

*The IHLA*

# NEWSLETTER

July 1, 2019

Volume 16 Issue 3

Editor: Trudie Aberdeen



It's been a great year.

Are you ready for a summer break?



**“Music can change the world because it can change people.” ~ Bono**

IHLA has been incredibly busy this past term with so many events happening. In this issue you will find

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## The President's Message

Dear IHLA Member Schools, Friends and Supporters of Heritage Languages,

First and Foremost, I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable Canada Day Celebration with friends and family!

What a year it has been for IHLA and our Member Schools! It was wonderful to see our IHLA Schools at our AGM on June 17th to share their respective 2018/2019 Heritage Language School Year, IHLA Mentorship Program Projects, and to welcome our new IHLA Board Members:

Nina Paulovicova (Slovak Heritage School in Edmonton)  
and  
Anupama Deshpande (Edmonton Marathi Shala)

Along these same lines, we are thankful for reappointment to the IHLA Board:

Sona Grigoryan (Armenian School of Edmonton)  
Kuljeet Bhuee (Ramgarhia Khalsa School)  
Eyup Ozturk (Nebula Academy)  
Krystyna Dembowski (Polska Szkoła im. Henryka Sienkiewicza)  
Renata Krawczyk (Polish Canadian Theatre Group)  
Josephine Pallard (Filipino Language and Culture School)  
Jaspal Bansal (Ramgarhia Khalsa School)

I, on behalf of all Members of IHLA, would like to sincerely thank Mr. Francis Wambugu (Kiswahili Learning Centre) for your time, efforts and good counsel on the IHLA Board since 2016. It has been a pleasure to work with you on the IHLA Board.

Above all, a *heartfelt* **THANK YOU** to EVERYONE in IHLA all for another incredible year and hope all our IHLA Schools have a great summer and we look forward to seeing you all in September! Don't forget to check our IHLA website for information regarding our First Principals Meeting in September 2019 and all events for the 2019/2020 IHLA School Year which will be full of purposeful and new Professional Development Sessions, information regarding Mother Language Day 2020 and more!

Best regards and Happy Summer,

Antonella Cortese, President IHLA

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## The Annual General Meeting

This year our AGM was held on June 17, 2019 at the Edmonton Viets Association at 10534-109 Street. Here are some of the highlights:

**Professional Development:** This year we held 9 teacher PD sessions and 8 principal sessions. Teachers' PD sessions included Festivals, Festivities, and Celebrations; PBL 1 & 2, Teaching Canadian Style; Snapshot Storytelling; Teaching Speaking Skills; Developing, Adapting, and Sharing Resources; Language Portraits and Identity Texts; and Family Language Policy. Principals' PD sessions included Strategic Planning 1 & 2; School Leadership; Budgeting and Keeping your School Afloat; Interviewing Prospective Teachers, and 3 special Principals' Meetings.

**Do Bugs Need Drugs:** IHLA principals had a special visit from a member of Alberta Health Services who came to speak to us about over-prescribing of antibiotics. A series of pamphlets are made available in languages other than English. Your principal will have a copy if this document is available in your language.

**The Casino:** This year IHLA will hold another casino- October 16/17. This provides a steady income for IHLA and we could not continue to operate without this money. Each school is expected to contribute at least one volunteer over the age of 18 for a shift. Mark your calendars.

**Mentorship:** We had reports from the St. Andrew's Ukrainian School for adults & the Polska Szkola Henryka Sienkiewicza and the Hindi Vidyalaya & the Ramgarhia Khalsa School. All four groups this year focused on understanding each other's operational structure. Congratulations to all 4 schools for a successful learning opportunity!

**Working Group for the IHLA Professional Standards:** This year we are committed to looking at the IHLA professional standards. A subgroup has formed to look at these and bring back the document for the principals and then the IHLA membership. IHLA extends a great thank you to Francis Wambugu, Anupama Deshpande, and Trudie Aberdeen for willing to serve on this committee.

**Mother Language Day 2020:** This year's MLD 2019 was very successful. This upcoming year we will hold MLD at the Polish Hall. We will continue with schools deciding to either submit to the MLD book or to have a performance.

**New Board Members:** IHLA held an election for new board members. IHLA would like to thank Francis Wambugu for his service. He had to step down due to other responsibilities. We would like to welcome Anupama Deshpande (Edmonton Marathi School) and Nina Paulocova (Slovak Heritage School in Edmonton).

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## IHLA Professional Development

We had a great many workshops and learning events since our last newsletter. Here are some of the things that we covered...

### **Developing, Adapting, and Sharing Resources-** May 15, 2019

By Trudie Aberdeen, Maria Lekkos-Carrozza, and Antonella Cortese

As teachers in heritage language schools we sometimes struggle to find the appropriate teaching materials. Should we look for materials designed for native speakers? Often the materials that are age-appropriate are too difficult for our students. Should we look for materials designed for second language students? Often these materials are too simple for our students or do not match their interests. In this workshop I covered some of the principles used in selecting materials at the “just-right” levels. The keys to adapting materials are to think about how you will group your students and how to modify your expectations for different students. You can either choose the same activity but change the materials based on the students’ needs or you can keep the materials the same and change the requirements. Both Antonella and Maria brought forth exciting activities that they have students complete in their classes.

Antonella has a series of flash cards and she chooses a word of the day. She uses the same flashcards to introduce new vocabulary. She will choose one word of the day such as hot/blue/pretty/expensive. She will go through the flashcards and ask the students if each item is that particular adjective. They will then answer yes or no. As they repeat the flashcards regularly students learn the items on the cards, the grammatical structure of questions, and the new adjectives. This is a great use of repetition.

Maria gave the game Monsters Ink. Students are given an ink spot and a straw. They use the straw to blow the ink into an interesting design. Students then add googly eyes to create a unique monster. Once the monster is completed, students then describe it. Less advanced students might label the parts of the monster. Others might describe it and the most advanced student might use their imagination to explain how it lives and its environment. This is a great example of modifying the same task to meet each individual student’s needs.

### **Interviewing Prospective Teachers-** May 16th, 2019

By Sigrid Olsen

The starting point for hiring a teacher is creating a job description. It is much easier to design interview questions for a teacher if it is clear in the interviewer’s mind what is required of the new employee. Below is a sample job description for a teacher.

<b>A Sample Job Description for a Teacher</b>			
<b>Job Title:</b>	Teacher	<b>Job Category:</b>	Academic Staff
<b>Location:</b>	Your language School	<b>Travel Required:</b>	No
<b>Level/Salary Range:</b>		<b>Position Type:</b>	Part-time contract per academic year or semester
<b>HR Contact:</b>		<b>Closing Date:</b>	
<b>Applications Accepted By:</b> Principal's Name			
Fax or Email: your school email address @gmail.com			
<p><b>Job Description</b></p> <p><b>Role and Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Planning, preparing and delivering lessons in LANGUAGE to students while following the established curriculum and differentiating for the educational needs, abilities and achievement of individual students and groups of students.</li> <li>· Managing classroom learning activities.</li> <li>· Assigning and correcting student work and assignments</li> <li>· Planning and presenting lessons in a comprehensive manner and use visual/audio means to facilitate learning</li> <li>· Reporting on student achievement to parents.</li> <li>· Maintaining communication with parents about student learning and activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Qualifications and Education Requirements</b></p> <p>Bachelor of Education degree from Canada or another Country  Fluent in the language with proficiency in reading, writing and speaking</p>			

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**Preferred Skills**

Experience in teaching the language to children  
Experience working with students or children

**Additional Notes**

All teaching staff will require a Criminal Records certification or copy of effective September 2019

When designing interview questions, please think about what questions you are not allowed to ask in Canada. These include questions regarding someone's country/place of origin and citizenship status; religion, faith or creed; age; gender or sexual orientation; race or ethnicity; family structure, children or marital status; mental or physical health and disability ;appearance, height and weight; and pardoned offences. A good on-line reference regarding interview questions can be found at

- <https://alis.alberta.ca/look-for-work/interviews-and-offers/what-can-employers-ask-you/>

First questions should be designed to get to know the candidate and to make him or her feel comfortable. Possible questions include "Tell me a little about yourself" or "how did you hear about this position?" The second round of questions should target the candidate's pedagogical knowledge. Appropriate questions include questions about differentiation, reading instruction, teaching speaking strategies, classroom management or infusing culture into your lessons.

Many interviews held by school boards tend to use "Behaviour-based" interview questions. Using past behavior is a proven technique used to more accurately determine the future performance or success of the individual. Behavioral questions ask the applicant to describe actual past behavior on the job, which in turn helps you predict their future behavior. You learn about the candidate's soft skills and you learn what you really want to learn about the candidate. You can learn more about this type of interview questions here:

<https://www.persegroup.com/4-reasons-use-behavioral-interviewing/>

Finally, be sure to check the candidate's references. Some questions you might want to ask include:

- Can you verify the job candidate's employment, job title, pay, and responsibilities? Why did they leave that job?
- How do you know the job candidate?
- What makes the candidate a good fit for this job?
- If you had the opportunity, would you rehire this job candidate? Why?
- What are the candidate's biggest strengths and weaknesses?

•Did the candidate get along with their co-workers and management?

## Language Portraits and Identity Texts- June 20th, 2019

By Renata Emilsson Pescova  
University of Iceland, renata@hi.is

Who am I? Children and adults alike ask themselves this question throughout their lives. It is important for everyone to build and nurture their positive identities, not the least for the students who attend heritage language schools to study their languages and learn about the associated cultures.

On Thursday June 20, Renata Emilsson Pescova, a representative of IHLA's sister organisation Móðurmál – the Association on Bilingualism from Reykjavík, Iceland, offered a professional development session for heritage language teachers of IHLA. The session took place in the Punjabi heritage language school in Edmonton.



The PD session was called *Three practical tools for HL teaching: Language portrait, language landscape, and Identity text*. The participants primarily learned how important it is to appreciate identities of their students in heritage language classroom. The main idea is that teachers need to know their students, their backgrounds and what previous knowledge they have, in order to build on them in their teaching and facilitating students' learning. The participants of the workshop learned about the underlying concepts of identity texts, identity, language, and learning, and they tried the tools out.

Identity texts are creative works or performances carried out within pedagogical spaces. Students invest their identities in their texts and they utilize their whole linguistic repertoires. The form can be written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic, or multimodal. Thereafter students share their identity texts with various audiences and often receive positive feedback, thus affirming their identities (Cummins, 2007, p. 60). Identity texts can have various forms and shapes and they can be used with students of different ages, skills and backgrounds. They elicit active participation of students, support their biliteracies and allow them to experience their strengths. By reaching out to families and wider communities, connections and communication are facilitated. Additionally, identity texts are time flexible and can span over one lesson or several weeks of intensive work on texts.

  
**Our goals today**

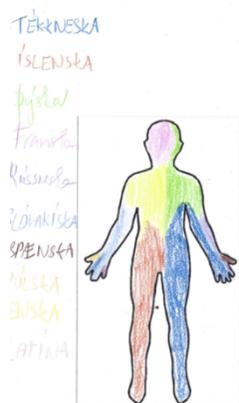
- Introductions (with a touch of identity text) (15 min)
- Identity, language, and learning (25 min)
- Language portrait (30 min)
- Break & Talks (20 min)
- Language landscape (25 min)
- Identity text

UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION STUDIES  
IHLA, IHLA, Education, June 20, 2019

As the youngest participant noted, the lecture was „no real teaching because everybody just talked and laughed“. This feedback testifies that the course participants were highly engaged in the process of learning. They created their own identity texts and discussed their experience, in order to learn how their own students might feel

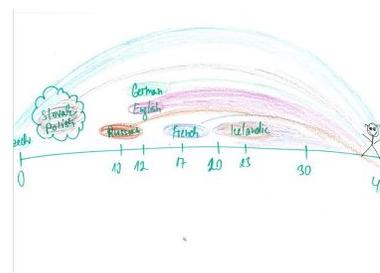
during such classroom activities. The teachers also discussed how these tools fit into a HL classroom and what are some of the characteristics of HL teaching.

The first simple form of an identity text was to create *name tags* with a drawing of something that was important for the person. Then everyone introduced himself with the help of the pictures. Notably, no languages and ethnic backgrounds were mentioned. Mountains, travelling, sun, hobbies and families were often depicted.



The second pedagogical tool that was discussed was a *language portrait*. Students draw their languages into a body outline and explain their thoughts to others. Language portraits can be used as icebreakers, art activities, collaborative activities, as oral or written assignments. Language portraits have the power to capture the development of children's language repertoire in time, similarly as a language portfolio. The important feature of a language portrait is that it recognizes and values any knowledge and skills of any language or dialect.

The third tool introduced to the participants was the *language landscape*. It is a variation of the language portrait but it traces the learning of the languages throughout students' lives. This activity, unlike the language portrait, does not suit the youngest learners who may not have the sense of time. Next to numbers, representing years or age, it is possible to draw events, associated images, flags or any imagery.



Identity text can also be created as a video, audio recording, powerpoint presentation, a text in the traditional sense, as a collage or any piece of art, or as a combination of technologies. Typically they are created in more than one language and thus they support bi- and multiliteracies.

Identity texts are a suitable pedagogical tool for heritage language schools. They suit diverse classrooms with learners of different ages, linguistic capabilities, learning styles and interests. They affirm multilingual identities of the learners, build on and integrate their previous knowledge and they extend their language repertoires. Identity text are easy to try out and they are popular with students. They can be preserved as a book or in any other form and remind everyone how important it is that we know who we are, where we come from and who are the people around us.

#### Reference:

Cummins, J. (2006). Identity texts: The imaginative construction of self through multiliteracies pedagogy. In A. K. Mohanty, O. García, T. Skutnabb-Kangas & M. E. Torres-Guzmán (Eds.), *Imagining multilingual schools: Languages in education and globalization* (pp. 51-68). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

## Family Language Policy and Raising Plurilingual Children- June 24th, 2019

In this workshop participants learned about different ways that parents work with their children in order to ensure that their children become plurilingual. The term plurilingual is used over bilingual because it respects that children have different abilities in each of the languages they speak. Participants learned that there are many different “kinds” of bilingualism and that parents should see their children’s language skills along a continuum, rather than a yes/no. Children might be one of many kinds of bilingual including language shift (the child retains little of their first language), passive bilingualism (the child can understand, but not speak), active bilingualism (the child can participate in the language community, but might not have a full range of linguistic abilities), and balanced bilingualism (the child has the same abilities in both languages).

For some families, the language goal of the family might be to move from language shift to passive bilingualism. For other families, the goal may be for the child to increase their passive listening skills. Other families might desire that their children be able to attend university in either language of their choosing. Language policy, therefore, requires that parents identify their goals with their children and make a policy which helps them to meet their goals.

The following picture illustrates some of the ways that teachers in heritage schools might support their students with their language journeys.

1. Introduction > 2. Plurilingual Children > 3. Family Language Policy > 4. Your language policy > 5. Classroom Language Policy

### Teachers as communication leaders

- ▶ Fostering good conversational skills among students
  - Provide opportunities for the students to use and practice the language
  - Encourage students to ask when they don't understand (comprehension and vocabulary)
  - There are no stupid nor wrong questions
  - Everyone has the right to have their own opinions and be respectful of others'

Use signals / cues to help the child understand

Call the child by name to catch attention

When you ask questions, give a few seconds to respond

If the child makes a mistake, just repeat the correct way without calling out the mistake

It is important to show interest and pay attention to the child

Kriszelle Suson Jónsdóttir [kris5@hi.is](mailto:kris5@hi.is) IHLA P.D. Session

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## Some things happening at IHLA Member Schools

### Ukrainian Language Classes for Adults

St. Andrew's Cultural Centre  
9831-75 Street; Edmonton, Alberta T6A 2Y8  
Phone: 780-469-1463

For the 29<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, St. Andrew's Ladies' Auxiliary has sponsored Ukrainian Language Classes for Adults. Seventy-two students from all over Edmonton and beyond were registered for the September 2018 to March 2019 term. Classes culminated on Wednesday, March 13 with a 'Celebration of Learning'. The instructors and students from the six classes assembled in the Cultural Hall to share some of the oral language learned during the 24, two-hour sessions.



MC for the evening was Lesia Perritt, the program Coordinator/Principal. Vivian Skakun, Ladies' Auxiliary Vice-President and Dr. Ernest Skakun, Parish President offered greetings. Each class presented delightful Ukrainian skits, aided by simple props and/or costume pieces. The audience appreciated numerous humorous moments and the evidence of oral language development.

Lesia thanked the instructors Tetyana Adamyk, Luba Eshenko, Rena Hanchuk, Ludvik Marianych, Ulyana McNally and Lesia Soltykevych for their work; and the students for their presentations and participation in Ukrainian language classes. She also thanked Ludvik for musical accompaniments, Marion Ostapchuk for serving as registrant and organizer of weekly snacks, and Gordon Ostapchuk for doing odd jobs whenever required. Marion and Gordon were acknowledged for promoting the program with a display at numerous events. The attendees then linked arms in a large circle and sang the traditional song of unity, *Де згода в родині* ('De zhoda v rodyni'), loosely translated as 'Where there's harmony in the family'. The 'family of learners' then enjoyed a social 'Munch and Mingle'.



Registrations for the 2019-2020 term will be accepted until Wednesday, September 11, which is also the orientation evening for new students. Classes resume September 18, 2019. Registration forms are available on the following website page.

<[http://uocc-standrew.ca/programs/cultural/ukr\\_language.asp](http://uocc-standrew.ca/programs/cultural/ukr_language.asp)>

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## Gurukul Nepal

The students of Gurukul Nepal of Edmonton are very hard at work on a special art project their teachers have prepared for them. Love the uniform!



## Truong Lac Hong School

This year our school wrapped up on Father's Day. We had our annual end-of-year field trip at the MacEwan University pool. Our students got the opportunity to play, splash, and swim with their fathers (and mothers, too!). When we returned back to school we had a great BBQ planned and served by our wonderful friends at the Edmonton Viets Association. We would really like to thank this amazing board who helps us so generously with their space. Even more so, we are grateful for your time and effort with our Vietnamese youth. Thank you so much for the wonderful Mother's Day crafts you did with our students and our Father's Day BBQ! We are so lucky to have you and so proud to be a part of this wonderful Vietnamese community!



## A Combined School Picnic with St. George's Hellenic School and the Hellenic Heritage Language School

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Together with the Hellenic Heritage Language School of Edmonton, the students of St. George's Hellenic School and their families ended the school year and kicked off the start of summer with perfect weather, great food and fantastic company! What a blast we had this past Saturday at our Year End BBQ 🍌🍔🥗🍹!



THANK YOU AHEPA for funding the event and your very generous donation to both schools.

THANK YOU to both school parent committees who

took time out of their busy schedules to plan the day's

festivities.

THANK YOU M&M Meats for catering our event.

THANK YOU Hawrelak Park for the wonderful venue.

What a great opportunity for our schools, our students and their families to continue supporting Hellenism and build community 🧑🧒🧑🧒

Have a great summer everyone and safe travels! Καλό Καλοκαίρι καί Καλές διακοπές ☀️



## The Way We Were About ... Our Sister Organization--Modurmal!

One of the benefits of joining IHLA is that we are connected with other language learning organizations in Canada--The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT), the *International Language Educators' Association* (ILEA) in Ontario, *L'Association Quebecoise des Langues d'Origines* (AQLO) in Quebec, the *Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages* (SOHL) in Saskatchewan, *BC Society for the Advancement of International Languages* (BCSAIL) in British Columbia, and the *Southern Alberta Heritage Languages Association* (SAHLA) in Southern Alberta.

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In 2017 IHLA officially became sister organizations with Modurmal in Iceland. We learned that we both have similar missions and can learn from one another. IHLA members went to Iceland to share their experiences about operating IHLA for 40 years. Likewise, we learned so much about Iceland. We even have a report from Maria Sastre (Volume 14 Issue 3) about comparing our respective heritage language organizations. This year the Mosurmal Chair, Renata Emilsson Pescova, made room for another to take her place while she finishes her PhD. We wish her lots of luck. Maria Sastre has officially become Modurmal's new chair! Congratulations, Maria!

This year we were very fortunate to have both Renata Emilsson Pescova and Kriselle Jonsdottir come to visit all the way from Reykjavik, Iceland. They both shared their expertise with us by hosting a PD session. We also received a copy of their book which highlights their organization. They credit us with giving them the idea based on our Annual MLD book. This is truly proof that great minds think alike. Thank you so much for sharing it with us.