



M A R Y L A N D TESOL NEWS

MARYLAND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

www.marylandtesol.org



Advocacy IS: ESL and Classroom Teachers Team Up to Teach Common Core

By Andrea Koller,
Advocacy IS Co-chair

At the 2013 annual Maryland TESOL Conference held at the Community College of Baltimore County in Essex, the Advocacy Interest Section hosted a session entitled, *Advocating for Positive Co-Teaching Models*. In this session attended by teachers of grades K – 12, a panel presented their experiences as co-teachers in content-area classrooms. As schools districts delve deeper into Common Core demands, we question what our role is as ESOL teachers and how to best accomplish learning goals in terms of language and content understanding. Panelists' experiences were both positive and negative, and all panelists and attendees agreed that communication and co-planning time is the key to successful co-teaching relationships and outcomes. That being said, many in the room felt powerless in their efforts to

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Learning and the Brain: An Interview with Dr. Martha Denckla, Director of the Developmental Cognitive Neurology Clinic of the Kennedy Krieger Institute

By Adreon Hubbard, Elementary Education IS Co-Chair

Serving on the MDTESOL Board is a wonderful way to maintain stimulating contact with people and organizations outside of my rewarding, yet hectic job teaching ESOL at a Baltimore City elementary school. In my Spring 2013 MDTESOL Newsletter article, *Brain Based Teaching and Learning*, I mentioned a forum called *How Students Learn: An Inside Look at Neuroscience*, where I heard Dr. Martha Denckla, Director of Developmental Cognitive Neurology at the Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI) and Professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. We are proud to announce that Dr. Denckla will be the speaker for a MDTESOL Interest Section Event on Saturday, March 15, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Miller Branch of the Howard County Public Library. This event is jointly sponsored by the Elementary Education and the Teacher Education and Professional Development Interest Sections. Please see the announcement in this newsletter and at www.mdtesol.org for more details.



Dr. Martha Denckla

One of our duties as MDTESOL IS co-chairs is to write articles for the MDTESOL Newsletter. For inspiration, I turned to someone with forty years' experience in brain research and a 25page curriculum vitae: Dr. Denckla. The following are excerpts from the interview she granted me. In the interest of cohesion and conciseness, I have made some minor edits.

How did you get started in your field, and do you have experience with learning

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A Message from Your MDTESOL Newsletter Editors

by Sarah Barnhardt and Chester Gates

It's cold. Every year around this time in Maryland, it gets cold, but this year has been a lot colder. When it gets cold, we attribute it to nature. Cold winters are normal.

In this issue, we explore nature's role in learning a second language in an interview with [Dr. Martha Denckla](#). We learn that our brains are the center of language learning, and that our brains are different.

But climatologists tell us that changes in climate are greatly affected by what we as humans do. The fact that the polar vortex split off a chunk in our direction may have something to do with what we are doing. In this issue, we look at things that we do that influence

our students' success, like techniques to improve [reading and comprehension](#) or [flip our classroom](#). Sometimes it's what our students do that influence their success. It might be acquiring [technology skills](#) or moving [half a world away](#).

Whether it's cold because of our actions or nature's constant change, we may not know, but we do know that our students will learn in our classrooms. Stay warm.

2013



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A Message from Your MDTESOL President

by Doaa Rashed



Welcome 2014! HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

As we begin this New Year, I am confident that 2014 will bring bigger and better things for the TESOL Community in Maryland. Our Board members have been working hard to line up speakers and timely, informative topics for 2014.

Our upcoming events feature the Graduate Student Mini Conference on March 1, 2014. Graduate students seeking degrees in TESOL teacher preparation programs are invited to share their research, teaching strategies, and classroom projects with faculty and colleagues. The conference has been held annually since 2007 in the English Language Institute at University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Maryland TESOL Board elections are held each May, and all Maryland TESOL members in good standing are eligible to be nominated for election AND to vote

for their representatives on the Board. The Board meets monthly to discuss matters relating to the affairs and events of the organization. This includes forward planning, setting policy, reviewing financial statements, membership applications and community involvement. Please consider joining the board next year.

As we move forward in this year, I encourage all members to make their thoughts known on any subject. Please contact us at president@mdtesol.org with any suggestions you have. You could also volunteer to organize any of our events or join any of our monthly meetings. Only through your active participation, will we continue to grow. BE THE ONE to commit to YOUR professional development in 2014!

Warm Regards,

Doaa Rashed
Maryland TESOL President



Students as Digital Natives; Educators as Digital Immigrants?

By Haleh Harris, Reading Instructor, The Community College of Baltimore County

“According to a Net Day survey conducted in 2004, students are not just using technology differently today, but are approaching their life and their daily activities differently because of the technology. . . . Students’ online life is a whole lot bigger than just the Internet. This online life has become an entire strategy for how to live, survive and thrive in the 21st Century, where cyberspace is a part of everyday life” (Prensky, 2004, pp.1-2). Marc Prensky, who is best known as the inventor of the terms “Digital Native” and “Digital Immigrant” contends that Digital Natives are communicating, sharing, buying and selling, exchanging, creating, meeting, collecting, coordinating, evaluating, gaming, learning, searching, analyzing, reporting, programming, socializing, evolving, and growing up differently. With the technological evolution that is occurring, this communication has become instantaneous.

As such, in the 21st Century it has become increasingly vital for educators to personalize communicative messages to the groups and individuals they lead and teach so that they too can expand from Digital Immigrant to Digital Native status.

NetDay, (2006a). Speak Up 2006 snapshot of selected national findings from teachers http://www.tomorrow.org/docs/Speak%20Up%202006%20National%20Snapshot_Teacher.pdf

Prensky, M., (2001a). Digital natives, digital immigrants -- A new way to look at ourselves and our kids From *On the Horizon* (NCB University Press, Vol. 9 No. 5, October 2001). Retrieved February 23, 2008 from <http://www.marcprensky.com/>.

SAVE THE DATE!

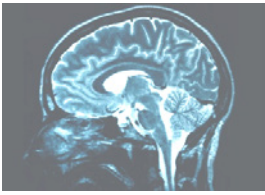


MARYLAND
TESOL



Announcing the

Elementary Education Interest Section (IS) and Teacher Education and Professional Development IS 2014 Almost-Spring Event



Learning and the Brain: A Talk by Dr. Martha Denckla



When: Saturday, March 15, 2014, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Where: Miller Branch of the Howard County Public Library (Patapsco Room)
<http://hclibrary.org/index.php?page=66> 9421 Frederick Rd. Ellicott City, MD 21042
The Miller Branch is a green building and is Howard County's newest library branch.

Cost: FREE! **Audience:** MDTESOL members and non-members.

Light refreshments will be provided.

To register*, please email hubbardesol@gmail.com by March 11 with *March 15 IS Event* in the Subject Line. *Registration is not required but is helpful for planning purposes.

Come hear distinguished speaker Dr. Martha Bridge Denckla, Director of the Developmental Cognitive Neurology Clinic at the Kennedy Krieger Institute and Professor of Neurology, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University, School of Medicine. She will provide an overview of what ESOL teachers and other educators should know about brain variability, language development, ADHD, reading disabilities, Executive Function, stress, and other factors that impact learning. There will be a question and answer session at the end of the talk.

Are You Receiving emails from MD TESOL?



Have you been receiving emails from MDTESOL? If not, you may need to add website@mdtesol.org to your list of "safe senders" in your email account. That way you can stay informed about all the exciting Interest Section events, advocacy issues, and conferences that MDTESOL offers throughout the year.



Summary-Response Posts: Improving Reading and Comprehension Using Student-selected Media with Summary and Reflection Posts on Blackboard

By Minna Nilanont, M.Ed, Professor Minna Nilanont, Prince George's Community College

Regarding motivation and language learning, people learn more when they are interested. Many college courses incorporate the practice of assigning reading material and posting to Blackboard as a way of demonstrating learning. English language-learners at the middle- or high-school level can benefit from a similar writing practice in response to materials they choose. Many can think of this as a digital twist on student-teacher response journals. By helping students discover the joy of self-selected media, we can improve reading and comprehension through reflection and discussion on open forums using Blackboard.

Summary-response posts are helpful as a supplementary and on-going component to any English as a Second Language curriculum or semester. To improve reading and writing, students need more practice reading and writing. Unlike medicine or rentals, there are no negative effects or additional charges for more reading and writing! Because all kinds of media are available, we take for granted that we live in a time when we can read and write with liberty and variety.

Some students and teachers might be hesitant to add more “work.” However, the great news is that students can have a choice, a powerful motivational factor, in reading, watching, or listening to the English subjects that they want and that teachers only have to read and respond to the ideas that students present.

The purpose of this practice is not to achieve a certain grade or correct for errors. The intention is to increase student interest in English and promote teacher rapport with students. This process is great for both students and teachers because it allows students choice and voice and gives teachers insight into students’ ideas, identities, and expression.

Process, Mini-Lesson Options, Correcting

We can start this process by holding a whole class discussion to have students think about their own language input (reading/listening), their interpretation of material (comprehension), and their representation of their reflections (reproduction of language in speaking/writing).

Based on continuing summary-response practice, teachers can identify student needs and incorporate various mini-lessons. These can include lessons on identifying the main idea, summarizing, navigating the Internet, typing, avoiding plagiarism, and citing resources.

Depending on students’ levels, grading with technical explanations may not be absorbed as readily as demonstrating correct forms. Students might present a paragraph or essay, and on traditional pen and paper we might fall into the trap of proofreading without regard to content or ideas. With “**recasting**”, we can take the students’ incorrect forms and incorporate the correct versions in our responses without disrupting communication.

Example:

St: I likes the movie because of pretty song.

T: I agree. I like the movie because it has beautiful songs in it. What was your favorite song?

Here are some questions to think about and some resources to start off your own planning or a class discussion. What is the nature of reading currently? Ask yourself and take a poll of your classes: Honestly, when was the last time we read a book from beginning to end? The common complaint is time. The language-learner complaint is difficulty. We’re living in a busy age. Thankfully, this busy age has wi-fi, smartphones, and troves of web-accessible content. Let’s show students what we can do with technology. Let’s convince them of the joy of reading. Let’s demonstrate how easy it can be.

There is so much interesting web content that would inspire reading.

- For conversation and vocabulary acquisition, go to www.elllo.org.
- For news, I use www.cnn.com.
- For short stories, I use www.eastoftheweb.com.

continued on page 6

Step 1: Activate prior knowledge, tie-in with new concepts

The following are questions and material to guide pedagogical thinking and student inquiry: What do we know about “**summary?**” There are many ways we can describe summary. One of my favorite analogies is to have students imagine that they are watching a movie and that they want to send a friend a text message about it.

I ask students the following questions: What will you tell her? The beginning, middle, and end? Every detail? Possible answers could be: The main actors, the main ideas, the central story.

For practice, we can present the following line of inquiry, which leads students’ self-discovery of the idea of critiques and personal responses: How would you summarize the movie “Titanic?” Would you tell your friend to watch it? Are you familiar with the term “recommendation?”

What can we guess about “**personal response?**” What does *personal* mean? What is a response? So then what is a personal response? Why should we have personal responses?

Back to the movies... Should we tell our friends to watch or not watch a movie? Can we use our personal response to the movie to persuade our friends to watch or not watch it?

From here, class discussion can be expanded: Can summary and personal response work with articles and stories? If you read something good online, do you post it to Facebook?

Step 2: Showing students how to post to Blackboard

Students at this point understand what summaries and personal responses are. However, some students might fall into the trap of **plagiarism** because they are unfamiliar with vocabulary that would allow them to put ideas into their own words. Here, it is advisable to develop a mini-lesson about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. It would be helpful to demonstrate how we as teachers can copy and paste suspect work into search engines like Google and can find whole phrases lifted from other articles. The general rule or range is that 3-5 author’s words must be cited. You can teach **citation** for more advanced classes or eventually build up to it.

Now they’re ready to get in front of the keyboard and post it to Blackboard! Figure A.1-A-3 shows step-by-step instructions and formats for posts to help visualize the process.

Figure A-1. FOR ELLLO.ORG

Students pick a conversation > listen, take notes

Go to Blackboard > go to “Forum” > Copy presentation format below > “Create Thread” > Paste presentation format > Students fill in with information > Post!

Teacher reads and responds

Teacher-provided format on Forum

Weblink (URL):

Topic:

Speakers/Countries of Origin:

Summary (3-4 sentences):

Response (3-4 sentences):

Figure A-2. FOR CNN.COM (or other sites)

Students pick an article > watch a video or read (according to your specifications), take notes

Go to Blackboard > go to "Forum" > copy presentation format > "Create Thread" > Paste presentation format > fill in with information

Teacher-provided format on Forum

Weblink (URL):
News Agency:
"Article Title" by Author:
Summary (3-5 sentences): Who? What? When? Where? Why?
Response (2-3 sentences):

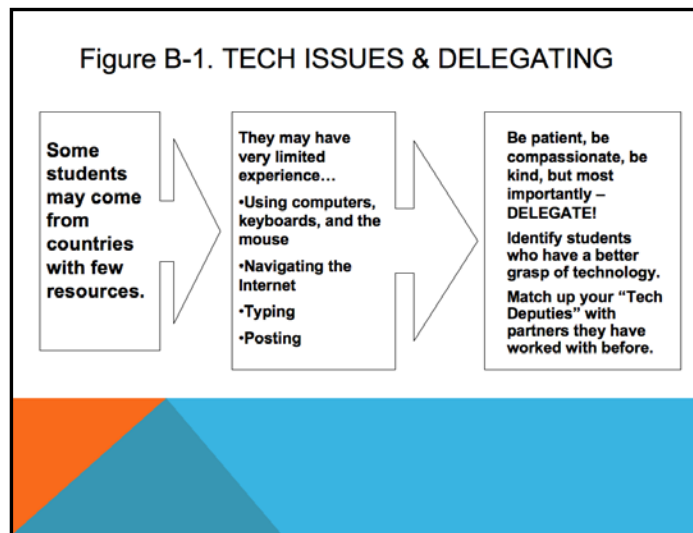
Figure A-3. FOR EASTOFTHEWEB.COM

Students pick a conversation > listen, take notes

Go to Blackboard > go to "Forum" > copy presentation format > "Create Thread" > Paste presentation format > fill in with information

Weblink (URL):
"Short Story Title" by Author:
Genre/page #:
Summary (4-5 sentences):
Response (3-4 sentences):

"Tech Issues and Delegating" in Figure B.1 explains what technical snags we should anticipate when we present this practice in classes.



Extension - Beyond the classroom...

We can set up class Facebook pages where students can post interesting content. Moderation may be required. Like elllo.org, students can be encouraged to develop their own audio or video clips to post. Again, guidance, advice, and moderation will be required.

Conclusion

There are so many things that we can do with this material, but always remember that the keys to success are student choice, space for reflection, and low-intensity teacher feedback. I've been asked about rubrics. There are so many forms and formats this sort of supplementary practice can take. Some teachers might modify it and make it a part of an informal or formal portfolio assessment or a running grade. That is fine.

However, regarding what we know about motivation in language, people learn better through natural communication that hasn't been overcorrected. Students reading, listening, or watching self-selected English subjects in action and reacting to them with minimal teacher corrective feedback encourages fluency while promoting more reading and writing.

**Attention
Graduate
Students!**

2014 Annual Spring Event



7TH ANNUAL ESOL GRADUATE STUDENT MINI-CONFERENCE

Presented by

UMBC



MARYLAND
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AN HONORS
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IN MARYLAND

MARCH 1, 2014

Hosted by the English Language Institute,
UMBC

PURPOSE:

- Present your research, projects, and teaching philosophies
- Practice your presentation skills in a supportive environment
- Network with fellow TESOL professionals

PAST PARTICIPANTS:

- American University
- Maryland /D.C. Public School teachers
- Notre Dame of Maryland University
- Old Dominion University
- Trinity Washington University
- UMBC
- UMCP

POSSIBLE TOPICS INCLUDE:

(but aren't limited to) Second Language Acquisition, Literacy Advocacy and Legislation, Bilingual Education, Special Education, and Technology Integration



PROPOSALS DUE

FEBRUARY 3RD

*For proposal form and additional
info go to <https://www.mdtesol.org/>*

For more information, please contact Emily Grey and Ann Smith
MDTESOL Graduate Student IS Co-Chairs

Email: egrey2@umbc.edu

a second language? Nobody who knew me would have predicted I would go to medical school - I was a closet pre-med. I didn't like math, and I was very good at languages - I took 6 years of Latin, 3 years of French, and 2 years of German. Music is my other passion. But I got inspired by a biology course at Bryn Mawr College - it was so beautifully taught. I discovered that I loved looking through microscopes and I'm very good at detailed observations. And so, suddenly I loved biology. Medicine is a perfect intersection between the humanities and sciences. And I spent so many years studying the brain's basis for language. It all ties together ultimately.

I became a very specialized neurologist in child development neurology - neurology that is relevant to learning, attention, and social development, the sort of overlap zone with psychology. I see the same type of children for intensive individual evaluation at my weekly clinic that I do research on. Parents bring in their children with concerns about reading. I started doing research about 40 years ago (chuckles) with clinical concerns. I wanted to have a better sense of normal development. In my first research I used a motor exam and the Rapid Naming Test, which has come to be used a lot in the field of learning disabilities. These were big normative databases of motor coordination and how speed of responding to visual stimuli works for reading. When I came here 25 years ago, my research really cooked up because of neuroimaging.

How did you get involved with education? About five years ago, Mariale Hardiman at the Johns Hopkins School of Education started having a series of lunch meetings called the NeuroEducation Initiative. People from the med school and JHU Homewood campus psychology department were invited to present work that crossed over the discipline between the brain and the educational environment. We, along with a special educator, Mary Ellen Lewis, designed a Masters Certificate called *Brain, Mind, and Learning*. We were hoping this course would survive, but it's ending this spring and will be folded into an online-only doctoral course.

Can you tell us a little about what teachers should know about the brain? Teachers should know about the development of those parts of the brain directly feeding into education. It's important to know about everything in the cerebrum and cerebellum. I start my courses and lectures showing a program called *3D Brain* to show the visual and the language parts of the brain. Teachers should have a broad sense of the different modules of the brain and not be intimidated by hearing the names and functions. And the timetables of development - what I call "localizing in the fourth dimension." For example, in language development,

when is prime time for most people to be learning a second language, what are some of the difficulties closer to puberty, being able to learn a second language without an accent? I call it clearing out the misconceptions. There's a lot of silliness people read about, like the idea that left-handers are more vulnerable to problems. The silly overpromises some people make about how they're going to change your brain. Teachers need to know a lot about the variability among ages and within ages. There is a *lot* of variability.

You emphasize variability, yet there's a lot of standardization right now in education. I know, and it's so counterproductive. The younger, the more variability, and the less appropriate standardization is. There is variability with the motor system, genetically, and there are tremendous gender differences. Teachers need to know that there is real science behind the common observation that girls develop more rapidly, especially at the younger ages. There are two big systems you need to know about: the language system and the executive system. Luckily, very few people have big deficits in perception or even in true memory. The two big sources of variation in learners' brains come in language development and in executive development. Executive development has such a protracted developmental course: it doesn't finish until your thirties.

ESOL teachers should be careful to not ascribe what could be a brain-based language disorder to the issue of the second language. There could be 5% of kids who will have a developmental language disorder. Too often I've heard of a delay in a diagnosis of a language disorder due to saying, "this is not his native language." Get the parents involved to find out if the child is having issues in the native language. I guess there's a need to have some speech language pathologists who know the native language.

How do you handle this population at KKI? Do you have recommendations? We don't have a program for ELLs at KKI. There are screening tests. The picture naming vocabulary test is very academically relevant. There is only one right answer - you see a hippopotamus, you say "hippopotamus." You can do it in the native language. A general problem we have with testing is that we're much more sensitive to children who are difficult to understand than to children with word retrieval problems. But those are kids who resurface later with academic problems because there is lots of precision naming in the content areas - in science, social studies.

How can the people who make education policy get some of this information? I'm scratching my head about that one. But we need to educate the parents - they are our allies. My

patients and my own grandchildren are telling me they are stressed and having headaches and stomachaches due to all the testing. The Common Core has tipped the balance, because in white, middle class, successful school districts, the tests have been making their children feel like failures. People in affluent suburbs like Westchester County, New York are organizing boycotts of the tests. We've been through *No Child Left Behind* and *Race to the Top*. I'm all for the concept for standards, but you can't just say, "Oh, I have this great idea for a research project," and not have a good implementation plan. You know what they call backmapping - it seems to me they just took a meat cleaver and chopped the ultimate goal into into 13 equal pieces. Some of the things they're asking of children in the K, 1, and 2, the Gesell Institute has come out and said, "developmentally inappropriate." We have to increase our knowledge, and people like Diane Ravitch are trying.

In previous talks, you've mentioned the harmful effects of stress. Yes. It's like giving you artificial ADHD. It's like taking away your Executive Function. You know how you become forgetful and disorganized when you're worried about something? You can see that with imaging. The amygdala, which is like the fire alarm in the brain, takes the blood flow away from the frontal lobe - makes you go into fight or flight mode.

What happens if young children have chronic stress? We don't really have the studies for that. But we know that lack of sleep interferes with growth and functioning. Some teenagers get too much homework and have anxiety about school and don't get enough sleep. This whole testing and accountability is a narrowing. It's almost diversionary from making the right learning environments for children. We have to deal with the basic socio-economic problems. Going back even further in the brain, there is substandard pregnancy care...these children come to school with two and a half strikes against them. Geoffrey Canada and the Harlem Project - he's one of my heroes. We have to optimize the whole physical and emotional environment in which children are conceived, carried, born, nurtured. Even the preschool emphasis...I fear it's going to be pre-academic. Maria Montessori was a doctor. She's another one of my heroes. She said we have to give these kids experiences as a foundation for their language development and everything.

Do you have any other words of advice or encouragement for teachers? We have to get into politics and ally ourselves with the parents. I've been particularly concerned with special education, but I see a tremendous deterioration of general education, so I have to be passionate about these issues. The so-called solutions absolutely disregard the

humanity of the learner. They have business models...we are not widgets or robots. What betrays their disregard and disrespect for the developing brain is they keep pushing the curriculum younger. Finland does not start the Three Rs until you're seven. It's OK if they learn it, but they don't demand it. They do a lot of general experiential build up, language, and exposure to music, and they are at the top of the international tests. They have less income inequality, but they have elevated the teaching profession. They assess for the purpose of teaching, not for high stakes. Charters have not turned out to be shining examples. The so-called "reforms" are not working. It's a crazy idea to have lots of Teach for America teachers with five weeks of preparation, and the retention is very low. But the public is beginning to side with teachers rather than blaming you - we're at a turning point.

Hear more from Dr. Martha Denckla at:
Learning and the Brain MDTESOL IS Event

**When: Saturday, March 15, 2014,
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Where: Miller Branch of the Howard County Public Library (Patapsco Room) <http://hclibrary.org/index.php?page=66> 9421 Frederick Rd Ellicott City, MD 21042 (410) 313-1950

Cost: FREE Audience: MDTESOL members and non-members. Light refreshments provided.

Come hear distinguished speaker Dr. Martha Bridge Denckla, director of the Developmental Cognitive Neurology Clinic at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. She will provide an overview of what ESOL teachers and other educators should know about brain variability, language development, ADHD, reading disabilities, Executive Function, stress, and other factors that impact learning. To register, please email Adreon Hubbard at hubbardesol@gmail.com by March 11 with your name, and put *March 15 IS Event* in the Subject Line.

create that kind of environment within their own schools. The following article, reprinted from Education Weekly magazine, discusses complications and successes while bringing content and language learning together, in various districts and schools with high ELL populations.

Moving Beyond the Mainstream

Helping Diverse Learners Master the Common Core

Published Online: October 28, 2013

Published in Print: October 30, 2013, as Standards and English-Learners: It Takes a Village

ESL and Classroom Teachers Team Up to Teach Common Core



Teacher Meredith Vanden Berg works with Jose Virgen, an English-learner in her 8th grade science class in Beaverton, Ore. She has been working with other teachers in her school to develop strategies for helping English-learners master the common core.

—Leah Nash for Education Week

Collaboration may be the new norm for teachers of ELL students

By Lesli A. Maxwell

It started with a simple after-school conversation last spring between two teachers.

Barbara Page, a veteran English-as-a-second-language teacher, and Meredith Vanden Berg, an 8th grade science teacher, were discussing a student from Somalia who had just arrived from a refugee camp in Yemen and landed at their ethnically diverse middle school in Beaverton, Ore.

Ms. Vanden Berg wanted to know what more she could do to help the girl—who was just beginning to learn a few words of English—understand what was going on in her science classroom.

“I don’t like when I see students staring off into space when I’m teaching and I know it’s because of the language,” said Ms. Vanden Berg. “I needed to take a look at my own practice. What could I be doing to convey the core concepts without completely losing her?”

That discussion was the spark for what has evolved into a much closer collaboration between ESL and content teachers at the 600-student Meadow Park Middle School as they fully embrace the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics this academic year. Along with their math teacher colleague, Allison Shultz, Ms. Vanden Berg and Ms. Page have begun picking apart the standards, stripping them down to the essential concepts, simplifying the language, and developing strategies that all of them can use to support English-learners in both content and ESL classes.

To read more click or go to <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/10/30/10cc-eslteachers.h33.html>.



Worldwide Calendar of Events

[Home](#) > [Attend and Learn](#) > Calendar of Events

The Worldwide Calendar of Events includes links to conferences and events related to the field of English language education. The calendar is published online and via the conferences electronic announcement email lists. Organizers are welcome to [submit conferences](#) germane to the field of English language education.

The calendar is updated (online and by email to subscribers) once a month. Join the announcement list to receive updates by email, or browse the calendar online.

Subscribe to the TESOL Worldwide Calendar of Events Announcement List

1. Log into the web site
2. Go to My Account at the top of the page. Select Update Interest Sections from the right hand side.
3. Scroll towards the lower part of the screen and check the box for the Conferences/Worldwide Calendar of Events
4. Click the Save button on the lower right corner of the page

OR contact [TESOL Member Services](#)

Disclaimer: TESOL International Association provides the TESOL Conference Calendar as a service to TESOL members and the field. The information provided in the Conference Calendar comes from the sponsoring organizations. For more information, contact the sponsoring organization. The listed events are not sponsored or endorsed by TESOL International Association.

February 2014

- 6–8. (Africa and the Middle East) [Tunisia TESOL First International Conference](#), "Curriculum Development in ELT: Learning from Case Studies," Tunisia. E-mail bigconf2014tt@gmail.com.
- 15. (North America) [TALGS: TESOL / Applied Linguistics Graduate Students Conference](#), "The Common Core State Standards: Opportunity and Challenge!" North Carolina, USA. E-mail talgs@ecu.edu.
- 21. (Asia and Oceania) [2014 TESOL Conference](#), "A Path to Innovation and Application in English Language Teaching," Taiwan. E-mail knuaeconference@gmail.com.
- 21–22. (Asia and Oceania) [Qatar TESOL International Conference](#), "Promoting a Culture of Reading," Doha, Qatar. E-mail qtesol@gmail.com.
- 22–23. (Asia and Oceania) [10th Annual CamTESOL Conference on ELT](#), "English for Regional and International Integration," Institute of Technology of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. E-mail sophearith.ngov@idp.com.
- 27–March 1. (Europe and Eurasia) [ECIS ESL and Mother Tongue Conference](#), "Developing Multi-literate Global Citizens: From Language Policy to Classroom Practice," Amsterdam, Netherlands. E-mail ronrosenow@gmail.com.
- 28–March 1. (North America) [Illinois TESOL-BE 40th Annual Convention](#), "Milestones in Learning: ITBE 40 Years On," Illinois, USA. E-mail convention@itbe.org.

March 2014

- 8. (North America) [CATESOL Los Angeles Regional Conference](#), "Sustain Ability: Support, Scholarship, Success," California, USA. E-mail laregionalconferencechair@gmail.com
- 13–15. (Asia and Oceania) [20th Annual International TESOL Arabia Conference and Exhibition](#), "Methods and Means in ELT," Dubai, United Arab Emirates. E-mail leskirkham@gmail.com.
- 15–16. (Europe and Eurasia) [TESOL Greece 35th Annual Convention](#), "Learning in the 21st Century," Athens, Greece. E-mail webmaster@tesolgreece.org.
- 26–29. (North America) [TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo](#). Portland, Oregon, USA. E-mail conventions@tesol.org.

April 2014

- 11–12. (North America) [Conference on Language, Learning, and Culture](#), Fairfax, Virginia, USA. E-mail kevin@viu.edu.
- 25–27. (Europe and Eurasia) [22nd Annual HUPE Conference](#), Istria, Croatia. E-mail hupe.tesol@gmail.com.
- 27–30. (North America) [Mountain Plains Adult Education Association 2014 Conference](#), "Transforming Adult Education...Exceeding the Limits," Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. E-mail AdultEd@northwestcollege.edu.
- 30–May 2. (Central and South America) [14th BRAZ–TESOL International Conference](#), "Emerging Identities in ELT," Brazil. E-mail claudiacavalcante@braztesol.org.br.



One Student's Back Story

By Esther Robbins, Chair of Language Studies, Prince George's Community College

I teach ESL (English as a Second Language) to International Students at Prince George's Community College. Our students come to us from all countries and from all walks of life. Most of our students work as well as go to college, and often as not, they actually work multiple jobs, sending a portion of their earnings home to families across the globe, keeping long hours, and leaving little free time in their lives. This does play out as an issue in the classroom as they are rarely able to devote sufficient time to their studies/homework, but on a human level it creates stressors in all aspects of their lives. While our students' academic progress might be hampered by these pressures (they DO improve, and they DO get 'there'; it just sometimes takes a winding road to reach the final goal), I am always humbled and impressed by their stories and the dedication it takes to come as far as they have come already.

Invariably, I enjoy my time in the classroom with my students (whether they have had enough time to finish their homework or not!). I appreciate their various global perspectives, cultural variation, and more often than not, I find that I learn something from my students in each new semester. One day in class this past semester, I had my students answer the following question: What is your favorite solitary activity? We were focusing on the new vocabulary word, "**solitary**." When I was grading the sentences later that evening, I found the following: "*My favorite solitary activity is to pray to G-d every day to take care of my two sons who I left at home in Cameroon.*" After the next class session, I made a point of chatting with the author to find out more about her story. As a mom myself, the idea of leaving one's young children—for years—is close to unbearable. My student was willing not only to talk with me, but to write her story for you to read. You will find it below. She did a wonderful job on it; therefore, I have not edited it at all. The errors in it are minor, and certainly do not impede anyone's ability to comprehend her tale. I am sharing it with the Instructional Forum, with *you*, because it behooves us to remember that our students come to us with back stories that we often do *not* learn over the course of the semester. Their stories (not infrequently sad or troubling) must not be an excuse for us to compromise our Academic Standards, but their stories **MUST**—conversely—open our eyes to our students' real life struggles. We need to teach, but also to listen, to encourage, and to understand the uphill paths that many of our students are climbing. This particular story is one that is not as atypical as you might think for many of our International Students. Families divided and

relationships put on hold are simply things that happen in order for our students to pursue their educational goals here in the U.S.A. My heart goes out to all of our students, who have made, and are still making, these painful sacrifices.

My Story

by A Student at Prince George's Community College

I was born in Cameroon, where I spent my whole childhood until I left to come to America two years ago. I have six sisters and I am the second child. I went to the University and my major was Animal Biology. I am a single mother of twin boys: Joseph and Gabriel. When I was in Cameroon, I worked for a German Catholic Organization, which was focusing on social activities, where I was a Permanent Secretary. Unfortunately this position did not generate a lot of income, which made life even harder. As the eldest of the family, I had to take care of my little sisters but also my two boys. However, being a part of a large family is an asset because we support each other.

A month after giving birth to my kids, a friend of mine proposed to take a walk. At this time, the lottery system, DV [Diversity Visa] Lottery, was a phenomenon of society and everyone wanted to try. My friend suggested we try it as well. We did, but without conviction, because we did not take it seriously. Later on, I received a letter saying I had been selected to get a green card. I could not believe it, but it was true. Without realizing it, my life would radically change. In fact, a huge opportunity had been offered to me. This was an important event in my life to get a green card, because it was an opportunity for a better life and maybe to find a good job in America, which would help my family and allow me to meet our needs.

The green card is a symbol of hope for a bright future. In Africa, people think that life in Europe or in America is better and easier. This experience enhances my life. In fact, I am learning a second language besides French and my own dialect. Furthermore, leaving Africa on my own taught me a lot about my abilities to integrate myself in a totally different world from the one I have always known. In addition, this showed me that I have enough strength to reach my goals, in fact after graduation, I will be able to have a better life that provides for my kids education as well.



Beauty and Baobab: One Teacher's Travel Exchange in Senegal

By Elizabeth Wagenheim, Prince George's Community College

Imagine yourself surrounded by 250 colleagues being serenaded by high school children, *Glee* style, with a song they composed to honor their English teachers. *Stand and sing for all our English teachers/they are like a candle in the life/it consumes itself to light the way/they are our idols/all one, strong and free.* I had this experience in March when I traveled to Dakar, Senegal for National English Day festivities, which attracted students and teachers from throughout Senegal for a day of games, competitions, professional development, and a talent show. The festivities were sponsored and planned by the Association of English Teachers of Senegal (ATES), which is a dynamic 15 year old organization with the mission of providing professional development opportunities to English language teachers. What began as primarily a social group has transformed itself into a vital organization that receives monetary support from the U.S. State Department and the British Counsel. ATES has also garnered support from local and international businesses such as an insurance company and an educational software company. Its success has inspired the development of a Pan-African English teachers' association based on the ATES model. My participation was part of the partnership between Maryland TESOL and ATES, and airfare was underwritten by MDTESOL.

Teacher Training in Senegal

A significant shift in language teaching occurred worldwide in the 1980s affecting a move away from the sole focus on structure, which had been the mainstay of the grammar-translation method. A new interest in authentic and meaningful language use took its place. The Communicative method manifests itself through classroom techniques such as role plays, pair work, and student-led activities. Communicative language teaching is embraced in Senegal by teacher-training institutes and ATES, but there are challenges to its full implementation. There has been a significant increase in the need for English teachers in Senegal as the government has been opening community based schools, thus creating a new need for English teachers. The teacher training college, FASTEF, cannot meet the demand, so novice teachers are being hired with limited or no pre-service training and sometimes with limited English proficiency. Teachers who have not been trained often resort to the grammar-translation model in which they were taught. The Ministry of Education has answered this need by hiring teacher-trainers to work with "cells" of self-identified teachers in a school

who engage in a needs assessment and then make a joint decision about their professional development plan for the year. While this is an unpaid professional opportunity, it garners much interest in teachers who are committed to their own professional development. ATES also provides workshops and colloquia throughout the year. The other obstacle to Communicative language teaching is class size. English classes in high school range in size from 40 – 80 students per class. Active learning techniques are difficult to implement in classes of that size. One teacher-trainer, Mareme Saar, has developed a method of grouping students into cohorts of six with whom they work inside and outside the class throughout the year. Each student is also assigned a "twin" within the cohort who becomes their study-buddy. Twin Day has become a popular celebration for these students when they acknowledge the strengths and qualities of their partner. Assessment is determined by the achievement of the group as well as the individual student.

Role of English Teachers

With large class sizes and multiple demands, teaching is a demanding profession in Senegal. According to a conversation I had with a British Counsel trainer, teaching in Senegal is a relatively low paid profession, and teachers often receive their salary late. That said, as I witnessed at the English Language Day and in walks around Dakar with teaching colleagues, teachers are greatly revered. When I was at a colleague's house on a Sunday, several of her students stopped in at her house to greet her and to bring small gifts. Students often address their teachers as *mother* or *father*. During a professional development workshop at the English Language Day, the presenter Christine Coombs, the past president of TESOL, asked what motivated the attendees to become teachers. A surprising number credited a meaningful teacher during their own education that inspired them. When I observed a high school class, I saw students clambering for their teacher's attention and praise.

The Demand for English

The U.S. State Department has set up Access classes after school, for which they hire Senegalese English teachers to provide 90 hours of extra English instruction to interested students. After school English language clubs are prevalent and are led by high school students under the supervision of an English teacher. When Suffolk University in Massachusetts closed their Dakar campus,

continued on page 15

a void in contract-training and English for adults was created. The Senegalese faculty members of the Suffolk campus formed a cooperative and operate the English Language Institute to fill the need. Everywhere I went from the airport to the market, Dakaroise were interested in practicing their English with me.

Personal Insights

Having the opportunity to observe classes and discuss English teaching in Senegal was a meaningful experience for me. Sitting in a classroom of fifty students who were snapping and hissing to get their teacher's attention was eye-opening; on several occasions, I've had a West African student in my PGCC class snap their fingers at me, eliciting irritation from me for what I had perceived as rudeness. Students, as I saw in Senegal, sometimes stop by my office to say a brief hello, leaving me to wonder what they need from me. I now know where each of these behaviors comes from. In one of my observations, the teacher gave an instruction for a task that required students to think creatively and imagine the continuation of a narrative. It took the students five minutes for clarification and thought before they could begin the task. This experience reminded me that when I integrate a creative task, I need to expect there will be a lag as students process this type of thinking task which is rare in their educational experience. Struggling with my limited French and trying to navigate life skills such as buying stamps, taking a cab, or bargaining at the market reminds me of how vulnerable and frustrated students can feel when they attempt to live in a new culture. Most importantly, my knowledge of the warmth of the Senegalese people and the beauty of the landscape makes me more sympathetic to the homesickness of our West African students as they acclimate to the very different lifestyle of the U.S.

The gnarled and bare baobab tree is the national symbol of Senegal because it is hardy and ubiquitous. There is a parable that explains its appearance as a punishment from God, who was angry at the baobab for its vanity and uprooted it, turning it upside down so that its roots are in the air and its branches underground. The baobab is an appropriate metaphor for English teaching in Senegal—resilient with its powerful “roots” in clear view.

Even though this experience is an enrichment, there is a side effect. Leaving Cameroon alone is one of them. Making that decision affects me because I had to leave my kids. Being apart reveals a fear that I do not share easily. In effect, I'm afraid that this remoteness creates a gap between them and I. I'm afraid of not being able to create a true maternal bond with them, for example, I can be a little jealous when I hear my sons calling me “Auntie” and my little sister “Mom”. They are my universe and it hurts not being able to see them whenever I want to. I feel like I am missing a huge part of their childhood, I am always afraid of a news such as they get injured or sick, every time, I receive phone calls from back home, I am always scared and I get worried very easily. I do not know what I would do if anything happens to my children, which is a natural feeling for a mother. Being away increases this feeling of protection and of course increased fear. However, I am aware that they have a good childhood, and making the decision to leave them in Cameroon instead of taking them with me was made in order to be able to succeed in school. Also when I came here, I had no connection, no friends and no relatives. I was entirely on my own and I could not allow myself to put my kids in that kind of situation too. Even being scared, I am reassured because I do know that my sister takes good care of them. She treats them as her own, she loves them the way a mother does, and they are blossoming, they still have this “mother figure” that all kids need in their life. I am excited because I will have the chance to be with them this summer during my vacation in Cameroon. This trip cannot come fast enough, also this will be during their fifth birthday on August 7th. Every time that I pray, I ask God to watch after my kids and hopefully, one day, to be with them here in America.



What Works: The Flipped Classroom: Traditional Education Flipped on its Head

By Tara Theroux, Secondary Education IS Co-Chair

‘Flipping’ a classroom is a buzzword in the education world as we become increasingly tech savvy. Most educators have a vague notion of flipping, but the devil is in the details: how do we implement it? I have flipped my classroom and have found it extremely beneficial for ESOL students.

Flipping a classroom refers to flipping the traditional order of a classroom. Instead of students receiving the opening lecture/video and notes at school, students complete the opening independently at home. Then when they arrive at school they spend more time in practice mode instead of opening mode. The main benefit is that students work at their own pace and can watch the video as few or as many times as they need. Another benefit for ESOL students is that the flipped model is ideal for providing multiple opportunities for practicing in the language domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking. They listen to models and videos multiple times, write notes, read and comprehend materials such as PowerPoints and assessment questions, and subsequently speak during the practice phase in class. Student talk rather than teacher talk can be exponentially increased. Lastly, teachers are able to differentiate lessons by placing students into groups based on their assessment results.

Nonetheless, while the integration of technology and differentiation are inarguably beneficial to students, there are some teachers who are reluctant to flip an ESOL classroom. They argue that many students do not have access to technology and therefore it is not practical. However, teachers can encourage students to use public libraries, or adapt so that the students do the opening at school rather than home. Next, some teachers state that ESOL students need direct modeling. I agree, but would respond that by flipping our classrooms, we can incorporate various methods of modeling instead of one method of one teacher modeling. Also, in everyday life students cannot literally rewind the modeling they have seen, yet on a video a student can pause and rewind as much as they need. Flipping is most appropriate for the presentation of new core subject content and skills, rather than for reading comprehension, which is more suited to cooperative learning.

So, how can a teacher go about forming a flipped classroom? The following are simple suggestions on how to flip your classroom:

Step 1: Create an appropriate online platform to post PowerPoints, videos and quizzes

First, you need an online forum for students to view videos, PowerPoints and take assessments. This could be by creating your own website through Google sites (www.google.com), a blog at (<http://wordpress.org>), a wiki at (www.wikispaces.com), or using Edmodo (www.edmodo.com). I use Edmodo because it is easy to create a class and you can post all of your materials there.

Step 2: Determine what you want to teach and upload the resources

Good teaching is based on core content standards such as the Common Core State Standards as well as local curriculum standards, and flipped classrooms are no different. So after the teacher has the standards and creates objectives, s/he needs to find the opening materials that will accomplish those objectives. The teacher can create his/her own videos through programs such as iMovie on a Mac, a Voki avatar through www.voki.com, www.goanimate.com and other programs. However, I would suggest looking to find resources and becoming comfortable in the classroom before delving into making a video. There are plenty of great resources. The trick is sifting through the plethora of videos to find the ones that actually match the objectives. Some of the best include Discovery Education for science and language arts, although this requires a login (www.discoveryeducation.com), Learn Zillion for language arts and math (www.learnzillion.com), Khan Academy for math and science (www.khanacademy.org), and Brain Pop, which also requires a login (www.brainpop.com). Brain Pop Jr. is great for newcomers but may not be age appropriate for older students (www.brainpopjr.com), Brain Pop ESL focuses on grammar, Teacher Tube (www.teachertube.com), Safari Montage, iTunes U, Grammar Bytes (www.chompchomp.com), YouTube (www.youtube.com), and many more! It goes without saying that teachers have to view the entire video and make sure it is appropriate to their objective.

The videos serve as the opening, but many also feature modeling. They cater to the auditory and visual multiple intelligence because students are listening and watching. However, teachers also need to upload written materials. At the opening stage and for lower -proficiency

levels, the materials should be shorter and contain less language demands. The teacher can create a PowerPoint or Prezi (www.prezi.com), a free online application for designing presentations. Also, the teacher needs to train students on how to take notes based on the videos and written materials. I use Cornell notes and cloze notes based on the videos. Learn Zillion has downloadable student notes templates (www.learnzillion.com). You can scaffold with cloze notes until students are taking notes more independently.

Last, the teacher needs to create an assessment and determine the level of mastery. For example, 80% on my quiz is mastery, while 60% is near mastery and anything below is not mastery. The quizzes are usually multiple choice. I like to create my quizzes through Edmodo.

So how does this play out? The following are possible flipped teaching scenarios:

Flipped classroom teaching scenario #1

Day 1 (at home day: homework)	Day 2 (in class practice)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. watch the videos 2. read the materials 3. take the notes 4. take the quiz 	<p><i>Opening:</i> compare notes and ask teacher and/or other students clarifying questions (option: cooperative grouping)</p> <p><i>Work period:</i> Practice in differentiated groups based on quiz, results(not mastery, near mastery, mastery.)</p>

Flipped classroom teaching scenario #2: for students without access to technology

The flipped classroom teaching scenario #2 is the same as above, but day 1 is completed at school rather than at home. Students work independently at school during day 1 and work in leveled groups for day 2. The teacher will complete some direct instruction for those groups that need it.

When I think about my personal experiences with flipping, I think of three scenarios: a whole class singing along a song about poetic elements based on a video rap I found on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPiVfdwAsUg>), a normally highly unmotivated student glued to his iPad as he watches videos and takes

Step 3: Create differentiated practice activities and outcomes for the groups

After students take the quizzes, they are placed into groups. I usually make three groups: not mastery, near mastery, and mastery. The not mastery students are usually assigned to do the opening lesson in full: watch the videos and read the documents, take notes, and take the quiz. They usually work with the teacher. They may be struggling students who need more practice or they may be students who have not completed the lesson at home or were absent. The near mastery group has another task. I usually have the students re-watch the videos and review the notes and then take the quizzes as a group or individually until they achieve mastery. They may then move onto another activity. The mastery group will go straight to an extension activity and project.

notes, and a student who tells the other students, “don’t worry, I’ll be over in the mastery group soon.” These really speak to the consistency of feedback about their performance, and the ensuing high levels of motivation and engagement. So, what are you waiting for to flip your classroom? When you flip, you kill two birds with one stone as you dazzle the students and administrators alike, demonstrating the dual buzzwords of flipped and differentiation.



The Tech Corner is a place for us to share quick and easy technology resources. Please feel free to send your ideas to the editors.: Sarah Barnhardt (sbarnhardt@comcast.net) or Chester Gates (chester.gates@comcast.net).

Wordle and Padlet

By La Tonya Dyett, Associate Professor, Reading, The Community College of Baltimore County

Are you looking for ways to help your students interact and retain vocabulary knowledge? Then introduce them to Wordle and Padlet. Wordle.com is website in which the user can create word clouds using their own choice of words. The user can choose from various fonts, layouts and color schemes. If some words/terms are more significant than the others, just enter the word multiple times in the word list, and your graphic image displays that word larger than the others.

Padlet.com (formally wallwisher) is another free website that allows the user to build graphic images to enhance learning. On this site the user is given a blank slate for which they can select a background and then begin dropping in their images and text. This site will allow the user to make their post public so that other classmates and the instructor can post a comment on their “wall.” This is a great tool for creating visuals to associate with text or to start a dialogue in which others can post their opinions/comments.

Both Wordle and Padlet are free websites that are user-friendly and can be used with most web browsers. Some suggested uses: study tools, presentation format, PowerPoint assignments or a means of capturing an audience’s attention.

Free Typing Lessons

By Sarah Barnhardt, MDTESOL Newsletter Editor

We are hearing of how cursive writing is no longer a useful skill. It seems the electronic word has become more relevant than hand-written notes. While we may mourn the dearth of hand-written letters, reality is that in the personal and professional world today, typing and texting have become the norm. As a result, our students have to learn how to type in English. However, who has time to add this skill to the teaching curriculum already packed full? No worries. There are many free resources at there

to assist students in developing skill. [Freetech4teachers](http://www.freetech4teachers.com) has a blog on ten free typing sites to help students develop this important skill: <http://www.freetech4teachers.com/2013/12/11-free-online-typing-practice.html#UsbMmPQcYZ8>

Who knows? Even you might find it fun to practice and improve your typing skills.

OfficeSuite Professional 7 for Kindle

by Chester Gates, MDTESOL Newsletter Editor

The tablet has brought with it a new operating system, Android, and apps to go along with them. The problem we have as instructors, administrators and students is connecting our documents across platforms. The OfficeSuite app for the Kindle helps to bridge that gap, turning the Kindle into more than a reader. It becomes a mini workspace that allows for document creation and editing on the go. The app utilizes the internal storage of the Kindle, but it can also access cloud storage, including Dropbox, Skydrive, and Google Drive. The user can create or edit documents, spreadsheets, and presentations that have many of the features of Word, Excel or Powerpoint files. Keep class rosters, create a worksheet, or refine a presentation and still have room for the latest MDTESOL newsletter!

The OfficeSuite Professional 7 for Kindle is available at the Amazon store.



33rd Annual MD-TESOL Fall Conference Photo Highlights



Preparing for the conference



MDTESOL President Doaa Rashed welcomes attendees



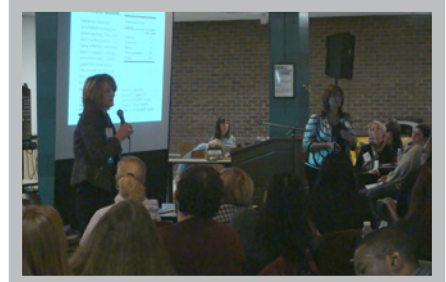
MDTESOL President Doaa Rashed with CCBC President Sandra Kurtinitis



CCBC Reading and Language Department Chairperson Rachele Lawton



MDTESOL President Doaa Rashed with the Lifetime Achievement Awardee Jodi Crandall



Keynote Speakers Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld and Dr. Maria Dove



Deciding on workshops



Free materials



Keynote Breakout Session



Workshop with Brock Brady



Workshop with Tara Theroux and Melissa Nankin



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