

The Definite Article

WATESOL Newsletter Fall 2023



Fall Conference Saturday, November 4, 2023

Pryzbyla Center at Catholic University

Blending Tradition and Innovation:

Effective Practices for Language Learning

WATESOL NEWS

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ON THE COVER

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From the editors:

Dear WATESOL Members,

We have experienced another year of unimaginable change and overwhelming tragedy. Yet we continue to teach English to children, adults, international students and professionals, as well as the many refugees who have made their way to the United States in the last two years. We are all coping in our own way; yet, let's remember the theme of last year's annual conference - we are stronger together.

We hope you will join us on November 4 for the 2023 annual conference at Catholic University's Pryzbyla Center. This year's theme examines the ways we teach in this new world: "Blending Tradition and Innovation: Effective Practices for Language Learning." The conference will be a wonderful opportunity to meet and learn from local TESOL professionals.

At the conference, the detailed program will be digitally available through a QR code posted throughout the site. Be sure to download a QR code reading app before the conference!

This year, hopefully before Thanksgiving, we will post a mini-proceedings, with a [Creative Commons](#) copyright license. The proceedings will be an open educational resource ([OER](#)) and available for those who did not attend the conference.

Very best wishes,

Kathleen F. Kearney and Marina Dewees
Co-editors



WATESOL welcomes submissions from members for publication in *The Definite Article*. Submission guidelines can be found [on our website](#).

Authors are responsible for the inclusion and accuracy of their references. The articles published in *The Definite Article* reflect the research, classroom experiences, and opinions of a wide range of contributing authors and do not constitute policy statements on behalf of the organization. WATESOL welcomes articles that reflect diverse perspectives on practices and issues relevant to those in the TESOL field.

Letter from the President

Dear WATESOL Members,

We are less than a month away from WATESOL's annual conference, the year's most cherished professional development event in our community of TESOL educators. We are excited to announce that the conference will be held in person, providing an opportunity to network with colleagues once again. The conference will span a single day, featuring a diverse range of workshops, presentations, and panel discussions. Renowned experts in the field of TESOL will be delivering keynote and invited speeches, offering valuable insights and innovative approaches to language teaching. You can expect interactive sessions that cater to various proficiency levels and teaching contexts, ensuring a rich and engaging learning experience for all participants.



At this year's WATESOL conference, innovation meets education in a remarkable fusion of technology and language instruction. With Artificial Intelligence at the forefront of our conversation, our spotlight shines on the limitless potential of AI in English language teaching. Imagine an AI-powered classroom that reinvents learning, engages students on a personal level, and opens up the potential for language acquisition to reach new heights. This conference promises to be an exciting exploration of how artificial intelligence is shaping the landscape of TESOL, including cutting-edge AI-driven language assessment tools. Join us in this dynamic dialogue about language education's future. The WATESOL conference offers opportunities, bringing together innovation and inspiration to empower educators and elevate English language teaching to a new level. Don't miss out on this exciting event!

WATESOL Fall Conference 2023
Saturday, November 04, 2023
Catholic University
Blending Tradition and Innovation:
Effective Practices for Language Learning

WATESOL is currently working on the following items:

- Grants WATESOL continues to offer a variety of grants and scholarships. We plan to offer another round of grants and scholarships in the fall. We will announce our grants and scholarships at the WATESOL conference and then on the WATESOL website.
- Spring Webinar Series WATESOL will continue to offer a spring webinar series in 2024. There are many opportunities to join webinars on a range of TESOL topics. Please check the [WATESOL website](#) and our social media platforms for additional information. This series is free and open to all; webinars will be recorded, and these recordings can also be found on [WATESOL's YouTube channel](#).
- Fall Conference Proceedings: Our Newsletter Team is working on putting together conference proceedings so that attendees and our larger TESOL community alike can have access to the valuable insights and knowledge shared during the event. This comprehensive collection will include summaries of keynote speeches, workshop materials, and research findings provided by the presenters, all of whom are subject-matter experts. We aim to create a resource that will continue to benefit our community long after the conference has ended.

It has been an honor to serve the WATESOL community. The board is committed to meeting the evolving professional development needs of its members and will continue to identify new and creative ways to support TESOL practitioners. We understand the importance of staying up-to-date with the latest trends and research in the field, and we are dedicated to providing relevant and valuable resources to our members. Additionally, we are always open to feedback and suggestions from our community, as we strive to create a collaborative and inclusive environment for all TESOL practitioners.

Krisztina Domjan
WATESOL 2022–2023 President

WATESOL Fall Conference

The annual WATESOL Fall Conference is happening on November 4, Saturday, and it brings a current and relevant theme: *“Blending Tradition and Innovation: Effective Practices for Language Learning.”* The board members chose this topic because we understand the Language Teaching Field as well as ELLs find themselves in an era of change and caught in the middle of conventional ways of teaching/learning, and novelties that keep popping up and apparently are here to stay, like Artificial Intelligence.

The Conference’s keynote speaker is Elisabeth Chan, an ESL professor at Northern Virginia Community College who is currently serving on the Board of Directors for TESOL International Association (2022-2025). She has advocated for, presented, researched, and published on social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion in TESOL, where she draws upon her lived experiences as a second/fourth-generation Chinese American from the U.S. South. Professor Chan will talk about the balance between the knowledge we have built and welcoming the new, discussing the idea that these are not mutually exclusive.

This year, WATESOL also brings two invited speakers who will address the topic of advocacy in their areas: Deborah Kennedy (National Coalition for Literacy) has her session in the morning, and Polina Vinogradova (American University TESOL Program Director) in the afternoon. In addition, our K-12, Adult Ed and Higher Ed SIG chairs are bringing invited speakers to their focus groups’ roundtables to discuss mutual interests, concerns and much more.

We hope that this year’s WATESOL Fall 2023 Conference helps you bridge the old and the new smoothly. We will see you at Catholic University on November 4 for one more chance to exchange knowledge and meet new people!

Professional Development Co-Chairs Débora Amidani, Mayonne Granzo, and Kellie Corbett



The conference will be held at the Pryzbyla Center at Catholic University in Washington D.C. on Saturday, November 4, 2023, and will feature keynote speaker Elisabeth Chan, Associate Professor, Northern Virginia Community College.

Registration fees are as follows:

- Early bird registration, \$80 for members and \$105 for non-members, through Tuesday, October 25
- Regular registration, \$90 for membership and \$115 for non-members.

Click [here](#) to register.

Conference Day Schedule

8:00-9:00a Registration/breakfast

9:00-9:15a President's welcome

9:15-10:00a Keynote speech

10:10-10:55a Session 1 (invited speaker 1)

11:05-11:50a Session 2

12:00-12:45p Lunch, Exhibitor visits, and Poster

12:50 - 1:50p SIG Panel Discussion/Workshop

2:00 - 2:45p Session 3 (invited speaker 2)

2:55 - 3:40p Session 4

3:45 - 4:00p Closing and Raffle

4:15 Happy Hour at Brookland Pint

Conference Sessions

- * **A Practice Review of Science Museum Programming for Multilingual Learners**
Xinxin Wang
- * **Empowering Multilingual Learners in Science Education through Infographics: A Transmodalising Approach**
Eden Langston, Xiaowen (Slyvia) Chen & Kathy Ramos
- * **Engaging English Language Learners with Global Education**
Abby Watkins
- * **Engaging Students in Self-Assessment in College ESL Composition Classes**
Nataliya Schetchikova
- * **Enhanced Grammar Instruction via CBI and the Flipped Classroom**
Heather Mehrtens & Andrew Screen
- * **Experimenting With AI in the Classroom: Guiding Students Toward a Critical-Thinking Approach**
Leslie Sheen & Kathleen Philpott Costa
- * **Using Digital Literacy to Connect Adult English Learners to Their Families and Communities**
Cassandra Kramer
- * **From Classroom to Experience: Personalizing and Engaging a 2-week Curriculum for K-12 EFL Contexts**
Dini Arini, Jihee Im, Hadir Alderaan, Tom Salsbury & Eugenie Mainake
- * **How TESOLers Can Utilize Coaching Skills for the Benefit of Learners**
Julie Yoder & Carrie McKinnon
- * **I Have a Great Idea: The Nuts and Bolts of Writing an Effective Conference Proposal**
Melissa Hauke
- * **Instructional Efficiency with ChatGPT: Traditional Meets AI-Assisted Teaching**
Krisztina Domjan
- * **Online to In-Person: A Continuation**
Ahlam Musa
- * **Preparing Your ESL Students for Their Next Job Interview**
Mike Pina
- * **Reading Comprehension of Culturally Unfamiliar Texts: How Text-Relevant Video Segments Can Help?**
Amirreza Karami
- * **Supporting ESL Learners in Online Classes**
Kirsten Stauffer
- * **Transforming English Language Learning with Generative AI**
Raymond O'Donnell
- * **Using ChatGPT for a Critical Analysis Assignment in an EAP Class: Rationale and Outcomes**
Dmitri Stanchevici
- * **'The Hidden Secrets of English Fluency Unveiled': What English Learning Looks Like on YouTube**
Sarah Knowles, Yu-Yu Chen & Jaelyn Jackson
- * **Using Ted Talks to Promote Advanced Listening Comprehension and Speaking Skills**
Marilyn K. Rahilly

Interview with Keynote Speaker

Dr. Elisabeth Chan

Associate Professor

Northern Virginia Community College



Dr. Chan's keynote is "Blending Tradition and Innovation: Effective Practices for Language Learning."

Please tell us about yourself as an educator.

I think something that is unique about the field of teaching, and especially language teaching, is that we are asked to put into words our teaching philosophy. I don't know a lot of other fields that do that. To put into words what we value, what we believe, and how we enact that in our professional lives requires such a deep dive into who we are as people. We are constantly growing, and that means we have the opportunity to also grow our teaching philosophies. That growth is a big part of who I am as an educator. I was once asked what I thought was the most important thing about teaching. I realized that my answer to this question has really evolved from being a young professional to where I am today. Yes, we need to base our decisions on sound theory and practice, but I've come to believe that we must also center love in those decisions. The relationships that we build with our students, with our colleagues, and for the love of teaching and learning is how I define myself as an educator.

How has your personal experience shaped your professional interest in language education?

I grew up as a monolingual English speaker, and at the same time I also grew up with my ownership of English constantly being challenged because of my race and ethnicity. In a weird way, it made monolingualism a strong part of my identity as a way to show that I was American, as a way to show that I fit in. However, I have been on a long journey to acknowledge and honor the multilingualism that exists within my family heritage. When I think about my language identity, and how it has shifted and grown and turned around throughout my life, I do think about how that affects the way that I value multilingualism, and the way that I then show

that commitment in both my teaching and my research.

In your experience, what are some of the most exciting developments or trends in the world of language learning that educators should be aware of as they navigate the intersection of tradition and innovation? (Question generated by Chat GPT 3.5)

When we look at current trends in some of our largest publications, for example, we see articles on translanguaging, on intersectionality and on new tools available to us today. These are all very exciting for me, especially when we view them in light of the shared experience we have been through and are going through due to the global pandemic. It has highlighted so many things about how our society works, from individual levels to systemic levels. These trends have potential to work together to make real changes in our field that can benefit both educators and students alike.

What advice do you have for language educators in the short term? In the long term?

I've been a language educator for nearly 20 years, and I believe that we can all continue learning. Being an educator is being a continual learner and that serves us both in the short and long term. It means, however, that sometimes we also have to unlearn things and question things we think we know. Just like any language education program, we start by determining what we need. In the short term, we can all do a personal needs analysis, and we can make a list of areas that we would like to know more about and see those as opportunities for growth. In the long term, we can build upon these areas from learning more about them to learning the best ways to take action on them.

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Engaging with Generative AI: Responses and Insights

By Kathleen F. Kearney, co-editor, *The Definite Article*

Everyone who's reading this knows that Generative AI, or GenAI, or GAI, is a subcategory of artificial intelligence and that it is having a profound effect on education. Since last November, the reactions have run the gamut: from fear and uncertainty to enthusiasm and excitement about the potential of a new technology. The discussions about the pros and cons of GenAI are as varied as the participants – we know that this technology will be part of our classrooms, but how?

One theme among the discussions is the great need for policies and regulations. In September, the [UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) asked governments to regulate the use of GenAI in education and research, including age limits for users. Additionally, [UNESCO noted in a press release](#) that public engagement, along with safeguards and regulations, is essential for the integration of GenAI into education.



[UNESCO](#)

The November 4 conference is an opportunity to begin that public engagement. The sessions include several presentations about AI in education and special interest group discussions and roundtables. Please participate and share your experiences about GenAI in teaching.

To begin the conversation, several former and current board members shared their experiences.

Albert Van Landuyt, a former WATESOL board member, described his developing relationship with GenAI. “When ChatGPT came into our lives, I first saw it as a threat. However, soon I realized that, with guidance, it could be used as a language development tool. Immediately, my investigation into incorpo-

rating it into my classes began. After discussing the possibilities with a colleague, I started examining what it was capable of producing.

“ChatGPT results are only as good as the prompts that it is given, so I looked into that by watching countless TikTok videos, which taught me that explicit, targeted language was effective. At the beginning, I was unskilled at writing prompts, and they were very basic. As I continued using this tool, my prompts became better suited for the task I was requesting, so the ChatGPT results improved dramatically.

“Upon writing my first prompt, I used it to check students’ homework. I discovered that its bullet points listing mistakes in writing could be repetitive and basic. At times, there were corrections for things that were correct to begin with such as spelling. There were some corrections that I disagreed with. As a result, I learned that I would have to proofread everything that ChatGPT produced, but I found it to be overall helpful, not to mention incredibly fast.

“AI doesn’t need to be the enemy of academic learning. In fact, it can enrich the learning experience when used in a structured manner.”

Heather Mehrtens, WATESOL advocacy co-chair, noted, “My experiences using generative AI in the classroom have been mixed. I’ve tried to embrace the technology, but sadly have had some students abuse it by using it to write for them. Talking about how the technology works and why it’s not perfect has helped.

“This past semester, I decided to use my university’s Canvas module on ethical use of AI to talk about the pros, cons, and limitations of AI and this has helped to help students understand how and when AI can and cannot be used (and why).

“Actively showing students how to use ChatGPT to write something and then fact check the paragraph it wrote together in class really made them see why it’s important to also put in some effort themselves. Also, some students were shocked that the AI doesn’t actually know anything and just generates based on predictions, which can be wrong. I hope this will help students see how to better use it in the future and

how it is also critical to think about the output it produces, and, perhaps even more importantly, why it shouldn't just be used as a tool to do homework for them.”

Ahri Lee, co-chair of WATESOL’s adult special interest group offered an additional perspective. “I grew up watching *Terminator* movies. I can’t shake off Skynet, the AI entity bent on exterminating humanity whenever I hear about ChatGPT.

“Despite the fear instilled by the movie series, a constant AI-related news feed kept my curiosity piqued. So, one day I logged into ChatGPT, hesitantly provided my email address and phone number and typed my first command: create a lesson plan for beginning ESOL students. The result was disappointing. While it had all the right phrases such as warm-up, vocabulary building and group activity, it was a poorly constructed lesson plan. I tried a few other prompts, but they were all unusable.

“Since then, I’ve been experimenting with various prompts for the last six months, and I now use ChatGPT almost daily. I usually use it to generate writing samples by providing a writing prompt and requesting ChatGPT to compose a paragraph. Often, I ask ChatGPT to simplify the content for ‘beginning English learners.’ Another use of ChatGPT is generating a paragraph that incorporates the vocabulary we are working on that week. While I often need to edit it to make it clear, it’s easier than making it from scratch. As a non-native English speaker, I also use it to check grammar and clarity of my own writing.

“To gauge the use of AI-powered tools by other adult ed educators, I reached out to the Adult Ed SIG book club members who kindly responded to a survey. About 56% of the respondents reported that they have used ChatGPT. However, only 40% of the ChatGPT users (22% of total respondents) introduced it to their students.

“One significant reason adult ed educators are hesitant to employ ChatGPT or other AI-powered tools with students is the lack of access to computers and the internet. Fifty-six percent of the respondents reported that less than half of their adult students have access to a computer. A few educators stated that they had used ChatGPT to research a topic or get ideas. While many educators expressed interest in learning more about AI-powered tools, this interest was not necessarily higher than their interest in other topics, such as mindfulness or effective teaching strategies.”

“One significant reason adult ed educators are hesitant to employ ChatGPT or other AI-powered tools with students is the lack of access to computers and the internet.”

The Definite Article co-editor Marina Dewees, an educator in Fairfax County Public Schools, shared her experience with AI at work. “Most of the public-school systems have openly banned use of AI tools by their students. It does not mean that this is a forever status of Generative AI in K-12 schools. I know that the FCPS IT department is currently actively engaged in working on AI-related policies and on ways to integrate AI in the educational process.

“I personally see two major directions of AI use in schools. The first and the easiest are the teacher-supporting tools. Multiple generators are now able to create not just educational texts geared towards specific audiences and learning tasks but also support those texts with post-reading activities.

“Then, there are several AI based sites that offer ways to connect reading materials to such widely used hubs as Quizlet, Kahoot, Quizzes and others. Several relatively new product generators offer creating slide decks on any given topic, that produce language content supported with rich visuals. All of these tools are true time and effort savers. Needing a fair amount of editing, they still do all the basic work for a teacher, living the most creative and fun part to humans.

“When it comes to the ways K-12 students could use AI, I totally understand that school systems proceed with caution. In order to ensure that AI is employed in a productive way that supports students’ learning without compromising the process, I can see too many grey areas, lack of well thought-through teaching strategies and multiple legal and security pitfalls.

“Generative AIs have entered our lives at high speed. At the same time public school systems are responsible for educational outcomes and security and, therefore, clearly need time to responsibly integrate AI into the fabric of teaching and learning. “

Melissa Hauke, 2023 WATESOL vice president and 2024 president, pointed out an environmental quandary associated with GenAI. “When people think about generative AI, they typically consider SIRI or Alexa, chatbots and lately ChatGPT. One of the biggest fears with AI is that it will get out of control and take over the world. People are also worried that it will cause unemployment, encourage laziness and eliminate creativity.

“What people seldom consider is its impact on the environment. We love that we can get directions, find out the name of a song and ask Alexa to turn off the lights. Now with ChatGPT, we can get it to write our letters, create a song or help us ace a test.

“Many people may not understand that all these questions and prompts are being managed through the Cloud. The Cloud is not something up in the sky, but a data center in a concrete factory that takes a lot of electricity to run its servers which generate heat and then use large amounts of fresh water to cool them. AI uses millions of gallons of water each day.

“The [University of California-Riverside reported](#) that *just* Google’s U.S. Data Centers in 2021 alone used over three billion gallons of fresh water, which is millions of gallons each day. This massive water use is reducing groundwater and shrinking lakes which are necessary to support human life and agriculture.

“...*just* Google’s U.S. Data Centers in 2021 alone used over three billion gallons of fresh water, which is millions of gallons each day.”

“Tech companies are rather secretive about how much electricity and water are needed to run their servers, and they aren’t being proactive to determine how to reduce their carbon footprint. Their main strategy is to purchase renewable energy credits, which is an easy but not sustainable answer to a big problem. Will we one day soon need to choose between freshwater and our thirst for technology?”

So, as you can see, we have a lot to talk about.

In May 2023, the [U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Technology \(OET\)](#) made seven recommendations for education leaders:

1. Emphasize humans in the loop.
2. Align AI models to a shared vision for education.
3. Design using modern learning principles.
4. Prioritize strengthening trust..
5. Inform and involve educators.
6. Focus R&D on Addressing Context and Enhancing Trust and Safety.
7. Develop Education-Specific Guidelines and Guardrails.

A considerable amount information, speculation, fear and excitement exists about GenAI, and we can all learn from each other. Today’s K-12 and Adult Ed students will be heading to Higher Ed soon. The November conference is a significant opportunity to share our knowledge, experience and insights.

Feature Article

Empowering Students in EOP Workforce Classes

by Tracy Bain Chase, Communicating Safety and Health Awareness (CoSHA)

As a US-trained ESL teacher in Brazil in 2014, I felt confident in my abilities to make a difference in the lives of a group of teenage girls from one of Rio de Janeiro's favela communities. However, in reality, I struggled to connect with the students and suffered a high degree of absenteeism and low productivity. What emerged in that Rio classroom was a culture, which was far removed from what I had grown to expect and accept as the classroom "norm." In time, I deduced that these students had, from the very start, entered the classroom with what I subsequently labelled a deep-rooted mindset of inadequacy.

They were already "on the back foot" as it were, feeling intimidated and defeated, and, thus, they self-sabotaged their own potential for progress. The inadequacy mentality shows itself as a consistent and comfortable choice *not to try* for fear of failing, especially in front of one's peers. Indeed, sometime after I had theorized the cause of stagnation in my favela classroom, I received a call from an HR manager in a luxury hotel in Rio, who reported that 75% of the hotel workers had dropped out of the in-house language class although the hotel had offered a variety of attractive incentives. Based on these high drop-out rates and absenteeism among both the hotel workers in their professional context, and the teenage girls at the community level, I came to accept that my assumptions, re the "inadequacy mindset," were reasonably true.



This mindset often permeates the circumstances of the English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) learner, and the following questions arise: How do teachers move such learners from **self-doubt to self-belief**? How do teachers open the eyes of the learners to **what they could become**? There are no easy answers, but experience has since

shown that "best practice" should focus on establishing a significantly more animated classroom context in which the interactions between the student and the teacher are more closely intertwined than previously thought, and a level of creative interplay between teacher and learner, and even learner and learner, is encouraged. The learner, at times, becomes part teacher and the teacher, part learner. Both are equal "citizens" in a carefully cultivated classroom *community*.

"EOP teachers must, therefore, go beyond "teaching" and actively empower learners in the classroom community."

The essence of the community rests on the idea that the EOP learners want to be present in a classroom where the experience is highly customized to meet their learning needs. The teacher's role is to help them make the connection between personal and professional success and the depth of their own involvement and leadership in the room. Once they perceive themselves as contributing *actors* to any progress made in the classroom, learners become **highly motivated to actualize this new self-vision**. EOP teachers must, therefore, go beyond "teaching" and actively empower learners in the classroom community.

There are two strategies that stand out as being effective in meeting EOP transformation goals.

The first is to immediately involve the workers in customizing the material they need in terms of the language required for their jobs. Essentially, the activities in many textbooks are contrived and themes are often not relevant to specific industries. In some cases, there are no materials. Having the EOP learners bring authentic scenarios and vocabulary to the classroom is an effective way to engage them and keep a heightened interest all through the semester.

In 2020, I worked with a group of workers from a local union teaching them how to read and follow warn-

ings on the Safety Data Sheets (SDS), which were packaged along with the dangerous substances they used. In addition, the workers had to identify the broad gamut of tools they handled and shared with other workers. Since union workers are often placed at different companies, even the workers who held similar functions, such as bricklaying, often used different substances with variations of tools for their jobs.

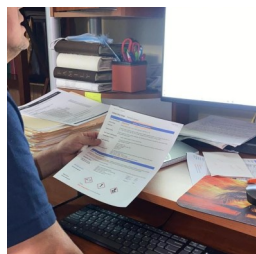
The success of the class greatly depended on them, and I asked for their help. Empowering the EOP learner with responsibility for their success early in the semester is a key motivator and forms a solid foundation for ongoing language development, which is specifically customized in a partnership between student and teacher to meet the individual needs of each learner.

Comparison of NFPA 704 and HazChem 2017 Labels	
Health Hazard	Categories (1-4): 1 – most severe hazard 4 – least severe hazard Health Hazard Vocabulary 1. Acute (short term) 1. Eye irritants 2. Asphyxiants 3. Skin corrosives 2. Chronic (long term) 1. Carcinogens
Physical Hazard	Physical Hazard Vocabulary 1. Explosives 2. Flammables 3. Oxidizers 4. Reactives 5. Pyrophorics 6. Combustible 7. Dusts 8. Corrosives
Environmental Hazard	Environmental Hazard Vocabulary 1. Acute (short term) 2. Chronic (long term) 3. Corrosives

Learning workplace vocabulary with Spanish equivalents.

The second, equally critical, strategy rests on the development of a feedback loop to and from the classroom and workplaces, with the EOP learners active in the delivery on both ends. In the case of the union workers, the activities that we practiced in class were the very same that they practiced at their workplaces. Assignments centered on simple games, enjoyed by all the workers, such as naming tools they handled, or reporting an emergency over the phone and/or reading data off the SDS. On a couple occasions, workers even asked if their co-workers on the job could join the class.

Such recognition by peers is a confidence booster and the workers are excited about coming back to class to share the positive experience. In essence, the concept of homework is, in fact, a practicum for the EOP learner. Making classwork relevant and immediately placing it in the context of the workers is an effective strategy for strengthening the learners' commitment to their own personal and professional goals and increasing awareness of



their expanding capacities.

The dynamic between our two strategies is what weaves the fabric of a nurturing classroom community, where classmates are sharing and giving feedback, the teacher and learners are building partnerships, workers are communicating with other workers, managers are noticing, and the learner is self-evaluating and growing. It is an optimal environment for language acquisition and personal development of the worker.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a decrease in the labor force and employment growth over the next decade (Dubina, 2023). This is because some industries have weakened post-pandemic, and workers must now consider work in other industries. In the article, "The Critical Role of Workforce Training in the Labor Force Recovery (2021)," Edelberg and Shevlin state that a strategy for more and improved workforce development and re-training programs to support workers and their readjustments to the market is necessary. Consequently, EOP workforce programs will play a crucial role in this economic realignment.

References

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Tracy Bain Chase is a university-level language & communication instructor. She is CEO & Founder of Communicating Safety and Health Awareness (CoSHA) and creator of the CoSHA training app for construction workers. In 2022, she was accepted into an accelerator program, GoForVertical, and is currently working on taking her business to market in Q1 2024.

Teaching Abroad

Class-to-Class Exchange Program Between India and Egypt

By Tina Verma, Higher Secondary School

Tina participated in a virtual exchange program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Office of English Language Programs through the English Access Microscholarship Program (Access). The program was administered by FHI 360 and delivered by Georgetown University.

Teachers from 30 countries participated in a facilitated learning experience focused on developing skills in using project-based learning (PBL) and content-based instruction to teach business and entrepreneurship in their English language classrooms.

Teaching Business Management and Financial Literacy in the English language classroom was my Project Based Learning (PBL) topic for the online class-to-class exchange program. In the class-to-class exchange, my fellow participant was Ms. Nahla - an English-language educator from Egypt.

It was a three-way collaboration process. Firstly, I needed to collaborate with Nahla regarding the time zone coordination, selection of grade-appropriate learners for the PBL, and intimation to our facilitator about the time and date of the live online interaction. To initiate the process, Nahla and I exchanged our Whatsapp numbers via email. We interacted with each other over Whatsapp video and fixed a meeting on Zoom. Secondly, we collaborated with the students who were the key element of the whole exchange program. Thirdly, both of us informed our facilitator regarding the selected date and time for conducting class-to-class exchange program.

Our expectation was the requirement of the smooth internet connection. Although the Zoom link of the live exchange session was shared with the facilitator previously through email, we faced an internet connectivity issue in the beginning of the live session. However, we tackled the issue by using two

different gadgets and sharing a new Zoom link through Whatsapp.

Initially, my students expected us to record the whole presentation and share it with Nahla's students in Egypt. Thereafter, I helped them understand about the class-to-class live interaction session, explained to them about the time difference between India and Egypt, and gave them a brief introduction of Nahla and her learners. I also shared with them about the presence of our facilitator during the session. Indeed, they were excited and anxious about live global interaction. It was observed that they collaborated, delegated, tackled the problems of arranging raw-material and took the responsibility of helping each other on Padlet. I was sure to scaffold them with some videos from YouTube, articles from Google and some vocabulary. I shared the list of links with them.

There were four PBL and CBI based presentations from the students of the Higher Secondary School from India. The students interacted with each other after the presentation. They talked about their culture, food, dresses, weather, festivals etc. The students also interacted with us.



Amidst the exchange program, a funny incident took place. While sharing about their rich

culture, one of the Egyptian students innocently stated to an Indian student that she was astonished and elated to witness the Indian students' interest, zeal and knowledge about her country and that she felt proud to be its citizen.

The most challenging part of the whole program was the internet connectivity in the beginning of the session.

The students of both countries were excited about the CBI and PBL based learning and presentation. But the students in Egypt were busy in the preparation of their exam whereas it was a summer break for the students in India. Hence, a few Egyptian students planned to participate in the online session by making a few short audio-video clips in the school uniform and shared them with their teachers. It was further shared and played in the live online session by the teachers.



As a matter of the fact, the proudest moment for me was when my students were able to interact in English throughout the PBL presentation. They were able to comprehend Nahla and her students and readily interacted with them with correct pronunciation, intonation and stress. Moreover, it was a proud moment for me when Nahla and I interacted with each other during planning, preparation and execution of the session. We were able to understand each other. Amidst our tight professional schedules, we coordinated and collaborated with each other for its success.

It was the first global exposure for us as well as for the students. So, we enhanced our critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, media literacy, IT skills, as well as content-appropriate English language skills. The most significant impact of the exchange program on my teaching will be breaking the initial inhibitions of the learners in interacting in English, scaffolding them regarding the netiquettes and motivating them to participate in the student cultural exchange programs. Next, I will be sure to enhance their rich vocabulary with the words related to business and entrepreneurship, so that they will become a productive resource for their community. Having said that, I will ensure to plan such activities and give them such topics which will help them to strengthen their 21st century skills.

It has been an exhilarating and memorable experience for me to learn so much from the educators from 31 countries and the students from varied socio- cultural backgrounds.

To conclude, we felt that for interactive sessions, we can involve as many students as we can in the class-to-class exchange program and the teacher may enjoy the session as a coordinator and moderator. In addition to that, students need scaffolding both at the digital and physical levels.



Tina Verma teaches English to the students of classes VI to X in the Directorate of Education, GNCT, New Delhi, the capital city of India. She has been teaching English for the past 20 years and holds a Master of Arts (English) and Bachelor of Education. Currently, her profile is that of a mentor teacher who motivates, inspires and collaborates with other teachers.



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ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

The World is Your Classroom

Reflections from Grant Winners

ISTE Live23, Philadelphia

June 25-28

Krisztina Domjan, Ph.D.

Professorial Lecturer, American University

This year's [ISTE Live23](#) was enriching with the perfect trifecta of educational content on digital citizenship, educational content on artificial intelligence in instruction, and a stellar display of collegiality. The event started with a keynote speech from [Richard Culatta](#), the CEO of ISTE, who addressed how AI is changing the landscape of education and what it means to be human in the digital world. During the first Mainstage event, there was a clip about people of different ages being shown images and they had to guess whether or not the images were human-made or AI-made. The success rate of their guess was about 50-50%. There is no way to tell! The audience (virtual and live) witnessed how AI can generate texts like codes, jokes, and student excuses (yup—I am on the receiving end of those emails!).

The ISTE Live23 event was almost a week long, which meant I got the chance to hear from some of the most talented educators, and it seemed like every talk, workshop or presentation focused on AI in some way or another. *That's great news for any teacher who wants to be prepared and their students to be prepared for this new world of learning! The virtual attendee program allowed me to select which topics I wanted to focus on this summer: I chose artificial intelligence.*

The titles were catchy and the presenters did not disappoint! Just to name a few:

Uncheatable digital story projects as an authentic assessment

Beyond pressing play: Podcasts in the classroom

Simple strategies for getting started with AI in your creative classroom

*ChatGPT and the future of all mankind
Innovation and AI meeting 2030 sustainable development goals*

Whose Line Is It Anyway copyright in the digital age

Fostering an organizational culture of digital citizenship

Critical strategies that prepare teachers to teach with and about artificial intelligence

Responsible AI in education

Connecting with global classrooms using virtual exchange International and interdisciplinary collaborations

Let's talk the hottest topics in artificial intelligence and education

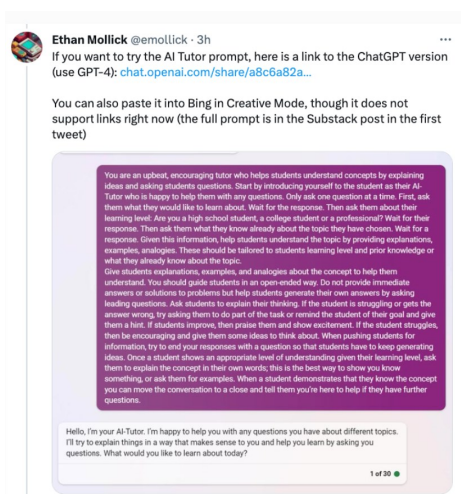
What do we do when students complete assignments with AI

The use of artificial intelligence is a new skill, so students and teachers should take the time to learn how it really works. AI is not magic. It is a tool that has its limitations, and students need to know when it is irresponsible to hand in work to AI and use it for shortcuts and when it's not: when it is actually okay to be used for increased efficiency. *Are there uncheatable assignments? How do we refine our assessments? These were recurring discussion questions because educators want students to use their knowledge and skills, but they also want them to be digitally literate to thrive in the world of artificial intelligence, as they progress toward their English proficiency.*

Some of the ISTE Live 2023 sessions offered fun creative engagement with AI like creating images, and others explored the possibilities of engaging students and teachers with AI. These presentations had one clear message: harnessing generative AI is the way forward. Prompting AI is an essential skill: be clear and specific, provide a context, anchor the prompt with examples, revise the prompts based on the output, and pick a role for AI (teacher, author, inventor, or another student?).

Here is an insightful prompt offered by presenters at a session. The example demonstrates how specific we need to be when prompting AI if we want to have

a meaningful conversation or interaction with it; if we want to learn what it takes to work in a hybrid setting: human + AI.



If you could think of a prompt that would help your students advance their learning, what would it be?

Be creative about using AI: Yes it takes time to explore all the options. *Can you team up with your colleagues to discuss prompts?*

No shortage of tools in the field of AI. **Adaptive AI** tools like Duolingo, IXL, and NoRedInk have already been helping students for years now literally adapting to their personalized needs and pace of progress. **Assistive AI** tools, for example, text-to-speech AI such as Voice Typing in Google Docs, Announcify, and Speechify have been assisting learning by faster typing, improving reading comprehension and pronunciation skills. **Generative AI** tools like ChatGPT and now Grammarly Go, Wordtune, and Quillbot aren't new either, but they have only become widespread and truly sophisticated in the past few months allowing anyone to be a decent writer regardless of their English proficiency, educational background, age or experience. These tools have become increasingly popular with people of all backgrounds, allowing everyone to have the same chance to create high-quality written content.

Does it really take a village? Oh my gosh! Exploring and identifying tools, and hands-on, interactive exercises with colleagues is vital, and the need for professional learning circles cannot be overstated. How do we set rules for ourselves and how do we set house rules for students? The AI-related language in my syllabus and how I should introduce these tools in my courses is something I spent a lot of time thinking about. My students should be using them. I know they will be/have been. From the ISTE sessions, I understood that while AI cannot replace teaching and learning, it can definitely augment it. I have been drafting explicit rules that students understand and that are used consistently

so that there is clarity for the use of AI in the classroom. This can help create an atmosphere of trust, transparency, and safety. I focus on the importance of AI rather than emphasizing its limitations. I also decided that I would provide students with the opportunity to use AI tools in class and provide them with guidance on how to use and interact with them responsibly.

Technology can be a tremendous help for the teachers and for the students together and independently as well. *So how do I shift my approaches to teaching and learning? As I am revising my assignments for this semester, I started looking for these entry points to find out how to incorporate this technology, and how to help my students be informed users.*

It quickly became evident to me how AI can help automate administrative tasks, lesson planning, and assignment or grading rubrics design, freeing up my time to focus on teaching each student.

As a passionate advocate of technology as an aid to learning, I cannot hide my enthusiasm for using artificial intelligence to assist English language learners. But I also am aware that I need to think critically, strategically, and with a healthy dose of skepticism... and have frequent long conversations with my fellow educators about our new reality.

In an effort to entice teachers who may still be on the fence, Culatta offered words of encouragement:

When another teacher sees what you're doing they feel like they can do it too.

This is a sentiment I hope will resonate with many in our profession.

References

Lin, L. (2023, June 12). *ChatGPT Prompt for an AI Tutor* — Lewis C. Lin. Retrieved September 12, 2023, from [https://www.lewis-lin.com/blog/chatgpt-prompt-for-an-ai-tutor](\"https://www.lewis-lin.com/blog/chatgpt-prompt-for-an-ai-tutor\")

Interested in learning more about what this event had to offer? [https://conference.iste.org/2023/](\"https://conference.iste.org/2023/\")



Krisztina Domjan is WATESOL president (2022-2023).



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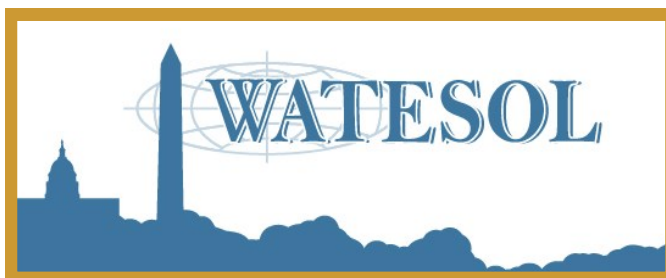
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Transforming ESOL Advocacy: The WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Grant in Action

John Simpson

Director, Professional Fellows Program for Economic Empowerment
in the Middle East & Africa, Legacy International.

In the ever-evolving landscape of TESOL and English language education, advocacy plays a pivotal role in ensuring equitable access and quality learning opportunities for non-native English speakers. In recognition of the significance of advocacy in the field of TESOL, I had the privilege of receiving the WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Award this year, which has had a profound impact on my journey as an advocate for English language learners.

The WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Grant, established to support and empower individuals dedicated to the advancement of TESOL education, has truly been a catalyst for transformative change in my professional career. This article delves into how the grant contributed to TESOL advocacy, illustrating how it supported the Professional Fellows Program for Economic Empowerment in the Middle East and North Africa, a program funded by the U.S. Department of State.

Empowering non-TESOL Professionals through the Professional Fellows Program

The Professional Fellows Program, an initiative funded by the U.S. Department of State, aims to foster cross-cultural exchange and empower professionals from countries across the MENA region, including Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and Lebanon. My role within this program involved directing a small team who were not trained in TESOL. These professionals, though highly skilled in their respective fields, lacked the necessary expertise to effectively incorporate TESOL principles in their work alongside non-native English speakers. Recognizing the critical

need to support the professional development of these individuals, the WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Grant served as welcome form of support to better assist my staff in navigating complex TESOL-related challenges. With this grant, I embarked on a mission to implement authentic materials that would equip my colleagues with the tools and knowledge needed to become more effective professionals when working in a TESOL-related context.

Bridging the Knowledge Gap

One of the most significant challenges faced by non-TESOL professionals working with English language learners is the knowledge gap between their own expertise and the unique needs and challenges of the learners. The WATESOL grant allowed me to bridge this gap by creating tailored workshops that catered to the specific needs of my staff and our fellows. These workshops covered a wide range of topics, including strategies for creating inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments. By providing access to these resources, the grant ensured that our fellows were not only better equipped to use English effectively but also gained a deeper understanding of the linguistic and cultural diversity present within their communities.

Fostering Advocacy through TESOL-Informed Practice

The true essence of advocacy lies in empowering individuals to champion the rights and needs of others. Through the support of the WATESOL grant, I was able to instill a sense of advocacy within my staff

as well as within the professional fellows themselves. By helping them gain insight into how their own professional practice could be more TESOL-informed, we paved the way for them to become advocates for non-native English speakers in their respective fields, including Entrepreneurship, NGO management, education, and youth development. The grant enabled us to organize workshops that encouraged critical discussions about the challenges faced by English language learners, especially in a diverse professional **work environment**. **It encouraged my staff to become vocal advocates for policies and practices that promote the inclusion and success of non-native English speakers in various professional settings.**

Measuring Impact

The impact of the WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Grant on the Professional Fellows Program was deeply transformative. Many of the fellows went on to implement the knowledge and skills they acquired through our workshops together in their home countries, creating a ripple effect of positive change within their communities. Moreover, the grant contributed to broader ESOL advocacy efforts by strengthening our network of advocates and educators. The knowledge sharing and collaboration that emerged from this initiative have fostered a sense of unity and purpose among various professionals, further fueling our collective efforts to advance the field of TESOL.

Closing Remarks

In conclusion, the WATESOL Excellence in

ESOL Advocacy Grant has been a game-changer for me in the world of TESOL advocacy. Through its generous support, I was able to design and implement workshops that not only enriched the professional development of my staff on the Professional Fellows Program, but also empowered them to become advocates for non-native English speakers. The grant's impact extended far beyond the initial program, as the professional fellows carried their newfound knowledge and passion for language advocacy back to their home countries, creating positive change on a regional scale. The grant exemplifies the power of targeted support in fostering a community of dedicated advocates who are committed to breaking down barriers and ensuring equitable access to English language education.

As we continue to navigate the dynamic landscape of TESOL education and advocacy, the WATESOL Excellence in ESOL Advocacy Grant serves as an example of how strategic investments can drive meaningful change and empower individuals to become champions for English language learners. With continued support for initiatives like this grant, we can look forward to a brighter, more inclusive future for non-native English speakers and the dedicated professionals who support them.



John Simpson is Co-Chair of the Higher Education Special Interest Group.



Summer Book Club

During our three discussion sessions, the participants shared their thoughts, reactions, likes, and dislikes from Jhumpa Lahiri's *Translating Myself and Others*. This collection of essays from the Pulitzer-Prize winning author focuses on the complexities of translating text, translating one's own ideas and identity, and writing in a second language. The group met to discuss three essays at a time throughout July and August, and we always found something to talk about.

One rich area for discussion was Lahiri's description of the many difficult lexical decisions she had to make when translating several Italian-language novels in to English. Though Italian is not her first or even second language, she became a dedicated student of the language and began writing fiction and nonfiction in Italian while living in Rome. After Lahiri befriended Italian novelist Domenico Starnone, he asked her to translate his novel *Ties into English*. Lahiri writes at length about the challenge of finding English-language equivalents of Italian terms that have no easy counterparts in English and finding the confidence to undertake such a project.

While not every essay was equally well-received by the book discussion participants, the conversation never lagged. Please consider joining us for the next WATESOL book discussion club!



Max Rhinehart is the co-chair of WATESOL's Higher Education SIG and an instructor in the Global and Immersive Studies program at American University.



Townsend Press
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Adult SIG: Our Field Trip to Planet Word

As an ESL Instructor, I understand that effective vocabulary instruction focuses on students' attention on words and their uses. That's why I was excited about a field trip to [Planet Word](#), a museum that focuses solely on linguistics. Planet Word is a voice-activated museum located at the historic Franklin School, 905 13th St, Washington DC. The museum's stated mission is "to inspire and renew a love of words, language, and reading in people of all ages." The museum is open from Wednesday to Monday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and closed on Tuesdays.

Our group of Adult Ed SIG members met in front of the building at 11:00 am on a Saturday. We were led by Kir Stauffer who had previously visited the museum. Although she provided a detailed explanation of the exhibits at the museum, I was astonished by the amazing displays inside. Words were everywhere--on the floors, on the bathroom walls, and the elevators were decorated as libraries. The museum has 11 galleries open to visitors of all ages. Two to three hours is the recommended time to explore all three floors of the exhibits.

We briefly visited the Present Perfect gift Shop on the main floor before beginning our tour on the upper floor, which consisted of three exhibits: "First Words"--a process of how we learn our first words, "The Spoken World"- the diversity of language around the world and, my favorite, an interactive presentation on a 22-foot "wall of words" that explains the origins of the English language in a fun and interactive way.

Other galleries included one with iPad stations that offered interactive videos where native speakers of thirty-one different spoken and signed

languages teach visitors about the uniqueness of their language and invite them to pronounce or sign words. Next, we made our way to the gallery dedicated to poetry where we listened to famous poems. In another gallery, we recited speeches by famous orators. Interestingly, I noticed that most of our group members shied away from the karaoke gallery.

Our final stop was at Immigrant Food, a restaurant that is easily accessed through the museum. Immigrant Food is a restaurant that celebrates America's diversity in its fares. The menu offers a "unique blend of cultures" that were affordable and delicious.

Our group had an extremely enjoyable Saturday afternoon at Planet Word. I highly recommend that every teacher spend an amazing afternoon of interactive learning.



Vivian Njosa is the co-chair for WATESOL's Adult Ed Special Interest Group. She is also an instructor for the AELG program in Montgomery College .

Recent Webinars

Implementing a Transmodalising Pedagogy with PK-12 Multilingual Learners in Science Classroom

May 17, 2023

- * **Presenters:** Dr. Sujin Kim, Dr. Kathleen Ramos, Cynthia Graville, Xiaowen Chen (Sylvia) and Eden Langston
- * **Session Type:** Practice-Oriented Workshop
- * **Focus:** K-12, Bilingual Ed, Teacher training, Technology
- * **Targeted Skills:** Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, Intercultural

This interactive webinar invited PK-12 teachers to explore how infographics can facilitate ways of learning STEM content and language with multilingual learners. Participants discussed transmodalising practices, considered the implementation of infographic teaching, explored digital tools for learners to engage in multimodal representations, and were provided with students' infographic examples.

Recording available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3dq3vpJxxg&t=10s>



Sujin Kim is an Assistant Professor in George Mason University, School of Education. Her research and teaching areas include bi-multilingual learners' literacy development, STEM disciplinary literacy, and critical discourse analysis.

Kathleen Ramos is an Associate Professor in George Mason University, School of Education. Her research and teaching interests include global competence education, translanguaging pedagogy, genre pedagogy, and STEM disciplinary literacy.

Cynthia Graville is an Instructor of Converging Communication Technology and Director of the Communication Media Lab at Saint Louis University. Currently, she is enrolled as a doctoral student in the Teaching and Learning Division of the College of Education at UMSL.

Xiaowen Chen (Sylvia) is a full-time doctoral candidate in George Mason University, School of Education. She has more than 6 years of experience in teaching Mandarin and has focused three years of her ESL teaching efforts for refugees and immigrant.

Eden Langston is a full-time doctoral student in the George Mason University, School of Education. Her primary specialization is Multilingual Multicultural Education. She has more than 10 years of experience working as a full-time Elementary teacher in all content areas.

Developing Transparent Assignments to Foster Multilingual Students' Academic Success

June 3, 2023

- * **Presenter:** Ilka Kostka
- * **Session Type:** Workshop
- * **Focus:** Higher Ed, IEP
- * **Targeted Skills:** Course design

Is the “why and how” of your assignments truly clear and explicit to students? This webinar explored the concept of transparent assignment design by analyzing examples of assignments and developing ways of enhancing their transparency.

**WATESOL SPRING 2023
WEBINAR SERIES**



**DEVELOPING
TRANSPARENT
ASSIGNMENTS TO
FOSTER MULTILINGUAL
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC
SUCCESS**

**DR. ILKA KOSTKA
SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 10AM**

Ilka Kostka is an associate teaching professor at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. She teaches English language courses to undergraduate and graduate international students in the NU Immerse and Global Pathways programs, respectively. Her interests include flipped learning, curriculum and program development, and second language writing instruction.

Giving ELLs in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Fields English Language Support *June 17, 2023*

- * **Presenter:** Kristen Stauffer
- * **Session Type:** Workshop
- * **Focus:** Adult Ed, Higher Ed, IEP
- * **Targeted Skills:** Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation

ELLs in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields need to develop communication and language skills. Through workshop discussions and interactive activities, participants examined perceptions, identified student needs, sampled online lessons, and shared resources. Participants left with innovative ideas and a digital workbook to add to their toolboxes.

**WATESOL SPRING 2023
WEBINAR SERIES**



**GIVING ELLS IN STEM
(SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY,
ENGINEERING, AND
MATH) FIELDS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
SUPPORT**

**KIRSTEN STAUFFER
SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 10AM**

Kirsten Stauffer is an associate teaching professor at Georgetown University. She holds an MA in linguistics from the University of Colorado Boulder and a BA in international relations from the University of Delaware. For over 15 years, she has been teaching and developing curriculum in various adult and higher ed ESL/EFL settings in the United States, Germany, and Chile.

Making the Implicit Explicit: Teaching the "Hidden Curriculum" in the Adult Ed Classroom

June 23, 2023

- * **Presenters:** Michelle Chan and Daniel Chavez
- * **Session Type:** Prerecorded Session
- * **Focus:** Adult Ed
- * **Targeted Skills:** Intercultural communication, Student autonomy, agency, self-efficacy

Many adult learners struggle with the "hidden curriculum" of a language classroom. This session presents practices to implicitly teach academic skills to help students internalize them. Participants will be able to reflect and leave the session with ways to incorporate academic skills into their weekly class routines.

Recording Available at: <https://youtu.be/BqzkQxi2QCo>

WATESOL SPRING 2023
WEBINAR SERIES



**MAKING THE IMPLICIT
EXPLICIT:
TEACHING THE "HIDDEN
CURRICULUM" IN THE
ADULT ED CLASSROOM**

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 4PM

**MICHELLE CHAN
DANIEL CHAVEZ
(BRIYA PCS)**

Michelle Chan is currently an Adult Education Lead Teacher at Briya Public Charter School. Before joining Briya, she was an Associate Professor of ESL at San Diego City College and served as a Peace Corps TEFL Volunteer in Jordan while working on her M.A. TESOL at American University.

Daniel Chavez is an Adult Education Lead Teacher at Briya Public Charter School. He has previously taught English as a Second Language to adults both at home in Washington, D.C., and overseas in Dublin, Ireland, where he received a Master of Philosophy in English Language Teaching.

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