

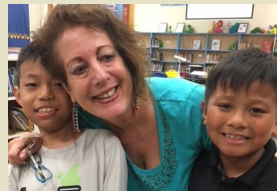
THE MDTESOL NEWSLETTER



Maryland TESOL

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY
BILLIE H. MUÑOZ



ESOL by the Numbers

I teach ESOL at the elementary school level. I jokingly tell people that I am an ESOL teacher and I will never be out of a job. This is a very bittersweet statement. On the one hand, immigration may be at a low in some places along our southern border due to the "current political climate" (a nice way of avoiding writing about the elephant in the room). On the other hand, the definition of an EL (at least in the elementary schools) is someone who was perhaps born right here in the US but who goes home to a place where another language is spoken exclusively or almost exclusively. This means that, for the foreseeable future, there is no shortage of English Language Learners. Let's take a closer look at current immigration trends and see what the numbers tell us.

From the website of the NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures) comes data from 2017. They claim this is the most recent data available. You-know-who was elected in 2016 with promises to seal the border. So, for this brief editor's letter, 2017 serves our purpose. I rounded the numbers up to the nearest million for simplicity. The total population of the US in 2017 was 322 million. Of this number, 13 million were legal non-citizens (still in the "English not first language at home" basket, right? ESOL teachers don't care how you got here. Unauthorized immigrants (much nicer than old "illegal aliens" moniker) accounted for 11 million that same year (definitely needing ESOL services). Another two million were defined as being on temporary visas. According to CBS News, the biggest source of unauthor-

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AND **MUCH MORE**

President's Message

Dear Maryland TESOL Members and Friends,
I hope you are looking forward to the summer months and reflecting on the past year. We are so happy to have many on-going projects within Maryland TESOL and several new projects on the horizon. I am thrilled to welcome a few new faces to our MDTESOL board and sad to see some leave as they embark on new endeavors.

I want to thank you all for supporting our Spring IS events that we very successful. We are now putting all our efforts into planning another fantastic Fall Conference that will take place on Saturday, November 9, 2019. Please mark your calendars! Our First Vice President, Katie Miller, is working diligently on to make this conference another huge success. Our keynote speaker will be Rebecca Oxford, distinguished

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orized immigrants comes from people who originally came here legally and overstayed their visas. Let me repeat that. The biggest source of unauthorized immigrants comes from people who originally came here legally and overstayed their visas. It seems logical to conclude that if this number is skewed it is *underestimated*. These people are staying off the radar, yes? So that's a grand total of 15 million people, some of whom are going to procreate. These children, even if one of the procreators is an American citizen or native speaker, are going to need ESOL services for at least three years. It takes that long to acquire the academic language needed to succeed in elementary school. If you are reading this and are not yet an ESOL teacher, or know someone looking for a field with job security, recommend they get certified in ESOL. They, like me, will always have a job.

"MESSAGE" CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Scholar Teacher formerly of the University of Maryland. Some other exciting news is that we are migrating to a new website. This is something we have put a lot of time and effort toward over the past two years. We are focusing on making our website as "user-friendly" as possible. Thank you to all of our board members who helped with this process. I look forward to seeing you all at the Fall Conference! Best Wishes,
Ashley Jenoff
MDTESOL President 2019-2020



President Jenoff at 2018 Fall Conference
photo courtesy of Ashley Jenoff



The Elephant in the Room by Luis Muñoz

EL RINCÓN BILINGÜE

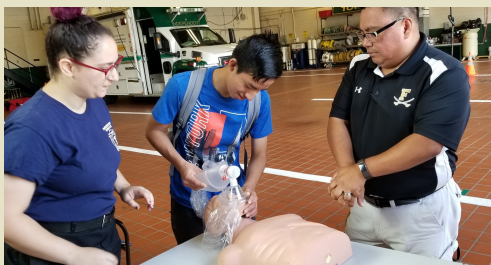
BY BILLIE H. MUÑOZ

Este es el tercer artículo en una serie bilingüe cuyo tema es de alto interés a los hispano-hablantes. Esta vez se trata de un programa más allá de lo que se encuentra normalmente en una escuela pública con una población grande de inmigrantes.

El colegio Frederick High se encuentra en el condado de Frederick y es el mayor de ese condado. En este momento, cuenta con más de 1,400 estudiantes del vecindario de la escuela. Es casi 50 por ciento hispano pero todos participan del programa LYNX. ¿Qué es LYNX y cómo sirve a esta población vulnerable?



Para saber más del programa, hablé con el Señor Marlon Morán, maestro de los Estudios Sociales y Economía y abogado de LYNX. El Señor Morán fue invitado especial en la Cena de Gala de MDTESOL esta primavera. Allí lo conocí y me concedió el permiso para este artículo. Se graduó en 2002 de Hood College y recibió su maestría de la Universidad de Phoenix en Educación y su licencia de maestro en 2008. Al principio, enseñaba en Urbana High, un colegio de alto prestigio, donde tuvo mucho éxito. Pero, poco a poco, se le ocurrió que, siendo latino, podría ser aún más útil en una escuela con jóvenes hispanos. Hoy, enseña inglés, finanzas y las fundaciones de la tecnología con el programa LYNX.



Yoni aprende a salvar la vida
foto cortesía de Marlon Morán

Yoni learns how to save lives
photo courtesy of Marlon Moran

La idea en la cual fue fundado el programa desde hace aproximadamente cinco años atrás era una de crear una escuela moderna, para el siglo XXI. Iban a tratar de diseñar la enseñanza del futuro, o sea "aprender por medio de las experiencias." Para darles un ejemplo, hace un par de semanas quince estudiantes viajaron a la estación de bomberos. Habían expresado interés en carreras de bomberos o asistente médico. Les enseñaron los básicos de CPR y otras destrezas para salvar la vida. Había específicamente un joven llamado Yoni. Yoni acababa de llegar aquí de El Salvador. Tenía quince años de edad y casi no hablaba inglés. Yoni llegó y pronto empezó a perder muchos días de la escuela. Parecía que tenía problemas con la asistencia tanto como el idioma. Cuando, por fin, apareció de nuevo supo del evento en la casa de los bomberos. Usando su interés

ESOL Success Story: From Nigeria to the Board of Education

This article is the sixth in a series that details the life of a former ESOL student who has found success and attributes a part of that success to his or her foundation in ESOL classes. Today we meet Haleemat Adekoya, a recent graduate of Milford Mill Academy in Baltimore County.

As teachers, we believe all students are special. Each one has gifts that make them unique. But, sometimes, a student comes along so extraordinary; that has a blend of personality, intelligence and je ne sais quoi making many take notice. Such must have been the case with Haleemat Adekoya, the Student Representative to the BCPS Board of Education. That would explain why both her guidance counselor, Bridgette Lewis, and principal at Milford Mill Academy, Kyria Joseph, tried to persuade Haleemat to apply for the position of Student Rep at the end of last year. "When something happens more than once," explains this high school senior, referring to these two individual incidents, "You have to pay attention."

Born in Lagos, Nigeria to a mother who wanted to become a Registered Nurse and a businessman father, Haleemat came to the United States at just one year of age. Although now a practicing Christian, Haleemat is a Muslim name believed to be that of the mother of the Prophet. The name presaged her role as oldest child in the family. It is traditional in many cultures for the eldest to take on an almost parental role. Then, Haleemat's parents won the citizenship lottery. This program, which has since been discontinued, allowed some foreign nationals to come legally to this country. It was both a lottery in terms of it being a one-in-a-million chance and in the comparative economic freedom and opportunity that winning represents. The growing family landed in The Bronx, New York and eventually grew to include three sisters and a brother. Haleemat would have plenty of chances to hone those parenting skills and learn responsibility!

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*The future looks very bright for this former ESOL student
photo courtesy of Haleemat*

She went back to Nigeria for four years where she lived with her grandmother and went to local schools. Haleemat spoke Yoruba at home, one of about three hundred languages there. But the British-run school taught her in English. This would also be a formative experience. Back in the United States by age six, Haleemat took ESOL along with her regular classes. She passed the WIDA exam which exited her from the program in 2nd grade. This was due to her command of our language, but she never lost her love for her heritage. This poised young lady affirms, "The part of Nigerian culture that makes me most proud is that we will show our best side. We have confidence." Haleemat often wears a headdress as a nod to her Nigerian roots and loves their traditional dances. The American side of her prefers Hip Hop. When asked what the best part of life is here, Haleemat does not hesitate. "Freedom to express yourself. I do not feel judgement here." Today, Haleemat's mother is an RN at Sinai Hospital and her father uses his degree from the John Jay School of Criminal Justice to work with people who have physical disabilities.

Haleemat just graduated from Milford in May. She will be attending UMBC in the prestigious *Sherman STEM Teachers Program*. To qualify for the program Haleemat had to show that she had a commitment to social justice and community engagement. Furthermore she had to demonstrate open-minded and reflective in mindset and practice." There may even be a run to be a Member of Congress in the future! In addition to her work with the Board where she has voting privileges, Haleemat co-founded an activities organization called Dare2Bee for mentoring young women. She states, "I have always been into advocacy. During my work with the Milford Student Government I learned to love being a leader and creating an atmosphere where everyone can share different points of view." That is exactly what Haleemat Adekoya does for the BCPS Board of Education. She advocates for her peers and shares a student point of view about issues like the importance of the Passport Program or the benefit of having a Math Resource Teacher in each school. She lives and breathes experiences that her fellow Board Members have to retrieve through years of buried memories. Her typically bubbly reflection on the experiences ahead is to tell us, "As I matriculate into university with a new narrative, my purpose will not change. I vow to continue to encourage our youth to rise above, empower your youth to be the best them, inspire our youth to be the change they wish to see, and educate our youth, because knowledge is power."



Left Haleemat poses with Julian Jones of the County Council and Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski. Right with peeps at Milford photos courtesy of Haleemat





Save the Date!
39th Annual Fall Conference
"Learner Agency"
November 9, 2019
8:00-3:00
Keynote Speaker
Rebecca Oxford, PHD

Can't wait for the next Newsletter?



An Emerging Trend: TBLT with Commercial Board Games

By David Schmidt

Editor's Note - David Schmidt served in Peace Corps Nicaragua as a TEFL teacher and teacher trainer from Aug 2014 - July 2017, working to promote teaching methodologies that increased student to student interactions. He currently teaches in the Towson University ELC, and is preparing to serve as an English language Fellow in Tajikistan for the 2019 school year.

Intro

Across disciplines, teachers are familiar with the use of games and game-like features to support student learning. The benefits of using games in terms of increasing motivation in ELF contexts are well documented (Mahmoud, 2014), and there are many studies that demonstrate the benefits of using games in learning contexts (Milczynski, 2011). However, the notions of what games we use; why we use them; and how we use them are expanding, guided by the premises of task-based language teaching and cognitive-interactionist research. To support other educators in expanding their conceptions of how games can be used in SLA, this article will distinguish between the pedagogic and commercial games in the classroom; the rationale for the use of commercial games; and how task-based language teaching is informing the way teachers make use of commercial board games in the classroom.

Pedagogical vs Commercial Games

At the core of the emerging approaches to using games in the classroom is a shift away from the more pedagogic games which we are all familiar with, towards the novel adaptation of commercial games as a way to provide meaningful language practice. In other words, we are using games with the goal of facilitating authentic meaning-focused communication, rather than as a way to practice or review specific grammatical forms, vocabulary, or language skills. In the table below, we see the core differences between these two types of games.

Pedagogic Games	Commercial Board Games
Designed with specific learning goals in mind	Designed for the entertainment of consumers
Language production is more prescriptive, structured, and restricted	Language production is more open-ended
Pedagogic games tend to be simple in design, failing to keep the attention of learners	Game designers are professionals in their craft, designing games with more elements to enhance game play
Often lack an underlying theme or authentic context	Themes used to contextualize games provide a linguistic context rich in comprehensible input

Why Use Commercial Board Games?

Years of research in second-language acquisition have led to a series of hypothesis which define the components necessary for a linguistic environment conducive to second-language acquisition. Specifically, the linguistic environment must offer language learners:

- 1) Comprehensible Input: language which learners process for meaning and which contains something to be learned, that is, linguist data slightly above their current level (Ortega, p. 59 2014)
- 2) Pushed Output: opportunities for language use that is slightly beyond what the learner currently can handle in speaking or writing, and production which is meaningful and whose demands exceed the learner's current abilities (Ortega, p. 62, 2014)
- 3) Interaction: opportunities for input that has been interactionally modified or adjusted after receiving some signal that the interlocutor needs some help in order to fully understand the message making input more comprehensible and generate pushed output (Pg 61).
- 4) Noticing: opportunities for noticing linguistic patterns and gaps in knowledge in order to learn any aspect of the L2 (from sounds, to words, to grammar, to pragmatics) (Pg 58)
- 5) Acculturation: opportunities for the positive development of their second-language speaking identity; “the more acculturated a learner can become (that is, the closer to the target society and its members, socially and psychologically), the more successful his or her eventual learning outcomes will be.” (Pg 59)

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is the resulting methodology derived from these SLA hypotheses. Task based language teaching is characterized by authentic, meaning-focused linguistic tasks which provide learners with clear goals and measurable outcomes. Jane Willis, a leading proponent of task based language teaching, suggests the following line of questioning to identify whether an activity meets the muster to be considered a task:

Does the activity engage learners' interest?

-Is there a primary focus on meaning?

-Is there an outcome?

-Is success judged in terms of outcome?

-Does the activity relate to real-world activities?

When we consider that board games provide the five key conditions for a rich linguistic environment and pass the muster test for TBLT tasks, we can begin to see their theoretical potential for use in SLA contexts. These are the theoretical underpinnings which justify EFL and ESL teachers who are now experimenting with the notion of using board games as TBLT tasks. Most importantly, however, is the fact that commercial board games are designed to be engaging and fun, which can help increase learner motivation substantially.

TBLT with Commercial Board Games

De Haan & York (2018) presents us with a tested, TBLT-informed approach for using board games as authentic language tasks. Informed by TBLT methodology, they divided the board game task into three stages: pre, during, and post. In their study, they developed an entire curriculum around their framework.

In their model, they borrowed from the flipped-classroom approach, tasking learners with studying each games' rules and gameplay at home prior to their assigned class. Rules and gameplay were subsequently reviewed in class to check comprehension and close out the "pre-play" phase. Next, learners played the game while the teacher monitored to identify the learner's linguistic needs and gaps. After gameplay, vocabulary and grammar relevant to the game were reviewed, and learners debriefed on the activity with each other and the teacher. Finally, during the post-play stage, learners were given a lesson on a specific form used during gameplay, and tasked with reflecting and reporting on their experience playing the game. The following table outlines their approach:

	Section number	Location	Task	Targeted Skill(s)
Pre-play	1.1	Out of class	Learn the rules (via the rulebook)	Reading
	1.2		Learn the rules (via video)	Listening
	1.3		Watch the game being played	Listening
	1.4		Create comprehension questions	Reading Writing
	2.1	In class	Comprehension check	Listening Speaking
	2.2		Teacher-led Q&A session	Listening Speaking
	Play	3.1	In class	Play the game
3.2		Review useful vocabulary and grammar		Writing
3.3		Debriefing (Class-wide Q&A session)		Listening Speaking
Post-play	4.1	In class	Focus on form	Reading Writing

Applying the Framework

My experience applying this approach to the cooperative board game Pandemic proved to be very rewarding for my students and myself. Once we surpassed the initial hurdle of learning how to play the game, learners became enthralled using their language repertoire to plan and negotiate solutions to the spread of four pandemic viruses that threaten to destroy human civilization. Participating in this sort of planning, which is intrinsic to the game, made students aware of the need to use new forms, prompting them to seek support, and leading to an impromptu lesson on using the conditional + can to make future plans. After the mini-lesson learners returned to gameplay and began experimenting more and more with the target form, as it was essential for achieving the games objectives. As the games wrapped up, students complained that they did not really understand the gist of the game in time to play effectively, leading us to dedicate one more class period for more play and focus on form. When learners were assessed during game play on the second day, half were consistently producing target utterances, and the other half were using the form, but with less consistency. To supplement the post-task stage, learners audio-recorded game play, and then they transcribed 3 non-target utterances from the recording and their corrections for homework.

Conclusions

While the idea of adapting commercial board games to second-language instruction shows promise, it is not without its challenges. Among the limiting factors are: using board games can be time consuming; scaffolding gameplay requires careful planning and additional materials development; and learners may not see the value of using classroom time to play games. Despite this, my experience suggests that the benefits of using games outweigh the costs, and that with some reflection and ingenuity, we can find solutions to the barriers limiting our ability to include commercial games in our practice.

If you are interested in keeping up with other teachers experimenting with game-based SLA, I recommend the following websites and blogs:

- <https://games2teach.uoregon.edu/2017/02/07/>
- <https://blog.kotobaminers.org/archive>
- <http://www.japangamelab.org>
- <http://www.teflgamer.com/>
- <https://ihjournal.com/form-and-function-using-board-games-in-the-classroom>



Citations

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**Nominate a colleague
for
Member of the
Month**

Send a quick email to newsletter@MDTESOL.org with the name of your nomination and your reasoning. Include your contact info. We will get back to you. **We also gratefully accept original stories, ideas for stories, photos and announcements.**

en tal ocupación, el Señor Morán pudo convencerle que se quedara en la escuela.

Los cuatro años del colegio en el programa LYNX se dividen así...

Grado 9 – exposición a cualquier campo de estudios que les interese, también cada estudiante recibe un abogado o “maestro consejero” y una clase de abogacía

Grado 10 – compañeros del mundo de negocios vienen para enseñarles la cortesía en el mundo de corbatas y chaquetas como dares la mano o mirar a un perspective empleado directamente en los ojos

Grade 11 y 12 -oportunidades para internados y aprendizaje

Como pueden ver, la idea en crear un sendero de la educación para todos, de aquellos que prefieren asistir a una escuela de oficios hasta aquellos que quieren asistir a la universidad. Uno de los problemas que suele emerger es lo de los jóvenes que llegan a los Estados Unidos a la edad de diecinueve o hasta veinte. La ley requiere que salgan de la escuela a los veintiún años de edad. Ahorita están en el proceso de crear un programa especial para ellos. Claro está, será uno en que los intereses y talentos de cada individuo se tendrá en cuenta.

AND NOW IN ENGLISH...

This is the third article in a bilingual series whose theme is of high interest to Spanish speakers. This time, it deals with a program that is beyond what one would find normally in a public school with a large population of immigrants.

Frederick High School is located in Frederick County and is the oldest school in that county. Nowadays, it has more than 1,400 students who come from the neighborhood around it. It's about 50% Hispanic but everybody participates in the LYNX program. So, what is LYNX and how does it serve this vulnerable population?

In order to learn more, I spoke with Mr. Marlon Moran, a Social Studies and Economics teacher who wears the hat of “LYNX Advocate.” Mr. Moran was our special guest speaker at the Spring Gala where I met him and he gave me permission for this article. He graduated from Hood College in 2002 and got his masters' from the University of Phoenix in Education and a teaching certificate in 2008. In the beginning, he taught at Urbana High, a high prestige school and was successful there. But, over time, it occurred to him that, being Latino, he could be even more useful in a school where there were more Hispanics. Today, he teaches English, Finance, and Foundations of Technology with the LYNX Program.

The fundamental idea of the program, established about five years ago, was to create a modern, 21st Century School. They were going to try to design the education of the future, or experiential learning. To give an example, they went to a local firehouse a few weeks ago. Students had expressed interest in becoming firefighters. They were taught the basics of CPR and other life saving skills. There was one student in particular, Yoni. He had just arrived from El Salvador. He was 15 and spoke almost no English. Yoni arrived at school but soon began to have frequent, extended absences. It seems he had attendance problems in addition to language barrier. When he finally came back to school, he found out about the firehouse event. Using his interest in this career, Mr. Moran was able to convince him to stay in school.

The four years are divided thusly...

-Grade 9 – exposure to whatever field of study they may be interested in, also every students gets and advocate or teacher counselor and takes a class in advocacy.

-Grade 10 – business people come to teach them “soft skills” like business attire and looking perspective employers in the eye

-Grades 11 and 12- there are opportunities for internships and apprenticeships.

As you can see, the idea is to create a path of education for all, from those who prefer a trade school to those going on to the university. One of the problems that emerges is students who are 19 or 20 years old when they first come to the US. The Law requires that they leave school when they turn 21. LYNX is in the process of creating a special program for them. Clearly, it will be one in which the interests and talents of every individual will be kept in mind.



Photo courtesy of Marlon Moran

The English as an Additional Language edTPA:

What is it and, what can we learn from it?

by Tabitha Kidwell

photo courtesy of the author



The edTPA is a performance assessment of novice teacher preparation to enter the classroom. Eighteen states either currently require the edTPA for initial licensure or are considering such policies (Pecheone, 2018). The assessment is not yet required in Maryland, though several teacher preparation programs use it as a final program assessment. Many readers of the Maryland TESOL newsletter will never need to complete this assessment - either because you teach adults, or because you earned your K-12 ESOL licensure many years ago. Nevertheless, readers may find it helpful to know more about this assessment for two reasons. First, familiarity with the edTPA will help you support any novice teachers you mentor and work with as they complete the assessment. Second, identification of the most challenging rubrics offers evidence about skills that many teachers struggle with, even after their early years of teaching.

Format of the Assessment

TESOL professionals who supervise, mentor, or support novice teachers may find it helpful to know more about the structure and format of the assessment. The English as an Additional Language (EAL) edTPA is one of 27 subject-specific assessments that candidates can complete while student teaching. It was developed by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) in partnership with the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. SCALE has also been involved with National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification, and there are parallels between the two processes. As with National Board certification, candidates are asked to submit and reflect upon lesson plans, teaching materials, video-recorded lessons, and student work samples. The edTPA is organized around three tasks: planning, instruction, and assessment. Each of the three tasks is assessed by five rubrics, for a total of 15 rubrics. The rubrics for the EAL version of the edTPA are as follows (SCALE, 2018):

PLANNING

- 1.Planning for English language development within content-based instruction
- 2.Planning to support varied student learning needs
- 3.Using knowledge of students to inform teaching and learning
4. Identifying and supporting language demands
- 5.Planning assessments to monitor and support students' development of English language

INSTRUCTION

- 6.Learning environment for English language development within content-based instruction
- 7.Engaging students' English language development within content-based instruction

- 9.Promoting comparisons and connections between the content and student backgrounds

- 10.Analyzing teaching effectiveness

Assessment

- 11.Analysis of students' development of English language proficiency through content-based instruction
- 12.Providing feedback to guide students' development of English language proficiency within content-based instruction
- 13.Students' use of feedback
- 14.Analyzing students' language use and content understanding
- 15.Using assessment to inform instruction of English language with content.

Each rubric is scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with level 1 representing a complete lack of the skill being assessed, a level 3 representing the knowledge and skills typically expected of a new teacher, and a level 5 representing advanced practice. The passing scores are set by each state; In New York, the largest state requiring the assessment, the passing score is 39, or an average of 2.6 on each rubric (Pearson, 2019).

Learning from the edTPA: The two most challenging rubrics

Though many readers will not take the edTPA themselves, and may never work with a novice teacher completing the assessment, it may be helpful to learn about which aspects of the assessment are most challenging to novice teachers. The two lowest rubrics on the EAL edTPA are nine (promoting comparisons and connections between the content and student backgrounds) and thirteen (students' use of feedback) (Pecheone, 2018). If novice teachers struggle to enact these pedagogies, it is likely that many teachers continue to develop these skills during their early years of teaching and beyond. By identifying these areas of potential improvement, the edTPA offers all of us the opportunity to improve our practice.

Regarding rubric nine, the need to make connections between the content and student backgrounds has been well documented. This approach to teaching aligns with constructivist approaches to language education, such as Schema Theory, which sees learning as a process of

making connections between new knowledge and old (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Particularly for teachers who work with students from ethnic and racial backgrounds that differ from their own, scholars have called for teachers to enact culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2014), and to build on the assets that students bring to school with them (López, 2016; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). Because so many of our students come from marginalized or minoritized backgrounds, it is especially important that TESOL educators work to establish connections between the content and students' experiences, background, and prior knowledge. We can do so by learning about students' backgrounds, building partnerships with their communities, and welcoming student choice and voice within our classrooms. For ideas about how to enact culturally sustaining pedagogies with linguistically diverse students, see Kidwell and Pentón Herrera (2019).

As for rubric thirteen, offering students effective feedback is an important – and challenging – skill. Feedback is an essential element of formative assessment, which serves to further student learning (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis & Chappuis, 2008). When teachers offer quality feedback, it helps students develop self-regulation and meta-awareness, which in turn contribute to their future learning (Butler & Winne, 1995). It is important for students to be able to understand and use the feedback their teachers give them. To support students' understanding of feedback, teachers should use student-friendly language, provide personalized, targeted feedback aligned with learning objectives, and consider students' developmental levels. To help students use the feedback they are given, they should have opportunities to correct errors, repeat the learning activity, and continue to engage in guided practice of the skills they struggle with. Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggest focusing on the following questions when giving feedback: Where are students going?; How are they getting there?; and Where do they need to go next? Effective feedback is an essential piece of the instructional and assessment cycles if it focuses on those three questions. For guidance about how to make your feedback more effective, see Brookhart (2008).

Conclusion

The edTPA is framed by its developers and proponents as an assessment of novice teacher preparation that can help ensure that every teacher is well-prepared to enter the classroom. It can also offer guidance to practicing teachers about how to continue improving. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the assessment has been a target of significant criticism. Candidates report finding the prompts confusing and handbook materials rather daunting (Tigert, Kidwell, Budde, Guzman, Lawyer & Peercy, 2018). Significant support from faculty and resources from institutions are necessary to support the implementation of the assessment (Ratner & Colman, 2016). Critics have raised the possibility of bias towards teachers of color due to the absence of attention to race within the assessment, as well as concerns about Pearson's involvement in the scoring and managing of the assessment (Petchauer, Bowe & Wilson, 2018; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2015). These concerns are justified and important. As the edTPA continues to be required of more novice teachers, it is important that TESOL professionals be aware of the assessment, use it as a tool to continue improving the field, and question the inequities and injustices that may be perpetuated through its use.

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Author Information

Tabitha Kidwell recently completed her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics & Language Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. She has taught languages and trained teachers on five continents. Her research interests focus on language teacher education, particularly how language teachers are prepared to teach about culture.

Dr. Pedro Noguera and Grit 2.0

by BILLIE H. MUÑOZ



photo courtesy of the Internet

Pedro Noguera gave one of the keynote speeches at the TESOL Convention in Atlanta this year. He held the packed auditorium spellbound with his ideas on TESOL and the current educational system. By way of a little background, Dr. Noguera is the Distinguished Professor of Education at UCLA. The author of 12 books, he is known for his views on equity and education. The winner of awards too numerous to name here, Dr. Noguera reached a wide audience for his TED Talk on Are We Failing Our Students?

Dr. Noguera comes to his views from a deeply personal experience, as he explained to the TESOL attendees. When he first came to this country, he and his brother were relegated to lower level classes due perhaps to noticeable accents or even prejudice against immigrants and perhaps “brown” immigrants in particular. He described school as little more than a holding cell. The boys’ father, a police officer, did not believe his sons’ description could be accurate but he took the time to visit the school. Shocked at what he saw, he made his views on their underwhelming placement known. He did not mince words with the authorities at the school and his police uniform lent him gravitas. Fast-forward a few years and we find Pedro Noguera studying at Brown University, while the brother went on to Harvard. The implicit question is; What happens to similarly gifted ELL’s who do not have a such a relative to advocate for them? He notes that “No English is still seen as a (learning) disability in many places in the country.” In his case, it indicated the need for placement in Special Education. He suggests that we look closely at the creativity of someone who crosses borders as an illegal alien. That is an “ability” to deal with diversity that many who were born here are sorely lacking.

In a speech that quoted equally from historian Alex De Toqueville and educator Jaime (Ganas!) Escalante, Dr. Noguera reflected back on the whole history of the United States as one of “ignorance and hostility.” He said that Trump’s xenophobia “makes for even greater obstacles” than at any other point in that history. He noted that, ironically, “Many politicians have undocumented workers on their payroll as nannies, gardeners” and other labor-intense jobs typically relegated to immigrants. The fact that this is also a world-wide problem does little to remove our collective guilt as a society that has stood for this for too long.

This underestimation of our newcomer population leads only to a tragic waste of brain power. Students drop out because they need to go to work to help support their families. In addition, they see that they don’t have the documents needed to get into college and become discouraged.

So, what are our challenges as TESOL educators who want to change the system and advocate for our ELL’s? Dr. Noguera believes that part of the challenge is to make our classrooms a place where it is not only fun to learn, but it is safe to make mistakes. He notes that “Why?” is the most common question students ask and that it is “way up there” on Bloom’s taxonomy. Kids are naturally curious and we do our best to stomp it out. He continues; “Agency is Grit 2.0” and “deeper learning is the answer as it trains you to think for yourself.”

Dr. Noguera was rewarded with a resounding standing ovation.

MDTESOLer Inducted in Atlanta

Past President of MDTESOL, professor, author and consultant, Debra Suarez was inducted to the Board of Directors of TESOL International recently. This is a dynamic experience and she will have an opportunity to learn about and provide leadership in various facets of the organization. Debra will serve for the next three years beginning as the liaison to committees such as Standards and Refugee Concerns. The short but powerful ceremony was held on March 15 at the TESOL International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. Present were several proud MDTESOLers including Dr. Gilda Martinez of Towson University and the past, present and future Presidents of TESOL.

An annual tradition celebrated when MDTESOL goes to “Big” TESOL for the Convention is for Marylanders to get together for a special dinner. This year was no exception and it just so happened that all of these illustrious educators including (then) current President, Past President Luciana C. de Oliveira Ester de Jong and incoming President Deborah Healey were all at the table. We lifted a glass to Debra Suarez and look forward to seeing all of them at the 2020 Convention to be held in Denver, Colorado.



Our esteemed colleague Dr. Debra Suarez is inducted into TESOL BOD

photo by Newsletter Editor

Empowering the Skilled Immigrant: Resources for Higher Education Professionals

By Heather Dellinger

Heather Dellinger got her BS from Stevenson University and her MS from Loyola University. She is the International Enrollment Manager for the English Institute at Howard Community College.



Whether you work in higher education, adult education, or you interact with the adults in the lives of your child students, you've heard stories. The story of the doctor who brought his children to the U.S. to increase their opportunities, who is now driving a cab. The story of the engineer who can't find work in his own country because of the unrest there, but whose credentials are not recognized in the U.S. And while you recognize that your primary role in the lives of these people is to teach them the English language, they seek your guidance in other areas of their lives. We can provide a rich referral source for these people, as well as adapt our programming and curriculums to respond to the needs of the growing population of skilled immigrants.

IMPRINT is an organization that mobilizes partners in the business, government, and higher education sectors to decrease the barriers that are faced by skilled immigrants seeking employment upon arrival in the U.S. Based on analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS), the Migration Policy Institute estimates that 21.6% of Maryland's foreign born civilian, college-educated labor force aged 25 or older is unemployed or employed in low-skilled jobs. IMPRINT names these as the most frequent barriers to employment for skilled immigrants: lack of access to needed information, difficult-to-navigate licensing and certification requirements, shortage of professional English coursework, and absence of a professional network. How can we leverage our roles as teachers and administrators to address these barriers for a population of people that is waiting in the wings, eager to employ their hard-earned skills?

Referrals

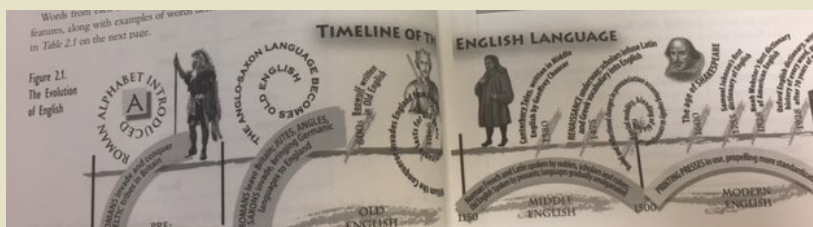
There is only so much that you can do as a teacher during a limited class period where your lesson plan is using minimal pairs to drive home the pronunciation of specific sounds. Inevitably, however, you'll have a student approach you at some point to ask an off-topic question completely unrelated to your meticulously executed lesson plan, "Teacher, how can I get a better job?" Our teaching role is often blurred to encompass immigration counseling, navigating the Maryland Vehicle Administration, you name it. And while we do not claim to be experts in any of those areas, we recognize the privilege that comes with knowing the language and being residents of this country long enough to know how to navigate its complex systems. It behooves us, then, to have some resources on hand to refer our students to. Here are some in our great state of Maryland:

Skilled Immigrant Apprenticeship Program

Hosted by the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH), this program is a partnership with Baltimore hospitals, the International Rescue Committee, the Community College of Baltimore County, Upwardly Global, and the Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation. That doctor you know who is now driving a cab? This program might be a good fit for him. Internationally trained immigrants with experience in the healthcare sector participate in Registered Apprenticeships (RA) as a pathway to re-enter the healthcare field, preceded by ESL and essential skills coursework and training in cultural competency, communication skills, and job readiness. Upwardly Global provides career coaching and an online portal with additional training exercises. More information is available at www.baltimorealliance.org.

Did you know?

English is made up of Old English, Danish, Greek, Norse, Chinese, French, Hindi, Japanese, Dutch, Arabic, Yiddish and other influences. Mention this next time you hear someone say, "This is America. We speak English only here."



Meet the Executive Board of Directors

Step inside one of our Third Friday meetings at Howard Community College and meet the Executive Board of Directors of MDTESOL!

President – Ashley Jenoff

Ashley's true passion is to teach and advocate for English Language Learners. She has taught for the past 18 years with all different K-12 students at every level of proficiency. She has a BA in History with a concentration in Elementary Education from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. Her Master's in TESOL is from Notre Dame of Maryland. Ashley is married and has two children.

Past President – Luis Javier Pentón Herrera

Luis, born in Havana, Cuba, is former military (Marine Corps) who also graduated from the University of Maryland with a B.A. in Business Administration and a minor in Psychology. After volunteering to teach ELs, Luis decided to get an M.Ed. in Adult Education and Development from Strayer University, an M.S. in Spanish Language Education from NOVA Southeastern University, and an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction: Bilingual Education with a Graduate Certificate in ESOL from American College of Education. Finally, he earned a Ph.D. from Concordia University Chicago in Leadership: Reading, Language, and Literacy. He currently teaches at Laurel High School in Prince George's County. As President of MDTESOL, he wants to move the organization further into the Digital Age while remembering our roots and history.

1st Vice President – Katie Miller

Katie grew up in New Jersey and attended Georgetown University where she studied French, Spanish and Italian, and German. She also has a Master's in Applied Linguistics and TESOL from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA and her Admin I certificate from Loyola University Maryland. She earned her National Board Certification in ENL in 2017. She taught ESOL in Baltimore City Schools for many years and is now an EL Department Chair in Frederick. Katie joined the Board three years ago on the Elementary IS and serves this year as 1st Vice President. She sees MDTESOL as a way for educators to "come together and share what's working in their schools and communities" for the benefit of our students. Katie and her husband welcomed two future MDTESOLers in January, twins Scott and Veronika.

2nd Vice President – Jamie Harris

Jamie works as an Adult Education Program Specialist for the Maryland Department of Labor. She has a B.S. in Communication Studies and a M.Ed in Adult Education, TESOL. As a Trinidadian, working with ELLs is an extension of her desire to support the success of foreign born individuals. She has worked in education for 12 years. Jamie is married and has two children.

Treasurer – Rosie Verratti

Treasurer Naomi "Rosie" Verratti has one of the hardest jobs in the organization since its non-profit status can make it hard to finance our many projects such as the Fall Conference and IS workshops. Rosie has a Master's in TESOL from UMBC. She has been working in adult and higher ed ESOL for the past 10 years. Currently the director of the English Language Center at Howard Community College, her dream for MDTESOL is to see increased engagement from all our constituent groups. These include K-12, adult ed, higher ed, IEP's and graduate students.

Secretary – Elizabeth Phillipson

Elizabeth Phillipson is an ESL teacher in WASHINGTON County Public Schools. Elizabeth received her undergrad from Shepherd University and Master's Degree from American College of Education. Before teaching ESL, Elizabeth worked as a classroom teacher at the elementary level for six years and lived abroad teaching English in China. She has a passion for connecting to students from diverse backgrounds and meeting exceptional learners at their individual proficiency level. Elizabeth enjoys traveling and enjoying good food with her husband and daughter.

Have you ever thought of taking your participation to the next level and joining us on the Board in 2019-2020? Meetings are monthly and most can be attended in person or remotely by calling in. Send a request for more information to newsletter@MDTESOL.org and let's start the conversation.

The goal at the next level of our pyramid is for teachers to foster pride in the higher proficiency English learners. For many of these students, knowing another language and being part of another culture is something to be hidden at school. Encouraging the use of the home language during instruction should be a top priority. Many elementary teachers do not allow the use of the home language because they feel it is detrimental to the development and improvement of English language skills. This fosters a view of subtractive bilingualism-- that the use of two languages is an impediment vs. a valuable skill and resource (Soltero, 2004). According to Fred Genesee, Professor of Psychology at McGill University, Montreal Canada, (2010), meta-analyses have shown that programs that allow the use of the home language result in greater academic success and literacy development in English learners than do English only programs. Melissa Eddington, an ELL educator in Central Ohio on a recent BAM radio interview has stated that employing the home language in such areas as understanding directions and vocabulary can assist in the transfer of understanding between the two languages. Another area to use the home language can be in discussions of material during cooperative learning activities. By doing this, students are using their home language intentionally to access English. The culturally responsive role of the teacher is to teach students to value their languages as a tool for understanding (Pillars, NBCT 2017).

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Notes from the Field (part I)

Western MDTESOL Mini-Conference The Wonderful World of Writing for Els

April 6th, 2019

Frederick Community College

Keynote speaker: Darcy Scott

Extreme Differentiation for Writing and Grammar



Darcy Scott

Darcy Scott has been teaching elementary ESOL in Prince George's County Public Schools for 11 years, where she has taught first, second, third and fifth grade English Learners. She is also Lead Teacher of the Adult Education ESL program at Prince George's Community College and has taught adult ESOL for 17 years.

As teachers from around the Western Maryland area began to gather that sunny Saturday morning, the energy and excitement was palpable. This was the very first time a similar event had been held in the area and with the support of Frederick Community College staff and community, the day was off to a great start. ESL professionals and content teachers from all levels were coming together for the 1st Western Maryland Mini Conference. Participants were welcomed with a networking breakfast where they could chat about the school year, catch up with colleagues new and old, hear about students and families as well as set their minds towards promising conversations. The focus of the conference was writing skills and strategies for EL students. Darcy Scott led the charge with an pertinent keynote that focused on the methods of creating effective writing groups based on ability. She outlined for participants the way to use rotations purposefully at any language level or age group. After a short break for refreshments and more coffee, Session One began. Participants were given four options of break out session that focused on how to help EL students develop their writing skills in a variety of ways. Some major topics discussed included "Teaching English through Writing to the EL students with Visual Impairment", "Before the Sentence Starters... Making Writing Meaningful", "Engaging Adult Learners Experiences Through Writing" and "Smartphones: What We Need for Modern Day Immersion". All sessions were engaging and presenters shared a wealth of knowledge to teachers present.d a little bit of body text

Next after a short break for networking and light refreshments, participants were again given four choices of sessions to pick from. Darcy Scott shared a follow up session on her keynote titled, "Extreme Differentiation for Writing and Grammar, Part 2" that was well attended. Other sessions included focuses on "Language Through Content Area Reading: A Whole New Approach", "SIOP Strategies in the EL Classroom", and finally "Helping Els Overcome Their Fear of Public Speaking". At the end of the sessions, all guest were invited back to the main meeting area for a raffle. Some lucky educators walked away with several content books, a plethora of teachers supplies and even a Kindle Fire.

Overall, there was a palpable sense of excitement and positive energy in the air as teachers from the Western Maryland enjoyed arresting sessions to help them grow professionally. The next conference is already slated for next year and will endeavour to continue providing new methodologies and strategies to educators who work with English Learners in the Western Maryland region.

A special thanks goes out to the local organizations that came and set up table displays for guests: Literacy COuncil of Frederick County, Frederick Community College, Asian American Center, Centro Hispano De Frederick and Frederick County Literacy Chapter.ext

**Expect to see more IS events
like these next year! Check our
website, Facebook and Twitter
to stay in touch.**



From left to right, all representing Washington County Public Schools - Elizabeth Phillipson, Alison Maurer, Ace Schwarz, Julie Perez, Melissa Swanson, Katie Beall

Notes from the Field (Part II)

Grad Student IS at UMBC

March 3, 2019



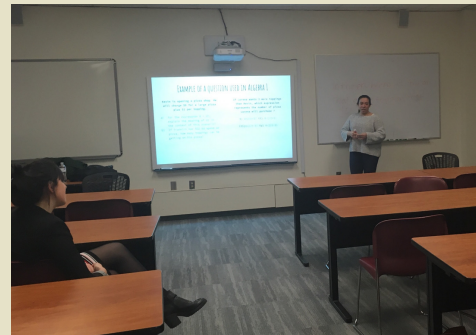
1. UMBC's Director of the MA TESOL program Doaa Rashed opened the graduate conference as the keynote speaker, providing some background on the various career pathways an MA TESOL student can take once they graduate including jobs in the public school system, adult education at community colleges or nonprofits, and opportunities abroad.



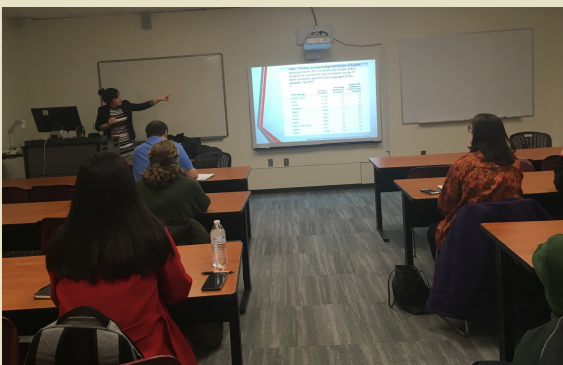
4. UMBC MA TESOL student Timothy Mallard gave a presentation on facilitating creative writing groups with students using innovative practices such as incorporating poetry and music lyrics.



2. Through his experience moving from adult education to elementary ESOL, UMBC MA TESOL student Felipe Kershbaum shed some light on the advocacy and social justice issues that guided his career choices.



5. Ana Granados, another current MA TESOL student from UMBC, provided some context on teaching Math to ESOL students at the high school level, sharing some of the strategies she currently uses and experiences she has had in her time in that position.



3. Jaione Mazquiaran, a current MA TESOL student at UMBC, presented her findings on the use of multiliteracies in the second language learner classroom and their effect on learners' cultural identity.



6. Amber Hengen (left) and Bridget Simmons (right), co-chairs of the Graduate Interest Section for Maryland TESOL, introduce the keynote speaker Doaa Rashed to open the Graduate Interest Section Conference for graduate students willing to present about relevant topics in the field to attending peers.