

This report provides information on the REALIZE project deliverables, serves as a reflection on accomplishments and challenges English Online encountered planning and executing the project, and provides recommendations for future events.

# REALIZE! 2014 Project Report

National Teacher Services  
April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014

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## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| The REALIZE Project .....                                | 3  |
| Pre-Conference Community Survey.....                     | 4  |
| Monthly PD Activities.....                               | 6  |
| Teacher Newsletters .....                                | 6  |
| Monthly Webinars .....                                   | 7  |
| NOCAC.....   | 7  |
| Defining Date and Location.....                          | 8  |
| Call for Registrations and Proposals .....               | 9  |
| Conference Website .....                                 | 10 |
| Promotion .....  | 11 |
| Promotion Materials .....                                | 11 |
| Promoting the Event .....                                | 11 |
| Keynote .....  | 12 |
| Proposal Selection Process .....                         | 13 |
| Conference Schedule and Program .....                    | 13 |
| Training Participants, Presenters, Moderators.....       | 14 |
| Manuals.....   | 14 |
| Orientation Sessions .....                               | 14 |
| Individual Training.....                                 | 15 |
| Contingency Plan .....                                   | 15 |
| The Day of the Conference .....                          | 15 |
| After the Conference .....                               | 16 |
| Badges .....   | 16 |
| REALIZE Conference Archive .....                         | 17 |
| Participant Feedback.....                                | 17 |
| Presenter Feedback .....                                 | 22 |
| Challenges .....   | 23 |
| Recommendations .....                                    | 24 |
| Appendix 1. Proposal Selection Criteria and Rubric ..... | 25 |
| Appendix 2. Participant Manual.....                      | 27 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Appendix 3. Abstract from Contingency Plan .....  | 30 |
| Appendix 4. REALIZE Badges .....  | 31 |
| Appendix 5. Copy of The Wrap-up Session Chat .....  | 32 |
|   |    |
| Figure 1. Pre-Conference Community Survey. Question 10. Which of the following topics are most relevant to you and your professional context? Please select the 5 in which you are most interested..... | 5  |
| Figure 2. Pre-Conference Community Survey. Question 9. What do you feel are the main benefits of attending an online professional development event? Choose all that apply. ....                        | 5  |
| Figure 3. <i>Registration Submissions Chart from January, 2014 (Formstack)</i> .....  | 10 |
| Figure 4. Conference Experience survey. Question 7. Please rate the following aspects of the conference. ....   | 18 |
| Figure 5. Conference Experience survey. Question 9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? .....  | 18 |
| Figure 6. Participant Feedback presented in a word cloud .....  | 19 |
| Figure 7. Presenter Survey. Question 2. Please rate the following: .....  | 22 |
| Figure 8. Presenter Survey. Question 3. Please rate the following: .....  | 22 |
|   |    |
| Table 1. English Online Teacher Newsletters (May 2013 – March 2014) .....   | 6  |
| Table 2. English Online Webinars on Best Practices (April 2013 – March 2014) .....  | 7  |

## The REALIZE Project

This report provides information on the REALIZE project deliverables, serves as a reflection on accomplishments and challenges English Online encountered planning and executing the project and provides recommendations for future events.

In November 2012 English Online wrote a funding proposal to Citizenship and Immigration Canada to organize and deliver the first National Online Conference for EAL/ESL practitioners in Canada. With this online conference English Online aimed to bring together EAL/ESL educators from across the country for a unique Professional Development experience. Funding was realized in April 2013.

### REALIZE! Conference Goals:

- Create Diversity of Content and Participants
- Reach Local and Smaller Communities
- Explore Topics in Depth
- Produce Lasting Resources
- Provide Technology Training for Conference tools
- Demonstrate a Sustainable PD model for the EAL/ESL Industry

This event was offered at no cost to participants. Conference attendees were able to attend live online sessions on various topics related to the EAL/ESL field. English Online provided ongoing technology support during and leading up to the conference to all registered conference participants.

Through the National Conference, English Online sought to demonstrate that online communication provides an additional way to network and contribute to the national dialogue and disseminate best practices; to easily access discussions and stay updated latest trends in language instruction; to enhance technical skills of EAL/ESL professionals.

### The REALIZE Project Milestones:

- Funding Secured from CIC (April 2014)
- Pre-conference Community survey created, distributed and processed (July 2013)
- National Online Conference Advisory Committee (NOCAC) formed (July 2013)
- Monthly PD activities (webinars, Newsletters) delivered throughout the year
- Conference date and location finalized (August 2013)
- Conference website created (August 2013)
- Keynote selected and confirmed (August 2013)
- Call for Registrations and Proposals opened (September 2013)
- Event announced and promoted at provincial conferences:
  - TESL Saskatchewan (announced National Online Conference; May 2013)
  - TEAM Manitoba (Announced National Online Conference; May 2013)

- TESL Ontario Conference (Maintained REALIZE booth; October 2013)
- ATESL Conference (maintained a table and presented on REALIZE; November 2013)
- ELSA Net Conference (maintained a table and presented on REALIZE; November 2013)
- Presentation proposals reviewed and selected (November 2013)
- Participant training materials developed (December 2013)
- Training sessions scheduled and delivered (December 2013-January 2014)
- Conference program and schedule finalized and published (January 2014)
- Contingency Plan developed (January 2014)
- Keynote Speaker presentation delivered (January 2014)
- REALIZE! Conference 2014 delivered (January 2014)
- Conference Archive created (February-March 2014)

## Pre-Conference Community Survey

This section outlines key findings of **Pre-Conference Community Survey** conducted to determine EAL practitioners' current professional needs and expectations/preferences for the Conference. The Survey was published in Constant Contact on June 24, 2013.

This survey was anonymous and contained eighteen (18) questions none of which was mandatory. Therefore, the number of responses varied from question to question. Most of the questions allowed multiple answers, therefore the percentages added to more than 100%. Two hundred and two (**202**) **respondents** completed the survey. Results of this survey provided the REALIZE team with a model of Conference target audience.

### 1. Demographics

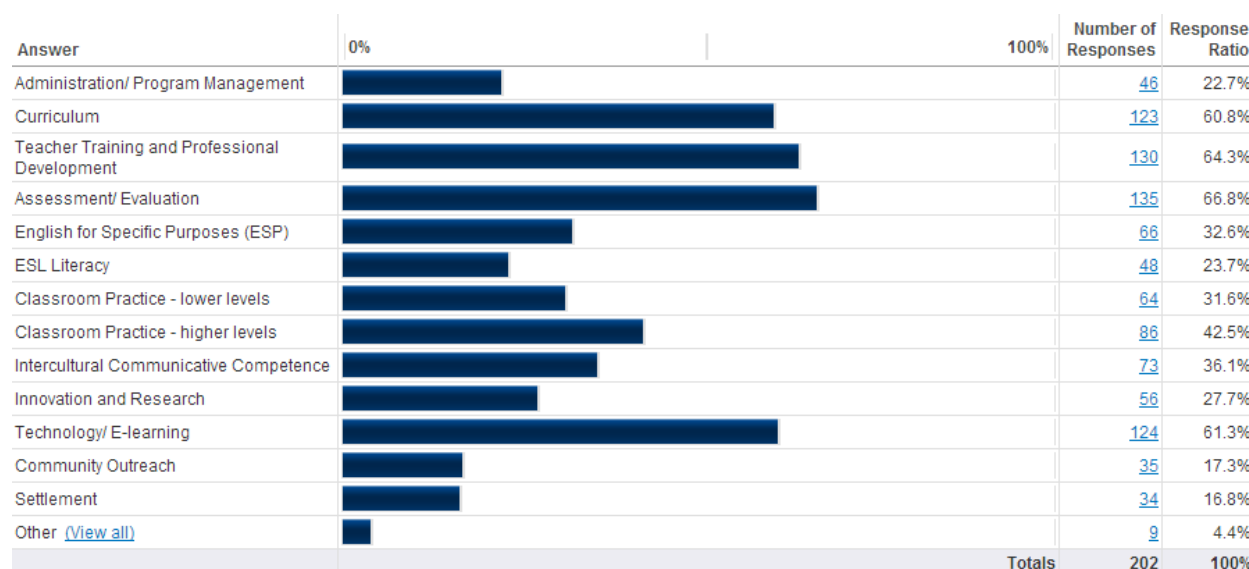
This section showed respondents allocation on geographical and professional map.

The majority of respondents were from Alberta (39.1%), Ontario (34.1%) and Manitoba (12.3%). Most of them were experienced instructors with 10 or more years in the field (53.4%), 23.7% had 5-9 years of experience, and 16.6% - less than 5 years. The largest percentage are holding positions of LINC/ELSA Instructor (41.2%) and EAL/ESL Instructor (37.6%), with less working as Administrators/Coordinators (24.6%), Curriculum Developers (19%), Teacher Trainers (17.5%) and University/College Instructors (17%).

### 2. Professional Needs

The Professional Needs Section showed the most popular categories of interest for online conference. 66.8% respondents were interested in Assessment/Evaluation, 64.3% showed their willingness to attend sessions on Teacher Training and Professional Development, and 60.8% wanted to learn about Curriculum development. Technology/E-learning was relevant to 61.3% respondents. Interest lies within 17% - 30% among other topics.

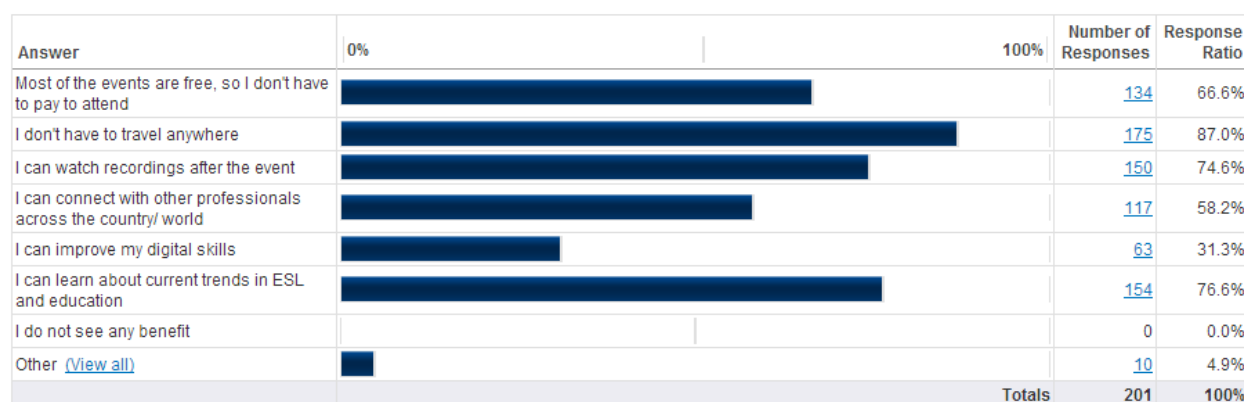
**Figure 1. Pre-Conference Community Survey. Question 10. Which of the following topics are most relevant to you and your professional context? Please select the 5 in which you are most interested.**



72.3% of respondents admitted that they had attended either few or none of online professional events of this kind, but most of them showed high interest in online networking tools.

In the following section participants were asked to indicate main benefits of attending an online professional development event. Most of them liked the convenience of access with no traveling expenses (87.0%) and learning about current trends in ESL and education (76.6%). Beside other advantages of online conference, 31.3% respondents saw it as an opportunity to advance their digital skills.

**Figure 2. Pre-Conference Community Survey. Question 9. What do you feel are the main benefits of attending an online professional development event? Choose all that apply.**



The survey also gave English Online date preferences for the Conference. The majority of respondents chose Friday (47.5% - Friday morning, 45.5% - Friday afternoon) as the most convenient day for delivering online professional event.

Respondents suggested potential candidates for Keynote Speaker and presenters.

Pre-Conference Community Survey helped to outline future direction of REALIZE project. Given the results of Pre-Conference Community Survey, English Online together with the Advisory Committee determined the following strategies for the REALIZE Conference:

1. Promote the event targeting less active provinces through attending Conferences, emailing and mailing campaign.
2. Engage more 'novice' teachers by reaching out to training programs/local universities and mentor programs.
3. Select presentation proposals that are based on current professional needs and interests of EAL/ESL practitioners.
4. Choose Tutela, Facebook and Twitter as online social media tools to promote the event.
5. Provide extensive training on online web conferencing software once the decision on it is finalized.
6. Set January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 as a Conference Day.
7. Reach out potential keynotes and speakers indicated by respondents.

## Monthly PD Activities

English Online saw the REALIZE Conference as a lasting project that could build and unite a community of practice. To lay the foundation for the conference, monthly Professional Development (PD) activities were planned around monthly themes.

Monthly PD activities at English Online include **Teacher Newsletters** and **Webinars**.

**Teacher Newsletters** provided consistent and compact information about TESL.

English Online created and distributed nine (9) **Teacher Newsletters**. Newsletters contained updates on ongoing projects; upcoming events section; and research on monthly topic where teachers could find useful ideas, links and resources.

**Table 1. English Online Teacher Newsletters (May 2013 – March 2014)**

|   |
|---|
| <a href="#"><u>March 2014 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> - Useful Resources for Upcoming English Online Webinar |
| <a href="#"><u>February 2014 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Pronunciation: New and Proven Techniques          |
| <a href="#"><u>December 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> - Conference Preparation                            |
| <a href="#"><u>November 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Digital Tools                                     |
| <a href="#"><u>October 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Pronunciation Resources                            |
| <a href="#"><u>September 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Back to School                                   |
| <a href="#"><u>July 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Work-Life Balance                                     |
| <a href="#"><u>June 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – Cultural Awareness in EAL/ESL Teaching                |
| <a href="#"><u>May 2013 Teacher Newsletter</u></a> – English for Academic Purposes                          |

**Monthly Webinars** on best practices in teaching EAL/ESL were launched as an introduction to online PD format. Each webinar consisted of two consecutive sessions around current topics in EAL/ESL. Presenters - active members of the ESL Community in Canada - were invited to share their knowledge in the subject area, innovative ideas and best practices.

In the reporting period, English Online organized and delivered seven **(7) webinars**. In September English Online switched to Big Blue Button for the synchronous webinar tool. This software was confirmed for REALIZE conference and participants of the webinars had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with its features. On average, English Online Webinars gathered an audience of twenty eight (28) participants.

Table 2. English Online Webinars on Best Practices (April 2013 – March 2014)

|  |
|--|
| <a href="#"><u>March 2014 Webinar</u></a> – Tools for Teaching and Assessment in EAL Classroom                                 |
| <a href="#"><u>February 2014 Webinar</u></a> – Current Approaches to Teaching Pronunciation                                    |
| <a href="#"><u>November 2013 Webinar</u></a> – Engagement in Online & Blended Language Learning Environments                   |
| <a href="#"><u>October 2013 Webinar</u></a> – CALL and Technology in the Classroom: practical tools, evaluation and assessment |
| <a href="#"><u>September 2013 Webinar</u></a> – Teaching Pronunciation: Advice and Practical Activities for the Classroom      |
| <a href="#"><u>June 2013 Webinar</u></a> – Cultural Factors that Impact Listening Skills                                       |
| <a href="#"><u>April 2013 Webinar</u></a> – English for Academic Purposes  |

Feedback from webinar participants:

*“Thanks so much for moderating the webinars. They were great and I am inspired with new ideas.” (Eldon Irvine, ESL Instructor)*

*“I introduced her (a student) to J. Thompson's pronunciation techniques and she was fascinated to realize that lack of connection between written and spoken English - just like Chinese.” (Anonymous, Reflection on English Online webinar from March 2013)*

## NOCAC

The **National Online Conference Advisory Committee (NOCAC)** was created to advise, support and plan the REALIZE Conference.

The National Online Conference Advisory Committee was formed with EAL/ESL community members with reach and scope in their professional communities and those with experience in planning/organizing with conferences. The committee comprised of 10 volunteer members. Three of these members were English Online Inc. representatives:

- English Online Inc, Executive Director
- English Online Inc, Lead, Teacher Services
- English Online Inc, Coordinator, Teacher Services



Seven (7) ESL community representatives were selected from three regions:

- Karen Berg (AB), Colleen Rogan (BC), Rita Zuba Prokopetz (MB) and Luella Jonk (MB) represented Western region
- Lorraine Hudson (ON) and Elena Maggio (ON) represented Central region
- Carol Derby (NS)

In this capacity, NOCAC conducted nine (9) online meetings and communicated asynchronously via email and NOCAC Group on Tutela. During this time period NOCAC members:

- Assisted in planning and preparation for National Online Conference
- Reviewed preliminary results of the initial Community Survey questions and advised on English Online course of action
- Provided informed input on conference program, prospective Keynote Speakers/presenters, selection criteria for submitted presentation proposals, marketing strategies/materials and activities
- Reviewed submitted proposals according to provided criteria and provided their recommendations/suggestions/concerns
- Provided local knowledge, relevant background and expertise
- Kept EAL/ESL community members informed about National Online Conference (in their geographic areas and organizations)
- Participated in training sessions on how to use web-conferencing tools and moderate online sessions
- Moderated online sessions on the day of the conference
- Discussed Feedback Survey and made recommendations for future conference.

## Defining Date and Location

English Online planned on delivering the conference in January. January was free from other major events in the EAL field in Canada. The results of the preliminary survey and in discussion with Advisory Committee members, Friday, January 24, 2014 was set as the Conference date. Keynote Speech was planned to open the event an evening before and scheduled for Thursday, January 23, 2014.

A decision was made to leverage the synchronous conferencing tool – BigBlueButton (BBB)- used by Tutela.ca. English Online discussed conducting the Conference on Tutela.ca with technical support. Due to the needs of the Conference Page, Program, registration options and BBB features, English Online decided to host REALIZE Conference outside of Tutela using Big Blue Button plugin integrated into English Online Website.

The crucial factors contributed to this decision were:

- Ongoing technical support
- Automatic video recording
- Comparatively fast processing of video recordings
- Ability of data retrieving in case of technical problems
- Phone-in option if the user can't log in/audio/microphone is not working
- No need to download and install before using

- Simple registration and login process

English Online worked closely with BBB to ensure successful integration and run of the software in the process of preparation and delivery of the Conference. In this process:

- BBB WordPress integration plugin was tested and placed on the Conference Website to launch the sessions from English Online Website
- Plausible registration and session login process was identified
- Recording formats were discussed
- Responsibilities for troubleshooting and support during the conference was ascertained
- BBB rooms were created for each session
- Phone-in numbers and pin codes were located on each Session Page

## Call for Registrations and Proposals

Registration and Proposal Submission process for REALIZE Conference was managed through online registration forms located on the Conference Website with Constant Contact plugin.

After finalizing *Privacy and Collection of Information Statement*, an online Registration and Proposal Submission Forms were created using Formstack<sup>1</sup>.

Submission and registration timelines were determined as follows:

- Call for Registrations – end of August, 2013 - January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013
- Call for Proposals– end of August, 2013 – November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013

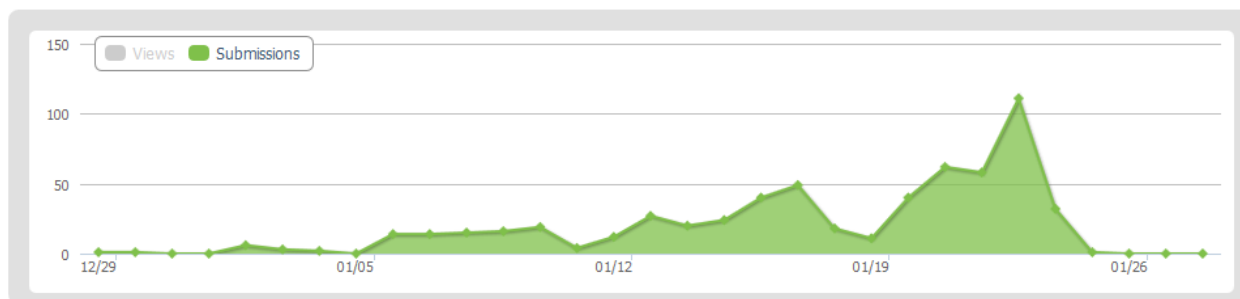
By the end of Call for Proposals all submissions were processed and reviewed by the Advisory Committee and English Online representatives.

Call for Registrations was open until the very day of the Conference. In total, **eight hundred eighty-nine (889) participants were registered** on the day of the Conference (January 24, 2014). The number of submissions continued to be fairly even throughout first months, with reasonable growth after publication of Schedule and Program of the event. The biggest spike was noticed on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 – **one hundred eleven (111) registration submissions** before start of the conference.

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<sup>1</sup> Formstack - an online company offering form building tools.

Figure 3. Registration Submissions Chart from January, 2014 (Formstack)



By registering for the Conference, participants gained access to latest updated information on the Conference. Reminders and emergency messages were sent out to all registered participants.

## Conference Website

To centralize REALIZE Online Conference presence on the national scale and allow easy access and navigation over the conference information, a subdomain **realize.myenglishonline.ca** was created on English Online website. This was a place for locating all information regarding the Conference. Pages and content were added as part of ongoing process arising from needs and updates of the Conference.

### Conference Website Development Stages

- Conference Subdomain created
- NOCAC Webpage created
- Keynote Webpage created
- Conference Blog started to provide a sneak peek of Conference life behind the scenes
- Call for Presentations and Registrations made live
- Tools and Tips Page added
- Conference Schedule and Program published:
  - presenter pictures, presentation resources and hand-outs added to Sessions Pages
- Alternative website created on the test server to be used in case the EO website goes down
- Conference Website updated after the conference to report on conference participation stats ( REALIZE home page)
- Conference Archive published:
  - Video recordings added to sessions details
  - Content for Presentation Slides, Resources, Links and Hand-outs added to each Session Page
  - Video Gallery Page for easy navigation through sessions video recordings added to Conference Website

## Promotion

REALIZE Conference was a first time event of wide scope conducted by English Online. Throughout the whole period of preparation for the event, English Online attempted to reach out to the audience and raise community awareness of the event.

### Promotion Materials

- Conference logo and promotional cards created
- Conference advertisement included into TESL ON Conference brochure
- Conference banner stand and Realize T-shirts designed and printed

### Promoting the Event

English Online communicated with EAL/ESL programs and organizations across Canada to promote REALIZE National Conference. English Online conducted **emailing and mailing campaigns**, encouraged participation during national and local **Conferences** and **PD Events**.

#### *Emailing Campaign:*

- Announcement on REALIZE Conference in English Online Teacher Newsletter (May, 2013)
- Updates on the Conference included into English Online Teacher Newsletters (June – December, 2013)
- Announcement on Call for Proposals emailed to Teacher Training Centers across Canada (September, 2013)
- REALIZE Promo Newsletters sent out to registered participants (October and January, 2013)

#### *Mailing Campaign:*

- 1550 REALIZE! postcards mailed to TESL ON (September, 2013)
- Promotional Letter sent to TESL Canada provincial associations (October, 2013)
- Conference Announcement sent out to BC TEAL members (November, 2013)
- 190 Realize postcard packages mailed out to CIC funded programs (December and January, 2013-2014)

#### *Promoting at Conferences:*

- TESL Saskatchewan (announced National Online conference; May, 2013)
- TEAM Manitoba (announced National Online Conference; May, 2013)
- TESL Ontario Conference (maintained REALIZE booth, conference bag inserts and ad in the program; October, 2013)
- ATESL Conference (presented a poster session on REALIZE; distributed REALIZE postcards among conference participants; November, 2013)
- ELSA Net Conference (maintained a table and presented on REALIZE; November, 2013)

#### *Promoting at PD Events:*

- Presented about e-Conference 2014 at English Online Best Practices Webinar (June, 2013)

- Delivered a training session on use of Big Blue Button and engagement for Realize 2014 Conference for RRC instructors in Manitoba
- Promoted Conference among local and national SPO's (ESEE, MOSAIC, RRC, Regina Open Door society, Kelsey SIAST Campus LT program, BC TEAL, BVC, Equilibrium, RDC, NQ College, Innovative Language Programs; throughout the year)
- Promoted REALIZE conference at MEALO Coordinators' Meeting (September, 2013).

## Keynote

English Online contacted potential candidates suggested by NOCAC members and respondents of the pre-conference survey. As a result of these negotiations, **Dr. Lionel Laroche**, Keynote Speaker was finalized at the end of August, 2014.

Dr. Lionel Laroche is a thought provoking and educational speaker who presented at over 200 conferences and venues across Canada and the United States. He has provided training to the staff of many immigrant-servicing agencies across the country. He has written three books that are used as textbooks by a number of programs for immigrants; the latest one just is entitled "Danger and Opportunity: Bridging Cultural Diversity for Competitive Advantage". Over the past thirteen years, Lionel has provided cross-cultural training, coaching and consulting services to a wide range of business, government, academic, professional and non-profit organizations in ten countries.

Main communication with Lionel Laroche was based around his presentation focus and training on web conferencing system. English Online and Big Blue Button technical support conducted 2 training sessions with Dr. Lionel Laroche (December, 2013; January, 2014).

On the days leading up to the Conference, registration numbers were rapidly increasing and the interest in Keynote Speech was rising high. This situation turnaround made English Online and BBB explore another option for delivering Keynote Speech to accommodate larger number of participants. After a round of discussions and 1 training session on Google Hangouts on Air, the REALIZE team successfully switched to live streaming in Google Plus.

Dr. Lionel Laroche Address on **Teaching Immigrants the Soft Skills They Need to Succeed in Canada Through EAL Courses** generated healthy dialogue on Google Plus and Twitter. **Three hundred forty five (345) viewers** from across the country joined live presentation **via Google+ and Youtube Channel** on January 23, 2014.

*"The keynote speaker on Youtube was so convenient and easy to use!" (Participant Feedback Survey)*

*"The speech of Keynote speaker was very impressive and interesting." (Participant Feedback Survey)*

*"The keynote was excellent." (Participant Feedback Survey)*

*“Listening to the keynote speaker. My question was answered promptly by Dr. Laroche. Enjoyed the interaction between the participants.” (Participant Feedback Survey)*

## Proposal Selection Process

Each proposal submitted for presenting at English Online was reviewed by three (3) members of the National Online Conference Advisory Committee. Reviewers evaluated each submission based on the Proposal Selection Criteria and Rubrics<sup>2</sup>:

1. Currency, Importance, and Appropriateness of Topic to the Field
2. Purpose, Participant Outcomes, and Session Type
3. Motivated by Theory, Practice, and/or Research
4. Support for Practices, Conclusions, and/or Proposals
5. Clarity of Proposal as Indicator of Presentation Quality

Factors affecting Selection were:

- variety and relative importance of topics
- relevance to the professional needs/interests of EAL/ESL professionals and the conference theme
- presenter’s level of expertise
- professional and geographic representation of the participants/presenters
- session abstract and description quality

Twenty eight (28) Proposals were reviewed and selected by the Advisory Committee for presenting at REALIZE Online Conference. Presenters were contacted by English Online and informed on further timelines and requirements for their presentations. 1 presentation was cancelled by the presenter after the review. Advisory Committee made suggestions on modifying/adjusting presentations content/duration and focus.

## Conference Schedule and Program

**Conference Schedule** has been created taking into account several factors:

- Different time zones for participants/presenters/moderators/tech support
- Avoiding topical overlapping
- Number of concurrent sessions per time slot
- Moderators availability
- Sessions length
- Coffee Breaks

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for Proposal Selection Criteria and Rubrics

Given these factors, the following decisions were made:

1. The schedule was set according to CST time zone with sessions starting at 8:45 am CST and finishing at 5:00 pm CST. This time frame allowed accommodating larger number of participants with equal distribution across provinces and splitting differences between an early start for BC and later time for NS.
2. Lunch break was not scheduled given the time zones. 30 minutes sessions were fit into the schedule leaving breaks between 1 hour sessions.
3. To optimize time utilization, 3 -5 concurrent sessions were scheduled in one time slot. Most sessions were placed between 11 am and 3 pm CST with less concurrent sessions at the beginning and at the end of the conference day.
4. After finalizing schedule, moderators from NOCAC and English Online staff were assigned sessions to moderate.

As per proposal submissions, sessions summaries and presenters' bios were published on the Conference Website at the beginning of January. Sessions were categorized according to focus areas and intended audience allowing participants to easily search through the program and target their areas of interest.

The schedule was published (January, 2014) on the Conference Website and promoted in REALIZE Group on Tutela, Twitter and Teacher Newsletter.

## Training Participants, Presenters, Moderators

To ensure effective and successful online Conference experience, English Online organized orientation and training sessions and developed manuals for Participants, Presenters and Moderators.

### Manuals

**Participant Manual**<sup>3</sup> was created to provide inclusive instructions on how to access the conference and use the conference software.

**Presenter Manual** provided structured review of steps that needed to be taken to ensure efficient session flow and successful delivery of the presentation.

**Moderator Manual** established moderator role within the session and pinpointed procedures that needed to be taken to provide positive interaction between presenter, moderator and audience.

### Orientation Sessions

English Online together with Big Blue Button technical support organized and conducted two (2) orientation sessions (January 8, 2014; January 14, 2014) for Presenters in Big Blue Button web conferencing system to familiarize them with software features; tested their equipment and discussed session structure.

The same steps were taken to train moderators and participants on Big Blue Button conferencing software:

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2 for Participant Manual

- One (1) orientation session was delivered to moderators (January 13, 2014)
- Four (4) drop-in sessions were delivered to participants (December 17-18, 2014; January 8-9, 2014)

## Individual Training

English Online took into consideration presenters' technical skills, their level of comfort with technology, presentation format and structure to schedule and deliver thirty-four (34) one-on-one training sessions. All sessions were tailored to fit the unique needs of each presenter.

## Contingency Plan

Approaching the day of the Conference, a **Contingency Plan**<sup>4</sup> was developed. It included steps to be taken to successfully resolve the issues anticipated for the day of the Conference. As delivering online conference nationwide involved large number of people across Canada, Contingency Plan served to clarify duties and responsibilities, defined means of communication for different situations as well as established efficient circulation of the information among the participants.

The following measures were taken:

1. A mirrored Conference Website was created on another server by English Online before the Conference.
2. Emergency emails with instructions and a link to new website were created in Constant Contact ready to be sent out to all registered participants.

REALIZE Presenters and Moderators were informed about the Contingency Plan before the conference day. (January 21, 2014)

## The Day of the Conference

**January 23, 2014 7 pm CST:** Keynote Address live-streamed via Google Handouts on Air. In total, three hundred forty five (**345**) participants took part in this session.

**January 24, 2014 8:45 am CST - 5:00 pm CST:** The Realize Conference took place all day long on Friday, January 24, 2014.

After the Welcome Message and before the first round of sessions, the Conference website experienced a large number of hits and temporarily went down. The Contingency Plan was put into action and the emergency emails were sent out by 9:16 am CST to participants. Moderators/Presenters were informed by phone/email/Skype about the following rearrangements in the schedule.

As a result, starting from 10 am CST sessions were carried out according to existing schedule with the following changes:

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 3 for Abstract of Contingency Plan



1. Two (2) sessions rescheduled (*CLB Language Assessment in Online Courses by Ellen Pilon and Using Literature in The EFL Classroom: Prominent Issues and Underlying Concerns by Halima Benzoukh*)
2. One (1) session repeated later that day (*Infographics and Visualization Tools for Language Learning by Faith Marcel*).

Thirty-nine (39) presenters delivered twenty-seven **(27) presentations** on vast variety of current topics in EAL/ESL teaching. **Morning sessions** had the biggest number of participation – two hundred seventy three **(273) attendees** in total in concurrent rooms. While **average number of participants** during the Conference was **54 per session**, in some of the sessions it reached **up to 100**. **The busiest session** of the Conference was *Pronunciation: The Big Picture by Andrea Taylor and Sean Cavicchi* gathering the audience of one hundred and three **(103) participants**.

Seventy-five **(75) participants** came to celebrate success of REALIZE Conference to **Wrap-Up session**. They shared positive emotions and experience throughout the event. Their comments are collected in **Copy of Wrap-up Session Chat**<sup>5</sup>.

## After the Conference

### Badges

The REALIZE Conference, introduced **badges**<sup>6</sup>. A badge is digital evidence of achievements, skills, affiliations or role. It is increasingly used in online environments to create a system of evidence for online learning. English Online together with NOCAC developed design and criteria for assigning REALIZE badges. It was agreed to differentiate between following roles for REALIZE 2014:

#### *Presenter's badge*

Description: Has participated as a presenter at the Realize Conference or in an English Online Webinar series

Criteria: Attended webinar training/preparation session, presented online, contributed to the resource page and discussion thread

Evidence: <link to webinar recording>

#### *Moderator's badge*

Description: Has moderated a presentation at the Realize Conference or in an English Online Webinar

Criteria: Attended/watched recording of moderator training session and moderated session

Evidence: <link to webinar recording>

#### *Participant's badge*

Description: Badge earner has registered and attended the Realize Conference and /or English Online Webinar

Criteria: Registered and attended at least one webinar/conference session

Evidence: <link to webinar recording>

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 5 for the Copy of the Wrap-up Session Chat

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 4 for REALIZE badges

The criteria of receiving badges hadn't been finalized as of the day of the Conference; hence English Online didn't advertise badges widely during the sessions. Nonetheless, **nine (9) badge requests** have been received from conference participants.

English Online assigned badges to thirty-nine **(39) presenters**, fourteen **(14) moderators** and nine **(9) participants** for their contribution to REALIZE 2014 Conference.

Moreover, **155 Certificates of participation** were requested and emailed to REALIZE conference attendees. TESL Ontario recognized every hour of participation in the REALIZE 2014 Conference as one PD hour for TESL Ontario accreditation renewal purpose.

### **REALIZE Conference Archive**

Another deliverable within REALIZE Project was creating a **Conference Archive** - a lasting professional learning resource. By visiting Conference Archive, users can:

- watch video recordings of the sessions,
- view/download presentation slides and hand-outs,
- refer to links related and/or used in the sessions at their convenience.

In addition to that, **REALIZE Group** on Tutela.ca was created to build asynchronous interaction between presenters and attendees. One hundred twenty five **(125) community members** joined the group. Twenty-five **(25) discussion threads** were started by presenters before the conference and introduced each of the sessions. REALIZE Group on Tutela.ca served as point of communication for Conference enthusiasts. Here everyone could place their questions, comments and share experiences of applying knowledge gained at the conference.

### **Participant Feedback**

English Online conducted **Conference Experience Surveys** ( Participant Feedback Survey and Presenter Feedback Survey) to accumulate evaluation of the event by participants and pinpoint areas for improvement for future events. Conference Experience Survey was published in Constant Contact on and sent out to all registered participants within a week after the Conference.

Two hundred and eight **(208) respondents** completed **Participant Feedback Survey** as of March 13, 2014. The majority of respondents attended the conference for personal and professional development (84.1%). They enjoyed the content (53.3%) and the novelty of online national conference (27.4%).

Most participants attended between two to five sessions (71.5%). 11% of respondents claimed attending 6 or more sessions.

Participants were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with following:

1. Registration process (91%)
2. Length of workshops (89%)
3. Diversity of workshop topics (82%)
4. Relevance of workshop contents to work (80%)
5. Length of the conference 78(%)

**Figure 4. Conference Experience survey. Question 7. Please rate the following aspects of the conference.**

1=Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 4=Dissatisfied, 5=Very Dissatisfied, 6=Not Applicable



| Answer                                     |                       | Number of Responses | Rating Score* |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Registration process                       | 62% 29% 2% 2% 0% 1%   | 203                 | 1.5           |
| Keynote Speaker                            | 33% 19% 2% 0% 42%     | 203                 | 3.4           |
| Diversity of workshop topics               | 32% 50% 11% 3% 0% 1%  | 203                 | 2.0           |
| Diversity of conference participants       | 24% 40% 19% 0% 0% 13% | 203                 | 2.5           |
| Length of Conference                       | 35% 43% 14% 1% 0% 3%  | 203                 | 2.0           |
| Length of Workshops                        | 38% 51% 6% 0% 2%      | 203                 | 1.8           |
| Schedule of Workshops                      | 29% 42% 16% 7% 1% 2%  | 203                 | 2.2           |
| Relevance of workshop contents to work     | 31% 49% 11% 4% 1% 1%  | 203                 | 2.0           |
| Networking possibilities                   | 9% 25% 41% 6% 1% 15%  | 203                 | 3.1           |
| Conference room audio / network connection | 15% 36% 18% 19% 7% 2% | 203                 | 2.7           |

For the majority of respondents, attending online conference was a first time experience (56.7%). They would recommend this event to others (88.9%).

Respondents of Post-Conference Survey admitted that REALIZE! Conference succeeded in achieving the following goals:

- Reduced a sense of geographical and professional isolation faced by teachers in remote areas (89%)
- Provided great possibilities for sharing and dissemination of best practices across Canada (83%)
- Offered great learning opportunities for novice EAL/ESL teachers (74%)
- Helped participants to better understand the use of technology and Web 2.0 Tools for education (61%)

**Figure 5. Conference Experience survey. Question 9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

1=Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 4=Dissatisfied, 5=Very Dissatisfied, 6=Not Applicable



| Answer   |                    | Number of Responses |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| I feel that this conference helped me better understand the use of technology and Web 2.0 tools for education                              | 22% 39% 26% 10% 0% | 204                 |
| I think that this conference provided great possibilities for sharing and dissemination of best practices across the country               | 33% 50% 11% 3% 0%  | 204                 |
| I feel that this conference offered great learning opportunities for novice EAL/ESL teachers   | 33% 41% 18% 4% 1%  | 204                 |
| I believe that online conferences like REALIZE reduce a sense of geographical and professional isolation faced by teachers in remote areas | 50% 39% 7% 1%      | 204                 |

Respondents shared their answers to survey question on what they enjoyed the most about the Realize Conference. Most frequently used words from their feedback are depicted in the following word cloud.

**Figure 6. Participant Feedback presented in a word cloud**



Participants expressed the following advantages of REALIZE Conference<sup>7</sup>:

✓ **Flexibility:**

*"Sheer joy of being able to do it online and not having to travel any distance."*

*"The ability to attend the conference in the quiet of my own home without the need to spend too much time on luncheons etc. I still felt very connected to other instructors and professionals. Great job."*

*"I like the idea of it, ability to attend a conference and get information without the huge time commitment and expense."*

*"I appreciated the flexibility. I find it difficult to attend live conferences because of my work schedule."*

*"I enjoyed the freedom and flexibility of just dropping in on the sessions without having to pre-register/commit to sessions in advance."*

*"The best part of the conference was the convenience. One could participate in the conference from home or the workplace and accomplish other tasks between presentations."*

✓ **Organization:**

*"[...] excellent organization / communication in advance of the conference"*

*"I am not that comfortable with technology, so I was surprised at how easy the whole process was!"*

*"The instructions for linking up were very clear and easy to follow. Thank you!"*

✓ **Professional Development:**

*"Information about practices of other teachers in class with concrete examples of how it works/a written description of class technique is hard to understand/i clearly saw how to implement and use a blog."*

*"We used some of the sessions for PD, and added activities of our own to make a useful networking and training event. The topics were varied and most were appropriate to our needs. The workshop on pronunciation was particularly good and useful to my staff."*

*"The topics were varied and appealing for its technological driven approach to its adoption in the ESL classroom for administration and lesson enhancement purposes. I like the professional yet friendly delivery of the presentations. The*

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<sup>7</sup> Quotes are taken from Participant Feedback Survey conducted via Constant Contact

*vast amount of valuable knowledge earned in a day was worth more than my participation.”*

*“I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet and speak with other professionals in the field. I really benefitted from hearing about all of their difficulties and successes. I also gained a lot of insight into some of the topics that were being discussed. I appreciate the opportunity for any professional development and this was top notch.”*

✓ **Networking/Collaborating:**

*I felt part of a much bigger group and realized how all of us face so many of the same issues in our positions no matter where we live and work.”*

*“I liked the list of presentations, and I like the idea of connecting far-flung professionals with similar interests and experiences and a similar interest in professional development.”*

*“Connecting with other educators across the country and learning something practical that I can use in my classroom.”*

✓ **Novelty/Unique Experience:**

*“The fact that so many ESL professionals connected from all over the country. I also appreciated the fact that we dealt with a lot of Canada-specific issues as I primarily attend international conferences/webinars.”*

*“The chance to communicate with the other members of the sessions and share your idea's while the session was ongoing. This is something that can't be done during a regular conference session and something that was quite useful to me. Also some of the idea's we shared online, like websites, we can't share in a regular conference.”*

*“Very relaxing atmosphere and yet the instant messaging was nice because it allowed for a connection to many people. In a real life conference there would not be that much discussion with fellow session attenders. Instant messaging allowed for free discussions and questions in a very relaxed manner.”*

*“The conference as a whole is an eye opener to me.”*

*“Obviously the wave of the future.”*

In addition, participants' tweets to hashtag **#realize14** were curated using Storify <https://storify.com/yvetteinmb/realize14>.

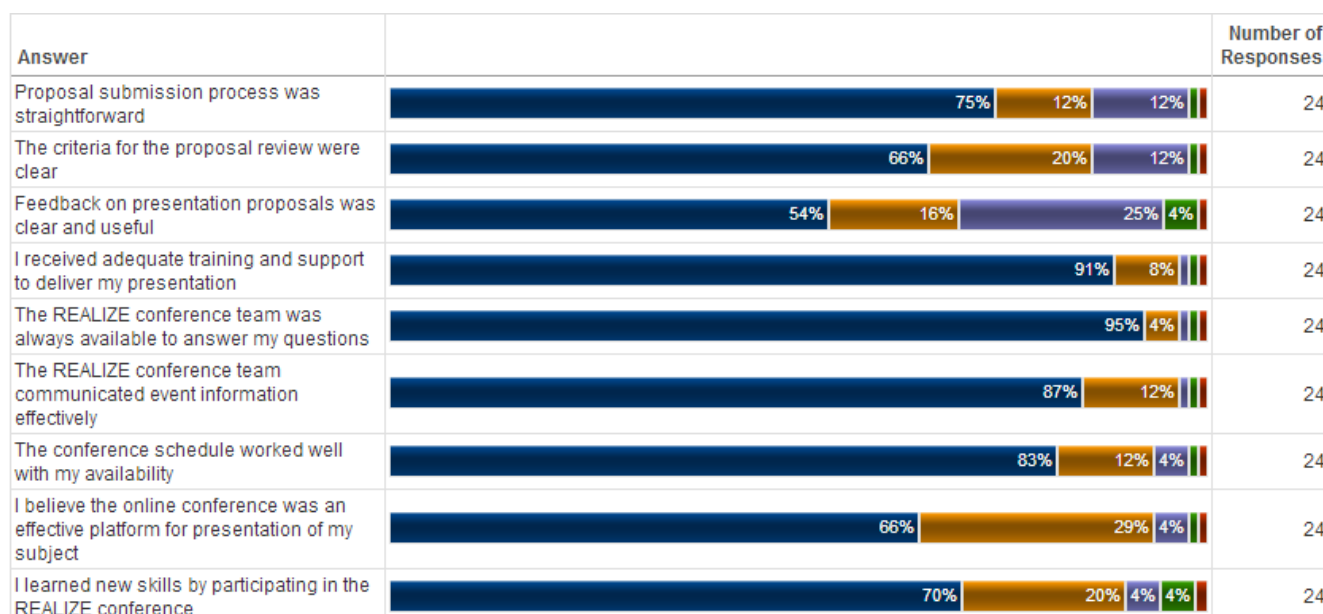
## Presenter Feedback

English Online conducted a Post-Conference Survey to estimate overall experience of the Conference from presenters perspective.

Twenty four (24) presenters responded to **Presenter Feedback Survey** as of March 17, 2014. The key results of the survey are presented in the following charts:

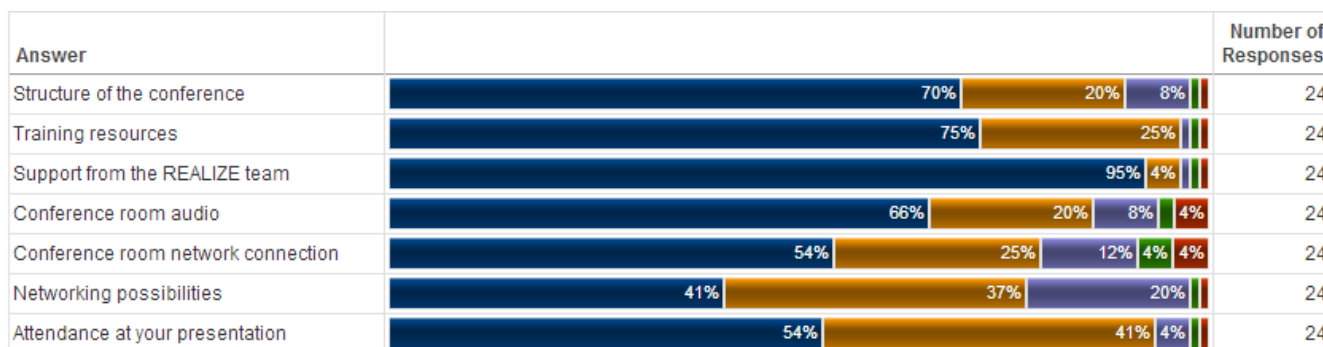
**Figure 7. Presenter Survey. Question 2. Please rate the following:**

1=Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 4=Dissatisfied, 5=Very Dissatisfied, 6=Not Applicable



**Figure 8. Presenter Survey. Question 3. Please rate the following:**

1=Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 4=Dissatisfied, 5=Very Dissatisfied, 6=Not Applicable



The following are some of presenters' testimonials<sup>8</sup>:

*"[This was]... the opportunity to be involved in "cutting edge delivery". Also to participate in a national event that gathered EAL professionals from across Canada."*

*"I found the team very helpful. Not only this but they were always calm and had solutions available to trouble-shoot problems I was having with the technology. Secondly, I enjoyed the wide network of people who attended my presentation. I think I had 85. I've never had 85 before. That's fantastic."*

*"Learning the technology for delivering an online conference and meeting the talented team behind all of it. Great opportunity for us that we many never have had without REALIZE 2014."*

*"The best thing for me was that although I am a very experienced presenter I looked at my presentation a new way, reflected on the content and the tools and technology."*

*"It was my first online conference and also my first time as a presenter.....a great experience! Thank you."*

*"Just a quick note to say thanks to you and your team for the hard work you put in on the REALize conference. While there were technical challenges, you pushed through them to deliver a great professional development experience for us all. Thanks for the opportunity to present in this conference—I thoroughly enjoyed the experience."*

## Challenges

1. Web Conferencing System – English Online agreed on optimal solution when choosing the software for delivering the Conference in terms of costs/features/availability of video recording. The drawbacks lied in capacity limitations (up to 100 users per room recommended by Big Blue Button).
2. Time zones - although English Online saw physical location of the Conference in central time zone (Winnipeg) as a main advantage for conducting synchronous online event, time issues were still pertinent when putting together Schedule and Program of the Conference. Main difficulties were availability of presenters and moderators located in different time zones, as well as allowing equally convenient access to sessions for participants across Canada.
3. The issue of possible crush of the Conference Website was foreseen in Contingency Plan. However, English Online had limited capabilities to test out the system prior to the event.

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<sup>8</sup> Testimonials are taken from Presenter Survey



4. Due to technical challenges in morning sessions, some video recordings were impacted. Hence video processing and editing took more time than anticipated.

## Recommendations

REALIZE National Online Conference was a pilot project implemented by national team of enthusiasts. Experience, expertise and ideas of these people allowed successful preparation and delivery of the Gala Event. To improve on overall experience of the future events of this kind, English Online listed these recommendations:

- To allow earlier start in preparation for Gala event (formation of NOCAC in April and setting timelines for Call for Proposals between June – October)
- Involve more members of smaller communities and local organizations in NOCAC
- Finalize and publish the Schedule and Program at least two months prior to the event
- Enhance technical criteria for submitting PDF versions of presentations (prior notification from presenters if there are links/video/audio files to be included into presentations)
- Enhance means of communication to allow efficient and timely flow of information regarding the conference
- Introduce badges prior to the conference and publish application submission criteria
- Extend conference over two (2) days/ two (2) half days (Friday and Saturday are preferred days indicated in two community surveys conducted by English Online)
- Keynote address on the same day of the conference
- Start earlier and repeat most popular sessions during the day
- Allow longer breaks between sessions (one lunch break)
- Make presentation slides/handouts available prior to each session
- Deliver sessions in more interactive format and allow more time for Q&A Sections
- Publish video recordings of the sessions within a shorter period after the conference



by



## Appendix 1. Proposal Selection Criteria and Rubric

| Evaluation Criteria   | <b>Excellent</b><br>5 points  | <b>Good</b><br>4 points  | <b>Satisfactory</b><br>3 points   | <b>Fair</b><br>2 points  | <b>Poor</b><br>1 point  |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>1. Currency, Importance, and Appropriateness of Topic to the Field</b> | The topic is cutting-edge, immediately relevant, groundbreaking, or significant to the field. It is definitely a session worth attending.   | The topic is current, important and appropriate to the field. It is probably a session worth attending.  | The topic may not be current or groundbreaking, but is relevant to the field. It might be a session worth attending.  | The topic is tangentially related to the field, not current, unimportant to the field, or unimportant to the potential audience. It is probably not a session worth attending. | The topic is not current, lacks importance or is not appropriate to the field. It is not a session worth attending. |
| <b>2. Purpose, Participant Outcomes, and Session Type</b>                 | The proposal matches the session type. The objectives and participant outcomes are clear from the title and content (stated or implied). Readers can envision what will be learned in the session. It contains specifics that make the reader want to learn more. | The proposal is appropriate for the session type. The objectives and participant outcomes are clear from the title and/or content (stated or implied), and it is clear how they will guide the presentation and aid in audiences' session selection. | The proposal is generally appropriate for the session type. The objectives and participant outcomes are stated or implied but may not be focused enough to guide the presentation or aid in audiences' session selection. | The proposal may be appropriate for the session type. The objectives and participant outcomes are too general or broad to be achievable.                                       | The proposal is inappropriate for the session type, and/or the objectives are not stated, implied, or clear.        |
| <b>3. Motivated by Theory, Practice, and/or Research</b>                  | The proposal refers specifically to the appropriate theory, practice, and/or research on which the presentation is based in a detailed, thorough, and comprehensible manner and relates it directly to the  | The proposal refers clearly to the theory, practice, and/or research on which the presentation is based in a thorough and comprehensible manner and relates it directly to the presentation  | The proposal refers to some extent to the theory, practice, and/or research on which the presentation is based in an understandable way and relates it to the content of the presentation.                                | The proposal provides background references to theory, practice, and/or research, but it is not specific, or it does not relate the theory, practice, and/or research to       | The proposal does not mention theory, practice, or research, or it is unclear how this session is                   |

|  |  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
|  | presentation content.  | content.   |   | the content of the presentation.  | connected to the field's body of knowledge .   |
| <b>4. Support for Practices, Conclusions, and/or Proposals</b>     | Details are provided indicating that the practices, conclusions, or proposals will be well substantiated.                  | Details are provided indicating that the practices, conclusions, or proposals will be substantiated.                     | Some indication is given of how practices, conclusions, or proposals will be substantiated.   | There may be some stated or implied reference to support, but it is not clear whether sufficient support will be provided for practices, conclusions, or proposals. | The proposal makes claims with no indication of the support for those claims.  |
| <b>5. Clarity of Proposal as Indicator of Presentation Quality</b> | The proposal abstract and description are well written and indicate that the presentation will be of professional quality. | The proposal abstract and description are clearly written and suggest that the quality of the presentation will be good. | The proposal abstract and description are adequately written but indicate that the presenter may not have a good sense of the conference audience or the quality may be uneven. | The way in which the proposal abstract and description are written suggest that the quality of the presentation may be weak.  | The way in which the proposal abstract and description are written indicate that the delivery of the presentation may be poor. |

## Appendix 2. Participant Manual

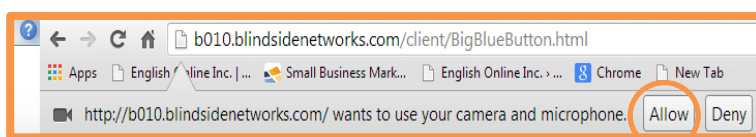
### TIPS ON USING BIG BLUE BUTTON FOR REALIZE! CONFERENCE

Many of us have experience either in participating or presenting at conferences. More than that, many ESL professionals visit conferences on regular basis. As participants we are familiar with conference procedures – going to the conference venue, registering, listening to speakers, taking notes, asking questions, interacting with others ... All this has become a usual practice and at the conference you feel like a fish in the water. Now, what about an online conference?

Technology allows the conference to come to you. No travel costs, no commuting, no suits. You can sit near your favourite computer, with a mug of your favourite coffee, wrapped up in a cozy throw, and switch between sessions in a couple of clicks. In order to enable all the ESL enthusiasts meet and collaborate at the conference, English Online is using Big Blue Button - a web conferencing platform which is designed especially for online learning. The following tips are aimed to make our participants more comfortable with Big Blue Button during The REALIZE! Conference.

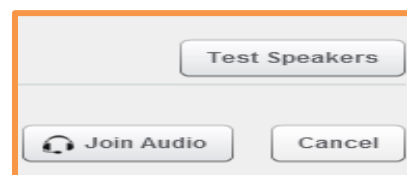
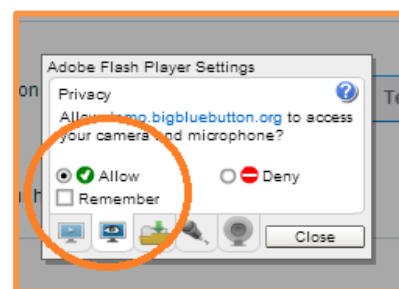
#### GENERAL SETTINGS:

1. **Use a headset** to assure better sound quality and reduce background noise. Adjust the Microphone or/and Audio on your computer before the session.
2. **Close all unnecessary applications.**
3. Go the [Conference Schedule Page](#) and choose a session you would like to join. Type in your **real name** in the box provided and click on **the blue button** to join the session.
4. You are now **logged in** to **Big Blue Button**. If it's the first time for your browser to use Microphone, Audio and/or Webcam, you might see **a drop-down line coming out at the top of the screen** and asking you to click **[Allow]**.



#### AUDIO SETTINGS:

1. Now the window will appear to adjust your **Audio Settings**. First, **Adobe Flash Player** will ask you to **allow access** to your Camera and Microphone. Click **[Allow]**.
2. Test your **Speakers** by clicking **Test Speakers Button**. You should hear the music coming out through your headset or speakers. Click **Join Audio**.





1. Participant (you)
2. Current Presenter
3. Moderator

## Webcams

Check for private  
messages from BBB  
tech support here

English

Shortcut Help



Quickly, click an image below to watch a tutorial video.

To join this meeting by phone, dial:  
(613) 317-3321 (Ottawa, ON, CA)  
(855) 352-6788 (Canadian toll free)  
Then enter 25539 as the conference pin number.

Send


Default

4. As a participant, you will be **muted** during the sessions. For the purposes of the Conference, please submit your questions and concerns in the **Chat Box**.

5. If you have difficulties hearing the sound, **double click the headset icon**  at the top left corner, and adjust your settings by using a drop-down menu. Or, simply use the **rewind/refresh button**  in your browser.

6. Still doesn't help? Go to the top right corner and click an **Arrow Icon**  to log out. Log in again and arrange **Audio Settings**.

7. If you are still experiencing difficulties with BBB, go to the **Chat Box** and type in your concern. **BBB moderator will help you to resolve your issue.**

8. At the end of the session click an **Arrow Icon**  to log out.

**NOTE:** *To log in to another session, simply go back to the Schedule and choose the session you would like to join.*

## Appendix 3. Abstract from Contingency Plan

| rEALize Contingency Plan |  |   |  |                                |  |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Day of the Event         |  |   |  |                                |  |
| Area                     | Occurance  | Impact  | Solution   | Who                            | How/Steps  |
| Technology               | Website goes down  | No one can connect  | Contact Webserver host to check connections  | Briar                          |  |
|                          | (i.e. www.myenglishonline.ca is not connecting)          | Conference delayed  | If no solution, move people over to the test server site and email participants via Constant Contact to give the redirected link         | Natalia                        |  |
|                          |  |   | * EO will call moderators; moderators will call their presenters   | EO Team and Realize Moderators | * EO team call moderators; moderators call their presenters and tell them to look for new link; please be sure to send contact information to your moderator |
|                          |  |   | * If presentations are missed, will work to add presenters to other times slots later in the day; will contact available moderators      | Natalia/Yuliana                |  |
|                          | "Join Session" button not connecting to BBB from website | No one can connect  | * Contact Big Blue Button (* Note: this has happened during training. BBB will be monitoring, last time this took 15 minutes to correct) | Natalia                        |  |
|                          |  | Sessions delayed  | * EO will call moderators who are scheduled during that time slot; moderators will call their presenters                                 | EO Team and Realize Moderators | * EO team call moderators; moderators call their presenters and tell them we are working on connection; please be sure to send contact information           |
|                          |  |   | * add notice to side bar of website to indicated any update  |                                |  |
|                          |  |   | * call moderators, who should then call their presenters   |                                |  |
|                          |  |   | * When website comes up, will continue the schedule as listed  |                                |  |
|                          | Internet Down/Connectivity for EO staff                  | Affects EO only   | Contact Internet Service Provider, MTS   | Briar                          |  |
|                          | * If Internet down for Moderator/Presenter (see below)   | Sessions that EO staff are moderating will need to switch to off site moderator backups | *physically move EO staff to co-location connected computers; move whole server to separate Internet                                     | Computer techs                 |  |
|                          |  |   | * go off site for EO staff   | Briar                          |  |
|                          |  |   | * contact BBB to advise their moderators that EO moderators not available  | Natalia                        |  |
|                          | Internal Server/Network, for EO Staff                    | Affects EO only   | Contact Computer techs (onsite both days)  | Briar                          |  |
|                          |  |   | * move EO moderators to computer connected to co-located Internet  | Moderators                     |  |
|                          |  |   | * move EO connections to co-located Internet   | Computer techs                 |  |
|                          | No power for EO  | EO not able to connect  | * arrive at work by 7:00, if power off will call EO staff to moderate from home  | Natalia                        |  |
|                          |  |   | * if power off across Manitoba contact BBB   | Natalia                        |  |
|                          |  | Sessions that EO staff are moderating will need to switch to off site moderator backups | * if power off after 7:00 am contact BBB moderators that EO moderators not available   |                                |  |
|                          |  |   | * ask offsite back up moderators to do welcome   |                                |  |
|                          | Phones not working at EO                                 | Participants and moderators, presenters will not be able to contact us                  | * send cellphone numbers to Presenters and Moderators prior to conference  | Natalia                        | * Natalia Aleko, cell: 204-688-7442//Yuliana Bagan, cell: 204-990-2616//Briar Jamieson, cell: 204-250-1285   |
|                          |  |   | * send Skype addresses to Presenters and Moderators in manual  |                                | *natalia_myenglishonline//yuliana_myenglishonline  |

## Appendix 4. REALIZE Badges





## **Appendix 5. Copy of The Wrap-up Session Chat**

### **Copy of the chat of the REALIZE Wrap-up session Jan 24, 4:45 – 5 pm CST**

Briar Jamieson: Hello is everyone here for the Wrap up?

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: Welcome Briar!

Colleen Rogan: I am - Hi Briar!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: Great conference, Briar!

Colleen Rogan: Yes - It's been a great day!

Briar Jamieson: Thank you Rita! it was a community effort

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: You have a great team at EO!

Dawn McCluskey: A positive learning experience.

Sherry N-M: I'm glad you are all having this chat box conversation. I was beginning to worry that my lack of sound meant there was another technical problem on my end.

Carol Neufeld: Very good conference It realized its goal.

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: rEALized!!! indeed!!!!

Stefanie Henders: One of the best conferences I've been to.

Natalia Aleko: yes, big realization!!!!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: yeah Natalia!

Lori Lobchuk: fantastic day!

Nicole Moore: Beyond expectations!! :-)

Kathryn Rockwell: loved it!

Paige Appleyard: I really enjoyed the experience!

Judith Rempel: A good first experience for sure! Evelin Horvath: What a fabulous day!

Ionalee: yes, beyond expectations

Ionalee: so many resources to go back to

Heidi Schlack: Thank you English Online...an amazing day!

Azhar Youssef: Thanks everyone ... you did awesome job today.

Arra Panlilio: woot woot!

Tanis Sawkins: rEALLY great experience for us first timers!

Evelin Horvath: hey, life would be too boring without any problems, right?

Colleen Rogan: Ah - just a speed bump

Nicole Moore: AWESOME!!!!

Lori Lobchuk: thanks so much to all the presenters and the hard working support people

Debbie Kroeker, MNU: And it's a community that "gets" that there will be tech issues

Sue: A very good first experience.

Olesya Osipova: Great presentations! Very informatie)

Colleen Rogan: Fantastic day!

Elena Maggio: Very productive

Evelin Horvath: very inspring presentations

Claudie Graner: Milestone in Canadian ESL

Sabine: great! thank you for all your hard work!!

Sherry N-M: I'm impressed.

Judith Rempel: definitely a great taste

Vania Ganacheva: Very informative, THANK YOU!

Kathryn Rockwell: it is just part of the experience - learning to be flexible and patient

Olesya Osipova: Very informative!

Nicole: Great to be a part of this experience! Nicole Moore: Thank you - bringing together like-minded people in one day is an awesome idea!!

Janis Fair: Really great experience - and so well organized! Lots of support for presenters.

Kathryn Rockwell: the sessions were awesome

Heidi Schlack: Everyone is doing good work from sea to sea! It is very validating for everyone!

jeanne: sessions I was able to access Fantastic. Such good ideas.. I am enthused to try them out

Joe AuCoin (ICEAP): As a first timer, I am very impressed and motivated to be an educator in this field.

This was energizing!

Kim Chaba: Great information, but I didnt' know where everyone was from. Otherwise awesome.

Evelin Horvath: i think it gave us a taste of all that is out there

James Thompson: Great vehicle for connecting!

Eugene: Great experience! Will this be an annual event? Thank you!

Lindsay Halliday: unfortunate to miss the first session, but the others throughout the day worked! Was great to be a part of the conference!

Kathryn Rockwell: i enjoyed the chat box discussions

Lori Lobchuk: there are some amazing people out there doing amazing things!

Kathryn Rockwell: and twitter

Carolyn: Wish I could've attended ALL sessions! Can't wait until the recordings are made available to everyone late Feb!

Janice Fischer: My first online conference and I'm so happy I participated. Learned lots but also realize how very much there is to learn! Looking forward to my next time. Thank you for this opportunity.

Paige Appleyard: After the 'blip', it was great. I am sad that I couldn't attend all of them. I'm excited that they were all recorded....see them later....excellent advantage of online conference!!!

Tanis Sawkins: Special thanks to Sharmila and Yulia and Natalia who helped trouble shoot for us! We'll be following up on Tutela

Marilyn: I would to do this again!

Sharmila Vijayann: It was a pleasure Tanis

Jacquie Harrison: Great support for presenters! We were well looked after. Nicole Moore: Please put up the presentations soon - I am looking forward to them! :-) Had to miss the morning to work! LOL!

@thespreadingoak 1h #realize14 BRAVO!!

Amazing! You all rock. This was a milestone in Canadian ESL

Olesya Osipova: "Thank you very much!" to all the organizers, moderators and presenters! I really enjoyed my day with "REALIZE14")

Debbie Kroeker, MNU: Don't need to go to F2F conferences with online conferences like this!

Yuliana Bagan: quick overlook: 50 participants in each session on average

Stefanie Henders: very well put!

Sharmila Vijayann: Absolutely Debbie.. sit at your desk in Tees and coffee

Tanis Sawkins: Cool idea.

Colleen Rogan: Love seeing these connections

Robert C.: @Yuliana - averaging 50 people per session is awesome! Great turn out

Paige Appleyard: I like the flexibility of the online conference.

Claudie Graner: F2F is also good - blended PD!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: Lovely!

Kim Chaba: I just want to reiterate that the conference was great, but that f2f connecting with people to be able to network was missing - I don't feel it can be replaced completely by an online format.

Paige Appleyard: I am looking forward to seeing all of them!  
Colleen Rogan: Huge applause!!!!!!  
Colleen Rogan: For Natalia and Yuliana!  
Sheri Rhodes: Great team!  
Lori Lobchuk: yay! applause to the team  
Natalia Aleko: thank you  
Nicole Moore: Community Wave for you all!  
jeanne: THanks Natalia  
Rita Zuba Prokopetz: I feel honoured! Lorna: Great work. Thank you so much.  
ejohnson: Yeah English On Line Team!!!  
Kezia: Congratulations, REALize Team! :)  
Jacquie Harrison: Well done  
Judith Rempel: Thanks for your initiative and work in making this happen.  
Lori Lobchuk: clap clap clap  
Sue: Thank you, REALize Team!  
Colleen Rogan: YAY!  
Eugene: clap clap clap  
Paige Appleyard: clap clap clap!  
Ionalee: clap clap clap huzzah  
Arra Panlilio: virtual applause!!!  
ejohnson: clap, clap, clap  
Tony Ratcliffe: Thanks all!  
Robert C.: \*\*applause\*\*  
Claudie Graner: APPPLAUSE!!!!  
Lindsay Halliday: \*claps\*  
Nicole Moore: woot!!  
Rita Zuba Prokopetz: Ditto  
Joe AuCoin (ICEAP): Yes, big applause  
Rita Zuba Prokopetz: The Tech Support was lovely!  
Colleen Rogan: Thank Goodness for tech support

Support: Thank You!

Yuliana Bagan: Fenomenal BBB technical support

Carol Neufeld: Will there be a Realize 2015 Elena Maggio: Amen!

Support: The Realize14 team did a great job!

Paige Appleyard: Yeah technical support people!!!! You all ROCK!!!!

Anne: Great job. Now you can sleep!

mzivko: Looking forward to the next Realize conference!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: Yeah team!

mzivko: Why do not we have conferences like this at the provincial/teritorial level?

Support: We're all connected...we all rock!

Colleen Rogan: So organized

Sherry N-M: Thank you all!

Sue: A great conference!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: we realized for sure!

Shirley Fredeen: Thanks so much!

Stefanie Henders: Fantastic, polished and so informative!!! The day was so positive and motivating.

Thanks soo much.

Colleen Rogan: The manuals were fantastic!

Paige Appleyard: It is a bit of sitting.....breaks are definitely necessary.....You should be proud of your hard work :)

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: You did a great job!

Lindsay Halliday: YAY! Good job!

Sheri Rhodes: Thank goodness for back up plans in my session!!

Rita Zuba Prokopetz: We thank YOU!

Robert C.: Congrats all of you!

Paige Appleyard: Thank you for all of your work for us to have such a great experience!!!!

Iwona Gniadek: Let's connect on Twitter @yvetteinmb

Tracy: Thanks. It was a great way to spend the day. :) Natalia Aleko: the survey will be emailed to all registered participants next week

Sheri Rhodes: I plan to visit all the Tutela threads post conference and continue the discussions!

Francine: Being an online conference allowed me to join in from Costa Rica. That wouldn't have been

possible if it had been an in-person conference. Thanks for all your hard work as it was very interesting.

Natalia Aleko: thank you all!!

Sharmila Vijayann: Thank you Have a great weekend!!!

Yuliana Bagan: Cheers!

Sue: Thank you!

Colleen Rogan: Have a super weekend everyone

Briar Jamieson: Thank you so much!