ATESOL ACT

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!!

Your Committee sends warm greetings for 2023. We hope your summer break is proving happy, restful and renewing!

We are kicking off the year with a wonderfully upgraded website. Please do take a look – we are excited about it! Go to: ATESOL ACT (https://atesolact.org.au) More about the website below.

Because of the transiting to the new website, the deadline for **Early Bird memberships and renewal** is now **28 February 2023**. Members' rates at ATESOL ACT and interstate on-line events are just 2 advantages in joining up. Also, don't forget that your membership fee will be waived if you recruit 2 new members! For details, click **here**

Our first Professional Learning Event is on 18 March: a TQI accredited workshop March **"Teaching spelling and vocabulary"** with one of our favourite presenters, **Dr Misty Adoniou**. To book, click **here**

2022 took a big toll on your Committee and our numbers are seriously depleted. **Your professional association needs your support** at the forthcoming AGM (TBC: Tuesday 28 February, 4:30 – 6pm). For details click **here**. *Please* consider joining our dedicated, lively group. The larger the Committee, the easier it is to offer professional support to enhance your work. See next section below for an outline of vacant Committee roles and duties.

2022 was a big year for ACTA advocacy to improve the professionalism we owe our students. Just before Christmas, we won a major victory for the Adult Migrant English Program when the Department of Home Affairs announced that it would **not be proceeding with its proposed outcomes-based payment system,** i.e. payments based on student assessments and results. The proposed system was a fundamentally attack on teacher professionalism. Its abandonment is a monumental relief! For ACTA submissions that led to this change, click here.

More ACTA advocacy is outlined below. Your Committee could do much more in this space, especially in carrying forward ACTA's great national work to the ACT. To do this, we need a larger group that shares the workload.

Finally, the ACTA conference last September was definitely worth waiting for! Your association supported three of our members to attend and give papers. See their reports below. For program and abstract details click **here**.

The next ACTA conference will be hosted by VicTESOL in Melbourne in September 2025. Check out our website for how we can support you to attend: **link** If you'd like to be kept up to date on ACTA conference developments, sign up at victesol.vic.edu.au

We look forward to seeing you soon at Misty's workshop!

Helen Moore, AM, PhD

President

Your 2023 Committee – Nominations Needed!

Your current Committee consists of six dedicated and interesting people. You will enjoy working with them. But – to be perfectly honest – we are seriously over-stretched. Without increasing our Committee members, our ability to maintain our support for the TESOL profession in the ACT is weakened.

We need you to step forward!

Here are the vacant positions on the Committee and a brief description of roles. None of these duties is difficult and you will always be supported by others when you need it.

Vacant Positions	Role
Vice-President	• Support the President and stand in when President is unavailable. • Support for Committee members as possible.
Secretary	• Send out meeting notices • Prepare meeting agendas with the President • Take minutes at meetings • Ensure list of Committee members is up to date (Google Docs & Google Groups). • Check secretary@atesolact.org.au Inbox and forward relevant mail to appropriate Committee members.
Website editor	• Liaise with our wonderful new website technical support person to keep the website up to date • Get suggestions, ideas and information for the website from the Committee, Working Parties and members • Convene Communications Working Party
Newsletter editor	• Keep a file of possible news items and request items from Committee members. • Draft newsletter and finalise in collaboration with President. • Send covering Mail Chimp newsletter notice and basic copy (unformatted) to the website technical support person for final formatting and sending out • Member of Communications WP (see below).

Events Working Party members	Participate in deciding on and organizing events.
	(We have developed an Event Planner to make organisation easy and clear.)
	We need more representation in this WP from teachers in secondary, senior secondary, adult and tertiary contexts.
Communications Working Party	Support the Convenor and Social Media editor in keeping the website up to date.
	We need a convenor, a newsletter editor and 1or 2 more members in this WP.
Membership Working Party	Collaborate with the Convenor in developing initiatives to maintain and extend our membership.
	We need 1 or 2 more members in this WP.

For full descriptions, also see our **Constitution**

The full Committee generally meets once a term. Working Parties meet once or twice a term, depending on requirements.

If you'd like to find out more and/or would like to join us, please write to Helen at **president@atesolact.org.au**

Upgraded ATESOL ACT Website

Since the ATESOL ACT website was developed many years ago by Lesley Cioccarelli, looking after it has rested with volunteers. Your Committee decided earlier this year that an upgrade was needed and this duty was asking too much of a volunteer. On recommendation, we accepted a proposal from Paul Taylor, who is responsible for what you can now see. We hope you will share our delight in what he has achieved!

As Paul did this work, we realised just how much is involved in keeping a website up to date and fully functional. So Paul is now employed as our regular website support person.

That means that our volunteer website editor's workload is greatly reduced. It will not involve any of the technical side of maintaining it. Paul is a pleasure to work with on line – he is based in Melbourne.

So if you're interested in working with excellent technical support to keep the ATESOL ACT website up to speed (and maybe learning something about how to do it on the side), you'll find this role a great professional experience. To find out more, please write to Helen at **president@atesolact.org.au**

Some Great Events from VicTESOL

ATESOL ACT member rates apply

EAL Writing Strategies in a Primary Settings	On-line February 22, 2023, 4:00 - 5:00 pm
Effective implementation of translanguaging pedagogy in TESOL classrooms	On-line Thursday, 9 March 2023 4:00 - 5:00pm
Digital Literacies in EAL Special Interest Group (SIG)	On-line Wednesday, 22 March 2023 4:00 - 5:00pm
And more!	

For more details, go to: Upcoming Events – VicTESOL

ACTA Advocacy

Some important contributions in 2022:

Early Childhood

- ACTA Principles for Early Childhood Education (developed by the ACTA ECE Consultancy Group) **Advocacy – Australian Council of TESOL Associations**

Schools

- The ACTA National Roadmap for EAL/D in Schools **Advocacy – Australian Council of TESOL Associations**
- ACTA Submission on the National Schools Reform Agreement **Advocacy – Australian Council of TESOL Associations; also View submissions and brief comments - National School Reform Agreement - Productivity Commission (pc.gov.au)**. The Productivity Commission report was sent to Government in December 2022.

Indigenous EAL/D in schools

- ACTA Submission to the Review of the Closing the Gap Agreement Submission 11 at **View submissions and brief comments - Closing the Gap Review - Productivity Commission (pc.gov.au)**

AMEP

- AMEP Action Plan: Request to the Minister **Advocacy – Australian Council of TESOL Associations**

- Proposal for an AMEP Advisory Body can be **read here**. The Minister's reply can be **viewed here**.

Your Journal - *TESOL in Context*

TESOL in Context is the peer-reviewed publication of the Australian Council for TESOL Associations (ACTA) for teachers, researchers and others interested in TESOL within Australia and internationally. Normally two issues are produced each year.

The journal is online at **http://tesolincontext.org.au/**

CURRENT ISSUE:

Vol. 30 No. 2 (2022): Special Issue Interactional competence in the online space: Affordances, challenges and opportunities for TESOL practitioners

SPECIAL ISSUES:

Volume 30, No 1 (November 2021) Languages in Early Childhood Education

Vol. 29 No. 1 (2020): Growing TESOL in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander contexts

CALL FOR PAPERS – SPECIAL ISSUE *Teaching English language learners across the curriculum*

Please submit a title and a max. 300 word abstract to the *TESOL in Context* Journal Coordinator at tic@tesol.org.au by 31st March 2023. In addition, please include the author(s)' short biography (max. 100 words) and contact information (name, affiliation, address, and email). Submitting authors will be notified of abstract acceptance by **30 April 2023.** The deadline for submissions is **1 July 2023** for online publication in the third quarter of 2023. For more details, go to: **CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: Special Issue "Teaching English language learners across the curriculum" | TESOL in Context (deakin.edu.au)**

Reports from the 2022 ACTA Conference

Ugyen Tshering

Report

I would like to thank ATESOL Canberra for sponsoring me to be part of the ACTA conference 2022. It was an excellent opportunity for me to make a presentation and meet and learn from various academicians and scholars about their academic work and research. As a practising teacher of ESL, the conference gave me insights into the current status and practices of teaching English, especially as a second or additional language, across various Australian classrooms. I learned many new things about ESL pedagogical approaches and assessments that I may use in my future classrooms in Bhutan. Also, it allowed me to meet fellow PhD students from different Australian universities and discuss our ongoing studies. In short, the ACTA conference has given me an eye-opening experience to learn and update my knowledge about current research into ESL pedagogical practices and challenges.

Abstract

A framework to scaffold critical reading in Bhutanese middle secondary schools

The Bhutanese high school English curriculum states that students should engage in critical reading and interactive learning. However, the students' English competencies are limited, and critical thinking has not traditionally been a focus of education. Thus, teachers face considerable challenges

in attempting to fulfil the curricular goal. This study tries to address these challenges by introducing teachers to a critical reading framework. This study proposes a critical reading framework based on Freebody and Luke's (1990) four reader resources model to scaffold students' critical reading through thinking before, during and after reading. The four resources empower readers as text decoders, text participants, text analysts and text users, while thinking skills help readers self-regulate their reading skills. The initial framework was used in three Bhutanese schools, where the teachers participated in revising the framework and implemented it in their English classrooms. Preliminary findings show that the teachers found the framework compelling and practical to address the reading problem. It provided them with insights into teaching critical reading and helped increase their teaching efficacy and cognition. It enabled them to meaningfully integrate language, literature and literacy and activate students' higher-order thinking. The study shows that the framework has positive implications for teaching critical reading and offering avenues for teacher professional development.

Lesley Cioccarelli

Report

It was so good to be back at an in-person conference, especially this ACTA one which had been postponed twice. So good to catch up with old TESOL friends from across the country, and meet new ones. I'd missed those wonderful conversations across the tables during sessions, and over lunch and coffee/tea, following on from something that came up in a presentation, or to share something else from our practice or research. And to browse the expo stalls, and chat with people and learn about new resources and services.

All of the keynotes were informative and thought-provoking. Standouts for me were the two workshops on using song and drama in the EAL/D classroom, both of which had us all up out of our chairs and actively participating as our students would. Those on the ATESOL ACT Facebook group will know I am already pushing for us to bring them to Canberra. I attended a wide range of research-focused presentations, some looking at different aspects of teacher practice/beliefs, some on working with students such as the outcomes of a centre-wide approach to teaching pronunciation and supporting the digital skills for low literacy learners, and some exploring the impact of a specific type of technology - I have many take-aways from each of these. There were two more advocacy-focused sessions which had me angry, but feeling more empowered sharing the anger with those around me. Another session, which I could relate to most in my current role at CIT, was on supporting young people from refugee backgrounds to achieve beyond high school, and I have already connected with the presenters from Victoria to share practice and ideas post-conference.

I received some positive unsolicited feedback about my session too. Presenting at a conference is a way for me to give something back to a profession and community I love being part of. It also helps me connect with more people who are interested in the same things I am doing, and the opportunity to share different ways of doing them - I always learn as much as I am trying to impart to others. I think I talked about my work as much out of the actual session as during it - people seemed genuinely interested. We all have something to share and I'd encourage others to present at a conference.

I would like to thank ATESOL ACT for supporting me to attend the ACTA Conference this year. It helped make my contribution seem more valued and also helped make the costs manageable.

For anyone who is interested in my workshop, this is the 'handout' I created for my session: **https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lTu1SwKXMDr_TboAHrKVRvFwviD2ieAyQegVnmIcyZY/edit?usp=sharing**

Abstract

"Just Like Sitting with the Teacher": Personalising Feedback to Students Using Screencasting Video

Video feedback can enhance and personalise the feedback you can provide to students on any written work. Students have told me it is "just like sitting with the teacher". A screencast is a video recording of what is on the computer screen, enhanced with audio narration. Lesley will explain the advantages of providing feedback using video and assist teachers to learn the techniques for screen casting. Using a mobile tablet app, you will capture a recording of yourself talking through the student's work, while writing directly on the screen, on the student's work. We will also look at other uses of screen casting in and out of the classroom, on tablets or PCs.

Mali Wijesundara

Report to follow.

Abstract

Effective Practices for Identifying and Serving EAL/D Learners in Gifted Education

Excellence and Equity have been the main focus of reforms in Australian educational landscape in recent decades. Irrespective of the priorities, the question is whether avenues to demonstrate excellence and equity are accessible to our gifted, talented and high potential English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) student population or they are lost in translation in mainstream education. Even though EAL/D students in Australian schools are on the increase, this trend is not reflected in current educational programs for gifted, talented and high achieving students. Does this mean some of our EAL/D learners are underachieving in our classrooms? For most of the programs across states and territories in Australia for gifted, talented and high potential learners, Gagne's (2009) Differentiated Model of Gifted and Talent provides the basic framework. According to this, talent development is facilitated through explicit teaching models which nurture raw gifts and turn them into exceptional levels of talents. Gagne (2009) suggests that academically high potential learners do not become outstanding achievers by themselves and the external catalysts such as teachers, schools and learning programs and internal factors as of level of motivation, effort and learning skills do impact their achievement levels. Unfortunately, EAL/D students in general are known to be disadvantaged in mainstream education due to varied levels of language proficiency and EAL/D students representing gifted and high potential minority groups are more likely to be deprived of the opportunities. The proposed workshop intends to explore the notion of Gifted and high potential EAL/D students, effective practices and strategies to support their learning to reach their full potential in senior secondary context.

Remember to share this newsletter with your colleagues and encourage them to sign up at
http://www.atesolact.org.au/join/