

President's Message by Patti Lefebvre

The Dalai Lama has referred to the importance of achieving intercommunity-cooperation. What a wonderful idea. To me, it means the ability to achieve something greater because of diversity and because of our different experiences and pasts. When I think of the future of Alberta, a province that will require over 114, 000 workers to sustain our workforce needs and with Calgary and Edmonton being two of the fastest growing cities for immigrants, I think of all the cooperation and **engagement** that will be required.

As TESL professionals, we strive to ensure that intercultural competency, which I believe fosters intercommunity-cooperation, is both implicitly and explicitly taught in our classrooms. I further believe that intercommunity-cooperation extends far beyond the classroom into our daily interactions with both familiar colleagues and the strangers we meet each day. As professionals and community members, we have the responsibility to enhance intercommunity-cooperation and we work in a field that gives us the opportunity to **empower** our learners to do this as well.

Be proud of the impact you make each day teaching ESL or promoting our work in the various ways you do. Perhaps, take some time over the summer to reflect on how you contribute to intercommunity-cooperation. This reflection will serve us well as Alberta continues to grow and diversify, and new immigrants have the opportunity to **excel**.

Engage, Empower, Excel: the theme for this year's conference. Your conference planning committee has been working hard to provide, yet again, another wonderful learning opportunity at the 2012 conference. Please check the ATESL website for details, dates, and a link to the registration site.

Speaking of our website, the Board recently met and one of the activities we undertook was a visioning session on what ATESL's website will become in the future. The project manager, President-Elect, and website designer walked us through a process of identifying how our mission will drive the design and the functionality of the website. The process was exciting, and we look forward to moving the project forward.

The Board has also made some final decisions regarding the members of the Accreditation Task Force and has hired Liz Karra as project lead. We are very pleased to have Liz researching

Feature Article, appended:

**ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework:
The Document and Its Applications**

by Justine Light and Wendy Chambers

President's message

A message from Patti Lefebvre

In Conversation with Judy Hasinoff

by Jody Gilbert

Bursary Report

Learner contribution

My Love... by Jasmine Seungha Han

**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.





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2012 - 2013

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President's Message continued

best practices. The Board will be bringing the project findings forward to our membership in November.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our hardworking Board for the time and commitment they have dedicated to ATESL. I wish each of them and each of you a wonderful warm summer! See you in the fall.

ATESL Mission Statement

The Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL) is a professional organization that promotes the highest standards of teaching and English language program provision for all learners in Alberta whose first language is other than English. We do this by:

- encouraging and providing professional development opportunities that are consistent with generally accepted principles of adult learning and with currently understood principles of second language learning and teaching;
- liaising with other organizations, local, provincial, national, and international, engaged in education;
- creating awareness about immigration, settlement of immigrants, and English language learning by communicating with government, business, and the general public;
- encouraging awareness of issues of accountability and program standards by communicating with English language program providers and learners;
- encouraging the highest standards of teacher preparation and performance by administering an ESL teacher accreditation process;
- working collaboratively with government to develop policies and procedures which govern the provision of English language programs and related services for immigrants to Canada;
- encouraging and supporting the participation of learners in the decision-making processes that determine their educational choices.

The ATESL Newsletter is published quarterly.

Deadlines: Feb.15, May 15, Aug.15, Nov.15

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

Contact: Irene Wood at atesl.admin@shaw.ca

More information and archives at atesl.ca



In Conversation with Judy Hasinoff

A recipient of the Dawn Seabrook de Vargas Fellowship

by Jody Gilbert

For anyone who knows Judy Hasinoff, one thing is abundantly clear: Judy is tremendously passionate about ESL. I suspect that passion has always been the 'secret' source of Judy's seemingly boundless energy, a trait that so many colleagues mention when her name comes up in conversation. Many times we've heard Judy described as "a bundle of energy" or "the Energizer Bunny." She just keeps on going!

I've been privileged to know Judy as a supervisor, mentor, colleague, and friend since I began my career in the field of TESL. When I think of Judy, what comes to mind first is of course her incredible energy, but also her professionalism, her consistently positive outlook, her sense of humour, and the fact that she always makes time for a chat, regardless of how much she has on the go – which is usually a lot.



In May, I sat down with Judy over coffee at "The Penny" in Lethbridge. I asked her to reflect on her 30 years of involvement with ESL in Alberta, and I am delighted to share some of our conversation with the readers of this newsletter.

Judy first worked with ESL learners while teaching elementary school in Edmonton. After spending some time at home as a new mother on leave, she was itching to do something and get back into the classroom. When YWCA Lethbridge got funding to support immigrant settlement using an old house as a classroom, she thought, "Why can't I do that?" The classes were multi-level, mostly women with children, and a daycare was set up for the kids. Judy helped students with basic life skills and cultural skills, brought in volunteers to work one on one with the students, helped them learn to cook in the kitchen of the house, and taught them how to eat peanut butter - the students were mostly Vietnamese and had never tried peanut butter before. She says, "It did my heart good to start there."

In 1981, Judy went into full time ESL teaching at Lethbridge College (then Lethbridge Community College). She soon realized that adult ESL was where she should be. She took some basic training in TESL, and attended conferences and workshops to build her teaching skills.

Judy's first students at Lethbridge College came to Canada as a result of the Solidarity Movement. There were 21 Polish men over six feet tall in her class (Judy stands somewhat under six feet tall, and so found herself often looking up to her towering students), and she is still in touch with some of them. Judy taught for eleven years at the college, getting her hands in "everything," and then began thinking that the program should be broader, more open, and more inclusive. When the program coordinator left, Judy remembers thinking "I'm going to try that." And she did, never looking back.

In her new position, Judy was able to explore new projects and relationships in ESL programming at the college, in Alberta, and across the country. She served as President of the Board of Lethbridge Immigrant

Settlement Association from 1991 to 1992, and travelled extensively, visiting schools all over Japan, and working on program evaluation in private schools in Mexico over a period of eight years. The work in Mexico led to a thesis for her Master's of Education.

Judy was a trailblazer in ESL programming in southern Alberta, bringing secondary school ESL summer groups to Lethbridge College in 1991. The projects required lots of work, but Judy describes them all as "thrilling." She was able to spend time with the student groups when they were in Lethbridge, and also visit many of the overseas the schools that she build relationships with. Judy also brought the national Explore! Program to Lethbridge and remembers fondly how the Quebecois students would refer to the High Level Bridge as "Le Pont du Leth." Lethbridge College continues to run many of these programs today.

Judy became an ATESL member early in her career, and quickly became involved in a variety of collaborative projects and committees, including an active southern Alberta chapter, Best Practices framework, qualifications assessment, and other government projects. In her eyes, all of that work by ATESL meant huge moves forward for the profession, building recognition for ESL as a profession. When Tracey Derwing asked Judy to be president she says she almost had a heart attack.

"I said, Tracey, how can I do that? But then I thought smaller centres are not being as recognized through ATESL so I did it as a smaller centre leader."

Judy served as ATESL president, and also became involved in Languages Canada, serving a term as co-president. In her role as the ESL Program Administrator at Lethbridge College, she continued to lead innovative projects and administrate quality ESL programming until her retirement on December 31, 2008.

Reflecting on her 30 years of involvement in ESL in Alberta, Judy thinks first about the individuals she's worked with, both students and colleagues. Many students came as young people with young families, and she's watched the families grow, the children arrive, and the grandchildren follow. She's celebrated their achievements with them.

"I can't tell you how many people have eaten in my house over the years – it's a thrill when they come. I've had Mexican teachers in my kitchen, mixing salad with their hands, with salmon on the BBQ, giggling and laughing, that's just one of the major perks of the job. Or they come over to show you their new baby...the other day I was in a Nepali home and they're asking me if I think they should buy a new house, and out come all the pistachios and Nepali snacks – How can you not want that in your life? Yes there are downs, but mostly ups. Teaching is not a job at any level – it's passion, a lifestyle, and it never leaves you. That's the toughest part of retirement – lack of daily contact with the people. But two or three emails a day from students who are now friends, and I'm good. I'm the one who's gained by this profession. I've gained more than I've ever given."

These days Judy works with CLB and SALAS (Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services), noting that all her ESL teaching experience seems to come out when doing CLBPT assessments. Judy also works on a resource database for ATESL (available on the ATESL website), where she gets to read about all the amazing projects past and present.

"There's always something new...the passion is still there. It never leaves."

Each year in its annual budget the ATESL Board dedicates \$2000 to be awarded in bursaries that year. Up to \$1000 of this is awarded following the March 15th deadline and the remainder is awarded following the September 15th deadline. The bursary committee may award up to \$500 per bursary and any remaining funds are carried forward. If you would like to apply for a bursary for a professional development activity, please consult the ATESL website.

In this newsletter, we are pleased to provide you with the report of a recent bursary recipient, Silvia Rossi

Summary Report for the ATESL Bursary

Attending the IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of EFL) conference in Glasgow, Scotland this past March was an incredibly enriching and energizing experience.

Along with over 2,000 other EAL professionals, I had the opportunity to choose from a mind-boggling number and variety of sessions – many of which were led by celebrated leaders in our field. As I hoped and expected, I came home with an updated perspective on the global ELT field. Hot topics of discussion included the growing influence of Content and Language Integrated Learning, the challenges which come with the push to incorporate technology into our lessons and the increasing prevalence of language classes for very young learners.

The theme of the full-day pre-conference event I attended was “Teacher Training and Education Worldwide: Sharing Experiences”. I learned of teacher training related projects taking place in Ukraine, Turkey, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Americas, and I left with a deeper understanding of the issues currently facing teacher trainers in EFL contexts. At the many well-organized social events, (which included a raucous ceilidh on a barge!), I met ELT professionals from every corner of the globe; exchanging ideas on the sessions we had attended each day helped me to solidify my reflections and truly broaden my views.

Since spending five days among such motivated and dedicated professionals, I feel a renewed desire to expand my Personal Learning Network in order to harness some of the expertise I have around me – both in Calgary and internationally. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the ATESL Bursary Committee for approving my application and making this unforgettable experience a reality!

Student Writing

Honourable Mention, ATESL Student Writing Contest - Spring 2011

My love...

by Jasmine Seungha Han

I like you
My feelings toward you are changing
I love you
I think my love is growing

Did you know that I always look at you?
There are lots of things that I want to tell you
Did you know that you only look at her?
I can't approach you because of her

I wish I can just say this sentence
I love you
I wish I can just say this word
Love

All I want is to talk to you like others
But it's too hard
All I want is to show my love to you
But it hurts me so much

I may be smiling all the time
But that's merely a mask of mine
I smile when you smile
But when you smile because of her, I cry

I am right over here
Just like a sunflower I will only look at you
I am right over here
I will protect you no matter what happens

Professional Development Bursaries

Apply for an ATESL professional development bursary.

Deadline: September 15, 2012

<http://www.atesl.ca/cmsms/membership/bursaries/>

ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework: The Document and Its Applications

By: Justine Light and Wendy Chambers

Introduction

Alberta's social, cultural, and economic well-being is vibrant and diverse, enhanced through high-quality English language programming and teaching that respond to a range of contexts, including the needs of immigrants and their families. To support quality adult ESL curriculum development for all stakeholders in Alberta, ATESL embarked on the development of a curriculum framework to provide a common set of guidelines and processes to develop and assess curriculum across the Government of Alberta's (2008) *Adult EAL/ESL Continuum*.

Led by the project manager, Justine Light, a team of five project consultants including Wendy Chambers, Kathy Dawson, Sara Gnida, Wendy Ilott, and Cindy Messaros produced the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* (see cover page in Figure 1). An advisory committee, in addition to various stakeholders across the province, representing government, academe, and both rural and urban ESL programs were consulted and played a vital role in the development, review, and revision process. The project was funded in large part by Alberta Employment and Immigration, with further support from CIC Edmonton Region and The Prairie Metropolis Centre.

Guiding Principles of the Curriculum Framework

The *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* is intended to be a supportive reference guide for programs developing new curricula or for programs seeking to evaluate and revise existing curricula. The guiding principles of the curriculum framework support curriculum development that is:

- Learner-focused, learning centered, and consistent with principles and practices of active, adult learning.
- Grounded in second language theory and practice to advance linguistic, communicative, and intercultural proficiency.
- Flexible and adaptable to diverse contexts.

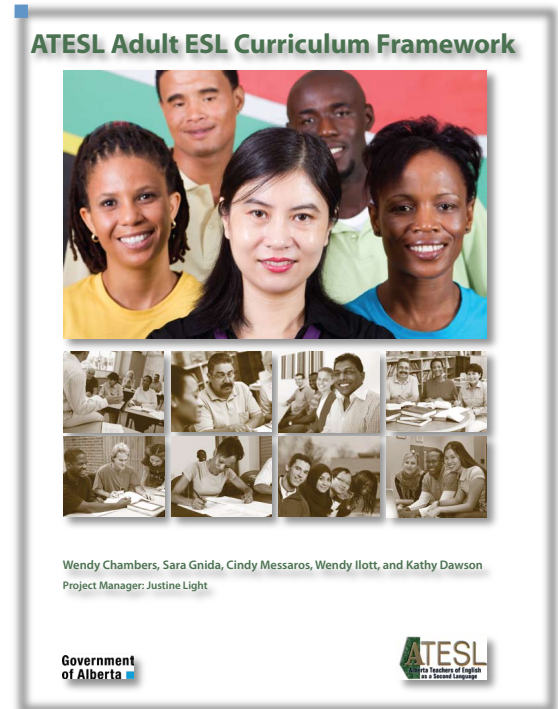


Figure 1. Cover page of the ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework document

- Linked to and built on existing resources, such as *Best Practices for Adult ESL and LINC Programming in Alberta* (ATESL, 2009), *Learning for LIFE: An ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework* (Bow Valley College, 2011), Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB, 2011), and Essential Skills (HRSDC, 2011).
- Accountable by integrating outcomes and assessments that are demonstrable, authentic, and meaningful.
- Able to facilitate smooth transitions for adult ESL learners across the EAL/ESL continuum (Government of Alberta, 2008) and into the workplace.

The curriculum framework seeks to promote a common language and approach in order to increase transparency and improve accountability in the curriculum development process.

Elements of the Curriculum Framework

The elements comprising the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* are organized into two parts, shown in Figure 2 as a circular process. Represented as the outer ring of the framework are the first five integrated and necessary steps in the curriculum development process:

- **Determining needs** focuses on how to determine learning needs as a first step in developing curriculum that addresses those needs.
- **Setting and assessing outcomes** provides a set of guiding principles and explores practical aspects of outcomes and assessment.
- **Sequencing tasks** builds on previous sections to address learning needs and learning outcomes in instructional tasks that are integrated, connected, and sequenced elements of the curriculum.
- **Selecting methods and materials** focuses on effective teaching and learning strategies and offers a set of principles to consider when selecting effective learning materials to contextualize and support ESL curricula.
- **Demonstrating accountability** considers what accountability is, who we (i.e., curriculum developers) are accountable to, and what we are accountable for; further, considerations for reviewing and revising a curriculum plan are offered.

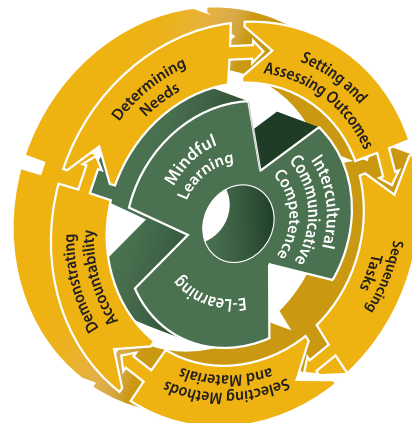


Figure 2. ATESL Curriculum Framework model

Represented as the inner ring of the framework are three core aspects, or foundations, of contemporary, relevant curriculum development:

- **Mindful learning** is concerned with various ways in which learners can enhance their own learning process, and by implication, ways in which curriculum developers and instructors can guide learners in this process. This section highlights the importance of mindful learning, offers examples of teaching strategies to support its development, and provides some food for thought.
- **Intercultural communicative competence** (ICC) draws from the growing literature base and experiences of ESL practitioners who recognize the important role that culture plays in the language classroom. This section of the framework recognizes culture as both a product and process; presents ICC as a stance, or orientation, rather than a body of content or method; and offers strategies to build ICC and foster more culturally responsive teaching and learning environments.
- **E-learning** highlights the key considerations for integrating e-learning into ESL curricula, identifies guiding principles for designing tasks and selecting effective assessment strategies that incorporate educational technologies, and presents principled e-learning and teaching practices.

Within each of the sections of the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework*, key considerations for designing and developing curriculum in diverse contexts are presented.

Practical Applications of the Curriculum Framework

The *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* is written for teaching professionals, particularly curriculum developers, and it aims to be both accessible and practical. Programs may choose to focus on one (or more) element(s) of the curriculum framework document to guide curriculum design or revision by:

- Designing and conducting a need analysis to identify the current learning needs of the target learners.
- Writing or revising intended learning outcome statements that align with the goals of the program and with the needs of the target audience of learners.
- Identifying and including ICC and e-learning learning outcomes as integral elements of the curriculum.
- Developing or revising rubrics to address identified learning objectives.
- Selecting, adapting, or developing materials that support and advance learners' English language proficiency for effective communication in real-world situations ensuring connections between general learning outcomes, specific learning outcomes, and learning tasks.
- Developing or evaluating tasks by following the principles for selecting and sequencing tasks.

- Setting short- and long-term program development goals and developing a road map for implementing and achieving the goals in an way that improves accountability and transparency for all stakeholders.

The curriculum framework may also be used to support in-house professional development or workshop activities that focus on advancing instructors' reflective praxis, for example by:

- Developing checklists to enable individual instructors to quickly and easily determine if they are including and encouraging mindful or mindless learning.
- Raising instructors' awareness of intercultural communicative competence by examining their own attitudes and understandings of their own culture and the culture of others.
- Offering opportunities for instructors to advance their e-learning skills and knowledge through practical experiences using educational technologies.

The ideas and suggests presented here are not meant to provide an exhaustive list of practical applications, but rather to offer a set of possible applications of the curriculum framework for promoting relevant, quality, and accountable ESL programming in Alberta.

Document Availability

Printed copies of the curriculum framework document may be available from ATESL. For further information please contact Irene Wood, atesl.admin@shaw.ca . A dynamic and interactive online version of the curriculum framework will be available in fall of 2012 along with the re-launch of the ATESL website, atesl.ca.

Conclusion

The *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* strives to achieve these objectives outlined in the original project plan:

- Provide a supportive reference guide for effective, contextually responsive ESL curriculum development and instruction.
- Promote a common language to build and share expertise across Alberta.
- Increase transparency and improve accountability for all stakeholders.
- Facilitate transitions for learners across ESL programs and into further adult learning and career opportunities.

The curriculum framework provides an innovative tool to support ESL providers in Alberta to develop ESL programming that can be more sustainable and effective in meeting the needs of ESL learners. It is hoped that the innovation of offering an interactive online version of the CF document, linked to the *Best Practices for Adult ESL and LINC Programming in Alberta* (ATESL, 2009) provides sustainable support

to programs and instructors for curriculum and program development for many years to come.

ATESL welcomes your questions or comments on the curriculum framework, to atesl.admin@shaw.ca.

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Biographies

Justine Light is an adjunct professor in the University of Alberta TESL program and a member of the CCLB registry of experts. She was project manager of the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework* and is currently teaching EAP at the Faculty of Extension.

Wendy Chambers recently completed her PhD specializing in TESL at the University of Calgary. She was a co-writer of the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework*. Her current research focuses on communicative presence within online learning communities and e-learning professional development for English language teachers.