

# TESL NS Newsletter

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## Editor's Note:

Today, the twenty-first day of September, is the beginning of spring. No, I haven't got my seasons mixed up. Today IS the beginning of spring for Ms. Sandy Thompson (TESL NS Representative), who is away studying in New Zealand.

For us, today marks the beginning of Fall. One would not think so, given the sequence of beautiful-beyond-words Indian summer days we have been having. And yet fall is in the air. The sunlight seems more yellow and there is that certain slant of light, which according to Emily Dickinson gives us "heavenly hurt" without leaving a scar. What's the cause of that heavenly hurt? Why do we find it hard to let go of summer? I know of no better answer than the one Hopkins suggests in his

*Margaret are you grieving  
Over Goldengrove unleaving?  
which concludes:  
It is the plight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you mourn for.*

Perhaps it is us we mourn for, though the sadness does not come into clear enough focus for us to be put into words except by someone like Hopkins. This change from the season in which nature puts on its grand show of life to the season where nature seems to die may strike a chord deep in us, reminding us of our own mortality. But there will be another summer less than a year from now. So let us not grieve but feel blessed having just had a wonderful summer and look forward to a great fall, a winter that comes with a beauty all its own, and another summer soon.

We note other changes besides the change of seasons. Some of our students have started to come to the Center wearing heavy winter coats. With a tear in one eye and a smile in the other, I remember Africa, where at the height of the cold season early morning temperatures might be down to 15 C and the natives thought no human beings should be exposed to such extremes of cold. They would wear army great coats, donations sent to their part of the world by Oxfam, the Salvation Army and other charitable organizations, and huddle around fires early morning.

Some of the changes we note have nothing to do with the march of the seasons. Ms. Maureen Sargent, Director of St. Mary's TESL Center, and an executive officer of the TESL NS, has been elected President of TESL Canada, our parent organization. Congratulations, Ms. Maureen and congratulations, TESL Nova

Scotia. Nothing like having your cake and eating it too - she the president of presidents and we still have her with us.

The TESL Nova Scotia conference is coming up in November. New officers will be elected for some positions. Our TESL NS President Ms. Norma MacSween and her 2 Vice Presidents Ms. Jayne Geldart and Ms. Darlene MacInnis are ready for change. Interested applicants for these positions please come to the Nov. 15/16 TESL Annual Conference. Anyone willing to serve on the executive should let us know in good time. For more information go to our Website at <http://www.teslins.ca>

A big thank you to our three chief officers who have worked so hard to put new life into our organization.

Letters, suggestions, comments and your most-awaited contributions should be sent to the editor --  
[ay056@chebucto.ns.ca](mailto:ay056@chebucto.ns.ca)

I wish you all a happy fall.  
*Fe Leonor Baculi*



### TESL NS President's Message: *from Norma MacSween*

This will be my last message in my capacity as President of TESL NS. It is hard to believe that two years have passed already.

I have many wonderful memories of TESL NS events over the last two years. A few that come to mind are...

- Trying to deal with whole "grammar thing" by mixing grammar with wine, sweets, and

laughter in various workshops.

- Being inspired by the informative talks given by our out-of-town guest speakers such as Patsy Lightbown.
- Attending wonderful sessions given by our many talented and knowledgeable TESL NS members right here in Nova Scotia.

However, what I have appreciated most about my time on the executive is the opportunity I have had to meet so many ESL professionals from across the province. This is a profession that tends to be fragmented, leaving its members isolated. We have ESL teachers, instructors and volunteers in so many sorts of teaching environments with so many different kinds of students. Opportunities to meet fellow professionals are rare. It was an certainly an honour to work with the dedicated members of the TESL executive and to get the various perspectives of those involved in very different types of ESL teaching.

As we draw closer to another TESL NS Conference, I hope that you, too, will take the opportunity to attend the conference and get to know your colleagues. The conference will also be an excellent opportunity for professional development. We have a tremendous variety of workshops this year, and have invited two excellent keynote speakers from Montreal. There should be something for everyone!

I would like to close by thanking you for giving me this opportunity to be President of TESL Nova Scotia. My experience has made me aware of how important this organization is to the ESL field in the province. As the need for ESL grows, I hope TESL NS will also grow and continue to provide the support and professional development we as ESL professionals need.

Thank you, and I hope to see you at the conference.

- Norma

**PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENT -  
FALL 2002  
National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT  
Providers**

TESL Canada in conjunction with the National Settlement Conference's 'Maximizing Settlement Working Group' is pleased to announce a one-year project funded through the federal Voluntary Sector Initiative. The new National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT Providers will promote information access and sharing among immigrant English language providers with programs administered both federally (LINC = Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) and provincially (BC's ELSA Program = English Language Services for Adults, and Manitoba's ALT Program = Adult Language Training).

Project objectives were informed by a 2002 Regina TESL Canada Conference session that was held to ascertain interest in and gather feedback for this proposal. The National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT Providers will provide:

- Increased opportunities for LINC/ELSA/ALT providers across Canada to share information relating to resources, research, and best practices.
- Identification of priority items for settlement language providers nationally to better inform policy and decision-makers and to provide an informed focus at national gatherings (such as the National Settlement and TESL Canada Conferences).
- A centralized location to go to for information on LINC/ELSA/ALT initiatives and resources - the National Network website will be public and easily accessible by the larger settlement community and other interested parties.

**The National Network project team is now inviting individuals interested in participating on our volunteer National Network Advisory Committee to us.**

The goal is to have cross-Canada representation on the committee to assist with communications and the establishment of a network. 'Virtual meetings' will be held to initiate a dialogue on priorities and set up a database of provincial contacts with access to current LINC/ELSA/ALT provider information. Potential face-to-face opportunities include the National Settlement Conference being held in Calgary and the TESL Canada Conference being held in Burnaby, BC, both scheduled for the fall of 2003.

To get involved in this project or for more information, please contact one of the members on our project team:

**Brenda Lohrenz**  
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**The Learners' Conference - TESL  
Canada Conference - May 2002**

The Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre was proud to send two of its students, Fang Liu and Leyla Turkdogan to Regina, Saskatchewan for the 2002 TESL Canada Learners' Conference. These students were studying in class 4/5 at the time and they showed a keen interest in attending the conference and representing Nova Scotia. Fang is from China and Leyla comes from Turkey.

In the days leading up to their departure they were excited and nervous about traveling across Canada and attending a national conference. Before Fang and Leyla left for the conference, they were requested to write an opinion on one of three topics that would be covered at the conference. This would also prepare them in the event they were asked to present at the conference. I was only going to insert excerpts from their papers, but I believe they should be presented in whole as the contents are insightful and well written.

*The first paper is by Fang Liu:*

"The better use of the skills and talents that immigrant bring to Canada", "The improvement of services to immigrants," and "Getting along with Canadian Culture". Those are three important points of immigrant. They might have different priority, but they are all necessary.

As a newcomer lives in an unfamiliar land, I need to learn the local customs, culture, and even basic life skills. I need to adjust my self to suit the new environment. And plus I need to study language. I feel a lot of pressures whatever they are from out side or inside of myself, I also feel powerless to release my-self from the pressures. This beginning period is stressful, and difficult for any immigrant, but it is very important too. Probably this is the main period that immigrants are anxious to have some services to get used to new system. Getting help with the language, getting help in be familiar with society. Therefore getting over this hard period smoothly, and be ready for stating the new life here in Canada. It is called settle down process, but settle down doesn' t simply mean living in somewhere. It means to be a member of society, and to be recognized by society. Immigrants came to Canada with their different

culture background, ideas and skills. Those are the conditions that be allowed to get into Canada. Bring out those skills are a profit for both immigrants and Canada. Absorbing and using those new ideas and skills in order to improve the Canadian society, and create a better tomorrow for whole Canada. On the other hand, through it immigrants will have the sense of achievement, and have confidence for their future too. That is the real meaning for settles down.

Although all the three points are very important, but "The better use of the skills and talents that immigrant bring to Canada" is the core and the purpose. Without it immigrant policy cannot be succeeded. It even may develop to a social problem. For solving this problem, only immigrants' efforts are not enough. It needs the contribution from Canada government and all Canadians. Helping each other because it is the best way to have a wonderful tomorrow.

*The second paper is by Leyla Turkdogan:*

Canada is accepting people as an immigrant around the world. Canada is one of the developed countries with second largest land area and only around 30 million populations. This situation provides Canada a good opportunity. At the other hand a lot of undeveloped or developing countries have several social, political, economical etc. problems. Many well-educated people who are living in these countries are suffering from these problems and they are looking better living conditions in one of the developed countries.

Other developed countries, such as The United Kingdom and France have limited land area and large population, The United States of America has large land, but at the same time, it has third largest population of the world. This situation provides to Canada to establish some rules and select the people from other countries, which desire to immigrate.

To prove good education to the people is very expensive and time-consuming investment. For example, educate a high school graduate and make him or her a professional would need approximately 10 years time and important amount of money.

Almost 200.000 new immigrants are coming to Canada every year. Most of these people were selected from well-educated and experienced

professionals on their occupations. This is a good opportunity for Canada as well as the people immigrating to Canada. This process seems good at the first glance but sometimes not working perfectly. Even immigrants are selected carefully, but their skills and occupations may not have a good match with Canadian professional or occupational standards. This situation gives hard or difficult time to the newcomers; even talented people are suffering at the beginning of their new life. Some of them working unrelated jobs with their original occupations, such as taxi driver or delivery with Ph. D. degree on engineering or to work on food sector, some of them never return their original (educated) occupations. Some other immigrants can not find any job for a long time from language or other several cultural barriers. This situation may cause important economic lost and negative morale effect.

We are one of the example for this situation, we came to Canada in March 2001, my husband is an engineer with good education and North America experience and myself is a teacher with 16 years experience. First six months we could not find any job. This caused important economical impact, because as a newcomer we did not have Canadian credit history and we had to pay every-thing with cash from our own pocket without any social or unemployment insurance. I am still looking for a job. What can do for the newcomers? Canada already has several good social and economic programs, such as free language programs, newcomers programs and welfare system a few example. Especially ESL programs gives to the newcomer's language and several other good cultural informations from geography to social life, from history to daily news.

In addition of these programs, the following suggestions may help to the newcomer's at the beginning of their new life:

- Without Canadian experience to find a job is very difficult, without a job to get Canadian experience is impossible! Some special additional programs may help to get Canadian experience, for example in these kind of programs would provide temporary or short-term employment. It is possible to use newcomer's talent and skills against Canadian experience.
- Credit history is also important issue and effecting new comers. Most insurance and financial companies

limited their services to the newcomers for this reason. For example, a regular car insurance is almost three time more expensive if you are newcomer regardless of your driving experience. Another example, to get a credit card and use the benefit of the credit card is almost impossible without Canadian credit history. To search and accept newcomer's own country credit history may help on this issue.

- Some regulated professions, such as teachers and engineers, are accepting newcomers as a member after a long and sometimes difficult process. Without proper license or membership, to make these professions is very difficult, usually impossible. To develop intermediate steps may help too much for proper candidates. For example, experienced and eligible teachers may work volunteer or assistant teacher during the evaluation and upgrade process.

Newcomers bring their talent and skills to Canada, but to make a new life in new environment is another talented task, usually needs additional support. To support the newcomers at this stage, I believe a good investment for Canada and bright future for newcomers.

Fang and Leyla arrived at the conference on Tuesday May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002, a couple of days early due to flight scheduling problems. This actually gave them the perfect opportunity to get acquainted with a new city. The day they arrived promised warm days ahead with a temperature of 26 and beautiful hot sunny skies. Unfortunately the next day was a harsh contrast to Tuesday with a temperature of -13 and winter like conditions. Regardless to say they went shopping indoors for most of that day. Thursday saw better weather so they headed outside to take in the sights of Regina. The Legislature and its reflecting lake were just two of the stops that day. After a day of tramping about they enjoyed an evening of meeting new teachers and students at the President's Reception. Friday night they attended a banquet with over a hundred others to see selected teachers receive awards. This banquet also highlighted Aboriginal dancing and music.

Fang and Leyla attended all workshops, forums and presentations over the two day conference.

Even though they were not asked to present they actively participated in many of the small group Learner panels. Two of these panels took place on Friday: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The following is a summary of the recommendations of these panels.

***Learner panels on the better use of immigration and on better services to immigrants***

What students can do:

1. work and study hard to improve English
2. never give up - be confident and positive
3. volunteer
4. be optimistic and patient
5. start from the beginning - be realistic
6. get further education
7. obtain Canadian degree/certification
8. get well-prepared to work
9. get along with and make a contribution to Canadian culture
10. emotional support for one another
11. be involved in social activities
12. respect and follow the government policies
13. break down our own emotional barriers
14. encourage investments to create more job opportunities

What the government can do:

1. break down the barriers for newcomers
2. more government support to find volunteer work - a bigger budget for programs such as the RTA program
3. allow newcomers to work with no Canadian certification
4. collect information from immigrants and put it in a information bank for newcomers
5. help newcomers to improve their English skills and networking
6. inform newcomers about settlement, finding a job, getting certification, etc.
7. combine language and information skills in an ESL program
8. not to discriminate against some

countries.

9. more hours in ESL schools
10. provide more information about employment and orientation before immigration
11. more on-the-job training
12. set up government sponsored pre-employment job programs
13. recognize more individual credentials
14. sponsor or organize more human resources or recruitment fairs for immigrants

Seven provinces were represented at the conference: The Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia On Saturday, Fang and Leyla had the opportunity to listen to different learners across Canada talk on getting along with Canadian culture. Students from almost every province spoke on this subject. This session was very entertaining and enlightening for Fang and Leyla.

Overall Fang and Leyla agreed that the conference was a wonderful opportunity to better understand immigrants' problems across Canada, to familiarize them with the Canadian Language Benchmarks, to further their knowledge on Canadian culture and to experience a different city in another region of Canada. As important as these all are, the most important benefit was gaining confidence in their English language abilities.

Fang did express one disappointment in the conference. With so much conversation around jobs, credentials and accreditation, she felt it would have been pertinent to have officials from CIC as well as regulatory boards attending. Questions concerning the issues above could have been addressed and the Learners would have felt like their recommendations didn't fall on deaf ears.

Finally, it was eye opening for Fang and Leyla to discover that newcomers have the same

problems regardless of where they reside in Canada and the one urgency they share is to find a job; not just any job, but a job that will use their full range of skills, leaving them feeling valuable and fulfilled in this culture.

Fang and Leyla again wish to thank CLBA and TESL Nova Scotia for the tremendous opportunity of attending the 9<sup>th</sup> Learners' Conference. They hope that the next Learners who attend the Learners' Conference in Burnaby, British Columbia in 2003 will reap as many benefits as they have.

On a personal note, I want to thank Fang and Leyla for accepting the challenge and representing Nova Scotia in a professional and confident manner. I'm very proud of them and I wish them the best in the future.

*Jayne Geldart*

ESL Instructor

Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre

## **Message from TESL Canada**

### **President Maureen Sargent**

*Dear TESL Canada Board Members:*

Welcome to September! I hope this report finds you well and having had a wonderfully relaxing summer. However, I'm sure by now you're back in the swing of things. For most of us, the fall semester is well underway with new students, new classes and



new challenges.

Although there weren't many messages back and forth across the airwaves this summer, Board members have been extremely busy with various TESL Canada initiatives. Virginia Christopher, Vice-President, has just come back from China where she represented TESL Canada at the first TEFL China conference held August 12-15, 2002 at the English Coaching

Paper Office in Tonghua City, Jilin Province, People's Republic of China. TEFL China is a national organization whose mission is to strengthen the effective teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in China, while at the same time developing international connections.

The 1st Annual International Conference offered TEFL professionals, both domestic and international, opportunities for professional development through the exchange of ideas and practices in English teaching and research. Participants worked to integrate knowledge of current trends in the TEFL field while developing a professional network. In today's China, 500,000 teachers teach more than 60 million students English. Within 4 years the number of children learning English is estimated to become nearly 100 million!

Carol May, Executive Director, has been very busy throughout the summer with the National Standards. Patricia Fahrni has been invited to do the initial adjudication for teacher certification. Patricia will process most of the applications, although any that are not straightforward will be forwarded on to the BC TEAL Certification Review Board for their evaluation. Carol reports a great deal of interest in the National Standards and there have been a number of enquiries directed at her office. The deadline for the first adjudication is October 1, 2002. I'd appreciate it if you could remind members at your upcoming provincial/territorial board meetings that this deadline is quickly approaching. The next intake following that will be in February 2003. With respect to standards for teacher training programs, that committee has also been very busy and a number of programs across the country have already been recognized.

As part of the national standards implementation process, Carol and Virginia will be attending the ATESL conference "Getting Connected" to be held October 18-19, 2002 at the Crowne Plaza-Chateau Lacombe and Alberta College, Edmonton. As part of the conference program,

Virginia will be doing a presentation on the standards and she and Carol will be available throughout the conference for any ATESL members who have questions about the National Recognition Standards. For more information on the ATESL conference to be held next month, please see the ATESL web site

<<http://www.atesl.org/>>

Speaking of conferences, on behalf of the entire Board, I'd like to send a big vote of thanks to the planning committee and members of SCENES

for the recent national conference. The TESL Canada/SCENES conference held in Regina in May was an outstanding success and, although the final calculations have not yet been made, it looks as if the income for TESL Canada will be approximately \$11,800. Congratulations to all involved in putting on this wonderful conference! The hospitality and warmth of the welcome will long be remembered by participants.

We were also very excited to learn that the grant application to Canadian Heritage in support of the TESL Canada Journal has been approved. In fact, the amount approved is \$30,000, \$5,000 more than last year! The extra monies will go to providing release time for the hard-working editors (thank you, Sandie and Pat!) and to providing some administrative support for them. Thank you also to Carol for writing the proposal and for following up with Canadian Heritage. The TESL Canada Journal is a world-class publication and we are extremely grateful for the continued support of Canadian Heritage.

Thank you also to all members who expressed interest in the National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT Providers. Brenda Lohrenz has been working throughout the summer to get information on this initiative out to the provincial/territorial organizations. Many of you will have received submissions on the project for your newsletters. Brenda has been appointed the TESL Canada representative on the Joint

Planning Committee as well as the Maximising Settlement Working Group in preparation for the Second National Settlement Conference to be held in Calgary in October 2003. Brenda is in the process of preparing a grant application to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for \$5,000 to support the introduction of the network. If you are interested in participating in the project, or wish more information, please contact Brenda at

elsanet@telus.net or Angela Schinas at aschinas@oise.utoronto.ca.

TESL Canada has recently received an invitation from the Japan Association of Language Teachers to participate in JALT's 28th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching "Waves of the Future" to be held November 22-24, 2002 in Shizuoka, Japan. Unfortunately, given budgetary constraints, it is not possible for a Board member to participate in an official capacity. However, in case you or some of

your provincial/territorial members are able to attend this event, you can find more information on the conference at <http://jalt.org/jalt2002/>.

So, as you can see, everyone has been busy. It seems we're well into another busy academic year. My very best wishes to all on the Board. I look forward to our next e-mail Board meeting to be held very soon. If you have items that you would like us to include in our discussions, please forward them to Carol at [admin@tesl.ca](mailto:admin@tesl.ca).

Have a great September!

*Maureen Sargent*

TESL Canada President

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