



ELSA Net *NEWS*

March 2003
Issue 7

English Language Services for
Adults – Service Provider Network

Inside this Issue

- 1** Greetings from
Coordinator & President
- 2** Spring into Action
BC TEAL Conference
- 3** Life in the Family
Addressing Parenting
Issues
- 4/5** PMFAC/Host Program
Progress Tests
- 6** Life After ELSA
- 7** An ELSA Story
New Resources
- 8** Staff Profile
Regional PD Review

Submissions for upcoming
issues – Brenda Lohrenz:

ELSANET@telus.net

Be sure to check out
www.elsanet.org

ELSA Net – English Language
Services for Adults
#208-2525 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4C1

Greetings from the ELSA Net Coordinator’s Desk!

I have been given the opportunity this spring to say hello to instructors at various ELSA Net professional development events being held across the province. This has been a great opportunity to ensure that people are aware of the ELSA Net work going on behind the scenes. Thank you to everyone who took part in our gatherings or helped to make them a success, we hope to do more of the same in the future.

Thank you also to those instructors that welcomed me into their classes. Organizations include Chilliwack Community Services, North Vancouver Continuing Ed., and Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society. It is great to touch base with the ultimate recipient of the work we do, the student. I hope that ELSA Net can continue to positively impact those who come through our ELSA classrooms by supporting the organizations who provide this all-important service.

Brenda Lohrenz, ELSA Net Coordinator



A conversation study group at
Chilliwack Community Services

Message from the President

Since the Annual General Meeting in November, your ELSA Net Board and Coordinator have been busy. We are well on the way to becoming a not-for-profit society. Loree Phillet has taken the lead on getting our bylaws in order and filing all the necessary papers.

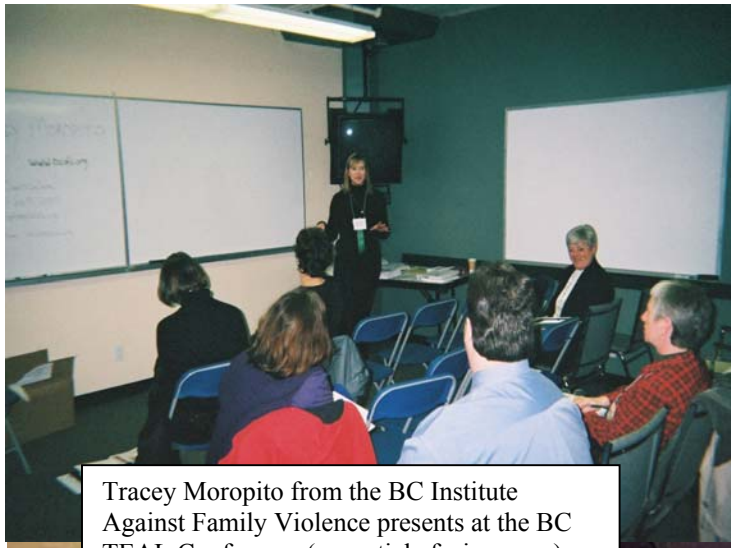
A huge amount of work had to be done in February to prepare the Stream 4 Proposal for funding ELSA Net and a couple of special projects in 2003/04. Meanwhile, the Performance Measurement Advisory Group, a Ministry-led committee of ELSA participants, was hard at work producing a chart of program outcomes indicators and suggested measurement tools (see inside article page 4).

Not to be forgotten in our list of achievements are two major ELSA Net projects for 2002/03 which are just winding up. Jennifer Walsh Marr has completed the “Newcomers Guide Teachers’ Resource”, which will be on the website by the end of March. The teaching ideas are many and varied and will be a terrific help to ELSA instructors.

Teresa Gray has been labouring behind the scenes to complete an updated “Directory of ESL Courses in British Columbia.” The project is near completion. The Directory will be posted on the ELSA Net website.

We have lots to show for our efforts – hats off to everyone involved!

Alison Norman, ELSA Net President



Tracey Moropito from the BC Institute Against Family Violence presents at the BC TEAL Conference (see article facing page)

Spring into Action con't

They presented a short overview of the course's planning and managing that included a realistic review of the assets and challenges involved in accomplishing a three-week onsite and six-month online training schedule. Their creativity and suggestions on how to improve the course were inspiring.

My thoughts jumped to the current ELSA program in BC and the possibilities of a training course with an online component – specifically geared to ELSA instructors. The online sessions could give instructors in rural BC an opportunity to continue training without the inconvenience of travelling to a faraway campus. In addition, it could reinforce the fundamental basics of a curriculum tailored to settlement language needs and the application of the Benchmark standards. This, I believe, would invigorate and strengthen the program province wide. Effective teacher training courses would heighten future growth and enhance the initiative to build an exceptional ELSA program. A project for the future?

Carol Hendren is a long time ELSA instructor at Vanwest College and a member of the PMFAC.

Spring into Action

**2003 BC TEAL Conference
Global Village Feb. 27th - Mar. 1st**

The three-day conference attracted crowds of ESL professionals who gathered to enjoy the upbeat, ingenious atmosphere as well as share ideas, attend seminars, and listen to noted plenary speakers. During breaks the publishers' displays of contemporary and classic ESL teaching materials enticed participants to blend a fresh outlook into their syllabus. Every class offered fascinating ideas for new and seasoned instructors, motivating us to develop our talents. A compelling seminar, Barbara Siennicki and Joyce White's 'Designing a Teacher Training Course' – inspired me to consider an alternative approach to teacher training.

How can we apply this concept of teacher training to the ELSA program? After many years teaching ELSA classes, I became motivated to create an instructor training course by acknowledging that some teaching methods are more energetic and effective. Siennicki and White, who teach at the University of British Columbia, inspired me with their design for an *onsite/online* training program.

ELSA Net Overview

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

ELSA Net: A society of ELSA Service Providers.

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 (BC Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration) 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 a local, provincial and national level; and
- (g) Provide advice to the Ministry regarding ELSA.

Life in the Family A Newcomer's Guide to Parenting Issues in Canada

At the BC TEAL Conference, Tracey Moropito from the BC Institute Against Family Violence presented this video and curriculum package designed for the ESL classroom. The curriculum consists of 3 parts: child neglect, physical discipline, child protection legislation.

The video has 3 scenarios, 5 minutes each and all done very professionally. The curriculum guide includes teacher's background and legal information, family information, parent services that are available in BC and the video transcripts.

The intent of the curriculum is not to teach parenting, but to teach parents what is against the law, to teach English, to give relevant information on discipline issues in parenting and to stress the role of the government. The

goal is not to take children away from their family, but to protect children. The Newcomer's Guide to Parenting Issues in Canada promises to be a valuable and topical resource for the settlement language classroom.

Donna Lambert, ELSA instructor and coordinator at the Victoria READ Society

NOTE: A free copy of the guide can be ordered directly from the BCIAFV from their website at www.bcfiv.org or by calling 604-669-7055.

Addressing Parenting Issues – Mosaic Language Centre's Family Place

Parenting is a challenging job under the best of circumstances, but just imagine taking away traditional family supports, economic stability, fluency in the language and ability to access community services. This is the situation most of our newly immigrated parents in the ELSA program are faced with.

In the ELSA classroom, we address many of the concerns facing immigrant parents, such as legal issues, cultural differences in family roles and available community resources. However, we often find that broaching these topics is like opening the proverbial can of worms: there is a huge unmet need for ongoing parenting support and education for our parents that we are unable to address in depth in the ELSA class.

Some time ago, we recognized that though we are fortunate enough to be able to provide childcare for our students' children, there is not enough time in the program for parents to be introduced to concepts of child development, the importance of play and communication with their children. We felt that it was important that parents be given a chance to be integrally involved in their children's program and be acknowledged and supported as their children's prime educator. We therefore developed the concept of the Family Place and Parent Time Program based on a family literacy model. We took this vision to various funders and were lucky enough to secure funding from the United Way Success by 6 to begin running this program in January 2002. We later received a three year commitment from the Vancouver Foundation to enhance and continue the delivery of this program. Participants attend our program once a week for three hours, outside of class time.

During our family time, we want to create a safe and welcoming place, where parents can go, free of the stresses of their daily lives to spend time with their children. Parents play with children in the different learning centres, do arts and crafts and sing songs and rhymes together during circle time. By providing this positive time together, with support and modeling from highly professional early childhood educators, we hope parents can enhance their skills and feel empowered in supporting their child's development. We also want to create a place where parents can go to share their concerns with other parents and to feel supported and not isolated as a parent. With a trained parenting facilitator/ESL instructor, we run parent group sessions, where parents form a meet to discuss their concerns and explore new ideas. We also invite guest speakers from a variety of agencies and services on topics such as dental hygiene, nutrition, language development, child development and behaviour. We also make sure parents are introduced to community services they can use once they have finished the program.

Over the past year, 42 families with 48 children have participated in this program. Participants have overwhelmingly stated their appreciation for having this opportunity to connect with their children, other parents, and the community at large. Parents have reported improved communication with their children and a change in the way they engage in activities with their children at home.

We look forward to further developing this program by focussing on the development of peer mentors from the participants, and also starting an ESL Nobody's Perfect group. As well, we are producing multilingual parent-child story and activity kits for parents to borrow for use at home. Given the success of the program, we are also pleased to report that the United Way Success by 6 program has renewed our funding for the coming year.

Nina Miller is the Director of Language Programs at MOSAIC (Multilingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities).

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PMFAC)

BCSAP STREAM 3 (ELSA)

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

The Performance Measurement Framework Advisory Committee (PMFAC) has met three times since the last newsletter and has accomplished much of the work set out in its stated goals.

Goals and Work of Committee to Date:

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

As reported in the last newsletter, the revised Service Performance Report was distributed to suppliers at the end of October. It is important to stress again 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.

- ii. Identification and Definition of Outcome Indicators.

The Committee has completed the work of identifying a set of outcome indicators for each of the six intended outcomes for ELSA. This information has been encapsulated in the Outcomes Reporting Chart, a tool which will assist ELSA providers to report on program outcomes.

The Host Program – The Time for Friendship

You’ve probably had this situation occur in your classroom. You will be teaching a particular topic, maybe words associated with “jobs”. You then get all your students asking questions about jobs, and now you are not just providing English language training, you are now answering questions about the job market.

You are doing what a Host Friend does. Host Friends spend 2-3 hours a week for six months with their Host Clients to help them through an easier and more comfortable settlement process. While newcomers come from many countries with different cultures, they often have the same common needs during their first months of settlement. Some of these needs are learning the language, school registration, shopping, public services and finding a job.

“It’s quite an interesting program. I’ve enjoyed the people that I have been matched up with. They feel more relaxed with a Canadian friend who has been living here for a long time, and I have learned about their culture,” says Violet Haas, a volunteer with the Host Program. Dennis Burns, another Host Friend agrees. “It feels great to make a difference, to get away from your own problems and help someone else and to learn about people in other lands. I also wanted my children to have a wider perspective”.

Matches are based on criteria such as similar interests, family size, age and occupation. People on Host matches enjoy many activities together, such as walks in the neighbourhood, shopping and visiting local attractions. Activities are decided upon by both the Host Friend and Client.

The Host Program relies on Host Friends (volunteers) to work. If you are interested in volunteering, please call the community agency in your area:
Vancouver/Burnaby/New Westminster (Immigrant Services Society of BC): (604) 684-7498
Richmond (SUCCESS): (604) 279-7180
Victoria (Inter-cultural Association of Greater Victoria): (250) 388-4728
Surrey/Delta (Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society): (604) 597-0205 ext 216
Coquitlam/Tri-Cities (SUCCESS): (604) 936-5900
North/West Vancouver (North Shore Multicultural Society): (604) 988-2931
Penticton (Penticton and District Multicultural Society): (250) 492-6299

PMFAC con't

The Outcomes Indicators Chart describes some possible behavioural indicators under each outcome that can be measured through different means to demonstrate the impact of ELSA on students. It is important to note that the examples contained in the chart are not exhaustive and may not be applicable at all levels or to all target groups. This is true also of the methods listed to track this information. The intent is to assist suppliers to come to a common understanding of outcomes and their indicators and ways of tracking and reporting on this information. The tool will be presented for clarification and discussion at the ELSA Net Regional Meetings held this spring and will subsequently be distributed to administrators of the various ELSA programs.

The Performance Design and Evaluation Unit (PDE) of the Ministry has also identified the need for a Ministry initiated province-wide survey of exiting Level 3 students to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of ELSA. To this end, the Ministry will be contracting with an independent consultant to develop a tool, possibly a survey, which can be administered easily and simply to exiting students. The PMFAC will keep suppliers up-to-date on developments in this area.

iii. Development of an assessment tool based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks

As reported in the last newsletter, the Ministry 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.

Progress tests for Level 1 and Level 2 and training packages for instructors have been completed and distributed to suppliers. (See sidebar this page for more info.) An exit test for Level 3 is close to completion. Use of these tools is not considered mandatory by the Ministry, and the new tool may be used to enhance and supplement assessment tools already in place.

iv. Curriculum Development

This area was not identified as a priority in the Committee's initial meetings and was set as a longer term goal. The committee invites continued input from suppliers in the area of curriculum development needs.

v. Promote an awareness and understanding of performance measurement within the sector.

The PMFAC will meet again in April and on an ad hoc basis thereafter to provide support to providers and input to the Ministry on performance measurement related issues. Communication of information will continue to be accomplished through a variety of methods and venues, such as the ELSA Net regional meetings and AGM, ELSA PD Days, TEAL and Settlement conferences, and through the ELSA Net website <http://www.elsanet.org>

Liz Bloomfield, ELSA instructor and coordinator at Inter-Cultural Association of Great Victoria, member of the PMFAC.

ELSA Level 1 and Level 2 Progress Tests Ready to Use.

On February 28, 2003, Vancouver Community College delivered 100 copies of the ELSA Level 1 and Level 2 Progress Tests to BC Settlement and Adaptation Branch. You should have received your copy in the first week of March. The test packages are complete with everything you could possibly need – student booklets, answer keys, audiotapes, listening and speaking test scripts, visuals, scoring sheets, scoring criteria, guidelines for test administration, and class record sheets.

You will notice that the tests are task-based and the tasks are as much as possible “real-life”. Some of the tasks are similar to those from On Target. However, some On Target CLB 2 task types appear in the Level 1 test, and some of CLB 3 task types appear in the Level 2 test. This is because On Target is based on the old Canadian Language Benchmarks which was less precise than the new CLB 2000. At VCC we extensively field tested the Progress Tests and we feel confident that they are level appropriate and that the passing marks (75%) are reasonable.

We have endeavoured to make the ELSA Progress Tests student and teacher friendly. We would like to have your feedback on them, as well as any queries you may have, at anorman@vcc.ca.

*Alison Norman, Department Head
ESL Vocational, VCC*

ELSA Student First Recipient of ESL-Vocational Endowment Fund Award

ELSA student, Kanya Chachai, who studied in the Bridge Literacy class at Vancouver Community College, was the first recipient of a student award made possible by an endowment fund established by the ELSA instructors and staff in the ESL-Vocational Department. Kanya received her award in the November 2002 Awards Ceremony for her remarkable progress in learning to read and write in English; for her strong, positive involvement in her class; and her helpfulness to her classmates and instructors.

Kanya comes from Thailand. She is single and works as a live-in caregiver. She entered the ELSA Program with Benchmarks 3-1-1. Through hard work and determination, she was able to exit with Benchmarks 4-3-3. In her thank you note, Kanya wrote "Dear VCC supporter, Thanks for your generous donation to the ESL Vocational Department Scholarship I have received. Your kind support means a lot to me, both financially and spiritually." (see photo)

Life After ELSA

Dusanka Urosevic: A Triangulation Technician
Triatholon Mapping Incorporated
Born: Pozarevac, Serbia

Dusanka arrived at the LINC 2 class at The Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver in September, 1995 after spending one month studying with a volunteer at the Immigrant Service Society. Prior to that Dusanka had never studied English.

She was a delight in our class, especially her fantastic European baking.

After completing the class at the Jewish Community Centre, Dusanka started studying at Vancouver Community College at the Lower Advanced Level, a success story that I have not witnessed since. Simultaneously, Dusanka took a Micro Station Drafting Course at BCIT and began working towards an Advanced Diploma in Geographic Informal Systems.

Eight years later Dusanka and her family have integrated into Canadian Society. They have bought a duplex in the Marpole area and she has maintained close friendships with many of the people she met in that first LINC class. Both her husband and she are employed in their fields and her daughter is graduating with honours from Churchill High School's International Baccalaureate Program.

Dusanka worked hard to fulfill her dreams and there is no looking back for her and her family.

Debbie Setton, Jewish Community Centre ELSA Program



ELSA student recipient of the ESL Vocational Endowment Fund Kanya Chachai with Dale Hunter, Assistant Department Head, ESL Vocational, VCC

An ELSA Story

My Life in Canada

My name is Yolanda Tufts. I'm from Mexico, Guadalajara city. I was married on May 8, 1996 for second time, this time with Canadian man. I had three children from my first marriage.

When I brought my children to Canada on July 22, 1999. I was pregnant with my last child. It was a difficult time for us because we didn't understand any English. For six months my children didn't go to school because my husband didn't make the papers for immigration. My children went to school in February. When they started school, they had to do homework, and that time I could not help my children, my husband helped them. When he was helping them he always screamed very loud at them. My children and I didn't like at the way he was helping them. I went to study English for second time in Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society.

When I came home from school and tried to practise my English with him he always said to me that my English wasn't good. I didn't go to school any more until Nov. 2000. I started in PICS and he tried again by saying that my English wasn't improving. He was saying because he wanted me to leave the school again, but my teacher, Devinder gave me strength to keep going and study hard. The time passed. Now I can do many things on my own, like going to the doctor, going to the teachers'

conference, to make appointments in different offices.

I went to volunteer at Delta Youth Service to paint chairs, to help clean, and prepare the snacks for the children. But my problems didn't finish with my husband. Then I separated from him on July 22, 2002. I took my children with me.

Thank you to all the staff at PICS, especially Devinder. She is a wonderful person. Thank you Sue Philis and Nicole Watts from Delta Youth Services that help me to get out of the house that we were living in an abusive way. Thank you all the people that gave me strength and taught me to trust myself. Thank you to my children, Claudia, Perry, Nataly, Barba, Laura and Vanessa Tufts for the love that You give me. Thank you, Canada for helping me. Thank you to my inlaws, the super people that gave me Larry and Pauline Watts.

Now I got promoted to level 3 and I go to Delview Learning Centre. I try to learn more English and proper English so I can find myself a good job to buy essentials to my children.

Now I look forward to so many good things to happen in future like finishing ELSA level 3 at the end of February, taking a training course, getting a job and taking care of my children in the best possible way. It all happened after I was given support and English learning. I wish there were another level after level 3, so my English could get even better.

Yolanta Tufts, a former student at PICS, and Delview Learning Centre, Delta.



Yolanta Tufts is standing to the right of the sign; Devinder Chattha, instructor at PICS is far left

NEW RESOURCES FOR THE ELSA CLASSROOM

These recent titles are getting a lot of attention in our staff room:

The Resourceful English Teacher offers techniques for using material at hand. If you have a newspaper, a photo, or even a song this book will give ideas on how to use those resources and exploit their potential in a variety of ways that may have not been considered. The activities included can be easily used with a variety of grammar structures. Icons above each activity clearly indicate that type of activity (group/mingle/pair), the level of ability needed and the A/V resources needed, if any. Most of the activities in this text can be used for ELSA 1 to 3.

Creating Conversation in Class is a text that is also heavily marked with post-it notes. This text offers activities with clearly defined functions that generate a lot of language in the classroom. There is a large section on "breaking the ice" and sections such as "talking to each other", "talking about people" and "focusing on the family". Any of these topics could clearly generate a lot of discussion. The functions included go from simple describing to requesting and giving help, asking questions, expressing preference, and so on. Time estimates given for activities range from 15 minutes to 30 minutes. This text is suitable mainly for ELSA 3.

Note: *Creating Conversation in Class* and *The Resourceful English Teacher* are published by First Person Publishing, a branch of the English Teaching Professional magazine.

Lenard Langlois of Shane Global Village

Staff Profile – Brajinder Dhillon

In January, 2003 Brajinder Dhillon was honored in Delta. She was a recipient of a 25-Year Recognition Award from Delta School District January 23, 2003.

Brajinder has been teaching for Delta School District from 1975 to the present. She taught English to LINC and later to ELSA classes for Vancouver School Board (1984-2000). She also worked at South Vancouver Neighborhood House (1986-1990).

As well as Teaching English as a Second Language, Brajinder has done settlement and social work for New Canadians and Citizenship training. Brajinder told us that her most memorable day was when she convinced the superintendent of Delta schools, Mr. Colin McKenzie, of the need for an ESL programme for adult New Canadians in Delta. He gave her the permission to go ahead and she started the foundation of the ESL adult programme in Delta in 1975.

Her next memorable day was when she got a real classroom with real cupboards and shelves. Brajinder worked hard for the adult immigrants in Delta. She spent a lot of her own private time advertising the program with local businesses, and in ethnic newspapers and on radio. Her teaching included some years at a local temple, where she worked mainly with senior citizens from India.

Brajinder continues to be an energetic, innovative, and dedicated teacher. She willingly helps other staff members, and relates to staff and students (and the photocopier machine) in a unique way. She has lately become a published poet, and has had a number of articles published in newspapers in various countries.

Last summer saw her swinging on vines in the Amazon. Not bad, when she has passed retirement age!

Brajinder was asked the question "What advice would you give to someone starting in your profession?" Her reply: "Teaching is a challenge, accept it cheerfully. Have patience and keep smiling – a happy teacher produces happy students. Understand your students problems. Stress on quality and not quantity. Keep your students involved in learning. Be in your student's shoes. Keep smiling. Use games, language activities and warmers instead of books. Enjoy your teaching."

*Yvonne Chard, ELSA Instructor and Coordinator,
Delview Adult Centre, Delta School Board*

Regional Professional Development East and South Central BC

On March 7, ELSA instructors from East and South Central B.C. got together for a professional development day at Kamloops Immigrant Services. Despite the less than perfect road conditions, representatives joined the Kamloops staff from Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, and even from as far away as Grand Forks.

The morning presentation was an introduction to the B.C. Newcomers Guide Teaching Resource, by Jennifer Walsh Marr, who produced these resource materials. Most of you will be familiar with the guide, but may not know about these resource materials that are made to go along with it.

Jennifer took us through several of the activities and gave us an overview of the layout and organization of the whole resource package. This resource package is full of puzzles, games, and other activities which provide a way to make good use of the informative, but dry B.C. Newcomers Guide in the classroom. Jennifer has put together a well-organized, easy to use package, and it was very useful to have this introduction to the materials. The resource package will be available on-line at the end of March.

The afternoon session was an overview of the new ELSA Level 1 and 2 Progress Tests produced by VCC, which ELSA providers should have recently received. Alison Norman from VCC talked about the structure of the tests, and how to use them. Those in attendance seemed to agree that these tests will provide a concise, objective measurement of student ability, and will be a useful tool for ELSA providers, although they may be used differently in the Interior than they are in the Lower Mainland.

This regional P.D. Day was very worthwhile, and something we should try to organize more often. The presentations were useful, and it was great to network and get to know some of the other ELSA instructors in our region.

*Sandra Frangiadakis is an ELSA instructor for Kamloops
Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society*

