



Fall 2002  
Issue 6

English Language Services for  
Adults – Service Provider Network

## Inside this Issue

- 1 Ten Years of Networking – ELSA Net History
- 2 Co-Chairs Greeting News from SAM Branch
- 3/4 Performance Measurement Framework Advisory (PMFAC)
- 5 ESL News 'STaRS Trek'
- 6 Teacher's Corner
- 7 Staff Profile (*new!*) National Network News
- 8 Assessment Project Life After ELSA (*new!*)

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## Ten Years of Networking!

Many of us have been working with ELSA or LINC in its various forms for some time now. But how many of us know that as a network, we have been around the Lower Mainland now for ten years?

Recently I gave an overview of ELSA Net for the provincial Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch at MCAWS. This allowed me the opportunity to delve a little into our history. Some of the following I was able to locate in the June 2002 issue of CLB's Inside Language, other notes were gathered through discussions with past and present ELSA Net members.

Looking as far back as 1989, Canadian Job Search Strategies and Vancouver Community College Employment developed an assessment tool for EIC Employment and Immigration Canada (precursor to CIC Citizenship and Immigration Canada). The E-Work assessment resembled an employment interview but focused on language, enabling counsellors to determine client eligibility for pre-employment English language training. Already BC was seen as a key player in the language / assessment field.

Changes to EIC and the introduction of a new settlement language policy led to the formation of LINC or Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada in 1991. Vancouver Community College again had a role to play in the development of the A-LINC tool. The assessment tool introduced

in 1992 focused on four aspects of life in Canada - home, daily life, recreation and work.

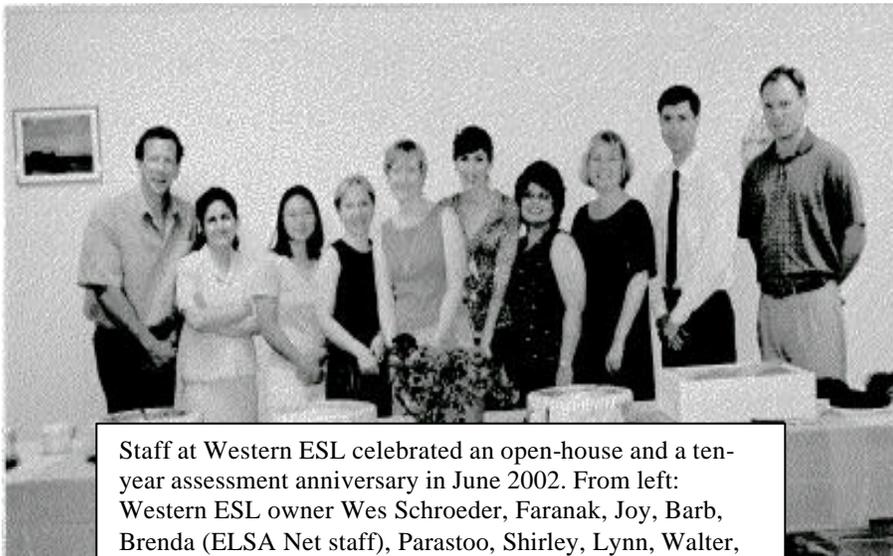
1992 also saw the beginnings of LINC Net here in BC. Originally introduced by founders Daisy Kwan of ISS and Elizabeth Jones of MOSAIC as a support network for non-profits, it soon grew to encompass non-profit, private, and public organizations in the Lower Mainland with assessment representation and some participation from Vancouver Island. Right from the start, the group set up a collaborative process with competency-based programming that strove to meet the language needs of newcomers to the area.

An important new chapter for the network came with the signing of the Canada-BC Agreement in 1998. ELSA or English Language Services for Adults was named and a provincial network was formed. The fall of 2000 saw the hiring of a coordinator, the first annual ELSA Net AGM, ratification of the rules of ELSA Net, and a provincial settlement conference.

Currently with approximately 22 non-profit, 12 private, 24 public organizations, and assessors around the province, our process of collaboration and setting objectives to meet the needs of clients continues.

Congratulations on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this network, and a special thank you to those who have put time and energy into making this provincial network a reality.

*Brenda Lohrenz, ELSA Net Coordinator*



Staff at Western ESL celebrated an open-house and a ten-year assessment anniversary in June 2002. From left: Western ESL owner Wes Schroeder, Faranak, Joy, Barb, Brenda (ELSA Net staff), Parastoo, Shirley, Lynn, Walter, and Fred. (Therese and Caroline not pictured.)

## News from the Ministry

The Performance Design and Evaluation Unit (PDE) was set up in May of 2002. The PDE Unit consists of Patricio Ibarra, Vicki Chiu, Dominic Fung and Norah Cameron as the Acting Manager. The Unit provides the Service Agreement Officers (SAO's) with tools and resources, which will allow them to effectively manage contracts. This includes application, assessment, reporting and monitoring resources. The Unit also maintains responsibility for performance measurement, service planning and reporting systems (STaRS) for the Branch.

Performance management and reporting allow us to answer the question: how do we know that the ELSA program supports the settlement process of newcomers?

## Greetings from the ELSA Net Co-Chairs

Well, wasn't it a fabulous summer and our good fortune has continued well into the fall. This season brings the start of school – for us it always has the feeling of ushering in a new year.

Extra classes opened up in the Lower Mainland which cleared out long waitlists. New reporting requirements are encouraging us to revisit programming evaluation methods. The ELSA Net website is a terrific tool that we hope all of you have taken the time to discover. Check out meeting minutes from regions, contact information from other suppliers, a growing links section, and a bulletin board. This area requires an individual password (an easy process), and is a great way to collectively help each other out with STaRS and reporting questions.

We feel we are heading into a strong and productive year at ELSA Net. Brenda, our coordinator, is forging links with other suppliers throughout the country, we are working on new resources for use in the classroom, things are looking very positive. Finally, congratulations to us all on our successes over the years!

*Loree Phillet and Alison Norman*

**ELSA:** English Language Services for Adults, a funding stream of the British Columbia Settlement and Adaptation Program.

**ELSA Net:** An unincorporated association comprised of ELSA Service Providers.

**Service Providers:** Organizations such as non-profit organizations, community and university colleges, school board continuing education departments, and private schools offering ELSA Programs.

**Purpose:** The purpose of ELSA Net is to facilitate the effective delivery of English Language Services for Adults throughout the Province of British Columbia taking into account and recognizing regional differences and needs.

**Objectives:** The objectives of ELSA Net are to carry out the following functions to assist in attaining the purpose of ELSA Net:

- (a) Recommend policies and procedures to the Ministry (Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services) regarding ELSA;
- (b) Provide a forum for networking by Members;
- (c) Provide professional development opportunities for employees of the Members;
- (d) Promote program research and development;
- (e) Establish and maintain an effective structure for communication and coordination among Members;
- (f) Provide representation of and information about ELSA and ELSA Net at the local, provincial and national level;
- (g) Provide advice to the Ministry regarding ELSA.

*Cont'd from page 2*

It involves looking beyond tracking language acquisition and looking at settlement indicators. We know that ELSA classes allow students to gain confidence to reach out into their communities, be supported, enhance their social network, and better understand their new environment, including its culture and systems. ELSA makes a difference in a student's adaptation process far beyond learning the language. We need to track and measure this information, and then put it into a format that supports program delivery and development. The Performance Measurement Advisory Group will play a key role in assisting the Unit to develop these performance indicators and measurement standards for the ELSA program.

*If you have questions concerning the PDE Unit, you may contact Norah Cameron at P: 604-775-0361 or E: [norah.cameron@gems9.gov.bc.ca](mailto:norah.cameron@gems9.gov.bc.ca)*

## The Performance Measurement Framework Advisory Committee

### *What is the PMFAC?*

The Performance Measurement Framework Advisory Committee (PMFAC) for Stream 3 services (ELSA) is comprised of a representation of service providers across the sector. It assists the Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch of the Ministry by:

- Providing support in the development of an action plan for the development and implementation of performance measurement tools and standards.
- Supporting the development of data collection and reporting mechanisms
- Assisting in the identification of outcome indicators that are needed to demonstrate the impact of ELSA on clients

- Advising in the establishment of Canadian Language Benchmark based tools for measurement of language acquisition (e.g. Program progress and completion assessment)
- Increasing awareness and understanding of performance measurement processes within the sector.

### *History*

The process of establishing an evaluation and monitoring framework for ELSA began over two years ago with a sectoral consulting process on outcomes measurement conducted by the Immigration Policy Branch of the then Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration. A report distributed by the Ministry to ELSA providers in March 2000 entitled *BCSIP Stream 3: English Language Services for Adults "Discussion Paper for a Revised Evaluation and Monitoring Framework"* provided a

**PMFAC Members** from back left and around: Nita Jacob, Coquitlam School Board; Arthur Ling, Kwantlen College; Gurrinder Roy, Abbotsford Community Centre; Nina Miller, MOSAIC; Janet Massaro, Immigrant Services Society of BC; Marcia Timbres, College of New Caledonia Prince George; Norah Cameron, Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch; Carol Hendren, Vanwest College; Nona Carey, Options Unlimited; Brenda Lohrenz, ELSA Net Coordinator; Dale Hunter, Vancouver Community College; Patricio Ibarra, Settlement and Multiculturalism Branch; Liz Bloomfield, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria; Colleen Rogan, Burnaby English Language Centre; Lynn Wells, Penticton and District Multicultural Society



starting point for the work of the Committee.

**Anticipated Outcomes:**

The intent of the Ministry is to have ELSA providers come to agreement about general guidelines and standards of performance for this sector. The overall objective of ELSA is to support the successful settlement and adaptation of new immigrants to British Columbia. The establishment of a performance measurement framework for ELSA will assist service providers to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and to plan and adjust services to meet clients' evolving needs. And it will assist the Ministry to demonstrate the positive impact of these services on the settlement process of newcomers and account for public spending on settlement language training programs.

Specific goals of the committee are as follows:

- Establishment of a Performance Reporting Framework (monitoring and evaluation tool)
- Identification and definition of Outcome Indicators
- Development of an assessment tool based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks
- Curriculum Development
- Increased sector awareness of performance measurement processes

**Work of Committee to Date:**

- Establishment of Performance Reporting Framework (monitoring and evaluation tool)

Committee members gave input into revision of last contract year's Service Performance Report. This revised Performance Report was distributed to suppliers at the end of October. While the new reporting form continues to ask questions related to the measurement of outputs (direct products of service activities, e.g. number of field trips) and outcomes (benefits and changes for clients as a result of program activities), notes attached to the questions supply clarification, examples and definitions

of the terms used within the report. It also simplifies and streamlines the reporting process for larger suppliers. It is important to note that the Ministry recognizes that activities and outputs will vary between programs based on factors such as type of service provider, funded budget, time of class, and regional delivery needs.

- Identification and definition of Outcome Indicators.
- The Committee is beginning the process of identifying a set of outcome indicators which demonstrate that the program's intended outcomes for immigrant newcomers have been achieved. Identifying these indicators will allow us to complete the statement "We will know we have been successful when..." For example, one behavioural indicator that supports the stated outcomes of ELSA might be that students are accessing community services on their own. The goal is to come to a common understanding and definition of outcomes and their indicators, and to identify and/or develop methodologies to track and measure this information.
- Development of an assessment tool based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Committee identified the need for a tool which would assist instructors to exit students at each level. In response, the Ministry has contracted with Vancouver Community College to develop an assessment tool based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks that is generic (not tied to a curriculum) and functional, and which can be used by instructors to exit students through the levels. Training packages, including training videos, will accompany this tool. Use of this tool is not considered mandatory by the Ministry, and the new tool may be used to enhance and supplement assessment tools already in place.

- Promotion of an awareness and understanding of performance measurement within the sector.

The Committee has begun to develop a communication plan to share information around performance measurement within the sector. This communication of information will be accomplished through a variety of methods and venues, such as at ELSA Net regional meetings and the ELSA Net AGM, and through the ELSA Net website <http://www.elsanet.org>

*Liz Bloomfield – PMFAC Member, Vancouver Island Representative.*

**ELSA Net Special Projects**

**BC Newcomers Guide Teaching Resource**

We are now well on our way with development of a British Columbia Newcomers Guide Teaching Resource. Developer Jennifer Walsh-Marr has been doing some excellent work, and test piloting of materials is now being conducted province-wide. Expected project completion date is March 2003. The resource will be added to our ELSA Net website as a downloadable resource with full functionality so that you can easily select materials for printing. If you would like to be involved in test piloting some of the new units, please contact the ELSA Net coordinator at [elsanet@telus.net](mailto:elsanet@telus.net)

**Provincial Directory of ESL Courses**

Another project that our new ELSA Net assistant Teresa Gray is focusing on is a compilation of ESL Courses offered in BC. This is an expansion of the Directory of ESL Courses in Greater Vancouver previously made available by ISS. We hope to get in touch with all ESL providers across the province for inclusion of their program information in this directory. Teresa can be contacted at P: 604-876-4348, F: 604-876-0134, E: [elsanet2@telus.net](mailto:elsanet2@telus.net) Let us know if there is a program in your community that should be included.

## TEAL 2003 Annual Conference

### “Reflective Teaching and Reflective Deliveries”

February 27 – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003

Shane Global Village English Centre (Yaletown Campus)  
& the Vancouver Public Library

#### **Confirmed Plenary Speakers:**

Kathi Bailey of Monterey Institute of International Studies;  
Maggie Beers of B.C. Institute of Technology;  
David Mendelsohn of York University

#### **CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS – DEADLINE NOVEMBER 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2002**

Please check the TEAL website at [www.bctea.org](http://www.bctea.org) or call Alison McBride at the TEAL Office at 604-736-6330.

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## ELSA LEVEL 3 CURRICULUM GUIDE

By now every ELSA provider in B.C. should have received a complimentary copy of the Vancouver Community College ELSA Level 3 Curriculum Guide. The VCC ELSA instructors are proud of the Guide and hope that you will find it helpful in your unit and lesson planning. They would like to get feedback so that when it is evaluated and revised in 2004, there will be input from you. You might be interested to know that orders for the Guide have been received from LINC providers in other provinces.

If you would like additional copies of the ELSA Level 3 Curriculum Guide, they are available from the King Edward Campus bookstore for \$19.95. Shipping and handling is extra but can be avoided if you come to the bookstore in person, or ask your program director to get one when he/she is attending an ELSA Net meeting.

Since publishing the Guide, one of our instructors has added a unit on “Accessing the Community – Immigrant Serving Agencies”. If you would like a copy to add to your binder, please contact Alison Norman at [anorman@vcc.ca](mailto:anorman@vcc.ca) and she will send it to you as an email attachment.

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## VCC WEBSITE FOR ELSA STUDENTS

Did you know that the ELSA program at VCC has lots of on-line resources for learners in all the ELSA levels? If you have computers linked to the Internet, just go to <http://esl.vcc.ca/eslvoc>. Select the side bar “esl online”. This will lead to VCC’s ELSA student exercises (graded by ELSA Level and produced by teachers), links to other on-line student resources, and links to immigrant serving agencies’ websites.

## ‘STaRS Trek’

**Student Tracking and Record System** or STaRS, as most of you know, is the internet-based software program that has replaced the green card.

The STaRS Advisory Committee was formed in the spring of 2002 because some Service Providers had questions and concerns about STaRS that weren’t being and couldn’t be addressed by the first version of the Users’ Guide.

The Advisory met throughout the summer and into the fall. Firstly we identified and prioritized the bugs, fixes, and enhancements on the program, but soon realized that many problems were related to policies which had to be established. Therefore, a STaRS Protocol was created in consultation with the Guidelines Committee. The STaRS Protocol will be an appendix to the revised issue of the ELSA Net Guidelines document. It will also be made available in the members only section of the ELSA Net website.

With close to 30 print screens, the appendix aims to provide explanations or establish protocols for each screen or drop-down box in STaRS. We met with the Guidelines Committee to make the 2 documents support each other, as well as to standardize some previously divergent ways of administering the ELSA program.

In early September a few of us also took part in the testing of an upgraded version of STaRS, which will be released in November. This new version will have a Help Menu featuring a newer version of the Users’ Guide.

The 10 current members of the STaRS committee have volunteered to be STaRS Buddies for whoever needs help. If you have any problems or questions, notify Patricio Ibarra, the MCAWS staff who is overseeing STaRS. He will also assign training, or match you with a buddy depending on your needs. Finally, check the bulletin board of the ELSA Net website ([www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)) for ‘STaRS Frequently Asked Questions’ – coming soon!

*Ming Berka, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.*

## Teacher's Corner

### Resources worth mentioning

After a summer break it was great to come back and find two new and interesting texts for classroom use.

“Grammar in Context”, First Canadian Edition, proves to be a well-thought out and useful series. A quick look through the table of contents reveals a determination to integrate Canadian content and grammar. Readings for the verb “be” contain a “Postcard from Ottawa” and further on in Book One an article about “The Ice Storm of '98” places simple past tense lessons in context. Locations around Canada are pictured, and even the change of address notice used in the chapter on imperatives uses a Canada Post Change of Address Notification Form.

Grammar in Context 2 continues the style with a chapter on modals using Canadian Citizenship, Copyright Law and an apartment lease as the context for the grammar. This has proved to be a very popular series right from the start. Published by ITP Nelson, there are three levels available.

Another text that is user friendly and involves minimal prep for teachers is “The Great Big Bingo Book”. This book features the usual bingo format for themes such as clothing, weather, and sports but also has pronunciation, writing, and grammar bingo games. Section 5 contains “Cultural Topics” and has a first day of class ice-breaker bingo and bingo games for seasonal celebrations and holidays.

Proficiency levels for each bingo game activity are indicated as a guide. This resource is published by Pro Lingua Associates.

Fans of “Clear Speech” had long wanted a companion book for lower level language learners. The publication of “Clear Speech-From the Start” answers those wishes. As well presented as “Clear Speech” was, much of its vocabulary was beyond ELSA Three students. “Clear Speech –From the Start” follows the

### Classroom Activity from Prince George

Here is an activity that works well in a classroom situation, for general review of vocabulary. (e.g. to review numbers, months, parts of the body, occupations, clothing).

#### Materials and equipment needed:

- Set of cards (one for each student) with one vocabulary item on each card.
- Chairs arranged in circle (one chair for all but one student).

#### Method: (\*using numbers as the example)

- One person does not have a card. He stands in the middle and calls two numbers.
- People with the numbers called, stand and try to trade seats.
- As the people try to trade seats, the caller tries to sit in one of the empty seats.
- Whoever does not get a seat calls the next two numbers.

This is a surprisingly simple activity that greatly enhances the students listening and speaking ability. Moreover, the students enjoy this game immensely!

*Lynn Letchford, ELSA Instructor/Coordinator, Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society Prince George – see photo directly below for the action!*



Cont'd from page 6

### Resources worth mentioning ...

text, but uses visual images to express concepts. Rhythm in language is stressed, as well as tasks, which emphasize phrases and not just pronunciation of individual words. A Teacher's Resource Book includes an audio CD of quizzes. This is destined to be a favourite book of teachers and students. This resource is published by Cambridge University Press.

*Lenard Langlois of Shane Global Village Yaletown*

### Profile: Parastoo Shirazi Referral Counsellor, Western ESL Services

Parastoo Shirazi is talking to a couple from Columbia who are trying to figure out where the wife should take her ELSA course. She'll be in Level 3 so the discussion isn't too difficult for her, but her husband's translations and explanations help a great deal. So many factors need to be considered: location of the school, whether to study part-time or full-time, the time of day and days of the week classes are offered. The school they most want has a waitlist for child-minding -- a priority because they have a 2-year-old daughter. Decisions, decisions ... Parastoo calls up the school to find out how long the waitlist is. Is it worthwhile to wait for this school, they wonder, thereby postponing the wife's English learning, or should she take an evening class that starts right away? Finally, the couple decide on a class. "You'll like it there, and you can start tomorrow," Parastoo reassures the woman. "Just ask your teacher if you have any questions." As Parastoo prints out the referral form, the couple relax and chat happily about their plans to start an import business together. They wave good-bye to Parastoo as they leave.

As Referral Counsellor, Parastoo Shirazi is the last person a client in Vancouver, Richmond or Burnaby sees before they begin their new life as an ELSA student. After writing the ELSA placement test at Western ESL Services and receiving their results in the mail, eligible clients come back to the center

to choose their school and course. That's where Parastoo comes in.

To assist in this task, she works out of a bright spacious room at Western ESL Services's office near the busy corner of Broadway and Commercial Drive. "The Big Map" takes up one entire wall of the referral room. An enlarged street map, it indicates the location of every ELSA provider in Vancouver, Richmond and Burnaby. Threads connect the location markers to colour-coded sheets that give important details about the schools and what they offer. Parastoo keeps in touch with ELSA providers on a regular basis to ensure she has the latest information on course and childminding availability.

Parastoo tackles her job with a variety of skills and attributes: a friendly open manner, patience, a genuine interest in meeting new people, and an ability to communicate with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Her own experience as an immigrant, combined with her work background, have proven invaluable for this job. Born in Iran, she lived in England from the ages of seven to eleven, and went on to teach English for ten years in Iran before coming to Canada in 1997. From 1997 to 1998 she did translation work, taught ESL, and assisted settlement counselors at the Immigrant Services Society, and taught ESL to refugee claimants as a volunteer for Storefront Orientation Services.

Parastoo has now been working as Referral Counselor for three years. Although she enjoyed being a teacher when she first came to Canada, she feels she's making a unique contribution to new immigrants in her daily work. "When I've been able to help someone and they leave here satisfied, it makes me so happy," she says. With that she flashes her customary smile and goes off to welcome the next clients into her office.

*Teresa Gray, ELSA Net Assistant and TESOL Diploma Student at VCC*  
(NOTE: See photo on btm page 6, Parastoo is on the left and Teresa Gray on the right, in front of the big map.)

### National Network for LINC/ELSA/ALT Providers

All three programs offer basic language instruction for adult newcomers to Canada and are fully funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) is currently offered in all provinces and territories except Quebec, BC and Manitoba. Because of federal-provincial agreements, BC offers ELSA programs, while Manitoba offers ALT (Adult Language Training) programs.

The National Network is being established in order to increase communication and sharing among these three groups. The goal is to provide timely access to resources, methodologies and other areas of research; to empower stakeholders (frontline settlement workers, regional agencies, etc.) by providing access to a broader audience; to provide a resource for CIC in determining priorities and addressing common issues; and to provide opportunities at national conferences where issues unique to settlement language providers can be discussed.

TESL Canada is undertaking the National Network project in conjunction with the "Maximizing Settlement Working Group" of the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI), which is providing one year of funding.

### CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

If you are interested in volunteering for the Advisory Committee for this project, or would like more information, please contact: Teresa Gray, ELSA Net Assistant (604-876-4348, [elsanet2@telus.net](mailto:elsanet2@telus.net)) or the ELSA Net Coordinator.

### Progress and Exit Test Development Project

Vancouver Community College’s ELSA Program has had progress tests for determining learner readiness to move from Level 1 to Level 2, and from Level 2 to Level 3 for a couple of years. These tests measure competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks for Benchmark 1 and 2 respectively, (original 1996 Benchmarks). VCC instructors have found the tests to be useful tools to check on individual student progress. Learners have responded very positively as they see the tests as an indication that their teachers take their progress seriously, as well as a way to get regular feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.

Recently MCAWS approached VCC to see if the progress tests could be made available as a resource to the whole ELSA system in BC. The tests need realigning to the new Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000, as well as some upgrading in terms of graphics quality, audio quality, presentation, etc. VCC has begun making improvements on the tests with the completion goal of end of February 2003.

The development of exit tests for ELSA Level 3 has long been on the back burner of “things to do”. ELSA learners leaving Level 3 do so with quite a range of competencies in the four skills. They enter ELSA with Benchmark scores, but leave without any, so it is not possible to show them how much they have progressed.

VCC has already developed an exit listening test, which has been in use for two years. Recently, exit reading and writing tests have been developed with College curriculum development funds, and are being piloted. MCAWS asked if these exit tests, with the addition of one for speaking, could be made available to the ELSA system as a resource. Each test will be designed to place learners at Benchmark 3, 4, or 5. Tasks will be generic, settlement language based, not closely tied to a particular curriculum. Making it as easy as possible for instructors to administer and mark the tests will be a priority. The project to get the exit testing package together will run from November until the end of March 2003.

Marking exit listening and reading tests will be easy as responses are simply right or wrong. However, evaluating speaking and writing has to be done with rating scales. To get consistent results, instructors need practice using the scales and understanding the criteria and how to apply them. MCAWS hopes to be able to find funds in the next fiscal year for VCC to develop training materials to accompany the speaking and writing exit tests.

*Alison Norman, Dept Head ESL Vocational, VCC*

### Life After ELSA

‘Life After ELSA’ was started a few years ago. Former students at New Directions return to talk about their experiences since leaving the ELSA program. The main reason for ‘Life After ELSA’ is to help our current students realize that it is possible to settle into the Canadian way of life and successfully pursue their plans for the future.

Students are reminded that they will succeed with perseverance and confidence even if it takes a few years to do so. The importance of being able to converse well in English is always stressed to the students.

**Doina Dragomir** is from Rumania and wanted to find work in her profession as a technical engineer. She quickly found that “applying for a job is a business in itself.” Her advice: “Be determined and courageous!” She emphasized the importance of a good resume, one that has to be adapted each time you apply for another job. She also stressed the fact that you have to be willing to start at a lower level and work your way up. Presently Doina works as a technical assistant for a company in Langley and she has confidence in her future.

**Sung-II Chung** and his family arrived from Korea two and a half years ago. After graduating from ELSA he started studies in the technical field. After completing his studies he started his own small business, KONADA (Korea & Canada). He found this did not provide enough income so he applied for work at Sears in the maintenance department and also does plumbing ‘on the side.’

In class Sung-II loved to write poetry. This is a sample of his writing:

I am going to be the wind in my next life,  
Nobody grabs me,  
Nobody ties me down,  
Nobody follows me.  
I could move the clouds,  
I could hear the sailors laughing,  
I could shake the leaves of trees.  
Sometimes I whisper to my lover.  
I could blow up everything when I feel upset.  
You wished really calm I could sleep,  
When I meet another wind something would happen.  
I don’t know what will happen.

The message that all ‘Life After ELSA’ speakers have in common: “Learn to speak English well, have confidence in the future, accept differences and changes, and never give up!”

*The staff at New Directions in Langley provided this look at some of their alumni. If your own organization has kept in touch with past students, please consider forwarding their stories for the ‘Life After ELSA’ column.*

