

A Newsletter Published by TESL North York and York Region

TESL TIME

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Fall 2010



Executive Committee 2010-2011

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A Message from the President

It's hard to believe that fall has passed and winter is upon us. Our recent AGM was once again a successful event. Tyson Seburn, an experienced ESL Instructor and workshop presenter was our Keynote Speaker, and his presentation on developing confidence and its importance in managing your classroom and improving job satisfaction was well-received.

I would like to thank all of the hard-working, dedicated Executive Committee members for doing an outstanding job. The committee works very hard to ensure that your conference experience is a positive one. We value your input and encourage you to inform us of your ideas so that we can do our best to meet your needs regarding professional development. We are starting to plan our Spring Conference, and I welcome your comments. Please don't hesitate to contact me with possible speakers or

suggestions at susanricharz@sympatico.ca. I would also like to welcome the two members who volunteered to join our committee as members-at-Large, Barbara Stasiuk and Marg Cappon. Thank you for your help with this event, and I look forward to working with you this year.

On behalf of your Executive, I'd like to wish all our members the best of the holiday season. We look forward to seeing you at our Spring Conference.

Susan Richarz

Thank you for filling out the evaluation forms and for your questions and comments. We wanted to address some of the questions that were asked on the forms.

Q. Why can't we pay by VISA or Master Card?

A. Because the TESL North York/York Region Conference hosts only 150 or so participants, it would not be a wise monetary investment since there is a surcharge for every transaction plus a connection fee to set up the service. In other words, it is very expensive and not worth the cost for such a small number of people, unlike TESL Ontario where there are over 1,000 participants.

Q. When I mail my cheque, why are you slow to cash it?

A. The person who receives the cheques is not the treasurer. This person waits to receive all the cheques and then they are submitted to the treasurer who deposits them. (Please remember the committee is a volunteer committee.) A note will be put on the registration form notifying people that cheques will not be immediately cashed.

Q. If I have to pay the full amount, why can't I just pay at the door?

A. The number of participants is taken into consideration when booking rooms and ordering food. Payment in advance secures the participant's spot and food that must be pre-ordered.

Q. Why can't we have the conference on Saturday?

A. After receiving many requests from members who are unable to attend the Spring Conference which is on a Saturday, the executive agreed to hold the fall conference in the evening. We realize that many of our members also work evenings, but we felt that by holding one event a year in the evening and one on a Saturday that we were able to meet the needs of more members. Last fall the event was held on a different weekday and we will try a different day next fall. In addition, we also decided to hold one event in York Region and one event in Toronto to acknowledge the fact that our members come from both York Region and North York.

Q. How is being a TESL member different from being TESL certified? TESL Canada certification - what is it and do I need it?

A (i) Because of the growing number of TESL Certification programs available, it was thought that a regulatory body was needed to make sure that some standards were maintained. This was so that prospective students and the schools that wanted to hire them would know what they were getting! Thus, TESL professional certification was born. The issue of being certified (as with licenses required for numerous professionals such as counselors and physicians) means that the teacher has gone through training beyond that of someone who has teaching experience. Having certification distinguishes persons who have training from those who do not.

A TESL Ontario Certificate is mandatory for all new hires in federally funded LINC programs in Ontario.

The TESL Canada National Professional Certification Standards benefit educators by helping ensure that:

- TESL training and ESL teaching experience are recognized as main professional measures of Canadian ESL educators;
- Teaching credentials are recognized not only from province to province but by virtue of their national status, from country to country;
- Credentials are recognized by international students when they compare faculty at post-secondary schools and language institutes across Canada before their arrival in Canada. As a result, programs that hire qualified professionals will attract more students.

A. (ii) TESL member: This membership category is for any individual who wants to join a professional association, in this case, TESL Ontario (which includes TESL Canada and TESL –North York/York Region), as many other professionals do. You may or may not be TESL certified to join.

Fall Conference

About 70 members enjoyed the Fall Conference/AGM. **President Susan Richarz** opened with welcomes and reviewed our North York/York Region Executive. (There were no new nominations, but members are reminded they are welcome to attend our monthly meetings as a Member-at-Large and ‘learn the ropes’.) Attendees get 3 hours Professional development credit, which is now on the honour system, but keep those certificates in case verification is ever needed.

Everyone participated in the meeting and greeting of old friends and new, networking, browsing and buying the used TESL language books – thanks to Uplands Centre and members who brought in their books, workbooks and even videos. The food was great – those sushi treats disappeared quickly along with the wraps and veggies, and our **Guest Speaker Tyson Seburn** gave us a boost of confidence with his talk “Confidence is Contagious.” (See Barbara Stasiuk’s article in this issue). See you at the Spring Conference.



Tyson Seburn spreads confidence.



Registrar Aida Aganagic & conference attendee.

More Fall Conference



The book tables raised \$354 for **Frontier College** literacy outreach.
Thanks, Donors.



Karen Besser, Poonam Sharma, Patricia Burns and Inna Fitch represented YCDSB at the table.

Still More...



Pam Kohly, Antoinette Stirling, Anna Bastiuampillai, Laura Zollner and Farnaz Saghafi are anxiously awaiting supper.



Marco Passafiume, Bari Hertzberg, Opal Edwards and Sylvia Fung catch up.

And then there were...



Warren Rufman clowns around with faithful attendee **Michael Chin-leong**



Be careful what you volunteer for! **John Lo** lugs in the books from Uplands Centre. John also helped with the newsletter computing. Thanks, John!

What About Your Teaching Ego?

Have you ever got up to teach a class and found that your palms were sweaty, your stomach hurt and your heart was beating as fast as the wings of a hummingbird?

The keynote speaker for TESL North York/ York Region was Tyson Seburn and he treated us with a philosophical discussion about the importance of being confident as teachers.

Citing erosion of trust, lack of certainty and questioning of our methods as the repercussions for our students, Tyson emphasized that our confidence in ourselves and what we are doing builds trust, produces aha moments and generates gratitude in the classroom.

According to data gathered on the subject, new teachers often fall prey to this malady, but, so do teachers at the seven year plus mark because, often they, as activist teachers, use more experimental methods which may result in a crisis of confidence.

“Fake it until you make it” might seem to be foolhardy advice but acting has its place in the classroom; if you’ve spent the time needed on preparation and are reasonably sure that your plan will turn out like you’d expect. When we exude confidence, our students pick up on it and are more confident. It’s contagious.


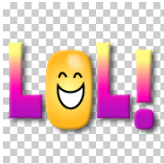

As a teacher trainer Tyson also cautioned us not to convey our own frustrations to students when things like texts are poorly chosen or administrative decisions are not in our favour because our students have enough to worry about.

I think that with the job insecurity and lack of benefits that often accompany this vital profession, teachers might struggle with confidence issues and Tyson’s speech was overall very informative and supportive. If you would like to learn more about his company Coursetree that supports teachers and administration visit <http://coursetree.ca/>

Barbara Stasiuk



This year I'm studying my **Master's of Applied Linguistics at York University** so I thought I would share with readers the pros and cons of advancing to graduate studies in the profession.

Cons	Pros
<p>Lack of money due to less employment (10 hours of work a week is the max recommended)</p> 	<p>Funding packages, OSAP, scholarships plus students discounts such as Post Secondary Metropass ease the pain - also it's only one full year to complete, unless you get inspired to go all the way and get your PHD.</p>
<p>Increased stress due to papers, readings etc,</p>	<p>You get to be a student again and learn up to date theory and research in the field</p>
<p>Have to reacclimatize to academia and meet higher standards than in undergrad and TESL</p>	<p>Gain confidence in the field and awareness of issues in Policy, second language theory etc, plus you direct your own research interests</p>
<p>More education inflation?</p>	<p>Many of our students have MA's and PHD's from back home, so don't they deserve a teacher with a little more expertise?</p>
<p>Have to go school with all those pesky undergrads</p> 	<p>Have great opportunities to network with professors, colleagues, attend lectures from visiting experts in the field and return to the land of idealism once again after experiencing the cold, hard realism out there</p>
	<p>Significantly increase your career prospects in today's world of increased competition and economic instability</p>
	<p>Continue on a rewarding journey of lifelong learning</p> 

Barbara Stasiuk