

The Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA) is proud to announce that the 2015 **PETAA Research Grant** of \$75,000 has been awarded to a research team based at Charles Sturt University (CSU) in Wagga Wagga, NSW and lead by Dr Christine Edwards-Groves and Dr Christina Davidson. The successful CSU submission is entitled:

Researching dialogic pedagogies for literacy learning across the primary years

This research will study how changes in classroom teacher's interaction practices will lead to improved opportunities and experiences for students' oral language and literacy development. In doing so, the project aims to develop and produce a number of shorter and longer-term deliverables to assist classroom teachers understand and enact dialogic pedagogies in their classrooms.

These deliveries include:

- Production of digital resource – representation of dialogic approaches
- PETAA Publications: print and digital materials to support the online digital resource
- Interim reports and a final research report
- Researchers sharing their research and presenting at PETAA conference/s.

In awarding the Research Grant, The PETAA Research Grant Advisory Group engaged in extensive review and debate in choosing from a strong and highly competitive field. Selecting the successful submission was a close and difficult task. The group, which included internationally acclaimed, leading literacy researchers Professor Peter Freebody and Professor Barbara Comber, *felt that classroom talk and its relationship to literacy learning is an area requiring a great deal of attention and has substantial potential as its insights relate to pedagogic relationships.*

The project will identify, describe and represent academically enriching teaching of English, oral language and literacy through dialogic pedagogies that support teachers to enact this key aspect of the curriculum. Developing dialogic, explicit and learning focused practices will improve student literacy learning by building substantive knowledge and high level communication skills. Enacting dialogic pedagogies requires understanding classroom talk as pedagogical practice that can be changed to enhance oral language, learner participation and engagement.

The project has two broad aims:

1. to assist participating teachers develop dialogic pedagogies through critical participatory action research (CPAR) that support students in primary school classrooms to develop oral language through acquiring and communicating knowledge with clarity and a high degree of intellectual focus. Action research is concerned with the development of social practices – in this case, practices of teaching and learning English, oral language and literacy.
2. to produce digital exemplars of dialogic pedagogies 'representations of practices' that may support teachers (both in-service and pre-service) to acquire academically enriching teaching practices.

Classroom teachers from Stages 1, 2 and 3 from primary schools in New South Wales will work with project team members to develop action research studies that examine and develop talk and interaction in lessons. The selected schools offer diverse geographical, cultural and socio-economic variances.

On announcing the successful candidates, PETAA President, Associate Professor Robyn Cox, commented that: *The findings of this work funded by teachers to support the development of their own practice based on research findings may well start a new era in evidence based practice in Australian primary schools.* The grant further confirms PETAA's ongoing commitment in support of educational research in the field of literacy; an initiative embedded within PETAA's Strategic Plan.