

**Milpera SHS**

**How long does it take to achieve academically in a second language? Investigating variables that impact academic outcomes for ESL learners in Qld primary and secondary schools.**

Dr Margaret Kettle, Dr Sue Creagh, Professor Barbara Comber and Dr Jennifer Alford are revisiting the research project carried out in America by Virginia Collier in the 1980s which sought to answer the question of how long ESL learners needed to achieve academic results equivalent to their English speaking peers. In this presentation, Marg, Jen and Sue will give an overview of their forthcoming 2015 pilot study which will revisit the 'How Long' question, in the context of Queensland state primary and secondary schools. First we will present an overview of the work of Collier and other scholars who have explored this question since the 1980s, in America, Canada, and the UK more recently. We will then give an outline of how we will go about studying this problem, first using data provided by the Qld Department of Education Training and Employment, and then through interviews with students, teachers and principals. At this presentation, we invite ESL teachers to share their observations, experiences and feedback with us, as representatives of the ESL teaching community. How do you see this study supporting your work and the provision of services to ESL learners?

**Bios.**

**Dr Margaret Kettle** is a Senior Lecturer in TESOL in the Faculty of Education, QUT. Margaret completed her PhD in 2007 in which she investigated the strategies, pedagogies and identity transformations involved in successful transition to English-medium study by international postgraduate students. She is currently involved in a number of research projects including the development of online English language learning resources with Australian themes for university students in China.

**Dr Sue Creagh** is a research fellow and Lecturer in TESOL at the Institute for Social Science Research and the School of Education, UQ. Sue completed her PhD in 2013 in which she focussed on the problem of the LBOTE category in NAPLAN testing. Sue is now working on a project with The Smith Family investigating the relationship between disadvantage and educational outcomes, as well as teaching ESL curriculum and pedagogy in tertiary education programs at UQ.

**Barbara Comber** is a Research Professor in the Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia. She is particularly interested in literacy education and social justice. Her research examines the kinds of teaching that make a difference to young people's learning trajectories. She has also undertaken an institutional ethnography focussing on mandated literacy assessment and the reorganisation of teachers' work. She has co-edited a number of books including the International Handbook of Research in Children's Literacy, Learning and Culture (Hall, Cremin, Comber & Moll, 2013) and Turn-around pedagogies: Literacy interventions for at-risk students (Comber & Kamler, 2005). She has a book coming out in 2015 called Literacy, place and pedagogies of possibility.

**Dr Jennifer Alford** is a Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, QUT. Jennifer's PhD (2014) investigated ESL teachers' understandings and practice of Critical Literacy with ESL learners in senior English. She is currently coordinating the delivery of designated ESL units in pre-service teacher education programs at QUT. Jennifer is also involved in a government-funded program that enables pre-service teachers to undertake a two-week, intercultural study tour in Malaysia.