

ATEAL 2026 Edmonton Symposium | Creating Ripples - Teaching, Learning, and Care



ED 122 (Main Ripple Room - Building Community)

8.00 - 8.30	Registration & Coffee			
8.30 - 9.00	Opening Prayer and Opening Remarks			
9.00 - 10.15	Keynote - Dr. Jenn Foote <u>Creating space for everyone: Fostering a mindset of inclusion in the classroom</u>			
10.15 - 10.30	Morning break			
	ED 206	ED 213	ED 221	ED 113
10.30 - 11.10	<u>Supporting Student Learning: Research-Informed Learning Strategies for EAP</u>	<u>Lightning Talks Block A</u>	<u>Leveraging the Liminal Against Social Cross-Pressures</u>	
11.20 - 12.00	<u>Language, Culture, Connection: Bridging Cultural Barriers Through Conversation and Student Engagement</u>	<u>Lightning Talks Block B</u>	<u>Grief and Loss as experienced by the newcomer to Canada</u>	
12.00 - 1.00	Lunch			
1.00 - 1.40	<u>Cultivating 21st-Century Competencies among Freshmen in a Flipped Classroom Environment</u>	<u>Keys to English Youtube Channel</u>	<u>Practical Communicative Strategies for Teaching Grammar Through Speaking Tasks</u>	<u>Narrative Métissage workshop: Developing Intercultural Competence through Narrative Métissage</u>
1.50 - 2.30	<u>Genre Writing Instruction and the Reliability of ChatGPT and Gemini</u>	<u>Chair yoga</u>	<u>Starting with the End in Mind: Backward Design in the LINC Program</u>	
2.30 - 2:50	Break			
2.50 - 3.30	<u>It is time to play! EAL Secondary Instruction Through Drama</u>	<u>Wellness, Connection, and Communication with Skoki</u>	<u>Teaching Senior English Language Learners</u>	
3:30- 4:00	Door prizes and closing			

Keynote Presentation

Creating space for everyone: Fostering a mindset of inclusion in the classroom



The goal of this talk is to inspire new ways of thinking about inclusion in the classroom, and to offer some practical approaches for creating a more inclusive classroom environment. It will begin with a discussion of what it means to foster inclusion and who we might miss when we think about inclusion. Possible barriers to inclusion will be discussed, however, there will be a stronger focus on ideas for moving past those barriers to create a mindset of inclusivity in our classrooms. In line with the conference theme, this talk is designed to create ripples of ideas, ripples of awareness, ripples of inspiration, and hopefully a few ripples of laughter.

Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Foote (she/her)

Dr. Jennifer A. Foote is an Associate Professor at the University of Alberta in the TESL Program. Her research interests include instructor and learner beliefs around second language pronunciation and exploring issues around ethics in pronunciation instruction. She is passionate about connecting research to practice.

Supporting Student Learning: Research-Informed Learning Strategies for EAP



This session introduces research-informed learning strategies for EAP students, drawing on learning science and learning specialist practice. Participants will explore how memory works, why common study methods are ineffective, and how small shifts can improve retention. Practical strategies will be shared to support student learning and success in EAP classrooms.

Presenter: Marcia Kim (she/her)

Marcia Kim, PhD is a Learning Coach at Olds College. She has worked as an EAP instructor. She's co-author of *Academic Inquiry 1: Sentences and Paragraphs* and co-editor of *Teaching writing to ELLs in the Elementary Classroom: Research-based Approaches and Techniques*, and *Teaching Writing to Secondary ELLs: Research-informed practices* (forthcoming).

Language, Culture, Connection: Bridging Cultural Barriers Through Conversation and Student Engagement



This presentation highlights the University of Alberta's English Conversation Club, a weekly program supporting international students' language learning and cultural integration. Through peer conversations, games, and discussions on Canadian culture, students build confidence, friendships, and belonging. The session shares insights into collaborative, student-centered programming that fosters language development and intercultural understanding.

Presenter: Diana Kim (she/her)

Diana Kim is the Student Engagement Coordinator at the University of Alberta. She brings more than 8+ years in International Education Experience in Post-secondary environments. She also has worked in International Development for more than 5 years. While originally from Alberta, she has lived and worked in 5 continents and passionate about supporting and empowering youth.

Cultivating 21st-Century Competencies among Freshmen in a Flipped Classroom Environment



This mixed-methods study of 148 Chinese freshmen investigates 15 lifelong learning skills in SPOC-based flipped classrooms. Results show 90% achieved competency, led by teamwork (91%) and autonomous learning (89%). A strong correlation ($r=.506$) highlights that digital pre-class preparation is essential for successful in-class collaboration.

Presenter: Khalid Ibn Hassan

Dr. Khalid Ibn Hassan currently teaches at ASSIST Community Services Centre. He previously served as an Assistant Professor of English at the International University of Business Agriculture and Technology. His research focuses on the flipped classroom, educational technology, task-based language teaching, teachers' beliefs, and professional development.

Genre Writing Instruction and the Reliability of ChatGPT and Gemini



We investigated the reliability of ChatGPT and Gemini in supporting genre-based writing instruction. When repeatedly prompted to identify genre components for nine genres, the consistency of the tools' responses varied. Results also showed significant differences in consistency across the tools. We conclude with suggestions for optimizing GenAI-supported genre-based writing instruction.

Presenters: Kent Lee, Marilyn Abbot, Shenli Zhang, and Raeanne Belley

Kent K. Lee is an associate professor in the Teaching English as a Second Language Program, Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.

Marilyn L. Abbott is a professor in the Teaching English as a Second Language Program, Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.

Shenli Zhang is a PhD student in the Studies in Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language Program, Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.

Raeanne Belley is a Bachelor of Education student at the University of Alberta, where she is pursuing studies in Secondary Education.

It is time to play! EAL Secondary Instruction Through Drama



This session explores drama-based approaches (DBAs) to support multilingual learners in Canadian secondary classrooms. It highlights how DBAs enhance communicative competence, reduce learning barriers, and foster social integration. Drawing on research, it offers practical strategies for teachers to create inclusive, engaging environments that support language development and student agency.

Presenter: Christina Brown

Christina Brown, B. Sc, B. Ed. M. Ed., a mother and a secondary teacher, completed her capstone project in Educational Psychology - Teaching English as a Second Language, April 2026. Her teaching philosophy is driven by a passion for developing supportive classroom communities and promoting the enjoyment of learning.

Leveraging the Liminal Against Social Cross-Pressures



This session explores how, through social learning, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the "decentering" of the teacher role can foster authentic learner and instructor agency. One question: Have we always underestimated how imitative learning is?

Presenter: Raymond J. Klassen (he/him)

Ray is currently a LINC Instructor at Norquest College, Ray Klassen has worked extensively with neurodivergent learners, including newcomers to Canada. Ray has been the Director of Interdisciplinary Studies for the King's University (Edmonton), and Head of Studies for McGill University (Montreal). With extensive international experience, including 5 years in East Asia, 9 years in Thailand, and 2 years in Saudi Arabia, Ray's book: *The Architecture of Authenticity* is due to be released in 2027.

Grief and Loss as experienced by the newcomer to Canada



In this presentation for all levels, the participants will learn about culture shock and cultural adjustments through the lens of non-death losses and grief. The presentation will describe the tasks of grieving and how to create meaning from these losses while embarking on the journey of living in Canada.

Presenter: Heather E. Perry (she/her)

Heather Perry is a TESL Canada Certified EAL instructor with over 20 years of experience. She is also a Certified Grief Educator and Bereavement Specialist with an emphasis on perinatal loss and vicarious trauma. She now combines her two passions and engages people in their understanding of the true nature of culture shock.

Practical Communicative Strategies for Teaching Grammar Through Speaking Tasks



Participants will discover adaptable, practical, student-centered activities designed to move beyond rote drills, and gap-filling activities fostering meaningful communication in a personalized contexts. Participants will learn how to create memorable learning experiences that integrate grammatical accuracy into authentic, communicative contexts for learners of all levels.

Presenter: Olena Gyrych (She/her)

Olena Gyrych is an English instructor with over 10 years of teaching experience in Ukraine, Qatar, and Canada. She is a Cambridge DELTA–certified educator and holds a Master’s degree in Psychology and a Bachelor’s degree in Philology. She actively participates in international professional conferences, including IATEFL and TESOL, and is committed to continuous professional development and evidence-based practice. Her work focuses on innovative, learner-centred approaches that promote communicative competence, vocabulary development, and assessment-informed instruction. Olena is passionate about empowering English language learners through practical, research-informed strategies and enjoys collaborating with fellow educators to bridge theory and classroom practice.

Starting with the End in Mind: Backward Design in the LINC Program



This presentation examines backward, forward, and central planning in language teaching, with a focus on backward design in the LINC program. It highlights aligning Canadian Language Benchmarks, instruction, and assessment, provides a practical planning guide, and concludes with an interactive questions and answers session for participants.

Presenter: Negin Amin Sabouri, She

My name is Negin Amin Sabouri, an English language instructor with over 11 years of experience. I taught EFL and IELTS preparation before moving to Canada in 2023. Now I teach LINC CLB 3/4 at Solomon College. I am passionate about developing effective strategies and improving student outcomes in my classes.

Teaching Senior English Language Learners



This workshop equips participants with the tools and understanding needed to support senior adults who are learning English as an additional language. Participants will discover best practices to connect with senior learners, and tips for getting them engaged and for making lesson materials meaningful, reflecting the real-life experiences of seniors.

Presenters: Alana Johnson, Rosalia dela Cruz (she/her) and Selestia Herrera-Ganton

Alana Johnson has been active in English language learning for over 17 years. She worked for many years as an EAL instructor and Workplace Essential Skills Specialist. Alana served for years as the South Alberta Co-chair for the ATEAL Board. She is currently Manager of NorQuest College's Alberta Routes Program.

Rosalia dela Cruz has been an EAL practitioner for over 30 years, combining her experience in the Philippines and Canada. Though her first love is classroom teaching, she has also worked in language assessment, curriculum development, and teacher training, and is currently the Alberta Routes Advisor for Central Alberta.

Selestia Herrera-Ganton has been working in the EAL/EFL field since 2015. She was an instructor in various Edmonton LINC programs, mainly working with literacy learners. Having a passion for travel, she has taught abroad in South Korea and Scotland. She is currently an Advisor for the Alberta Routes Initiative.

Lightning Talks Block A



I Replaced Final Presentations with Board Games—Here's What Happened

This lightning talk shares a classroom innovation replacing traditional presentations with a student-created board game project in an intercultural communication course. Designed to increase engagement and authentic language use, the project required students to create, teach, and facilitate gameplay. The session highlights outcomes, challenges, and practical strategies for meaningful, interactive learning.

**Presenter: Zuzana Buchanan
(She/Her)**

Bridging Worlds: Teaching Pragmatics to Connect EAP Classrooms and Communities

Many EAP students don't experience as much real-world interaction as they expect while living in predominantly English-speaking environments. This session provides suggestions for how practical communication skills can be taught in academic contexts to support students' pragmatic proficiency, helping them feel more confident, connected, and capable of participating in English-speaking communities beyond the classroom.

Presenter: Kevin DeSoete

Ripples of Support Beyond the Classroom with AI Writing Coach

Learn how customized AI writing coaches were developed to support EAL students at the University of Alberta. This session shares practical steps, lessons learned, and strategies for using AI to enhance feedback, promote learner autonomy, and complement—rather than replace—teaching.

**Presenter: Sofia Elgueta Duplancic
(she/her)**

Lightning Talks Block B



Your voice matters: Building belonging in the classroom.

This session will explore how EAP instructors can support their learners in finding their voices while fostering a sense of community in the classroom. Through practical skills, strategies, and classroom-based examples, I will examine how inclusive teaching practices can empower students to participate, take risks, and engage more deeply in language learning.

Presenter: Vicky Nyoike

Supporting Struggling and Quiet Students: Creating Inclusive Classroom

This talk explores practical strategies to support quiet and struggling learners in EAP and CLB classrooms. Through simple, low-preparation techniques, instructors can foster participation, build confidence, and create inclusive learning environments that encourage all students to engage and succeed.

Presenter: Hanieh Rezaeifar
She/Her

NotebookLM: Supporting Student Autonomy and Engagement

The presentation will demonstrate how using the AI tool NotebookLM encourages student autonomy and engagement. By having the ability to make content more accessible, students and instructors will be able to increase learning and engagement with materials.

Presenter: Barbara Edmondson
(she/her)

Keys to English Youtube Channel



Rose had limited time to teach decoding in her LINC classes, so she created Keys to English Sounds, a systematic Youtube decoding program with two parts: Basics and Next Level. With over 200 videos and additional teacher materials, her presentation explains why and how to use the channel.

Presenter: Rosalea Elliot

With a Masters of Teaching English, Rose worked for ten years in the LINC program primarily with literacy students in the first four beginner CLB levels. Her short Keys to English Sounds online lessons on Youtube can be used in the classroom or by students independently.

Chair Yoga



Kelly will guide you through mindful breathing exercises and gentle stretching to awaken your body, ground you in the present moment and calm your mind.

Presenter: Kelly Kaye YAA Certified Yoga Teacher

Kelly Kaye, a fitness instructor since 1981, discovered yoga nearly 30 years ago and deepened her practice through breathwork, mantras, and postures, earning her first yoga certification in 2010. Alongside her wellness journey, she spent many years with Edmonton Public Schools, supporting elementary and special needs learners. In the fall of 2014, she began her ESL teaching career, a path she continues with dedication and passion today.

Wellness, Connection, and Communication with Skoki



Meet Skoki, a certified pet therapy dog supporting student well-being at the University of Alberta. This drop-in session offers conference participants a calm, welcoming space to reduce stress, recharge, and experience how animal-assisted interactions can foster connection, communication, and a more inclusive campus environment.

Presenters: Shona Webster (she/her) and Skoki

Shona Webster is an Assistant Lecturer at the English Language School, University of Alberta. She focuses on supporting student well-being and communication through inclusive, low-pressure learning environments. Alongside Skoki, a certified pet therapy dog, she promotes connection, reduces stress, and fosters a compassionate campus experience.

Skoki is a 3.5-year-old Cavalier King Charles–Bernese Mountain Dog–Australian Shepherd mix and a certified pet therapy dog with the PAWSS Association. She brings calm and connection to campus through her gentle nature. Skoki loves performing tricks and playing games, while helping people relax, connect, and feel at ease. She is a 2026 Wellness Champion at the University of Alberta.

Developing Intercultural Competence through Narrative Métissage



Recently ATEAL launched a which supports EAL instructors in fostering intercultural competence, anti-racism, and decolonizing practices through the innovative approach of Narrative Métissage, a collaborative storytelling practice rooted in Indigenous worldviews and ways of learning. This storytelling workshop will give you the opportunity to experience Narrative Métissage yourself in preparation for sharing it in your classrooms.

Presenter: Judy Sillito

Judy Sillito has 40+ years working in EAL, narrative approaches, EDI coaching, and the promotion of intercultural perspectives. For the past decade she has indulged her passion for storytelling by offering Storytelling workshops to various groups including newcomers, LINC teachers, and Indigenous communities. She is a past-president and current secretary of TESL Canada.