



Welcoming and the TEAL Profession

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The BC TEAL newsletter is available through membership in BC TEAL and by special arrangement. It is published three times a year in Winter, Spring, and Fall.

Contact the editor for specific deadlines.

Contributors: We welcome articles of general interest to associated members. All material is submitted to the editorial board before being approved for publication.

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Letter from the President

We are #Welcoming!

The theme of this newsletter, “welcoming”, is appropriate on multiple levels for the teaching English as an additional language (TEAL) profession, and I’m grateful it was chosen. As professionals who are often some of the critical front-line contacts for newcomers to Canada—immigrants, refugees and international students—we play a critical role in our students’ lives in welcoming them to this country. On a daily basis, we help these individuals with their adaptation to life, study and work in Canada.

Just for fun, I did a quick experiment and googled “most welcoming countries” and a couple of related search terms. To no surprise, Canada ranks at or near the top on many websites and surveys. It seems that Canada’s diversity, policies reflecting openness to those from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and the attitudes of most Canadians are reflected in these perceptions.

Each year, Canada welcomes hundreds of thousands of international students—those here for short and long-term programs—as well as immigrants and refugees. The number is quite staggering actually, and it reflects the principles we have here in Canada.

This past year has seen a huge increase in the number of refugees that came to Canada, many from Syria, but Canada also will welcome thousands more from around the world. That is on top of the thousands of immigrants and international students we work with in our classes.

The articles in this newsletter reflect the care that we, as professionals, bring to the classroom around the province. Keywords in the titles of the articles reflect the values, and opportunities, we as EAL/TEAL professionals embody, for example: experiential learning, volunteering, inclusive, cultural liaison, and bridging communities of practice. I applaud the many who contributed to this newsletter and their taking the time to share their valuable ideas and approaches with their peers.

As fall approaches and we enter our classes full of eager, sometimes anxious and excited learners, I am grateful and proud to be part of such a #welcoming profession.

Sincerely,

Joe Dobson

President, BC TEAL

Joe Dobson is the president of BC TEAL. He is a senior lecturer at Thompson Rivers University. His research interests include educational technology, teacher education, and intercultural communication.



Building Community through the BC TEAL Newsletter

by Scott Roy Douglas

The theme for the fall issue of the BC TEAL newsletter is “Welcoming.” In preparing this issue, I was reminded of my first few years when I was welcomed into the profession.

My first taste of the profession was when I started out as a workshop monitor for the Summer Language Bursary Program (now Explore). I still remember the thrill of joining the initial meetings for new monitors when we introduced ourselves and took part in various ice breakers to get to know each other. Between untying ourselves from human knots, acting like our favourite animals, and drawing life-sized images of ourselves as cowboys on huge pieces of paper, we quickly bonded as a group and I felt welcomed into a community of novice educators bent themselves on welcoming learners to an additional language. Although it was just six weeks for three or four summers, being a workshop monitor in a language program was more fulfilling than any other job I had tried out in my twenties. It wasn’t long before I switched career paths and decided to go into language teaching full time.

I soon went overseas to teach, and again a number of elements came together to welcome me to the profession. There were free local language lessons and professional development workshops as well as little things like my fellow teachers sharing their lesson plans, showing up with cake on my birthday, helping me to read undecipherable bank statements, and making sure that I was part of school pictures. After a stint abroad, I came back to Canada, and again there were incidents that served to welcome me to the profession. For example, the private language school I was working at offered to pay the travel expenses and conference fees for new teachers to attend their first provincial conference. Suddenly I was welcomed into a teaching community beyond the walls of my school. There were also other little things that welcomed me and made me feel valued at my first full time teaching

job in Canada, such free lunches at monthly meetings, a chance to lead professional development seminars, invitations to social events, the opportunity to lead clubs based on my own hobbies, and a role in the graduation ceremonies.

These initial experiences served to welcome me to teaching English as an additional language and anchored my sense of belonging for years to come. I learned that welcoming others is an active endeavour that calls for reaching out and creating an environment that helps people feel welcomed. The fall issue of the newsletter reflects these types of active endeavours.

The fall issue starts off with a welcome to the new interim director of BC TEAL. The next few articles focus on welcoming learners through supporting students with special needs, facilitating active discussions, incorporating Indigenous perspectives, and volunteering in the Kootenays. The issue then turns to an exploration of the different communities that educators belong to as a result of the intersection of being both teachers and researchers. This is followed by a report from the TESOL 2016 international convention and a look at the experiences of a cultural liaison to a short-term study abroad program for English language learners in Canada.

Scott Douglas is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Education on UBC’s Okanagan campus. He enjoys working with teacher candidates and graduate students as they explore additional language teaching and learning. He has also taught in Alberta, the Middle East, and Japan.



Welcome to Brenda Lohrenz, Interim Executive Director

by Shawna Williams

This fall, BC TEAL welcomes our Interim Executive Director, Brenda Lohrenz. We are thrilled that Brenda will be taking on this two-year position at BC TEAL, and know that she brings much to the table given her exceptional experience in the world of English as an additional language (EAL).

Until recently, and for the past 16 years, Brenda was the Executive Director of the Language Instruction Support and Training Network (LISTN), an organization that supported the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) community in British Columbia. She was also a founding member and the first co-chair of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Newcomer Language Advisory Body (NLAB) and chair of TESL Canada's Settlement Language National Network (SLNN). Furthermore, Brenda has had very strong ties with BC TEAL, having served as a board member in the past, and via regular interactions with the LISTN representative at BC TEAL.

Brenda is no stranger to the language classroom. Like many of the TEAL community, she "fell into" English language teaching. She started at a Japanese private language school; then returned to Japan on a year-long Japanese language study bursary at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, where she augmented her allowance with other teaching gigs. Upon return to Canada, Brenda took the TESL Diploma from UBC, and taught at a downtown business English school where she also taught LINC. From there, she became the first provincial coordinator of ELSA Net (ELSA being BC's equivalent to LINC at the time), and subsequently helped to establish their society status. Brenda was still at the helm when BC re-joined the federal LINC program, with ELSA Net changing its name, but not its mandate, to LISTN.

Although Brenda's focus has been on settlement language, she is no stranger to the needs and challenges of language programs at private schools

and public post-secondary institutions, as well as the diversity of BC's student population, from international students, those on short-term visas, immigrants, and even Canadian citizens with language learning needs. She has moderated and led many provincial and national conference sessions on the topic of public policy and building language sector capacity. In her professional life, Brenda is currently completing a Master's Degree in Community Development at the University of Victoria. Her broad perspective will be a boon to BC TEAL, as the organization aims to become even stronger as the first and largest association serving EAL instructors in the province of British Columbia.

The board of BC TEAL has often discussed wanting to bring on an executive director; however, given it is a non-profit association funded almost entirely through memberships and conference revenue, the opportunity seemed like it couldn't be realized. However, events over the past year have transpired and will make that dream a reality. Last year, LISTN made the difficult decision to dissolve knowing that federal government funding for its activities would no longer be available. Thus, upon its dissolution, they transferred their assets to BC TEAL, including its most valued human asset: Brenda.

Shawna Williams's career in TEAL has spanned almost two decades. Shawna has been a member of BC TEAL since she moved to Vancouver after teaching abroad. She first joined the board in 2008 as the editor of TEAL News. She was then a 2nd vice-president, as co-chair of the 2011 and 2012 annual conferences. Shawna was president of the association from 2012 to 2016, and she is currently the past president.



Welcome to the ADAPT Strategy: A Five-Step Strategy for Inclusion in Adult ELL Classrooms

by Raj Khatri



It is often experienced that due to the diverse linguistic backgrounds, disabilities are mostly unidentified among adult English language learners (ELLs), which makes it challenging for instructors to efficiently accommodate differently-abled students. Although instructors often feel that particular ELLs might benefit from certain classroom strategies or differentiated instruction, when learner disabilities are not formally identified, it becomes critical that instructors systematically and appropriately assess ELLs' learning needs and identify potential mismatches in order to facilitate adaptations. With that said, I am going to discuss the ADAPT strategy (Hutchinson, 2010), which I employed when working in a regular classroom with adult ELLs who were formally identified as learners with disabilities or exceptional learners. This process (I prefer to call the ADAPT a process rather than a strategy), I believe, can also be implemented in an adult ELL classroom with learners who are not identified with disabilities but seem to be needing assistance.

A few days before I started teaching an adult ELL class, two envelopes marked "Confidential" were handed over to me at the program coordinator's office. I carefully opened and read the documents right then and there. It took me no time to find out that they were academic accommodations from the school's disability service centre. Because I had just completed my program on special education from Queen's University and was then certified to teach learners with special needs in Ontario, I instantly felt that it was an opportunity for me to apply my learning to classroom practices. My responsibilities towards these two learners with disabilities started right from the moment they were introduced to me on that very first day. Since there were only two learners with disabilities in the regular ELL classrooms, I facilitated my classes in such a way that all of my learners had

equal access to classroom materials and academic instructions. No modifications took place, but I used a variety of strategies to accommodate learners with disabilities. I always provided a supportive and encouraging classroom throughout the semester so that all learners would participate in activities and assignments in a non-threatening environment.

The ADAPT Strategy

It is important that for teaching to be effective, it be differentiated in regular classrooms with exceptional learners and that differentiated teaching be an integral part of planning and delivering lessons (Hutchinson, 2010). One of the systematic processes or strategies I often use for differentiating teaching is the ADAPT process, which Hutchinson often discusses, showing its application and importance in accommodating learners with disabilities. During the use of the ADAPT process, I try to ensure in class a structured learning environment, scaffolded instruction, and opportunities for learners to experience success, all of which, I believe, alleviate boredom and frustration and promote engagement and learning, as stated by Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2008). The ADAPT process, which I incorporated when teaching the learners with disabilities in an adult ELL classroom as mentioned in the paragraph above, consisted of the following five steps (Hutchinson, 2010):

- Step 1: Accounts of learners' strengths and weaknesses (A)
- Step 2: Demands of the classroom (D)
- Step 3: Adaptations (A)
- Step 4: Perspectives and consequences (P)
- Step 5: Teach and assess the match (T)



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Step 1: Accounts of learners' strengths and weaknesses

During Step 1, I familiarized myself with all information that was important for me to know about the exceptional learners with the help of their confidential files that contained medical information, counsellors' contact information, exam instructions and accommodations, assistive technology needs, classroom accommodations, supportive services, and other relevant information, as is generally provided in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for K-12 public school system in Ontario (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). These files contained very specific statements about learners' strengths and weaknesses under social, emotional, and behavioural; physical; and academic categories, just as Hutchinson (2010) discusses. Turn taking in a group assignment, avoiding from being harsh, and being highly motivated to do better and score higher grades were some of the social, emotional, and behavioural strengths, whereas showing resistance to move and participate in group work, crying as a result of frustration caused from academic assignments, and disobeying classroom instructions were part of social, emotional, and behavioural weaknesses that I came across when reading the files. Physical strengths and weaknesses are mostly manifested in motor skills, sight, hearing, and neurological functions. Reading and mathematical skills, problem-solving strategies, and organizational skills could be connected with academic strengths and weaknesses. I also assessed the learners' knowledge with regards to their learning expectations and gathered information through observation of the learners. I finally prepared a detailed description of these strengths, weaknesses, and needs of every exceptional learner and added it to my agenda so that I could easily and promptly access this information whenever needed, keeping all information still confidential throughout the process.

Step 2: Demands of the classroom

All social, emotional, and behavioural; physical; and academic demands of the classroom were taken into account when planning classroom activities, and this

occurs in the second step of the ADAPT strategy. It is important that classroom activities be planned, keeping in mind strengths and weaknesses of learners with disabilities. When preparing long-range and daily lesson plans, I made sure that I balanced grouping configurations. I realized that some learners would benefit from discussion in pairs, as it helped them understand some difficult assignments in class when working with peers, but at the same time, I had to make it sure that these learners did not find it difficult to concentrate because of the noise or commotion originating from nearby pair or group discussions, as the challenges of the learners with attention difficulties would generally be further complicated because of the noise or commotion. As far as physical demands are concerned, I exercised caution when I moved furniture around for grouping configurations. Similarly, the academic demands of the classroom are related to instructional and supplementary materials, such as textbooks, realia, audiovisual aids, manipulatives, etc, and assessment methods. With regards to this, I provided direct instruction before guided and independent practice took place in class, which mostly helped the learners become independent gradually. I included the supportive service or the support from a note taker in the academic demands of the classroom, and I add that sometimes a note taker was recruited to help a learner with the class notes. Regarding assessment methods, additional time was provided for submission of both take-home and in-class assignments. Time was doubled for tests and exams, but the questions remained the same in all tests and exams. Private rooms were always arranged during tests and exams for the learners with special needs in this particular class.

Step 3: Adaptations

According to Hutchinson (2010), in the adaptations step, teachers need to find out potential mismatches or gaps between learning needs of exceptional learners and demands of the classroom and identify adaptations to differentiate teaching and evaluation methods in order to eliminate these mismatches or gaps. There are, in fact, several ways for the instructor to adapt and to make changes that meet learner needs.

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I sometimes ADAPTEd the instructional and evaluation approaches. I broke a complex assignment into three key steps without watering down the curriculum (Dehn, 2008), and thus avoided learner frustration. Based on the learner strengths, one group of learners was assigned to read a few articles on multicultural characteristics of Canada, discuss some key important elements as provided in those articles, regarding different cultures and their celebrations, and bring their ideas to class. However, the other group was asked to visit some street festivals and cultural shows that were happening around them, write down about cultural showcases that they thought were very interesting as well as significant, and report to class. And, the third group was supposed to watch videos online, and use the Internet and talk to their friends and members of their family to gather information on different cultures, discuss some key celebrations of the people from these cultures, and present it to class. Learners from these three groups would then gather information from all sources together to present their findings both orally and in writing. Students had varied amounts of knowledge when they completed their part of the assignment, but when they got together in class and shared their experiences and knowledge, everybody in class made gains, which I could definitely observe.

There are also other ways to ADAPT. As instructed in the confidential file that belonged to a learner with disabilities, the student's learning need was also bypassed sometimes, since she was allowed to use a word processor with spelling and grammar check, so bypassing some learning needs of learners with disabilities can also be a way to ADAPT. I also facilitated some classes on basic or study skills, such as note taking, test taking, scanning, and skimming skills, and teaching such skills are also considered a way to ADAPT. As Hutchinson (2010) mentioned, students with learning disabilities may need support right away in such basic or study skills, whereas the whole class can still benefit from instructions on these skills although they may not need these skills right away.



Step 4: Perspectives and Consequences

Now is the step for critical reflection on adaptations. I considered my own perspectives, and perspectives from learners with disabilities and the rest of the class. It is essential that adaptations be critically reflected on from several perspectives, such as considering how the adaptations went, whether the adaptation process was very time consuming, if instructors and learners were happy with the adaptations, how effective this process was, and whether instructors would ADAPT their teaching the same way in the future. In the process, as Hutchinson (2010) suggests, throughout the semester, I incorporated the simplest adaptation that, I believe, was effective, and was beneficial for many of my learners, if not for all. Although it was the simplest adaptation, planning, preparation, and implementation of it took considerable time and energy. As it was a summer class, and there were not many classes I was engaged in teaching that summer, I had sufficient time to use for creating and implementing a variety of strategies for incorporation in this particular class. But, as Hutchinson suggests, the adaptation process should not consume considerable time and energy. I surely had to reconsider time management and effort level for the adaptations in the following semesters. Along with my perspectives, I also considered the perspectives on adaptations from the learners with disabilities for their learning. I ensured that adaptations I incorporated were not biased and that these adaptations did not draw undue attention to the learners with disabilities in my class. I kept confirming that all of my learners were respected in the adaptation process.

Along with perspectives as such, I was able to consider consequences of my ADAPTEd teaching in class. I made sure that the learners with disabilities benefited from my adaptations and that these learners and the rest of the class were always engaged in activities and the learning process in and outside the classroom. I kept observing and sometimes assessing as much as possible for evidence that would demonstrate all learners' learning. While I provided the learners with additional time after class, I also ensured that these learners did not become dependent as a consequence of continued assistance.

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Step 5: Teach and Assess the Match

This step meant the time for me to decide on whether to incorporate this adaptation again or make some changes in the existing adaptation, or rethink a completely new adaptation should I be assigned to teach adult ELL learners with disabilities in a regular classroom. I carefully analyzed whether the adaptation matched strengths and needs of the learners with disabilities to the classroom demands and whether it was able to eliminate the mismatches or gaps I had identified during my adaptations step. It was again important for me to include the learners' opinions about the adaptations. To assess the adaptation process, I also needed to find the evidence of learners' getting involved in different activities in and outside the classroom.

Reflection

This was the ADAPT strategy I incorporated first when accommodating the learners with disabilities in my adult ELL classroom a few years back, and it was really a learning opportunity. The process went well; however, I sometimes think it could have been a little different, and possibly better if I had opportunities to discuss with colleagues who were involved with the students, just as the IEP would allow the student, his or her parents, the school, the community, and other teachers or professional involved with the student to work together for the best accomplishments (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). However, there were no such instructions from the disability service centre. And, as it was the only class the students with disabilities were taking that summer, the instructors who had taught them previously were not available then. Nonetheless, it was a great experience, and since then this process has been part of my teaching and learning engagement. It has been instrumental in further shaping my teaching and learning process when it comes to working with exceptional students. I have lately come across a few learners who have not been identified with disabilities due to various reasons, such as learners' diverse linguistics backgrounds and lack of diagnostic tests in different native languages, that would help identify disabilities. Although learners might not be identified and the

instructor may think that learners might benefit from the ADAPT strategy, I think it can still be used, which can enable the instructor to identify strengths and needs of their learners and differentiate their teaching and assessment methods accordingly.

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A practicum student supervisor and doctoral student at the University of Victoria, **Raj Khatri** has facilitated EAP and EAL classes for over fifteen years at a variety of settings, including at the University of Regina, Toronto Catholic District School Board, and Centennial College. Raj is an accredited member of TESL Canada, the Ontario College of Teachers, and SPTRB, and a member of TESOL and BC TEAL. His areas of interest are L2 reading strategies, L2 writing, intercultural communication, teacher professional development, and strategies for adult ELLs with special needs.



Agree to Disagree Lesson Plan Activity

by Edward Pye



Agree to Disagree is a fun and interactive opinions-based speaking activity which could easily be prefaced with a lesson on arguing and debate. I usually run through the different phrases for giving opinions before I do this. It works well with high-level academic students, but can also be customized to lower levels by using less complex ideas and language.

Objectives:

- Using language and grammatical structures for arguing and debating.
- Thinking and responding quickly
- Interacting in content-based discussions with multiple partners

Preparation:

- You will need to clear a space for the class to line up in two lines
- You will also need to prepare a series of controversial debate statements. Obviously you can tailor them to what you have been studying; however, the more controversial the topic, the better it works. I have found these statements work well at different levels:

Lower Level:

- Cats are better/more fun/cleaner than dogs
- My home city is more exciting/interesting/expensive than this city
- Women are better than men

Intermediate Level:

- All school children should have to wear school uniforms
- Athletes and movie stars deserve the amount of money they make

- The death penalty should be outlawed
- A bear/lion/crocodile could beat a tiger/wolf/shark

Higher Level (academic):

- Higher income earners should be taxed more than lower income earners
- Women should be allowed to serve on the front lines in the military
- Marijuana should be legalized everywhere
- Fast food companies should be allowed to market to young audiences
- Abortion clinics shouldn't receive funding from the government.

Steps:

1. Start by having all the students come to the front of the class and having them line up in two lines facing each other so that everyone is matching a partner. If you have odd numbers, put one person on the end in a group of three.
2. Stand in the middle of the line and explain the activity to students
3. The teacher will read one of the controversial statements aloud, the students have to carefully listen to the statement and quickly think about whether they agree or disagree with this statement.
4. Once they have thought about their position, the student has to say "agree" or "disagree" before their partner can. The first student to do so gets to argue their opinion while their partner must argue the opposite (even if that is not their own personal opinion).
5. Give students three to four minutes to debate with their partners. This can be a noisy

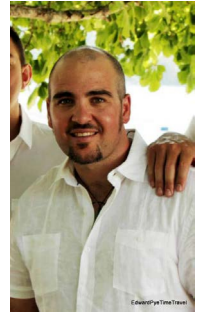
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activity, so I sometimes tell students to move away from the line to chat.

6. When time is up, pull the students back together and quickly go over the main points on each side of the argument. Have the students give their ideas and then elicit rebuttal from the other side. Try to do this quickly because the activity can go on for too long if you let it.
7. Once that idea has been talked through, rotate one line, so everyone has a new partner.
8. Give the students the next controversial statement and repeat the steps.

I find that doing three or four rotations and giving about 10 minutes for each is good because it allows students to interact with more people, and that is the key for this activity.

Edward Pye is a New Zealander with an English literature degree from Otago University. Before moving to British Columbia, he taught in South Korea for eight years. Since then, he has worked as an educational programmer on UBC's Okanagan campus and as an EAL instructor at Okanagan College.



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GRADUATE
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I could, so I should

by Jennifer Walsh Marr



At this year's BC TEAL conference, I presented on the language materials I developed to support Vantage College's first year Arts students. Here, I'd like to get into the agency, rationale, and impact of some of that work.

In the Academic English Program (AEP) at Vantage College, we don't have language text books, in no small part due to the fact that we're using the theories of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Genre and applying them to a Content & Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. At times it's overwhelmingly ambitious, and textbook publishers have understandably focused their resources on less demanding, less specialized markets. But beyond the exponential learning curve, this need to create resources has given me significant creative and intellectual license. Where so often English as an additional language (EAL) and English for academic purposes (EAP) instructors are told to teach this course with this textbook, my context isn't so prescriptive. There is significant agency as an instructor I just couldn't pass up. I could, so I should.

My students take a full first year course load, including three credits of POLI 100. To supplement their English language proficiency, and prepared in conjunction with my fellow Academic English colleagues, students also take VANT 140, a three credit course in which we analyze and work with how language is used to construct meaning in the disciplines. I teach the Political Science (Poli Sci) portion of this language course, working one hour a week with students. Authentic texts are used as much as possible, as students are expected to do literature reviews and to prepare several research papers. In the first year of the course, most language tasks were built around the Poli Sci textbook. While logical, this approach wasn't

ideal. It had the unintended impact of positioning my course in a service role, with some students using it as a tutorial for Poli Sci rather than getting deeper into critical language work. Heading into the second year of our program, and having had the experience of working with research articles through the VANT 140 course of Geography in year one, changes were made. Instead of drawing on weekly textbook readings (which had the consistent voice and objective, descriptive tone one would expect of a textbook), I wanted to use fewer texts and look at them repeatedly, for different language features and in comparison to one another. This would require more authentic articles in which we could look for shared patterns of Poli Sci discourse, how definitions were contextualized and extended, and how different authors constructed arguments, referred to other scholars, and contested, even contradicted each other. A curated selection of authentic Poli Sci research articles would facilitate this, but they needed a focus for coherence.

In the first year of our students' research practices course, they had read from some articles around Idle No More and Indigenous activism. This focus wouldn't continue for the second cohort of students, leaving the articles available for me to use. The Poli Sci professor was quite happy to highlight her lecture themes in these articles, so we had our focus. She would point out the Poli Sci theories of normativity, sovereignty, and effects of colonialism in the articles and I would develop lessons on language features. But that makes the work sound accidental and tentative. The reality was that I wanted to roll up my sleeves, participate more in the academy, and better connect the classroom and community. At about the time this thinking and course revision work was going on, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission was very present in the news. I was galvanized. As an educator, parent, and

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citizen, I needed to do something. Hearing more truth, I needed to contribute towards reconciliation. Fancying myself something of an agent of change, acknowledging that I had benefitted from many privileges through my life, and now working with young scholars in the context of critical language analysis and Political Science, what better opportunity?

Not everyone embraces working with the communities of international students BC attracts. There are complicated differences in culture, socio-economic status, academic, and social expectations. While I genuinely like working with these young people, I readily admit I have missed the more grassroots, community-based satisfaction of settlement-based language work in which I started my EAL career many years ago. How satisfying it was to work with topics and language functions of real impact and importance to my new neighbours and prospective fellow citizens. This critical yet touchy topic of First Nations and Indigenous activism was perhaps an attempt to reclaim that sense of purpose and greater social investment. It was also an attempt for me to be as brave as the students who move halfway around the world to participate in our classrooms and social fabric.

Often, both general EAL courses and even EAP courses have unspoken guidelines of taboo topics, commonly referred to as “PARSNIP.” Avoiding controversy even more assiduously than a TED talk, most EAL and EAP texts and curricula stay away from politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, isms, and pork. But how does that prepare students for grappling with Political Science? How does that facilitate students’ respectful intercultural communication development? And what practice does reading about and discussing dreams, the weather, novel business ventures, or a simplified ecology cycle really do for students’ social, critical and academic engagement? If my international students were going to work through concepts such as positive and negative freedoms, totalitarianism, communism,

and self-determination, surely I could be brave enough to lift the curtain on my nascent understanding of some current issues facing First Nations in Canada. So we started. With my acknowledgement that I’m not an Indigenous scholar. That, in fact, I’m from settler stock. That language has power, and that the choices we make in using language position ourselves and others. Then we looked for and at examples: for the prevalence of Graeco-Latin morphemes and nominalizations that imply presumed knowledge; for inductive reasoning building a case for different ways of understanding and knowing; for causation developed not through explicit discourse markers, but through contributing factors more subtly suggested in particular verbs and sentence structures; and for responsibility and agency erased through the use of passive voice.

At the beginning of the term, I tasked my students with a warm up asking them what they knew and wondered about the academic discourse of Political Science and First Nations in Canada. At the end of term, I returned students’ initial impressions to them to revisit and reflect on. I asked them to describe what they had learned; here are some insightful, verbatim responses:

Nowadays, I am aware that First Nations suffered great genocides, they were almost annihilated by discriminatory policies. Moreover, that discrimination persists until now. Regardless of that First Nations stand up and face those policies. They are showing up all the injustice they have suffered from the colonization. I am conscious that they are not passive subjects any more, they started to leave people listen to their voice and people are eager to help them. They want people to know that better policies regarding them and the environment can be created. -Vantage Arts student, 2015

The feature of political science discourse I want to describe and explain is the functions active and passive voices. One of the major functions

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of passive voice is to hide the participants. For example "the bill C-45 was violated in...", the people who violated the laws were not mentioned in the sentence. When newspapers and social medias used the passive voices in this way, they are trying to remove the social responsibilities of participants. When we read sentences written in passive voices, we need to critically think who are the participants.
-Vantage Arts student, 2015

And what of it all? It has been really intellectually and socially rewarding work. I'm reading content I would never have imagined, and I'm reading it more critically. I feel like a bona fide, contributing member of the academy. I feel honoured and humbled by my students' engagement in the work and my opportunity to work alongside them.

Jennifer Walsh Marr is a long time member of BC TEAL, serving on its board now and again. She teaches at UBC Vantage College, has aspirations to write a book about paraphrasing someday, and believes marking doesn't have to be bad as we all like to complain it is.



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Welcoming through Volunteering: Reflections on a Selkirk College Volunteer Class

by Tyler Ballam

I am sure most of us are familiar with the quote above and can agree with the message conveyed. However, as educators, we quite often are able to address the first two lines but have difficulty actualizing the last. The ideas of experiential and transformative learning have seriously gathered steam in the post-secondary world and the concepts of community involvement and volunteerism are (finally) taken quite seriously. Many institutions have begun their own initiatives created, in part, by the students themselves demanding more “real-world” experiences which can help them prepare for life after college or university. As with most things in the world of academia, English as an additional language (EAL) professionals have traditionally been ahead of the curve. I would like to share a story about how my colleagues at a small rural college assisted a group of post-secondary gerontology diploma students from India to adjust to life in Canada through volunteering. I hope that this simple story may provide some ideas to help other institutions develop similar programs to welcome newcomers to Canada while at the same time providing them with opportunities to further develop their skills in a new country.

Firstly, some context is needed. The Selkirk College International department has been running a volunteer class for over 15 years. Throughout the years, our students have been put in various places throughout the West Kootenay Region. These places range from senior-care homes, hotels, bookstores, elementary schools, hospitals, restaurants, and cafes. The concepts behind this class are threefold:

provide the students with an experience where they can meet members of the community, gain an opportunity to practise English in a workplace setting, and develop the soft skills needed for future employment.

*“Tell me and I forget
Teach me and I remember
Involve me and I learn”*
—Benjamin Franklin

In May of 2014, we had the opportunity to help a cohort of recently arrived students from India. Although they were not EAL students, the International department was able to bring them into the volunteer program. As nurses in their home country,

we soon realized that they had a skill-set already in place, which we had to respect and consider. The choice was made to connect them with senior-care facilities in Nelson and Castlegar. They were to volunteer once a week and their duties were to be explained and defined by the volunteer coordinator at each facility.

Since this course was for credit, assessment requirements were needed to “grade” the students. This was done through weekly journal entries where the students were given a chance to reflect on their



First day volunteering

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Cultural activity

experiences. These journal submissions allowed the instructor to see how things were going as well as check on any grammatical hiccups the students may have had. This model of formative assessment was one which met the needs of this particular course while, at the same time, helped to actualize the principles of experiential learning since reflective observation is a key component to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle.

Before delving into the triumphs of this class, however, some of the challenges must be mentioned. A long list of logistical considerations was needed prior to sending the students to their placements. Firstly, students had to figure out the bus schedules that allowed them to arrive and leave on time. Buses in rural B.C. do not run as frequently as they do in South Asia (or in Vancouver for that matter), so that challenge proved to be the first test. Secondly, the instructor responsible for the class had to set up the initial meetings with the volunteer coordinators in order to clarify the expectations of each institution. As can be expected, this took up some additional time outside of classroom time. Thirdly, since many of these students would be volunteering with those in need of care, RCMP criminal background checks were required. Finally, there was the off-chance that the students themselves would not show up to volunteer and therefore tarnish any relationships

the college had with those institutions. Thankfully, the vast majority of the students showed up, flourished, and built stronger relationships between our institutions.

It became evident quite early on that the students were professional, motivated, and engaged. What had happened was that they were in an environment which respected their professional backgrounds and made them feel more welcome in their new communities. Through this experience, the three parties involved (the students, the college, and the senior-care facility) all managed to learn from one another, and it helped to pave the way for future endeavours. One of these future endeavours included the students themselves being willing to continue to volunteer even though the class had finished. They had managed to build up meaningful relationships with the staff and guests of the homes and wished to carry on. Another positive result of this class was that the college's nursing department created their own volunteer class to be built into the overall post-graduate gerontology diploma program. Through these classes, a template is now in place to help welcome students into the community, respect their backgrounds, and provide them with opportunities to succeed in their studies.

The connections that can be created between



Special moments

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students, the college, and the West Kootenay community may have been somewhat easier to facilitate since Selkirk College is in a small, rural area with a low population base. However, I feel that this class concept can be transferable to other colleges and universities in larger areas provided there is the will on the institution's behalf to help welcome new students (and potential citizens of Canada) to their communities. Although there may be some logistical challenges at first, I have personally seen how the long term benefits of a class of this type have helped the students feel more comfortable in their new surroundings and succeed academically in their courses. My hope is that our story can stimulate more discussions on how we can help involve students in learning. Thank you.

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Tyler Ballam started his teaching career in Seoul, South Korea shortly before the World Cup in 2002. His background covers the full spectrum of EAL in Korea. He has taught EAP in Kangnam University, EAL in large multinational companies including Samsung Electronics, and TESOL professional development to English teachers in the Kyunnggi-do school district. In 2012, he was offered a position to teach EAL and TESOL at Selkirk College in Castlegar and went on to instruct students from all over the world. Having a background in film studies, Tyler is interested in applying his film knowledge to the EAL classroom.

*"Volunteers don't get paid, not
because they're worthless, but
because they're priceless"*

~Sherry Anderson

Metanoia and Additional Language Learning in the EAP Classroom

by *Samantha Ranson*



Metanoia and additional language learning: How do these two topics intertwine? When I was working as a teaching assistant in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program at a university in the interior of British Columbia, I suddenly had an epiphany in that it seemed as if students coming from different social and cultural backgrounds, while speaking English as an additional language, were not necessarily recognizing their full potential or communicating it as such. I also noticed that many EAP students did not seem to recognize their accomplishments until well after the fact. I wondered if this was related to the concept of metanoia, and this realization prompted me to complete a Master's thesis on the topic of the relationship between metanoia and additional language acquisition within a post-secondary EAP environment. I did this in hopes that the results of the study would promote a stronger awareness of the positive relationship between metanoia and acquiring an additional language.

What is Metanoia?

To initially understand my study and the issue at hand, I needed to fully understand the concept of metanoia, especially as the connection between metanoia and additional language learning has rarely been made. When I first heard about metanoia, it inspired me to understand the why behind transformative learning and growth that occurs within additional language acquisition. Metanoia is originally a Greek term that can be defined as an “after thought, change of mind” (Cuddon, 2013, p. 432). Senge (1990) further defined it as a “fundamental shift or change, or more literally transcendence...of mind” (p. 12). Building on these understandings of metanoia, when

considering additional language acquisition, metanoia can be thought of as the conscious realization of a subconscious moment of learning. This conscious realization is important when discovering the moment in which a learner becomes aware of the evolution of new knowledge in an educational environment.

Metanoia does not have to be a huge learning achievement. It can also be small as it is about gaining awareness and empowerment within the learning process. This awareness and empowerment allows for individuals to become more knowledgeable about themselves, their limitations, and their abilities within the learning process. When metanoia occurs, an individual generally becomes more enlightened and sees the world through a different lens, learning from his or her experiences, and in turn becoming more educated. Senge (1990) clarified the relationship between metanoia and general learning with the understanding that “to grasp the meaning of ‘metanoia’ is to grasp the deeper meaning of ‘learning,’ for learning also involves a fundamental shift or movement of mind” (p. 13). Metanoia is a transformative process which changes both a person's learning abilities and processes, assisting in growth and identity change while acting as a catalyst for additional language learning. It is a conscious realization of the changes and learning occurring subconsciously within a learner, and it can be a process of discovery and exploration that facilitates learning. When this awareness, recognition, realization, and reflection occurs; it becomes a process of identity change; and it also prompts discovery and exploration that seems to facilitate additional language acquisition.

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Moments of Metanoia in English as an Additional Language Acquisition

Throughout my MA thesis project, I experienced some observations of powerful moments of metanoia for current or previous students within an EAP program. This was important twofold: First, it seemed to demonstrate that moments of metanoia were transforming the lives of participants, and secondly it seemed to demonstrate that participants felt it was important to spread the word about learning English, improving the EAP experience, and sharing their lived experiences as language learners within EAP.

Additionally, certain participants brought up experiences that caused me to experience metanoia; they taught me about aspects of culture, communication, and life that I personally take for granted every day while communicating within my first language (English) within the country and community (Canada) that I have lived in the majority of my life. This realization surprised me as I personally have lived in other cultures and settings where I was not only the minority, but English was not the dominant language. It reminded me that in many instances, but not necessarily all, an individual can so easily transition back into their own culture without hesitation nor difficulty.

As an example of the relationship between metanoia and additional language acquisition, one participant discussed how he regularly expanded his listening skills and communication abilities by turning off his music and electronics, pretending they were still on. Meanwhile he eavesdropped on conversations on the bus, allowing him to observe via listening how others communicate and learn from each other. He clearly has experienced moments of metanoia through this activity as he finds it to be an effective learning tool and continues to do this on a regular basis. He explained how he had a sudden realization that he learned language not only from the pronunciation, grammar, and verbal language of the other people on the bus; also from their body language and mannerisms.

Expressing positivity and learning within positive environments also helped many participants experience moments of metanoia during the additional language acquisition process. One participant stated experiencing negative feelings until introduced to programs and resources around campus offering support. After taking part in specific programs as a newcomer to the university and after experiencing this learning moment of metanoia (after gaining support), this person wanted to make a difference in other's lives thus enrolling as an assistant in a program to help other language learners the following year.


Metanoia can occur through multiple processes in additional language learning. It appeared that the participants in my MA thesis research project were glad to express their personal opinions and bring awareness to the benefits, advantages, and areas that needed improvement within EAP. I believe this process of sharing might have taken place because they had such strong moments of metanoia that they want the same success, positive environment, and growth for other English language learners coming to a new cultural and educational environment.

Fostering an Environment that Supports Metanoia

It is important to foster an environment for additional language learners to obtain and experience moments of metanoia. To achieve this, the student can be taught as a “whole” learner in which the instructor or institution pays attention to the social, academic, cultural, and emotional needs of the student. How can this environment be fostered to obtain moments of metanoia? By teaching with the awareness and goal of promoting metanoia, an English language instructor can get creative and come up with some interactive activities such as journaling or cultural contact assignments.

First, students can be encouraged to recognize moments of metanoia in a journaling or diary activity in which the students create their own journals or diaries (this can include artifacts, writing expositions,

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and art) to represent the growth and change occurring in their language learning process. Throughout the process they can work in small groups of students and discuss casually the changes they are going through. The instructor would then have the option to assess this, or could use this as an opportunity to gain the students' trust, observing their personal language learning patterns. This could also be perceived as a learning opportunity for instructors, allowing them to experience moments of metanoia or awareness as they learn from observation of the students' work how to instruct and communicate more effectively with English language learners.

Secondly, a cultural contact activity could be included in the curriculum to create a rich language learning environment that fosters moments of metanoia. For example, students could be asked to enjoy a potluck meal; however, they would have to bring a popular dish from their culture. To find out what is the most popular food item from their culture in the local community, students could create a survey. Once they have created the survey, they could go to different environments such as the university campus or in the downtown part of their city. Here students could communicate with different people by asking them in a survey format what their favourite dish was from the students' home culture. After gathering this information, the students could take this back to their class, presenting their findings and answering any questions on the type of food, its significance, possible reasons for its popularity, etc. The students would then apply this knowledge, creating and preparing the food, bringing it to the potluck.

These are just a couple of ways that metanoia can be fostered in the additional language learning environment. The key is to have instructors aware of this process and for students to be learning and working within a calm emotional state and welcoming environment.

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Samantha Ranson recently completed her Master of Arts in Education at UBC's Okanagan campus focusing on metanoia and second language acquisition. She has a Bachelor of Arts (English) and a Bachelor of Education (Elementary Education and Teaching English Language Learners). She aspires to become an English for Academic Purposes instructor.



Bridging Two Communities

by Melanie M. Wong






For most PhD students, life is very much like a balance beam; it is difficult to maintain an equilibrium as it is a never-ending cycle of work. My academic thoughts often occur while doing mundane activities such as taking a shower, walking the dog, or navigating traffic. For this PhD Candidate and Kindergarten to Grade Twelve (K-12) educator, it is a constant juggling act to maintain two different identities (Norton, 2013) and be a member of these two Community of Practices (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Initially it was quite natural to participate in a K-12 educator CoP although I have found that as I have been away from this CoP, it has become inherently difficult to relearn the discourses and social practices. When I reflect on the process of academic discourse socialization (Duff, 2010), it becomes apparent that becoming an academic does not come easy. There are often moments when I feel like an “imposter” or when I don’t quite fit in. However, as I have begun to realize, in all of the CoPs I belong to, I am constantly negotiating language and social practices in order to participate.

When my academic journey began, I was already a K-12 educator. As a practicing teacher, I was comfortable discussing pedagogy and best teaching practices, but coming into a doctoral program I had to “flip my switch” to discuss theory. Unfortunately, it was not as simple as it sounded to “flip a switch.” When we consider English Language Learners and teaching these individuals, the reality is everyone is a learner of “English,” whether you are a native or a non-native speaker of the language. In my own experience, academic English was a new language. Problematizing and discussing the abstract was a discourse I was not familiar with. As a K-12 educator, we wrote report cards and lesson plans. The language required for these tasks were familiar. I have often referred to my past educator experiences as “putting on a pair of very comfortable shoes.” Being an educator was something

I knew. In my humble opinion, over the last four years since entering the PhD program, I have been learning a new language, a new way of expression, and discovering a new identity. Learning academic English has been a personal struggle. Some individuals may find it interesting that I have had difficulty learning academic language considering that I am a native speaker of English. However, my experiences learning to be an academic has taught me that the ways that we use language to express ourselves differ significantly from the language I utilize when teaching elementary school or speaking with school board colleagues.

From my experiences working as a teacher educator in a K-12 setting, there is often a disconnect between theory and practice. It is not that teachers do not care about the theory, but classroom teachers are juggling additional factors that require immediate attention and often the day to day is about survival. When I speak with some teaching colleagues, there is still a strong sense that at the university there is an “ivory tower” and unfortunately this creates barriers between practice and theory. For example, teachers want “things they can take home and do the next day” during professional development sessions rather than listening to “research findings.” In the K-12 educator CoP, experience matters. If you have taught, you are usually respected. Many teachers I have met have the misconception that professors do not understand their field or have had any teaching experience. However, often teachers do not realize that many professors have had vast teaching experiences (whether in K-12 or beyond) prior to entering into academia. It is these experiences that fuel their curiosity to engage in research. Perhaps what perplexed me further from my personal experience is how some educators deny the importance of research, yet it is research that often drives innovative teaching practice.

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My discussion above illustrates some of the challenges of belonging to these two CoPs. Although there was personally a familiarity with the K-12 educator CoP, since being away from this CoP, there have been changes and challenges to re-learn the social conventions. Alternatively, being a member of an academic CoP has presented a number of additional challenges, including learning the language and feeling a sense of belongingness. My question is “How can we “bridge” these two CoPs?”

After reflection, I have three suggestions that could potentially help to bridge these two communities further. First, I believe it is important to have opportunities for knowledge exchanges to occur between both school boards and universities. School boards and universities need to create an ongoing “open dialogue.” These dialogues should include leaders, classroom teachers, and classroom researchers. Many of the misconceptions and misunderstandings can be resolved just by maintaining open communication channels. It is also an opportunity for both CoPs to mutually support each other.

Second, at the beginning of my reflection I elaborated on both my difficulties learning the academic language and the disconnect between theory and practice. Unfortunately both academic language and academic journals are not often accessible to many teachers. Most teachers are not reading the latest research because of these barriers. A simple solution might be for researchers to consider publishing in teacher journals or other forms of text (e.g., blogs, etc.).

Third, extending on my last suggestion, rather than just presenting at academic conferences, professors need to consider presenting their work at teachers’ conferences. Venues such as teachers’ conferences promote knowledge exchanges between academics and educators. It allows for an open dialogue to start to occur and continue.

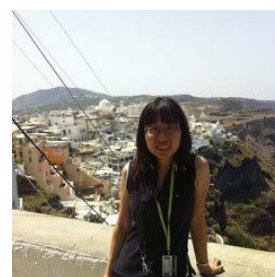
Bridging these two dominant CoPs in my life has not come naturally for me. However, it becomes apparent that this is not an individual effort but rather one that takes a community of people to accomplish.

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<http://melaniewong.ca>



Moving from Testing to Assessment in EAP Instruction

by Shahid Abrar-ul-Hassan



The TESOL 2016 International Convention & English Language Expo (April 5 – 8, 2016) in Baltimore was the 48th annual convention organized by the TESOL International Association. The convention, the largest event of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) professionals, typically attracts about 7,000 delegates from around the world (75 countries from all regions of the globe), and there were more than 1,000 sessions to choose from including colloquiums, workshops, practice-based sessions, research-based sessions, keynote and invited presentations, and pre- and post-convention institutes. The convention attendees represented all sectors of English language education such as teaching, research, teacher education, language assessment, and materials development.

My presentation at the TESOL 2016 convention tackled the issue of assessment in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction. The session description was as follows:

The teaching function of assessment is integral to the effectiveness of instructional programs. In addition to gathering information about learners' linguistic proficiency, assessment practices can help engage learners in their learning and cultivate positive washback.

Assessment remains an underutilized practice in EAP programs due to its focus on the testing function (i.e., measuring learners' linguistic proficiency or competence). This widespread approach undermines the teaching function of

assessment and the fact that it bears consequences beyond being a testing tool. In fact, assessment events provide reliable data on learners' existing and emerging needs and could enhance teaching effectiveness in manifold ways by developing a positive washback effect.

In order to promote research-informed practice, this presentation offered insights on how practitioners could best utilize assessment in EAP instruction. A three-dimensional practical framework was shared, along with a set of practitioner-friendly test tasks, in order to optimize assessment. This framework could easily be incorporated into EAP curriculums. Relevant handouts were also provided.

In addition to my own session, I attended a number of other presentations and workshops at the TESOL 2016 convention. It's hard to decide which session was more valuable from the number of sessions I attended. Nevertheless, Anne Curzan's keynote presentation, entitled "Survey says....: Determining what English usage is and isn't acceptable," was enlightening. She is the Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of English at the University of Michigan and serves on the Usage Panel of the American Heritage Dictionary board. The presentation focused on the dynamism and vibrancy of languages, especially the English language, that is, the language is constantly and imperceptibly changing. Although this reality is well-known, it is not typically given due consideration in English language teaching. It's not uncommon to see language practitioners and administrators subscribe to prescriptive conventions of the language. She suggested teachers

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start using the term “grammando” to mean “grammar nazi.” Curzan offered a practical as well as realistic perspective on language change and illustrated her findings with everyday examples. For instance, language educators would differ on the acceptability of these usage issues: different from/than/to, singular generic “they,” split infinitives, and starting a sentence with “and” or “but.”

Full video clips of Curzan’s and three other keynote presentations are freely accessible with downloadable slides on the 2016 Convention’s website: <http://events.commpartners.com/webcasts/tesol201604/>.

NB: The forthcoming TESOL convention is in our neighborhood: Seattle, WA, from March 21 to 24, 2017.

Shahid Abrar-ul-Hassan is an EAL/EAP educator, academic researcher, and professional development consultant based in Vancouver, BC. He is an alumnus of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California, where he completed an MA TESOL and Post-graduate Certificate in CALL. See his published works on Academia.edu.



Smile and Say Hello!

by Mark Rosvold

In a world that currently seems so volatile and warring, filled with alienation and mistrust, there needs to be more than ever a globalized movement towards embracing the welcoming spirit. This has been a complex issue debated by governments, large and small; however, I do not intend to propose anything political or complicated for that matter. Here instead is something more anecdotal in nature.

Eight years ago I set off for Europe with a friend who had, like myself, just graduated from high school. I was to enter university the September directly following my June graduation. As such my friend and I decided to use the meagre savings in our coffers, earned through various high school jobs, as well as plead with our parents to assist us in order that we might live the dream of all dreams. We wanted to backpack around Europe before starting university in the fall.

Pleading, planning, and packing done, off we flew above the great Atlantic, to arrive in London. Shortly after spending some time in London we ended up deciding our next destination was to be Paris. Emboldened by high school French courses, we thought we would wend our way through the historic European streets and find magic, art, and bohemian warmth. Instead we were rudely shocked to realize just how poor our conversational French truly was. What we had learned over a few years in high school, did little to aid us in our efforts to communicate in the Parisian French that washed over us like a linguistically alienating wave. Frankly put, we were overwhelmed.

By the time we were on day two of the four days we had planned to stay in Paris, our spirits were low, despite some vin rouge et vin blanc. There was a specific moment where my friend and I were riding the metro together, and for whatever reason, he managed to get off while I stayed stuck behind the

absurdly fast closing doors. These doors were ruthless beasts, closing themselves on hapless souls, such as an older woman who had to be pulled in by a few strong young men. So, there I was, stuck on a train going to a location I hadn't planned for, without my friend with me. What made this particularly bad was that we did not have phones with us, and since it was unplanned, we had not figured out a place to meet. Also, we were foolish 18 year olds with zero notions of a contingency plan should something go wrong. So basically, I was panicking.

Now, the story is not about to be resolved, and I'm afraid I can't tell you how I ended up meeting up with my friend, except to say that, eventually we did meet up, perhaps at our hostel. This is basically because that part of the story pales in comparison to what happened next when I was panicking on a French train. I recall looking around, trying orient myself on one of the maps, but due to panic, the little French I knew was not serving me and I couldn't figure the map out. Standing there, stricken with fear that I might be truly and properly lost, fresh out of high school, and entirely on my own for the first time in my life, I must have made a pitiful sight. And then an angelic voice called out to me from the heavens and I snapped out of my anxious reverie. It turns out the heavens hadn't actually opened, but the mouth of a young Dutch woman had. She was a few years older than me, and had a kind face, and spoke with a beauty I cannot describe. She spoke clear competent English in a land of what seemed to me baffling Parisian French. What she actually said to me, I truly can't begin to recall, but I remember that the moment I heard English, and saw a smile, I finally felt as though I was welcome in a strange foreign realm.

This memory is one that has impacted me over the last eight years. In that time a lot of linguistically

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meaningful events have happened for me. For instance I have travelled to other parts of the world, completed an undergraduate degree in anthropology, volunteered with immigrants, helped as an EAP teaching assistant, worked as a cultural liaison for a short term study abroad program, as taught some basic English to Syrian refugees. Through all of these life events, that smile and accompanying hello offered by that Dutch stranger have woven their way into the living tapestry I have thus far constructed.

There is one particular example I would like to share in an attempt to reveal the beauty and importance of understanding what it means to welcome, and be welcomed by others.

In 2015 I was provided, for the second time, with a position at UBC Okanagan as a cultural liaison for a short term study abroad group. This circumstance was unique in that the group was quite small, around half a dozen university students in their 3rd year. They were all studying to become teachers of English in Japan, their home country. When they got off the plane at the airport near the campus, I greeted them and helped them get into a taxi, accompanying them to UBC Okanagan campus.

During the time that the students were visiting, I was also working as a research assistant on campus. My supervisor and I were planning on doing an embedded narrative research project with these students. So for the length of time that they were visiting here, I spent a great deal of time with them, which included interviewing them on a couple of occasions.

Once they had left, I then had the meticulous task of going through hours of recorded conversation and transcribing them. For those reading this who have

not had this pleasure, it requires you to listen carefully, and often to re-listen multiple times so as to perfectly capture the dialogue. In doing this I was quite humbled, that is when I wasn't entirely absorbed in the process of trying to render peculiar coughs or mumbles into a discernible orthographic form. What humbled me was the mention of how welcoming everyone was, which included me. Our smiles and small gestures, like offering to take their luggage out of the cab were a few that were mentioned. Another was how happy the students were when I joined them for meals, and specifically when we all shared food.

These probably wouldn't have stuck in my memory as time passed, but to know that small gestures like smiles and lending a helping hand produced such vivid and meaningful memories points to the simple yet vitally important role of making others feel welcome in a strange and sometimes terrifying new land. Be it a backpacking trip, an academic journey, or just running into someone who seems to be struggling with their surroundings, all it usually takes is a smile and a hello.



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Call for Submissions



BC TEAL Newsletter

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of the BC TEAL newsletter is December 1, 2016, with publication in early February. The theme for the winter 2017 issue is "Reflection." Please contact the editor, Scott Douglas, with your submission ideas: editor@bctéal.org.

BC TEAL Journal

The BC TEAL Journal is the peer-reviewed scholarly publication of BC TEAL. It exists to promote scholarship related to the teaching and learning of English as an Additional Language in British Columbia, with articles explicitly reflecting the various contexts and settings of the BC TEAL membership. The journal is freely available as an open access publication, and BC TEAL members are encouraged to register as reviewers, authors, and readers on the journal website (<http://ejournals.ok.ubc.ca/index.php/BCTJ>).

The BC TEAL Journal invites the submission of original previously unpublished contributions, such as research articles or theoretical analysis, classroom practice, and opinion essays, from all sectors and experience levels represented by the BC TEAL membership. Research type articles should be no more than 7,000 words, plus references. Theoretical analysis, classroom practice, and opinion essays should be no more than 3,500 words, plus references. Manuscripts are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, with papers that have completed the review and editing process being published as they are ready. Articles are gathered into a single issue over the course of one calendar year. Please refer to the BC TEAL Journal website (<http://ejournals.ok.ubc.ca/index.php/BCTJ>) for more information on the submission process.

Recent articles published in the BC TEAL Journal include a look at how to write effective conference presentation proposals in the field of TESOL, the use of canine assisted therapy to reduce the affective filter for international students studying at university in British Columbia, and the importance of gathering student feedback to understand the needs of learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds accessing university writing centres. Feel free to contact the editor (editor@bctéal.org) if you have an idea for a scholarly article you would like to submit.