



Alberta Teachers of English
as a Second Language

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www.atesl.ca

President's Message

Dear ATESL Members:

As the warm days of summer fade into the cool days of fall, your ATESL board is busy preparing engaging professional development opportunities for the year ahead, including the ATESL 2016 conference.

Planning for the ATESL 2016 conference is in full swing and excitement is building! Join us at the Fantasyland on October 14th to 15th for a jam-packed schedule including keynote speakers Dr. Jonathan Newton (Victoria University of Wellington) and Dr. Stuart Webb (University of Western Ontario). You will also have an opportunity to join sessions presented by four invited speakers, including Dr. Scott Douglas (University of British Columbia, Okanagan), Dr. Jeremie Seror (University of Ottawa), Dr. William Dunn (University of Alberta), and Emily Albertsen (Bow Valley College). Be sure to check out the [conference website](#) for more information and updates. You can also follow the conference on Twitter #atesl2016 @ATESLnews or join the ATESL Conference 2016 Facebook page. I would like to thank Phil Zirkwitz and Jeff Hendrick (Conference Co-chairs) for their hard work so far and for the many hours they will continue to dedicate in the weeks ahead. In addition, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the many volunteers, including ATESL Board members, who are generously giving their time to ensure the success of the conference.

In addition to regular monthly online meetings, the ATESL Board met in Red Deer on June 4th for an all day face-to-face meeting. After attending to regular ATESL business, we then participated in a workshop facilitated by a Community Development officer from the Government of Alberta. Among the issues discussed during the 3-hour session were strategies for attracting and retaining ATESL members, approaches for recruiting and mentoring board members, and ideas for recognizing ATESL volunteers. The discussion was fruitful and many of the ideas have already been incorporated into practice and integrated into ATESL's Strategic Plan (please see the Strategic Planning Committee report, below).

During the summer months, ATESL was involved in a number of provincial and international events. ATESL was invited to attend Day 2 of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies' (AASIA) conference. I took part in two panel discussions to provide feedback on language, specifically, lessons learned and priorities for future action on language and the Alberta Settlement and Integration Dashboard. ATESL was also showcased as the proud sponsor of the Tips and Strategies session of the Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching conference held at the University of Calgary on August 13th. It was a pleasure to see so many ATESL members attend the conference and take part in the Tips and Strategies session. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Silvia Rossi for her work as a conference co-organizer and also for coordinating registration for ATESL members. Please see the message below from Dr. Tracey Derwing, PSSLT Co-organizer.

On behalf of the organizers of the Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference (theme: Technology) held in Calgary this August, thanks so much to ATESL for hosting the Pronunciation Tips and Strategies session. It was very well attended by ATESL members, and by attendees at the conference itself. Interest was high for the full hour and a half and each tip was very well attended every ten minutes! The conference will be held at the University of Utah next year in Salt Lake City (September 1-2). The organizers for that event have already indicated that they want to include a similar Tips and Strategies session at their conference. The theme changes from year to year (previous conferences have focused on issues such as intelligibility, assessment, and sociocultural aspects of accented speech). Next year the organizers hope to focus the entire conference on the integration of teaching and research. Details will be posted on the PSSLT website. Again, we are grateful to ATESL for support.

*Sincerely,
Tracey Derwing, PSSLT Co-organizer (on behalf of Mary Grantham O'Brien, Jennifer Foote and Silvia Rossi)*



ATESL is recognized as a valued PSSLT sponsor. Pictured left to right: Wendy Chambers and Silvia Rossi

ATESL was invited to participate in the IRCC Immigration Consultation in Edmonton on August 18th. Together with Board members Lisa Rochman and Cindy Messaros, representing NorQuest College and AWES, respectively, I joined Minister John McCallum and a group of stakeholders to discuss a set of questions addressing topics that included unlocking Canada's diverse needs, modernizing Canada's immigration system, and Canadians' views on leadership in global migration and immigration.¹ IRCC recorded the session and aggregated responses will be available to all Canadians once the consultations are complete.



Left to right: Lisa Rochman, Wendy Chambers, Minister John McCallum, Cindy Messaros

I am very pleased to announce that ATESL has signed a 3-year MOU with Rural Routes. This strategic partnership offers the potential for many collaborative opportunities between our respective organizations that will enhance professional development offerings across the province, especially in rural areas. To learn more about Rural Routes as well as ATESL's national affiliate, TESL Canada, please check out our new webpage, [ATESL Affiliate/Partners](#).

Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns related to ATESL, please feel free to contact me at president@atesl.ca. I look forward to seeing you at the ATESL 2016 Conference October 14th and 15th at the Fantasyland Hotel! Also, be sure to watch for updates from your local ATESL co-chairs about upcoming meetings and events.

Respectfully,
Wendy Chambers

¹ If you are interested in reading an overview of the responses I provided during the IRCC Immigration Consultation, the file is available [here](#). The overview was developed in consultation with Dr. Tracey Derwing (ATESL's Advocacy Committee Chair).



Alberta Teachers of English
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Strategic Planning Committee (ad hoc) Report

Members: Wendy Chambers (Chair), Maureen Stewart, Lisa Rochman, Janet Kwong, and Sally Scholefield

In Spring 2016, the Strategic Planning Committee administered an e-survey to the ATESL membership and 103 responses were collected. The purpose of the survey was to seek membership feedback to inform the development of ATESL's 3-year strategic plan, *Envisioning the Future*. Over the summer months, the committee met numerous times to develop strategic directions and key implementation strategies that represent the ideas and views provided by ATESL members who completed the survey, ATESL's past presidents and board members who took part in a strategic planning retreat in Spring 2015, and the current ATESL board. The committee has also taken care to ensure alignment of each component of the plan with ATESL's vision and mission. The final revisions are being complete and the strategic plan will be ready to present at ATESL's AGM taking place on Friday, October 14th from 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Fantasyland Hotel.

Respectfully submitted by: Wendy Chambers



Alberta Teachers of English
as a Second Language

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2015-2016

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TESL Canada Representative

Nadia Khan

Rural Routes Representative

Tracey Derwing

Member-at-Large

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Irene Wood

Business Manager

Calgary Local Report

In June, the Calgary Local hosted its second successful mini-conference. The theme of the conference was “Supporting Wellness in the Language Classroom”. A total of 46 ATESL members and 10 non-members registered for the one-day conference, which was held in historic Heritage Hall at SAIT. The conference offered concurrent sessions as well as the ever-popular lightning talks.

Presenter Liette Wilson of the Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association talked about the importance of movement for learning and demonstrated how to integrate simple movement routines into language learning activities. In the session “Managing Stress in the Workplace”, facilitator Joanne Meunier led participants in a number of relaxation techniques, including visualization, deep breathing and self-hypnosis. Marjorie Contenti of Bow Valley College distinguished between listening, advice giving and coaching in her session called “Connecting with Learners in a Healthy Way”. She also raised awareness of the supports and resources related to mental health and well-being available to learners in Calgary. The session by Yvonne Lau of Alberta Health Services provided an overview of how to stay emotionally healthy.

In addition, three major publishers set up displays and donated books to the draws, which were held during the lunch break and at the end of the day. In a post-conference survey, 96% of respondents indicated that the conference either met or exceeded their expectations.



Lena Bishop presents her lightning talk entitled “A Conceptually Different Mapping of English Verb Tenses”



Participants get active in Joann Meunier's session



Marjorie Contenti's session

Respectfully submitted,
Nadia Khan & Silvia Rossi
Calgary Local Co-Chairs



Alberta Teachers of English
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Newsletter Information

The ATESL Newsletter is published quarterly.

Deadlines: February 15, May 15, August 15, November 15

Announcements, workshop dates, book reviews, teaching ideas, and articles relevant to the field.

Contact: Irene Wood at services@atesl.ca

More information and archives at www.atesl.ca/newslettersArchive

Professional Development Bursaries

Apply for an ATESL Professional Development Bursary

Deadlines: March 15, September 15

<http://www.atesl.ca/bursary>

The Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL)

is a professional organization which promotes the highest standards of teaching and English language program provision for all learners in Alberta whose first language is other than English.



Alberta Teachers of English
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Edmonton Local Report

This year, the Edmonton Local was represented by Janet Kwong and Sabine Ricioppo who attended monthly Board meetings and organized ATESL meetings for ESL professionals residing in Edmonton and surrounding areas. We would not have been able to do this important work without the help of our Treasurer, Nick Williams, the Hospitality Committee, Sydney Suess and Astrid Luethe, our Secretary, Lynn Sawyer and our newly appointed Communications Officer, Rosemary McMahon.

ATESL would like to thank all of the outgoing volunteers for their commitment. Sabine Ricioppo's hard work and dedication to ATESL will not be forgotten. She has been a wonderful mentor and I have learned so many things from her during this past year. Even though Sabine's term is finished, I know she will remain as an active ATESL member and supporter. Anyone who has had a chance to work with Lynn knows how impeccable she is at carrying out all her duties. We were lucky to have Lynn Sawyer to take AGM minutes, mail out certificates of attendance, and provide an extra hand whenever it was needed. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

ATESL would also like to express their gratitude towards our ongoing volunteers. Janet is very dedicated to ATESL and she is well prepared to continue in her role as Co-Chair. It has been a pleasure working with her and I have no doubt she will do a fantastic job coaching our incoming Co-Chair. Nick is amazing at keeping records on our finances and we are grateful that he has agreed to continue as Treasurer.

The Edmonton Local would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to everyone who offered their expertise to our members at the local ATESL meetings: In January, we hosted a panel discussion where Annette Kreider (CSS/LARCC), Suzanne Gross (EMCN), Diana Kim (City of Edmonton), and Susan Coughlan (IRCC) kindly provided participants with updates regarding the Syrian refugee crisis. The February ATESL Edmonton Local Meeting was the ESL Directors' Forum which was well attended. In April, the Edmonton Local Chapter hosted two meetings: a Mental Health Sensitivity Training Seminar presented by Dr. Fatima Al Sayah, Dr. Mohammad Alghamdi and Dr. Samer Aldandashi and three capping project summaries presented by Elina Stop (*Analysis of Vocabulary Frequency in ESL Textbooks*), Moncef Abbassi (*Canadian Short Stories to Teach Language and Culture to Advanced ESL Learners*), and Oksana Oleksyn (*Using Web Resources to Enhance L2 Listening Comprehension*). In May, we concluded the year with three additional capping project presentations by Sami Ghariani (*Enhancing Vocabulary Use in ESL Speaking Activities*), Yitao Wang (*Developing Language Support Materials for LING 101: Using the Adjunct Model*), and Tabitha Gillman (*An Analysis of Present Perfect Timelines in ESL Textbooks*).

Our Annual General Meeting will be held in Room 808/809 at NorQuest College's downtown campus on September 30, 2016. We will vote/agree on a new slate of volunteers for the Edmonton Board. If you would like to join the Board, we are still looking to fill the positions of Secretary and the Hospitality Committee. Following the Local AGM, Dr. Jennifer Foote will be presenting on pronunciation. Her presentation will be entitled "Pronunciation in the classroom: What you really need to know". Finally, we will be issuing a coupon for a free conference registration for the upcoming ATESL Conference: Inspiring through Inclusion & Communication. The winner of the draw needs to be in attendance at the September meeting and an ATESL member in good standing in order to receive the coupon.

Respectfully submitted by Sabine Ricioppo and Janet Kwong

TESL Canada Report

TESL Canada held its last meeting in June 2016. The Provincial Representatives Committee met during the month of June as well to discuss the current Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) between the provinces and TESL Canada. TESL Canada is seeking feedback regarding each province's MOA, and a list was compiled and sent to the Executive Board. These MOAs and the provincial comments attached will be further discussed in our upcoming September 2016 meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Sally Scholefield, TESL Canada Representative for ATESL

TESL Canada Conference 2017

The upcoming TESL Canada conference will be held at the home of the famous Niagara Falls from June 8-10, 2017 at the Falls Avenue Resorts, which include the Sheraton on the Falls and the Crowne Plaza Niagara Falls-Fallsview.

More details on how to register and book accommodations will be forthcoming. Plan now to submit a proposal to present or exhibit at the conference.

Mark the dates in your calendar to join with us and celebrate Canada's 150th birthday by visiting this natural wonder and learning and networking with your colleagues across the country. More information to follow in the 2016 *TESL Canada Bulletin* to be published in early fall.



ATESL Conference Report

This year's provincial conference is in Edmonton on October 14th and 15th at the Fantasyland Hotel. The dates are soon approaching! There is a discount for students this year. If you are a student, please have the necessary verification in order to avail of the discount. You will find the details on

the ATESL website.

The program is taking shape nicely. There is a full slate of presenters and an exciting group of keynote and invited speakers. Our two keynote speakers, Dr. Jonathan Newton from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and Dr. Stuart Webb from the University of Western Ontario and prepared presentations that will engage the audience with insights from their vast experience related to language teaching and education. Their impressive biographies are also found on the ATESL website. In addition to the other presentations, there will be a Wine and Cheese during the conference which will feature renowned local musicians.

The various committee members met on August 31st for a conference meeting to discuss items of importance for the conference. We will have another meeting in September to finalize details before the conference. In total, there are seven committees involved in sponsorship, programming, facilities, publicity, publisher displays, registration and hospitality. We would like to express appreciation to each of the committee members who have helped to make this upcoming conference a great experience.

Respectfully submitted by:

Phil Zirkwitz and Jeff Hendricks,
ATESL 2016 Conference co-chairs



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ATESL Intercultural Communicative Competence for TESL Instructors Project

In 2014-2015, ATESL received funding for Language Training Program (LTP) Innovative Projects from the Government of Alberta and did a research project called *Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) for TESL Instructors*. In this project, we explored how ICC is integrated into ESL instruction, identifying strengths and area where support is needed in Alberta. (<http://www.atesl.ca/node/844#.VykRPdIgtD8>).

In summary, we found that ICC was not fully integrated into ESL instruction for the following reasons:

- ESL instructors need materials that provide content linked to outcomes.
- ESL instructors are too busy to develop their own materials.
- Some learners or instructors don't value ICC

In 2016-2017, we received another funding for LTP from the Government of Alberta to address the needs above by creating a resource called *Enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Resource Based on the ATESL ESL Curriculum Framework*. The resource will include:

- Lesson plans
- Instructor self-assessment tool to help instructors gauge their own ICC
- Resources to help instructors develop their own ICC
- Learner assessment tool to support instructors identify students' ICC needs and select lesson plans.

The resource will be available on the ATESL website in fall 2016. We are also designing and delivering both face to face and online workshops to support instructors develop their ICC:

- The face to face workshop is 2-3 hours long and it will be held in November 2016, January 2017, and February 2017.
- Calgary and Edmonton local chapters will each host three face to face workshops.
- The workshops in Calgary will be facilitated by Veena Zarour-Murthy and in Edmonton by Yuji Abe.
- The members of Central and Southern local chapters are invited to join in the Calgary or Edmonton workshops, or, they can access the online workshop.

The ATESL business manager will email you when the dates and locations of the workshops are determined and when the online registration is set up.

Report submitted by Yuji Abe

2016-2017 Project team

Bow Valley College: Veena Zarour-Murthy, Hana Taleb Imai

NorQuest College: Yuji Abe, Cheryl Whitelaw



Focus on Research by Marian Rossiter & Marilyn Abbott

We are pleased to introduce our eleventh Focus on Research column by Majid Nikouee. In this article, Majid presents two ways in which instructors can integrate grammar into their task-based lessons and provides recommendations for doing so. We encourage you to explore the references for additional ideas for teaching grammar in a communicative context.

Teaching Grammar without Sacrificing Meaningful Communication: Two Models of Integrating Grammar Instruction and Task-Based Teaching

Majid Nikouee, University of Alberta

One of the major concerns of ESL instructors is how to teach grammar in a communicative context so that second language (L2) learners will be able to use their grammar knowledge accurately and fluently in genuine communicative events. The challenge for teachers is to draw learners' attention to grammar while keeping their focus on communicating meaning. They do not wish to revert to a traditional model where grammar is taught via rule explanations and repetitive mechanical drills, nor to leave learners to their own devices to absorb grammar from input without instruction.

Current views of grammar favor an approach that is in the middle of a continuum with a purely grammar-focused and a purely communicative approach at the extremes (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). It is represented by an integrative approach that aims to bypass the weaknesses of the extremes by incorporating a grammar component in the purely communicative approach, without undermining the principles of communicative language teaching. The ultimate goal of integration is to enable learners to put their grammar knowledge into practice. Task-based language teaching (TBLT), which stresses the priority of meaning by requiring learners to do communicative tasks, constitutes a suitable context for implementing integration.

In this paper, I will present two models of merging grammar instruction and TBLT that are discussed in the language teaching literature and discuss some of the challenges of each that ESL instructors need to tackle.

1. A Delayed Model: Grammar instruction following the main task

One approach to integrating grammar instruction and TBLT is to delay instruction until the main task is completed (Willis, 1996). This model starts with a pre-task phase during which the task procedures and necessary vocabulary are introduced. Knowing how to do the task, learners begin the task cycle that comprises three steps, namely conducting the main task, preparing an oral/written report of the process of doing the task and its product, and presenting the report to others. There is no focus on grammar in this phase; attention is directed at only content and vocabulary. Grammar instruction is delivered at the end of the sequence, in the form of rule explanations and exercises or activities aimed at addressing the grammatical errors arising in communication or any other language point selected by instructors or learners.

2. A Distributed Model: Grammar instruction at different points during a lesson

In the distributed model, grammar activities can take place at the pre-task, during-task, and post-task phases (Ellis, 2003). Given the fact that L2 learners have difficulty focusing on meaning and grammar at the same time, the pre-task phase can serve as a preparatory step in which learners may be provided with some time to decide how to perform the task, be asked to perform a similar task, and/or be asked to watch the task being performed by others. Knowing how to carry out a task and what language to use, it is assumed that learners have more attentional capacity to pay attention to grammatical accuracy during task performance.

In the during-task phase, different types of *corrective feedback*, defined as a signal to draw an L2 learner's attention to his or her error (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), can be provided by teachers or other learners. The feedback moves can be as implicit as a *recast* that is a reformulation of an erroneous utterance without changing its original meaning. For example, in

response to a learner's past tense error in "I go to school yesterday", the instructor says "You went to school yesterday". Alternatively, corrective feedback can be in the form of *explicit correction* that involves indication of an error and provision of its correct form. As another option in this phase, instructors or learners can stop task performance to briefly discuss any grammatical structure that is essential to the task, whether it is problematic or not; this is a brief timeout from communication. Finally, grammar instruction in the post-task phase is built on the problematic points arising in the main task phase. Among the options recommended for this stage are traditional grammar drills and consciousness-raising tasks, which engage learners in communicating about grammatical structures with a view to working out the pertinent rules (Ellis, 2003).

Integration: An example

By way of illustration, for the English comparative structure *noun X is (comparative adjective) than noun Y*, a pair of different family pictures can be distributed among groups of three or four. Each picture may contain parents, a boy, and a girl. First, the groups work out the vocabulary, appearance and assumed personality adjectives, needed to describe each family member. The instructor can circulate in the class to help with vocabulary and to model the target structure by comparing two of the students in the class. Next, each group makes a set of comparisons and presents them to the class. The other groups are asked to find the distinctions between their outcome and that of the other groups. During this phase, the instructor may provide corrective feedback on errors of the target feature or make notes of the comparative errors to focus on in post-task phase. After the presentation stage, the instructor can deductively or inductively present the rule for the use of *more* and *-er*, have learners correct utterances containing comparative errors, or have learners read a short passage with instances of comparatives underlined.

Which model to use?

The purpose of this piece is not to suggest one model over the other but to describe each so that teachers can decide which one fits into their context of practice. An essential element guiding this decision is syllabus goal(s).

When a syllabus is organized around learners' communicative needs without a prespecified set of grammar points, either model with unfocused tasks seems to be an appropriate choice. Unfocused tasks, according to Ellis (2003), are designed to provide opportunities for language use while pursuing a communicative purpose rather than a specific grammatical structure. One of the pitfalls of unfocused tasks, however, is that learners may avoid using certain features or may use them so infrequently in communication that they receive inadequate attention in the task sequence (Ellis, 2001). What instructors can do in dealing with this problem is to briefly halt communication and draw learners' attention to these structures. Further, they can use practice activities targeting these features in the post-task phase.

Alternatively, if the goal of a syllabus is to enable learners to accurately and fluently use certain grammatical features, focused tasks that are designed to elicit attention to a specific grammatical feature in a meaningful context (Ellis, 2003) are needed. An example of a focused task is the *Alibi Game* that is aimed at eliciting past tense. Students are asked to assume that they are suspects for a crime committed last weekend. In a pair, they are expected to prepare an alibi by constructing an account of what they did during the previous weekend. However, designing a focused task is problematic as learners may avoid the target structure or utilize others to complete the task. It is advisable that instructors experiment with their tasks in different contexts and with different groups of learners to refine them and ensure that they elicit the targeted feature(s).

An advantage of focused tasks is that they provide L2 learners with opportunity for the repetitive practice of the targeted features in a meaningful context. Meaningful repetition is a requisite for gaining the ability to use grammar knowledge fast and effortlessly in spontaneous situations (DeKeyser, 2007). This, Ranta (2015) suggests, can be enhanced in TBT by the incorporation in the pre-task phase of *enabling* activities that repeatedly elicit a particular form in a meaningful context for a nonlinguistic purpose (for more on enabling activities see Ranta, 2015). Instructors can add this new sense of repetition to their practice using enabling activities instead of mechanical drills that do not require an understanding of meaning.

My final remark is that if ESL instructors wish to employ an integrative approach, they should first discuss the

characteristics of this approach compared to other approaches with their students. Further, instructors can trial an integration model in their context of practice to demonstrate how it works.

Majid Nikouee is a PhD student in the TESL program in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta.

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RURAL ROUTES

The partnership between ATESL and Rural Routes continues to strengthen. I am excited to inform members that a three year MOU between ATESL and Rural Routes was signed in June. Over the past year ATESL and RR engaged in various collaborative measures. Both the organizations have information about each other on their respective websites. Information about Rural Routes can be accessed on the ATESL website at: <http://www.atesl.ca/affiliate-partners>. Information about ATESL on the Rural Routes website is available at: <https://eslruralroutes.norquest.ca/about-us/partners.aspx>

Brochures and other informational materials about Rural Routes were also put on display at the ATESL mini-conference in Calgary in the exhibitors section. Be sure to stop by the Rural Routes set up in the exhibitor's section at the upcoming ATESL 2016 conference in Edmonton as well. The partnership between ATESL and Rural Routes offers many collaborative opportunities that will be beneficial for both the parties.

Respectfully submitted by:

Nadia Khan



The Rural Routes set up at the ATESL mini- conference in Calgary.

CANADA: DAY 1 EXHIBIT

Canada: Day 1 is the inaugural travelling exhibition produced by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. This exhibition, through the voices of immigrants, brings to light the similarities and differences, the ups and the downs, of the experiences of one's first day in Canada.

The exhibition is currently housed at the Alberta Legislative Assembly Visitor Centre in Edmonton until December 4th. It is free to visit and teachers can book a time to take classes.

There are learning resources about the Canada: Day One exhibition, specially created for teachers to use with their adult English language learners. The materials are organized into three levels: Canadian Language Benchmarks levels 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6.

Lesson packs are available on the ATESL Resources website at <http://atesl.ca/node/973#.V-UwITUYFsq> (on the right hand side of the page as Downloads).