

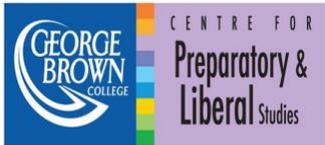


School of ESL and Immigrant Education George Brown College

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at The School of ESL and Immigrant Education

Learn something; share something!

Winter 2022



Critical Issues in ELT

Dear Readers:

In honour of the second-anniversary edition of the SoTL-ESL News, I am pleased to bring to you this Winter issue, which focuses on critical issues, including female leadership in TESOL and intercultural communication, in the field of English language teaching and learning.

Since the winter of 2020—the time when the publication of the SoTL-ESL News began to provide professional development opportunities; the time when the pandemic of COVID 19 and social isolation started to alter ways to teach and learn, I have had the privilege of working collaboratively with many colleagues via this publication to ensure student success and wellbeing continue to remain as our top priority at the School. We began this newsletter, an issue of which you are reading now, to reflect the new vanguard of the promotion of the scholarship of teaching and learning in the EAP field. Our first issue published in 2020 billed itself as a newsletter, inspiring all of us at the School to “learn something and share something” and this philosophy has always been at the centre of the publication.

With *Critical Issues in ELT* as its fitting theme, this issue covers several important dimensions of our work, learning, and contributions in the field and offers theoretical as well as practical implications of potential interest to faculty members at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education. In this issue, Ruari MacLeod, in his interview with SoTL-ESL, shares insightful ways of engaging in conversation with our students and colleagues that help create a positive impact and promote a respectful and inclusive environment within the realm of intercultural communication. Our conversations in this direction may sometimes be quite simple and intuitive. However, the impact these conversations have on our teaching may go far beyond our imagination when it comes to supporting the interest of our students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In her article, Ana-Marija Petrunic addresses female leadership in TESOL and challenges in the process, an issue that warrants immediate attention and extensive research in the field. In addition to these crucial learning opportunities, the issue highlights scholarly and professional works SoTL-ESL and faculty members have engaged in locally and globally in the field.

I hope that you will enjoy reading and sharing this issue and that your reading will spur excitement for our teaching and learning that may call for our critical thinking over identity, female leadership in TESOL, and intercultural communication. At the same time, I am hopeful that this issue will also inspire you to bullet-point your achievements and take pride in your contributions during these critical times.

Thank you for your readership.

Raj Khatri
Co-Chair, SoTL-ESL



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Member Highlights

We are pleased to congratulate the following members at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education on their important contributions to our SoTL-ESL community:

Presentations

Arai-Rissman, Andreia. (2022, March 7). *How to bring mindfulness to the ESL classroom* [Webinar]. Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies, Saskatoon, SK.

Glass, Maria. (2021, November 25). *Universal design for learning in ESL* [Virtual]. TESL Toronto's AGM 2021: Inclusivity in ESL. TESL Toronto, Toronto, ON.

Kushkiev, Plamen. (2022, August 6). *EAP teacher identity as pedagogy: Why our personal and professional stories matter* [Virtual presentation]. MMVC 22 Annual Conference, Toronto, ON.

Book Reviews

Brown, Jeff. (2021, November). Stephen Gaukroger, "The failures of philosophy: A historical essay" [Review of book *The Failures of philosophy: A historical essay*], by S. Gaukroger]. *Philosophy in Review*, 41(4), 230-2. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1084773ar>

Book Chapter

By Anna Bartosik in:

Townend, N., Bartosik, A., Folinazzo, G., Kelly, J. (2022). Teachers implementing action-oriented scenarios: Realities of the twenty-first century classroom. In E. Piccardo, G. Lawrence, A. Germain-Rutherford, A. Galante, (Eds.), *Activating linguistic and cultural diversity in the language classroom* (pp. 179–233). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-87124-6_8

STLHE Board of Directors

Ana-Marija Petrunic, Director (June 2021 – June 2024). <https://www.stlhe.ca/about/board-of-directors/>

Learn & Share Corner

Journals and Newsletters

Check out these journals and newsletters for the latest developments in the field.

- [The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#)
- [The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language](#)
- [TESL Canada Journal](#)
- [TESL Ontario CONTACT](#)

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

- [Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 2022 Annual Conference](#) (June 7 – 10)
- [Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance](#) (October 27 – 28)
- [TESOL Worldwide Calendar of Events](#)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

- [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning \(SoTL\) Canada](#)
- [International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning \(ISSoTL\)](#)
- [Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education \(STLHE\)](#)

Invitation to Review for TESL-EJ:

Acting as a reviewer for a peer-reviewed journal is a great way to get more involved in scholarship in the field as well as a wonderful professional development opportunity.

[TESL-EJ](#) is a peer-reviewed journal (indexed in Scopus) that publishes original research articles on a broad range of topics in TESL and Applied Linguistics.

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for the journal, or if you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact Jeff Brown, Co-Editor, TESL-EJ at jeffrey.brown2@georgebrown.ca.

The SoTL-ESL News

Interview with Ruari MacLeod

EAP Professor at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education, Ruari MacLeod (pronounced "Rory McCloud") has taught EAP classes in Japan, UAE, and Qatar. He holds a Master of Education degree and a doctorate in education, both with a specialization in TESOL/critical applied linguistics. In addition to facilitating EAP classes at the School, Ruari has been engaged in scholarly activities in the field of TESOL and applied linguistics, specifically critical applied linguistics, in Canada and abroad.

"One idea that stood out for me is that people who work together can sometimes almost unconsciously adopt shared ways of thinking and talking about their work (identifying as members within specific communities of practice). This can happen in the international (overseas) English language teaching profession, where teachers can take up particular ways of speaking about what they do; specifically, they may express commonly held ideas about their students as members of a 'host' culture... In such spaces of intercultural communication, language can take on unintentional undertones which are normalized within communities of practicing educators - especially in overseas contexts where a perceived dichotomy between cultures exists."

Thank you for joining us today for sharing your insight through our SoTL-ESL Newsletter. Could you please briefly tell us about your professional background in the EAP/ESL field?

Thank you for inviting me to participate in this interview session. I have been involved in the EAP/ESL field since 1997, when I worked as an English language teacher in Japan. I taught EAP in Japan until 2006 and then moved to Dubai, where I worked as an English language instructor at the Higher Colleges of Technology until 2014. I then taught EAP in a foundations program at the Community College of Qatar until 2019—the year when I returned to Canada. I have been living in Toronto and working as an EAP professor at George Brown College for two years.



As I have learned, your area of interest lies in critical applied linguistics. Would you specifically tell us about your interest within critical applied linguistics and how it has influenced your EAP or ESL teaching in the process of supporting our students in their academic endeavours at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education?

I first became aware of critical applied linguistics as a field of study when I was working on my EdD about 10 years ago. The discipline encompasses a number of elements related to language use, such as critical literacy, pedagogy, and language testing, but the one I found especially interesting was critical discourse analysis, which involves looking closely at the language people use and learning to identify unexamined assumptions that people may express through verbal and written communication.

One idea that stood out for me is that people who work together can sometimes almost unconsciously adopt shared ways of thinking and talking about their work (identifying as members within specific communities of practice). This can happen in the international (overseas) English language teaching profession, where teachers can take up particular ways of speaking about what they do; specifically, they may express commonly held ideas about their students as members of a 'host' culture.

This was definitely the case at the college where I worked in the United Arab Emirates, and the teachers I interviewed during my study made a number of commonly-held – and sometimes judgemental - observations relating to the culture of their students (UAE Nationals). In such spaces of intercultural communication, language can take on unintentional undertones which are normalized within communities of practicing educators - especially in overseas contexts where a perceived dichotomy between cultures exists.

Allstair Pennycook's book *Critical Applied Linguistics* (2001) is a good starting point to explore this area of study, though I found *Intercultural Communication and Ideology* by Adrian Holliday (2011) especially useful as a primer and aid to understanding the complex issues in this field of linguistics. *Linguistic Imperialism* by Robert Phillipson (1992) and *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching* by Suresh Canagarajah (1999) also offer valuable contributions to this subset of applied linguistics.

The authors do not offer much by way of specific pedagogies to counter this kind of unintentional discourse, but tend instead to recommend self-reflexivity towards chauvinistic attitudes on the part of educators. The idea seems to be that understanding a problem like this one (and its implications) goes a long way towards solving the problem. I think that it is also important to learn to recognize how even seemingly innocuous remarks about culture can be problematic; ultimately, they can perpetuate stereotypes about people that will disadvantage them when they look for places to work, places to live, and even places to socialize.

The SoTL-ESL News

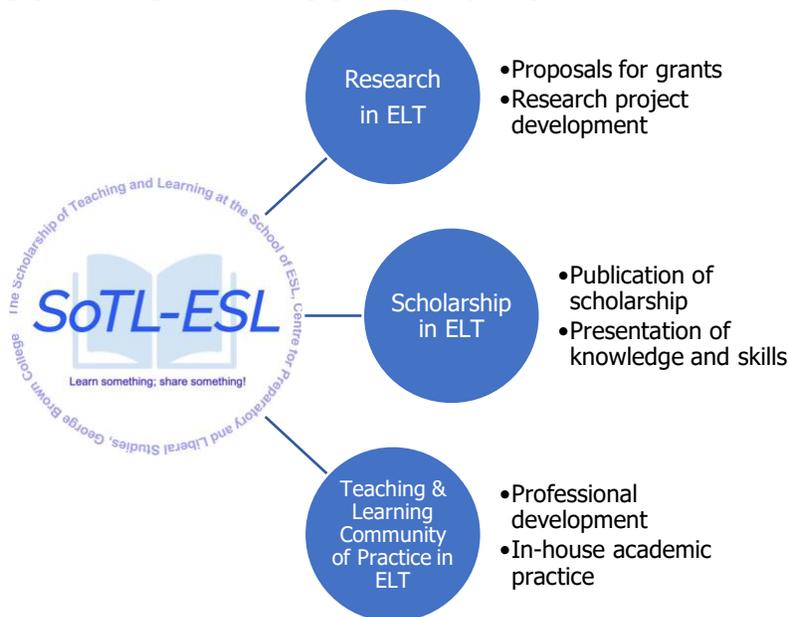
What does the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education (SoTL-ESL) mean?

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education (SoTL-ESL) was launched on November 4 of 2019 at George Brown College's School of ESL and Immigrant Education in order to enhance student learning through scholarly works among faculty members teaching English for academic purposes (EAP). Honouring the core values of SoTL and the nature of English language teaching and learning at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education, SoTL-ESL is defined at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education as the systematic study of teaching and learning in the English language teaching (ELT) field (*Research in ELT*) that involves the public sharing of the study findings and promotes scholarship among ELT teachers (*Scholarship in ELT*) in order to improve instructional practices and maximize learners' language learning. In addition, SoTL-ESL provides ELT teachers with opportunities for professional development (*Teaching and Learning Community of Practice in ELT*) at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education.

Building upon Felten's (2013)* principles of good practice in SoTL, SoTL-ESL includes inquiry into ELT that is methodologically sound and learner-focused, incorporates an awareness of the challenges unique to the ELT field, is conducted in partnership with learners in GBC's context, and is publicly available for critique and application.

*Felten, P. (2013). Principles of good practice in SoTL. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal*, 1(1), 121-125.

SoTL-ESL: Three Domains



The SoTL-ESL Committee

Raj Khatri and Ana-Marija Petrunic (Co-Chairs)

Sharmaine Itwaru (*Research in ELT*)

Jeff Brown (*Scholarship in ELT*)

Maria Glass and Andrea Rankin (*Teaching and Learning Community of Practice in ELT*)

Invitation to submit articles

SoTL-ESL is now accepting feature articles for its future issues. Faculty members are encouraged to submit their articles that have a maximum length of 1,000 words, including references. Articles previously published will not be accepted for re-publication. Review of articles submitted can take from 3 weeks to 2 months. Articles may address research work in ELT or may highlight practical tips and strategies in ELT, instructional methods, materials, and resources, technology in ELT classrooms, curriculum design, universal design for learning in ELT or assessment strategies in the field of TESOL and applied linguistics.

Member Insight

The Negotiation of Professional Identity as a TESOL Leader: A Research Opportunity

By Ana-Marija Petrunic



A woman in an educational leadership position encounters multiple challenges in her role, including, specifically, the challenges that transcend the tensions and inequalities between males and females, or the masculine and feminine. Gendered leadership from a critical feminist perspective identifies the purpose of gender is to politicize, historicize and de-essentialize the subjugation of women by examining power relations, challenging assumptions, and questioning the universality of ideas.

Women leaders in the field of TESOL are faced with the impact gender and culture have on their own leadership of complex and diverse organizations. The professional development of women TESOL leaders and the negotiation of their professional identities are directly impacted by gendered and enculturated ways of being. Although women leaders can be embattled from gendered, class-based, culturally biased assumptions and attitudes, how these challenges are negotiated, overcome and conquered requires further research. Whether the challenges for women TESOL leaders in higher education are presented from below (students and clients), above (supervisors and administration) or within (colleagues and co-workers), they are present and palpable (Airini, Conner, McPherson, Midson & Wilson, 2011); they may restrict access to career development and effective program administration and delivery as limitations are (sub)consciously imposed by the Other.

"The professional development of women TESOL leaders and the negotiation of their professional identities are directly impacted by gendered and enculturated ways of being. Although women leaders can be embattled from gendered, class-based, culturally biased assumptions and attitudes, how these challenges are negotiated, overcome and conquered requires further research."

Systemic inequalities in the context of Canadian higher education institutions have been examined through the participation of women students in academia, women in academic faculties (Guppy, Balson, & Vellutini, 1987) and the engagement of senior women leaders in rural areas (Sherman, 2000). A review of literature focusing on women as middle managers in Canadian higher educational institutions focuses mainly on occupation-specific training, as in faculties of education (Acker, 1997), yet the field of TESOL has not been examined to the same extent.

The theorization of gendered TESOL leadership necessitates practices of domination and marginalization be uncovered, examined and analyzed. The process of othering based on economic, social and political contexts fails to critically challenge embedded dominant discourses, critically understand the process of empowerment, relinquish the silence of the feminine voice and account for the lived experiences and histories of feminist educational leadership (Blackmore, 2006). Personal, professional and organizational factors influence the ability to support women's advancement in higher education institutions. Professional obstacles mirror facets of new managerialism – entrepreneurialism, performance management and corporatization (Deem & Brehony, 2005). Gendered, racialized, classed, and sexualized practices are at the root of the inequalities embedded within the organizational context. However, members of dominant groups have difficulty addressing systemic inequalities with which they do not have lived experiences.

Addressing this assumption, parts of my current research examine how professional lived experiences of a female TESOL leader impacts self-perception of leadership development, namely the act of performing leadership. Negotiating my professional identity through an autoethnographic review of critical incidents while encountering engendered pathways may lead to further contributions to the literature of gendered leadership as well as provide a framework for the situated narrative of female TESOL leadership experiences.

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- Blackmore, J. (2006). Social justice and the study and practice of leadership in education: A feminist history. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 38*(2), 185-200.
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Interview with Ruari MacLeod

Continued from page 3

"I don't talk about the shared characteristics of people from particular places, so as to avoid characterizing individuals as simply members of "other cultures" who lack the agency to live as free-thinking individuals. I do everything I can to create a shared space for students that is equitable, unbiased, and values the individual."

As a teacher in the ESL classroom, I often think back to what I've learned about (the idea of) culture and how it offers such a limited (and limiting) way to think about people. I do what I can to avoid discussions on culture that could lead to the continuance of stereotypes, or to members of the class feeling alienated or left out. I think it can be interesting to explore specific cultural practices as discussion topics in the classroom, but even that can be tricky, so I try to think carefully about what might be suitable for everyone. I don't talk about the shared characteristics of people from particular places, so as to avoid characterizing individuals as simply members of "other cultures" who lack the agency to live as free-thinking individuals. I do everything I can to create a shared space for students that is equitable, unbiased, and values the individual. I hope that this helps to create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in my classroom that is conducive to student motivation and learning.

As Professor of EAP at the School, would you briefly tell us about your role and how you have engaged in supporting students, particularly at the time when all instructional and curriculum activities are online? (How have you embraced tech to empower students?).

I have made my classrooms - virtual and real - friendly and relaxed places where I encourage students to participate in as many different learning activities as possible within the limitations of the online world. I continuously challenge students to engage with new technologies to complete assignments and participate in class. I support these activities by making instructional videos where I demonstrate to learners how to use online learning applications (such as Flipgrid, Nearpod, and Padlet, for example). Experience has led me to have students work in small breakout groups as often as possible; my students enjoy doing this and they are able to learn a surprising amount from one another within their discussions. I find that students are also less hesitant to speak in front of the entire class following these breakout sessions and I have plenty of volunteers when I ask questions. I continually explore and research different ways of teaching online and applications/activities we can access to help make learning easier and more engaging for students. Learning how to teach online has been empowering for me and I believe that it has also empowered my students. For example, many of my students say they did not believe they could record a 5-minute video of themselves speaking English before they actually did it; this exercise has given them confidence, as they spoke the language.

In addition to your teaching EAP, you continue to professionally engage at the same time in and outside of GBC. Could you share your insights into how we, faculty members at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education, can continue our professional development opportunities and stay current in the field while supporting student success at the same time?

Right now, we have a great opportunity to take advantage of an unprecedented number of professional development activities that are offered online. While the pandemic has limited us in terms of the kinds of professional development sessions we can attend in person, it has opened a new world of possibilities for PD that are neither time nor location bound. In this sense, it has made PD more accessible to everyone and demonstrated the effectiveness of distance education. Even after the pandemic, many PD sessions may continue to be offered online and such opportunities will be recognized as effective forms of learning. This development will make it easier for teachers to take advantage of PD opportunities and will benefit not only the teachers in the school, but also their students and the profession as a whole.

Would you like to share with us, in short, scholarly activities you have recently engaged in? How do you think your research and scholarly activities will contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning and student success at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education?

Much of my recent scholarly work has been conducted in the area of intercultural communication and (aside from completing my doctorate) I have used my knowledge and experience to design and teach courses in international business communication to English language learners. I have also planned and delivered courses in IELTS preparation, academic reading and writing, English for healthcare professionals, and public speaking. All of this experience has helped me to develop a globally-minded outlook on English language teaching and its practical applications for teaching and learning. I have been involved in numerous professional development initiatives overseas and here in Canada, which has also helped me to focus on current trends within the English language teaching profession. I believe that these experiences will help me to effectively support student success as well as the scholarship of teaching and learning at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education.



The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the School of ESL and Immigrant Education (SoTL-ESL)

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