

This newsletter and the English Language Learners and Home School Partnerships Professional Learning and Development initiative is funded by the Ministry of Education. The provider is Te Tapuae o Rehua consortium.

# National Newsletter: English Language Learners

**Information and resources for leaders and teachers of multi-lingual English language learners in secondary schools | Term 4 2014**

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Kia orana, Talofa ni, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula, Mauri, Greetings.

Welcome to the new term from the professional learning and development (PLD) facilitators for English Language Learners (ELLs) and Home School Partnerships (HSP). We hope you had a restful break and feel refreshed for the final term of the year.

## Purpose of this newsletter

This newsletter is to provide a link with PLD for school leaders, teachers in a range of learning areas and for English language teacher specialists.

## What is in this newsletter?

- Teacher qualifications opportunities
- A summary of a Jim Cummins article: *Beyond language: academic communication and student success*
- Science Capabilities and ELLs
- Virtual Learning Network
- Key Messages for Principals and SLT: Leading a department to support multi-lingual ELLs
- Job descriptions.

## Qualifications for teachers of ELLs

Teachers of ELLs (including ESOL specialists and mainstream teachers) might like to take up the opportunity to study towards a TESSOL qualification. These are available at most universities.

Teachers must have at least two years teaching experience, be permanently employed at a school, have residency and teacher registration for New Zealand. Teachers are funded to complete two to five core papers over two years.

The scholarship includes fees for two years and \$100 for books. Schools will receive information packs by the first week of Term 4 and the information is also at <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/EnglishForSpeakersOfOtherLanguages/ProfessionalDevelopment/TESSOL.aspx>.

The closing date for the 2015 scholarships is 28 October, 2014.

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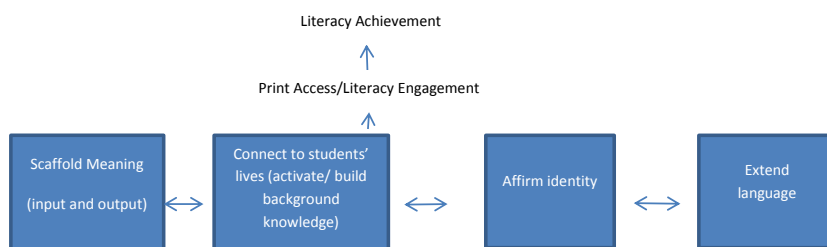
## Beyond language: Academic communication and student success Jim Cummins

This article is from the *Linguistics and Education Journal*, University of Toronto, Feb 2014 (pp 145-153). Many of you will know the seminal work of Cummins differentiating social language -basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) from academic language -cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPS). Cummins develops his thinking to discuss a more refined view of academic language in the classroom.

Jim Cummins focuses on the importance of teaching academic language across the curriculum with a stated aim of providing effective pedagogies to raise the achievement of students at risk. He identifies these students as those from "low socioeconomic status and students from marginalised communities" (p 145). In the New Zealand context we recognise these students as being "priority learners". Many English Language Learners (ELLs) fall into the priority categories. Cummins' stated purpose is to maximise literacy engagement and demystify academic language across the curriculum.

Cummins posits that the teaching of academic language should be framed "in a broader academic communication...that emphasizes both critical literacies and multiple modalities through which meaning is constructed and communicated" (p 146). The argument is that students will gain confidence and expertise in using academic language when they are provided with opportunities to use academic language for "intellectually powerful purposes" (p146). Cummins suggests ELLs need to know how such academic communication works in practice. When students are enabled to draw on their cultural and linguistic resources, the acquisition of academic language is part of critical literacy skills needed by all students, including ELLs.

Cummins theorises a framework for literacy achievement (p 150):



Literacy engagement will be enhanced when:

- students' ability to understand and use academic language is scaffolded by the use of effective learning strategies, and encouragement of students' use of their home languages to clarify content;
- instruction connects to students' lives by activating their background knowledge (often encoded in their home languages);
- instruction affirms students' academic, linguistic and cultural identities by enabling them to showcase their literacy accomplishments in both their home languages and English;
- students' knowledge of and control over academic language is extended across the curriculum through purposeful instructional strategies.

Academic language teaching needs to integrate language and literacy for powerful and empowering purposes. These forms of literacy engagement enhance students' identities in association with their developing expertise in using academic language.

## National courses/ seminars

### NZQA Best Practice Workshops Making Judgments: EL Unit Standards

Auckland: 14<sup>th</sup> November (extra to accommodate demand)

Christchurch: 20<sup>th</sup> November

Dunedin: 21<sup>st</sup> November

Napier: 27<sup>th</sup> November

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/events/best-practice-workshops/>

### 2013 Census

#### Free Information Seminars Profiles for over 100 different ethnic groups in NZ

Statistics New Zealand, in collaboration with the Office of Ethnic Affairs, is holding free information seminars on the 2013 census results.

These seminars will be held between 6 - 21 October in Hamilton, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch & Dunedin.

They provide opportunities for the participants to hear about New Zealand's changing demographic landscape. The seminars will also include interactive workshops on how to navigate and interpret census data on different ethnic groups.

These short seminars might be interesting for ESOL, Social Sciences and Maths teachers and/or classes of students developing English communication and ideas using statistics. See information and more and register through: <http://ethnicaffairs.govt.nz/story/2013-census-free-information-seminars>

### Interpreting in schools: Language Line

[www.languageine.govt.nz](http://www.languageine.govt.nz)

0900 33 325

\$3.07 incl GST per minute



## The Science Capabilities

The Science Capabilities, published on TKI this year, were designed to 'join the dots' between areas of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC):

- the Key Competencies (pages 12 & 13)
- the description of Science (page 28)
- the Nature of Science strand in the Science Achievement Objectives

The competencies are:

**Gather & interpret data** Learners make careful observations and differentiate between observation and inference.

**Use evidence** Learners support their ideas with evidence and look for evidence supporting others' explanations.

**Critique evidence** Learners evaluate the trustworthiness of data to become clear about the limits of science. Not all questions can be answered by science.

**Interpret representations** Scientists represent their ideas in a variety of ways, including models, graphs, charts, diagrams and written texts.

**Engage with science** This capability requires students to use the other capabilities to engage with science in "real life" contexts and take an 'action'.

In Term 3, some workshops on these Science Capabilities for teachers of Year 9 and 10 Science were co-presented by Science PLD facilitators and an ELLs PLD facilitator. The capabilities develop critical thinking and language is integral in that process. The PLD facilitators considered that teachers of ELLs would benefit from thinking about developing language and science capabilities concurrently. In the workshops, an additional language 'dot' connected an aspect of Learning Areas and Language (NZC, p. 16).



An example of the resources that can be found on gathering and interpreting data: <http://scienceonline.tki.org.nz/Introducing-five-science-capabilities/Gather-interpret-data/Food-webs>

The Science Capability learning focus for this unit is: *Students explore how evidence can be built by making inferences based on close observations.* Teachers could add a Language Learning focus so that ELLs could develop the language to learn at Level 5 of the NZC with their peers. The Language Learning focus might be: *Students develop general and scientific language to describe evidence and make inferences.* Some of the resources and activities that are supplied on the website could be used as they are and some could be amplified for ELLs.

By Juliet Fry

## The Virtual Learning Network

The Virtual Learning Network (VLN) provides online support for all New Zealand educators. It is set up by the Ministry of Education and it is where educators can collaborate online and share ideas. There are two groups offered by your ELL PLD facilitators to support teachers using or those considering using the following assessments:

1. English Language Unit Standards
2. English for Academic Purposes Unit Standards

Both groups have an invite only membership policy that requires the members to be verified by an ELL PLD facilitator. This is to ensure that resources shared can be used for formative and summative assessment purposes without concern that students may have had access to them.

To request an invitation to join please contact your regional ELL PLD facilitator – contact details are listed on the front page of this newsletter.

## Key messages about leaders supporting bi /multilingual English language learners in secondary schools



Leadership for ELL ākonga shares the challenge from *Tū Rangatira: Māori Medium Educational Leadership*:

Our challenge is to provide effective and inspirational leaders who will lead vibrant learning environments that have the ability to unleash that potential and the success of learners as Māori and as citizens of the world.

Key ideas for leadership are also expressed on the Secondary Middle Leaders TKI webpage:

*The New Zealand Curriculum* has students at the heart of the educational process. The decisions made in departments focus on the diverse learning needs and achievement of the best outcomes for all students. How departments support students' culture and identity is central to students experiencing success and realising their potential.

There are complex requirements to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) and a continual demand to adapt support as numbers and/or diversity of ELLs change. School populations include those from migrant and refugee backgrounds (ranging from NZ-born to new arrivals), international students, exchange students and those transitioning from kura kaupapa. Many ELLs are included in Ministry of Education (MOE) 'priority learner' groups.

### The middle leader role is unique to each school and responsibilities may include:

- supporting senior leaders to manage systems to identify and monitor ELLs' strengths and needs using a range of assessment practices, to record the information in relation to *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP) and to share this with the purpose of informing teaching and learning;
- developing programmes that cater for a wide range of students' learning needs, acknowledging educational experiences, ELLP stages, ages, cultures, languages and identities, length of time in NZ and different pathways;
- fostering dynamic bilingualism: encouraging ELLs to access the potential of their home languages for learning;
- supporting mainstream teachers help ELLs develop competencies in language learning as conceptualised in the NZ Curriculum (p.16);
- managing the MOE funding mechanisms and managing allotted budgets to ensure the needs of the identified ELLs are met;
- networking and facilitating relationships with communities and families, deans, careers advisors and other support staff that contribute towards ELLs achieving their goals;
- supporting teachers to manage a range of assessment types, e.g. Levels 1-3 English Language unit standards (US), Level 1 Literacy US, English for Academic Purposes US and assessment from other Learning Areas such as English and Languages achievement standards (e.g. Samoan, Tongan, Chinese).

### Middle leadership job descriptions

These roles and responsibilities are often clarified in formal written job/position descriptions. A key purpose is to define aspects of this role that are distinct from other roles e.g. English HOD, International Director. Another purpose is to clarify lines of communication with SLT, BOT, teachers in department, bilingual language assistants, administrators, whānau, community representatives and teacher aides. **A model of a specialist ELLs teacher job description that is linked with the Registered Teacher Criteria can be seen at:** <http://www.edplus.canterbury.ac.nz/esolsecond/resources.shtml>