How to Ethically Respond to Plagiarism

Reaching Out to ELL Families

Documenting Services for ELLs

Promoting Discussion in the ITA Classroom

Plus conference information and more
# Ohio TESOL Board

## Executive Committee - Voting Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Jessica Burchett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:burchettjes@gmail.com">burchettjes@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Vice President</td>
<td>David Smith</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dlsmith.1@mac.com">dlsmith.1@mac.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Vice President</td>
<td>Sara Levitt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:saralevitt1@gmail.com">saralevitt1@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Interest Section Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>K-12</th>
<th>Post Secondary/Higher Ed.</th>
<th>Adult Education</th>
<th>Research /Teacher Ed. / Applied Linguistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td>Elizabeth McNally</td>
<td>Don Beck</td>
<td>Wendy Buckey</td>
<td>Tim Micek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcnally.48@osu.edu">mcnally.48@osu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:dbeck@findlay.edu">dbeck@findlay.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:wendytesol@yahoo.com">wendytesol@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:micekt@ohiodominican.edu">micekt@ohiodominican.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Underwood</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sunderwood@fairborn.k12.oh.us">sunderwood@fairborn.k12.oh.us</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Advisory Board - Non-Voting Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Marty Ropog</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mropog@literacy.kent.edu">mropog@literacy.kent.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Secretary</td>
<td>Jill Kramer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kramerjill@sbcglobal.net">kramerjill@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>Beverly Good</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jaeger56@hotmail.com">jaeger56@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Coordinator</td>
<td>Linda Berton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lberton@csc.edu">lberton@csc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Advisory Liaisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liaison</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Bev Good</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jaeger56@hotmail.com">jaeger56@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christina Terrell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:christinat103@yahoo.com">christinat103@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFLA Liaison</td>
<td>Lillian Acker</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ackerlil@aol.com">ackerlil@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODE Lau Resource Center Liaison</td>
<td>Dan Fleck</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dan.fleck@ode.state.oh.us">dan.fleck@ode.state.oh.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abdi Mohamed</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abdinur.mohamud@education.ohio.gov">abdinur.mohamud@education.ohio.gov</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards and Grants</td>
<td>Susy Oldham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:soldham@efcts.us">soldham@efcts.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charlotte Putt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:charlotte.putt@gmail.com">charlotte.putt@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Conference</td>
<td>Brenda Custodio, Chair</td>
<td><a href="mailto:custodio.1@osu.edu">custodio.1@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David Brauer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brauer.11@osu.edu">brauer.11@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td>Elizabeth McNally</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elizabethmcnally417@gmail.com">elizabethmcnally417@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitor Liaison</td>
<td>Mary Benedetti</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mary.benedetti@uc.edu">mary.benedetti@uc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Communications Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Manager</td>
<td>Mike Dombroski</td>
<td><a href="mailto:md108091@ohio.edu">md108091@ohio.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Editors</td>
<td>Content: Brenda Refaei</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brenda.refaei@uc.edu">brenda.refaei@uc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Layout: Chris Hill</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hill.880@osu.edu">hill.880@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listserv Manager</td>
<td>Bob Eckhart</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eckhart.5@osu.edu">eckhart.5@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I wanted to start off this letter with a big thanks to everyone who made our 2012 Ohio TESOL Conference a success. It was a lot of hard work, but thanks to the many volunteers we were able to enjoy and learn from a variety of speakers. We are thankful for the help of all the volunteers and facilitators who helped everything run smoothly during the conference. We are also thankful for the vendors and the presenters who made the conference days interesting and worthwhile. The conference chairs and the Ohio TESOL Board work year round to bring you a purposeful and productive conference, and we hope to see everyone again this year for our 2013 Conference that will be held at the Downtown Hilton on November 15th and 16th.

Ohio TESOL is filled with educated and experienced members and we want to stay connected throughout the year. We would like for you to share your ideas, insights, and questions with us. This can be done by writing articles for our Ohio TESOL Journal or by submitting a proposal to submit your best practices at the annual conference. We would also like to encourage members to become more active in our list-serves and discussion boards. More information will be coming from your interest section leaders on how to utilize more of these resources.

Please feel free to contact board members with questions or suggestions. We are here to help and to serve by being a resource, promoting professional development, and advocating for both teachers and students in our English language programs throughout the state of Ohio.

I look forward to a great 2013!

Jessica Burchett
President,
Ohio TESOL

http://ohiotesol.org
Ohio TESOL welcomes proposals for sessions at its 2013 conference. Proposals are being accepted for non-commercial sessions. Please read this entire page before submitting a proposal.

General Presentations: This Call for Proposal form is for submissions that are non-commercial in nature. You may submit your general proposal electronically at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GHFJCKB or go to OhioTESOL.org for more information. **Proposals are due June 21, 2013.**

**Proposals are accepted for the following types of sessions:**

**Papers**

50-minute sessions. These are mainly of a presentation format (40 minutes) followed by 10 minutes of questions and answers and discussion.

**Demonstrations**

50-minute sessions with substantial audience participation. Demonstrations involve the actual doing of a task, or series of tasks. For example, the presenter could explain the steps in the actual performance of a language learning simulation by having the audience participate in one. Demonstrations of computer or technology activities in the computer lab are welcome. “Make it and Take it” activities are also encouraged.

**Panel Discussion**

50-minute sessions, with 3 or 4 panel members, leading to substantial audience discussion; one specific topic should be pursued by all speakers, while the coordinator introduces speakers, summarizes their approach to the topic, and leads the discussion. Submissions should include a clear description of the thematic focus, the proposed contents of the discussion, and a list of the active participants. Topics can include research or practice. For example, with respect to research, a panel could offer several points of view on a con-
troversial subject such as the pedagogical value of explicit grammar instruction. On the other hand, the coordinator of a non-academic topic provides the initiative for the session. She/he will approach colleagues and invite them to participate and coordinate their efforts.

**Poster Presentations**
Posters will be on display during a set time to be announced later. Presenters will be expected to remain at the presentation site (a bulletin board) for approximately half an hour in order to discuss their topics with attendees. Poster presentations are designed to depict a topic by means of pictures and brief notes. Many possible topics suitable for posters can be pursued, from research notes to a detailed lesson plan. For example, a language learning field trip for intensive English students could be depicted with pictures, maps and samples of materials.

**Graduate Research**
Graduate students are invited to discuss their research projects with conference attendees. Three students with similar topics will be scheduled for one concurrent session; each presenter will talk for approximately 15 minutes. Proposals may be from individual students or a group interested in working together.

**Proposal Format**
• Title of Presentation (15 words or less)
• Brief Description (30-40 words)-This information will be included in the conference program.
• Abstract (200 word maximum)

Please note: Due to time constraints, double sessions are rarely scheduled.

Proposals on all topics of relevance to teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages are encouraged. Feedback from previous conferences showed that the following topics are of interest:
• Preparing students for the new PARCC assessments
• How to get parents involved
• Meeting the needs of employers
• Suggestions for teaching grammar/writing
• Low-literacy ELLs
• Ideas for parent or community nights
• Collaboration between classroom teachers and the ESL teacher
• Low incidence school districts
• Implementing the Common Core with ELLs
• Sessions geared toward paraprofessionals
• Cultural information on ethnic groups new to Ohio
• Special needs English language learners
• Ways to integrate technology easily into the classroom
• Reading Recovery and ELLs
• Collaboration between refugee resettlement providers and educators
• Basic information for people new to the field
• Sessions for general education/mainstream teachers

Presenters are also encouraged to submit 4-5 page articles of their presentations to the Ohio TESOL Journal.

http://ohiotesol.org
Happy New Year! I know that by now many of you have made and broken (and a few have made and kept) some resolutions for 2013. My OHTESOL resolution for this year is to increase communication between members in our K-12 band, and I am going to need your help! During the next month or so, I will be sending out an email to each K-12 member who has given us an email address. In this way, I will begin reaching out to you, encouraging you to begin spreading our good news, great ideas and triumphs with each other. I will also be using your feedback from last year’s conference regarding what areas and topics need addressed, and we’ll begin focusing our efforts there. I hope that together, we can begin using our website as a resource and support and a meeting place for ideas. As always, feel free to send me an email with any ideas, questions, or concerns that you have. I look forward to working together to making this resolution one that will lay a foundation for greater student achievement through collaboration and teamwork.

Elizabeth McNally
k-12 Interest Section Rep,
Ohio TESOL
How to Ethically Respond to Plagiarism: Fair and Formative Options for L2 Writing Instructors

By Thomas Fenton

Is plagiarism a moral issue? Educators use moral language that expresses the wrongness of the act that can imply some personal, rather than a technical or conventional, shortcoming. They also observe policies that use virtuous terms such as academic “integrity” and “honesty”. While most academic administrations provide resources to support instructors in dealing with instances of academic “misconduct”, the identification and response to plagiarism is largely left to the instructor. This places a burden on instructors who are faced with a choice between pedagogical and juridical responsibilities (Chandrosoma et.al, 2004) when they suspect plagiarism in their student’s writing. This choice may be clearer in relation to deliberate instances of literary theft. However, do all instances of plagiarism warrant a summative and punitive response? More importantly, are there additional considerations that should be given to university level Second Language (L2) writers who are especially challenged by academic and linguistic discourse conventions?

Simply put, if plagiarism is a moral matter, then it warrants a moral response. In other words, the punishment should fit the crime, and instructors are making an ethical choice when they determine how to respond to plagiarism. In doing so, L2 writing instructors must be considerate of the intentions of the student and the consequences of their response. Furthermore, the notion that plagiarism is “something fixed and absolute” (Price, 2002, p.89) and that there is a single “one size fits all” answer needs to be challenged. In addition to failure or academic sanction, some space needs to be considered for a pedagogical response. This paper will explore this space by first discussing conflicting views on plagiarism, then describing the particular issues facing L2 writers that might lead them to plagiarize, and finally offer alternatives for L2 instructors to consider in responding to plagiarism in their classes.

Plagiarism is a deeply personal topic for instructors. It can be seen as not only compromising a student’s development, but also challenging the relationship between the instructor and student. In terms of its moral import, opinions among scholars range considerably. On one end of the spectrum, there is the absolutist position that it is wrong in every case (Mallon, 1989), regardless of intention (Stern, 2007, p.3) or circumstance. Some have gone as far as to consider plagiarism in biblical terms in that it violates the 8th and 9th commandments; thou shall not steal, thou shall not bear false witness (Harris, 2001, p. 30-31). Conversely, there is a belief that all texts are borrowed in some way, that the dishonesty is with those who believe that “a writer’s words have a virgin birth” (Gladwell, 2004), and that good writing is largely a matter of “covering one’s tracks” (Howard, 1999, p. 7). The extreme view on this side is that all written discourse borrows from
somewhere, and that academic writing has merely created discourse conventions (citations, reference lists) to accommodate the very recent notion that words and texts can be owned by the authors that produce them (see Kearney, 1988 and Foucault, 1969). The question underlying all of these views is one of authorship; when and how words become one’s own. Yet university students are seldom if ever empowered with the authority to write without using sources to support their ideas. The path to authorship is further obscured for L2 writers who also face considerable linguistic barriers when writing academic research papers.

In preparing L2 writers for mainstream university courses, instructors have to work with a variety of topics in addition to linguistic ones. L2 writers need to become proficient in the integration of textual citations with their own original propositions and ideas, and to be able to segregate their research material from their own authorial identity (Wette, 2010; Abasi et al., 2006). Instructors work with students in developing writing practices including direct quotation, paraphrasing, and summarizing (Pecorari and Shaw, 2012). This rhetorical negotiation, or what Kristeva (1980) calls “intertextuality”, poses a serious challenge to the authorial tone L2 writers are charged with developing in order to avoid inappropriate language appropriation. As Angélil-Carter (2000) argues, “Inarticulateness of the novice writer” required to use a foreign language, results from lack of “voice” or a conceptual and social discourse in that “the voices of the sources are not animated by the authorial voice” (p. 35). The challenge is further compounded by cultural factors (Pennycook, 1996) which might further discourage L2 writers who come from cultures whose educational paradigms might promote a more deferential position towards established texts.

When instructors detect plagiarism in their students’ writing, it is important that they recognize that not all forms of plagiarism are the same. Portions of their texts might be improperly cited or patchwritten (see Howard, 1999), their papers may have been revised or re-written for them by a friend or family member, or they could have simply copied text from an online source. Pecorari’s (2003) distinction between “prototypical” and “non-prototypical” plagiarism is helpful at this point. “Prototypical” plagiarism is when a writer deliberately represents someone else’s words as their own. However, “non-prototypical” plagiarism is distinguished by a lack of intention or deliberateness. The writer may have inappropriately included content in their own writing, or engaged a more capable writer in revising their work, not in a calculated attempt to avoid doing the work themselves, but because of lack of competence or familiarity with academic writing conventions.

L2 writing instructors can consider alternatives when responding to plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism can be regarded as a developmental issue, and instructors can offer mediation to students who “slip over the edge of their competence” (Newman et al., 1989, p. 87). Papers that contain uncited or patchwritten text can be revised with the appropriate conventions to adequately conform to formatting rules. A lack of competence in these rules should encourage instructors to intervene in ways that guide students towards better overall writing. Indeed, the writer may have already demonstrated some aptness in locating relevant research material, and they may only require some additional guidance in order to better integrate their sources into their own writing.

L2 writers are particularly subject to instances of plagiarism involving collaborative revision. Papers that are grammatically “too good to be true” often raise red flags, especially when they exhibit word choices and sentence structures not typical of L2 student writing. This might seem unfair in contrast to L1 writers who are encouraged to utilize proofreaders and editors to sanitize their writing of errors. However, there is a natural pedagogical concern for L2 instructors who endeavor to foster linguistic agency in their students in addition to the conventions of academic and scholarly rhetoric. Despite this concern, the learning process should never be monopolized by the instructor who tries to monitor every opportunity for collaboration and ultimately sanction learner autonomy. The expectation of imperfection creates a liability that runs contrary to certain core principles of language education where “discourses aren’t mastered by overt instruction...but by enculturation (apprenticeship) into social practices...
through scaffolded and supported interaction” (Gee, 1989, as cited in Yeh, p. 54). Emulation is an important part of all learning, and there is no easy answer as to how instructors can encourage students to seek out exemplars to facilitate good revision practices. Instructors who engage students in a multiple draft writing process can more effectively identify overly revised texts and redirect the L2 writer back towards more authentic composition.

When instructors face plagiarism, they are faced with an ethical dilemma; whether to respond as teachers or enforcers. In responding with punitive or summative measures that impact a student’s academic and personal life, the instructor might miss an important opportunity to assist or guide the student through a critical, and often perilous, point in their academic writing career. However, choosing to respond in formative and instructive ways will perhaps better enable students to retain and develop their own voice and authorship.

Thomas Fenton is a visiting instructor and academic adviser in the LEAP program at Wright State University.

References


Reaching out to ELL Families When No One Can Read

By Leila Kubesch

As an elementary school teacher, communicating with parents is not just a luxury. At times, if we don’t reach out to ELL families, it could mean that the child misses out on important opportunities that require a parent’s signature like field trips.

I watched the creative effort of staff at my school, noting they do everything from the heart. One teacher takes on the daunting effort of translating all of his lessons to his students, and many other colleagues followed in taking the initiatives to send communication home in the best way they know how. Many discovered the online translation, where pages and pages of text could be cut, pasted and translated. In seconds everything looks amazingly foreign with all the accents we are unfamiliar with. It looks good, we cut and re-paste adding a signature and Voila! It is ready to send home. Unfortunately, these hard working teachers do not hear back. They resolve with the consolation that the information has been conveyed at least one way.

I never read what they sent home, and they never knew the daily calls that I received from confused families. As I became inundated with calls, that time became an additional task to my daily teaching assignment; had even less time to have a dialogue with my colleagues.

Parents who could not read, managed to find those who could, but no one was able to de-cypher what was being sent. Parents began sending those letters back hoping to convey that they did not understand, and teachers were confused why the backpacks of their students were turning into a mess of a filing cabinet. “Parents don’t even bother to take them out!” A colleague shared in frustration after all that she had done to send and copy these letters.

To add to the challenge, teachers upheld a team spirit sending letters marked with “2nd grade team, or the Office Staff, and so on. When parents call me to inquire, I have no idea who sent the letter so I may ask. When I inquired with the Office Staff, no one recalls sending anything, as though we have Office Gremlins sending mischievous writing when no one was around!

As it turned out, we had received flyers from various buildings to pass on to our ELL families.

When I was lucky and had the parents come to show me the letters that were sent, it became clear what had happened.

Lost in translation: What the staff intended to say

Intended Message: Parents, please fill out the form and return to the teacher.

Received message: Parents, please fill out the shape and return to the teacher.
Intended Message: The pink paper explains about the field trip.

Received message: The diaper rash paper explains about the trip to the field.
(Rosado in Castilian Spanish, spoken in Spain, means pink. In Mexico it means diaper rash.)

Intended Message: To help your KDG student reinforce the material at school, you can use items like beans to count because repetition helps to reinforce his/her learning.

Teacher Note: To help your KDG student reinforce the fabric at school, you can use components desire beans to count, because repetition helps to reinforce his studies.

A Note about Translation

Some common procedures that we use in the U.S are never employed in other countries. For example, detention is foreign in other nations. Newcomers who receive a detention should get a note home that explains to parents what exactly happened. Instead of writing that the child received a detention, opt to explain that the child was kept from going to recess along with the reason. Many parents who received a note about detention, kept their child home the following day believing that their child is not allowed to return for a day as punishment.

Conveying Your Message

1. Use standard fonts for all the written documents. Many people are unfamiliar with certain fancy lettering that would make it hard for them to read. Some lettering might seem childish so parents would believe the letter is unimportant.

2. Use concise writing, enough to get the message across. For example, “We are striving to teach our young friends to sit crisscross applesauce on the floor.” Change to “we are teaching students to sit on the floor properly or to cross their legs when they sit on the floor.”

3. Include the names of the teachers or staff member who sent the letter, instead of using 2nd grade team or office.

4. Consider having a logo for the different department on all letters. For example, letters from the nurse could have a Red Cross symbol.

5. Consider including clipart on top of the letters that would tell what the letter is about. For example a field trip to the park could have an image of a picnic. Parents shared that the images helped them a lot. For instance, when they misplaced the paper, though they could not read it, they knew what to look for.

Urgent Communication

ELL parents rely on friends and family to interpret school communication when they feel that the letter is important and requires their attention. When that is not available such as timely signatures, these are some strategies that have been very successful.

Use clip art to inform of the field trip when possible and highlight the line that needs to be signed. Inform the students whenever possible. Parents rely on them to tell them what is happening at school. This may not be possible for very young students. Attach a note to the letter such as the sample below

Favor de firmar - Please sign - подпись

Dear Parents,

Please sign and return the permission letter. It serves to receive permission from you to offer English as a Second Language intervention and accommodations that your child needs.

Sincerely,
Your name

Addressing issues of making phone contact

Even when an interpreter is available or funds exist to use the telephone interpreting services often
there are issues with the family’s phone such as:

1. The phone is not in service
2. The phone does not accept messages
3. The phone starts with a very long song that does not end even after 4 minutes.
4. The phone number belongs to someone else
5. No response after a message is left.

Sending a note with the following information is a sure way to let ELL families know that you need to reach them and you need them to update their telephone contact with the school.

*We can’t reach you! Please send a working telephone number.*

([(---) --- ----] [(---) --- ----])

What to do when a dialogue with an ELL family needs to take place

There are times when a signature and phone number updates are not enough. For example, if the administrator or teachers need to engage in collaborative communication about the child such as having a Parent/Teacher meeting to include IEP meetings or to disclose pressing disciplinary actions. Many schools have attempted many creative endeavors including bringing in high school students who have completed a year or more of a foreign language. This is a great idea to enlist the help of youth to direct parents to the right location. However, it is never acceptable to have a child interpret or translate. First, these students do not have the technical command to know vocabulary that relate to serious issues. Secondly as some parents pointed out, “Es una verguenza.” Simply put, they feel ashamed. Often, people from the same ethnic group within the same district live near each other and may know each other. Parents do not want private matters to become public, and they merit the same dignity anyone else receives.

Telelanguage is a service that many schools use that is supported with Title III funds. It is ideal to use anytime the school needs to communicate with parents by phone or in person. The service has over 200 languages. A school may contact the service a day in advance for less common language and arrange for a time.

To use Telelanguage:
1. Call 800-514-9237.
2. Specify the language needed.
3. Have your school access number. You will be asked to wait a moment.
4. Turn on speakerphone.
5. Begin with an introduction to the family with who is present at the meeting. The phone interpreter will interpret.
6. Announce “End of Call” to signal the end of the interpretation.

Check with your school as you may already have the service. If you don’t have it, consider having it available. Fees are assessed based on the number of calls and wouldn’t have to be paid when it is not used. Here is the contact information for inquiring about this service.

Final Advice

ELL families do not wish to be disconnected from the school. They tend to have a high regard for school and staff, but often feel excluded. One of the best ways to foster a relationship is to consider sending translated documents in both languages on the same document. Parents who speak Spanish, should not receive a copy in Spanish only. Many of them cannot read in their own language, but could rely on others to help. Consider using the same font, size, clip art and so on whenever possible in sending bilingual communication.

*Leila Kubesch is an ELL teacher at the Princeton City School District where she works closely with ELL families and is a translator/interpreter.*

Reference

Telelanguage 514 SW 6TH Ave, 4th Floor Portland, OR 97204 or call toll-free: 888.983.5352.
While working closely with several northwestern Ohio K-12 school districts in meeting Ohio compliance regulations regarding the education of English language minority students, I have learned that each school district’s needs and English language learner (ELL) populations are unique. However, one common theme that appears amongst all the schools is the need to document and communicate the services that are being provided to their respective ELL populations. This need is both internal and external. Internally, they need a system to communicate the English level and learning expectations of the ELL to the content classroom teachers including what classroom modifications are to be made to help students succeed. Externally, they need documentation that shows that adequate services are being provided and that learning progress is being made. What I recommend to the schools I work with is to institute an individual learning plan (ILP) when ESL and administrative staff is sufficient to record and track the needs of each ELL and a leveled learning plan (LLP) when there is not sufficient staffing to specifically tailor the plan to each individual learner.

Below I offer a generic copy of an ILP, which the readers can then tailor to meet their school or district’s specific communication and compliance needs. In this form Section A: Identification contains biographic information on the child as well as documenting that parental approval for services has been given. Section B: English Language Proficiency Assessment provides the test date, ELL/LEP level as indicated by the assessment and the type of assessment instrument used. Section C: Program Type/Hours of Service defines the school’s service options and the amount of service to which the student is entitled. For most schools in Ohio there may be only one ESL programing option and service may or may not be provided daily. Section D: Mainstream Classroom Accommodations reports what accommodations should be made by the content teachers in order to assist the ELL during content instructional time. Section E: Assessment Accommodations allows the school and the content teachers to understand what kind of assessment accommodations they should make to assist the ELL in showing his or her competency in the content material. Section F: Comments is a box that can be filled-out and shared by either the ESL teacher or the content teachers working with this student. Such comments can be compiled over time or they can be dismissed by semester or grade level depending on the purpose of the document and the needs of the school. Sections G and H allow the school administrators, parents, teachers or compliance auditors to know when the student’s form was last updated and by whom.

The difference between the ILP (individual learning plan) and LLP (leveled learning plan) is in the level of detail being recorded and provided.
In the ILP, each section would be filled out and monitored per the student’s needs, and may be updated as frequently as the ESL teacher feels is necessary as the student makes progress through the program. However the LLP is a document that the school tailors to the services and accommodations that are representative of each OTELA assessment level; and as such the information provided in the ILP sample Section C: Program Type/Hour of Service, Section D: Mainstream Classroom Accommodations, and Section E: Assessment Accommodations are predetermined by the OTELA/diagnostic level that the child has achieved. A new LLP would therefore be provided with each new OTELA score given that progress by the student was made, until the student is successfully exited from ESL services.

If your school decides to adopt this documentation system, it should be used with all English language learners in your district even if the parent refuses ESL services. Refusing ESL services does not exempt the district or the content teachers from being required to help an English language learner make adequate yearly progress – it just makes it more difficult.

Dr. Jennifer Fennema-Bloom is the Graduate TESOL Director and an Assistant Professor of TESOL/Bilingual Education at The University of Findlay. She works closely with north-western Ohio public schools to provide in-service training and support to schools struggling with new or expanding populations of English Language Learners.
**School Name/School Logo**

**Individual Learning Plan**

**A. Identification**

1. Last Name: ____________________________  
   First Name: ____________________________

2. Birth Date: ____________________________

3. School: _______________________________

4. Grade: ________________________________

5. Home Language: _______________________

6. Has been enrolled in U.S. School for less than 1 year (consecutive or cumulative): yes/no
   First Enrollment Date in a U.S. School: _______________________

7. Enrollment Date in the district (month/date/year): ________________

8. SIFE Status: yes/no

9. Migrant Status: yes/no

10. Qualifies for Government aide (e.g. free lunches): yes/no

11. Qualifies for Special Education services: yes/no

12. Parent/Guardian ESL Notification Letter sent: yes/no

13. Parental/Guardian ESL services waved: yes/no

14. ESL teacher and Mainstream teacher(s) reviewed ILP: yes/no

**B. English Language Proficiency Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Date</th>
<th>ELL/LEP Level</th>
<th>Instrument Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C. Program Type/Hours of Service:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program type</th>
<th>Daily Amount of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pull-out</td>
<td>Provide written notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push-in</td>
<td>Create vocabulary lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered instruction</td>
<td>Respect students silent period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion (with/without tutoring assistance)</td>
<td>Allow inventive spelling or native language on first drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>Tap into students’ prior knowledge, before introducing concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**D. Mainstream Classroom Accommodations (check all that apply)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperative/community learning</th>
<th>Phonetic guidance</th>
<th>Provide written notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio-text</td>
<td>Graphic organizers</td>
<td>Create vocabulary lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language dictionary</td>
<td>One-on-one tutoring</td>
<td>Respect students silent period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language translations</td>
<td>No penalty for morphological/syntactic errors</td>
<td>Allow inventive spelling or native language on first drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use scaffolding techniques</td>
<td>Present directions in written and spoken format</td>
<td>Tap into students’ prior knowledge, before introducing concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student from one level of understanding to another</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shown examples of good/poor assignments</td>
<td>Reduction of non-essential text</td>
<td>Give shorter assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model assignment</td>
<td>Main ideas highlighted for students</td>
<td>Employ realia and hands-on activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use simplified language</td>
<td>High usage of visuals</td>
<td>Limit areas for correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary development projects</td>
<td>Check and recheck for understanding</td>
<td>Allow the use of bilingual dictionaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use TPR</td>
<td>Allow students to copy notes</td>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://ohiotesol.org
E. Assessment Accommodations (check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Allow open note/book tests</th>
<th>Allow English dictionaries</th>
<th>Modify grading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exempt from standardized testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of bilingual dictionary</td>
<td>Give directions in small, distinct steps</td>
<td>Modify course objectives/outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended time requirements</td>
<td>Oral &amp; written directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test orally</td>
<td>Read directions to students</td>
<td>Grade on pass/fail basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading assistant</td>
<td>Shorten assignments</td>
<td>Multiple choice – limit choices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give clues/prompts</td>
<td>Adapt worksheets/packets</td>
<td>Modify weight of course components</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record or type assignments</td>
<td>Use alternative assessments/ portfolios</td>
<td>Final grade/assignments reflect a variety of measures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Comments:


G. Last Date Updated: __________________________________________________________________ Affective until: __________________________________________________________________

H. Person Responsible for Report: ____________________________
Promoting In-Depth Discussion in the ITA Classroom: Three Winning Activities

By Lara Wallace

Many universities rely on International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) to instruct undergraduate classes (Finder, 2005; Gorsuch, 2011). To help those ITAs in need of improving their spoken English intelligibility, some institutions offer courses for the ITAs in which they learn pronunciation and presentation skills. However, even when the ITAs take these classes, which are offered on campuses in which English is the primary language spoken, ITAs often complain that they do not have enough opportunity to practice English. Therefore, it is important for oral communication instructors to not only go beyond the textbook to find meaningful discussion contexts for the ITAs, but to also give them some control over these topics and materials. In this article, I will briefly explain three activities that I have used in the classroom that have allowed for the in-depth practice that these English language learners (ELLs) need in order to put their new pronunciation patterns into practice, and how these activities can be graded.

The Reflexive Photography Project

In this capstone activity that takes place towards the end of the term, ITAs take photos that represent what has been helping and/or obstructing their progress towards improved spoken English intelligibility. Past ITAs have taken many kinds of photos such as a picture of bookshelves in the library to show that she spends much of their time studying quietly (not practicing their speaking), a group of people holding umbrellas while waiting for a bus to illustrate how small talk has helped, a round table discussion in a class that gave him the opportunity to speak his mind and take risks, self-portraits of positive practice with a tutor or friend, friends and roommates from their home countries to show that they don’t speak English in their free time, and a single autumn leaf to show that change is “always hard and it’s always necessary.” Of all of the pictures that they take, they choose seven of the most representative photos to share in a small group discussion format in class. From these discussions, the ITAs then set goals for the remainder of the term on how they can improve their spoken English. By doing so, this not only gives the ITAs a chance to speak in an extended fashion, but it also allows the ITAs to examine their personal progress towards improved spoken English intelligibility in a visual way, and to learn from others’ experiences.

So as not to discourage creativity, points can be given based on bringing the correct number of photos, giving a clear and concise caption to each photo (how the photo represents something key to the students’ spoken English improvement), and making sure that the subject clearly and directly relates to the ITAs’ efforts at improving spoken English intelligibility. If presented as a Power Point rather than individual printed pho-

It is important for oral communication instructors to go beyond the textbook to find meaningful discussion contexts for ITAs.
tos, points can also be given on the appearance of slides (format is clean and free of errors, a title is provided for each photo, and so on). However, please be aware that if the photos are in a PowerPoint, the ITAs may feel more inclined to present their photos rather than discuss them. To read a more detailed description of reflexive photography, see Schulze (2007).

**Using Blogs as a Platform for Course Content**

On many types of course management systems such as Blackboard, for example, blogs can be set up on the course website by topic, such as Overcoming Speech Anxiety, Body Language, or Tongue Twisters. Before class, ITAs find and post relevant material, and give a brief explanation as to why they chose it. This material can be used in class in a variety of ways. ITAs can present it to the class as a whole, they can share it in small groups, and so on. Posting to a blog gives the ITAs an opportunity to find, contribute, and explain materials that serve as the basis of classroom content for certain lessons, and this can be done throughout the term. I have noticed that ITAs have more to say about the content when they are the ones who provide it. Another advantage is that the materials that the students contribute are often from a wider variety of sources than what I might tap if it were only me looking for course content. In terms of grading, I have given them credit for posting the content before class along with a brief summary on what the source is and why it was chosen (0 for incomplete, 0.5 for partially complete, 1 for being complete). I do not give credit for late submissions in order to highlight the importance of their timely contribution to class content.

**Leading a Discussion**

This activity is designed to take place throughout the term in order to give ITAs ample opportunity to speak, and ensure that everyone has a turn as discussion leader. As the instructor, I have chosen themes for the discussions based on ITAs’ concerns going into the school year (such as motivating students, grading, and lesson planning), and SPEAK Test question types and strategies (organization of responses, reading a graph, making changes to a schedule, and so on). After ITAs have chosen the topic of discussion, the discussion leader finds materials for the class to prepare on that topic and submits them for the instructor’s approval. I have ITAs turn these in towards the beginning of the term so that there is more consistency in the amount of preparation the rest of the class must do; it also provides some extra time for ITAs to find improved materials in the event that what was submitted is insufficient or inappropriate. In advance of each discussion, the rest of the class is expected to have read or watched these materials. In order to boost participation, I have required that everyone contribute a discussion question based on what was prepared, and it is turned in at the beginning of class on a note card, then given to the discussion leader after I have made any changes in the grammar or word choice to clarify the question. I then remove myself from the group and cede control to the discussion leader, who facilitates the fifteen to thirty-minute discussion, summarizing as s/he goes, and tries to engage as many people as possible in the discussion. This activity provides ITAs with the opportunity to prepare, facilitate, and participate in a discussion where both planned and spontaneous speech is necessary.

Because more preparation is involved, I grade discussion leaders on a rubric, evaluating them on time management, their ability to draw others into the discussion, giving background knowledge and context in the introduction, sharing related information from other sources, adherence to and unpacking of the topic, and tying it all together in the end. The rest of the class receives credit for their relevant discussion question being submitted on time. To read more about the pedagogy on which this is based as well as to learn more details about how I set up this activity the first time I used it, please see Wallace (2012), “Moving ITAs from the wings to center stage: Leading discussions in an ITA preparatory course.”

**Conclusion**

These activities provide a safe space and opportunity for busy ITAs to practice their spoken English, especially for those who surround themselves
with people speaking their native language, or for
the solitary ITAs who do not interact much with
others. As one ITA wrote appreciatively in his
reflexive photography project last fall, “This [the
ITA Preparation Class] is one of the few places
that I have to talk to other people. Sometimes I
don’t talk to anybody for two days.” It is for him
and all other ELLs that instructors need to not
only help ITAs understand what they need to do
to become more intelligible and how, but also to
give them some time to practice this while having
some agency in their own learning.

Lara Wallace is a Lecturer and the ELIP Pronun-
ciation Lab Coordinator in Ohio University’s De-
partment of Linguistics. Her research interests
include ITAs, pronunciation, oral communica-
tion, and CALL (Computer Assisted Language
Learning).

References
Finder, A. (2005). When the teacher has mastered all but Eng-
articles/2005/06/24/news/assistant.php

Gorsuch, G. (2011). Exporting English pronunciation from
China: The communication needs of young Chinese sci-
entists as teachers in higher education abroad. Forum on
Public Policy, 2011(3). Retrieved from forumonpublicpolicy.
com/vol2011no3/archive/gorsuch.pdf

Schulze, S. (2007). The Usefulness of Reflexive Photography
ed.gov EJ840904

Wallace, L. (March 2012) “Moving ITAs from the wings to cen-
ter stage: Leading discussions in an ITA preparatory course.”
tesolitis/issues/2012-03-06/email.html
A Study on Taiwanese American English Pronunciation Difficulties

By Ku-Yun Chen & Jeffrey S. Wurm

In the last few years, several articles have been devoted to the study of English pronunciation for students of English as a Second Language (ESL). A great deal of effort has been dedicated to pronunciation of ESL students. What seems to be lacking, however, is the element leading to and causing ESL students to mispronounce words (Mojsin, 2009). A review of the literature revealed that a common theme among multiple sources is a lack of qualified teachers in Taiwan (Dey, 1993; Glasser, 1993; Herrell & Jordan, 2004; McKenna & Robinson, 2006). It is not easy for foreign teachers to teach standard American English. One major problem is teachers with diverse accents. From these teachers, students learn diverse ways of speaking and pronouncing English as correct. How to correct foreign accents is an inexorable and persistent topic.

Research Questions

The intent of this study was to understand why ESL students cannot eliminate their accents. Our general question asks:
1. Do the participants in a carefully conducted study think that practice really can eliminate Taiwanese Students (TS) own accents?
2. Beyond a certain age, can TS acquire a near native American accent?
3. Do TS know the clues for accent placement and syllable division?

According to these basic and controversial dilemmas, our assumption is that it is impossible for TS to eradicate their accent. The age at which they started English study, their Taiwanese language fluency, their university major, and the nationality and accent of their English teachers are focal elements that may influence their English pronunciation.

Method

Participants
The study took place at Ashland University (AU), in Ashland, Ohio, in 2006. The participants were 19 female Taiwanese students who were attending AU. Some were studying for their master’s degree at AU while the others were studying English as a Second Language (ESL) at the Ashland University Center for English Studies (ACCESS). All had at least university degrees from a Taiwanese university and had fundamental English abilities. In this study, the age of most participants was between 20 and 30 years old.

Instruments
The data collection was based on a triangulated qualitative approach. The three instrument elements were verbal analysis, interview, and observation (Creswell, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Every element informed the others (see Figure 1). In this research, two researchers (Taiwanese and American) conducted these interviews. The Taiwanese researcher played the role of collecting and recording data whereas the American researcher played the role of silently noting the participants’ incorrect pho-
nemes. The first interview for this study was designed with an examination of 44 phonemes, and common mispronunciation of TS.

**Results: They Said They Know; Actually, They Don’t Know**

First, 11 participants said they only had vocabulary problems, not pronunciation problems when they communicated with native English speakers. Only one participant said that she had pronunciation problems. Nevertheless, the reason the American researcher had difficulty understanding was the pronunciation problems not language problems. From this viewpoint, one might say that the participants did not truly realize that they had pronunciation problems.

Second, the Achilles’ heel of TS, the *th* sound, is a well-known example. Most ESL students have a problem with the *th* sound. During the entire interview, none of the participants could consistently pronounce the *th* sound of the sound. Of course, every participant was aware of the *th* sound. However, none of the participants could always remind themselves to pronounce it. Thus, generally speaking, all participants sometimes forgot to pronounce the *th* sound because the *th* sound is not related to any Chinese or Taiwanese pronunciation. This example sufficed to show that TS lack the ability to sense the extent of their pronunciation problems.

Third, the accent issue is complex in this study. Five participants said that they could control their accent. However, they had even heavier accents than those who said that they could not control their accent. Evidently, some TS are not aware of their oral speaking limitations. In other words, some overestimated their English ability. Knowing does not equal actual capacity. It is clear from this research that TS cannot control their own accent even though they think they can.
Fourth, seven participants thought they knew the clues of accent placement. Nevertheless, after the American researcher’s examination, another ironic outcome emerged. Their linguistic intelligence was not as high as they thought. When these seven participants were engaged in casual conversation, they often placed the wrong accent on words. Those who said that they sometimes know the accent placement and even those who do not know where they should place the accent mentioned that it depends on the words. Different words have diverse accents.

Fifth, 10 participants said they did know how to divide syllables whereas seven said that they sometimes know. Only one said that she did not know how to divide them. This is totally similar to the accent results. Most participants are not aware of their English inability. Some think they know their ability because of a lack of education and experience. However, perhaps the TS that only know up to a certain level of fluency, do not know their speaking deficiencies in terms of accent and syllabic division. This significant characteristic reflects why TS always cannot eliminate their own accent. TS do not realize where their flaws are, which makes TS still suffer from wrong accents and incorrect speech (see Figure 2.).

Several observations in the last few paragraphs have shown that TS are unaware of their English pronunciation difficulties. It seems reasonable to conclude that TS cannot improve their speech because they do not know that there are English pronunciation problems. How can the students fix their mistakes when they do not even know the existence of the mistakes (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010; Dey, 1993; Shrum & Glisan, 2010)?

To sum up, the study indicates three suggestions for ESL teachers. First, ESL teachers should pay attention to their students’ incorrect pronunciation. Second, the teachers should analyze and categorize types of mispronunciation their students
make, such as the *th* sound, intonation, accent placement, and difficulty in dividing syllables. Third, as professional ESL teachers, we should give students hints and expect them to notice their own mistakes. Never do we point out students’ mistakes in front of them and their classmates. Students’ anxiety is going to sabotage their English learning. What is worse, anxiety will further kill students’ interest and motivation to learn English.

Ku-Yun Chen, Ph.D (ABD) is a member of the Faculty of Education of Beijing Normal University. Jeffery S. Wurm is an ESL Instructor at Ashland University: ACCESS.

**References**


http://ohiotesol.org