

THE ESL LINK

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Inviting your input...

For our annual conference, Gathering XIV, on October 28th, we will have a plenary panel session on Revitalizing Your ESL Program. We are hoping to hear from a variety of speakers about different ideas that would refresh an existing program. There will also be an open mic for live contributions. Might you send us your questions, encouraging stories, suggestions, or things you have tried? We will try to incorporate them. Contact us at eslministries@gmail.com?

One of the workshops in Gathering XIV is entitled "A Kaleidoscope of ESL Materials". For this, we are also inviting your suggestions. If you have materials or "best lessons" that have worked well in your class, might you want to share them in this workshop? If you do, please email us at eslministries@gmail.com. We can't, though, promise to include in the workshop everything we receive because of the limited time we have. We can display materials in the foyer of the church at a SOCEM Table.

The Power of Listening

Judy Rowlands

Judy is a professional ESL teacher who lives in Sydney, Australia. Her passion is to provide Christians (especially church and mission groups) with specific training and appropriate quality resources to enable effective Cross Cultural Outreach Ministries via ESL programs in particular. www.aussieesl.com

"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak..." (James 1:19, NLT)

This command is a challenge to us all, in any circumstance, and it has a most particular application to those of us in ESL ministry. Yet, do we truly *understand* the importance of listening, and what good listening involves (how we best exercise it)? Do we consciously seek to *implement* being quick to listen and slow to speak, especially when we are with our ESL learners? And why is it so important in ESL ministry anyway?

Let's look at some of the answers to these questions, but first let's take a simple Listening-Health Check:

"Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." So says the author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. We like to rush in with our "helpful" words, our thoughts and ideas, our answers or solutions or suggestions.... Can you

honestly say you are not 'guilty, as charged'?

Why is this a particularly important issue for us when working with ESL students? Let me start with a quote I love from Dayle Burkhart (of GEM TEFL.org, a former TEFL arm of <http://www.gemission.org>) on why we invest ourselves in ESL ministry: "We meet a need..., to build a relationship..., to have an opportunity..., to share Christ."

In helping our students to improve their English, we are meeting a strongly felt need. That is loving, and very valuable. However, let's not leave it at that: we know that their real need, of utmost importance, is to know the One True God, and to come into intimate relationship with him by trusting in Jesus.

By demonstrating Christ-like-ness in our relationships with our students, we are showing them what He is like, and that He cares deeply for them. Really listening, with (*cont'd on p2*)



(cont'd from p1) consistency, is very Christ-like and deeply loving. It shows respect for them as a person, and for their ideas and feelings. It requires us to be "completely humble and gentle" (Eph. 4:1-3).

So, we listen carefully: yes, to their English (so we can address relevant language needs in the future); but we also listen carefully: so that they feel we are interested in what they have to say, and not just how they say it; for hints of deeper thoughts and feelings, so they understand we want to know them as a person; and finally, for evidence of their current worldview, so that we can understand what they truly think and believe at present, and over time discuss how this differs with the (secular) culture in their new land, and especially - how it compares with what the Bible says.

Yes, this all takes time (valuable time, well spent). We do not want to be "Bible Bashers", but on the other hand: "if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it" (1 Peter 3:15). Let's not be afraid to speak the gospel whenever we have the opportunity.

Paul writes: "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:3-5). I would like to write the same thing to all of you.

May our Lord richly bless your ministry, for the sake of His Kingdom and His Glory.

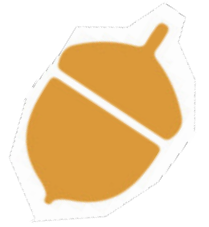
What is the difference between "continual" and "continuous", between "alternatives" and "choices"?

How do you use "momentarily" or "virtually"?

**This article will challenge your use of words:
The 35 Words You're (Probably) Getting Wrong**

Gathering XIV

October 28th, 2017



We are gearing up for our annual training conference, Gathering XIV, on October 28th, 2017 at Trinity Church Streetsville from 8:15 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. This year we are planning a plenary panel session on "Revitalizing Your ESL Program", and a variety of workshops covering the areas of Aspects of English, ESL Material, Teaching Tips, ESL and Neighbouring Communities, and Caring for the Student/Teacher. There will also be numerous display tables from various organizations including publishers and mission organizations. Do plan to attend as it will be an inspiring day of learning, networking and fellowship.

Here are the titles and presenters of the workshops we will be offering. You will receive an email when registration opens. At that point you will have access to a full list of workshop descriptions and presenter bios. We will be posting further G XIV information on the SOCEM website and Facebook soon.

Workshops

SESSION A 9:00-10:00 (CHOOSE 1 FROM 1-5)

- 1: "I Can't Read!" (Carey Jo Johnston)
- 2: A Kaleidoscope of ESL Materials (Moderator: Tom McCormick)
- 3: Using Technology in Teaching ESL (Emily Leung)
- 4: ESL for Church Planting (Tom and Karmen More)
- 5: Grace for Shame – Caring for Muslim and Asian students (Jeff McCarrell and Jennifer Tong)

SESSION B 10:35-11:35 (CHOOSE 1 FROM 6-10)

- 6: Intermediate English Grammar (Carol Blake)
- 7: How to Teach ESL Using English Bible Texts (Gail Tiessen)
- 8: Let Them Talk! Noise Is a Good Thing (Heather Green)
- 9: Helping Refugees Adapt to Canadian Life (Diane Toycken, Dalia Taylor, Ruth Anderson)
- 10: The Emotional Challenges of Teaching ESL (Jennifer Tong)

SESSION C 1:40-2:40 (CHOOSE 1 FROM 11-14)

- 11: What does that mean? (Lydia Mountney)
- 12: Teaching Beginners (Olga Gilbert)
- 13: ESL Ministries and Evangelism (See Kiat Toh)
- 14: Helping New Believers Return Well to their Home Countries (Don and Sandi Howell)





How ESL Might Change One's Morality

Tom McCormick

Have you ever wondered what changes when someone learns a new language?

We have noted before how one's identity is intertwined with one's languages and cultures. When those languages and cultures change, might there be a change even in one's sense of what is right and what is wrong? Many of us would think (and hope) that our morality would not change, except perhaps for improvements. Recent studies, however, indicate that considering moral situations in a language other than one's native language gives different results. For instance, while only 20% of participants would make a problematic decision when presented with an ethical dilemma in their native language, about 50% would make that same problematic decision in a foreign language. Somewhat similarly, those questioned in their native language would place more weight on the *intentions* when judging an act to be right or wrong, while those questioned in a foreign language placed more weight on the *outcome*. For instance, was it good or bad to give a homeless person a new jacket when others then beat him up because they thought he stole it? The intention was good, but the outcome was bad. Those questioned in their native language tended to say it was a good act because the intention was good, while those questioned in a foreign language tended to say it was a bad act because the outcome was bad.

This is puzzling, and troubling as well. Why would this be the case? And if in fact it is the case, what might we learn from these studies?

Apparently, the best explanation is that languages are learned integrated with the affective or emotional dimension of our experiences, and so our first languages were learned along with the strong and colourful experiences of childhood, including the discipline and punishments and painful memories of early failures. For instance, one's emotional arousal as measured by the skin's electrical conductivity is much stronger to taboo words or reprimands in one's native language than in a foreign language. Some think it is the lack of these sorts of visceral responses in a foreign language which affects one's moral judgments, muting one's outrage or sympathy for intentions, leaving one's judgments based more on the outward outcomes. So, for instance, the decision of a couple to adopt a disabled child *for the purpose of* getting monies from the State (bad motives but possibly a good outcome) is judged as bad in the native language (the intention) but good in the foreign language (the outcome).

So what might we learn and apply in our programs? Here are some thoughts: (i) be aware of the affective domain of the learners, and include the learning of culturally and morally appropriate feelings in your sessions. I have found well-chosen Chicken Soup stories to help facilitate this. Sometimes there is not a dry eye in the group after reading such a story as we meet together on a very human level. I have used, for instance, "The Scar" & "What's Really Important"; there are many such readings available. (ii) Include discussions of moral situations and dilemmas (news stories, movies, life situations they share, etc.); I like to use "The Tiger's Whisker" (a Korean Folk Tale; an oral version good for listening can be found here), and then ask, "What do you think happened next?" (iii) With more advanced students I might share this study for discussion; (iv) Searching <"you be the judge"> gives many simple "case studies" with alternative moral options, all good for discussions.

I'm sure there are many more lessons and creative applications. What do you think? Let us know at eslministries@gmail.com.

"[W]e are pronouncing "God" more like "gawd," "bagel" like "bahgel," "pillow" like "pellow," and "sorry" less like "sore-y." See this article for more: [Sah-ry, eh?](#)

We're in the midst of the Canadian Vowel Shift.

Do you agree?



What are some good conversation topics with residents from other cultures?

Consider this 'testimony' from the story of an American Immigrant and her [trials with gratitude](#):

"No one ever asked what our house in Iran looked like, what fruits we grew in our yard, what books we read, what music we loved and what it felt like now not to understand any of the songs on the radio. No one asked if we missed our cousins or grandparents or best friends. No one asked what we did in summers or if we had any photos of the Caspian Sea. "Men treat women horribly there, don't they?" the women would ask. Somehow it didn't feel OK to tell them about my funny dad with his pockets full of sour cherries, or my grandpa who removed his false teeth when he told ghost stories."

English Conversation Circles at Glad Tidings Church, Burlington

Pat Klein

English Conversation Circles (ECC) is an outreach program that has been hosted by Glad Tidings Church in Burlington for about four years. Our goal is to help newcomers to Canada and to Burlington feel welcome. We want to be friends—and we want to give them a chance to practice speaking and listening to Canadian English. We have had fifty to sixty individuals attend through the four years of twice-weekly sessions, some for several weeks, and some for several months. It is a fluid group of between two to seven participants per week as the composition of the group changes whenever people get jobs, move, or undergo changes in their family situation. They have come from every area of the world! Countries represented include Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Romania, Iran, Syria, Philippines, China and Vietnam.

Others sometimes ask why we offer an English Conversation Circle instead of ESL classes. We tell them that newcomers are most eager for opportunities to practice listening to and speaking English, especially since ESL classes with explicit instructions on grammar and an emphasis on reading and writing are widely available elsewhere in our community.

Our venue and format are intentionally simple. Once inside the church, we are easy to find as round tables and chairs are set up just inside the church doors. There is tea and coffee nearby. We sit around a table and begin with informal conversation. Each week we explain our goals for the session. Then we have each person introduce themselves, as there is someone new most weeks. We get a general idea of their proficiency levels from listening to this. From there, if necessary, we divide them into two tables: one for lower-level speakers and one for higher-level speakers with English-speaking conversation partners at each table. They remain at their respective tables for the balance of the 90 minutes (until we

come together at the end for a short and simple closing prayer, led by the leader).

We have been very grateful for the resources offered through [SOCEM](#). We have made several copies of various conversation sheets: some based on seasons or holidays, others on general topics varying from basic to more advanced. These are kept in file folders, ready for the facilitators to use. Typically these are only used to help start and keep the conversation going. We don't distribute them around the table, as the



focus is on oral and listening skills, rather than reading and writing. Another valuable resource has been a large picture dictionary, particularly the maps. These are great for general conversations such as geography, climate, customs and holidays. We love to pore over the maps and show one another where we've come from, where our city is within the countries, and what other countries we've lived in. Very often conversations will flow from the initial introductory comments, or someone will have something on their mind they want to ask about. Our conversations flow very freely, and we let the conversation drift (though steering away from controversial topics such as specific

politicians, or controversial social issues; we have found these difficult).

The facilitators are careful not to dominate the conversation; rather, they sometimes redirect the questions to give every opportunity for our newcomers to practice speaking themselves. Also, the facilitators need to use simple speech patterns, avoiding idioms, or too many irrelevant details.

As for special events, each year we have a joyful Christmas party, with special food, carols, etc. In the spring, we have a picnic together at a park.

Besides making newcomers feel welcome and helping them develop friendships, we also want to expose them to the love of Jesus. Although we don't preach the gospel explicitly, we do end each session with a simple prayer. When it seems natural, we also share our own faith or parts of our personal stories, and invite participants to other church programs.

Here are two examples of how ECC's participants are attracted to Jesus. One is a young Chinese man who was in Canada for one year to gain English proficiency and business experience. He was so attracted to the loving atmosphere among us that he began reading the Bible and asking questions about the Lord. He hasn't become a Christian yet, but we continue to pray for him and to keep in touch. "One sows, another waters, another reaps, but God gives the increase" (see 1 Corinthians 3:6).

The other is a young mom from an atheistic background. She has accepted Christ. Only then did she open up about how difficult it was for her to move to a strange country where she felt so lonely. She has a beautiful smile now as she speaks about the difference Jesus is making in her life as she learns to walk with Him.

We are grateful for the ECC ministry—a small group, but still very, very rewarding!

Conversation Starters

Dale Fisher

About this time of year, we often feel that we could use some new ideas for our conversation classes. Here are four of them. The first is a great idea I learned from my teaching partner, Cindy Hubert.

Adjective + Occupation Activity

Cindy handed out a set of cards with occupation titles such as:

policeman,
photographer,
rock star,
doctor,
or store owner.

Then she had a list of characteristics or adjectives, for example:

curious,
late,
nervous,
shy,
or creative.

If you have a larger class, make up more sets.

Then each learner told a story about himself/herself utilizing the adjective: e.g. how the photographer manages to run a photography business even though she is shy, or why the policeman became so nervous.

Then, in pairs, they solve a problem they have or a conflict that happened between the two. One of the pair could use his or her characteristic to help his or her partner. For example, the late photographer might have angered the creative rock star, and they had to come to a solution. Or, the shy doctor has a problem finding a date so the curious store owner gives him or her some tips.

Medical Problem Activity

During the cold and flu season learners need a lot of information. I found good information online, but it was too dense for the learners to absorb. So I made up

some true/ false question strips with important information such as:

"If a child has a fever, give them a cool bath or an alcohol rub." (false)

"If a child has a cold, give them chicken soup" (true)

I made it into a team contest. At the end, I gave the learners the list of questions with the correct answers (email me at dndfisher@telus.net if you want the list).

I also ran off a chart with essential information about influenza and colds: www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/influenza-compare-symptoms.html

Feature Your Skills Activity

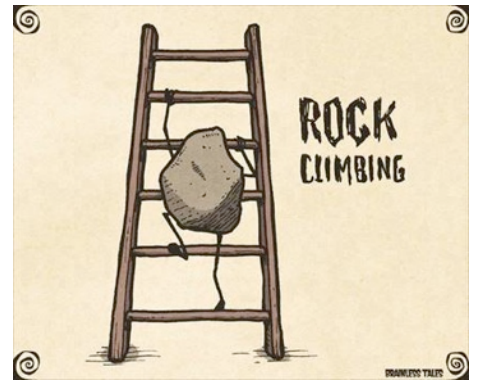
At the beginning of the year, I began a class by telling the learners about sailing. I had a picture of our sailboat, and explained how we sailed it, and my tasks as first mate. After that, we started each class with a learner explaining something he or she could do. We have had a great range of skills, from knitting to making Korean buns. When the learners had something concrete to show or demonstrate, they were not at all nervous. The food ones are especially enjoyable when they bring the class a sample! Hey, we ESL teachers are in it for the food!

Where Have You Been Activity

At the start of the second term, I told the class about what to see in Ontario, my former province. Fortunately, I had lots of pictures. Now, each learner will tell about what there is to see in their city or country. Last week, we learned what to see in Seoul.

If anyone has some other conversation ideas, send them along for us to share! eslministries@gmail.com

** This article was originally published by the Calgary ESL Cooperative at <http://eslcooperative.ca/conversation-starters-dale-fisher/>. Reprint with permission.*



Weekly Humour From the journals of various bar associations Actually uttered in court...

Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

Was it you or your younger brother who was killed in the war?

How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?

You were there until the time you left, is that true?

How many times have you committed suicide?

Q: You say the stairs went down to the basement?

A: Yes

Q: And these same stairs, did they go up also?

