



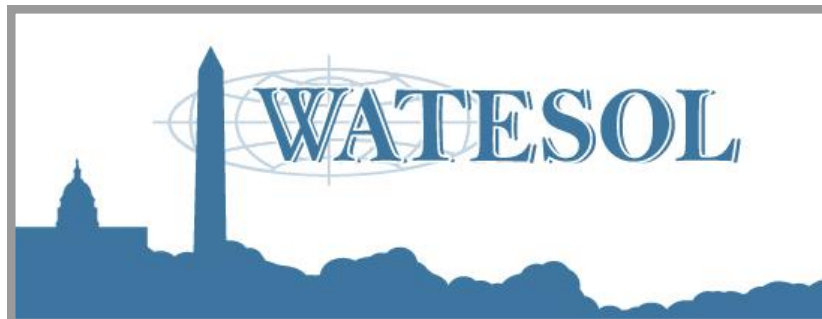
# *Blending Innovation and Tradition: Effective Practices for Language Learning*

**WATESOL Fall Conference Proceedings  
November 4, 2023**



# Washington DC Area Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

## WATESOL



[watesol.org](http://watesol.org)

WATESOL, PO Box 25502, Washington DC, 20007-8502

WATESOL provides a professional community at the intersection of the DC Metropolitan area. Our members hail from districts and counties within Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Our membership includes English language educators, program administrators, pre-service teachers, graduate students, and other language professionals in the areas of K-12 Education, Adult Education, Higher Education, language education research, and program administration, among others. WATESOL members truly represent the diversity of the TESOL community in the DC Metropolitan Area.

WATESOL was established in 1970 with 34 charter members. Today, WATESOL is a successful nonprofit association with nearly 300 members

### Our Vision

We aim to be a trusted organization that serves our local TESOL community by fostering knowledge, expertise, and advocacy.



### Our Mission

Our mission is to support professionalism and excellence in English language education through:

- enriching multicultural teaching and learning communities
- promoting scholarship and research-to-practice connections
- supporting high-impact professional development
- advocating for the profession and our learners



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## INTRODUCTION FROM WATESOL PRESIDENT, KRISZTINA DOMJAN

As the world continues to evolve, it is important to balance timeless teaching techniques and modern innovations. Throughout the day, here at this year's WATESOL conference, you will be able to explore how tradition can serve as a solid foundation, and how innovation can propel us toward new horizons in language education. We named this year's theme *Blending Tradition and Innovation: Effective Practices for Language Learning* because we would like you to engage in discussions, insightful presentations, and hands-on workshops that combine the best of both worlds, with the tools and strategies needed to foster effective language acquisition in today's diverse and dynamic classrooms.

At this year's WATESOL conference, innovation meets education in a remarkable fusion of technology and language instruction. With Adaptive, Assistive, and Generative Artificial Intelligence at the forefront of our conversation, our spotlight shines on the limitless potential of AI in English language teaching. This conference is going to be an exciting exploration of how artificial intelligence is shaping the landscape of TESOL, including cutting-edge AI-driven language assessment tools. So, thank you all for joining us in this dynamic dialogue about language education's future. If you are part of the Adult Education Special Interest Group, please attend the hands-on workshop Exploring AI-powered Tools with the co-chairs Darlene and Vivi after lunch. Take advantage of this opportunity to explore easy-to-use AI-powered tools that can be highly beneficial in your classrooms.

The WATESOL Higher Education Special Interest Group (SIG) presents a thought-provoking panel discussion facilitated by our higher education co-chair Max, featuring three college ESL instructors Kathleen from Georgetown University, Susan from American University, and Joshua from George Washington University exploring the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in English language learners within higher education contexts. This insightful session looks at the innovative ways AI-driven tools and platforms can enhance language learning experiences. The panelists will discuss AI's role in personalized instruction, language assessment, and fostering autonomous learning. Join us to gain valuable insights into the evolving landscape of AI in ESOL higher education, its potential, challenges, and the ethical dimensions shaping its integration. If you are a K-12 teacher, please attend the SIG Panel Discussion about AI in ESOL with accomplished educators from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia: Lucas, Marina, and Raymond. They will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by generative AI in K12 English Learner education. Each panelist brings a unique perspective and insight into how AI tools can be used to improve learner outcomes as well as how to address possible pitfalls of AI use in the K12 classroom.

Today we also welcome two wonderful FEATURED SPEAKERS who promote advocacy in our field. In the morning Polina Vinogradova from the TESOL Program at American University will explain how storytelling with multimodal expression can be incorporated into English language education to

create innovative multimodal spaces for the multilingual voices of English learners. In the afternoon Deborah Kennedy from the National Coalition for Literacy Advocacy will give participants guidance and practice in creating narratives that will resonate with community members, funders, and policy-makers. She will increase participants' understanding of different types of advocacy and orient them to an asset-focused perspective that emphasizes strengths, successes, and contributions to the community.

Spring Webinar Series at WATESOL will continue in 2024. Please check the WATESOL website and our social media platforms for additional information and updates about the Spring webinars.

It has been an honor to serve the WATESOL community with my true commitment to meeting the evolving professional development needs of its members and identifying new and creative ways to support TESOL practitioners. WATESOL understands the importance of staying up-to-date with the latest trends and research in the field, and it is dedicated to providing relevant and valuable resources to our members. The WATESOL board is always open to feedback and suggestions from the community to create a collaborative and inclusive environment for all TESOL practitioners.

And now please welcome the KEYNOTE SPEAKER Elisabeth Chan who will give this year's WATESOL's keynote address titled: "Blending Tradition & Innovation through Reflection & Relationality..."

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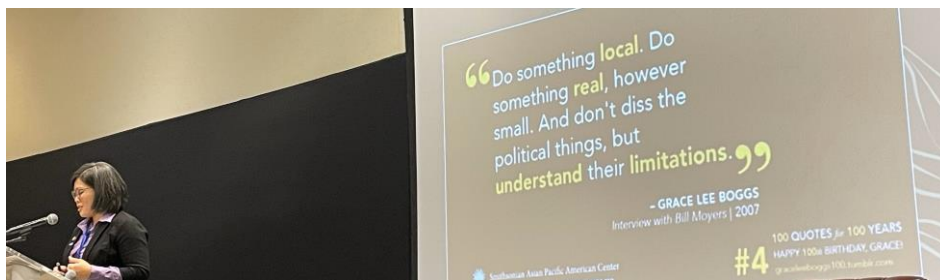
# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

*Dr. Elisabeth Chan*

*Associate Professor*

*Northern Virginia Community College*

[“Blending Tradition & Innovation through Reflection & Relationality”](#)





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## SUMMARIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS

### HIGHER EDUCATION SIG: USING AI AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL



The panel discussion with Dr. Susan George (American University), Kathleen Kearney (Georgetown University), Dr. J.M Paiz (George Washington University) and Max Rhinehart (WATESOL Higher Education SIG co-chair) explored how artificial intelligence (AI) can enhance language learning experiences. Overall, the discussion underscored the evolving role of AI in education, advocating for responsible and purposeful integration while being mindful of its potential challenges. AI is a powerful teaching tool that can complement but not replace teachers' expertise.

The panel emphasized the importance of integrating and using the tools judiciously. They mentioned [ChatGPT](#), [Google Bard](#), [Grammarly](#), [DALL -E](#) and even [Microsoft Word](#). These tools can encourage critical thinking, create learning materials, and address diverse learner needs by re-casting educational materials for neurodiverse learners or providing personalized content to students with different backgrounds and abilities.

The panelists shared their personal experiences with AI for assignments and classroom activities and stressed the need for students to develop AI literacy. This includes using AI ethically, which suggests an ongoing dialogue with students. The panel agreed that the effectiveness of AI detection tools in educational platforms is currently unreliable and offered instances where the tools flagged content as likely generated by AI, leading to student denials, confusion, and educator uncertainty about how to handle such situations.

The panel also discussed the importance of conversational AI. Engaging with AI through dialogues rather than simple query-response interactions may allow for deeper engagement. They noted that prompts should be queries linked to an objective rather than a demand that the "bot" may refuse. This approach may also reduce AI "hallucinations," responses that are illogical or wrong.

The panelists touched upon the accessibility of AI tools and named tools such as [Goblin.Tools](#), ChatGPT, DALL E, Google Bard, AI presentation generators, [ResearchRabbit](#), [Twee](#), and [Canva](#). These tools are useful in a variety of educational tasks, including student reflection, presentations, visuals and worksheets.

Lastly, the panel looked at the future of AI in English language teaching, with efforts to train teachers and incorporate AI ethically. They emphasized the need to balance AI's benefits with over-reliance on AI tools. Wise use of AI in the classroom may allow educators to focus on uniquely human aspects, such social and emotional learning.

## ADULT EDUCATION SIG: EXPLORING WAYS TO USE AI-POWERED TOOLS

Co-chairs of the Adult Ed SIG, Vivian Njosa and Ahri Lee had discussed various ideas and formats to present at the 2023 WATESOL conference. They never considered Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a topic; thus, they were surprised at the suggestion from WATESOL president that they moderate a panel discussion on the topic. Their initial reaction was to change the topic and choose a more effective one for adult learners. However, after a discussion with Adult Ed SIG member, Darlene Fahrenkrug, who has experience in using AI, we reached a consensus that AI platforms are promising tools that can be highly effective in language teaching and learning.

The SIG co-chairs' objectives were:

1. Hold a book raffle
2. Complete an interest survey
3. Presentation
4. Discussion

Members participated in the raffle as they entered the room. Six books were won by lucky participants. Everyone participated in an interest survey that will help Adult Ed SIG co-chairs connect with new members and select activities that can be beneficial for all.

The Adult Ed SIG workshop was a one-hour presentation, immediately after the lunch break. The plan of having workshops on four tables of about 20 members changed when we noticed that the room was filled with 45 participants. Ms. Darlene Fahrenkrug led a presentation titled, "[Exploring Easy-to-Use -AI -Powered Tools.](#)"



Darlene Fahrenkrug's presentation on AI tools was the highlight of our session. Ms. Fahrenkrug brought the right energy to the podium. She had taken into account that some participants might be new to the AI world; therefore, her slides were clear and concise. Her content was structured and organized in an easy-to-follow manner that made it understandable. She demonstrated and shared tools that teachers can easily access and use in creating lesson plans and classroom activities.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and make suggestions. Some participants signed on to their phones and followed with the link she provided. She shared links and easy-to-use AI sites at the end of her presentation. Numerous participants mentioned that they now felt comfortable to use AI-tools in their classrooms.

## K-12 SIG



## GENERATIVE AI AND THE K12 ESL EDUCATOR: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES, LUCAS TORRE, FELIPE KERSCHBAUM & MARINA DEWEEES

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a pivotal point of discussion. As educators, we find ourselves navigating uncharted territories, grappling with questions about the role of AI in shaping the learning experience for our students.

The prospect of AI serving as a personalized tutor for students is both exciting and challenging. This transformative technology has the capability to offer tailored support, adapting to individual learning needs. However, the shift from traditional teaching methods to AI-driven personalized learning raises concerns about the diminishing role of educators.

Just as the transition from handwriting to digital platforms revolutionized education, the incorporation of AI presents a new frontier. It transforms the dynamics of teaching, providing opportunities for interactive and engaging learning experiences. The question emerges: How can educators harness the power of AI to enhance rather than replace their instructional roles?

Delving into the specifics, tools like [ChatGPT](#) have shown promise in generating language-appropriate content for students. The ability to create prompts and activities in multiple languages, including bilingual texts, opens up avenues for inclusive and diverse educational practices.

While the potential benefits are evident, there are concerns that demand careful consideration. Issues such as students' reliance on AI for language proficiency and the ethical use of technology in learning environments need to be addressed. The line between scaffolding learning and hindering independent language acquisition is a delicate one.

As AI tools become more prevalent in education, it becomes crucial for educators to adapt. The focus should shift from blocking students' access to AI to teaching them the ethical and responsible use of these tools. Digital citizenship and AI literacy should be integral parts of the curriculum, empowering students to navigate this digital age effectively.

Practical examples, such as the use of AI in language translation tools, showcase its potential as a scaffold rather than a replacement. Encouraging students to critique AI-generated content can foster critical thinking skills, emphasizing that AI should be a tool for enhancement rather than a substitute for individual effort.

As we navigate this uncharted territory, it's essential to remain open-minded and proactive. Professional development sessions that explore the applications of AI in education can empower educators to leverage these tools effectively. Embracing AI literacy is not just about staying relevant; it's about preparing students for a future where digital proficiency is a prerequisite.

In conclusion, the integration of AI in education is a dynamic journey. While challenges exist, the potential for transformative learning experiences and enhanced student engagement makes it a path worth exploring. As educators, our role evolves into that of guides, facilitating a balance between harnessing the power of AI and preserving the essence of independent learning.

## Invited Speakers

**Frames, Facts, and Stories: Advocating for Results in ESOL, *Deborah Kennedy, National Coalition for Literacy and Key Words***

[Link to Slides](#)

This session will give participants guidance and practice in creating narratives that will resonate with community members, funders, and policy makers. It will increase participants' understanding of different types of advocacy and orient them to an asset-focused perspective that emphasizes strengths, successes, and contributions to the community.

**Innovation with Digital Storytelling: Creating Multimodal Advocacy Spaces for Multilingual Voices, *Polina Vinogradova, American University***

Digital storytelling (DST) blends tradition in storytelling with multimodal expression and can be incorporated in English language education to create innovative multimodal spaces for multilingual voices of English learners. The presenter will highlight several recent DST projects conducted by English language educators, discuss how DST projects support multilingualism and translanguaging, and establish connections between these projects and advocacy.

## Exhibitor Sessions

**Considering Grad School? The Professional Value of a MA in TESOL, *Sarah Knowles & Polina Vinogradova, American University***

A graduate degree is a considerable investment for TESOL professionals. In this presentation, TESOL professors and alumni share their experiences in a local MA program where experiential learning, technology, research, community partnerships, and social justice are integrated in TESOL coursework and practicum opportunities. Career options for MA holders are emphasized.

**Empowering Teachers Abroad: Utilizing Needs Assessment Tools for Contextualized Training, *Andrew Shannon, U.S. State Department & Melissa Hauke, West Potomac Academy***

Teachers abroad benefit from utilizing needs assessment tools in their training projects. During this interactive workshop, attendees will engage with U.S. Department of State exchange participants and learn to utilize various tools for understanding teachers' needs, interests, and experiences, which helps to contextualize training for audiences abroad.

**The Power of 'Probable Passage': A Pre-Reading Strategy Helping Multilingual Learners Comprehend Grade-Level Texts, *Kia Johnson, Center for Applied Linguistics***

Participants will use the Probable Passage graphic organizer as an introduction to grade-level texts' main idea, new vocabulary, and key points. Come to this session and leave with a ready-to-use template of a high-engagement comprehension tool that can be used for pre- and post-assessment to gauge students' comprehension of texts.



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# **PRESENTATIONS**

# A Practice Review of Science Museum Programming for Multilingual Learners

Xinxin Wang, George Washington University

## **Summary:**

This presentation delves into science museums' regional distribution, subjects, and multilingual-related services. It explores the potential for community science initiatives and adapting programs to cater to multilingual families, adults and youths, emphasizing inclusion and equitable access for diverse linguistic backgrounds.

## **Description:**

Embark on an illuminating journey into the world of multilingual adults within science museums in this captivating presentation. The session begins by introducing the speaker personally, sharing her background as an international student and ESL instructor adapting to the American academic environment. She emphasizes the significance of English as a tool for connecting with Western academic norms and enhancing engagement. This personal story forms the basis for her deep interest in how museums can assist multilingual guests. Next, the presenter will share results from a recently-completed review of educational materials and programming as represented on science museum websites. Data were sourced from the ASTC website, which is an organi-

zation dedicated to advancing public understanding and engagement with science and technology. At the time the review was conducted, 391 member organizations were listed in the directory. In this presentation, the speaker will analyze these 391 organizations websites from various perspectives in terms of their contributions to promoting the participation of multilingual visitors in scientific activities. The speaker will sequentially introduce the distribution of science museums across the United States, categories of science museum themes, the proportion of science museums providing support for multilingual visitors by providing illustrative examples, such as adjustments in language difficulty and the establishment of guides tailored to them. Finally, the speaker will distill conceptual themes that facilitate connections with local multilingual families and ideas for engaging with multilingual adults/youth from these case studies. This practice review is expected to provide a solid foundation, in conjunction with the literature review, for the necessity and feasibility of the entire research, and assist in the selection of research venues and the collection of research sample data in the subsequent phases.

# Empowering Multilingual Learners in Science Education through Infographics: A Transmodalising Approach

Eden Langston, Xiaowen Chen (Sylvia), and Kathleen Ramos, George Mason University

[Link to Slides](#)

## **Summary:**

Discover how collaborative ESOL and science teacher guidance empowers fifth-grade multilingual learners in upper elementary science to create inquiry-based infographics. Uncover strategies for equitable learning, enhancing engagement, and creative science expression across varied communication modes.

## **Description:**

In our presentation, we explore the transformative potential of a transmodalising pedagogy using infographics to empower multilingual learners (MLs) in upper elementary science education. We discuss our research project where ESOL and science teachers partnered to facilitate meaningful science learning experiences for MLs through the creation of infographics.

Our work is grounded in a multiliteracies approach to enhancing STEM learning for MLs (Gebre, 2018; Grapin, 2019). We present a detailed case study to share how an ESOL and science teacher collaborated to guide fifth-grade MLs to transmodalise their inquiry-based science learning from science fair project boards to infographics. This collaborative effort allowed students to leverage diverse modes of communication, including images, texts, and even translanguaging, to articulate their scientific understanding.

We will highlight three exemplary infographic projects showcasing how students engaged with the process. We explore how students at varying English proficiency levels effectively communicated scientific inquiries using infographics. Additionally, we discuss the challenges encountered, such as technological hurdles and time constraints, and the innovative strategies teachers employed to overcome them.

Our presentation illuminates the advantages of using infographics in science education for MLs. We emphasize how infographics allow students to collaborate to convey their understanding of science concepts with personal and cultural significance to real-world audiences. Furthermore, we address the role of teachers and school leaders in supporting and sustaining this approach beyond the project's scope.

Attendees will gain insights into how a transmodalising pedagogy using infographics can serve as a powerful tool for fostering equitable and engaging science learning experiences for MLs. We aim to inspire educators to explore innovative approaches that empower all students, regardless of language proficiency, to engage meaningfully in science education. Through practical examples, reflective discussions, and strategies for implementation, participants will gain a heightened appreciation for the potential of infographics for enhancing science education in diverse classrooms.



# Engaging Students in Self-Assessment in College ESL Composition Classes

Nataliya Schetchikova, Northern Virginia Community College

## **Summary:**

Self-assessment can help students reflect on their writing and thinking process and give the instructor insight into students' strengths, weaknesses, and priorities. This practice-oriented session will demonstrate self-assessment activities implemented in community college ESL courses. Participants will form an understanding on how to include self-assessment in their composition courses.

## **Description:**

As many effective writers know, writing is a recursive process, and good writing means rereading and rewriting. Yet this is news to many ESL students. Some expect instructors to give them quick solutions but struggle without guidance. Others resist our recommendations. Ultimately, our goal is to help students learn to effectively write independently, and self-assessment can help.

According to Andrade & Brook (2010), "Self-assessment is a process during which students reflect on the quality of their work, compare it to explicitly stated criteria, judge

how well their work reflects the criteria, and make appropriate revisions."

The benefits of self-assessment include development of a writing and writer's voice, together with metacognition, transfer, and learner autonomy and self-efficacy; enhancing classroom communication and collaboration (Nielsen, 2012); and giving the instructor insight into student learning goals and into whether they are being appropriately challenged (Eaton, n.d.).

The presenter will review forms of self-assessment, barriers to implementing self-assessment, and best practices recommended by research. She will then describe a process of engaging community college students in self-assessment in composition classes at the higher intermediate and freshman composition co-requisite levels implemented to help students integrate reflection and revision into their writing processes and provide support for improving their composition and language skills on their level of language development.

# Enhanced Grammar Instruction via CBI and the Flipped Classroom

Heather Mehrtens, Maryland English Institute & Andrew Screen, Georgetown University

## **Summary:**

This session will show how Content-Based-Instruction (CBI) and Flipped Classroom approaches may enhance grammar acquisition. The presentation will discuss the outcomes of a Presentation, Production, Practice (PPP) vs. CBI/Flipped Classroom teaching experience. The session will conclude with practical tasks and assessments that attendees may adopt and adapt.

## **Description:**

Despite research to the contrary, the present-practice-produce, or PPP, method is still used for many grammar classes. Students are given a textbook, shown a grammar rule, and then asked to practice and produce it. They may perform well in class, but struggle in real-world communication. As Ellis (1995; 2003) explains, this is because PPP leads to explicit knowledge and not long-term retention. Moreover, PPP can lead to cognitive overload (e.g., Anderson, 2000; Ellis, 2003; Kennedy, 2006). Alternatively, methods like Content-Based Instruction, or CBI, and the Flipped Classroom can lead to increased student retention & motivation (Davies, 2003; Le & Nguyen, 2018; Grabbe & Stoller, 1997; Bishop & Verleger, 2013).

This session will begin by reviewing the research on PPP, CBI, and the Flipped Class-

room, e.g. through an overview of new research in language acquisition theory and cognitive science. The presentation will then discuss the outcomes of two courses the instructor has taught: One using PPP and another using CBI and the Flipped Classroom. These methods and their effectiveness will be reviewed. The session will conclude with practical tasks and assessments, and a discussion of how CBI and the Flipped Classroom can be integrated into the attendees' courses.

The attendees will analyze tasks and assessments to contrast them with traditional grammar textbooks. For example, a unit from a grammar textbook on sentence structure including homework and assessments will be contrasted with an instructor-developed module. It will be demonstrated how the tasks and assessments using CBI and the Flipped Classroom led to better engagement and retention. Tips for maximizing instructional efficiency and effectiveness will be addressed. The pitfalls of both methods will also be reviewed. Attendees will leave with an enhanced understanding of how to more effectively teach grammar using instructional methods they may not have previously considered.

# Experimenting With AI in the Classroom: Guiding Students Toward a Critical-Thinking Approach

Leslie Sheen & Kathleen Philpott Costa, Georgetown University

## Summary:

The presenters will describe class activities they are currently using to encourage students to make critical analysis of the usefulness and accuracy of generative artificial intelligence (AI). They will present how they are guiding student experimentation with AI, what they are observing, and what students are learning from the process.

## Description:

Educators everywhere are asking important questions about how the rapid development and widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools will affect their profession. Generative AI tools such as Chat GPT are "already prompting a reconsideration of traditional teaching and learning practices" (Genone & Hughes, 2023).

In their white paper, "Integrating Artificial Intelligence: Key Strategies for Higher Education," Genone and Hughes (2023) urge instructors to move beyond a combative approach that focuses only on preventing plagiarism to engagement and integration of the tools into the learning process. However, several concerns regarding generative AI have been raised, such as its tendency to invent or omit sources, to provide inaccurate information and to oversimplify content

(Sullivan et al., 2023). The presenters developed activities to help students make critical analysis of the usefulness and accuracy of these tools. They do not wish to convey that the tools are "good" or "bad" but just that they have some limitations. It is their hope that these activities will encourage students to "learn to evaluate the output of AI tools with increasing nuance and sophistication" (Genone & Hughes, 2023).

In this workshop, the presenters will describe some ways they are currently experimenting with AI in a post-secondary-level intensive program. They do not offer a definitive approach but wish to share how their students are engaging with and critically evaluating AI in the classroom. The presenters will describe at least 2 activities designed to allow students to analyze the performance of Chat GPT on tasks aligned with course objectives. The first combines skills of investigation, critical thinking, and oral presentation. The second requires students to critically compare an AI-generated summary with one written by a human. After explaining the plan, process, and results of these learning activities, the presenters will welcome questions and discussion.

# How TESOLers Can Utilize Coaching Skills for the Benefit of Learners

Julie Yoder & Carrie McKinnon, International Language Coaching Association

[Link to Slides](#)

## Summary:

In this workshop participants will actively engage with the language coaching approach, explore its benefits and challenges in diverse educational settings, and share experiences of working with English learners. Participants will learn what a coaching approach entails, how it is different from instructional teaching, and how to implement to deepen learner engagement.

## Description:

In this workshop participants will explore how to use coaching to better serve diverse learners and to build a skill set for success in multiple learning environments.

The workshop leaders will address ways coaching practices can support students who struggle with demotivation, stress, and unclear goals. It will also show how to break negative learning cycles in an increasing number of hybrid class environments. When learning a language is perceived as more of a burden than an opportunity, coaching can turn it around (Kovács, G., 2022).

In the coaching process the emphasis is on how to do something, rather than knowing about something (Barber & Foord, 2014). Therefore, coaching in the language learning setting is a welcome alternative to instructional mode and helps to deepen auto-

nous, learner-led collaboration while taking on a more holistic perspective for higher engagement (CASEL, 2021).

Participants will learn more about what a coaching approach entails, how it is different from instructional methods of teaching, and how it can be implemented to deepen learner engagement.

This interactive session will benefit all English language educators but particularly seasoned TESOLers who are seeking new opportunities to extend their skill set and knowledge to increase wellbeing for both teachers and learners.

Drawing on research on language coaching as a part of TESOL teacher education, facilitators will pose four questions:

- 1) Do you have challenging learner experiences to share with other education professionals?
- 2) How might language coaching be a next step for you?
- 3) In what ways might a language coaching approach be a professional development option for you?
- 4) What issues and barriers are you facing in the implementation of coaching tools in your classroom?

# I Have a Great Idea: The Nuts and Bolts of Writing an Effective Conference Proposal

Melissa Hauke, West Potomac Academy

[Link to Slides](#)

## Summary:

Why not share a strategy that you have developed or adapted that you love and find effective? In this presentation, participants will review the importance of sharing ideas and learn the basic components of a proposal. Finally, they will read and assess sample proposals which will help with future efforts.

## Description:

Attending and presenting at regional and national conferences has many benefits for everyone involved. Conferences are a great place to meet other educators and share ideas and expertise. Presenters can expand their skill set; it takes courage and confidence to share their ideas with peers. Teachers value other teachers' experiences; they want to hear about those successes and failures, and they can gain insight and knowledge during presentations (Thompson, 2023; Gumbhir, 2014; Tingley, n.d.). Most importantly, everyone leaves a conference feeling energized and motivated to tackle that next unit of study.

With all these positive attributes, why don't more educators submit conference proposals? Some people have written a proposal which was rejected, and they did not understand how to improve it. Some people don't consider themselves to be an expert or are relatively new to the field, so they may feel intimidated by the other presenters (Gumbhir, 2014; Hendley, 2021). Perhaps they want to write a proposal, but they just don't know what or where to present. Or maybe they just aren't sure what a proposal looks like or how to write one (Bryson, 2023).

In this workshop, the participants will review the three components of a proposal and the

guidelines for each one. Next participants will use that information to read proposals and assess them using a rubric. They will also have the opportunity to discuss how each of those proposals could be improved. Finally, participants will review the 2024 MATSOL Conference (which has a virtual option) call for proposals, brainstorm topic ideas and start crafting their own proposals.

## References

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# Instructional Efficiency with ChatGPT: Traditional Meets AI-Assisted Teaching

Krisztina Domjan, American University

[Link to Slides](#)

## Summary:

Participants examine ways to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) like ChatGPT into language instruction, combining conventional methods with technology-assisted tools. Learning strategies for incorporating AI into the learning process are analyzed through discussions, hands-on practical activities. See how AI can provide personalized and adaptive support to enhance writing through intelligent scaffolding!

## Description:

In conjunction with the exponential growth of artificial intelligence (AI), the impact of AI on the future of English writing instruction (Strasser & Schmidt, 2022) becomes more apparent by the day. In this session, participants explore how AI tools like ChatGPT, Google Bard, Wordtune and Quillbot can be integrated with human input for optimizing writing processes (Kim et al., 2022), improving accuracy, and enhancing student outcomes. By combining recent findings and tried-and-true exercises, the presenters show participants how to leverage intelligent scaffolding with smart AI writing tools.

Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, participants will gain the knowledge and strategies to recognize the benefits of AI smart writing (McKee & Porter, 2018) in English writing instruction, stay abreast of the latest research, and confidently incorporate AI into their teaching practice to minimize their workload and maximize their students' learning. The session introduces the concept of intelligent scaffolding (Umutlu & Gursoy, 2022), which employs AI and technology to support learners throughout their educational journey by targeted assistance, promoting independent thinking and problem-solving, maximizing the learner's potential for development and achievement. Learners need different levels of support at different times, and this support can be provided in a variety of ways using AI tools.

The session begins with a brief overview of the specific benefits of using AI in English writing instruction, followed by practical tips for how to use AI in their classrooms and the challenges associated with it. Participants are encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences. During the hands-on activity participants explore AI tools and develop strategies for incorporating them into their own writing instruction practice. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to recognize the benefits of AI in English writing instruction, and confidently incorporate intelligent scaffolding into their teaching practice.

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# Online to In-Person: A Continuation

Ahlam Musa, Johns Hopkins University

## Summary:

A case study of an academic success course/program offered to multilingual international students at a music conservatory that started off as an online program then evolved to an in-person one as a continuation. This continuity from online to in-person emphasized the engagement of students and ensured their maximum benefit.

## Description:

The shift from an in-person learning environment to a learning online one has been explored and celebrated by many (Garrison et al, 2000). However, this case study examines the opposite where a course shifted from online to in-person, not in a hybrid or blended manner, but rather in more of a continuation one. The poster will describe a summer program that was developed to prepare multilingual international students, prior to their arrival in the country, for the academics at a music conservatory and the general college experience in the U.S. featuring 3 self-paced units: supporting student transitions, strengthening academic strategies, and developing behaviors for success. The program was asynchronous in nature but required engagement and interaction among the students. Nevertheless, according

to Allen (2014), a common challenge among online students is a feeling of social isolation resulting from a lack of peer communication. This was evident during the course of the program this past summer; thus, an administrative decision was made to create a “continuation” of the program after the students arrived in the U.S. during the Fall semester. Inspired by the Community of Inquiry framework proposed by Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2000) which examines the learning environment of the online settings and emphasizing the interaction of cognitive, social, and teaching presence, this study aims at analyzing the concept of “continuation” and its implications. The study examines engagement statistics offered by Canvas and e-learning- the platforms used to deliver the program, and qualitative data collected anonymously from the students reflecting on their experience before, through, and after the “continuation.” The audience will get a closer look at the idea of “continuation” and its effect on student engagement ensuring maximum benefit to the students as they get acclimated to the academic environment and maximizing their chances of academic achievement and success.

# Preparing Your ESL Students for Their Next Job Interview

Mike Pina, U.S. Department of Transportation

## **Summary:**

More than 90% of job seekers say job interviews make them nervous; now imagine English is not your first language. This session will give teachers specific training tools to help non-native English-speaking students perform well in job interviews.

## **Description:**

One of the most important conversations your students will have will be a job interview. This can be extremely challenging for non-native English speakers, especially those who are not sure how their past work experience and education can translate into jobs in the English-speaking world.

A job interview is a high-pressure situation that requires good communication skills, confidence, and the ability to articulate one's thoughts clearly. Preparing your ESL students for job interviews is crucial to their success in the job market.

As an ESL teacher, it's important to understand the challenges that non-native English speakers face when it comes to communicating effectively in English.

In addition, it is important to your students develop their own unique communication skills. Each has their own personal story, and that story can be leveraged to succeed in an interview.

This session will give several techniques teachers can use to prepare their students for interviews, including how to get them into the right mindset, how to use the most effective vocabulary and how to handle tough questions. The session will also include lesson-planning ideas that can help students practice speaking clearly and confidently, using appropriate body language, and listening actively to the interviewer's questions.



# Supporting ESL Learners in Online Classes

Kirsten Stauffer, Georgetown University

## **Summary:**

An adult learner has difficulty with a digital device/tool in class. You are miles away. Sound familiar? The presenter will share tips and facilitate scenario discussions around best practices to support online learners with limited digital resources and skills. Attendees will leave with resources and ideas to use immediately.

## **Description:**

Online courses connect individuals with numerous learning opportunities. Remote and online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic greatly advanced e-learning resources and increased availability of online ESL classes, especially for adult learners. While online education eliminates some barriers, the “Digital Divide” continues to hamper accessibility and equity. Even with federal and other programs, more than 42 million Americans lack access to broadband because of affordability or availability (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2023 and Campisi, 2023). Additionally, many online learners lack adequate devices and digital skills. Therefore, many learners join classes using their cellphone. Furthermore, low English language skills can impose obstacles. Hence, there are numerous challenges that are not present in a face-to-face class.

The presenter will share teaching tips, digital tools, and resources to create accessible and engaging online classes. Grounded in best practices, these techniques and activities can be implemented seamlessly to help all online learners and not single out participants with greater disadvantages. After briefly explaining the rationale, the presentation will focus on two areas. The first area will examine the use of technology and include training needs and e-learning apps and websites to create accessible and interactive learning environments. Before moving to the second focus area, participants will work in small groups to discuss realistic scenarios. They will have an opportunity to share solutions to technology issues in their online classrooms. The second area will focus on classroom culture and community building to create more inclusive and engaging classes. Again, participants will have an opportunity to talk in small groups and share ideas and resources. The presentation will conclude with a short Q and A session. Participants will leave with practical tips and resources (including a handout with suggested Zoom settings/features) to create accessible, inclusive, and interactive online classes.

# The Hidden Secrets of English Fluency Unveiled': What English Learning Looks Like on YouTube

Sarah Knowles, Yu-Yu Chen, American University & Jaelyn Jackson

## Summary:

This presentation examines how highly popular English teachers on YouTube create content, attract English learner audiences, and manipulate the mysterious social media algorithm to get "clicks" worldwide. Recommendations are given for using YouTube videos as an instructional resource, while the limitations and shortcomings of this medium are also addressed.

## Description:

Market research predicts that the global English learning industry will reach \$69.62 billion by 2029, with a substantial segment delivered through ad-supported channels on YouTube. Our systematic search of YouTube has identified a group of highly popular English teacher YouTubers (EngTubers) who have between 1.5 and 9.7 million subscribers (July 2023), with tens or hundreds of millions of video views and active comment threads. Their videos tend to explain perceived trouble areas for English learners, provide tips for learning English more effectively, and explore cultural topics that center the experiences of native (usually White) English speakers. Typical video titles are "10 English words you pronounce INCORRECTLY" and "The hidden secrets to English fluency unveiled."

Research on YouTube for language learning

(e.g., Benson, 2017; Nishioka, 2021; Wang & Chen, 2020) has not addressed the EngTubers' qualifications and characteristics, their video content, or their interaction with English learners. Given their global platform, these EngTubers have immense influence on what varieties of English are privileged over others and what it means to use English "properly."

Therefore, this mixed methods research study asks: 1) What are the topics and teaching approaches used most frequently by the EngTubers, and why? and 2) What impact do their videos have on their viewers?

Our methods target statistics on these videos (e.g., views, likes, and comments), thematic analysis of video content, sentiment analysis of viewer comments, semi-structured interviews with top EngTubers, and surveys of English learner audiences to identify perceived benefits and applications for English language learning gained from the videos. Findings drive a larger research agenda that examines YouTube's role in combating native speakerism, promoting World Englishes, and providing theoretically sound approaches to teaching/learning additional languages online.

Recommendations for English teachers on choosing YouTube videos to share with their learners are included.

# Transforming English Language Learning with Generative AI

Raymond O'Donnell, McLean High School

## Summary:

This presentation aims to guide teachers to use generative AI (ChatGPT) in modifying curriculum, reading passages, articles, comprehension questions/prompts, academic vocabulary, etc., with any inputted material for scaffolding and leveling purposes for varying language proficiencies among English Learning students.

## Description:

### Purpose and Point of View:

This conference aims to illuminate how generative AI can revolutionize English Language Development (ELD) education.

### Justification and References:

Recent research highlights the efficacy of AI-driven text simplification in enhancing comprehension among language learners. State-of-the-art technologies like OpenAI's GPT-3.5 demonstrate AI's potential in generating personalized learning materials.

### Participants and Population:

Our audience comprises English Language Development educators working with diverse English Language Learners, spanning different proficiency levels. Including teachers seeking innovative tools to address varying learning needs in multicultural classrooms.

### Methods and Results:

Witness AI-generated simplified texts that maintain context and integrity and explore personalized learning paths using AI-created exercises.

## Session Highlights:

**Automated Text Adaptation:** Experience how AI can simplify complex text while preserving meaning, aiding comprehension for diverse learners.

**Personalized Learning Journey:** Learn to create adaptive lessons and activities tailored to individual students using AI-generated content.

**Enhanced Reading Comprehension:** Delve into AI's ability to formulate comprehension questions and summaries, fostering deeper understanding.

**Creative Language Exploration:** Explore AI-generated prompts that ignite student creativity and language production.

### Conclusions and Implications:

Generative AI is poised to reshape English Language Development education by making learning materials more accessible and engaging. By integrating AI thoughtfully, educators can enhance language acquisition and cultivate digital literacy skills.

### Intended Outcomes for Audience:

By the end of this conference, attendees will grasp the potential of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Development classrooms. They will be equipped to integrate AI-generated content effectively, fostering inclusive learning and enabling learners to engage with complex texts. While gaining practical insights into curating personalized learning experiences.

# Using ChatGPT for a Critical Analysis Assignment in an EAP Class: Rationale and Outcome

Dmitri Stanchevici, George Washington University

## **Summary:**

This presentation describes the use of a generative AI tool (ChatGPT) for a critical analysis assignment in an online graduate EAP course. Having grounded the assignment in the relevant literature, the presentation shares its context and details and finishes with an evaluation of its outcomes.

## **Description:**

Nigel Caplan (2023, April 30), a notable figure in EAP studies, has proclaimed that generative AI tools (GAIs), such as ChatGPT, have no place in a writing class. While sharing Caplan's apprehensions about GAIs, most literature acknowledges the tremendous role GAIs will play in writing pedagogy and advises a carefully regulated incorporation of AI tools in writing curricula (The MLA-CCCC Joint Task Force on Writing and AI Working Paper, 2023; Roose, 2023, Jan 12). GAIs enable students to brainstorm ideas and generate outlines and preliminary drafts, to understand genres and components of writing, and, for non-native speakers, to overcome language barriers. Despite these benefits, the commentators urge teachers to instill in students a critical attitude to AI-generated texts (Anson, 2023; D'Agostino, 2023, Jan 31). In fact, one benefit

of using GAIs in a writing class is precisely that their products provide students with opportunities for critical analysis.

This presentation describes an assignment, adopted from Mollick and Mollick (2022), which engaged students in a critical analysis of ChatGPT-generated essays. This assignment was incorporated in an online graduate EAP course enrolling EFL students at a private US university. The presenter taught this course in summer 2023. Following an initial prompt to ChatGPT, students were to continually refine the generated essays with additional prompts. They then prepared reports evaluating the essays' thesis statements, supporting claims, use of sources, and the quality of paragraphs and sentences. This presentation will ground this assignment in the relevant literature, describe its context and details, and evaluate its outcomes in terms of the students' demonstration of an understanding of the components of an argumentative essay and of the strengths and weaknesses of AI-generated essays. Attendees will be invited to share their experiences with and thoughts about teaching with GAIs.

# Using Digital Literacy to Connect Adult English Learners to Their Families and Communities

Cassandra Kramer, English Empowerment Center

[Link to Slides](#)

## Summary:

Incorporating family-motivated assignments and elements of digital literacy into the classroom can empower adult English learners to succeed in the workforce and at home. This presentation explored several mini-projects that helped connect learners to their communities in a digital way.

## Description:

In an ever-changing digital world, adult ESL instructors are faced with the task of providing survival language skills while concurrently trying to make sure learners can access necessary materials across digital platforms. Digital literacy is recognized as core to adult education (Rosen, 2022).

For adult ELLs, including refugees, asylum seekers and Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (LESLLA) learners, using family-centered or motivated activities leverages their funds of knowledge to support their learning. English language skills and digital literacy are essential for obtaining and keeping a family-sustaining job, supporting children at school, participating in community life, obtaining community services, and accessing further education and training (Harris, 2015).

When educators teach English through the lens of being a parent or caregiver, they can create authentic tasks, activities and projects that allow learners to better connect to their communities.

This presentation explored three categories. Using mini-project examples, summary handouts

and student outcomes, it highlighted how digital literacy was used to achieve the goals. While the assignments were designed for a beginner level remote class, they could be adapted for multi-level and in-person classes.

Mini Project #1: Connecting students to their local libraries. Students were required to locate their closest library, as well as apply for and obtain a library card.

Mini Project #2: Connecting students to their child's school. Students learned to navigate school websites, follow social media, access the school's PTO, and subscribe to newsletters.

Mini Project #3: Connecting students to their own culture with food. Students created a recipe in Google Docs with a dish from their culture. It was used for a class-wide recipe book.

During the presentation, the participants had the opportunity to collaborate with one another and brainstorm and share possible future family-motivated mini-projects.

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# Using TED Talks to Promote Advanced Listening Comprehension and Speaking Skills

Marilyn K. Rahilly, Johns Hopkins University

## **Summary:**

Many adult ESL learners, even those at the advanced listening comprehension and speaking level, have difficulty understanding native English speech and speaking fluently, especially when discussing complex topics. Using TED Talks, which present a wide diversity of topics spoken by native English speakers, has proven to be an effective strategy to help advanced EAP students to understand authentic speech, take detailed notes, fill out cloze exercises, paraphrase, summarize, make oral presentations and improve their comprehension and speaking fluency.

## **Description:**

Many adult ESL learners, even at the advanced level, have difficulty in understanding native English speakers and speaking English fluently, particularly when discussing international affairs. Using TED Talks, which present a diversity of topics by native English speakers, has been a useful and productive method to assist advanced ESL students improve their comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. The method involves listening to TED Talks, taking detailed notes, filling out cloze exercises, paraphrasing and summarizing the talks and making a similar speech using the vocabulary, idioms, figurative language and other

features of authentic English. TED Talks have also proven to stimulate conversation and reflections on many topics, some of which are especially relevant to international students.

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[nnest@watesol.org](mailto:nnest@watesol.org)

