

Teaching English as an Additional Language to Adults in Manitoba

Fall 2008 Edition



visit us at: www.manitobateam.com

President's Message

Welcome to our new and returning members!

Thanks to the following members for their contribution to the newsletter;

Michael Rochon

Kathe Remillard

Antoanela Denchuk

Margo James

Rita Prokopetz

Your Executive Committee members would like to share the following with you:

TEAM Conference: The conference will be held at St. Boniface College on Friday May 08, 2009, and the keynote speaker is Dr. Karen Magro – a University of Winnipeg Professor. The theme for the conference is "Navigating the Social and Emotional Literacies of the 21st Century – Lessons Learned from Newcomers and Immigrants." For information, contact Kathe Remillard, Chair or Heather Lamont, Co-Chair or visit TEAM's website at www.manitobateam.com

TEAM Conference Learner Display: TEAM will once again feature at the conference sale items made by our learners. Dorota Blumczynska will be in charge, and you may contact her at dorota.blumczynska@gmail.com

TEAM Mentorship Program (TMP): Orientation with the mentors and mentees for the fall session are now underway, and work has begun for the winter session. For more details, contact Margo James at mjames@prairie.ca

TEAM Adult EAL Student-teacher Bursary: TEAM is awarding a \$500.00 scholarship to a TEAM member who is registered in a TESL Canada accredited



TEAL training program either at Providence College, the University of Manitoba's *UM CTESL* or the University of Winnipeg's *UW TCP*. TEAM created the Adult EAL instructor candidate bursary in response to member requests, and also because some programs do not qualify for any other bursaries or for the Canada student loans program. Antoanela Pardel, Membership Committee Chair, is working on the final details, and the scholarship will be available in the spring.

ALT Branch Fall Conference on November 28th: TEAM's Fundraising Chair Dorota Blumczynska has been in discussion with the ALT Branch Conference organizers regarding TEAM's first fund-raising event of the year. TEAM will host the pizza lunch which will include two pizza slices, a salad and a drink. The conference entitled "Motivation in Adult EAL" takes place at Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre. Proceeds from the lunch will be donated to the Winnipeg Millennium Library towards the purchase of resources for the Adult EAL teachers and learners library.

On behalf of the Executive, I would like to thank you for your support. See you all at the Conference on November 28!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz

Participants Needed

Participants are needed for a research study on the university experiences of EAL students who arrived in Canada as children. Participation involves two, one hour long interviews and a two hour focus group session, for a total of 5 to 6 hours.

Participants should:

- ◆ be over 18
- ◆ have immigrated to Canada as children
- ◆ have graduated from a Manitoba high school
- ◆ have finished at least one year of university studies in Manitoba
- ◆ have English as an additional language

This study has been approved by the University of Manitoba ethics committee and is part of the requirements for completion of a M. Ed. thesis in TESL education. If interested please email Antoanela Denchuk at apardel@gmail.com or phone 772 4735.





TEAM Spring PD

The Conference Chairs would like to announce that the Spring PD will be held on May 8th, 2009. The theme for the Conference is; "The Social and Emotional Literacies of the 21st Century" Keynote speaker, Dr Karen Magro, Professor at the University of Winnipeg.

Newcomer Vendors interested in having a display in the gym are encouraged to call either Heather or Kathe for more information.



TEAM Mentorship Program Fall 2008

The TEAM Mentorship Program is well on its way to providing individualized mentorship to fifteen novice EAL teachers by the end of March 2009. We've had a few challenges, but are generally very pleased with the progress in the program so far this fall.

As of October 10, we had received approximately 12 nominations for mentees, eight of whom have applied and been matched with appropriate mentors. Some have been orientated and are already working together; the rest will begin in the next week or so, probably with one more partnership added to the fall group. These mentorship will have essentially the same format as the pilot program ones with two differences. First, the partners will have a longer time than the pilot group had to complete the ten hours of mentoring because we are mindful of the extra demands on new teachers' time with the ALT workshops for them. Secondly, the confidential nature of the relationship is being strengthened with the participants asked to sign an oath of confidentiality. Overall, this group of teachers seems every bit as dedicated, capable and pleasant to work with as the pilot project group was, and I expect they will be every bit as successful!

One reflection of our growth is the fact that the participants in this group come from a greater variety of programs than we had in the pilot program. There are teachers from Winnipeg School Division 1, Workplace, Red River, Winnipeg Technical Centre (both campuses), and three Community-based Language Training programs. Still other programs, like English Skills Centre, have offered meeting space, and others still have indicated a willingness to nominate participants in the future. We truly appreciate the broadening of involvement and support in the Adult EAL community.

However, we still have challenges. Unfortunately, we haven't yet been able to accommodate all those who have expressed interest in becoming involved, like substitute teachers. We are also hoping we can expand beyond Winnipeg and possibly include some mentees from the Winkler area despite the extra time and expense involved in doing so. These challenges indicate some exciting prospects for the Mentorship Program as it grows further!

Anyone interested in more information about the program, or wanting to offer input, is welcome to phone or email at the contacts below.

Margo James MP Coordinator

757-2142 or mjames@prairie.ca



One student asks

Is it better to learn Formal or Informal English?

Here is what one educator advises....

Language skills: Formal speaking versus informal speaking

by [Drew Price](#)

Informal vs. Formal Speech

One evening while I was working at a video store I remember having a casual conversation with my boss. During the conversation my boss and I used slang terms such as "whatcha gunna do after work" or "quit playin' around." I don't exactly remember the extent of our conversation, but my boss, who is about as old as I am, used many terms and phrases that were very informal. As we were talking, she was interrupted by a customer who was complaining about late fees. When she shifted her attention to the customer I noticed a completely different vocabulary, tone, and even appearance from my boss. While I was speaking to her she talked in a casual tone, used slang terms, and slouched against the counter. While she was dealing with the customer her vocabulary became proper and formal. She addressed the customer as sir, and talked in a slow calm and clear voice. She also straightened her posture and maintained eye contact with the customer throughout the entire dialogue.

This shift in formality involves the social context of the situation. Obviously, when a manager is addressed by a complaining customer, the manager must respond courteously; therefore using formal speech. If the manager chose to respond casually the customer may perceive the manager of being indifferent to the problem, or of being disrespectful. In American society speech reflects the level of respect that one shows for another. It is generally common knowledge to speak more formally to strangers than to those close to you. People are motivated by what other people think of them; therefore they attempt to make positive impressions by using a more formal speech. Appearance also plays an important role in conversation. As my boss was helping the customer her posture and eye contact suggested that she was attentive and interested in the situation. Using the same posture and eye contact in the conversation with me as she did with the customer would have been socially unacceptable. In a society that values the opinions of others so much, the extent of formality used during a conversation can communicate a message of its own such as respect, indifference, sincerity, and many others. During that entire conversation with the customer I noticed a complete transformation of language characteristics. My boss shifted from informal to formal as if it were an involuntary reaction. The shift was indeed necessary according to today's social standards. After the conversation with the customer my boss and I resumed our conversation using informal language once again. These shifts occur often, because different social situations require different types of communication.

Two New Web sites for Teachers

TORONTO, Oct. 9 /CNW/ - CFEE has just completed work on a new web site called the Virtual Adviser. It is designed to support teachers and community service agencies working to help students and Canadians who face money- and work-related challenges and questions. The Virtual Adviser can also be used, independently, by students and agency clients.

The Virtual Adviser provides plain language answers to about 70 common questions that people have about MONEY and about 50 common questions that people have about WORK. Links to further information about many of the questions are also provided. Users can also submit suggested material for possible posting on the site.

We hope you will take a moment to check out the Virtual Adviser at www.virtualadviser.ca and let us know what you think. We would also appreciate it if you would pass this e-mail on to others who might be interested in such an on-line tool.

You can also check out CFEE's other new web site, the Building Futures Network at www.buildingfuturesnetwork.com. This site focuses on saving - in particular, the challenges of saving for post-secondary education and training. A Planning Guide is also available to help students and their families plan for these future expenses. It is available in hard copy or can be downloaded from the web site. There will soon be an interactive on-line version as well. At this time, access to a calculator enables users to help determine the cost of post-secondary education.

Finally, for those of you who may not have seen it yet, CFEE produces the Online Classroom Edition of the Globe and Mail, which provides selected articles each month along with complete lesson plans - all free and downloadable - and you can photocopy the articles for educational purposes. You can visit the site at www.classroomedition.ca.

We hope you find these new sites useful.

For further information: Gary Rabbior, President, Canadian Foundation for Economic Education, 110 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 201, Toronto, Ontario, M4R

1A3, Phone: (416) 968-2236, Fax: (416) 968-0488, CFEE Website: www.cfee.org



EAL
English as an Additional Language

Learning English with CBC Manitoba

89.3
FM
100.1

Highlights

- Learn about Manitoba's people, places and culture while improving your English communication skills.
- Develop listening skills by studying real conversations from stories on CBC radio.
- Lessons are for intermediate level English speakers—CLB levels 5 and up.
- New lessons posted every week: one for self study, one for classroom use.

To start studying, or to learn more, visit:
www.cbc.ca/manitoba/eal

Funded through the Manitoba Immigrant Integration Program

Always informative!

Check it out!

For a complete list of your TEAM executive and contact information visit our web site:

www.manitobateam.com

This is the final installment of my article on dictionary use...

I have my own tendencies and choices with dictionary use in my classroom, but as of yet, I have not banned the use of bi or e-dictionaries. I was curious about this practice, though and wanted to check with an expert. You may be surprised to know that an exhaustive survey of dictionary use was done by Dr. Shira Koren 10 years ago. You can read her excellent article on this at:

Quality versus Convenience: Comparison of Modern Dictionaries from the Researcher's, Teacher's and Learner's Points of View ; (1 6 P g s) . . .
www-writing.berkeley.edu/tesl-ej/ej07/toc.html

I found that Dr. Koren's general conclusion on dictionary use at that time was open and balanced. She encouraged the use of bi-dictionaries to the highest levels of language learning. Because I wanted to be sure I didn't misunderstand her conclusions, I decided to write her an email for a 10-year follow up. Here was her response:

The big change in many learners' use of dictionaries since I published my article is the widening use of on-line dictionaries. If I wrote this article now, I would include some such dictionaries in my description and comparison. The use of the on-line dictionary is fast and efficient, and enables a better and quicker comprehension of on-line texts. So why not?

The condemnation of bilingual dictionaries stems from the fact that bilingual translations are not always precise, and while they enable a quick comprehension of the text, they do not contribute to a correct, active use of new words. Monolingual dictionaries enable the learning of the new word, but at the cost of time - lots of time - required for comprehension.

Another cost is the fact that the use of monolingual dictionaries does not always enable a precise understanding of meaning, a word-for-word comprehension, which is desired by everybody.

In our modern internet-based world, speed is the name of the game.

We want to have everything fast. Understanding texts in a foreign language is not an exception. It seems to me absurd that while we seem to be justified in getting quick fulfillments of everything, starting from fast food and ending with fast communication (email, cell-phones), we should be denounced for wishing to obtain a quick understanding of words and texts in the foreign language.

That's why I think that the negative attitude to bilingual dictionaries is outdated and unjustified, and believe it will change with time.

Still, the ideal dictionary in my opinion is the mono-bi-lingual, the one that gives both translations into the first language but also explanations and examples in the second language.

Thanks to all for your attention to this issue, and thank you to Dr. Koren for a prompt and insightful response.

- Michael Rochon



We heard you....

Antoanela Pardel, Membership Chair

TEAM has adopted two initiatives that will enhance our organization's ability to reach the professional needs of our members:

The EAL Instructor Candidate Bursary

The Welcoming Chair's title change to Membership Chair

Background on the EAL Instructor Candidate Bursary

A year ago a new member called for information regarding TEAM membership and the Tutor List. She also mentioned she had not taken a TESL certification course because she had already spent a large amount on a TA course. As a single mother struggling to keep her current job as a TA, she said she could not afford to take any of the instructor training courses because they did not qualify for Canada student loan support. As there were not any bursaries or any other type of financial assistance available, I checked the two institutions that I was most familiar with. According to the UM and UW calendars, the *UM CTESL* and the *UW TCP* do not qualify for any bursaries or for the Canada student loans program. TEAM thus decided to create the EAL instructor candidate bursary, which is currently in the process of being detailed and should be available by spring. This bursary will be for 500 dollars and will be available to members who want to take a TESL Canada approved TEAL training program. I hope this bursary will encourage those interested in entering this field to pursue their goal.

Membership Committee Chair

The Welcoming Committee name change idea came as a result of numerous emails from members who needed proof of membership in a TESL organization to get their EAL instructor certification with TESL Canada. These members were unsure regarding what type of proof they needed as TESL Canada requires proof of membership in the form of a letter signed by either the treasurer or the membership chair. Since the treasurer already sends out a receipt, and the welcoming chair sends out a welcome letter, the executive members decided to combine the two letters into one that can be used as proof of membership. Since TESL Canada requires a signature by either a treasurer or a membership chair, the Welcoming Chair title has been changed to Membership Chair.

The executive feels this title is a better reflection of the duties undertaken by this committee, and hopes this change will simplify the process of getting certified through TESL Canada.

Did you notice the name change?

Welcoming committee chair has been changed to *membership chair*. This will fit the requirement for signing authority with TESL Canada, which will in turn allow us to send membership confirmation along with the welcoming letter.

Thanks for your support

Back by popular demand...

A Colleague Down the Hall is back!

If you have any questions related to a EAL related issue write to

pbowman@rrc.mb.ca

And this colleague will provide an answer in the next issue...

