President’s Letter

Welcome to our Spring 2016 PTE Voices newsletter!

Since our last newsletter, we have been able to fill most of our PennTESOL-East board member positions. With active board members, we will be able to offer all PTE members more opportunities to meet and discuss issues of concern in your interest section. Our website is in the process of being updated with the board member’s information so that you may reach out to the interest section of your choice.

It is with great pleasure that Dr. Nelson Flores will be our plenary for our Fall Conference being held at Arcadia University. I had the opportunity to hear him speak at a Language Expo held for ASPIRA of PA schools in 2015. Our theme will focus on being appreciate of all languages and how they can be used as a resource.

We are asking for those interested in presenting at our Fall Conference to send their proposal. Call for proposals will go out in early July.

Lastly, I thank all of those who have submitted articles to make this newsletter happen.

We look forward to your attendance in November at our full-day Fall Conference.

Best wishes from Peru!
Dawn Adamoli, PTE President

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"Reflecting Forward" marked the theme of the 50th anniversary International TESOL Convention, celebrating and reflecting on the organization's history while moving "beyond the borders and limitations of the past to share new research and innovative practices." So declared the "Welcome" in the program guide for the 2016 convention, which took place in Baltimore from April 4 to April 9. I had not attended a TESOL convention since 2012, when it was held in Philadelphia for the first time. Now retired as ESL Program Coordinator from the Norristown Area School District, I participated in this year's event to stay abreast of developments for my own reflecting forward to possible ESL-related activities in the coming years.

The convention offered over 1,000 sessions, pre- and post-convention workshops, Pre K-12 and community colleges days, an electronic village, a large exhibitors display, and a model "TESOL Classroom of the Future" as well as various plenary presentations, special interest group meetings, etc. Technology integration themes appeared frequently in the session descriptions, and the electronic village arranged 175 hands-on demonstrations involving media technology, Smartphones, web resources, Google apps, MOOCs, game-based learning, etc. The Classroom of the Future scheduled a presentation each hour, such as Superblend: Using Robots for ESL Telepresence, or How to Be in Two Places at One Time. "Reflecting Forward," indeed! The amount of space occupied by the large publishing companies in the exhibition area has noticeably shrunk over the years, as many of their primary materials are now online. The convention made evident that technology is playing an increasingly significant role in TESOL-related instruction and support.

As a retiree from the K-12 TESOL world, however, my chief interest remains the teacher's fundamental challenge of how to help English language learners learn English while they simultaneously have to learn in English. Though technology can facilitate this process in increasingly multiple ways, appropriate instruction as well as teacher effectiveness continue to be the central issues in K-12 ESL education. The Pennsylvania Basic Education Circular for ELLs stipulates that students are to receive English language instruction from qualified ESL teachers and, at the same time, that ALL teachers are to use the Pennsylvania English Language Proficiency Standards for differentiating instruction - a tall order! Content-based instruction, thematic units, and English language proficiency standards have become standard models of K-12 instruction for English language learners in this century compared to foreign language models of the past. Thus, I generally chose See “Reflecting Forward,” page 14
Fall Conference to Mark 35th Anniversary of Our Affiliate

PTE’s upcoming Fall conference will mark our 35th anniversary as a TESOL affiliate. To celebrate, this year’s conference will feature giveaways and special activities. The conference will be held on November 5, 2016, at Arcadia University.

The plenary address by University of Pennsylvania linguist Dr. Nelson Flores will reflect the conference theme – “Languages as Resources.” Dr. Flores’ talk – “There’s a Spanish Word in There!” Supporting Language Architecture with Bilingual Mentor Texts – will explore alternative visions of language learning.

In his address, Flores, assistant professor of educational linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania, will describe a case study in which a second grade ESOL class incorporated a bilingual text. He will also provide blueprints for classroom activities that make optimal use of students’ language identities.

“In many contexts across the United States, the bilingualism of English Language Learners is at best ignored and at worst positioned as a barrier to their academic development,” Flores says. “This presentation offers an alternative vision of language learning where the bilingualism of these students is positioned as a resource for teaching and learning.”

Flores has collaborated on several studies related to the education of emergent bilingual students in U.S. schools. He also served as project director for the CUNY-New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals, a New York State Education Department funded initiative that seeks to improve the educational outcomes of emergent bilingual students through an intensive seminar series for school leaders combined with on-site support by CUNY faculty.

He currently serves as principal investigator of the Philadelphia Bilingual Education Project (PBEP), which seeks to examine the historical and contemporary cultural politics of bilingual education in the School District of Philadelphia and to provide professional development support to bilingual teachers throughout the district.

The Saturday, November 5 conference will run from 8 am to 3 pm on Arcadia University’s campus in Glenside, PA, and feature presentations by regional educators and publisher exhibits. Next month, PTE members will receive e-mails with a call for proposals and more details about the 35th anniversary celebration.
The Purpose and Limitations of Standardized Assessments

By Walt Babich and Mary Beth Worrilow

As is usually the case with intensive English programs, the English Language Institute at the University of Delaware has found the need to incorporate standardized assessments as part of every student’s grade. These grades are used to determine the student’s readiness to benefit from instruction at a higher level, so an inaccurate set of assessments can lead to the premature promotion of students who are clearly not ready for this instruction.

The importance of determining a student’s proficiency has become more vital as intensive English programs prepare students for higher education in mainstream university classes. Nevertheless, finding an appropriate standardized instrument for a program can be a daunting task, especially if the expectations for this tool are unrealistic. In this article, the authors will attempt to address both the purpose and the limitations of any standardized test.

At the University of Delaware’s English language Institute, the testing committee, consisting of full-time faculty members, searched for and discovered a final listening assessment to be administered in every class at the end of an eight-week session. The purpose of the assessment was to help determine whether or not the student was ready to go to the next level and in some cases, to begin attending classes with American students. A computer-based product was chosen which seemed to have the face-validity lacking in older paper-based assessments. The reception given to this change, however, was far from one of universal acceptance. Some teachers noted that students who had done relatively well in their classes and on their own assessments, did relatively poorly on the computer-based test. Moreover, some teachers noted that some students did relatively well on the test but did not do well in class or on their own assessments. This led to some dissatisfaction among some of the faculty, and it also led to some requests to replace the assessment tool with one that would more accurately assess the students’ proficiency, presumably by mirroring the results that the teachers observed on their own assessments.

Unfortunately, the teachers’ expectations of this assessment tool were simply unrealistic for several reasons. While a standardized assessment is a useful instrument, it is not perfect, and should not be used as the sole criterion in determining a student’s language proficiency.

Standardized assessments are not used this way at the English Language Institute, and, in fact, only comprise 20% of the final grade, meaning that the teachers’ own assessments make up 80% of the grade. A standardized test and teacher–created assessments are both flawed indicators of proficiency, but taken together, they can complement each other and offer a more complete and unbiased view of a student’s status than either can alone.

See “Standardized Assessments,” page 12
Marriage is an ideal topic for English language learners of all levels and ages. The key to creating a successful unit is to select an engaging text (listening or reading), and then add activities that will help learners comprehend the text (before, during, and after listening or reading).

Here are some sample activities that I have developed for a unit anchored by a YouTube lecture (see the link below). These are not all the supplementary activities I created for this unit, but the ones I’ve included here represent the types that work well before, during, and after listening to the lecture. This unit has proven to be engaging and enriching for advanced level listening-speaking learners in pre-academic college ESL programs.

“What You Don’t Know about Marriage”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8u42OjH0ss

Teachers may choose a different lecture (or a reading) as the unit anchor, and adapt these activities to make them level- and age-appropriate for their own students. Start by selecting the reading or listening text, and then add activities modeled on these examples. In the end, you’ll have a customized version of this successful unit.

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**Before Listening**

**Think and Talk**

Discuss the questions below in pairs, and take notes on your major points.

1. Why do people get married?
2. What do you think are some of the main reasons for successful marriages in your country?
3. What do you think are some of the reasons for divorce in your country?
4. What are some of the main advantages and disadvantages of marriage in your country?

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Survey and Discuss

Look at the following characteristics. Which do you think are most important in a marriage partner? Rank the items 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important. Write the characteristics in order of their importance, and explain your ranking to a classmate.

- good looks
- kindness
- wealth
- nationality
- intelligence

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

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See “Marriage,” page 18
Activities that Give Students a Voice

By Donna McVey

After the students have settled into their classes, usually by the third week, I like to introduce activities that both empower my students and encourage self-expression. The following are five examples of activities I have used in my reading/writing or listening/speaking classes to give the students a voice. Classes in the intensive program at Drexel University, where I teach, are ten weeks long, and we meet five times a week for 1.5 hours a day.

**Leading a class discussion**
Students choose an article, bring it to class, and use it to lead a class discussion on the topic. I ask the students to select a topic they and the class would find interesting, summarize the article, and prepare questions for discussion for the class.

**Writing a group essay**
Students choose a topic of interest and write an essay about the topic as a class. The students brainstorm topics of interest in class, then vote on a topic and come up with a thesis statement for the topic. Subsequently, they work in pairs, as they compose an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion for the essay. As a final step, students revise and edit their draft.

**Writing creative stories in pairs**
Students, working in pairs or small groups, write and perform stories they create. After the students are introduced to the elements of a story, like setting, characters, conflict, each pair is asked to create an original story that they will write and eventually perform in class. Alternatively, I’ve had the students choose a character from a story, novel or play we’ve read, and write an original story about the character.

**Giving an impromptu speech**
Students collectively write questions about various topics, and then each student draws a question and gives a short speech about it. I ask the students to choose topics from our textbook and/or topics of interest to them. After each student has finished giving the impromptu speech, I have another student give him/her a challenge. At the end, I ask random students questions about the impromptu speeches to test their listening comprehension.

**Leading a conversation group**
In an informal setting, students discuss topics of interest to the group members, with one student facilitating the conversation. For this activity, I take the students to a cafe or restaurant, and have them sitting in groups of 4-5 students per table. Each table has a moderator for the day, who encourages everyone to participate and to speak English. The students can discuss any topic of interest to them. I circulate among the various tables, trying to listen more than talk.

The above activities encourage my students to express themselves, promote camaraderie amongst them, and enhance their creativity and confidence. In addition, they give me an opportunity to get to know my students and uncover their strengths.

Donna C McVey, a University of Pennsylvania graduate, teaches English at Drexel University.
Using “Kahoot” Quizzes as Informal Assessments

By Eve Litt

Looking for an informal assessment that engages students through the use of technology? Kahoot is a web-based platform where instructors can create quizzes, discussions, and surveys with which students interact by using their smartphones. I’ve only used the quiz function in my class as an informal assessment, but I’ve found it formative and fun to use. First, I will outline the steps it takes to create a Kahoot quiz, and then I will discuss the benefits and challenges to using Kahoot in class.

1. As with most websites, first you need to create a profile. https://create.kahoot.it/account/register/
2. Then, you will need to decide on your quiz focus. Frequently, I use Kahoot to reinforce a unit’s vocabulary, but I have used it in grammar, reading comprehension, and transition word activities as well.
3. Click on “Create a Kahoot”, and give it a title. Then, begin adding questions and answer options. You will be asked to identify the correct answer, and you can also add a picture to accompany each question.
4. Once you’re ready to use the Kahoot in class, pull it up on a computer/projector, and select “play”.
5. A screen will appear with the website and a six-digit passcode that students need to sign-in on their smartphone. After they log on, each student will be asked for her or his name, and once she or he types that in, it will appear on projected computer screen. Once all of the students have joined, click on “Start now” and the game will begin.
6. Questions appear one at a time. There is some suspenseful music to add to the excitement that plays during the projection of a given question. The music speeds up toward the end of the 30-second window or until everyone who joined the game has answered.
7. After all students have offered an answer, a screen appears with the correct answer highlighted and a bar graph illustrating the distribution of answers. This is immediately helpful to the instructor because it gives real time feedback. Additionally, the next question isn’t projected until the instructor clicks on “Next”, so the instructor has a chance to

See “Kahoot,” page 13
Tips for Teaching Paraphrasing

By Dawn Kane

Sometimes when we talk about paraphrasing in classes, I hear students say, ‘We know about that.’ This, as teachers know, isn’t the same as being able to do it. Generally, students soon find out that it’s not always as easy as it seems.

Based on experiences with intermediate to advanced level students in Drexel’s Intensive English program, I have found that paraphrasing is a skill that should be introduced as students are faced with their first academic writing tasks in English. As they build proficiency, the skill needs to be reinforced.

When beginning intermediate students are asked to use outside sources, often there is a strong temptation to ‘borrow’ the language. Then later, at the higher levels, it is not even about ‘borrowing’ words, but students lack the skills to hold on to key concepts from their research and also sufficiently change the words. They may inadvertently commit plagiarism. That is particularly challenging when the reading level is high for the student’s language level.

When initially introducing the skill to students, it is often helpful to start with some examples of text that have been successfully paraphrased, and some that have not. The examples should be appropriate to students’ reading levels.

With high-intermediates, it could look something like this:

**Original text:**
Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. By placing his/her name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Plagiarism covers unpublished as well as published sources. (http://drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty)

**Paraphrase 1:**
Plagiarism is committed when one includes words, ideas, or data that isn’t one’s own work and without credit. When students write for class credit, and do not include the source of the information with specific and accurate references, that is plagiarism. When the student writes his or her own name on the writing and submits it that means that it is the student’s original work. Plagiarism can be committed from published and unpublished sources.

**Paraphrase 2:**
Students commit plagiarism if they turn in work which contains someone else’s words or thoughts, or if they fail to give credit to the original author. The ideas that come from your research can be included, but they must be either given as a quotation, or rewritten to reflect the student’s own

See “Paraphrasing,” page 11
**Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL**

*By Daniela DiGregorio*

*Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL: A Resource Book for Teaching K-12 English Learners.*


The sixth edition of this textbook for pre- and in-service ESL teachers offers up-to-date and detailed information about teaching strategies, activities and resources. The book consists of 11 chapters focusing specifically on first and second language acquisition, effective classroom practices, early literacy, vocabulary, writing and reading strategies, and assessment.

Chapter 1 describes the needs of English learners in 21st century classrooms. The authors list important suggestions for helping newly arrived ESL students, a table of English Learner Program models (pp. 29-30), Internet resources, and activities at the end of the chapter. The section “Quality Indicators to Look for in Programs Serving English Learners” (pp. 30-31) is informative; however, it could have been more detailed. For example, a chart of indicators evaluating effectiveness of an ESL program would be helpful. In chapter 2, the authors explain first and second language acquisition as well as use of language for social and academic purposes. Well-organized tables 2.1. (p. 61) and 2.2. (p. 67) offer a very good summary of language acquisition perspectives and instructional implications of second language acquisition theories. Chapter 3 clearly describes effective classroom practices for English language learners addressing the differentiated instruction (DI), response to intervention (RTI), content-based instruction (CBI) and specifically designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE). The authors implement up-to-date information about instructional use of web tools in the table 3.2. (p.118). The table explains how blogs, wikis, podcasts and social networking sites together with the list of weblinks can be used in classroom instruction. In chapter 4, the authors discuss oral language development in second language acquisition, pay special attention to content areas such as math, science and social studies, and list oral language games and activities. Although authors provide accurate information, it appears that the majority of activities is appropriate for elementary students. I wish other activities applicable to older ESL students in grades 7-12 such as note-taking from a short lecture or talk, paraphrasing, summarizing of a story, or cloze tests were also included in this chapter.

The second half of the textbook focuses predominantly on reading and writing instructional strategies. In chapter 5, the authors discuss emergent literacy and show many examples of children’s emergent writing in Arabic, Hebrew and Chinese.

See “Reading, Writing,” page 10
“Reading, Writing,” page 9

Figures 5.15. (p. 213) and 5.16. (p. 214) provide a good summary of writing and reading development. Chapter 6 addresses English learners’ vocabulary development and covers all the important strategies for teaching vocabulary to younger and older ESL students. Chapter 7 focuses on English learners and process writing. Examples of students’ writing excerpts illustrate the differences between proficiency levels and the writing strategies. Chapter 8 focuses on reading and literature instruction for English learners. The authors clearly described the assessment strategies (e.g. miscue analysis, running records and self-assessment) as well as teaching strategies (e.g. guided reading and DL-TA). The overall chapter strengths are detailed explanations of differentiating reading instruction and assessing English language learners. In chapter 9, the authors discuss strategies which promote reading and writing across the curriculum and provide specific examples. The strengths of this chapter were up-to-date websites and Internet resources as well as Figure 9.8. (Model of Reading/Writing in Content Areas) which includes a detailed summary of purposes and sample strategies. Chapter 10 consists of postreading strategies for organizing and remembering the content information. The authors also implemented many helpful examples of graphic organizers, a great overview of different journal activities across the curriculum and an excellent example of a differentiated lesson plan. Final chapter 11 thoroughly explains reading assessment and instruction. Figure 11.3. provides a good summary of reading assessment for ESL students of different levels and figure 11.9. illustrates the elements of guided reading in great detail. The overall strengths of the chapter are explanations of how reading instruction and assessment need to be linked together.

As a whole, Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL: A Resource Book for Teaching K-12 English Learners is a comprehensive and user-friendly textbook. The key strengths of this book are thorough topics on teaching reading and writing skills in K-12 educational settings as well as excellent tables, charts and graphic organizers, extensive list of current websites with useful information, additional Internet resources and suggestions for further reading. I strongly recommend this textbook for pre- and in-service teachers and those who instruct them.

Daniela DiGregorio teaches at Wilkes University in Wilkes Barre, PA
“Paraphrasing,” from page 8

language. In both cases, references to the original work must be provided. Anytime a student puts his or her own name on work that is turned in for a class, the expectation is that it is their own work with the exception of what is honestly credited to all other sources.  (www.drexel.edu)

After reading through examples such as the ones given above, the students can then work in groups to determine which example is correctly paraphrased. In the feedback, it is important to point out the specific areas where the incorrect paraphrase went wrong. For example, ‘In paraphrase #1, phrases like: ‘...words, ideas, or data that isn’t one’s own work,’ are not sufficiently different from the original. There are several instances of this in paraphrase #1, and the writer failed to include the in-text citation that indicates the source of the material.’

After working through some examples, the students are generally more sensitized to the pitfalls of paraphrasing. Then they are ready to try a step-by-step approach for their own paraphrases. Your steps may vary from this, but I find the following steps to be useful:

1) Read the passage carefully until you are sure that you understand the main idea and significant details,
2) Take notes with the book closed, so you don’t inadvertently copy the original writer’s language,
3) Be sure that to use synonyms for key words,
4) Identify ideas that can be combined, and finally,
5) Check your written notes to make absolutely sure that the language is yours and not the original author’s.

Students may require repeated practice in paraphrasing, as it is a skill that needs to be fine-tuned as academic rigor increases. Students may benefit from continued quick practice sessions. For example, a writing class could start with a paraphrasing warm-up, where the whole class works on a single piece of text. This allows the instructor to model the editing process, which will reinforce the skill.

Finally, it is worth reminding students that if they are working with an outside source, and they are unable to paraphrase the original author’s words, then probably the reading is difficult for them. At that time they should reach out to the instructor or a tutor to get help understanding the passage. In the end, it is their voice that we want to hear.

Dawn Kane teaches in the English Language Program at Drexel University, Philadelphia.

SAVE THE DATE!

PTE Fall Conference
Nov. 5, 2016
Conference Theme:
“Languages as Resources”
All standardized assessments are, by their nature, artificial and administered in an artificial environment. A standardized listening test, administered by a computer in a language laboratory, does not necessarily measure a student’s ability to communicate in real-life, face-to-face situations. Furthermore, all test results are influenced by variables such as the student’s familiarity with the form of the test, the student’s familiarity and skill with computers, and the student’s level of comfort within the testing environment.

All teacher-created assessments are, by nature, biased because bias is a natural part of the human thought process. When a teacher judges performance on an assessment, the teacher is already inclined to give the student a grade within certain parameters established by performance on previous assessments. The teacher is also biased by the students’ behavior in class, so, for example, if a student has failed to follow the teacher’s instructions, the teacher assumes that the student’s listening proficiency is below level; however, if that same student performs well on a standardized test, the teacher will tend to attribute the difference between class performance and performance on the test to poor test design rather than an increase in motivation by the student.

To understand what standardized assessments can do in determining a student’s proficiency, consider an analogy regarding the operationalizing of the nebulous construct of listening proficiency in a second language and another nebulous concept. Imagine a situation in which a young woman asks her boyfriend, “How much do you love me?” If the boyfriend replies “235 kilowatts,” the young lady will not accept the answer because it is clearly nonsense. However, imagine that the young lady has three boyfriends, and in her desire to narrow the field, she puts the question to all of them and she receives the following responses: The first boyfriend says, “I love you so much I will give you some of my peanut butter and jelly sandwich.” The second boyfriend says, “I love you so much that I will go shopping with you instead of hanging out with my buddies this weekend.” The third boyfriend says, “I love you so much I would die for you.”

From these responses, the young lady still does not know exactly the extent of her boyfriends’ love, but she does have a better handle on her expectations of them, especially in relation to each other. A standardized test can give a better feeling for how well we can expect the student to respond to instruction at a higher level, but the results still do not tell us exactly what the future will hold.

A teacher’s assessments may be better indicators of a student’s ability to perform particular tests and function in certain situations than a standardized test. A teacher can tailor his/her assessments to fit the outcomes specified by a particular program. However, the fact than an outcome is specified by a program does not necessarily mean that it is a perfect indicator of future success either or that the student will be unable to function at a higher level if he or she does not meet this outcome.
address any discrepancies in that moment.

8. After the instructor clicks on “Next,” a scoreboard appears ranking the top five students’ scores. Scores are calculated by the correctness and the timeliness of their response, meaning the most points are awarded to students who not only answer the question correctly but also who answers it the fastest. Another “Next” button appears that will activate the next question.

The reason I like this web-based program is that it is highly interactive, engaging, and it offers real time feedback during the practice stage of a given task chain. I would never, however, use this as a formal assessment, as it’s public, meaning the students’ performances are displayed at various times on the screen (at least the top five performing students), and there is no way to record a student’s performance after the quiz concludes. There is no way to track or export an individual student’s performance at the end of the quiz.

Additionally, the suspenseful music, colorful display, and pictures add to its ability to engage students, but it may also detract from the formality, and also appear slightly juvenile for the adult population. In my experience, students have appreciated the opportunity to play a game that used the content of our course, but I am sure it’s not appealing to every student, nor does it align with traditional classroom norms of adult education.

Finally, the Kahoot website is inherently collaborative in the sense that these quizzes default to a public setting, which means it’s searchable and usable by other Kahoot members. That means if you are using a text popular with IEPs, you can search to see if another Kahoot member has already created an activity for a particular unit, and in most cases you can use that Kahoot. You also have a chance to share with specific people once you have their username. If you’re interested in learning more, Kahoot has an excellent FAQ page and there are numerous YouTube videos about creating and using Kahoot in educational contexts.

Eve Nora Litt is a language specialist at the University of Pennsylvania’s English Language Programs, teaching mostly in the Intensive Program.

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- & more

E-mail articles in MS Word to Linda Fellag, lfellag@ccp.edu.

Deadline: August 30, 2016
sessions that featured current applications in these areas as well as professional development for teachers. Below are summaries of several sessions regarding these themes.

**Academic Vocabulary**
A content area session entitled *Scaffolding Vocabulary for Adolescent Newcomer and Long-Term ELLs* (Yuliya Ardasheva, Washington State University Tri-Cities and Jennifer Green, Western Washington University) described a science vocabulary support program for middle school students in schools in Kentucky and Washington State. The selection of science vocabulary as a focus stemmed from the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Standards stressing comprehension of informational texts as an important 21st century skill. The program reflects current research in emphasizing explicit instruction of only about 6 new words a week, and it focuses on both science and general academic vocabulary, or "enabling" words, as informed by corpus linguistics work in recent decades (e.g. Coxhead's Academic Word List). A weekly learning cycle moves from a slide show introduction of vocabulary to game, conversation, and writing activities for the words. The format parallels "good practice" for vocabulary programs in this century, and the session handout provided detailed research summaries for every aspect of the program, whether the principles of powerful vocabulary instruction (integration, repetition, meaningful use, and autonomy), inclusion of both contextualization and de-contextualization vocabulary practice, a spotlight on both form and meaning, collaborative learning, etc. Academic vocabulary "support" can clearly be a well-conceived, research-based program rather than cursory approaches of telling, tutoring, or previewing.

**Project-Based Learning**
*Beyond Exams: Project-Based Instruction in a Secondary Context in China* (John Liang, Biola University, USA and Feifei Xie, Beijing Academy, China) described project-based learning in a Chinese middle school as an "experimental" methodology for meaningful language learning to replace examination-oriented curricula. The tradition of task-based learning of grammar and social function applications of the four language skills still overwhelmingly dominates English teaching in China. The switch to an "experimental" project-based curriculum in the school sought to improve communication, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity, all key 21st century skills, by having students "learn English while using English to learn." A video demonstrated the process of student teams creating their own fashion design projects after completing internet research and then making a class presentation during which other students took notes. Rubrics regarding language, research, collaborative learning and communication skills served as the project evaluation. The presenters noted that excellent growth in language ability, a high level of creativity, and an increase in student motivation resulted from the approach. There were admittedly some challenges, such as how teachers can provide effective feedback for grammar errors, especially as students still face standardized language testing. Moreover, collaborative learning is a relatively new practice in China, and "selling" the concept to principals with the need for ensuing
“Reflecting Forward,” from page 14

professional development of teachers can be daunting, a situation not unfamiliar in the U.S. The presenters nevertheless maintained their optimism for the future in stating, "All it takes is a vision of learning and the courage that goes with it."

Student Learning Outcomes/Standards

"Clearly defined criteria for placement, advancement, and student learning outcomes based on sound research in an English language program are key to the success of the students and the program." Such was the theme of Defining Student Learning Outcomes: Beyond the Borders of a Textbook (Lynore Carnuccio, esl-etc. Educational Consultants and Kristin Grayson, Intercultural Development Research Association).

The WIDA framework now rules the K-12 world for diagnostic placement within ESL and summative ESL language assessment in the Penn TESOL-East region, as Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are all WIDA states. WIDA's 2016 updated "Can Do Descriptors" pinpoint how students can use the academic language functions (recount, explain, argue and discuss) at various English proficiency levels based on the W-APT placement diagnostic or annual WIDA Access Test.

For higher education and the adult world, constructs such as the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) and the British-based International English Language Test (IELT) provide performance definitions of language proficiency functioning, with claims that both are aligned to TOEFL Test results. Nevertheless, the presenters cautioned against relying on test scores per se for placing students without a closer consideration of the language ability needed for specific academic functions.

Reviewing classic second language acquisition theory, such as Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" and Krashen's "Comprehensible Input = I + 1," the presenters stressed the need for a placement model based on academic language proficiency as a starting point to gauge accessibility of content instruction for ELL placement. In addition, they suggested that sub-test results for the production skills of speaking and writing serve as the best indicators of placement for academic programs. Instruction based on English language proficiency standards aligned with the placement level should help ensure accurate and meaningful measures of student achievement. The workshop participants also practiced matching performance descriptors to linguistic tasks in aligning frameworks, such as the TESOL Standards and the CEFRs, to their existing ESL program levels.

Ms. Carnuccio, the chief presenter, has been a long-term consultant for the Pennsylvania Department of Education for developing the Pennsylvania English Language Proficiency Standards. Like the TESOL Standards, the PA ELPS follow the WIDA framework for differentiating instruction for ELLs. A conversation with Ms. Carnuccio revealed that she had recently coordinated a team of Pennsylvania educators for updating the standards to correspond better with PA Core and Academic Standards. With the

See “Reflecting Forward,” page 16
“Reflecting Forward,” from page 15

updates, the Model Performance Indicators are also now more progressive in language function and support across each strand, from lower to higher proficiency levels, and the cognitive function across the strand is consistent. Moreover, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has generated an online ELL Differentiation Tool with the revised standards for creating printable differentiated lesson plan supplements for ELLs (See www.esportalpa.info - 2015 Migrant Education Conference Slides). The teacher selects the grade level, content area standard, topic, PA core/academic standard, and one of the key uses of academic language (recount, explain, argue, discuss). The teacher then enters topic-related academic language for a standard at the discourse, sentence, and vocabulary levels. For example, for a math standard about fractions, the discourse level may be "ordering operations" (e.g. First, Second, Third, etc.), the sentence level "logical connectors" (e.g. "If...then"), and the vocabulary level terms related to fractions (e.g. "numerator, denominator, etc.").

With the topic "fractions" for each model performance indicator, the teacher then chooses a language function and support from a drop down box for each of the five proficiency levels. A supplemental lesson plan for fractions prints out in a graphic organizer format with differentiation for the five different proficiency levels.

This exciting new online planning resource, which should be released by PDE during the 2016-2017 school year, will help teachers accurately plan for instruction according to students' English proficiency levels. Interestingly, the online ELL Differentiation Tool may prove the driving force in increasing implementation of the PA ELP Standards for differentiating instruction, as per the PA ESL Basic Education Circular, a situation where technology helps ensure practice.

Professional Development

Breaking Down Borders in Professional Development: A Model for Expansion showcased the continuing growth of professional development efforts in the Program in Intensive English at Northern Arizona University (Jacqueline R. Evans and Hannalisa Savolainen). The presenters emphasized a culture of collaboration in the program for planning, practicing evidence-based reflection, and supporting each other's efforts. What started with assessment meetings and peer observations led to formal professional development sessions, including presentations from other faculty, such as the library and international office, and webinars. In addition, the program set aside a resource room for reference materials, created a share folder for accessibility, and inaugurated an On Base scanning system of research materials. Over several years, participation in professional organizations increased, reading groups evolved, and a

See “Reflecting Forward,” page 17
For these reasons, neither standardized tests nor teacher-created assessments are accurate predictors of future success; however, taken together, they may complement each other and offer a clearer view. A standardized assessment offers a second opinion which has not been colored by the teacher’s experience with the student or the student’s study habits. Teacher-created assessments tend to be less artificial in nature and more reflective of the outcomes listed in a program’s curriculum. The two different kinds of assessments, when observed together, should not necessarily produce a strong correlation. Instead, they should be seen as very different, equally imperfect tools, which when taken together, can be better indicators of the student’s proficiency than either one alone.

Walt Babich and Mary Beth Worrilow teach in the English Language Institute of the University of Delaware.

Survey task force was created to solicit better feedback from the intensive program’s faculty. As the program moves forward, the administrators will continue to solicit input and feedback on what works and doesn’t work. They will also narrow and focus professional development sessions to address the most critical and current information.

By contrast, K-12 professional development is driven by the school district’s general agenda, and ESL-specific professional development for both second language teachers and general educators varies from place to place. Academic language proficiency as a goal requires ESL teachers to be well informed of the general curriculum and grade level academic demands, compared to their status as separate "language teachers" decades ago. The movement to push-in ESL and co-teaching in this century especially requires more awareness of content area instruction. Moreover, ongoing ESL professional development is needed given rapid change in the K-12 ESL world. Well-defined proficiency levels, formal program exit criteria, ongoing differentiation by regular classroom teachers, and elaborate English language proficiency standards are little more than a decade old. Presumably, large city districts or districts with huge numbers of ELLs have more formal and frequent second language professional development in their schedules for both ESL teachers and regular classroom teachers. Whatever the situation, the kinds of initiatives above - share folders, resource "shelves" (if not rooms), peer observations, book study groups (by Skype?), sharing scanned research, etc. - can be organized and developed by resourceful teachers and administrators, and attending a Penn TESOL-East conference is only a mouse click away. As TESOL "reflects forward" into the technology-dominant second half of its first century, it is probably a safe bet that the quality and expertise of knowledgeable teachers will still make all the difference.

Joseph E. (Joe) Leaf, Retired ESL Coordinator of Norristown Area School District, is a long-time PennTESOL-East member.
About 50 ESL educators from community colleges across Pennsylvania met at Reading Area Community College (RACC) on June 9, 2016, to explore best practices in teaching adult English language learners. In a keynote address, Dr. Elena Lawrick, RACC’s ESL Program Director, introduced her college’s innovative approach to providing ongoing support for ESL students through a language center named to recognize the value of being multilingual.

Participants in the day-long conference discussed strengths and challenges of teaching community college ELLs. Some best practices reported by groups included the following:

- ESL students observe college classes and then deliver reports in their ESL classes.
- Advanced ESL students can select an accelerated online option that will speed their matriculation into credit-bearing courses. The online instruction is followed by an Accu-Placer post-test to evaluate whether they are ready to enter college courses.
- Student ambassador and mentor programs allow advanced ESL students to mentor lower-level ESL students.
- Advanced and high-intermediate ESL students may enroll in hybrid courses in which students meet face-to-face once a week and use an online course management system with instructional materials, assignments, and discussion.

Representatives of United Way and other non-profit organizations in the predominantly Hispanic Reading, PA, area also reported on efforts to serve immigrants with language and other services. Community partners are working with RACC, the only college in Pennsylvania to be designated as a Hispanic-serving institution, to coordinate programs and services to aid immigrants in learning English and continuing their education.

Conference organizers hope to continue the annual event as a way to promote exchange of ideas among community college ESL programs in the state.
“Marriage,” from page 5

Analyze and Learn Vocabulary in Context

The boldfaced words appear in a lecture about marriage. Working with a partner, guess the meaning of these words in their contexts.

1. They have been in love for quite some time, and they **vowed** that they would never leave each other alone.
2. The **eternal** God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms.
3. Open relationships can be idealistic, cynical, natural, negotiated, beautiful, or abusive—just like **monogamy**.
4. Out of the deep depths of misfortune comes **bliss**.
5. Those who had received the actual drug reported better levels of self-satisfaction than the unfortunates who just got the **placebo**.
6. The incumbent governor, Deval Patrick, has presided over a series of budget shortfalls, leading his poll numbers to **plummet**.
7. Even the most **abject** have a sense of superiority based on powerful though undefined merits.
8. It’s better to master a small skill than to **accumulate** a big fortune.
9. You **numb** yourself as you hear the death count rise, and the screams of the mothers who will never hold their children again.
10. “I think that he is relatively unaware of the relevant research, especially the development research,” he said.

**Match and Learn**

*Match each word to the correct definition.*

Following are definitions of the ten words. Clearly write or print each word next to its definition. The sentences above will help you decide on the meanings of each word.

1. ...................... To decline suddenly and steeply
2. ...................... Deprived of the power to feel or move normally
3. ...................... Extremely contemptible or degrading
4. ...................... An inactive substance or preparation used as a control in an experiment or test to determine the effectiveness of a medicinal drug
5. ...................... The practice or condition of having a single sexual partner during a period of time
6. ...................... In comparison with something else
7. ...................... An earnest promise to perform a specified act or behave in a certain manner, especially a solemn promise to live and act in accordance with the rules of a religious order
8. ...................... Being without beginning or end
9. ...................... To gather or cause to increase; amass
10. ...................... Extreme happiness; ecstasy

_DURING AND AFTER LISTENING_

**Watch and Learn**

While watching the video about marriage, do the following tasks:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8u42OjH0ss

(a) **Complete the sentences below by filling in the right-hand column.**

Write no more than three words for

(b) See “Marriage,” page 19
“Marriage,” from page 18

each answer. Focus on this part of the video: 0:36-0:52.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENTENCE COMPLETION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The number of people marrying in the U.S. is...</td>
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<td>2. He buys a...</td>
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<td>3. She buys a...</td>
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<td>4. They go...</td>
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<td>5. She takes him to...</td>
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<td>6. They stand before...</td>
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(c) Complete the sentences below. Write only one word for each answer. Focus on this part of the video: 0:57-1:18.

7. They vow that nothing, not abject poverty, not life threatening illness, not complete an utter misery will ever put the tiniest ___________ on their eternal love and devotion.

8. These__________ young bastards promise to honor and cherish each other.

(c) Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

9. According to the speaker (1:30), “one of them finally rests in peace” because
   A. They have gone through hot flashes and have gained 50 pounds.
   B. They cannot hear each other snore.
   C. They have gotten used to living with each other for years.

(d) Complete the summary below. Write no more than two words for each answer. Focus on this part of the video: 1:43- 1:52.

In middle age, they are very active and prompt in celebrating the marriage ceremony of others. They shower them with (9)_________________ and (10)_________________, and they drink their free (11)______________ and throw (12)_________________ at them although it is a fact that half of them get divorced within the first ten years of their marriage.

(e) Mark the following statements true (T) or false (F), according to the speaker. Focus on this part of the video: 2:30-2:40.

13. A double blind placebo controlled study helped figure out what makes a marriage fail.
14. Too much time on FaceBook is one the reasons for marital break-ups.
15. Not having sex with others is an important reason for long-lasting marriages.

(f) Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

16. It can be inferred from the talk that ‘sleeping solo’ (3:14) refers to a
   A. divorced person
   B. married person
   C. unmarried person

AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Strategy: Offering a fact or example
By offering a fact or example, you can

See “Marriage,” page 20
“Marriage,” from page 19
transform a topic from theory to reality. This can make the topic not only more understandable, but also more memorable. You can use examples from personal experience (In my experience...), observation (I’ve noticed...), and media (I just read this article in The Times...).

In small groups, discuss one or more of these perspectives. Try to use the discussion strategies outlined above.

Three perspectives on marriage
Alex: The era of marriage is nearly finished. Divorce rates have skyrocketed. Marriage will be a thing of the past. The only thing that keeps marriage alive is the legal system. Once laws are changed, we will see a rapid decline in the number of marriages.

Kristen: The future of marriage is safe. Both now and in the immediate future we will see a mix of married and single people. In countries where the economy is strong, we will see a rise in the number of single people. For instance, by 2020, 30 percent of the households in the U.S. will be what we call solo singles; however, none of this means that marriage will disappear. The majority of people will be married at some point in their lives.

Subbu: Marriage? I can’t imagine a society without it. Marriage will enjoy a rise in many western countries as we continue to learn more about how to make marriage work well and educate young people about marriage. We now know a lot about how make good, long-lasting relationships, but we have done a poor job of communicating that information to high school and university students. Once we get better at the education side of things, we will see more and more successful marriages, and that will increase attractiveness of marriage to young single people.

Discussion Questions
1. Which view do you most agree with?
2. Which trend best describes the future of marriage in your home country?

Research and Present: Homework
Talk to any married couple whom you consider having a successful marriage and explore some of the characteristics of their marriage. Find out their perspective on the following characteristics of a successful marriage. While talking to them, take notes.

(1) love
(2) honesty
(3) support
(4) respect
(5) humor
(6) compassion
(7) financial stability
(8) friends and family
(9) communication

Prepare for your presentation by reading over your notes and choosing three to five characteristics. Organize your presentation as follows: Introduce the couple, describe their perspective on the selected characteristics, and then add a brief conclusion.

Deliver a presentation to your classmates.

Muhammed A. Khan (MAK) is a full-time member of the ESL faculty of Community College of Philadelphia
PennTESOL-East Board of Directors

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