

## **Call for Participants**

I am a PhD Candidate at York University, who is looking for participants for my dissertation research project *English Language Teacher (ELT) Self-Directed Teacher Learning (SDTL) in Online Spaces: Case Studies of Teacher Explorers*.

Briefly, I am looking for experienced English language teachers (5 years+) who engage in professional development activities online because of their own interest (i.e. not due to their employer's requirement, or to fulfill re-certification requirements). I am hoping to learn more about your motivations, learning experiences, and reflections on teaching.

Participants will be asked to track their activities over a 3-month period, keep a journal, take part in two 60-minute interviews and one 45-minute webinar.

If you are interested, please contact me at [cfretz@yorku.ca](mailto:cfretz@yorku.ca)

## Consent letter 1- Pre-Screening Consent Letter

**Researcher Name:** Cheryl Fretz, PhD Candidate, Applied Linguistics, Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, York University, Toronto.

**Contact:** [cfretz@yorku.ca](mailto:cfretz@yorku.ca)

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Linda Steinman, [lstein@yorku.ca](mailto:lstein@yorku.ca)

### Purpose of Research

I am conducting this research for my PhD dissertation in Applied Linguistics at York University. Through my research project, *English Language Teacher (ELT) Self-Directed Teacher Learning (SDTL) in Online Spaces: Case Studies of Teacher Explorers*, I hope to shed light on pathways, experiences, and learning that teachers engage with on their own, and create awareness of alternative professional development pathways for use in accreditation models.

The first stage of this research involves screening individuals to ensure they meet the requirements of the study. In this stage, prospective participants will complete a Google form survey with questions about their teaching experience, training, and professional development. If you are selected for further participation, you will be notified by email.

### Confidentiality

The researcher acknowledges that the host of the online survey, Google, may automatically collect participant data without their knowledge (i.e., IP addresses.) Although this information may be provided or made accessible to the researchers, it will not be used or saved without participant's consent on the researcher's system. Further, because this project employs e-based collection techniques, data may be subject to access by third parties as a result of various security legislation now in place in many countries and thus the confidentiality and privacy of data cannot be guaranteed during web-based transmission.

Once the surveys have been completed and participants have been selected, the researcher will delete the survey and its responses.

### Legal Rights and Signatures:

I \_\_\_\_\_ consent to participate in the screening survey for *English Language*  
(print your name here)

*Teacher Self-Directed Teacher Learning in Online Spaces: Case Studies of Teacher Explorers* conducted by Cheryl Fretz. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Consent Letter 2 – consent for project participants

### Letter of Consent

**Researcher Name:** Cheryl Fretz, PhD Candidate, Applied Linguistics, Department of Languages, Literatures & Linguistics, York University, Toronto.

**Contact:** [cfretz@yorku.ca](mailto:cfretz@yorku.ca)

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Linda Steinman, [lstein@yorku.ca](mailto:lstein@yorku.ca)

**Department Contact:** phone (416) 650-8046, email [redge@yorku.ca](mailto:redge@yorku.ca) (Graduate Program Assistant)

### Purpose of Research

I am conducting this research for my PhD dissertation in Applied Linguistics at York University. Through my research project, *English Language Teacher (ELT) Self-Directed Teacher Learning (SDTL) in Online Spaces: Case Studies of Teacher Explorers*, I hope to shed light on pathways, experiences, and learning that teachers engage with on their own, and create awareness of alternative professional development pathways for use in accreditation models.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- participate in a 60-minute Zoom interview about your teaching career and growth (recorded)
- engage in online self-directed teacher learning of your choice for a 3-month period
- keep a journal reflecting on your independent learning activities over a 3-month period (approximately 6 entries) and keep a log of your activities (what you participated in and when).
- attend a 45-minute pre-recorded Zoom webinar conducted by the researcher, followed by a Q&A with the researcher and the other participants (Q&A not recorded)
- participate in a 60-minute follow-up Zoom interview (recorded)

You have been invited for this research because you have at least 5 years of adult ELT experience, and have indicated that you engage in independent online learning about your profession.

### Consenting to participate in the project & withdrawing from the research

If you agree to participate, you will complete the consent section below. Signing the form indicates that you have consented to take part in the research.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed.

### **Possible benefits and risks to participants**

During your participation in this research, you will experience professional development (the 45 minute webinar) that may benefit you in your future reflective practice. You will also help to bring to light the impact of independent teacher learning.

Participating in this research may involve discussion of past or present employers and reveal uncomfortable information. You can refuse to answer any question you find uncomfortable and stop any interview at any time. As explained in the section below, all responses will be kept confidential.

### **Confidentiality**

Please be assured that you will not be identified in either the dissertation or any publications: a pseudonym will be used, and any identifying factors (names of employers, for example) will be fictionalized. During the group Zoom Q&A session, you can opt to turn off your camera, and/or identify yourself with a pseudonym. Data collected in this project will be used in my dissertation and may be used in subsequent articles for publication.

This study will use Zoom to collect data, which is an externally hosted cloud-based service. When information is transmitted over the internet privacy cannot be guaranteed. There is always a risk your responses may be intercepted by a third party (e.g., government agencies, hackers). Further, while York University researchers will not collect or use IP address or other information which could link your participant to your computer or electronic devices without informing you, there is a small risk with any platform such as this of data that is collected on external servers falling outside the control of the research team. If you are concerned about this, we would be happy to make alternative arrangements (where possible) for you to participate, perhaps via telephone. Please contact Cheryl Fretz (cfretz@yorku.ca) for further information.

Recordings (audio/video) will be saved in a password protected file to research team members' local computer, not the cloud-based service

Please note that it is the expectation that participants agree not to make any unauthorized recordings of the content of a meeting / data collection session.

### **Storage of data**

Data collected in this project will be stored, by me, in a password-protected hard drive. All data will be destroyed on December 31, 2024. If you would like to receive a copy of the dissertation which I submit, please inform me, and I will send it to you via email or provide a link to its public electronic form.

## Questions & Complaints

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail [ore@yorku.ca](mailto:ore@yorku.ca)).

If you have any questions about this process, or your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the supervisor of this doctoral research

## Legal Rights and Signatures:

I \_\_\_\_\_ consent to participate in *English Language Teacher Self-Directed Teacher Learning in Online Spaces: Case Studies of Teacher Explorers* conducted by Cheryl Fretz. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Consent

### Audio recording

- I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

### Video recording

- I consent to the video-recording of my interview(s).

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(print your name here)

