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# ORTESOL NEWS

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ORTESOL Quarterly Newsletter \* Volume 37, No. 4 \* Winter 2014

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## **ORTESOL Board Elections!**

The Election Committee is pleased to submit nominations to our membership for election of the 2015 ORTESOL Board of Directors.

Please take the time to fill out the ballot, which is in an online survey format, and give the incoming board members your support by participating in this process.

Please vote before the election closes at **December 21, 11:59 pm.**

Click or paste this link to cast your vote:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ortesolballotdec2014>

Dear ORTESOL members,

As 2014 is on its way out, many in the US are questioning why justice for all remains elusive fifty years after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For this K-12-focused issue, it seems timely to acknowledge a civil rights anniversary in our field of ESOL.

Forty years ago in 1974, the landmark Supreme Court case, *Lau v. Nichols*, determined that linguistic minority students have a civil right, based on the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to the language instruction they require for meaningful access to education.

This is not an unfunded mandate; state and federal funds are allocated to districts to provide for effective ESL programs. In Oregon, English learners currently bring an additional .5 per student in state funding to their districts. Federal Title III funds are also designated for English-language-acquisition programs, and the Office of Civil Rights requires that language programs have adequate resources.

The 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* ruling established the legal foundation for ESL and Bilingual programs in our K-12 system and marked a new phase in ESOL education. When ORTESOL was founded in 1977, there were only a few thousand English learners in Oregon's K-12 schools. Now there are almost 60,000.

Thus the ORTESOL mission, to "strengthen instruction and research at all levels in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages," is part of a civil rights struggle that is relevant to all of us as ESOL professionals, voters, taxpayers and community members.

As the first K-12 teacher to be president of ORTESOL in 25 years, I'm proud of the progress we've made in promoting scholarship and disseminating information at the K-12 level, but there is much more work to be done to ensure excellence in English language teaching for all. Public misconceptions are widespread about the purpose and efficacy of ESL programs, and it's clear that justice has not been achieved for English language learners. Controversy abounds, but what is very clear is that the best thinking and research around second language acquisition is urgently needed in Oregon classrooms and the voices of ESOL teachers need to be heard in the debate.

That's where ORTESOL comes in. We connect teachers to the world of TESOL, provide a forum for sharing best practices and research, and advocate for improvements in education policy. Belonging to ORTESOL not only makes a difference to your own classroom and professional résumé, but also contributes to the education of tens of thousands of English learners at all levels in Oregon.

I salute all the work that you do, and it has been an honor to serve as your president this year. I hope you enjoyed TESOL 2014, our biggest-ever ORTESOL Fall Conference and our many networking events. Your membership makes this all possible, so thank you. All the best for the winter holidays and a fabulous 2015!

Barbara Page, ORTESOL president

## **Tri-TESOL is coming!**

**Mark your calendars now: October 2-3, 2015, Highline Community College, DesMoins, WA.**



## Welcome to the Winter 2014 Edition of the ORTESOL newsletter with a focus on our K-12 SIG

The role of the ORTESOL K-12 Special Interest Group is to represent the views of K-12 educators and support their interests at ORTESOL events. The SIG aims to provide a forum for exchange of views, research, and best practices related to ESL in K-12 education, to promote research pertinent to ESL in the K-12 arena, and to recognize and explore issues brought on by current and proposed legislation which affects our jobs as educators.



Our 2013-2014 K-12 SIG co-chairs, Sheree LeDoux-Leos and Allison Smith, have represented K-12 concerns at ORTESOL Board meetings and at ESOL-related events throughout Portland. Both work in Portland Public Schools.



### ELPA21: A Newly Developed Assessment System for English Language Learners

*Oregon has taken the lead in a consortium of 11 states to develop ELPA21, an assessment system for English language learners (ELLs) that is based on new English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards for college and career readiness. Although ELPA21 is aligned with Common Core Standards in English Language Arts, Science, and Math, the focus of the assessment is on language proficiency, not on content knowledge.*

*ELPA21 will be field-tested beginning in February 2015, with the field test first given to native English speakers, then exited ELLs, and finally current ELLs. The test will be fully implemented the 2015-16 school year.*

During the month of August, our K-12 SIG co-chairs, Allison Smith and Sheree LeDoux-Leos, traveled to Seattle, WA to participate in Content and Bias review for ELPA21. There, educators from participating states convened to provide feedback to test questions. Outside of the meetings, teachers were able to converse with each other and learn about what is happening across the country pertaining to K-12 English Language Development.

This was an amazing opportunity to collaborate with ELL Professionals across the country. Allison and Sheree gained valuable insight from teacher leaders across the country who know and work with ELLs each day, including veteran teachers, administrators, Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs), ELL Program Directors and coordinators. 🌟

### Interview with Michelle McCoy, Oregon Department of Education Assessment Specialist and Timothy Blackburn, ODE Education Specialist

*By Sheree LeDoux-Leos and Allison Smith*

**AS&SL:** *How do you see ELPA21 changing the outcomes for ELLs regarding placement and proficiency accuracy?*

**MM/TB:** ELPA21's purpose is to provide assessments that best measure English language learners' mastery of the communication needed for states' rigorous academic standards. With the adoption of the new ELP (English Language Proficiency) standards, we anticipate that the ELPA21 will properly assess those standards and be useful to educators regarding student proficiency in English.

ELPA 21 can provide teachers with feedback on how students are performing within the context of each of the 10 ELP Standards. Instead of linearly assessing student language development, ELPA 21 will give teachers a clear picture of how students are using language in academic contexts.

**AS&SL:** *What has been one of the biggest challenges working on this project?*

**MM/TB:** For most of us on this project, it is our first experience working in with a multi-state consortium. Additionally, it is a small endeavor (both in finances and staff) when compared to other assessment consortia, so we are similar to a grassroots organization where everyone involved has multiple roles and responsibilities on a very fast calendar.

Additionally, the ELP Standards, much like the Common Core, require shifts in teaching and learning for both English Language Development (ELD) teachers and mainstream teachers alike. This instructional shift will require teachers to reflect on their own practice to ensure that students are developing the academic language they need for school success, while extending language learning opportunities throughout the school day.

**AS&SL:** *What can teachers do to prepare themselves and their schools for the new ELP Standards and the ELPA21?*

**MM/TB:** As with any standards adoption, unpacking the standards and providing solid professional development for implementation is a great place to start. The ODE Education Equity Unit has been involved in the Professional Learning Teams (PLT) conferences, hosted by the ODE Office of Learning. At the PLTs, ELP Standards teams from 28 school districts with high concentrations of ELLs prepare develop the tools to lead professional learning to guide their district's alignment to the new ELP Standards.



(Continued from page 2)

**MM/TB (continued):** Additionally, the Oregon Department of Education has partnered with Stanford University’s Understanding Language and Oregon State University on a Massive Open Online Course. This free, 8-week online course supports teachers with real classroom applications for instruction aligned to the new ELP Standards. Specifically, the course focuses on supporting ELLs as they construct grade-appropriate claims backed by evidence. One way to stay informed about ELP standards news and opportunities is the Education Equity Unit ENewsletter. To subscribe, click this [link](#).

Specifically for ELPA21 preparation, districts can watch ODE communications for opportunities to participate in the upcoming ELPA21 pilot test, the field test, and other assessment tasks in which Oregon educators will be invited to participate. This ensures our state has excellent representation on all the decision-making steps in the development and implementation of the ELPA21. Then, a year from now, teachers can prepare their students for the first operational assessment by using the ELPA21 practice test with all students prior to the operational window. This will help students become familiar with any test design changes and the new ELPA21 item types. For those interested, the Assessment and Accountability Update is a weekly newsletter that will announce topics of interest regarding the Oregon ELPA and ELPA21. To subscribe, click this [link](#).

An earlier version of this ELPA21 interview omitted mention of Timothy Blackburn's collaboration. We regret the error.

K-12 ORTESOL Board members at this year’s annual Northwest Teachers for Social Justice conference, titled “Re-thinking our Classrooms, Organizing for Better Schools.” Learn more about NWT SJ and watch for news about next year’s conference at <http://nwtsj.org/>



Photos this page courtesy of Barbara Page

**Coming soon!**  
**ORTESOL Spring Workshop 2015,**  
**in Eugene, Oregon**

### Recent K-12 ESOL Events

ORTESOL joined the Oregon Education Association (OEA) and public school students and families for a day of fun at the Quality Education Festival in Pioneer Square on October 19, 2014.



NEA president Lily Eskelsen Garcia, ORTESOL president & K-12 Dream Day planner Barbara Page and OEA president Hanna Vaandering.



TESOL Dream Day 2014 was a success! Educators and administrators from around the world gathered in Portland to participate in workshops on topics such as family involvement, language expectation for the Common Core, educational policy, and assessments. A highlight of the conference was Lily Eskelsen Garcia, current National Education Association President. Her presentation, “The Changing Demographics of English Language Learners in America,” was empowering and moving. She encouraged educators to be fearless advocates and spoke against over-testing children.

2015 TESOL Dream Day will be March 24 in Toronto, Canada. Strands include *Ensuring Equity and Enriching Opportunities to Learn, Meaningful Assessment, 21st Century Excellence, Responsive Teaching, and Rethinking Student Engagement*. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Jim Cummins. <http://www.tesol.org/convention2015/pre-and-postconference-education/k-12-dream-day>



### “Lessons of Basketball and War”

An unorthodox approach to promote conflict resolution and integration of refugees in a Portland middle school

By Zsuzsa Nemeth, ESL Teacher, Portland Public Schools. Photo by Ron Bourke.

As ESL teachers, we always look for ‘best practices’ to improve our teaching, and in our effort to embrace the latest instructional approach and method, we sometimes lose sight of our students, by failing to consider what experiences, skills and knowledge or lack of, they bring to their education. And when we work with adolescent refugees, we are not only their ESL teacher, our role ranges from being a liaison between the school and several social service agencies, to being a negotiator, mediator, and most importantly, an advocate. This is a lesson I learned a few years ago working with Bantu refugees.

At first I only had two of them in my ESL class, a girl and a boy. Then more and more appeared. Our staff was baffled; these newly arrived students just didn’t have what we call ‘school readiness’ skills. Not only did they not know any English, they didn’t quite understand the ‘concept’ of school. They were late to class; many were wandering around in the hallway. Some felt easily overwhelmed and refused to go to classes. I remember calling the principal when I noticed one of my students standing by the water fountain in the hallway eyeing the entrance door. She was about to ‘flee’ and head home in the middle of the day. “Fariido,” the principal said, “you need to go to class”. Fariido\* turned away, and shrugged her shoulders. When Fariido first ran away from school, we brought her back; later we watched her walk out to the corner, stand there hesitantly and eventually return to school.

These are some of my first memories of the Somali Bantu refugees who came to Hosford Middle School about a decade ago. Responding to the immense challenges that these students presented to a regular neighborhood middle school in SE Portland, we had put in place all the interventions that were at our disposal: small ESL classes, support classes, homework club, and collaboration with social service agencies. Despite all of our efforts, we were shocked when things got worse. The girls got into vicious fights and they bit each other, leaving bite marks that were visible for months. Some of these incidents happened at school, some at their apartment complex. It was clear that these refugees were acting on existing tribal rivalries that were fueled by a legacy

of ethnic hostilities they had carried with them from refugee camps in Kenya.

It was time to switch into high gear. As we watched these girls arrive very early to school and dribble a basketball, rain or shine, a small idea took root in our principal’s mind. Why not form an African Girls’ Basketball team and use basketball as a vehicle to teach conflict resolution, team building, social skills and English? A seasoned basketball coach, principal Kevin Bacon sat down with the girls, their families, and embarked on trying to mold a cohesive team out of mostly Somali Bantu refugee girls, who didn’t know the rules of basketball, who would not get along, who were shuffling on the basketball court in their long skirts, hijabs and flip flops, and had never worn a sports jersey before.

There was no time to waste, so the practices started in the summer, months ahead of the Portland Parks and Recreation’s basketball season. The team needed support: a female assistant basketball coach, culturally appropriate uniforms, basketball shoes, grant money for sports equipment and gear, and plenty of community support. I teamed up with Mr. Bacon and started to attend the practices, and wrote a couple of grants with a parent volunteer to fund the purchase of equipment and gear. Slowly the news spread, and the project began to receive media attention. On a hot day in August, local filmmaker Ron Bourke appeared at practice and expressed a strong desire to make a documentary film of the project. He and his crew began to show up for all the practices and games, and interviewed school staff, the girls and their families throughout the year. His movie, *Lessons of Basketball and War*, premiered at a film festival in Florida this past October, and will also be shown at the Cascade Film Festival of African Films on February 28<sup>th</sup> 2015 at PCC. I am not giving away anything of the film, let me just add that most of the girls have since graduated from high school; and many of them are currently college freshmen at PCC and PSU. And yes, it does take a village.... 🐼

\* a pseudonym has been used



**Contribute to the Oregon TESOL community...**

Submit to the *ORTESOL Journal!* The journal publishes the following:

- **Full-length feature articles** – Primary or secondary research with a focus on direct application in the classroom (methods, materials, techniques and activities) at all levels of instruction
- **Teaching notes** – 500-word descriptions of successful teaching projects, practices, activities or techniques that may be adapted and applied by other teachers in a variety of classroom settings
- **Research notes** – 500-word descriptions of completed studies or projects in progress
- **Book reviews** – reviews of scholarly works (not teaching materials) that have been published in the last 3 years

Please visit <http://www.ortesol.org/guidelines.html> to read the details about submissions. Click on “Submission Guidelines”. Contact [journal@ortesol.org](mailto:journal@ortesol.org) with questions.

The deadline for the 2015 edition is December 20, 2014, but extensions can be made for works in progress.



## Oregon EL Facts

In 2013-2014, 57,376 ELs (10.24% of all K-12 students) reported a language of origin other than English.

This is at least as high as the national proportion of EL students (9.1% in the USA for 2011-2012).

Salem-Keizer is the school district with the most ELs in Oregon (2011-2012): 8,572 students (21% of all students) in the district are learning English.

Woodburn is the school district with the highest proportion of ELs in Oregon (2012-2012): 43% of all students are ELs (2,362 students).

School districts in the greater Portland area range from 10% to 20% EL population.

More rural school districts tend to have relatively few ELs. For example, Klamath County schools have about 7% ELs, and John Day School District has about 0.3% ELs.

## K-12 ESOL Glossary

EL or ELL = English (Language) Learners

ELD = English Language Development (classes)

ELP = English Language Proficiency (standards)

LEP = Limited English Proficient

LTEL = Long-Term English Learners

DLL = Dual Language Learners

EB = Emergent Bilinguals

ELSWD = English Learner Students with Disabilities

## Oregon's English Language Learners and English Proficient Students

Oregon's 2013 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Learners	Oregon's 2013 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Proficient Students
13 % of total 4 <sup>th</sup> grade population	87 % of total 4 <sup>th</sup> grade population
91 % Eligible for free/reduced price lunch	52 % Eligible for free/reduced price lunch
9 % Asian, 79 % Hispanic, 9 % White	4 % Asian, 12 % Hispanic, 72 % White
17 % Identified as students with a disability	13 % Identified as students with a disability
76 % Enrolled in school wide Title I schools	54 % Enrolled in school wide Title I schools
39 % Enrolled in suburban schools	24 % Enrolled in suburban schools
10 % Enrolled in rural schools	21 % Enrolled in rural schools
20 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% ELLs	3 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% ELLs
11 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% of students receiving non-English instruction	2 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% of students receiving non-English instruction
40 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% White students	85 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% White students
29 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% Hispanic students	4 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% Hispanic students
33 % Enrolled in schools with 6% or more of students absent on average day	23 % Enrolled in schools with 6% or more of students absent on average day
Oregon's 2013 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Learners	Oregon's 2013 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade English Proficient Students
3 % of total 8 <sup>th</sup> grade population	97 % of total 8 <sup>th</sup> grade population
97 % Eligible for free/reduced price lunch	52 % Eligible for free/reduced price lunch
4 % Asian, 77 % Hispanic, 7 % White	4 % Asian, 20 % Hispanic, 67 % White
39 % Identified as a student with a disability	11 % Identified as a student with a disability
21 % Have at least one parent who graduated from college	47 % Have at least one parent who graduated from college
54 % Enrolled in school wide Title I schools	16 % Enrolled in school wide Title I schools
6 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% ELLs	2 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% ELLs
10 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% of students receiving non-English instruction	1 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% of students receiving non-English instruction
37 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% White students	83 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% White students
32 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% Hispanic students	9 % Enrolled in schools with more than 50% Hispanic students
42 % Enrolled in schools with 6% or more of students absent on average day	35 % Enrolled in schools with 6% or more of students absent on average day

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Mathematics Assessment.

## Most Common Languages of Origin of Students in Oregon Public Schools (2013-2014) - ODE

Language of Origin	Number of Enrolled Students by Language of Origin*	Number of English Learners**	Percent of Total Spring Enrollment*** (Total: 560,482)	Percent of Total English Learner Enrollment*** (Total: 57,376)
English	43,8865	993	78.30%	1.73%
Spanish	80,872	44,341	14.43%	77.28%
Russian	4,722	1,995	0.84%	3.48%
Vietnamese	4,390	1,594	0.78%	2.78%
Chinese	3,060	995	0.55%	1.73%
Arabic	1,272	822	0.23%	1.43%
Ukrainian	1,060	398	0.19%	0.69%
Korean	1,056	390	0.19%	0.68%
Somali	1,012	737	0.18%	1.28%
Romanian	796	314	0.14%	0.55%
Japanese	720	278	0.13%	0.48%
Chuukese	679	479	0.12%	0.83%
Hmong	607	242	0.11%	0.42%
Tagalog	551	208	0.10%	0.36%
Marshallese	420	321	0.07%	0.56%
Hindi	345	94	0.06%	0.16%
Lao	334	104	0.06%	0.18%
Persian	281	102	0.05%	0.18%
Telugu	281	49	0.05%	0.09%
German	277	56	0.05%	0.10%
Thai	263	136	0.05%	0.24%
Nepali	253	199	0.05%	0.35%
Amharic	224	118	0.04%	0.21%
Karen	217	208	0.04%	0.36%
French	213	58	0.04%	0.10%
Burmese	179	118	0.03%	0.21%
Tamil	178	23	0.03%	0.04%
Other or N/A	17,355	2,004	3.10%	3.49%



## Happening ESOLer

*Sandi Rands is an English Language Acquisition Specialist (ELAS) for Salem-Keizer school district. She also coordinates the SPELL (Sustainable Practices for English Language Learners) Grant for her school district. We spoke on the phone.*



### **BES: What do you do as an English Language Acquisition Specialist?**

SR: There are ten of us and we support elementary teachers who have ELs (English Language Learners) in Salem-Keizer schools. There are three different programs available for English acquisition so we have different roles. A couple schools have a dual language program. Quite a few schools have an early exit program that we refer to as Lit Squared; in this program Spanish speakers start in a kindergarten where 90% of instruction is in Spanish and only 10% in English. Each subsequent year, English instruction is increased by 10%. Finally, there are the ESOL program schools where there is at least one ESOL endorsed teacher at each grade level. ELs from many cultures and home languages join English-speaking students in these classrooms. I support teachers in six of the ESOL program schools.

Regardless of the program, there are two key goals for instruction: 1) teachers provide strategies and language structures so that students have access to content regardless of their first language, and 2) teachers provide daily English language development instruction based on their ELs' specific language needs. ELAS work with ESOL teachers to assess students' language proficiency levels and language needs, and to implement scaffolds into instruction to help the students learn the content and acquire the English language. We also use tools to monitor and assess language progress with the Salem-Keizer vision in mind: *All students graduate and are prepared for a successful life.*

ELAs develop and present professional development for their school sites, and district wide as well. All teachers need to understand language acquisition and the new English Language Proficiency standards - all Salem-Keizer students are our students.

### **BES: What do you find most rewarding about working as an ELAS?**

SR: I absolutely love going into the classrooms and working with the teachers and with the students. It is especially rewarding to collaborate with teachers in trying new strategies and seeing students achieve beyond our expectations. We model lessons and introduce interaction routines. Trying something once doesn't always work, so we practice and adapt as needed. Going through that process with a teacher, hearing students explain their new learning using language taught, and seeing them write with academic language makes my job a fulfilling one.

### **BES: I know you also coordinate the Sustainable Practices for English Language Learners (SPELL) grant for your district. What is that?**

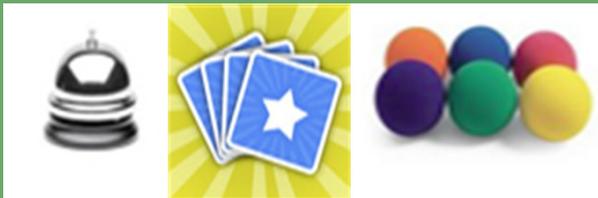
SR: SPELL is a 5-year federal grant written by Maria Dantas-Whitney, Chair of the Division of Teacher Education and ESOL/Bilingual Coordinator at Western Oregon University along with Carmen Caceda, Coordinator of the Bilingual Teacher Program at WOU. It begins with a cohort of 20 teachers going through ESOL endorsement coursework with WOU. In the second year those teachers are assigned a coach (an ELAS), who works closely with them in the classroom on a regular basis to implement the strategies that they learned in their ESOL coursework. The teacher chooses an area or a theme that they want to focus on for based on their students' needs. For example, it might be using language structures in STEM content, self-reflection after lessons, or regularly monitoring students' language progress. SPELL coaches not only meet regularly with their teachers, but also help them collect data. Self-reflection is built into the coaching scenario. By the end of the year we have data on teacher growth as well as on student growth through the use of ESL strategies.

Each year a new cohort begins with the coursework and progresses through the sequence. Year three participants do an inquiry project. They consider the challenges faced during their coaching year and plan a project which begins with a question. In April of every year, the poster cohort presents at the annual SPELL conference, to which all SPELL participants are invited. This year is our fourth year of the grant. We encouraged our 4<sup>th</sup> year participants to present their posters at the ORTESOL conference.

*(Continued on page 9)*

### **Bells, Balls and Bright Colored Cards**

A book of games and activities to brighten up your ESL classes and help students learn.



**By Netta Carver**

Contact "The I Inside Press" for Orders.  
([theinsidepress@gmail.com](mailto:theinsidepress@gmail.com))

Book = \$35 + Kit = \$20 + shipping

*Kit includes 1 bell, 2 balls, and card sets for FastWord and PictureIt*

*Do you know a "happening ESOLer" in Oregon? I would like to include people from a variety of geographical areas and work contexts. Please let me know your idea: [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org)*



## 2014 ORTESOL Fall Conference “Students and Teachers Speak Out” November 14-15, 2014

Over 400 ORTESOL members gathered at PCC Sylvania in Portland on November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for two days of speakers and sessions devoted to excellence in English language teaching at all levels and from a rich diversity of perspectives.

We were honored to host Oregon Poet Laureate Peter Sears who opened the Friday plenary with bilingual poetry in English and Farsi along with PCC Sylvania student Nahid Rashidi. Our featured student, Manny Romero, spoke movingly about his experience as an English language learner from Mexico in local schools. Friday plenary speaker, Dr. Steve Reder, then shared his fascinating research and wisdom on Adult ESOL literacy. PSU professor Janet Cowal, Saturday’s featured teacher, inspired the audience with partnerships that bring together Applied Linguistics departments and schools in the community. Our Saturday keynote speaker, renowned researcher and author Dr. Catherine Collier, addressed the critical issue of English learners with disabilities.

Over 90 break-out and poster sessions featured teaching ideas for all levels, wisdom from research, intercultural information, ESOL policy discussions and many, many opportunities to share resources and information with peers from around the state. Congratulations on a successful conference to all the presenters who worked hard to share expertise with colleagues, to the board members who put on the show and to all ORTESOL members for making the ORTESOL 2014 Fall Conference possible. 🌟

By Barbara Page

### Grantee Report

Anne Marie Engelsen received a grant from ORTESOL to fund her attendance at the conference. Below, she describes her favorite conference session.

By attending Deborah Healey’s session, **Gamification: Hype or Useful Teacher Tool?** I learned that Gamification refers to a larger restructure of the course as a whole.

Dr. Healey began the session by showing a video called *Gamifying Education*, which gave a fast-paced explanation of the benefits and structure of a gamified class. As the video stated, and Dr. Healey clarified, the basic tenet of gamification is to start with the activities and practices used in a classroom and conform them into a game-like system. Teachers already break larger information down into smaller pieces, create achievements for students, use community collaboration, and award points to students. Gamification will include all of these components, but use a game-like organization system. Instead of students assuming they have an A on the first day and losing points every time they don’t receive a good grade, students come into class with a clean slate and earn points for every assignment they complete. Students then level up when they earn a certain number of points, and these levels can correspond to the traditional grading system. Assignments can be structured as quests (long-term, broad-scope projects that take time to complete) and challenges (smaller assignments that move quickly and fit within the quests). As students earn points, they can see their progress and experience an extra sense of ownership and achievement. Teachers can also add in more timed activities, extra collaborative points, and rewards for class achievement as a whole.

Dr. Healey’s session included a demonstration of the gamification system. The participants were given a sheet with several assignments and were able to earn points for not only completing the assignments correctly, but also for collaborating with other participants. This portion was useful for giving the participants first-hand knowledge of how the system worked.

Overall, I was intrigued by the entire idea of gamification, and realized that the basic idea behind gamification - focus on tracking a student’s progress and adding up a student’s grade rather than losing points and counting down - was one that could be easily adapted to any ESOL course or program. 🌟



**SPELL Grant:  
Salem Area Elementary Teachers Present Inquiry Projects**  
*See page 6 (Happening ESOLer) for more information about the SPELL grant*

**Second Grade Retell:** How can the use of visuals, such as graphic organizers, sentence frames, and pictures, support my 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ELLs in meeting the standard to create a written retell of a story? **By Kelsey Dake, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Chavez Elementary.**

*By the end of 2nd grade, students are required to write a retell of a story in sequence that includes characters, setting, problem, and solution, in order to pass a level 28 DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment). At the beginning of the year, only 25% of my ELL students were reading on grade level. In order to support my ELL students in writign a retell, I implemented the use of many visual supports. I monitored student progress using both formative and summative assessments, including a pre-test and a post-test, using the Analysis of Student Work/Student Performance sheet. By April, a third of my ELs were able to meet or exceed the standard, a huge improvement.*



**From Corn to Tortillas:** Will practicing new topic specific vocabulary with language structures as support help my Latino population speak in English about topics learned using that new vocabulary and will they then be able to transfer those skills to their writing? **By Guillermina Romo, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Hallman.**

*I used oral language practice routines such as Busy Bees, Lines of Communication, Talking Bats and others to give students ample opportunity to orally practice new language – vocabulary and a variety of everyday language structures. I employed GRR (Gradual Release of Responsibility Model), modeling, sharing, and working in small groups along with administering “Dictado” for improving writing conventions. To assess the achievements of the students, I used the Language Monitoring Form as well as English and “Dictado” journals. While very little of the writing was performed independently, data showed improvement from week to week in the writing journals.*

**Songs, Chants and Raps Help Students Internalize New Vocabulary:** If I use songs, chants and raps consistently in teaching new content in science, will my students use the new vocabulary in their formative and summative written assessments? **By Carly Justino, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Gubser Elementary.**

*I was concerned that my students weren’t able to use newly learned vocabulary in their writing. My research was based on exposing students to content vocabulary through songs and chants. I compared the student use of content vocabulary in writing when they were taught in a more traditional way to their use of vocabulary after having been taught the same concepts with the addition of songs and chants. I attribute the increased use of content specific vocabulary in writing via the songs and chants supported instruction to the power of rhythm and repetition provided through this medium.*



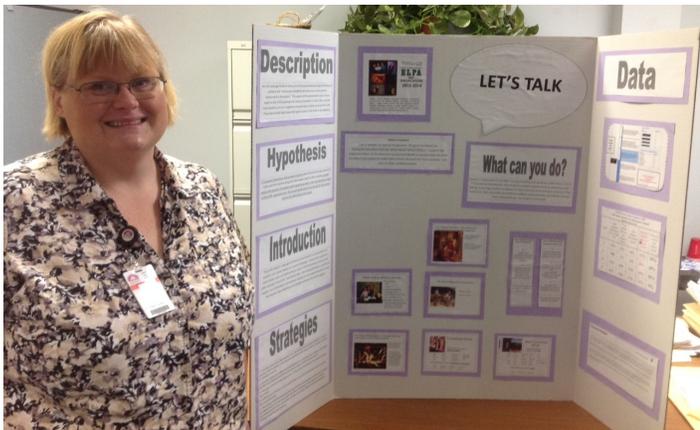
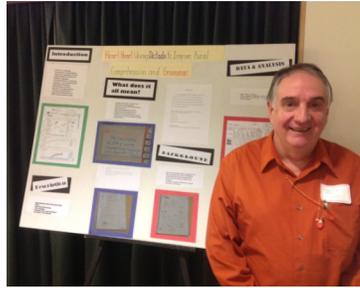
**Realia:** How can the use of realia facilitate greater and deeper understanding of both subject matter and vocabulary? **By Bill Foster, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Miller Elementary.**

*My concern was that my ELL students weren't consistently using descriptive words in their writing. I hoped that by using realia in my lessons that a deeper understanding of the subject matter could be achieved by incorporating the senses of touch and smell. Some of the realia included coconuts, salmon eggs, smoked salmon, pine cones, and pine needles. The most immediate result was the level of excitement it brought to the classroom. Where there is excitement there is conversation, and where there is conversation there is language acquisition. In one unit of study, pre and post test results showed a 100% increase in the number of descriptive words used.*

(Continued from page 8)

**Hear, Hear:** Can using Dictado improve EL student writing in regard to sentence structure and vocabulary use as well as conventions? **By Matt Carter, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Liberty Elementary.**

*ELPA results from last year (2013) indicated the need for work in illocutionary skills – responding appropriately and completely to a prompt - and in grammatical skills. I chose to use a Dictado each week based on content and related vocabulary taught to help students improve their writing, specifically in responding to prompts with elaboration and in trying complex language structures. Purportedly listening skills would also be strengthened. I monitored their performance using an ongoing language monitoring form. All my ELs gained at least one proficiency level in the ELPA. One student gained two levels.*



**Let's Talk:** If I support the principals, coaches, and ELAS to fully understand the illocutionary strand of the ELPA testing, could we improve student performance in the Illocutionary strand of the ELPA? **By Rebecca Eastland, Program Assistant, Curriculum & Testing.**

*Every year our district has students who are negatively impacted due to their scores on the ELPA. They have had double digit losses from year to year (through 2013) on the ELPA, especially in the Illocutionary aspect. It could actually be the fault of the system, not the fault of teachers or students. In the assessment, students must state three things happening in a given illustration. Students often complete only one part of the response and then stop the mic before responding to questions two and three. However, each time they stop the mic, the previous response is erased. Teachers and administrators need to understand the technology of the assessment and then practice with the students accordingly. Students also need guidance in responding to three-part questions in a fluid way. If the teachers understand this, they practice appropriately. Once Professional Development on ELPA was shared district wide, the overall, the ELPA scores rose by 33 per cent. (2014).*

(Continued from page 6)

Our vision for the grant grows and develops each year, as do all of the participants.

**BES: How have you seen the grant make a difference for schools?**

SR: I can see the “Sustainable Practices for ELs” goal coming to fruition.

As teachers go through each stage of the grant, they become more confident in their role as ESOL teachers, and more able to be leaders in their own schools. For example, some third year SPELL teachers are being asked to be English language Facilitators. When the assigned ELAS can't be at a particular school, the EL Facilitator can connect with other teachers providing guidance in that area. The more expertise we have in our schools, the more help principals will have in ensuring that sustainable practices are in place to support ELs. SPELL participants gain confidence through coaching followed by action research. Once they are grounded in their skills and their desire to help our English language learners, it spreads to other colleagues. The outcome is naturally academic success for all our students, our ultimate goal.

**BES: What drew you in to ESOL work, originally?**

SR: Well, it's pretty interesting - I'm originally a high school French teacher, although I didn't teach French for very long right out of college. I married and we started a family, and we lived in Mexico and Puerto Rico. After we moved to Oregon, I went back to teaching. I was hired by Salem-Keizer to teach French but they also needed someone to teach ESOL writing. Having students from many different countries in the class, I enrolled in Western's ESOL endorsement program. For the next eight years I taught French, ESL reading, English, and Spanish. At that point I went into a coaching role which led to my current position as ELAS at the elementary school level.

**BES: What new or future development in ESOL are you excited about?**

SR: I'm really excited about the new Common Core and the fact that the new English Language Proficiency standards align so beautifully with the Common Core. I am pleased to see the focus on student engagement, which means everyone must be able to talk clearly and succinctly about what they're learning. We can no longer say, "Oh this one's shy so she doesn't say much." All educators have the responsibility give all students the language and the opportunity to express their understanding of the content. It's going to boost all of our students' abilities and confidence to interact with each other and communicate. In today's global society, understanding each other through communication is the path to peace.



## ORA Vocabulary Workshop Report

By Diane Tehrani, ESL Instructor, Clark College

A vocabulary workshop entitled “First Key to Unlocking Complex Text: A Generative Vocabulary” was presented by Dr. Elfrieda Hiebert for the Oregon Reading Association (ORA) on October 23. Dr. Hiebert started her presentation by highlighting the role teachers have today to “curate knowledge” much like art museum curators curate art. Thus, language teachers need to “curate language,” using knowledge based in linguistics and neuroscience to organize and teach vocabulary according to how it can best be learned.

Dr. Hiebert's seven “Generative Word Strategies” can help achieve this goal:

1. Teach students to anticipate that complex texts will have many new words and that their generative word knowledge will assist them in figuring out the new words.
2. Expose students to many new topics and the vocabulary associated with those topics.
3. Teach students about the multiple uses of many words in meanings, parts of speech, and uses in phrases and idioms.
4. Teach students words in families, not just single words, including compounding, inflected endings, and derivatives.
5. Teach students about the rich networks of similar meaning words from which authors of narratives choose words for traits/attributes, emotions, motion, and communication.
6. With the vocabulary of informational texts, teach students about relationships among concepts of critical topics.
7. When appropriate, introduce new concepts with pictures and illustrations.

An extensive vocabulary is essential for student success, with the new Smarter Balanced test emphasizing students' ability to read more broadly in literary nonfiction as well as to read more closely and deeply in careful reading of text. In order to be learned properly, words have to be learned in context, and luckily a vast amount of vocabulary is available today from a wide variety of sources, both print and electronic. Thus, teachers can give students many opportunities to meet unknown words in context. Dr. Hiebert pointed out the differences between vocabulary in informational and non-informational texts. In the first, we see lots of repetition and in the second we see sets of synonyms. Because of this, she proposes that since many informational articles are available in magazines, and also the Smarter Balanced test uses articles, students get the breadth they need through reading an article a day, rather than the traditional approach of spending weeks reading a full novel. Dr. Hiebert cautioned against using lexile as a measure of text difficulty since shorter sentences are always rated easier without attention to the difficulty of concepts students need in order to make connections across groups of words in the text.

Dr. Hiebert recommended that words be taught in semantic and generative families. Vocabulary can be organized into

semantic clusters around a central idea, and words should be taught together with similar words. For example, in the framework developed by Dr. Hiebert, words are part of either narrative (synonymous) or informational (concept-cluster) networks. In the first case of narrative networks, examples such as story words ‘amazed, fascinated, and marveled’ would extend beyond the story with ‘enchanted, enthralled, spellbound, captivated, and transfixed’ and ‘baffled, bewildered, and stumped’ with ‘confused, mystified, perplexed, and confounded’. In the case of informational networks, examples for ‘designing mixtures’ would delimit as ‘dissolve’ as a first category, ‘substance’ as a second, and ‘property’ as a third that would respectively entail (1) ‘absorb, combine’, (2) ‘ingredient, mixture, chemical, solution, pure’, and (3) ‘soluble, acid, abrasive, odor’.

In the process of identifying concepts as the basic building blocks of vocabulary, students need to know the two fundamental language systems in English history, the Anglo-Saxon of Germanic tribes and the Latin of Church and Court. The influence of both these languages can be seen in modern English. The former offers the opportunity to teach and learn phonics and word compounding, while the latter offers the opportunity to learn about common prefixes and suffixes, as well as many useful cognates for learners from Romance language backgrounds. With awareness of both these systems of word origins, students will be able to see how words are generated.

Dr. Hiebert noted that pictures are often the quickest way to represent concepts and she and her staff are continually working to add to her free website of some 600-700 such representations at <http://www.textproject.org>. She added that words can be seen as proxy for what is known, and even in picture books many concepts cross over to adult conversation. 🐼

The ORA (<http://oregonread.org>) sponsors an annual conference and many workshops and professional development opportunities for classroom teachers around the state of Oregon. It is the state affiliate of the national International Reading Association (IRA), which publishes journals and research, sponsors a yearly conference, and a number of regional workshops with speakers from the wide world of scholars in the field of literacy education.

A former university professor and researcher, Dr. Hiebert now heads her own non-for-profit organization entitled Text Project, Inc. (<http://www.textproject.org>) to research vocabulary usage and disseminate strategies to enhance vocabulary instruction and learning in the schools. She is also a research associate at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Dr. Hiebert received a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has worked in the field of early reading acquisition for over 40 years, as a teacher in central California and as a university-based teacher educator and researcher. Dr. Hiebert has published numerous research articles, chapters and academic books. Dr. Hiebert's model of accessible texts for beginning and struggling readers, “TEXT,” has been used to develop a number of reading programs that are widely used in schools, including QuickReads, QReads, and Zip Zoom. Since Dr. Hiebert is one of the major contributors to a new series of texts to teach K-12 literacy, she will be speaking in other localities around Oregon. Readers can contact Glenn Chapin at [Glenn.Chapin@Pearson.com](mailto:Glenn.Chapin@Pearson.com) for information about Dr. Hiebert's future presentations.

## Wellness in the Winter

by Rachel Drummond Sardell

The holidays are upon us and we're one-third of the way through the academic year. Whether you're feeling happy and grateful, or overwhelmed with obligations from all directions, winter is a good time to do a self-assessment on your overall mental health.

If you're feeling inundated by "all the things," you're not alone. Dr. Janie Crosmer studied perceptions of faculty burnout in her 2009 dissertation, titled: "*Professional burnout among U.S. full-time university faculty: Implications for worksite health promotion.*" In her study of 411 full-time professors, the two biggest stressors cited by these professionals were navigating bureaucracy and meeting the high expectations that they had set for themselves. This study confirms something we all know: there can be negative impacts to people's personal and professional lives when individuals feel burned out.

When we are mentally, emotionally, and physically drained, we cannot give of ourselves to the degree that we would otherwise be capable of giving. Therefore, I'd like to encourage you, my fellow educator, to prioritize YOU. Make recreation time for yourself at regular intervals that are realistic for your life. I am giving you license to fiercely and consistently put "you time" on your daily do list. Whatever activity makes you feel renewed, be it yoga, social dancing, power walking, cross-stitching, photography, or pleasure reading, schedule it, and do that thing.

Here's the catch: there will be days when you'll get your fun time in and you'll feel like a rock star. Then there will be days when you'll have to limit your precious "you time" or cancel it all together, because life happens. It's okay. It happens. The most important part of this process is that you'll be in the habit of prioritizing your own health and happiness. And when those things are fulfilled, imagine the possibilities of what you'll be able to do! 🌟

## Contribute to the Job Zone!

We would love to include your insights and tips for working in our wonderful profession. Articles are encouraged on any aspect of our work—finding jobs or getting hired locally, visas and international work, juggling multiple jobs, keeping a work-life balance...

Please share your ideas with the editor at: [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org)

### JOB ZONE: Graduate Students Strike at University of Oregon

By Megan Kelly. Photo by AFT-Oregon



"This week students are taking finals, so in an effort to be respectful, our pickets and marches are silent," Graduate Teaching Fellow Emily Mathis describes the scene of the 8 day strike by 1,500 graduate employees that just wrapped up at University of Oregon. "We have information tables stationed around campus to answer questions about the strike, as well as hand out goodie bags to the undergraduates taking exams and wish them luck."

The strike wasn't just about labor concerns. It was about concern for quality of education, and quality of life, for graduate and undergraduate students alike. With Graduate Teaching Fellows at University of Oregon being paid less than the university's own estimates for cost of living in Eugene, and with no paid leave for medical or family emergencies, GTF's are forced to work when they are sick or in crisis, at detriment to their own health and wellbeing, as well as to the education of the undergraduate students that they are tasked with teaching and often mentoring.

The new agreement, according to a letter released earlier this week by the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation, "includes 5% raises to minimum wages retroactive for the current school year and another 5% for next year." It also includes a provision to create a new fund that will be accessible to all graduate students at the university to cover unexpected financial crises.

The University of Oregon, according to Mathis, is a little behind the curve. "Many similar sized state schools do offer paid leave," she explains. Encouragement has been strong, both from other universities – UC Berkeley's graduate student union wrote a letter of support – and from community members, students, faculty, and advocacy groups both locally and nationally. State Senator Michael Dembrow came to express his support as well.

Graduate Teaching Fellows are an integral part of the University school system, and this strike's timing demonstrated that. Exams were delayed and some students were given the option to skip finals in order to relieve the grading burden that now fell to a single instructor for class sizes sometimes in the hundreds. This term six ESL classes were taught by GTFs from the Linguistics Department in the American English Institute's Intensive English Program, according to Alicia Going, Associate Director. "I appreciate our graduate student colleagues, and while it was challenging to keep all the classes covered during the strike, I fully supported their right to strike and am glad that they now have a better contract."

"The Fund is not everything we had hoped to achieve," states the GTFF President Joe Henry in the letter announcing the strike's end on December 10th, "but this is progress in a national movement to strengthen the rights of workers to protected time off work."



## TECHNOLOGY CORNER

### Getting the most out of Chrome in the language classroom

by Sean McClelland, UO American English Institute

Chrome is the most used web browser in the world, with nearly half of all devices running some version of this program. In addition, Chromebooks and Chrome-based applications are gaining ground in K-12, now accounting for 50% of all new K-12 device purchases (Paul, 2014). These Chromebooks run Google's Chrome Operating System using an interface that is identical to the Chrome Internet browser, allowing for ease of use with a limited learning curve.

Many K-12 districts are already invested in Google's *Apps for Education* ecosystem (<https://www.google.com/edu/>), integrating Google Drive, Google Calendar, Gmail, and most recently, the Google Classroom learning management system.

Despite this K-12 shift to the Google ecosystem, many instructors still do not have access to Apps for Education. There are, however, dozens of free or low-cost applications available at the Chrome Web Store (<https://chrome.google.com/webstore>). Here is a short, but far from exhaustive, list of apps designed for classroom use.

#### Pear Deck

Pear Deck (<https://peardeck.com/home/>) is a combination presentation and polling software which allows the instructor to engage students with anonymous multiple choice and free text responses. Ask your students a question, then see their responses in real time

#### Kaizena

Integrated into Google Docs, Kaizena (<http://www.kaizena.com>) gives instructors the ability to leave voice comments in a document in place of written comments.

#### Present Me

Designed for the flipped classroom, Present Me (<https://present.me/content/>) lets instructors upload a PowerPoint, then record a lecture with or without video of the instructor. Presentations are then saved to Google Drive and can be shared with anyone.

#### Google Voice

While not specifically designed for education, Google Voice (<https://www.google.com/voice>) will allow students to call a phone number - free from Google and not attached to your personal number - a leave a recording. After students have finished their recording, Google Voice will provide a transcript of what students said. Instructors can respond either with a returned phone call or a text message. 📞

#### References

Paul, I. (2014, October 23). Chromebook shipments skyrocket as Microsoft unleashes counterattack. *PC World*. Retrieved November 16, 2014, from <http://www.peworld.com/article/2837946/chromebook-shipments-skyrocket-as-microsoft-unleashes-counterattack.html>

Screenshots courtesy of Sean McClelland



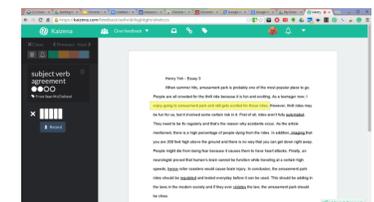
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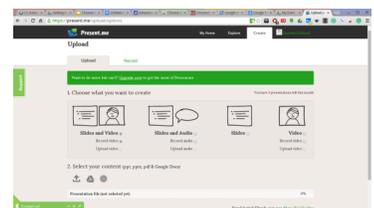
Google's Apps for Education



Pear Deck



Kaizena



Present Me



Google Voice

### The Technology Corner is a regular feature in our ORTESOL newsletter!

If you have new resources to share, or new pedagogical uses for old resources, you can write about them in this space. Submissions of 200-300 words would be ideal, and I can potentially include more than one contribution in a given newsletter. Send me an email and we'll talk about how your idea can fit! ([newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org))



Photos by Beth Sheppard - Send me your pictures for future issues!



**A Sad Loss for AEI** *By Greg Bolt, UO Public Affairs Communications*

Cindy Kieffer, director of the UO’s American English Institute, died Sept. 4 at age 64. Kieffer’s loss was felt deeply at AEI, where she was known for her giving spirit and willingness to help others. Even when deadlines loomed or the work load was particularly heavy, Kieffer could be counted on to lend a hand or a kind word where it was needed, colleagues said. Alison Evans, AEI’s former associate director and a longtime coworker, called her an “unsung hero” who often worked behind the scenes to help others.



Kieffer spent most of her professional career at the UO, arriving as an AEI instructor in 1978. She was instrumental in building the AEI from its inception, and was also widely known and respected both in the US and abroad for her active roles in professional organizations and the AEI’s eLearning programs. She rose to senior instructor in 1988 and has been director or co-director since 2005. She had planned to retire soon.

“She was there for me with some gentle honesty during some unique work situations that I had never before faced,” said Brandy Collier, who has been at AEI for three years. “It’s amazing what an impact she had on everyone.”

Kieffer is survived by her husband, Ken Fuller; a daughter, Vanessa Fuller Martin of Eugene; and a son, Andrew Fuller of Atlanta, Ga. She also is survived by two grandchildren, Zeno and Phoenix, of Eugene. 🐾

**Letter from the Editor**

Dear ORTESOL Members,

Congratulations on making it through another busy fall and into winter. As you read this, most of you are heading into a well-deserved break. Enjoy!

As usual, I appreciated the opportunity to work with our membership on creating this newsletter. I always meet wonderful people in the process. Thank you for our suggestions and submissions.

Our next issue will be published in March and it will focus on the work of our Higher Ed SIG. This SIG includes the greatest number of our membership.\* We’ll also feature the greater Portland region, so I’m sure there will be lots to write about. Please send me your ideas and submissions! I will email a reminder in the new year.

Comments and suggestions are welcome at any time. I love hearing from you!

All my best wishes,  
Beth

*\*This is interesting.*

*I just learned how many members we have in each SIG:*

*Higher Ed - 312 members*

*Adult Ed - 286 members*

*K-12 - 172 members*

*Tech/CALL - 80 members*

*Refugee Concerns - 78 members*

*Which is your SIG? Do you know who represents your SIG on the ORTESOL board? Find out at <http://ortesol.org/sig.html>*



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