Nominations for new Board members will be advertised soon and elections will be held electronically.

Liliana M. Dominguez, TESL Canada Representative

LANGUAGE, INTIMACY: Classroom Reflections

That language is utterly intimate was brought home to me during an English class in which three quarters of the learners were Bangladeshi. During a break, two of the Bangla-speaking men took one of their phones and went off into the hallway. That hallway is private. I happened to be leaving the room shortly afterwards and noticed that the men were speaking rapidly in Bangla with each other. I shrugged my shoulders, made a joke about speaking English in English class (not a hard and fast rule). They both looked incredulous, said “But, this is private!” Though no one could have heard them in the hallway, I understood where the language boundaries lay: English is work, is their ‘public’ language, whereas the mother tongue issuing from the source of their being is identity, agency, is intimately connected to the self.¹

How did I become educated to my student’s processes? A typical Saturday morning, people are hanging over each other’s shoulders, maybe a head resting on another’s shoulder, maybe arms around each other or holding hands: Bangladeshi men in the classroom. In a homophobic culture, men were shocked to learn that physical closeness is not a part of cultural norms. Nor is the constant social engagement. For the students, all process is perceived as a group endeavor. I realized the students were creating meaning through noncompetitive communal processes that did not and could not fit “traditional classroom relations and pedagogical approaches” which “have the potential to stifle the dispositions and competences which students bring with them.” In fact, suggests Suresh Canagarajah in his work on translingual practice, “form-focused, teacher-led, product-oriented pedagogy will contradict the learning strategies and dispositions students bring” and can “counter-socialize students into monolingual ideologies and norms.”¹ No English as monoculture. My curiosity about their knowledge structures led me to learn more about the Bangladeshi geography and the language.

Bangladesh is a land almost under water, the mouth of the Ganges (the Padma) welling in the Bay of Bengal, as compared to the flat Canadian prairie and the city of Saskatoon with its extreme hot and cold temperatures, icy roads that are bafflingly dangerous to negotiate, summer heat and mosquitoes. The vast space holds very few people in comparison to tiny Bangladesh’s massive population of 200,000,000.¹ Bangladesh’s watery geography is imprinted in the hearts and minds of the Bangladeshi students as is an intimacy of physical space very unlike those of Canadians accustomed to great distances and large personal space.

To approach English from a Bangladeshi perspective is to approach a rhythmic flatness and linear construction. English is iambic, head initial subject-verb-object, right-branching, and tends to construct meaning around ownership—linear in its progression, it chugs on, da **da da da**, whereas Bangladeshi, beautiful visually, letters interconnected and strung together like musical notes or clothing hanging from a line, is trochaic,¹ with a rising intonation, and head-final, left-branching: subject–object–verb. The language suggests relationship. English as understood in Bangladesh is often spoken with the rhythms of the mother language, because “sound patterns” are not important, therefore no attention is paid to the actual English sounds.¹ The language patterns were immediately evident in the classroom, although understanding that for me, the teacher took time. As the students were able to use more English, they took possession of it as noted above, for public use. A student wrote that his reason for coming to Canada was for “my future plain, my kids life make good life live.” Notice the verb placement in transition to English. He wrote in what some Bangladeshi call Banglish. While he would continue to grow in English, he was comfortable using English for his utilitarian purposes, for public use, employment as a former chain restaurant owner, preparing to open one in Canada, speaker of three languages.

Written By Charlotte Garrett

¹ Before the Bangladesh independence, Pakistan banned Bangla and instated Urdu as the official language. Bangla speakers revolted in what became the Language Movement. A 1952 demonstration at Dhaka University cost the lives of a number of students when police opened fire. Protests erupted again in 1954. In my experience, every Bangladesh student I know is passionate and knowledgeable regarding the language history. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bengali_Language_Movement

¹ Canagarajah, S. (2013). *Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations*. New York: Routledge, 184.

¹ <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/bangladesh-population/>