



Third Panel Presentation
36th Annual TESL Ontario Conference
November 14, 2008

Renate Tilson, TESL Ontario's Executive Director and moderator of the Panel Discussion, welcomed attendees to TESL Ontario's third annual panel discussion. Renate began by congratulating several affiliates for their many and varied contributions to ESL Week and then invited everyone to view the ESL Week Poster display located in the City Hall Rotunda. Renate also encouraged all to attend the AGM at 5 that day and to enjoy the dinner and entertainment afterwards.

Finally, Renate spoke to the theme of the conference: Celebrating the International Year of Languages. The United Nations had proclaimed 2008 the International Year of Languages in an effort to promote unity in diversity and global understanding. Renate informed the listeners that TESL Ontario had to apply very early to UNESCO to be able to use the theme and were, in fact, the first Education activity listed on UNESCO's website. She advised us that there were 63 different activities listed on the site and gave a small sample, which included activities taking place in Japan, Guatemala, Germany, Poland, Vietnam, Austria, Sri Lanka and Brazil. Renate then quoted an excerpt from the message delivered by Mr. Matsura, the Director General of UNESCO, on the celebration of this special year.

Directly introducing the 3rd Panel Discussion at this point, Renate reminded the audience of the panel discussion's goals which were to identify trends, update initiatives and share future directions and recommendations. She also clarified to listeners that the goals of TESL Ontario's Panel Discussion Series were to raise the profile of ESL, raise awareness of issues in the field, and bring stakeholders together so we could all identify and share best practices for working co-operatively, collaboratively and effectively with each other and with ESL learners.

With that direction, Renate then introduced the speakers of the 3rd Panel Discussion: Wilma Jenkins, representing Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Catherine Finlay,

representing the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration; Patti Redmond from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; Pauline McNaughton from the Ministry of Education; and Naomi Alboim, a Fellow at the School of Policy Studies in Queen's university and a public policy consultant. It should also be noted that both Renate's moderation and the speakers' presentations were translated into sign language simultaneously.

Naomi Alboim

Renate introduced Naomi as the first panel speaker. She advised those in attendance that Naomi, in addition to being an active public policy consultant, advising governments and NGOs across Canada and abroad, is currently a fellow, adjunct professor, and vice chair of the Policy Forum at the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University. Renate told us that Naomi was a Senior Fellow at the Maytree Foundation, working on a variety of immigration issues and directing its Public Policy Training Institute. In addition, Naomi was currently on the Board of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council and chaired its Intergovernmental Relations Committee. Naomi, Renate revealed, has worked at senior levels in the federal and Ontario provincial governments for twenty-five years, including eight years as Deputy Minister in three different portfolios.

Naomi began her presentation by remarking that she was the only non-governmental person at the discussion, and, as such, felt that she could speak more boldly. Naomi addressed the group of ESL teachers as "unsung heroes." Naomi spoke personally about how her mother had come to North America alone as a teenaged refugee and how the person who took her in and showed her kindness was an ESL teacher by the name of Jessica Kelly, an Irish immigrant herself who became "Grandma Kelly" to Naomi.

Naomi turned her attention to potentially positive but also potentially negative policy changes by CIC. Naomi listed these as follows: First, CIC is putting a focus on short term labour market needs. Secondly, CIC has increased the number of temporary workers employed in low end jobs, making them more vulnerable...this influx of

temporary workers is also happening to the detriment of permanent workers. Thirdly, CIC introduced the Canadian Experience Class. And, lastly, increased Ministerial discretion gives the Ministry more flexibility, but it also removes an amount of transparency and certainty.

Naomi reminded the audience that immigration was only one tool available to government and certainly was not a panacea to solve all the country's labour market or demographic problems. The demographics of 2025 are such that 100% of our net population growth will be dependent on immigration. Another projection is that by 2011 our country will be 100% dependent on immigration for net labour force growth. There is strong international competition for skilled workers.

The sad fact is, said Naomi, that the number of immigrants given permanent residency is going down and temporary workers are going up. Only 17% of permanent residents were assessed on the point system and this figure continues to drop. The only figures within the permanent resident classes rising were those of the Provincial Nominee Program and those new immigrants were not going to Ontario.

Naomi continued to surprise the audience with other statistics. Ontario, for example, is receiving only 47% of immigrants today as opposed to 59% in 2001. She added that 70% of immigrants had been coming from Asia, but that statistic was headed downward, whereas the percentage coming from Africa and the Middle East was going up. Over 90% of new immigrants have some post-secondary training as compared to 55% of native-born Canadians. The largest group of immigrants fall within the 25-44 age category and 67% of those who are skilled workers have some official language capacity on entry. Yet, these recent immigrants are actually doing much worse than previous immigrants did, taking longer to catch up (and some never doing so) with native Canadians. More are underemployed, more in low-paying and/or part-time, temporary jobs.

Naomi then addressed the reasons behind these statistics. One of the major reasons for the weak economic position of many immigrants is that their increasingly advanced credentials and work experiences are being discounted. In fact, Naomi explained that education achieved outside Canada is discounted by the labour market by a factor of 30%, and work experience gained outside of Canada is discounted by a factor of 70%. Other possible reasons also exist, Naomi listed increased competition both with educated Canadian born individuals as well as other “new entrants,” the business cycle and economic restructuring, the changing characteristics of the immigrants themselves, a lack of alignment between selection criteria and labour market needs, and, of course, unfortunately, discrimination.

Looking at the statistics again, Naomi pointed out that immigrants who are skilled, are well-educated and have good language ability still do best in the long-run, which proves that human capital matters. After skilled immigrants, refugees do second best, which proves that services matter. Next, family class members do better than other economic categories, which proves that social capital matters.

According to Naomi, research also supports the fact that refugees and family class members stay in Canada longer than those from the Economic Class. She told the audience that the average immigrant escapes poverty within 2 to 6 years of entry. More of immigrants in the 18-24 age bracket attend school than their Canadian counterparts and more immigrants aged 25-54 go back for advanced language and training acquisition and improvement. The 30% of “credential discounting” is wiped out if there is a “top up” – that is if the immigrant takes a bit of training in this country, the immigrant’s qualifications are considered more seriously.

Naomi then focused on the “Options for Intervention” which involved first of all, focusing on the immigrants themselves –their language level in ESL or EFL, culture, age, education, credentials, and occupation. Secondly, programs and services must be examined. A plan must be developed to bridge gaps faced by immigrants before and after arrival. Information, qualification assessment, language and bridge training, mentorships,

work experience programs, and loans must be put in place. Next, explained Naomi, systems and attitudes of the host society and institutions must be considered, including all regulatory bodies, employers, schools, universities, community colleges, and community agencies. Attempts must be made to bridge gaps faced by the institutions: legislation, incentives and supports must be put in place to encourage awareness and recognition of skills and there must be cross-cultural and anti-racism training. Vehicles must be created for collaboration of all stakeholders including governments at all levels – federal, provincial and municipal.

Naomi was critical that although governments have invested in programs and systems, instead of evaluating their impact or fixing Skilled Worker processing and criteria, the federal government has created policy changes which, in fact, have been detrimental. They have reduced skilled worker permanent admissions in favour of provincial nominees and temporary entrants; they have focused almost exclusively on short term labour market needs; and they have devolved responsibilities to provinces, educational institutions, and employers.

An overview of provincial nominee programs (PNP) was next on Naomi's agenda. She explained that there were 10 federal-provincial agreements in the absence of a national framework and that there was a patchwork of criteria, costs and processes. She believed this to be a "downloading of responsibility" to the provinces and away from the national government. She granted that the programs were a response to regional needs but pointed out that since immigrants are guaranteed mobility rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there is no requirement that they remain in the province that selected them. She explained that the PNPs were provided priority processing but that there were no caps and the numbers were growing significantly (22,411 in 2008). The programs had become testing grounds for new approaches, which is always good, but unfortunately no national evaluation had taken place. Ontario is now evaluating its pilot program, but other provinces have not yet done so. Naomi highlighted the fact that Ontario's pilot provincial nominee programs is very small (500 immigrants) in comparison to other provinces (Manitoba has 10,000 and is looking into doubling that

number) and that over time, this could lead to a significant reduction in immigrants for Ontario.

Naomi went on to discuss International Students who are, as we all know, a pool of excellent potential immigrants. Because these students are not eligible for any federal programs, they and their institutions must bear the financial burden. Naomi suspects that we may very well see a large increase of these students, possibly because they may see it as a good way to become permanent residents, given the introduction of the Canadian Experience Class which allows certain international students to transition to permanent residence without leaving the country. There are concerns about the impact this could have on post secondary educational institutions and domestic students as well as on skilled worker applicants.

Naomi then turned her attention to the temporary foreign workers brought into Canada by employers. She expressed concern about the real vulnerability that these workers face since they have mobility restrictions and are not eligible for any federal support programs such as language and settlement services. Also, their numbers have increased dramatically over the last few years. If temporary workers are used strategically, an effective labour market tool at the high end could be created. However, if used inappropriately it could discourage investment in the training and hiring of under or unemployed permanent residents and citizens, and it could suppress wages. According to Naomi, many Canadians are worried that Canada may end up like Europe – with a underclass of people on temporary work permits or with no immigration status if they remain in the country once their permits expire.

Naomi analyzed the implications of these new policies. Ontario and Toronto will continue to receive fewer permanent skilled workers because of increased activity by other provinces, priority processing of Temporary Foreign Workers and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC). There will be more blurring of numbers (permanent/temporary) which will make planning difficult. The occupational list proposed for ministerial instructions for skilled worker processing will result in a narrower range of skilled

workers and will not respond to the longer term needs of Ontario. An increased proportion of landings will come from the CEC: people who will have had no prior access to federal settlement and language programs in a 2 step process to permanent residence. Increased selection, settlement and language training responsibilities will be expected for provinces, employers and post secondary educational institutions.

Naomi suggested that language training may need to be addressed in a different way. Perhaps, she said, we need to place more importance on language skill testing before immigrants come here, and we may have to look at different ways to provide more accessible language training. Other comments she made were the need to increase the points allocated to language knowledge in the selection criteria for the Principal Applicants in the skilled worker category, to increase accountability and employer acceptance by implementing language training exit tests, to require standardized overseas tests for Skilled Worker principal applicants, to expand eligibility and access for LINC or other language training programs at all CLB levels, to enhance ESL opportunities in PSE institutions and workplaces, and to provide loans or income support for those in language training.

Naomi concluded her presentation by expressing her concern that the new policy directions may in fact be creating more problems than they are solving.

Wilma Jenkins

Wilma represented Citizenship and Immigration Canada as Regional Director of Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs for the Ontario Region. In this role, Renate explained, Wilma had line responsibility for Toronto and York Settlement Operations and had functional responsibility for the Settlement Program in Ontario. Wilma has had 25 years experience managing immigration programs, frequently handling complex and high profile files. When introducing Wilma, Renate Tilson also reminded us that Wilma had personal knowledge of the immigrant experience, having moved here from Scotland as a child.

Wilma began her presentation by addressing, as the only federal representative on the panel, some of the points Naomi had made. She emphasized that immigration was a shared provincial and federal jurisdiction, remarking that “downloading” was a “bit of a charged” term. In fact, she stated, the federal department is always working with provinces to see what their needs are, and they are asking CIC in many instances, to look at and to change their PNP (the provincial nominee program) numbers and to consider what their market needs are, so that it was not the federal government just deciding to push these things out, but very much a discussion with the provinces and with employers.

And, yes, Wilma concurred, short-term farm workers are up; there is no question about that, to address the short-term labour needs. However, the federal government, she countered, was aware of the challenges of changing labour markets, and continued to be concerned about the long-term and about demographics.

Wilma believes that there is no question of the long-term immigration program disappearing. To the best of her knowledge, Minister Kenney had indicated that the levels of immigration would likely remain constant at last year’s levels, and that would be announced very soon. She also stated that, in terms of there being no national framework for government programs, there has always been a recognition that it is important that provinces are able to address their needs, and we do now have changes to our terms and conditions that were approved in May, and we have moved to what is now very much 3 program streams and that includes pier one immigration with 6 different immigration streams and that still includes languages, evaluation framework, that includes settlement and welcoming communities which is about making communities much more ready and willing to accept immigrants and to have them adapt to their communities.

After these forwarding remarks, Wilma moved on to her presentation. First, Wilma outlined the history and basic tenants of the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement, reminding the audience that the COIA was signed in November 2005 to allow for

expansion of services to help newcomers integrate into Ontario successfully. She stated that COIA had provided a very successful mechanism to allow for 3 levels of government to work together in the planning of delivery of services. Consultations with stakeholders have taken place in order to develop the strategic plan to guide investment under COIA. This strategic plan, she explained, addressed the gaps and issues in settlement and language training identified in the consultations.

Wilma then moved on to outline the four strategies The COIA Strategic Plan embodies: The first is to develop a flexible, coordinated system of settlement services with strong linkages and clear pathways to services newcomers need such as language-training, labour-market integration, and social services; the second is to build on existing services to develop and implement a comprehensive language assessment, referral and training system that assists newcomers to become competent in English or French as quickly as possible; the third, offers a unique opportunity, and that is to work with municipalities and federal-provincial government departments to enable partnerships that will integrate newcomers into the economic and social life of Ontario communities; and the fourth is our accountability framework and that is to design, fund and administer language training programs based on how well they support desired outcomes.

Wilma elaborated on this plan by adding that on the third strategy they had an MOU with the city of Toronto and the province, the first of its kind in Canada, and it has proven useful in terms of the city being able to have a say in what policy is being shaped nationally. CIC also has a useful immigration committee where they work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and they also have COIA working groups that have federal-provincial-municipal representatives, settlement working groups, and a language-training working group. In addition, something new they are doing this year is called LIPS (local immigration partnerships). Those are initiatives which help communities and neighbourhoods put immigration on their overall planning agenda in order for communities to benefit from the successful economic and social integration of newcomers. So it is really about communities coming together across the table to talk about what immigrants' needs are and where they start shaping their own local policies to

provide services. Important as terms of measuring outcome, they are developing credible, valid, measurable outcomes of success for settlement services and language training. They are developing a multi-level evaluation plan and a research plan. We will be sharing those research findings with municipalities, service providers, and other funders and will be reviewing existing committees which engage in consultations with service providers and municipalities and will establish other committees and venues as required. Wilma estimated that they were up to about 24 committees now. And to the extent possible they will have a common data dictionary and standard texts as a requirement of CIC.

Wilma then went on to discuss the expansion settlement programs under COIA. She explained that there had been an expansion of settlement workers in schools through library settlement partnership projects, involving the settlement workers working out of the libraries in the summer time. This initiative proved so successful that they now have settlement workers stationed in several libraries throughout Ontario all year round. She mentioned that there had been research to show that immigrants and newcomers use public libraries much more than the average Canadian does, so they believe it is a good logical place to be. Regarding CIC's Employer engagement Initiative, the Internationally Educated Trained Professionals Conference, CIC is also funding Youth Programming projects, addressing underserved areas and pre-arrival services, and occasional child care services. CIC has also been working with non-traditional main stream service providers such as hospitals and expanding settlement programming to increase awareness of language programs. Wilma remarked that the more uptake there is of settlement programming, the more aware people will become of language training. The department has also been producing videos which will be shared with LINC and ESL sites.

In terms of the expansion of Language Training Programs under COIA, they have introduced higher LINC levels, specialized employment related language training (ELT - enhanced language training and OSLT – occupation specific language training). They have more and smaller LINC Literacy classes. They have expanded child-minding

services including the introduction of infant care and they are introducing programming to address several gaps and issues such as the following:

The first issue being addressed by CIC is the need for employment-related language training. They are supporting occupation specific language training by having 14 colleges in Ontario deliver 29 curriculum and development pilot projects. Those projects include: Project Management, Business and Accounting Focus, internationally trained nurses, medical lab technologists. In addition, there are 73 ELT projects delivered by 50 agencies. They are also co-funding 41 Bridge-to-Work projects with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. As well, the COIA Language Training Working Group has developed recommendations for in the workplace language programming and for the workplace language programming. So, Wilma stated, these are the recommendations which have come from the COIA Language Training Group; the two streams allow for actual training to improve the workplace itself and for training around intercultural understanding.

The next issue is the need to build capacity and competency in the teaching profession. Recent research, conferences, and the language training work leaders have all strongly recommended the need for increased capacity so what CIC is doing there is funding conferences such as those of TESL Ontario and Higher-level language conferences. CIC has put forth a call for proposals for projects to provide professional development supports and training to English and French second language instructors in Ontario. Those projects will include: training for instructors in teaching soft skills, workplace communication, and intercultural communication; training to strengthen competency to deliver language in and for the workplace; resources and training for the teaching of literacy to newcomers.

The third issue CIC is focusing on is the need to strengthen coordination across federal and provincial language training programs. Wilma advised us that through the COIA Language Training Working group, CIC is working closely with the province to strengthen co-ordination. Also, CIC is collaborating with MCI on the development of

CFPs (Calls for Proposals). They are also funding conferences (CIC fund 800 seats at the 2008 TESL conference) and they are assessing eligible clients in provincial specialized language training pilots. In addition, they are sharing tools and resources that were developed for teachers.

The next issue Wilma explained was the need for alternative delivery approaches. CIC has increased home study seats by 800 (in fact, increasing the seats by 600 in 2007/8 and an additional 200 this year for Toronto because Toronto had previously been excluded from this home study program. Wilma joked that “the light bulb had gone on that yes, some people in Toronto might actually need to study at home. CIC has also been funding the development of resources for LINC and ESL teachers in Ontario, including interactive and on-line activities. They have been developing on-line language training in French at the LINC level 3-4 and that has been going well. The on-line course will be piloted and the lessons learned from that will be transferred to English on-line training. In terms of the resources for LINC and ESL teachers (Wilma read “The teaching resources will include interactive activities which will be published in HTML and JAVA and packaged as scored learning objects so they can be reused in various learning management systems.”) Teachers will be able to use the on-line activities to show their students that the web can be used as a resource for improving language skills.

The need for more targeted language training is another issue which CIC is addressing by implementing new programming options through existing operational contribution agreements (CAs) as well as through the new CFP Process 2009-2010. This programming is Youth focused, LINC for Late Life Learning, LINC Tutoring, and Language in the Workplace.

To satisfy the need for consistent measurement of learner achievement, CIC is exploring options for standardized exit tests in LINC. They have someone looking at short and medium term options right now. The goal for new exit evaluations would be to enhance the ability to assess newcomer language learning outcomes, to allow CIC and stakeholders to assess what is working and to share best practices, to give students

confidence in their progress, and to enhance how accepted and marketable LINC training is to potential employers.

Wilma ended her presentation by bringing forward a number of statistics. She pointed out that CIC has increased agreements by 61%, LINC Service Providers by 13%, and LINC Classes by 52%. Wilma also pointed out that LINC year-to-date enrollments were up 14% over last year and LINC Home Study Seats were up by 33%. She noted that 73 diverse ELT projects were delivered by over 50 agencies.

Catherine Finlay

As the third speaker of the panel, Catherine represented the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration as their Director of Programs with the Immigration Branch, a job which she had just begun. In this position, Catherine has responsibilities for the Provincial Nominee Program, Global Experience Ontario, Adult Non-Credit English and French as a Second Language, settlement and bridge-to-work programs. Renate advised us that Catherine had had an extensive and diverse career in the Ministries of Health, Consumer and Business Services and Government Services in operations, policy development and strategic planning and communications. As a Director at Service Ontario, Catherine successfully championed numerous business and service transformations.

Catherine started her presentation by advising the listeners that the focus of her presentation would be on working together to integrate newcomers into Ontario. She said that Ontario recognizes the benefits immigrants bring to the province, that they are important source of skills, ideas, capital and connections to international markets. Catherine said that by 2011, immigrants will account for 100% of Ontario's net labour force growth, according to Statistics Canada. She cautioned, though, that in spite of this labour market need, economic outcomes for newcomers have been declining. Compared to the 1990s, immigrants had lower income rates in 2000-2004. Historically, immigrants' income levels and employment rates have caught up with their Canadian-born

counterparts within 10 years of arrival but it is now taking longer. A lack of support to help immigrants match work to levels of skill and knowledge will result in Ontario wasting potential and opportunities. According to a 2005 Conference Board of Canada report, Canada's failure to recognize immigrant learning credentials has cost the Canadian economy between 3.4 and 5 billion dollars annually. Ontario must be able to compete with other jurisdictions, must ensure that it can attract and retain skilled immigrants by making sure newcomers succeed here. That is why the government of Ontario has made labour market integration of newcomers one of its priorities.

In 2007, about 125,000 people (47% of immigrants to Canada) came to Ontario; however, Ontario's share of immigrants has declined slightly in recent years because of increased competition from other provinces such as Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and the Atlantic provinces, but it may also be a reflection of the declining economic outcomes for immigrants here in Ontario. In fact, the past 20 years has seen great changes in immigration patterns in Ontario. Our current top five source countries are now India, China, the Philippines, Pakistan and the USA. Catherine referred to charts she had brought to show that more of these immigrants are coming with language proficiency and it is likely that Ontario will continue to receive more immigrants with a higher level of English proficiency. If this is the case, more training which goes beyond general ESL will be required. One area of need will be language training that is occupation-specific with the focus on workplace culture and communication. Immigrants landing in Ontario today are highly educated and skilled. Between 2003 and 2007, an average of 46% of immigrants of working age had university degrees. Despite these high levels of education, social and economic outcomes for immigrants are declining. With an increasing reliance on newcomers to meet labour market demand, we need to more effectively package this skilled and well-educated workforce to support future economic growth in Ontario.

Government has made significant investments in institutions to support newcomers. Catherine referred to Wilma's explanation of COIA (The Canadian Ontario Immigration Agreement). This bilateral agreement between Ottawa and Ontario settles \$920million

dollars over a period of 5 years for new federal funding for settlement and language training in Ontario. This funding is in addition to the federal government's base settlement funding of \$108 million dollars for the language instruction of newcomers to Canada and other language training programs. This amounts to a total of \$1.5 billion in federal funding over a five year period.

Since 2003, Ontario has invested more than \$600 million in innovative programs and services for newcomers including more than \$290 million for adult non-credit language training programs and \$85 million for bridge-training programs. The province is focused on five priority areas: (1) attraction initiatives and pre-arrival services; (2) coordinated settlement services; (3) a comprehensive language training system (of which TESL Ontario is a key component); (4) labour market integration; and (5) community and employer engagement.

Catherine listed barriers to employment for immigrants, stating that these barriers were identified in discussions with newcomer service associations and were also identified in consultations in 2006 for the development of the Canada- Ontario agreement and strategic plan for settlement services and language training. As previously noted, Catherine said, their main priority has been the labour market integration of newcomers. We need newcomers to find jobs and careers commensurate with their experience, training and education. Developing programs geared to the labour market integration of newcomers is addressing a growing need identified by the immigrants themselves. To address this goal MCI is spending approximately \$77 million this year to address this priority through adult language training programs and bridge training programs.

One of the solutions, and she believes it has been mentioned several times, is occupation-specific language training. This is important for newcomers to attain and retain suitable employment. Although labour market integration is a priority for Ontario, language training programs also address a wide range of needs and ages. The province funds English and French as a second language training programs from kindergartners to senior citizens through three Ministries. The Ministry of Education provides training for the

ESL/FSL training programs in school boards for the K-12 program and the adult credit program offered through their Continuing Education departments. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities provides funding for ESL/FSL programs with colleges and universities. And the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration provides funding for Adult Non-Credit ESL, FSL and Citizenship and Language Training Programs in Ontario. Many of you here today are important to the success of the Adult Non-Credit Training Program. Learning English or French is the foundation of success for newcomers. This year 39 school boards have been contracted to deliver ESL/FSL classes (35 in English and 4 in French), recognizing, however, that integration demands a higher level of language ability, MCI has funded occupation-specific language training through specialized language training pilots and bridge training. As previously noted by Wilma, MCI is currently reviewing all aspects of adult non-credit language-training programs to ensure they are focused on the changing needs of our newcomers. The goal is to create a simpler well-coordinated training program that meets their needs. Having come from ServiceOntario, Catherine recognizes the importance of the fact that people don't need to know how the work is done in the back office or what level of government provides services; we need to simplify and make it easier which means we need to work more collaboratively together to make that happen. So, they don't need to know who to go to; they just need a window in, and that window opens up to so many different avenues, so this is really critical for our newcomers and Catherine is excited about being part of a broader team at different levels of government.

Catherine explained that, launched in 2006, specialized language training pilots offer occupation-specific language training for in and around the workplace. Partnerships with employers such as advisory committees, community agencies and other partners are essential for success. Fifteen school boards are currently involved in piloting 28 projects for up to 2300 learners. With regard to language training for the workplace pilots, these specialized language training projects assist immigrants who want to work in a specific economic sector but require specialized sector-specific training and skills. Eighteen pilot projects have been funded to develop curriculum resources and to pilot them. The resulting inventory of curricula will be available to participating school boards interested

in adding these courses to their regular list of ESL programs. Some of these pilots offer learners a valuable work-placement component to provide work place experience. With regard to language training in the workplace, these specialized language training projects are for immigrants who are already in the work force but require ESL/FSL language upgrades for improvement. There are 10 pilot projects that have been funded in this category and they cover a wide-range of industry sectors such as manufacturing, health care, hospitality and tourism, skilled trades, and food processing. Most of the language training takes place at the employer's worksite, but some training takes place off-site. The success of these pilots is reflected in the growing demand from employers. Select employers do choose to go the extra mile to recognize their employees' achievements. This is not a project requirement; they just become part of the process. They hold graduation ceremonies, insert photos and stories in their newsletters.

Catherine then turned her attention to Bridging Projects. MCI funds the development and testing of new approaches to help internationally-trained individuals achieve licensure and employment that matches their skills, education and experience. The goal is to provide training without duplication of previous training. Typically, projects are delivered by the universities, colleges, community agencies, regulators and school boards. These organizations deliver occupation-specific training that gives immigrants the skills, language, and work experience they need to secure employment in their field. Assessments of our newcomers' skills and training provides targeted training that addresses what the newcomer needs to acquire licensure for their profession and therefore employment. Many of the bridging projects offer a higher-level of language training component, including technical language training, sector/occupation-specific language training, workplace communication skills, cultural diversity training, and business writing and presentation skills. Since 2003, the province has funded 145 projects that have served 20,000 internationally trained individuals. There are 3 types of bridging projects: getting a license, getting a job, and then we look at changing the system itself to make it work for individuals. The projects themselves are selected through an annual competition through an Invitation for Proposal Process which opens in early summer and closes in

early fall. Organizations are notified of the IFP and we send out a pre-release flyer just to make sure everyone is aware that it is coming.

In conclusion, Catherine stressed that successful integration of Ontario's newcomers requires collaboration among all key partners and stakeholders. She stated that we need to work closely together to meet the changing and emerging needs of newcomers choosing Ontario. We need to provide a wide range of leading edge programs to continue attracting and retaining newcomers to Ontario. We need to make it easier for newcomers to integrate and overcome barriers to realize their potential. In this current challenging economic climate, now more than ever, we need to work more closely together and more effectively together to achieve this. Catherine expressed the desire to take this opportunity to thank you, and all ESL instructors, for committing to teach newcomers important language skills. We need your knowledge, your expertise and your passion to help newcomers succeed and let us continue to work together to make this happen.

Patti Redmond

Renate introduced the panel discussion's fourth speaker as the Director of Programs Branch with the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. Renate explained that the Programs Branch brings combined employment, training and post-secondary expertise to the practical work of program design, program development, program standards and program evaluation, linking policy directions with operations and service delivery. She advised us that previously Patti had held the position of Director of the Skills Investment Branch at MTCU where she had responsibility for adult literacy programs and employment programs.

Patti began her presentation about Emerging Issues in Language Training by stating that she would first focus her presentation on what MTCU's role is in language training, as well as on what they are doing with what they term the common assessment approach, their skill attainment initiative, the development of an adult literacy curriculum. She said

that she also planned to talk a little bit about their transformation employment Ontario as well as the future directions and issues from MTCU's perspective. Patti joked that as a civil servant she could not speak as directly as Naomi did, but nevertheless, she would try to identify points from her own perspective.

Patti reviewed Wilma and Catherine's points that MCI is responsible for, not only the delivery of adult ESL/FSL, but for the overall development of policy for it. MTCU also funds the delivery of ESL/FSL courses and programs through each of the 24 colleges of applied arts and technology. Patti noted that all colleges are involved in some degree or another but the level of post-admission service available to college students requiring language training depends on the size of the college and, of course, the ESL/FSL population size and demographics. Patti reminded us that colleges are also the recipient of a number of landed immigrants and refugees and that in both our college and our university systems, people are re-entering into post-secondary education as part of a number of different approaches in order to upgrade their skills or to get an Ontario credential or a variety of other issues, so it is a very important part of our post-secondary education system within Ontario. Our post-secondary institutions are working a lot with the educational needs of immigrants.

Patti pointed out that one of the most important ways MTCU is involved is in this support is through the Literacy and Basic Skills Program. She reminded the listeners that MTCU funds about 75 million dollars on an annual basis to colleges, school boards and community based organizations in order to support their literacy needs, and while Literacy is different than ESL and FSL programs, the literacy intake process determines whether a 2nd language learner can cope with the language of instruction used in the class. She advised the audience that she would talk about the linkage between the two. She suggested that what we need to do as we move forward is to improve our ability to refer and link people to the programming that they need. Immigrants not meeting that particular requirement are referred to ESL or FSL programming whether it be federal programming or provincial programming that is offered and that many of the audience is part of delivering. Patti stated that some of their Literacy and Basic Skills agencies are

accepting some new immigrants in smaller communities and when looking at measuring literacy levels across Ontario and looking at such things as the International Adult Literacy survey to use in MTCU and across the Ministries of the Ontario government in terms of measuring needs across Ontario, including people who may need support with literacy levels plus the needs of people who need ESL or FSL. Patti explained that MTCU was centering their LBS programs around the essential skills framework and specifically trying to connect that work to the “Transition Path” whether that be employment, going on to further education and training, continuing through a post-secondary institution, acquiring an OSSD, apprenticeship, or independence. And, because those paths are relevant, whether it is Literacy or English as a Second Language, French as a Second Language, there are many aspects of the LBS Program that are equally relevant between the ESL, FSL or LBS student. She suggested that one of the things that had to be improved was the ability for individuals, as one of the earlier speakers said, to not know what is going on in the back office but get in to the programming that they need to support their needs. Part of that is what civil servants call policy line and co-ordination to make everything work a bit better, and that is supported in terms of this particular area by inter-ministerial committee that is both the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the Ministry of Trade, Colleges and Universities, and the Ministry of Education, three of the Ministries that are part of the panel today, and this particular committee is chaired by the Minister of Education and it provides that overall policy direction to improve access, alignment and co-ordination between the programs. Patti said that when she would talk about Employment Ontario she would talk about the vision they had in terms of overall co-ordination.

Patti referred to Pauline, the presentation’s final speaker, and mentioned that Pauline would discuss these things a little more, but emphasized that part of this is to achieve that degree of co-ordination and support and to be more customer focused in terms of the needs of these learners and the pathways these learners will be following.

Patti told us that one of the projects on which MTCU is working closely on with one of their partners in one of the other Ministries relates to a common assessment approach,

assessing people's needs, being able to understand what these needs are, and making sure they get into the training they need, and having a common assessment approach to dealing with that. Patti pointed to a "crosswalk" being built between the various programs and all being tied together. She reminded the audience that the presenters were asked to consider future directions and while it may seem a Nirvana, it is all based on a common platform and that the varied themes can be built on from there and this is what they are trying to do.

Within the LBS program itself, she stated, they have been working on doing a better job of assessing the skills achieved through the training and they call this Learner Skill Attainment. Right now success in the LBS program is measured as to whether someone goes on to further training, education and employment services. Many of our LBS agencies are focused on trying to help people find jobs and potentially finding them access to other education, which is important, but also needing to know whether they are achieving the skills as a result of that training, so getting at the quality of the training and its specific outcomes.

Patti told the audience that Pauline would talk about the pilot projects and the work between the two ministries in terms of the tie in between literacy and attainment, the common language assessment and going back to the overall framework of essential skills.

The whole objective, Patti reiterated, was to help the Second Language Learner easily move between education, training and employment because there is that essential skills basis. She said that MTCU is trying to tie that back to the government's overall strategy in terms of Employment Ontario which is the name they give to the set of employment and training programs that are offered through MTCU in order to support people who are having trouble for one reason or another obtaining employment, keeping that employment or need some form of training in order to be able to do that.

Patti said that the other part of the overall set of strategies is that the government made a commitment and wants to make sure that we have an adult literacy curriculum as part of

the overall delivery of programs, measuring results, measuring people properly, making sure there are good results, and making sure that kind of curriculum is in place...and again, there are essential skills, so the package will still consist of those core essential skills as far as the curriculum that we are developing now with that assessment framework. They are just getting this work underway and plan on working closely with stakeholders in terms of the development of it but are looking at field testing with full implementation in 2011. It is tied again to that set of work which must be done with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration through that Adult Education Committee and look again at how we improve the pathways and again that is very much one of the things MTCU is focused on.

Patti then discussed Employment Ontario which is the name given for a set of services at MTCU that helps support the training and employment service needs of individuals. It is tied to the Ministry's Employment promise to offer effective training and employment services, getting at the needs of user clients looking at single point of access. She thinks that to a certain extent that is sometimes misunderstood to mean one building where everyone goes through and then goes elsewhere but it is something that can be built both virtual and actual, just a better understanding of how you can access services and address the individual needs and the labour market demands. It has to be responsive to employers and job seekers, apprentices, new Canadians, etc. A number of immigrants seek services through the Employment Ontario system and part of this is making sure that their needs are assessed when they enter that door because they may come in through the Employment Ontario door because they are seeking employment or better employment and we are making sure we can support the needs that they may have.

In terms of Employment Ontario itself, new Ontarians and new immigrants, or a variety of different terms that are used depending on the situation, we heard from many other speakers the economic challenge of finding employment appropriate to training and experience. The previous speakers talked a lot about that problem. Employment Ontario does, though not exclusively, but with new Ontarians, try to help them find jobs that they need and support their employment needs through a number of programs called Job

Connect, Employment Assistance Services and other programs. One of those other programs, she reminded, is the LBS program which she had talked about earlier. The government introduced a number of new initiatives in its past budget. One of them is The Second Career Program and there has been a number of TV advertisements associated with this, but it is a program that specifically chartered to support the needs of people who have been laid off, and we are seeing increasingly large numbers of people being laid off in the manufacturing sector, in the forestry sector, and other sectors and supporting and supporting them to be retrained into areas of growing need in the economy. It is a very new program. The program was only launched in June of 2008. They are seeing a number of immigrants who have been laid off and, as Wilma addressed, there is a changing pattern jobs, for example, may no longer be available in the manufacturing sector, and there may need to be retraining to re-enter the market. One of the issues being identified with that particular program is that clients may not have the, depending on their circumstances, foundation skills which may be literacy, which may be ESL in order to be successful in that retraining experience to be successful to go on and get a job in that particular field. So, it is one of the things that is part of the new initiative that MTCU is looking at.

Another one is The Apprenticeship Program and an increasing need for a greater number of skilled tradespersons, but as the person responsible for setting the training standards for Apprenticeship and establishing those in terms of our standards-setting responsibilities, I can tell you that the trades are changing in terms of what people may have been able to be successful in, not necessarily having the foundation skills, literacy or ESL or FSL, is no longer the case. She stated that MTCU is seeing that as the future needs of Apprenticeship. The economy desperately needs these people, she said, and everyone here knows that. Patti exclaimed, "Have you ever tried to hire a plumber or an electrician? Very challenging." Huge numbers of retirements in these occupations are anticipated and not so many participating in them, but large numbers of people who want to. We must make sure that we have the appropriate pathways to support that.

In terms of Employment Ontario, in terms of some of the linkages, Patti then explained a chart she had up on the screen (see power point). When people come into Employment Ontario seeking a job, but in terms of getting the job they are looking for or in terms of job retention, we need to look at their foundations skills training. We include in that ESL and the LSP. Getting them referred to the training is also an important part of it. They made apprenticeship or technical skills training Also professional skills and in that particular category, a large part of their efforts there, sadly, are dealing with the impacts on communities as a result of economic adjustment and seeing large numbers of layoffs that have hit very specific communities across Ontario and there is a need to figure out what the right kind of responses should be there, but the bottom being, that employment service, making sure that they do a good job of helping people through those pathways should they come into Employment Ontario in terms of overall strategy.

So, in terms of future directions, again, working on that coherence is vital. Patti mentioned that Pauline would be talking about the work that is happening across various sectors, for example, between the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and federally Immigration and Citizenship Canada, but there is a need to bring that whole level of policy and program coherence to the whole system and help support the needs of clients. It has vastly improved over the past number of years through the number of agreements that have been talked about and better co-ordination of those services but there is always more coherence and integration that is possible. There will be an ongoing need to improve our ability to assess the clients' needs and ensuring that the training and education we offer those clients should meet those needs. That will be a continuing emerging issue in these particular areas as we move forward.

Patti explained that MTCU is certainly under a significant amount of pressure right now to look at and be able to demonstrate specific results for the investments being made in these programs, so measuring the skills obtained by learners, being able to tie that specifically to funding that has been provided, having specific performance measures and results associated with those things...that is something that in terms of the LBS Program is very much part of the work they are doing in terms of program design and

development...and the alignments of that training too, people's employability and getting the job, a livable wage, all those kinds of things you associate with is making sure that that training, whether it be Literacy, ESL which all of the audience is involved with, making sure all those ties come together in the overall approach. These needs are not necessarily emerging in the future; they are here now and you, the audience, is all part of this process and a number of the speakers have already talked about how that will work as we go forward in the future.

Pauline McNaughton

Renate introduced Pauline, the panel's last speaker, as the Manager of the Adult Education Policy Unit, a Unit which reports to both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and works closely with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Renate explained that Pauline has worked in the field of Adult Education for over 25 years, most of it involved with Adult ESL including holding the position of Executive Director for the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks.

Pauline began her presentation by taking a survey of how many attendees were instructors in the K -12 school board programs and how many were teachers of ESL in a high school credit program? Non-credit ESL whether college or school board? Pauline began with a brief update from the Curriculum and Assessment Branch of the Ministry of Education, highlighting new resources and initiatives to support ELL (English Language Learners) in K-12 programs. However, she clarified that most of her presentation would be on the unit that she manages: the Adult Education Policy Unit which is part of the Student Success Learning to 18.

Pauline then began with a quote (on her power point) from Energizing Ontario Education which she explained was a vision for the province that was issued in the last election. As indicated in the quotation, there is a real commitment to adult education and the role of the Ministry of Education in supporting and encouraging and re-engaging adults to come

back and finish their education and in particular to engage immigrants who may come without having completed formal education in their home country to have that opportunity to work towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Pauline noted that although there are immigrants with higher levels of education attending adult credit programs in order to complete particular courses required as pre-requisites to further education or training, or seeking to gain Canadian work experience and opportunities through co-operative programs, there are also a number of immigrants who come here with less than a high school education who are seeking a high school diploma. A key focus of the Adult Education Policy Unit is to work with MTCU and MCI to better coordinate the delivery of adult education programs and services to serve the foundational education needs of learners. We have developed a strong collaborative approach through an inter-ministerial committee or working group. Pauline pointed out that Mourad Mardikian was in attendance and was part of that committee from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

Pauline said that she wanted to focus in particular (given that this is International Year of Languages that TESL Ontario was celebrating) that correlates to one of the three pilot projects that they ran in 2007-2008 in partnership with the other two Ministries. They invested 1.7 million in 14 pilot projects during that year and there were 3 in particular that were a focus of that whole initiative. The first one was recognizing newcomers' first language for high school credit and there were 8 sites across Ontario; finding better ways to recognize adult learners' skills and knowledge through common assessment and there were 3 pilot sites in Ontario for that one; the third was exploring potential partnerships through school boards, community organizations, local agencies and colleges to provide flexible learning opportunities for adult learners. There were 3 pilot sites for the latter one. They also did some piloting in the context of the overall initiative of the work carried out with Employment Ontario to integrate detailed information about adult credit school board programs into their online searchable database. The pilots included a component looking at how effective access to information on adult credit programs in services to Employment Ontario was or how accessible that was.

Pauline said that she wanted at that time to focus on adults and the recognition of newcomers' native language rather than the other two because that is particular relevance to the topic of the conference. Pauline explained that they were looking at how to reach out to newcomers and support them in earning high school credits towards a high school diploma, and also to better engage and welcome them by recognizing that they bring with them valuable skills and abilities, such as their first language skills, for which credit can be granted towards achievement of a secondary school diploma. Another key objective was to support and encourage school boards in conducting outreach and partnership activities with local immigrant-serving agencies. This would hopefully help school boards to better understand the needs of adult newcomers, and help agencies that serve immigrants better understand how Prior Learning and Assessment for Mature students could help newcomers seeking to complete high school education. Pauline explained that they had looked at a number of case studies to see how the policies around prior learning assessments and recognition, work for newcomers and how to address any issues and barriers identified. There were, she said, a number of things they were looking at in the pilot all at the same time; it was a kind of window into what was going on out there in terms of how they could actually serve a particular client. She referred to the 7 communities listed on her slide and involved in the projects (Peel, York, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, Windsor, Kitchener-Waterloo) as well as the partners involved (11 English school boards, 2 French school boards, 11 settlement service organizations, Independent Learning Centre, and World Education Services). The pilot projects were completed on July 31st and produced a number of marketing resources in various languages. They also resulted in a number of language challenge assessments and guidelines in those particular languages (as displayed on her power point). We received all the final project reports from each pilot site, as well as the results of an independent evaluation the Ministry had contracted to look at the overall pilot initiative. There were some tools developed to assist in the comparison for grade 11 and 12 curriculum equivalencies from other Canadian jurisdictions and we received a lot of information about how these policies are being worked out at a local level. Pauline stated that this information is already informing them in terms of next steps. One of the findings from the evaluation was that, of course, a lot of newcomers don't need an Ontario secondary

school diploma; a lot are very well educated who face a challenge in having their international credentials recognized. There are, however, a number of newcomers who did not complete basic formal education to a high school level, so part of the task would be to work with the newcomers and agencies, and adult education departments as well within the school boards and colleges to find out who those clients are, how we can reach them, and how we can make them aware of the streamlined processes for completing their high school. And, so they are looking at next steps needed in that area and looking at ways to take those new language assessment tools that they have now in 6 or 7 languages and make them more broadly available to school boards. Pauline stated that they were also continuing to look at working with the other Ministries to work at results and look at how they can work together in terms of helping the transition and movement between and among the different programs and the three different Ministries. Pauline commented that she realized the audience knew what a very real challenge that was. As she said, you can prepare your clients as best you can in terms of their language ability but how well are they going to function when they go to the next step, whether it is going to an adult credit program, a training program, a college or university program...and that is a big concern. How do they know they have prepared them well enough and what exactly do they need then to be ready to move on to the next level. How can that next step program be best prepared to continue to support and meet their needs? That is the real focus of the work between the three Ministries.

This next part, Pauline said of her presentation, comes from a different background of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Branch. She mentioned that this might not be new to those in the audience who are involved in k-12 , but a new English-language learning policy services are available, and a new curriculum policy for ESL and literacy development was issued last year All are available on the Ministry of Education website: *Many Roots Many Voices, Supporting English Language Learners in Kindergarten, Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling* and *Tips for English Language Learners of Mathematics*. Other things that have been going on, Pauline said, were a number of Board Projects and a new resource coming out, *A Practical guide for Supporting ELL in Grades 1 to 8*. Pauline then asked the audience if

they were familiar with the Step Program, a new assessment kit developed by the Ministry of Education Curriculum and Assessment Branch and being piloted now in school boards. Pauline explained that that pilot will be ongoing for approximately 2 years. Pauline then asked if anyone was present in the audience who was involved in that Step Project and discovered there was one individual. She then joked that any questions about the project could be directed to that individual! Pauline confessed her own limitations to answering any questions about Step but offered to take them back and find answers if she did not have them.

Thus concluded the presentations.

Question and Answer Period

A short question and answer period followed the presentations.

Question: Much of what has been talked about here relies on or talks about accountability, reliability and is based on a framework of Canadian Language Benchmarks, the LINC Program in terms of the curriculum, and a number of the assessment tools I imagine that are being developed, that have been talked about by these people here today and are indeed based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks.. These Benchmarks have been in existence now for roughly 12 years, I think, and in that time there have been a lot of questions raised about their validity and reliability and there has been very little evidence provided to show that they are reliable or valid. Moving forward and developing things based on this seems to me a potential waste of time in terms of money. Are there plans to validate the Canadian Language Benchmarks more thoroughly or to revise them before this kind of movement happens, or are we going to move forward based on these existing documents?

Answer: First, Wilma responded by saying that they are looking at language testing to see if there was a test they could use overall. It is exploratory at this point and probably it

will be some time until we come to a definite conclusion. Pauline McNaughton also spoke up and asked what these allegations of a lack of reliability are based on? At this point, the questioner responded that it was not because they had been shown to be invalid, but they have not been shown to be valid. Pauline asked whether he meant the benchmarks themselves or the assessment tools. The questioner responded, “either one.” Pauline responded that in terms of the assessment tools hard data is there in terms of the psychometric testing and validation studies and are available. Catherine Finley added that it was important to keep in mind that these tests were developed for particular purposes. Also, the Benchmarks are a criterion, so they are not something that would be reliable or not reliable in terms of testing or success, so there have been CLBA and CLT tests which have been developed for placement and language training programs. Now, over the past while, she stated, there have been consideration of these tools for other purposes and how valid they are for other purposes is another question altogether.

Question: Lana Stevens asked the next question and identified herself as working for LINC in Thunder Bay. Lana addressed her question to Naomi Alboim. Based on the statistics you gave us, I believe you gave us the date 2025, 100% of our population growth would be immigrants and a significant part of our workforce even by 2011. She asked Naomi why this would be.

Answer: Naomi responded by saying that the simple fact is we are having fewer babies at the same time as a strong demographic shift is taking place; there are more older people, and the baby boomers are retiring. Naomi reminded us that we are not alone and that most industrialized countries have an even bigger problem with this. Naomi pointed out how interesting it was that while immigrants tend to have more children in their home countries, once they come to Canada they tend to emulate the Canadian norm for similar reasons and they end up having fewer children here than they did in their home countries.

Question: Sarah said that there is a lot of discussion about ESL or FSL language training and she was wondering to what extent does bilingualism or a lack thereof affect the economic and social success of immigrants, and asked whether any statistics existed?

Answer: Patti Redmond responded that although she is not aware of any particular statistics on this, it should be positive but that this could vary according to areas and occupations. In some communities, she said, it is seen as very beneficial in terms of success and attachment to the labour force, so having proficiency in both official languages would obviously be valuable.

Question: Does the Ministry push bilingualism as a way to get work?

Answer: Patti replied that the Ministry of Trades, Colleges and Universities has no specific policy objective to promote bilingualism, although the standard position is to encourage bilingualism. Certainly their programs would be available in both official languages in designated communities. Wilma Jenkins added that certainly from the federal perspective, the answer would be yes, of course, marketing exists to promote bilingualism in the public service. We also have three networks in Ontario that are to foster francophone initiatives and to some degree and to some degree your question will be addressed through (French expression).

Question: This question was addressed to Citizenship and Immigration. Many times as an instructor, I am in the position where I have to ask a student, “Are you a Canadian Citizen?” If they say, “yes,” then I have to say, “I’m sorry” because the bridging programs, the “Skills to Go” and other programs are outside of their grasp. This makes citizenship seem like a punishment and imposition and makes people want to say “Don’t be a citizen yet.” Is there any motion by the federal government to expand those parameters? Because, the questioner stated, it really takes more than 3 or 4 years to acquire the kinds of skills mentioned in the Bridging Programs and the Future programs.

Answer: Wilma agreed. She stated that an individual should not have to choose between citizenship and higher learning. She said that she had made her personal opinion known to the people in Ottawa. There is a group now which will be examining the eligibility criteria and she did not want to make people think that they will not consider a change.

She said that Multiculturalism will be moving over to join her Department which may allow some flexibility about what can be done. She insisted that CIC was moving towards opening such doors.

Question: My question is about trying to change a bill which brought LINC Programs to the country...when would the alignment of provincial –federal sharing that the Ministry of Education of Ontario might not pick up. Could not cost sharing help goals such as including allowing Canadian citizens into some of these programs. We might be more creative in some of our programming. My other comment is that when we are getting funding and developing programming to support the needs of newcomers in terms of curriculum and their learning, their acquisition of English, especially since we have a workplace focus, I just hope that any people who are granting funding, and any of the people who are meeting talking about funding and any of you who are developing curriculum, make sure that we have explicit information, instructional pedagogical information, for functional language. I think this also speaks to the question that the first questioner asked today. The difference between CLB and an academically focused text is that we have different views of language. We have language for academic purposes, listening for academic purposes, but we also need interactive communicative language. So, this is not a question, but simply a comment.

Question: Bernice Klassen from Algonquin College asked about funding. She said if she applied the fact that there could be an investigation of work being done at the committee level around funding, eligibility and so on, that was partly her purpose for coming to the conference. She stated that they cannot wait for 3 years. They have projects such as OSLT that are seriously undermining immigrants' opportunity to be successful because of eligibility restrictions. We know co-funding is often the best solution, so I encourage consideration of it so that providers are not put in the situation as the women sitting next to her who had to tell students that if you are a citizen you can not get support, but if you are a resident, you can. As an example, right now, Bernice stated, I am recruiting for a nursing program and she had to tell applicants that she was sorry, but she could not accommodate citizens. One applicant said, "Oh, that's because I am an old

immigrant, isn't it?" And she had to reply, "Well, yes." Another woman told Bernice that she had not become a citizen because her husband had not allowed her to do so. She said that he had not decided if he was going to stay. Bernice said that these people in the middle are not being captured and she suspects that there are even more of them than we realize. We need to address this now. We need co-funding so that we are not turning people away.

Answer: Wilma responded that co-funding will not necessarily solve the problem: it does not address eligibility criteria. Wilma said that those changes she recently spoke of took over two years. The broad policy changes in direction must go into government and does takes a long time. We're conscious when we are starting with new funding that if there are issues around what we can find and what the province can find, we try as best we can to address where our eligibility criteria fits. I can only say that the door has been opened and hopefully we can resolve that problem.

Response: Bernice replied, "That comes back then to what you mentioned before. We really need a comprehensive framework then that you have all spoken about. Bernice then addressed Patti and told her that she applauded the LBS work being done and the common approach to assessment. As a college representative, however, I can see that ESL is losing ground in college. LBS is not going to be addressing the needs of the new immigrants we are talking about. We feel that we are losing touch with the domestic population.

Answer: Wilma replied that yes, I did speak about LBS and foundation skills. And we do need to move to higher skills and those are one of the areas in which the colleges have done very well. She said she was trying to demonstrate how we are trying to tie all those things together in a bit more of a common approach.

Question: Tiffany from Kingston, who said she teaches ESL to adults, addressed a question to the group of presenters about COIA. Tiffany asked, "How do you think the

Canada/Ontario Immigration Agreement will affect instructors in non-LINC programs, specifically school boards. Does it have a positive or negative effect on school boards?

Response: Patti asked Mourad , the Team Lead of the Language Training Unit of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, who was sitting at the front right of the audience, to respond. Mourad responded that the advantages for school boards is that they are just as eligible as any agency or college or university to apply for funding under COIA. Absolutely, school boards will benefit. They may receive funding to avail themselves of the opportunities which are available. As more such calls come out, we will make sure information is provided.