



# Newsletter

June 2022



## President's Message

Cindy Valdez-Adams

I hope this newsletter finds everyone well. The challenges that many of you are currently experiencing in your various spaces during this time of the year are acknowledged by ATESOL NSW. Therefore, the team has continued to design and provide Professional Learning for our colleagues for the remainder of the semester.

Earlier in the school term, [the National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect \(EAL/D\) Education in Schools](#) was launched by the peak Council for teachers of English to speakers of other languages, the Australian Council for TESOL Teachers (ACTA) - Australia's opportunity to reform and revitalise EAL/D provision in schools. (see [Media release](#)) [READ MORE](#)



Danley, Gayle (You Tube Clip)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f8VcV8v2LE>

## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

Robyn Johnson

**We are a public school in the Riverina region on the border of NSW and Victoria.** Last year, we decided to include slam poetry in our poetry unit to extend and challenge our Enrichment English students.

Five students have a language background other than English.. Two students are Aboriginal. One is Wiradjuri which is the country on which our school is located. The other student is from Wonnarua country. There were thirteen year 6 students, five year 5 students and one accelerated year 3 student. [READ MORE](#)



Helen Moore ACTA Vice President

## Advocacy

### W(h)ither the Adult Migrant English Program? Political posturing and real outcomes

Helen Moore

'Will the forthcoming AMEP contracts send the Program even further down the path to becoming a... hollowed-out pretext for English language provision ... or set the Program on the path to becoming once again "the best program of its kind in the world?'

[READ MORE](#)

**Since this article was written, a new government has come into office.**

The opportunity has come to ask our newly elected local members to request the Government withdraw and review the forthcoming Request for Tender.



### Federal election 2022 result fails to make impact on lives of multicultural Australians

Norman Hermant, Mary Lloyd,  
**ABC News** Fri 27 May 2022 at 5:35 am

**The informal vote in the seat of Blaxland was 10.9 per cent, more than twice the national average.** For more than 70 per cent of its residents, English is not the main language spoken at home. [READ MORE](#)



### Teaching pronunciation: English for participating in Democracy

Glencie Aiken & Marina Pearce

**Meadowbank TAFE ESL students** took on the challenge of testing their speaking skills in the 'bear pit', the Lower House, when visiting NSW Parliament. [READ MORE](#)



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## President's Message

Cindy Valdez-Adams

I hope this newsletter finds everyone well. The challenges that many of you are currently experiencing in your various spaces during this time of the ATESOL NSW. Therefore, the team has continued to design and provide Professional Learning for our colleagues for the remainder of the semester ensure continuity of effective EAL/D pedagogy in the classrooms. And all the while, programs continue to be co-designed and co-taught, school strategies evaluated, student reports written, a new Government elected and a new Education Minister named.

In keeping with this year's focus on 'purpose' and on our 'why', here are a few questions we could ask ourselves when trying to reimagine, reframe and rebuild what matters to us most: What principles and values are guiding your thinking? The work or change you want to make, does it matter? Does it matter to you? Does it matter to your team or the sector that you're in? Which brings me to my next point: As part of the 'Impact Strategy' journey, we want to hear from you, our valued members. How can we better support you in your role/s? A survey was sent out a few weeks ago to collect your thoughts, so if you haven't already, please complete the survey by clicking this link: <https://us16.list-manage.com/survey?u=233d5f10373c5a851efb5dc23&id=1383c140f1&attribution=false>

Earlier in the school term, the [the National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect \(EAL/D\) Education in Schools](#) was launched by the peak Council for teachers of English to speakers of other languages, the **Australian Council for TESOL Teachers (ACTA)**. The *National Roadmap* is Australia's opportunity to reform and revitalise EAL/D provision in schools for these students. It has been included in this term's newsletter. I invite you to engage with it by having a read, and perhaps start a conversation with a colleague or two!

On behalf of the ATESOL team, I wish you all a safe and restful school holidays.

Cindy Valdez-Adams

## From the Editors

Glenice Aiken and Marina Pearce

Welcome to the June NSW ATESOL Newsletter with some inspiring reads (and videos) in our **winter** issue. Have a look at the **Slam Poetry** videos and article by Robyn Johnson (page 1 + link) – it will have *all* of us writing poetry ....and please send them (and AV?) to our little newsletter for everyone to enjoy!

**Advocacy** (page 3) NSW ATESOL and our national Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA) continue to work tirelessly on our mission to improve educational outcomes for EAL/D students in the schools and adult sectors. Following the launch of the **National Roadmap** in early May, the universities of Sydney and NSW, ACTA and NSW ATESOL are hosting a **Public forum on the future of EAL/D education in Australia, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 12-2 pm, Room 351, Education Building University of Sydney.** [Registration link for EALD forum](#)

In 2022 the **Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)** faces another gruelling and wasteful round of tendering as a new government comes into office. With news of the final distribution of preferences for the Senate we learn that 'the informal vote in the seat of Blaxland, in the heart of Sydney, was 10.9 per cent, more than twice the national average. For more than 70 per cent of its residents, English is not the main language spoken at home', with voters reporting confusion about the electoral system (*ABC news report 27 May 2022 page 8*) These figures raise questions, yet again, about access to quality English education for adult migrants and refugees, so they can achieve a 'functional' level of English, to settle in Australia, get a job and also understand their citizenship rights and obligations.

**ACTA has spear-headed an unrelenting campaign for the AMEP** for over five years, along with teachers in the state TESOLs. Action has included provision of seven reports, 12 submissions, hosting of 10 forums across the nation, lobbying politicians, and meeting with three different ministers' advisers. The seemingly endless campaign is outlined in an article by Helen Moore, Vice-President of Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA), ***W(h)ither the Adult Migrant English Program? Political posturing and real outcomes.*** (page 1). The author asks, 'Will the forthcoming AMEP contracts send the Program even further down the path to becoming a... hollowed-out pretext for English language provision ... or set the Program on the path to becoming once again "the best program of its kind in the world?"

**The time has come to ask our newly elected local members to request the Government to withdraw and review the forthcoming *Request for Tender for the AMEP*.**

While we continue to report on the challenges facing EAL/D education, we hope you will find the strong advocacy reported in our newsletter, an inspiration, knowing that teachers, academics, students, concerned community organisations are continuing to work together to restore professional standards which have been built up over decades.

Wishing members a good break

Marina & Glenice

## Advocacy

### Schools

#### **NSW ATESOL Response to the NESAs English 3-6 and 7-10 Draft Syllabuses, May 2022**

Margaret Turnbull

NSW ATESOL recently completed consultation with members on a **Response to the NESAs English 3-6 and 7-10 Draft Syllabuses, May 2022** and the submission represents the views of TESOL teachers across the government, Catholic and Independent school sectors. Issues with the Draft Syllabuses raised by ATESOL and their recommendations included recognising the critical role of language in building the foundation for all other outcomes and underpinning learning across the curriculum.

[READ MORE](#)

#### **ACTA National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Education in Schools**

<https://tesol.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Roadmap-for-English-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect-in-schools-ACTA-May-2022.pdf>

ACTA has launched its *National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Education in Schools*, calling for national 'build back better' reform of specialist provision for English language learners in schools ahead of the Federal Election.

The plan addresses longstanding and now pressing national policy issues that have affected the quality of English language provision for over 600,000 English language learners in Australian schools through twelve key actions aligned to the directions and initiatives of the *National Schools Reform Agreement*.

Following the launch of the **National Roadmap** in early May, the universities of Sydney and NSW, ACTA and NSW ATESOL are hosting a **Public forum on the future of EAL/D education in Australia, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 12-2pm**, Room 351 Education Building, Manning Road, University of Sydney.

[READ MORE](#)

#### **2021 August ACTA's submission to the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review**

### Adult ESOL

#### **2022 May**

SBS TV and on-line have reported on concerns about

the proposed new funding model for the AMEP. The reports include comments by Dr Helen Moore, ACTA Vice-President.

To see the **on-line report**, click here: [Fears over new funding model for Australia's migrant English program \(sbs.com.au\)](https://www.sbs.com.au/news/content/2022/05/12/fears-over-new-funding-model-for-australia-s-migrant-english-program)

To listen to **audio of the TV news item**, enter the following address for the podcast: **Concerns sparked over Adult Migrant English Program funding (sbs.com.au)**

To read **Helen Moore's article in the VALBEC journal *Fine Print***, which describes the key issues, click [here](#).

To read **ACTA submissions** about this proposed funding model, click [here](#).



<https://tesol.org.au/advocacy/#advocacy-6>



## AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TESOL ASSOCIATIONS



**MEDIA RELEASE – 06/05/2022** A *National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Education in Schools* was launched by the peak Council for teachers of English to speakers of other languages, the **Australian Council for TESOL Teachers (ACTA)**.

“Today there are over 600,000 Indigenous, migrant and refugee students in Australian schools needing help with English,” said Dr Anne Keary, ACTA President.

“However, Commonwealth devolution of responsibility for EAL/D education to State and Territory governments, and the aggregation of funding through school global budgets, has compromised the targeted provision of funding for EAL/D learner support. The *National Roadmap* is Australia's opportunity to reform and revitalise EAL/D provision in schools for these students.”

The *Roadmap* proposes twelve key Actions that are aligned to the directions and initiatives of the *National Schools Reform Agreement*. They are designed to reverse the following problems:

- inadequate levels and methods of Gonski needs-based English language funding
- lack of transparency and accountability for the allocation and use of Gonski needs-based English language funding
- absence of any national reporting of students’ English language levels, learning or progress
- lack of targeted education and training pathways that include English learning for young people from Indigenous, migrant and refugee backgrounds with incomplete schooling
- failure to leverage bi-lingual/bi-literacy programs to improve Indigenous students’ school engagement and achievement
- failure of teacher regulation authorities and teacher education to ensure **all teachers** are equipped to teach English language learners in Australian classrooms
- lack of national workforce planning for specialist English language teachers.

“As Australia emerges from the pandemic and reopens to the world, national action is urgently needed to restore our former leading role in teaching English to English language learners,” Dr Keary said.

“ACTA calls on all political parties and Commonwealth and State and Territory Education Ministers to commit to implementing the ACTA *Roadmap* Actions. We need to rebuild effective English language and literacy provision to promote English language learners’ successful participation in education and their contribution to a cohesive and prosperous multicultural society.”

ACTA’s *National Roadmap for English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Education in Schools* can be viewed [here](#)

### For further information:

Dr Michael Michell, ACTA spokesperson on EAL/D education in schools. h: 02 9610 4870; m: 0412 167 054 Email: [m.michell@unsw.edu.au](mailto:m.michell@unsw.edu.au)



# Newsletter

June 2022

## 2022 MAJOR CONFERENCES



The future-oriented seventh biennial **ACTA Conference, Pushing the Boundaries**, is being held in **Brisbane in 2022 (date to be confirmed)**, in the heart of Brisbane at the Hilton Hotel.

Conference presentations will focus on the theme, Pushing the Boundaries, and speakers will highlight innovations in the theory and practice of teaching English to speakers of other languages in Australia and globally.

The conference strands are:

- New approaches and ideas in TESOL pedagogy
- New developments in linguistics/ applied linguistics
- New insights and perspectives on student support and well being
- Changing systems, structures and policies in a TESOL context
- English in a global context

For updates, please visit the <https://actaconference.com/> and like the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACTAConference/>

**Sponsorship** of one full conference registration (per paper) will be provided to members who have a paper accepted at the ACTA conference. See NSW ATESOL website for details

TESOL calendar of Events 2021



<https://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/calendar-of-events>



<https://alaa.net.au/Conference/ALAA-Conference>

The Applied Linguistics Conference 2021

**Postponed until 2022**

Wellington City, New Zealand

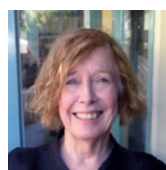
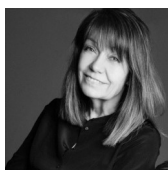
**New dates: 25-27 November, 2022**

## STATE TESOL ASSOCIATIONS



[Become an ACTA affiliate member of State TESOL Asso-](#)

## From the ATESOL NSW Newsletter Editors



Welcome to the **Winter** ATESOL NSW Newsletter. To view, click on **READ MORE** or the URLs to read the full articles, or scroll.

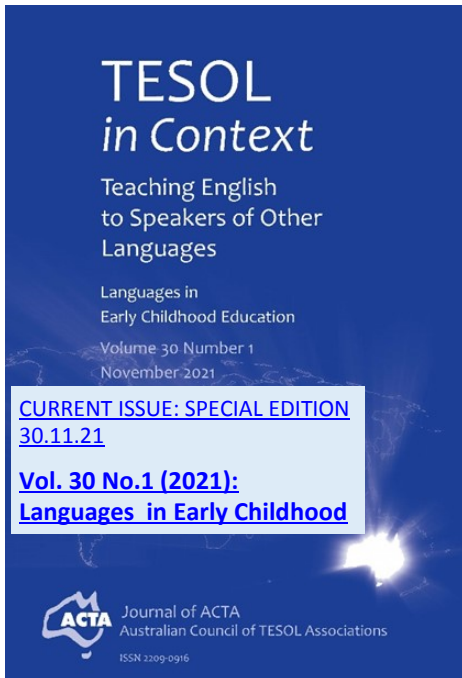
We hope you enjoy the newsletter. Please email ATESOL NSW for any enquiries or other correspondence.

General enquiries: [atesolnsw@gmail.com](mailto:atesolnsw@gmail.com)



# Newsletter

June 2022



## TESOL in Context

*TESOL in Context* is an internationally refereed journal with a wide target audience, both national and international. Readership includes TESOL / EAL professionals working in all sectors of education; universities, primary and secondary schooling, early childhood settings, adult migrant programs, vocational training, ELICOS and TESOL teacher education, both in Australia and internationally. Articles published in *TESOL in Context* typically examine the nexus between theory and practice. The aims of *TESOL in Context* are to

- provide professionals in the field with insights into TESOL issues in Australia and internationally
- contribute to the development of classroom expertise through dissemination of current research and thinking around TESOL

On this page we provide a few of the articles from the [CURRENT ISSUE](#):

*From the editors of this issue of TESOL in Context*

*(Some of the) recent research scholarship into languages acquisition ... suggests a critical precondition for learning involves recognising and engaging with the cultural and linguistic knowledges and learning experiences of students ...and views the linguistic repertoire of any individual, including the very young child, as complex – shaped by the “linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional” characteristics of the individual ...*

[Editorial Abstract, TESOL in Context, Vol. 30 No.1 \(2021\): Languages in Early Childhood Education](#)

### Leveraging Languages for Learning: Incorporating Plurilingual Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education and Care

<https://ojs.deakin.edu.au/index.php/tesol/article/view/1572>

(See authors listed on website)

This article...argues that multilingualism can be encouraged and effectively supported within early childhood education environments (ECEC).

### Mothers as First Teachers: Exploring the Features of Motherchild Interactions That Support Young Aboriginal Children’s Multilingual Learning at Playgroup

<https://ojs.deakin.edu.au/index.php/tesol/article/view/1580>

(See authors listed on website)

For many Indigenous children living in remote communities, the prerequisites to achieving strong language and learning outcomes include the maintenance of their first languages and progress in learning English as an additional language. This paper reports on data from a Linkage study conducted with families at two Families as First Teachers (FaFT) playgroups in two remote Northern Territory communities ...

The data highlight the importance of early childhood teaching and learning that honours children’s linguistic and cultural resources and prioritises families’ aspirations for children’s multilingual language learning.

### The Niichii Project: Revitalizing Indigenous Language in Northern Canada

<https://ojs.deakin.edu.au/index.php/tesol/article/view/1582>

(See authors listed on website)

Two Anishnabek kindergarten teachers discuss four principles of Indigenous pedagogies in a project with a university researcher that created a context for children to engage in activities to learn their Anishnabek language and culture, and create positive identities ...

...Implications for other bilingual and multilingual contexts include creating role play contexts where children are positioned as teachers and helpers to support an imaginary character’s language and cultural learning, building on children’s funds of knowledge and highlighting cultural connections to the local community.



# Newsletter

June 2022

## MEDIA WATCH



### How can Australia support more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers?

March 14, 2022

**Ren Perkins** PhD Candidate, School of Education, The University of Queensland  
**Marnee Shay** ARC Senior Research Fellow, School of Education, Affiliate Senior Lecturer, Centre for Policy Futures, The University of Queensland



The government has a history of trying to increase the numbers of Indigenous teachers. We must build on these earlier attempts and centre the voices of Indigenous peoples in implementing programs to support these recommendations if these are to lead to successful outcomes

<https://theconversation.com/how-can-australia-support-more-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-teachers-178522>

### All teachers need to teach language and literacy, not just English teachers

April 21, 2022

**Sue Ollerhead**

Senior Lecturer: Language and Literacy Education, Macquarie University



In NSW schools, 24% of students speak English as an additional language ... They need their teachers to be able to understand their language challenges and to give them subject-specific language support so they can succeed at school like everyone else ... many teachers say they don't feel well prepared to teach English language learners.

<https://theconversation.com/all-teachers-need-to-teach-language-and-literacy-not-just-english-teachers-180498>

### 3 barriers that stop students choosing to learn a language in high school

Published: April 26, 2022

**Stephanie Clayton**

Lecturer in Curriculum Studies (Primary), University of Tasmania



Fewer students are choosing language electives at school, but contrary to popular perception, it isn't purely a lack of interest causing the decline. My recent study suggests students want to study a language, but can't. Barriers to studying a language include: **Lack of options**—students not able to study a preferred language; **timetable restrictions**; **languages are rarely a prerequisite for (further) study**.

<https://theconversation.com/3-barriers-that-stop-students-choosing-to-learn-a-language-in-high-school-178033>



## Newsletter June 2022

### MEDIA WATCH



Abbas Nazari was 7 years old when his family boarded a crowded fishing boat in 2001, bound for Australia, that became the focal point of the Tampa Affair.



Rescued asylum seekers on the Tampa



Rukhsana Raza, a permanent resident here for 2 decades, said she still found the voting system confusing.

### Celebrating World Refugee Day 20 June 2022

The Year that Made Me:  
Abbas Nazari, 2001

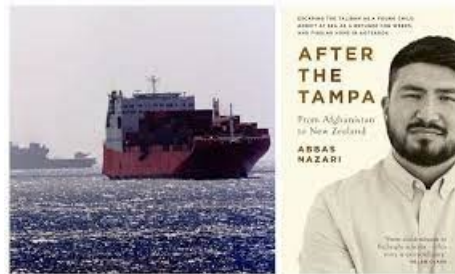
Broadcast on ABC RN Sunday Extra, 19 June 2022

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/sundayextra/13932710>

When the Taliban were at the height of their power in 2001, Abbas Nazari's parents were faced with a choice: stay and face persecution in their homeland, or seek security for their young children elsewhere.

The family embarked on a harrowing journey from the mountains of Afghanistan to a small fishing boat in the Indian Ocean, crammed with more than 400 other asylum seekers. When the boat started to sink, they were saved by a cargo ship, the *Tampa*.

Abbas was interviewed by Sarah Kanowski, Presenter



### Federal election 2022 result fails to make impact on lives of multicultural Australians

Norman Hermant, Mary Lloyd, *ABC News* (*enter headline in Google for best results*)

Fri 27 May 2022 at 5:35a

The informal vote in the seat of Blaxland— votes cast, but filled out incorrectly – was 10.9 per cent, more than twice the national average. Blaxland is one of the most multicultural electorates in Australia. For more than 70 per cent of its residents, English is not the main language spoken at home.



Gulay Karci said she believed many people in her community were confused about the voting system "I don't believe that the people understand how this voting system really works," ... "They're all just doing their bit to not get a fine."





# Newsletter

June 2022

## Professional Learning & Teaching Resources

Review - Joanne Rossbridge

### ***English and Literacies: Learning how to make meaning in primary classrooms***

(Ewing, O'Brien, Rushton, Stewart, Burke and Brosseuk, 2022, Cambridge)

***English and Literacies: Learning how to make meaning in primary classrooms*** presents a broad view of literacy applicable to the twenty-first century and has a focus on meaning at its heart. It is aimed at pre-service and early career primary teachers. However, it is also great resource for teachers with many years of experience to refocus on literacy issues at this point in time and how these impact upon current classroom practice.

With chapters contributed by a range of authors with extensive experience in the literacy education world over many years, reading, viewing, and writing are considered in terms of the importance of oracy and within the context of quality children's literature and inclusion.

Each chapter effectively shows the connection from theory to practice with case studies and practical strategies throughout. Reflection/review questions also assist in making connections and assisting readers to consider the reasons for literacy practices in classrooms.

Each of the 16 chapters is underpinned by research and practice related not only to the importance of teaching language in context and the love of literature but much more. Frequent themes also include the importance of creativity, the critical role of the teacher in knowing about language, and careful choice of strategies to interact with and acknowledge the diversity and identities of their students throughout their literacy development.

**School leaders** will also appreciate this comprehensive book, particularly those supporting early career teachers. The book can be dipped into overtime by looking at relevant chapters depending on the needs or professional learning focus at the time. The chapters also provide very useful stimulus for discussion in professional learning teams with teachers coming with a range of experiences.

**The chapters are organised** from big picture ideas and issues in literacy education including literacy development and policy and curriculum in the first two chapters. These chapters are critical for early career teachers to know the history and politics surrounding literacy teaching in Australia. Following chapters cover topics ranging from authentic assessment and oracy, reading and viewing, as well as the importance of children's literature and creative and critical response. Chapters are also devoted to writing and teaching grammar in context. Additional chapters look at cultural and linguistic diversity and learners with special needs. Chapters on the knowledge and skills for spelling and handwriting are also included. The final chapters consider literacy across the curriculum and family partnerships.

**Some of the highlights** in the book include chapters such as *Chapter 3: Assessment and Reporting*. Assessment is placed up front in the book giving guidance for teachers to plan their own assessment with clear connections to teaching and explicit feedback. This is effectively exemplified with case studies and examples. Early career teachers would also find *Chapter 4: Developing oracy* helpful in terms of understanding its importance and the suggestion of strategies thoughtfully embedded into teaching reading. *Chapter 6* is useful for all teachers with its strong focus on a meaning-centred view of reading and viewing and exploration of some of the controversies surrounding the teacher of reading. Similarly, *Chapter 7* assists with the curation of classroom literature and setting up the classroom. For those looking for support to teach writing, Chapters 9 and 10 are complementary, looking at purposefully creating texts and developing knowledge about language and grammar in context.

*English and Literacies: Learning how to make meaning in primary classrooms* is a very rich text that addresses many of the needs of pre-service and early career teachers and is sure to be of great support for those both entering and already within the profession. It is the type of text to keep returning to over many years throughout a teaching career.



# ATESOL

NSW Inc

ASSOCIATION FOR TEACHING ENGLISH  
TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

## Newsletter

June 2022

### Professional Learning & Teaching Resources



## The CREATE Centre



**Everybody Deserves a Creative Education**

**CREATE Centre** - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Creativity Research, Engaging the Arts and Transforming Education. Exploring the relationship between learning, creativity and the transformative role of the arts in education, health and wellbeing. ... The **CREATE Centre** is a vibrant hub



**Webinars:** Victoria Campbell & Zoe Hogan *Connecting Through Drama*



**Film Screenings:** *Tree of Ecstasy* and *Unbearable Sadness*



**Public Forums:** Getting Arts Education on the election agenda



**School Projects**

For all current CREATE initiatives, projects and events, [keep an eye on our website](#) plus an archive of our online activities on our [YouTube Channel](#)

## Professional Learning & Teaching Resources



Danley, Gayle (You Tube Clip)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f8VcV8v2LE>

### Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

Robyn Johnson

Last year, we decided to include slam poetry in our poetry unit to extend and challenge our Enrichment English students. It was an exciting opportunity to really get to know each other in the class and play with language. This focus was inspired by the text: Dutton, J., D'Warte, J., Rossbridge, J., & Rushton, K. (2018). **Tell me your story: confirming identity and engaging writers in the middle years**. This text aims to:

*[Value] the linguistic and cultural heritage of students [as] an important way to develop inclusivity and connectedness and ... promote wellbeing and engagement with learning. By fostering an inclusive creative pedagogy, teachers can meet the needs of students from a range of linguistic, cultural and social backgrounds ...*

(Janet Dutton, Jacqueline D'warte, Joanne Rossbridge and Kathy Rushton as quoted on the PETAA Website)

#### Class Context

We are a public school in the Riverina region on the border of New South Wales and Victoria. Last year, the Enrichment English class consisted of nineteen students. They would come to my classroom as part of a parallel teaching arrangement under the banner of Learning Support for the entire literacy session. These were held four mornings a week. Five students have a language background other than English. They were all in the consolidating phase of their English development (Annual EAL/D Survey, 2021 – NSW). Two students are Aboriginal. One is Wiradjuri which is the country on which our school is located. The other student is from Wonnarua country. There were thirteen year 6 students, five year 5 students and one accelerated year 3 student.

#### The Start of the Slam Poetry Journey

Before we started the unit, I made our class text 'Limelight' by Soli Raphael. During brain breaks, I would read sections of the book, the poems at the back of the book and showed You Tube clips of Soli performing. I knew this would create curiosity around poetry since Soli started slam poetry at a similar age to the children in my class. This enhanced the message – you can do it! The content was also about topics that I knew the students would relate to such as social justice and environmental themes. I wanted to generate interest in the topic before starting the unit to reduce the fear that many students have in sharing details about themselves and the creative pursuit of poetry. We discussed the type of culture we wanted in our class, so that the students were prepared to encourage each other knowing that the most effective poetry reveals something about the poet. According to Soli Raphael himself '.. slam poets usually use their personal experience to tell a poetic story.' (Raphael, p3) As you can imagine, that can be daunting for some 10, 11 and 12 year olds!

(From my Daily Slides for my class in 2021)

## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

### What is 'Slam Poetry'?

According to the Penwings Publishing Website:

*Slam poetry is the competitive version of spoken poetry where performers are required to recite their piece within a given time in front of a crowd... Performing slam poetry is like story-telling, but shorter. There is a time limit of three minutes per performance in each round. Usually, there are three rounds where performers with the top scores for each round are qualified to continue the match to the next round. They move up the ranks of the competition until a slam poetry champion is chosen.*

When I officially introduced slam poetry, I used a couple of You Tube clips with comprehension questions. See the screenshots from my daily slides. Each one of these below was a warm up for our writing lesson on consecutive days.

**Slam poetry**

What is the point of slam poetry?  
How are judges selected?  
How is the poetry scored?  
How can you progress to the next round in the competition?

Pen Clique (You Tube Clip;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1b4NHBl3ujE>)

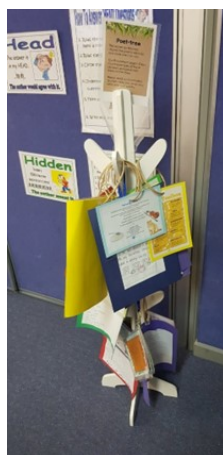
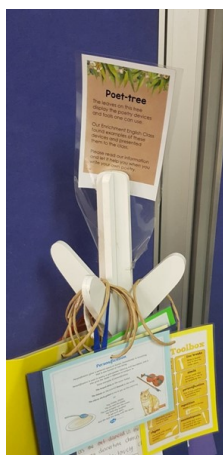
**Slam poetry**

Slam poetry is performance poetry. It has no genre.  
What is particularly clever about this procedure on how to create slam poetry?  
What is the main message that the boy in the clip is trying to convey?  
Give an example of the 'show don't tell' technique.

Danley, Gayle (You Tube Clip;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f8VcV8v2LE> )

### Exploration phase

My good friend and fellow EAL/D teacher, Noreen Navin, gave me the tip of creating a 'Poet-tree' for the classroom. The word pun was a hit with my class! We used a coat rack in the shape of a tree to display poetry devices and examples of these devices. The students were organised into pairs and provided with an explanation of one poetry technique. They had to conduct an internet search together to find poetry with examples using this particular type of poetry device and then create 'leaves' for the tree showcasing what they had learned. My students were invited to then share their findings with the class, which allowed me to conduct an initial assessment on speaking for the students before they started their unit. It also meant they had a resource that they could use throughout the poetry unit. They could borrow a leaf at any time, take it to their desk and use it to help them with their poetry when they were up to the creation / independent writing stage of the unit.



## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

We also covered Blackout Poetry, which is created from a previously printed page such as a newspaper, magazine or page from an old book from an opportunity store. The poet after choosing the words they wish to keep, 'blacks out' the parts they do not want and they can cover them with art, collage or simple black lines. The end result is a visual artwork as well as a poem. This type of poetry can help students get initiated into poetry without having to stare at a blank page to begin.

### How to make Black Out Poetry



What is black out poetry?  
 Answer here.

What materials can you use to make blackout poetry?  
 Answer here.

Why does the presenter like Black Out Poetry?  
 Answer here.

### Independent Sourcing

1. Find a recent Australian news article on the web.
2. Copy and paste it on to the next slide.
3. Use the black highlighter feature in the tool bar to 'black out' some of the words. The words that you want to keep should remain unhighlighted.

Enjoy and be creative!



You tube Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nt5nguT3hEM&t=4s>

For our independent writing task, the main topic was 'unapologetically me' and the discussion centred on societal norms and how we do not have to conform to them and should embrace our authenticity. When I introduced this topic, I asked the students to draw a self portrait and label it according to their own features, characteristics and personal traits. This helped in the planning phase for the writing.

### Unapologetically Me

Today, draw a self portrait and write labels of the things that define you around the border.



We explored many of Soli Raphael's performances such as Game Changer and Evolution. The students were allowed to borrow the book during our silent reading sessions, which led to slam poetry Contests in the class. They would pick one of Soli's poems, memorise them and then battle out in the classroom. It was epic! I also introduced the students to another slam poet who I had taught before many moons ago – Bilal Hafda. They were interested to know about his slam poetry, his role in the story factory and the Bankstown Slam Poetry Competition. <https://www.westfield.com.au/story/6Ypd1HmQ2k0cUluoCA2aqA/bilal-hafda>

Next, I built the field for the students around the topic 'Unapologetically me'. This is where the students needed to get behind the purpose of the poem to stop apologising for being the way they are, accept themselves, stop trying to be something they are not and find their true happiness in honesty. I conducted an internet search on the topic. Since some mature themes arose from this internet search, I selected sections of an internet article with the students rather than have the students conduct their own search. We read this written stimulus as a class and discussed the various points. Students ended with picking one thing from the text that they could relate to.

## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

### *Internet search:* [Don't apologise for being yourself](#)

I've got a simple question for you: Who are you? Look, this is not a job interview or any type of interview.

I'm not looking for a politically correct answer. "I'm a person who's serious about his career. I like to spend time with my family and friends." That's true for every single person who is determined enough to have a job.

No, I'm talking about who you truly are — deep down.

Because let's face it, you and I both know that we all have two personalities, who live two different lives. There's the life we want to live, and then there's the life we're actually living.

I used to be that way. I always thought that "It's impossible to live the way I really want." And that's what held me back from: Living the way I wanted. Turning my passion into a career. Taking ownership and full control of my life.

You know what my problem was? I was afraid to be myself. That's all. But most of us are simply so scared to admit that.

But I meet people all the time who are afraid to be themselves. Not only at work but also outside of it.

Recently, a reader asked me: "Hey Darius, do you think I should stop being silly so that people take me seriously?"

And I get emails like this all the time. And it [annoys me]! Not that I get these questions, but that we live in a world where these things happen all the time.

### *You'll be happier if you become yourself.*

When we take control of our lives, we start feeling better about it. And when we feel better, we enjoy our life more. And that makes us happier.

"That's common sense!" Sure. So are a lot of other things. But you need to act on it. Otherwise, you're just a talker.

Over the past few years, I've been gradually living life on my terms. And now, I can honestly say that everything I do and say is because I want to.

I only work with people I like. I spend time with people I like. And I do what I like. Now, it also happens that I'm a responsible person and help others. I like to set a good example for my environment.

That's just who I am.

It's time for you to be yourself. Do what you're meant to do: The right thing.

### *You should never apologize for who you are.*

I get a lot of questions that can be boiled down to this: I can't be myself. I get it because I was like that too.

We fear that people won't like us, respect us, or value us if we don't "fit in".

Why do we fear that so much? It's a waste of energy.

Like all fears, it's unnecessary. Look, you're not going to die alone when you become yourself 24/7.

It's not only a waste of energy, but it's also a waste of LIFE if you're not living it on your terms.

I believe that you should live the way YOU want. You should always say and do what YOU want. I don't care where in the world you live in. "That's not what we do in our country." Find a way!

Because what's the alternative? Do you want to shut down your true personality and become some robot that's programmed by society or other people?

No one deserves that.

From here, I figured if I'm going to expect my students to create their own slam poetry, I had better have a go at writing my own. I used this text as a modelled piece of writing. I shared how I structured the poem to give the students enough support to feel confident enough to get started.

### *Unapologetically Me*

Unapologetically,

An adverb meaning in a manner that does not acknowledge or express regret.

I look around to see many people act and say things that are to impress people they have just met.

Not them - pretend - mend,

How can this be living your best life?

Daughter, sister, cousin, teacher, friend, mother, wife,  
Strife,

Too many roles to play,

Day after day,

It is easy to get lost in what I'm expected to be,

But I am starting to see,

That I should always be unapologetically me.

### *Unapologetically Me*

I am a fast-paced, regionally placed teacher who loves travel, cultures and languages,

I have problems with time and rhyme, organisation of baggages,

I love laughing and spending hours with my family and friends,

To no end.

I am kind, caring, nurturing, sharing,

I can be fiery when I see people disrespecting others because of their race, face, place, space,

It's a disgrace,

And I won't stand back and let it happen,

Without a retort,

Fraught, can't be bought.

After the modelled text, we started the writing process. I started the lesson by emphasising that the students need to play around with their ideas and language. I highlighted that I had changed my writing several times before I made my final copy. The slide for their task is displayed below. The students had three lessons to build up their poem.

## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories

### Unapologetically Me

Write your poem.

Look up rhyming words in Google.

Be brave. Play around with the language. Re-read it over and change things up.

Structure of your poem

1. Definition of 'unapologetically' and real world situation
2. Different roles we play and what we are expected to be
3. What we really are
4. What we stand for

Be who you are  
 And say what you feel  
**Because those  
 who mind don't  
 Matter  
 And those who  
 Matter  
 Don't Mind.**  
Dr. Seuss

Initially, the students were a bit hesitant to start. For many students, I sat next to them and conducted google searches with them based on rhyming words from the labels they used in their self portrait. They started writing all their findings down under their self portrait. This helped them to get past the 'Blank Page – Writer's Block' moment. Then, I encouraged those who had trouble starting to use the structure I had used (displayed on the slide), but for the others, they did not have to stick to the structure if they had their own structure in mind.

Once the students completed their poems, they needed to perform them. That is the whole idea behind slam poetry as it is essentially 'performance art'. These slides guided them in their preparation for their performance and how to be a 'good' audience member

### Unapologetically Me:

Time to shine

Be brave  
 Audience -  
 behave.  
 Click along and  
 click faster and  
 louder when your  
 hear something  
 you like.

In the end, many of the performances included themes such as: feeling pressure to excel at school, gender identity and sexuality, racism, acceptance and societal issues around identity. The students made some highly profound comments and it was so pleasing to see some of our students come out of their shell through the process. Students were asked if they would like to share their performances with our school community. Since some of the poems were extremely personal, many students declined the offer understandably. Here is a video of the students who did volunteer to be featured on our Facebook post and newsletter to share their poetry with the community.

## Slam poetry – linking culture & stories



Facebook Post: <https://fb.watch/dPcbdCxeaQ/>

### **So, what do you have to lose?**

Embrace 'Tell them your story' and get to know your students through slam poetry today.

**Robyn Johnson** B.Ed., Grad Cert (TESOL), M.Ed.(TESOL)

EAL/D Teacher and LaST (Learning and Support Teacher); Albury EAL/D Network Coordinator

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## Teaching pronunciation: English for participating in Democracy

Marina Pearce & Glenice Aiken

*Students in the AMEP have always been involved in the consultation with governments by teachers, unions and professional associations, to improve equitable access to quality English education for adult migrants and refugees. This article was first published in the newsletter six years ago and it is timely to offer it again as a new government comes into office. The Parliament workshops continue to offer an opportunity to learn about how laws are made in Australia, the rights and obligations of citizenship and a truly authentic challenge for developing and testing students' English acquisition.*

### Meadowbank TAFE ESL students took on the challenge of testing their speaking skills in the 'bear pit', the Lower House, when visiting NSW Parliament.

Taking the roles of Government, Opposition and Speaker the students debated a Bill, *To Provide More Assistance to Adult Migrants Studying English*.

In preparing their arguments, they were able to draw on their own lived experiences as migrants and international students, and their aspirations for life in Australia which promoted the use of more complex language and encouraged strong presentations delivered with conviction.

A/V recording of practice role play sessions, especially on their mobile phones, was a powerful motivator, encouraging students to review, assess and continue to develop their spoken performance.

Recently-arrived from around the world (China, Bangladesh, Korea, Russia, Ukraine, Italy and Japan) the group included tertiary-educated professionals, aged 24—45, aiming to resume work in their chosen professions as well as high school graduates planning vocational study in Australia.

They were enrolled in *Certificate 2 in Spoken and Written English (CSWE)* delivered through the Adult Migrant English Program which provides 510 hours of English language instruction.

Practice included A/V recording on their mobile phones.



The students researched the process of how laws are made in an Australian parliament and the roles and responsibilities for members of Parliament.

They developed arguments for and against the Bill.

#### Preparation activities:

- Research NSW Parliament and how legislation is made included Dictionary skills for meaning, grammar and pronunciation
- Preparation of arguments about the Bill to be passed. Students worked in pairs to script, practice and A/V record on mobile phones.
- Teachers and students then reviewed and assessed the videos.



AMEP students Level 3 debate a bill in the Lower House NSW Parliament

### Excursion activity

- Parliament Education Officer guided students through their role play of debating a Bill
- Students and teachers A/V recorded speeches in Parliament which were later uploaded to Dropbox for self/peer assessment
- After the excursion students compiled a booklet about the excursion activities illustrated with their photos.
- Students wrote emails of appreciation to The Speaker in the Upper House.



**NSW Parliament Workshop**  
*Opposition members voice their dissent from government arguments for the Bill*



<https://education.parliament.nsw.gov.au/>

Programs are developed and delivered by Parliamentary Education across a number of different subject areas and can be tailored to the lecturer's needs.

**Guided tour** – Students sit in the historic Legislative Chambers and have an opportunity to participate in a role play. These are only available on non sitting days.

#### Virtual Parliament excursion

Alternatively, set up a mock Parliament at your school or centre and the debate can be AV –recorded. Students still get a lot of enjoyment out of the drama of the proceedings, the roleplay and the opportunity to confidently express their ideas about real life issues.



**Teachers video-record the debate so students and teachers can evaluate the final performances.** The class below compiled a DVD and booklet of their speeches. Some of the students have gone on to join *Toastmasters* to continue developing their public speaking skills.

*Students, Sze and Eun Ju:*

*“We had an opportunity to practise public speaking in the Parliament House heritage building. This gave us the chance to prepare speeches and to project our voices in a large space.”*

*“We not only learned about debating a Bill in Parliament but also learned many new words and how to pronounce them so that people could understand us.”*

*Manami, Minami & Nanako*

*“The excitement of the debate to pass a Bill has encouraged us to understand more about government in Australia. We want to go to Parliament house again and listen to a real debate.*

*As overseas students we think this program is very important for us. “*

## NSW ATESOL Professional Learning Calendar 2022

### A call out to Champion Teachers

Are you teaching adult, secondary or primary students? Are you always reflecting on your practice and trying new ways to engage them? Then you are a **Champion Teacher**! If you are interested in sharing your work with colleagues through a 'Champion Teachers' presentation please contact us. We would also welcome any requests for professional learning that you and your colleagues may have, especially if you are in regional NSW. Please contact us through our website <https://www.atesolnsw.org.au/>.

Robyn Johnson (Albury); Caitlin Park (Wollongong); Bess Wassman (Armidale) & Kathy Rushton (Sydney)

Below are just some of the offerings for 2022 ... watch this space for more details, workshops and presentations.

**\$20.00** for members of ATESOL NSW or ACTA affiliated

(Non-members \$30.00). ***Presentations are online***

#### Term 3 Week 5

|                                 |                                      |  |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Primary/<br>Secondary/<br>Adult | Wednesday<br>17 August 2022<br>4-5pm | <b>Host:</b> Caitlin Park<br>(Wollongong)<br><b>Presenter:</b> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|

|                                 |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Primary/<br>Secondary/<br>Adult | Thursday<br>18 August 2022<br>4 – 5pm | <b>Host:</b> Bess Wassman<br>(Armidale)<br><b>Presenter:</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|

#### Term 4 W5

|                                 |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Primary/<br>Secondary/<br>Adult | Wednesday<br>9 November 2022<br>4-5pm | <b>Host:</b><br><b>Presenter:</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

|                                 |   |                                   |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Primary/<br>Secondary/<br>Adult | Thursday<br>10 November<br>2022 4 - 5pm | <b>Host:</b><br><b>Presenter:</b> |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|

## NSW ATESOL Professional Learning Calendar 2022

### Celebratory presentations and workshops

This year ATESOL NSW are again offering these celebratory workshops and presentations **\$20.00** for members of ATESOL NSW or **of any other professional association, in any state in Australia.** (Non-members \$30.00). There will be presentations and workshops in celebration of **Harmony Day, World Refugee Day** and the **International Day of the World's Indigenous peoples** **\*All presentations are online**

#### World Refugee Day 20 June 2022

##### Presentations for the Week of celebration (Term 2 W9 20 - 24 June)

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 4.00-5.00**

**The power of talk.** The role of talk is critical for both learning and language development. The presenters apply these same principles as they explore the potential of talk for leading teacher learning.

**Dr Gill Pennington** is a past president of ATESOL NSW and has worked as a primary EAL/D teacher and consultant. Her current research interests include the use of home languages in the classroom, and multilingual ecologies which support English language learning.

**Margaret Turnbull** is the vice president of ATESOL NSW and is currently undertaking a PhD exploring pedagogy that develops spoken and written argumentation skills for EAL/D learners in History.

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 4.00-5.00 2022 Designing learning for Vocabulary Development**

Designing targeted, explicit and intensive learning strategies to develop vocabulary knowledge to support and improve EAL/D students' oral, reading and writing outcomes in pre-school to Year 12.

**Cindy Valdez-Adams** is the president of ATESOL NSW, and currently an EAL/D Education Leader for the Department of Education, Metro South and West Directorate. She values inclusivity and believes that every learner has the right to access the full curriculum in a safe, secure and quality learning environment.

**Wednesday 22nd June 4.00-5.00 2022**

##### Talking with Intent - Scaffolding academic language with EAL/D learners

Planning scaffolding for marginalised students with a particular focus on refugee students.

**Dr Helen Harper** is a senior lecturer at the University of New England. She has worked as a lecturer and mentor in literacy education as a linguist in remote Indigenous communities and as a teacher of English as an additional language. Most recently she has collaborated with primary and secondary teachers in disadvantaged urban and remote schools to apply principles of scaffolding language and literacy across the curriculum

#### International Day of the World's Indigenous peoples 9 August

##### Presentations for the Week of celebration (Term 3 W4 8-12 August)

**Tuesday 9th August 4.00-5.00 pm 2022**

**Personalised Learning Pathways – 'Storylines'** The journey at Lavington East PS has focussed on improving community relations with Aboriginal families to develop Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) with cultural, literacy and numeracy goals and make the school a more welcoming place where all children can thrive.

**Nathan Raynor** is an SLSO from the Wiradjuri Nation and **Nichole Williams** is the Principal Lavington East PS

**Thursday 11th August 4.00-5.00 pm 2022**

**'Belonging' and 'connectedness' in Kakadu** Strengthening students' sense of belonging and connectedness to each other through the use, and production of identity texts

**Natasha Koro** is a Primary AP, Classroom teacher 1 / 2 and she is passionately dedicated to strengthening students' sense of belonging. She has done this in schools in Sydney, the far west of N.S.W. and in the Northern Territory.

# NSW ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ATESOL) RESPONSE TO THE NESA ENGLISH 3-6 AND 7-10 DRAFT SYLLABUSES May 2022

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **ATESOL NSW**

ATESOL NSW Inc. is a non-profit professional association of people working in the field of TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and related areas. Our mission is to advocate on behalf of and improve educational outcomes for learners of English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D), including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak traditional Indigenous languages, creoles and varieties of Aboriginal English.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the NESA draft English 3 – 10 Syllabus. Having completed consultation with our members we would like to share our considered response representative of the views of TESOL practitioners across the government, Catholic and Independent school sectors.

### ***English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) learners in NSW***

NSW is Australia's largest immigration state with the greatest number of school students learning English as an additional language. In June 2019 there were 190,889 students requiring support for EAL/D, enrolled across 2,210 NSW Government schools. EAL/D students represented 23.7% of all NSW Government students (CESE 2021). These students are enrolled in all years/levels of schooling and function at different levels of English language proficiency. They include Indigenous students with varying degrees of exposure to Standard Australian English, newly arrived and Australian-born migrant-background students, refugee students with little or no previous formal schooling, and international students with age-equivalent education.

While EAL/D learners come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, English language proficiency is a prime factor determining their access to education and educational opportunities in Australian schools (Gibbons, 2009; DEWR 2011). The potential educational disadvantage of this group arises from having insufficient English to access, participate and succeed in the English-medium school curriculum. EAL/D learners are in the process of becoming bilingual or multilingual users of English. They enter the school system with language skills and cultural and cognitive abilities, bringing to the task of learning a range of linguistic and cultural resources that contribute to their English language and curriculum learning.

Australia's ongoing immigration program, recent increase in refugee resettlement numbers, and its growing culturally and linguistically diverse population means that EAL/D learners will continue to make up a significant proportion of the NSW school student population. Most teachers throughout the state will therefore have responsibility for one or more EAL/D students within their classrooms and will seek support from curriculum documents when planning and programming for their learning. Specialist English language provision and explicit language instruction in schools remains vital to educational access, both to support classroom teachers and to give English language learners opportunities to achieve their educational potential. EAL/D students should be a focus group that receives special attention in all curriculum areas but particularly in subject English.

## 2. Background

ATESOL notes the intention of the Masters 2020 curriculum review which included recommendations to:

- Include a focus on oral language, specifically for children who are less advanced in this area.
- Be inclusive of the diversity of learners

Both these recommendations, if implemented consistently, would provide a syllabus that is inclusive and supportive of EAL/D learners. We acknowledge that there are some attempts towards inclusiveness of the curriculum for EAL/D learners. These are articulated in the introduction:

- The statement in the introduction referring to the importance of language in the early years
- The reference in the evidence base noting that language should be linked to audience and purpose
- The reference in the rationale to the importance of the study of language and the way it is used to shape meaning in its various textual forms

However, we note with concern that these elements are not systematically reflected in the outcomes and content. In particular:

- oral language is not followed through into the 7-10 syllabus. Explicit teaching of oral language provides a critical resource to literacy teaching across all grades
- The representation of language as isolated skills demonstrates a lack of knowledge about how language works in context
- The isolation of vocabulary, reflects a lack of awareness of the integral role of vocabulary in the process of reading, writing and oral interaction. It shows again, the lack of awareness of vocab as an element of language.
- The lack of a clear pathway for EAL/D learners to access the curriculum at all stages. The ESL Scales and the EAL/D Learning Progression provide that pathway and need to be explicitly linked to each outcome to support teacher planning. It is a key equity issue that pathways have been provided for students with special learning needs but not for EAL/D learners.

## 3. Acknowledging the diverse needs of EAL/D students

### 3.1 Update the EAL/D student NESA information

The inclusion of the link to NESA's EAL/D information in the Background section of the introduction is welcome. It is critical that this remains as a prominent link in the final syllabus document. This statement also needs to be updated to include reference to the EAL/D Learning Progressions and ESL Scales. The ESL Scales are used by specialist EAL/D teachers for programming and planning whereas the EAL/D Learning Progressions is used by teachers without TESOL specialisation. Both tools are important in assisting teachers to bridge the gap between students' English language proficiency and the language demands of the curriculum.

***Recommendation 1 – Update the EAL/D student NESA information to include information about the ESL Scales and the EAL/D Learning Progression clearly referenced in a section on student diversity in the final syllabus.***

### 3.2 Map the EAL/D Learning Progressions and ESL Scales to syllabus outcomes

EAL/D students enter school at any Stage of the curriculum with minimum English. The Syllabus assumes students have achieved prior learning in previous stages. The strong disjuncture between the K-2, 3-6 and 7-10 syllabuses makes it very challenging for teachers to support students who have not achieved previous Stage outcomes.

The key purpose of EAL/D Learning Progression and ESL Scales is to describe the pathway of English language development, characteristic of EAL/D learners. They provide important information that supports teachers to bridge between where students are at in English language development and where they are expected to be in terms of the curriculum stage. When an EAL/D student enters school with limited English language proficiency at any stage of schooling, the teacher cannot simply go to earlier curriculum stages to find an entry point. These students may be functioning at the cognitive levels of their peers and need explicit language instruction to scaffold learning through English. The EAL/D Learning Progression and ESL Scales need to be referenced and linked to each English K-10 outcome to support teachers to bridge the gap in English language development. A statement should be included on each outcomes page mapping to the ESL Scales level needed to meet this outcome.

**Recommendation 2 – that the following text be inserted for each outcome.** *For EAL/D students working towards this outcome, please consider the language learning requirements of the outcome, content and the planned learning tasks, relative to the students’ levels of English language proficiency measured against the ESL Scales (link) and the EAL/D Learning Progression (link). EAL/D students need to be at ESL Scales level (x) and EAL/D Learning Progression phase (x) to achieve this outcome.*

### **3.3 Support teachers to make connections with students’ other languages**

There is only one indicator that acknowledges that many languages are spoken in the community (Early Stage 1, p23). This gives the impression that it is only in Kindergarten that EAL/D students might begin schooling and only in Early Stage 1 that teachers need to be aware of linguistic competence as a resource for English language development. It implies that, once students start school, they leave their multilingual competencies behind and become English speakers only. A student who is multilingual will draw on their multilingual competencies throughout their education as it strengthens conceptual and English language development.

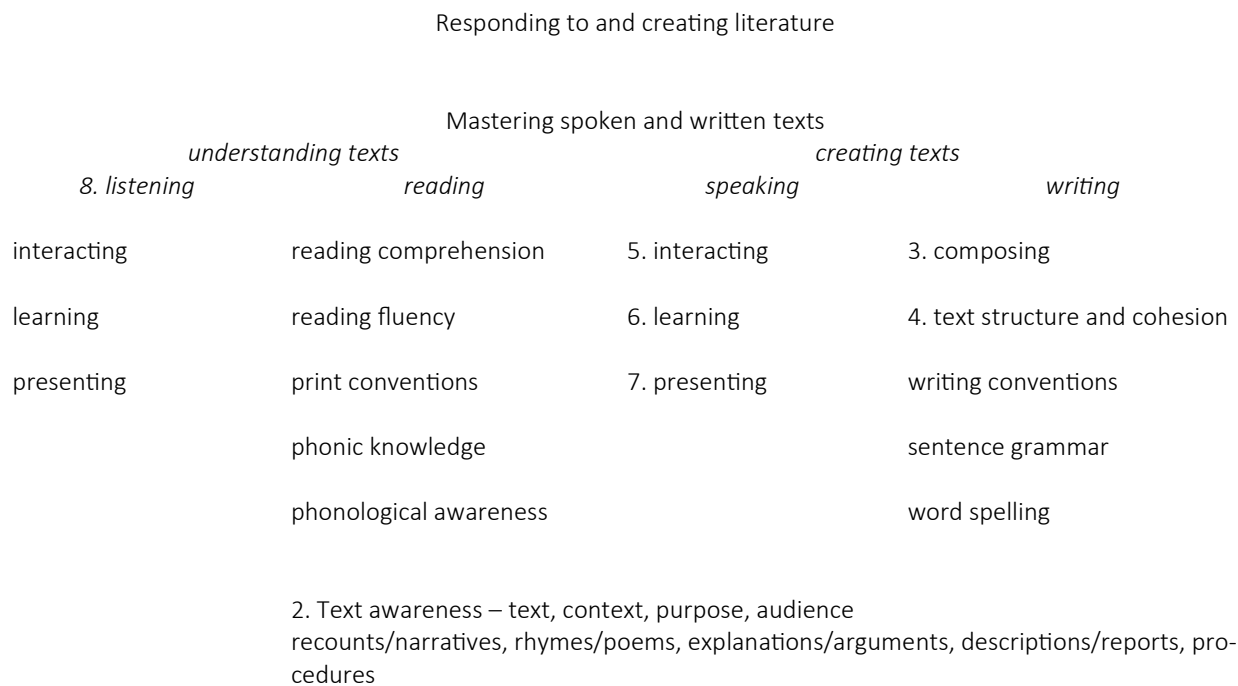
**Recommendation 3 - Multilingualism is a critical resource that should be acknowledged throughout the syllabus stages to support teachers to make connections with students’ other languages and, in doing so, strengthen their understanding of English language.**

## **4. The role of language in making meaning**

### **4.1 Review the Syllabus overview diagram (p7) to reflect the critical role of language as foundational in learning**

It is only through explicit teaching of English language in meaningful and purposeful contexts that EAL/D students will achieve academic parity with English speaking peers. While EAL/D students develop social language within a few years, academic language of schooling takes much longer (5 – 7 years) (Cummins, 2008). As their spoken language develops this can sometimes mask their ongoing issues with written language. The functional approach to language learning provides a way of teaching English that has been clearly shown to be critical for EAL/D learners (Derewianka & Jones, 2016). This approach teaches students to understand what language features work in different contexts. Research has identified a range of genres that are required for school learning and identified the language features that make writing successful. Research has shown that for EAL/D learners, and indeed many disadvantaged learners, explicit teaching of structures and language features improves students’ ability to read and write to learn across the curriculum. This syllabus acknowledges the importance of understanding of how language is used in different contexts (The importance of

language in the early years) but there is limited reflection of this in the syllabus content. The diagram below illustrates the critical role of language in building the foundation for all other outcomes and underpinning learning across the curriculum.



#### Oral language and vocabulary

1. Language for social interaction, meaning making and learning

#### Diagram explanatory notes:

1. recognises foundational language use across the curriculum that underpins and infuses all other outcomes, in particular, Oral language and Vocabulary and Text awareness. Children entering school, including speakers of languages other than English, may already engage in such language uses at home. The practice and development of such language uses cannot be assumed, however, and must be built on, promoted and developed within the curriculum.
2. identifies key recurring spoken and written text forms across the curriculum that students need to know and master in order to succeed in the school curriculum. They broaden the exclusive focus on narrative and provide the necessary integration and context for the elements/outcomes in reading, writing, speaking and listening and an essential basis for Responding to and creating literature.
3. recognises the essential practice/processes of writing, namely planning, drafting and revising written texts. This outcome applies and integrates the writing mechanics outcomes as well as the additional Text structure and cohesion outcome.



4. recognises essential knowledge for writing coherent and cohesive texts as a key outcome beyond sentence level grammar and the writing mechanics outcomes of writing conventions and spelling.
5. 6. and 7. identify key dialogic and monologic speaking outcomes reflecting key language uses identified in 1. 5. recognises social and cooperative talk necessary for group work in classrooms. 6. recognizes important cognitive/ thinking uses of talk (including self-talk), such as focusing attention, remembering and synthesizing. 7. recognises more formal public speaking which includes oral delivery skills of prosody and pronunciation, especially necessary for second language learners.
8. recognises listening as a key mode of language and content learning for all students, corresponding to speaking outcomes. It is especially critical for second language learners immersed in the English medium curriculum and cannot be assumed that they will simply pick up this skill by themselves.

***Recommendation 4 - that the Overview of the syllabus structure diagram on page 7 be reviewed to reflect the critical role of language as foundational in learning.***

#### **4.2 Review syllabus to identify language understanding**

The importance of language is made explicit in the introduction to the syllabus, but without a clear model for language, the result is fragmentation, language out of context and poor use of metalanguage. For instance, there is more language/ grammar content in 3-6 than K-2 but there is a disconnect. It is unclear which 'evidence base' promotes focus on sentence and word level grammar rather than clause and group level.

Content focuses on sentences: simple, compound and complex but there is no mention of clauses or types of clauses, except adjectival. Declarative, exclamatory, interrogative and imperative sentences are in the content. This was previously in the early years and really doesn't seem rigorous enough for Stage 2 let alone Stage 3. It's unclear as to why this focus is given such a high priority when so much else should be included in Stage 3 content. There is some reference to the group level within sentence level grammar, but knowledge has not been developed sufficiently in earlier stages.

For example, students are expected to write sentences to suit purposes but are not taught about clause structure and how it varies for particular text types.

For example, (p.23)

- use simple, compound and complex sentences to suit a purpose

Teachers and students need **understanding of different types of clauses** to be able to use sentences for purpose.

In Text Requirements (p9) there is an assumption that students develop an understanding of language of a range of text types by osmosis when reading or being read to.

For example (p.9) *Reading texts supports wide writing, giving students the knowledge to:*

- *select appropriate language suited to purpose*
- *adapt and experiment with language*
- *use textual elements from different styles, modes and text forms.*

It is explicit teaching and deconstruction of text that develops students' knowledge. There is considerable research (Derewianka & Jones p.3) that shows that explicit teaching of language is required to overcome the equity gap in reading and writing outcomes. Texts are only going to be accessible to some students through deconstruction of language and explicit teaching first – particularly as texts become more complex in upper primary and secondary school.

**Recommendation 5 - that the syllabus be reviewed to identify the language understanding that students need to read and create an increasing range of text types with appropriate language features.**

## 5. The role of oracy, literacy and language in learning

### 5.1 Maintain Oral language and communication content in Stages 4 & 5

In the English 3-6 syllabus *Oral language and communication*, reflects 'interactional talk for learning'. These are skills that are critical to explicitly teach in addition to listening, presenting and social interaction. However, in Stages 4 & 5 oracy is reduced to listening and presentation.

Students need to learn the language skills for effective learning talk that builds on ideas of others, expresses ideas, justifies opinions, references evidence, evaluates bias and reasons logically. In Stage 4 these skills can be further developed as this kind of talk and the development of the language skills for 'talking to learn' is critical for the growing learning demands across the curriculum. Talking to learn describes the informal process of learning *through* talk where talk is exploratory rather than constrained by formal performance talk. When 'talking to learn', students are formulating ideas, developing reasoning skills and experimenting with language. Through this kind of talk, students learn to formulate their ideas logically to describe, reason, entertain, etc. This is more than interaction. Interaction has more of a focus on the talk, social and emotional skills required to work with others. In Stages 2 and 3 'talking to learn' is usually at the informal end of the mode continuum whereas presentation is at the formal end of the mode continuum where language is written-like. In Stage 4 'talking to learn' is becoming more formal and written like and needs to be taught explicitly through sentence starters, etc to cater for the increasing language demands of the curriculum.

**Recommendation 6: It is recommended that the oral communication outcome and content be continued into Stages 4 & 5**

### 5.2 Literacy and language features of relevant text types are explicitly taught within each syllabus

**Stage 2** Creating texts clearly articulates that text structure and language features vary according to the writing purpose. Stage 3 no longer has the dominant, explicit focus on text structure as in Stage 2 nor the segregation of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts into the three outcomes. This is not necessarily problematic but seems to show a lack of continuity across the stages. It also reflects a sense that what has been 'taught' is no longer relevant in the next Stage. This doesn't account for the iterative nature of literacy and language development and the complexities of writing when moving into Stage 3 and beyond.

**Stage 3** Creating texts outcome statements articulate that text structure and language features should vary according to the writing purpose. However, there is no guidance for teachers about the structures of different text types and how they might have evolved since Stage 2. Likewise there is no guidance for teachers in how the paragraph or sentence structure evolves particular to the text type or purpose.

*e.g make intentional choices about the texts to be created, selecting appropriate text structures for the writing purpose and targeted audience*

**Stage 3** hints that English is responsible for teaching the literacy demands of the range of subjects.

*eg create texts on topics centred across* if the syllabus is going to cater for the literacy demands across subjects then this indicator needs to change to *'create texts according to the range of purposes across learning areas, selecting appropriate language and structural features.'* learning areas

However,

The complexity of language features required to cater for literacy demands across learning areas is not reflected at all in the Sentence level Grammar section which describes instead how writers will 'experiment' or select features 'appropriate for purpose'. This assumes teachers have the necessary knowledge of language to be able to explicitly teach appropriate language choice. The syllabus needs to show what language features align with what text types.

**Stages 4 & 5** Creating texts do not cater for the increasing complexity of literacy and language demands across the curriculum. What is unclear, is within which syllabus this subject specific language and literacy will sit. As with Stage 3, the increased structural complexity of texts is inferred, without the grammatical features included to support teaching and learning.

Example indicators:

- Stage 4: *use the structural conventions of analytical and persuasive writing, including a detailed introduction of ideas, a logical progression of supporting points and a rhetorically effective conclusion.*
- Stage 5: *develop an effective thesis for extended analytical and persuasive texts that represents critical thinking about a text or topic*

**In Stage 4** Creating Texts, teachers are given an inaccurate message that language in KLAs is just about learning the subject words when it is much more.

- *For example: select topic-specific vocabulary to write with accuracy in a range of modes appropriate to audience, purpose, form and context*

As the level of complexity of subject knowledge evolves, so does the grammatical complexity. For example noun groups become more generalised and abstract as concepts become more abstract. There are a broader range of text types used across subject as the curriculum becomes more complex.

It is our belief that, in the 7-10 context, subject teachers should be able to understand and teach how to effectively communicate in their subject. This requires an understanding of the types of texts that are read and written in their subject and the text structure and language features that define these texts.

**Recommendation 7: It is recommended that the literacy and language features of relevant text types are explicitly taught within each syllabus.**

### 5.3 Integrate Vocabulary into oral, reading and writing content and outcomes

The isolation of vocabulary from reading, writing and oral communication and the use of the Tier 1,2 3 framework does not support teachers' understanding of how vocabulary is to be selected by

teachers relevant to context, nor how it is developed, that is, through oral interaction, reading and writing *across subject areas*.

Knowledge of vocabulary is essential to achieve 'reading fluency' where fluent reading requires students to be able to track, for example, the development of ideas across a text through lexical cohesion. Without vocabulary, 'reading fluency' does not include comprehension and can be interpreted as simply 'barking at print'.

For EAL/D learners, vocabulary instruction must not only be long term and comprehensive, but also be taught explicitly in all subject areas before, during, and after reading. Students benefit the most when teachers provide rich and varied language experiences; teach individual words, noun phrases, and idioms; teach word-learning strategies, such as looking for prefixes and root words; and foster word consciousness that makes clear the importance of learning as many words as possible throughout the day.

Explicit vocabulary instruction entails frequent exposure to a word in multiple forms; ensuring understanding of meaning(s); providing examples of its use in phrases, idioms, and usual contexts; ensuring proper pronunciation, spelling, and word parts; and, when possible, teaching its cognates, or a false cognate, in the child's primary language.

The isolation of vocabulary from talking and listening and reading and writing and the use of the Tier 1, 2 and 3 framework is inappropriate for EAL/D students. EAL/D students may need to be explicitly taught Tiers 1, 2 and 3 words at any time throughout their schooling. Tier 1 and 2 words may be more challenging than Tier 3 words for EAL/D learners as they may not have been explicitly taught these words in English.

Many items in Vocabulary require understanding of language.

- identify how modal words indicate degrees of probability, occurrence, obligation and inclination;
- identify words that convey informative and objective meanings in texts;
- identify words that convey subjective, emotive and persuasive meanings in texts

Hence, many of the indicators in vocabulary could sit within the *Reading Fluency* outcome, *Comprehending Language* content in the *Reading Comprehension* outcome; and within the *Word Level Language* content within the *Creating Written Texts* outcome. This will encourage teachers to teach vocab in the context so vocabulary development is meaningful and contributes to explicit teaching of the language of the text.

**Recommendation 8: It is recommended that the vocabulary content be integrated into Oral, Reading and Writing outcomes and content of the syllabus.**

## References

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation. (2021b). *Schools: English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) learners, 2015 to 2019*. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/statistics/eald-2019-statistical-bulletin>

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PUBLIC FORUM

The future of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)  
programs in Australian schools

Venue: Thursday 14 July: 12-2pm, Room 351 Education Building, Manning Road  
University of Sydney

[A National Roadmap for EAL/D Education in Schools](#) was launched by the Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA) on the 6 May.

At the forum you will hear from a panel of expert educators about the importance of the National Roadmap for improving educational equity and excellence in NSW's multicultural schools.

Australia once had a world-class national system of specialist English language provision supporting newly arrived and migrant and refugee students' participation and achievement in the English-medium curriculum. Over the last two decades, however, national commitment, effort and accountability for this vital educational access and equity program has faltered.

As Australia emerges from the pandemic and re-opens to the world, state and national leadership is needed to restore its former leading role and rebuild the effective English language and literacy provision that Australia's English language learners need to successfully participate in school education and contribute to a cohesive and prosperous multicultural society.

Registration link: [Registration link for EALD forum](#)

Please register for the forum by **Tuesday 12 July**.

We look forward to your response to our invitation.

Professor Ken Cruickshank, Faculty of Education, University of Sydney

Professor Andy Gao, Faculty of Education, University of NSW

Dr Anne Keary, President, ACTA

Cindy Valdez-Adams, President, ATESOL NSW