Issues in Language Instruction

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A Journal for Practicing and Interpreting TESL

Proceedings of the 2018 Conference *Building Bridges for English Language Centers*

Editor's Note

In December 2018, Colleges and Universities from around the region convened at the University of Kansas to present at the *Building Bridges for English Language Centers* conference. The conference explored relationships among ESL practitioners, English language center staff and administrators, and others across the campus. In short, the conference brought together a variety of university professionals to shed light on their roles in English language centers.

Bringing together both domestic and international students, McClendon, Pacioianu, Routsong, and Williams describe interdisciplinary models where ESL students interact with domestic students in Communications Studies, English 101, and Education courses. In their article, *Building Bridges in Classrooms: Collaboration for Integration and Globalization*, the authors describe class projects that allow for authentic interaction, setting up two-way opportunities for learning and cultural awareness that go beyond classroom assignments. The authors also provide student comments to give specific insights into how non-native and native English speaking students reacted to these unique opportunities in international education.

In her article, *Promoting Your Department and Practice with Twitter*, Thiessen builds bridges across the University and beyond through Twitter. This social media platform flattens out University hierarchies and allows ESL instructors, Deans, and University Chancellors to communicate directly with each other overriding barriers that arise from organizational charts. Twitter can also be used by ESL practitioners and IEPs to raise their visibility and build professional relationships, which is especially important during this difficult time in our profession. Thiessen also demystifies Twitter for the novice ESL professional, provides clear explanations for using Twitter, and offers advice for engaging with the wider ESL and educational community.

Sood and Taveggia report on their experience teaching in a pathways program, where students are co-enrolled in EAP courses and General Education courses such as Environmental Studies and American Studies. Their article, *From General ESL to EAP: A Fall Leap¸* discusses their transition from ESL instructors focusing more on general English language development to EAP instructors helping students use English and other academic skills to negotiate academic content from specific disciplines. This firsthand account offers candid discussion on using specialized knowledge or content from General Education and other disciplines in the EAP

classroom, which is perhaps one of the most significant concerns of general ESL instructors who transition to teaching EAP.

Berardo, Šedriks, Lamer, and Greene outline two short-term programs that require the involvement of different departments on campus as well as international education specialists such as the Education Program Coordinator. Their article, *Re-Envisioning ESL for Short-Term Programs*, goes beyond the IEP to begin to re-position the ESL/EAP practitioner as an instructor/guide for participants in international short-term programs. Rather than focusing on the traditional 4-skills, grammar, and vocabulary, the ESL/EAP practitioner contributes to the short-term program by providing classroom space for program participants to critically examine their international education experience in its entirety. Critical exploration of the international education experience is done in English through writing and speaking activities, making the ESL/EAP professional uniquely qualified for this role.

Larson's article, *Addressing Cultural Challenges of Teaching English to Chinese Students for Beginning ESL Instructors*, tackles cultural perceptions about Chinese students for ESL instructors who may be working with Chinese students early in their career. The author bases her observations, perceptions, and advice on much firsthand experience studying and working in China as well as teaching ESL to Chinese students in her IEP. Written from a Western perspective, the paper reveals North American cultural values as well. Key issues the author deals with are integrating students into the larger community, saving face and risking embarrassment, critical thinking and plagiarism, as well as cross-cultural perceptions maturity and privacy.

The primary mission of English language centers includes preparing international students who have not yet met the University's ESL requirement for academic success. ESL and EAP courses are at the heart of this mission. The conference, *Building Bridges for English Language Centers*, demonstrated that there is much involved in the successful implementation of this kind of preparation. The conference broadened the discussion to illuminate the bigger picture: relationships with colleagues across disciplines, networking and new media, professional journeys from ESL to EAP, relationships among instructors, staff, and administrators, and the cultural complexity in the ESL classroom at the University today. Recognizing the profession in its entirety allows us to see beyond our silos, work more effectively together, and make relationships with colleagues and other professionals on and off campus.

<div style="text-align: right">

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Building bridges in classrooms:
Collaboration for integration and globalization
McClendon, Pacioianu, Routsong, & Williams

Building Bridges in Classrooms: Collaboration for Integration and Globalization

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Abstract. International students are missing out on an immersive campus experience because they have few meaningful interactions with American students. This article describes three class projects with different instructors across different areas of study that sought to more successfully integrate international students while building a more global mindset in American students. Both groups of students in each of the three projects expressed positive experiences and a new outlook on the possibilities for relationships between international and domestic students on campus.

Introduction

Two years ago, we attended a conference presentation that embodied what administration and Intensive English instructors at Washburn University (WU) have been seeking to do for many years: integrate our international students into university life, socially and academically. The conference presenters brought professors from different departments on their campus with whom they had collaborated across disciplines to create experiences for the international and domestic students in class. They had paired English language classes with courses that had global outcomes. This idea seemed a perfect fit for WU, which has made global and intercultural competence and diversity and inclusion priorities for the student body, many of whom come from rural areas in Kansas without much previous exposure to students from other countries. We envisioned integrating international students and increasing domestic students' global awareness through shared experiences inside the classroom. Thus, a collaboration between the Intensive English Program and various academic departments began at WU two years ago. The following is what we have implemented and some ideas on how we made it work; we have found these ideas to be adaptable and beneficial to all students involved.

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Literature Review

Immersive Learning

While international student numbers have recently fallen in the United States (Redden, 2018), the benefit of immersive learning has been well researched (Fortune, 2019).

The concept of immersion in international education not only involves travel to another country to attend school but also to integrate with students from that country. If the point of travel was only for educational opportunities, then perhaps this would not be the case, but often one major consideration for international travel is to broaden personal horizons, experience cultural differences, and become global citizens of the world. Yet, international students traveling to the United States tend to segregate from their host populations. This is not a new phenomenon. In a 2012 study conducted by Stahl for Voice of America (VOA), the largest U.S. international broadcaster, some of the problem seems to stem from outreach. International students see their American counterparts as self-involved while American students watch their international counterparts remain isolated in and out of the classroom. In this survey, Stahl reported over 80% of American respondents claimed that they were interested in getting to know international students. However, a disparity exists in the two groups' perception of the effort it takes to develop relationships between American and international students. Almost half of American respondents stated that they thought it would not take extra effort to get to know international students. In comparison, only 19% of international students believed that it would not take additional effort (Stahl, 2012). While Stahl (2012) notes that both groups say, "It's the other group that's not doing enough", the survey indicates that compared to American student respondents, a higher percentage of international students seem to know that extra effort is needed to further intercultural friendships.

When we spoke to our students regarding relationships, answers followed similar trends. International students reported that they believed the American students were "stuck up" and "disinterested" in building relationships while American students reported not really thinking about the complexity of friendships at all. Therefore, we decided that intentional relationship building activities would need to be at the core of our collaboration project.

Icebreakers

Shapiro, Farrelly, and Tomaš (2014) discussed the importance ice breakers serve to integrating international students into one collective body. Students in language programs are thrown together with other students of varying cultural and national backgrounds and instructors use icebreakers to facilitate integrations. Before international students leave the English language classroom and take General Education courses, an intermediary step of helping them interact with American students seems needed. Integrating within the culture, as well as being introduced to those in the more traditional space serves them by helping them acclimate to their host country.

Modules

Model 1: IE091 Language in Context Seminar | CN385 Global Communication

These two courses, Language in Context Seminar and Global Communication, had three mutual goals (See Fig. 1). The Intensive English course assignment originally included interviewing American students to find out what they thought on certain issues and writing a reflection assignment. The Global Communication students had to interview international students about certain aspects of communication and how they differ among cultures. An emphasis was placed on cultural biases, perceptions and filters.
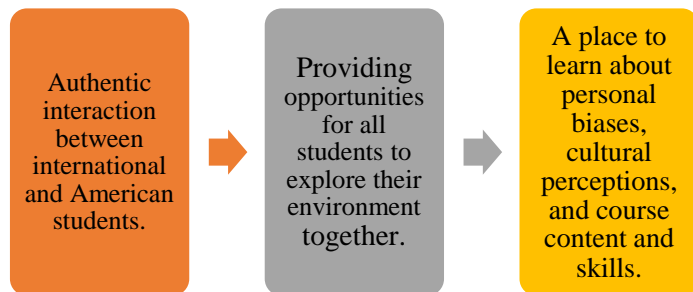
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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│   Authentic       │      │   Providing       │      │  A place to       │
│  interaction      │  →   │ opportunities     │  →   │ learn about       │
│   between         │      │    for all        │      │  personal         │
│ international      │      │  students to      │      │   biases,         │
│ and American      │      │ explore their     │      │  cultural         │
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Figure 1. Goals

For this first joint instruction project, a basic sequence of activities was developed to accomplish the mutual goals (See Fig. 2). It was determined that we would need ice breakers to lower the affective filter when first gathering the two groups of students. They would need instruction to prepare them for the interview, and clear parameters and expectations for the assignments. It was also decided that change to perceptual bias could be captured by assigning reflection activities. This first iteration of the collaboration project was a success. Feedback revealed these activities built friendships and broke through previous perceptions:

- "I can make American friend by this project….understand Americans much more!" - NNS
- "…now we are close friends! …we are very talking and we talked about many interesting things." - NNS
- "This assignment helped change my view and allowed me …make friends with American students…" - NNS
- "…it took those perceptual biases and helped get rid of them." -NS
- "It was so cool to find common ground with someone I would of thought was completely different than me…" -NS
- "[ ] is the first person I have ever met from Japan…I always thought Japan and China were basically the same thing…how culturally unaware I am." -NS
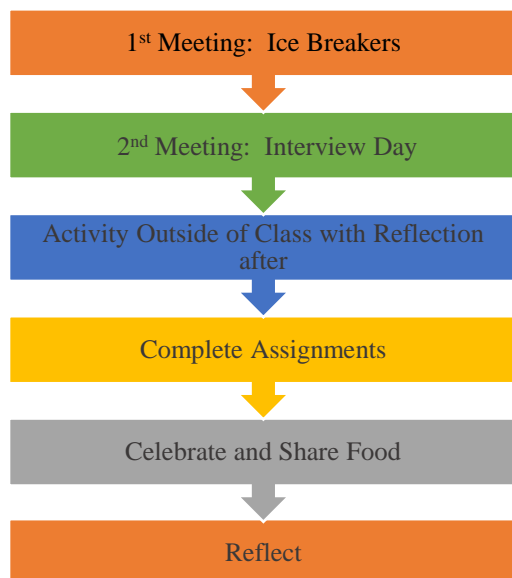
Figure 2. Class Activity Sequence

This type of joint venture program works with multiple Communication Studies units: nonverbal, intercultural, conflict, family, health, etc. While textbooks tend to focus on United States trends and practices, this ability to work with people from other cultures is essential in instilling a global mindset.

Model 2: IE204 Writing for Academic Purposes III | EN101 First Year Writing

To encourage a global mindset early in their higher education experience, students in a traditional First Year Writing class were tasked with writing a narrative based on interviews with students in Academic Purposes III, a class consisting of L2 students at the higher intermediate to low advanced level. The project followed the same sequence of class meetings and activities as shown in Figure 2.

In order to adequately prepare students ahead of time and set them up for successful interactions, students in First Year Writing read about culture and language and wrote about the significance of culture and language in their own lives. They learned about interviewing techniques and gained confidence and practical experience by interviewing an international guest as a class. Students also wrote about their expectations and anxieties heading into the joint class meetings. The most common fear expressed by First Year Writing students about the project was the possibility of difficult communication. Students worried that they would not understand or be understood by their interview partners. Knowing this concern ahead of time helped us develop and incorporate tools for successful interactions. For instance, in addition to interviewing practice, First Year Writing students composed and printed questions to leave for their L2 partners during the project's first joint class meeting. That way, if something was lost in verbal communication, L2 students had time to look things up or ask for help prior to the second joint class meeting.

Students ultimately realized that their fears were exaggerated or unfounded. They overwhelmingly reported positive interactions and a new understanding of each other's lives and cultures:

- "The icebreakers were good because everybody interact and got fun." - NNS
- "Both of us like playing basketball so we planned to play basketball together in the gym of Washburn." - NNS
- "It was a great experience getting to know him and … we both got to learn a lot about each other." - NS
- "We won all three of the games and after I was hyping him up because he was handing out buckets to the other team and they were doing a lot of talking about how they were going to win. I had a good time with [ ] and wouldn't mind going back with him to play again." - NS

While students' anticipatory writing indicated an emphasis on difference and discomfort, reflections following the project revealed students' surprise and excitement about the things they found in common.

Model 3: IE203 Speaking and Understanding for Academic Purposes III | ED335 Creative Experiences in the Elementary/ Middle School Classroom

The third model emphasized cultural diversity in the classroom. It has been implemented for four semesters and is somewhat different from the other three. The Intensive English (IE) Speaking and Understanding course goals include presenting and practicing English in authentic situations while course goals for the Education (ED) Creative Experiences course include learning about cultural diversity and inclusion in the classroom. ED students learn about cultural diversity and how to integrate culture and arts into the teaching of the content areas of English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. To facilitate the introduction of cultural diversity in the classroom, the IE students were invited to present short lessons on the culture of their home country in the ED classroom. During the same time period, the ED students presented cultural arts lessons on either an American cultural art or a culture which they identified with. Presentations included visual arts (folk art/crafts), music, dance, narrative and culinary arts. After all presentations had been completed, the ED students planned a mixer celebration. The event in the fall of 2018 was hosted by the ED class and centered around a Thanksgiving cultural theme. All students were invited to share food and participate in Thanksgiving arts and crafts. The students had spent quite a bit of time together considering two presentations took place each week until all the students had finished. The impact on the students was shown in this feedback and plans are currently being made for a new semester of collaboration:

- "Know more about cultures deeply such as Thanksgiving." - NNS
- "Listen to different kind of pronunciation" - NNS
- "Our classroom time spent with our partner English learning class and learning about the importance of recognizing other cultures, fills me with excitement on the infinite possibilities of having special cultural days directed at the culture your students identify with." - NS

Conclusion

These collaboration projects between Intensive English and other departments on campus meet the goals of both kinds of courses. Across all projects we found that we needed at least two icebreakers in the beginning, teacher assigned groups, very clear instructions, several class meetings together, group time outside of class, reflection assignments, and celebration time with food. Even with these structured activities, these projects proved to be simpler to implement than one involving community groups off campus. There could be many different types of projects established with any course that had global awareness or diversity outcomes. We have since expanded and paired a seminar for international students with a first-year experience course, which could work on any campus. Further ideas could include participation with a departmental course in a showcase event on campus, such as poster sessions, panel discussions, and on-campus publications. Besides promoting engagement of both groups of students, these collaborations also promote interdepartmental collaboration and community engagement.

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Promoting Your Department and Practice with Twitter

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Keywords: Twitter, Tweet, ESL, IEP, Networking, Professional Development

Abstract. Intensive English Programs (IEPs) constantly find themselves in an ongoing battle for their legitimacy and relevancy throughout many university campuses in the United States. The often overlooked professional development demands and multicultural endeavors in which ESL instructors partake, coupled with our current social and political climate, makes it imperative that IEPs and English language instructors take on the promotion of their important work on campus and with our international English language learners themselves. Fortunately, with the prevalence of social media, Twitter in particular, it is easier and more accessible for English language professionals and departments to demonstrate that what they do extends greatly beyond teaching.

Introduction

Caught somewhere between a required hurdle for many international students on their way to college admission in the United States and a vital university department, Intensive English Programs (IEPs) constantly find themselves in an ongoing battle for their legitimacy and relevancy throughout many university campuses in the United States. While ESL instructors often do not have the research demands placed upon them that their colleagues on campus do, balancing assigned English language classes, designing new courses, and engaging in professional development endeavors are key parts of their jobs. International students have a myriad of cultural, academic, and adaptation issues with which IEP instructors constantly and effectively help, which is a heavy service component to their teaching that many times goes unrecognized (Eaton, 2013). IEP classes are generally not offered for academic credit and the profession of teaching English as a second or foreign language is often misunderstood as only needing to have native or near-native command of the English language in order to teach it, which can serve in "further distancing it from the academic mainstream" (Heyen, 2016, p. 9).

This seemingly isolationist position, coupled with our current social and political climate, makes it imperative that IEPs and English language instructors take on the promotion of their important work on campus and with our international English language learners themselves.

Fortunately, with the prevalence of social media, Twitter in particular, it is easier and more accessible for English language professionals and departments to demonstrate that what they do extends greatly beyond teaching.

Twitter Overview

Twitter is a social media microblogging platform on which users post information and connect through short posts known as Tweets. Implementing a limitation of 280 characters per Tweet "promotes [a] focused and clever use of language" that is both personal and quickly digestible, and which has contributed greatly to its popularity all over the world (Gil, 2018). In a sense, Twitter is a perfect blend of informative posts and instant messaging that gets your information out and spreads it throughout a very connected network quickly (Figure 1). This format is especially useful to educators as it gives access to a wide variety of people, departments, and organizations (Carpender & Krutka, 2014), providing an easy platform on which to build professional relationships that would ordinarily be more difficult to foster.
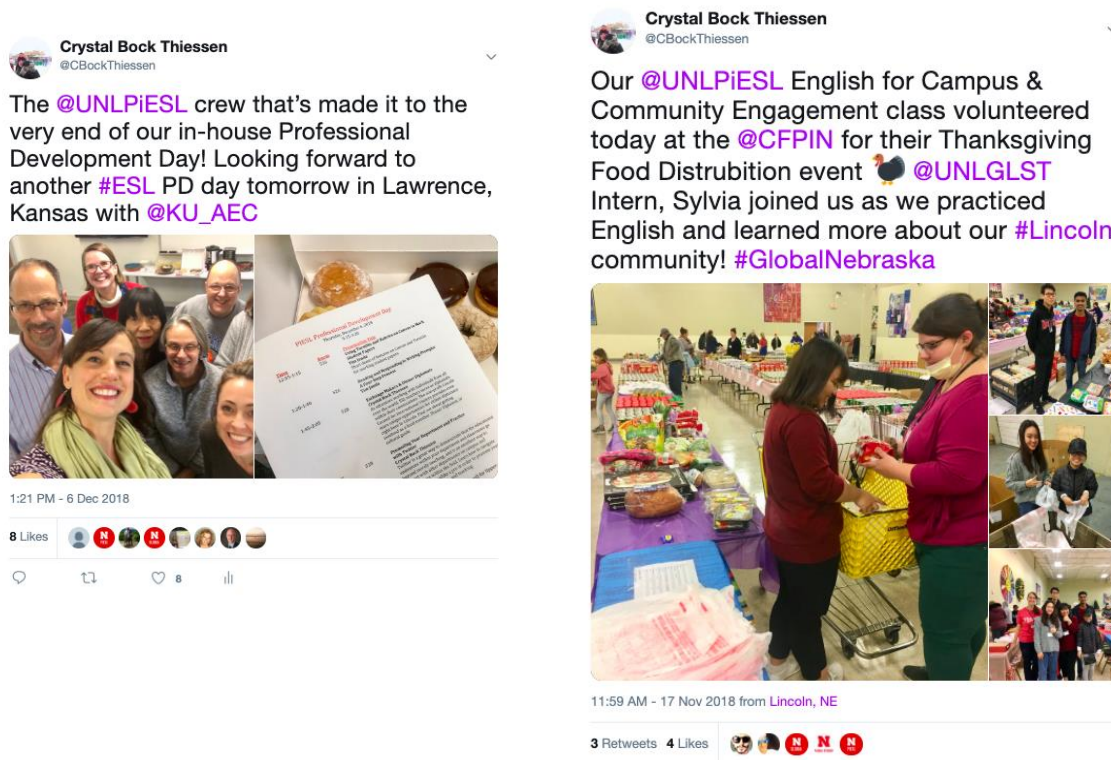

Figure 1. Example Twitter Posts from the Author. Posts can instantly showcase activities as well as connect with other entities and individuals.

Tweeting Away the Educational Hierarchy

Being an engaged contributor and participant on Twitter in an ESL community of practice and in a university's Twitter network has the power to propel educators' status and recognition despite the predisposed academic hierarchies that have traditionally existed. Adjunct

instructors, college deans, and university chancellors have equal opportunities to showcase their involvement, and a lack of physical barriers on Twitter makes it easy to professionally connect despite the difference in titles and personal access. In the case of our IEPs and the English language teaching profession as a whole, Twitter provides an opportunity for a marginalized profession to gain a larger voice and presence. Bringing transparency to workloads and showcasing just what, exactly, English language instruction entails is one of the biggest benefits of using Twitter professionally, and actively using a Twitter account goes a long way in showing that IEPs are modern and relevant places of learning and globalization (Herrmann, 2015).

Twitter Demystified

Whenever teachers gathered in a room are asked to raise their hands if they have a Twitter account, more than half the arms go up. When further asked how many of them are active within this account at least once a week, more often than not, all but a very few go down. Twitter's pervasiveness can be quite intimidating to teachers who are not regularly on social media. For those who are already quite proficient with Facebook, the differences on Twitter and the tendency to view Twitter through a dense Facebook-oriented lens can make it seem confusing, impenetrable, and "just one more thing to learn."

Creating a network and presence on Twitter for professional exposure, however, is really just a matter of three easy steps that can be broken down into stages (Figure 2). The first one is the easiest: Twitter users should follow people, departments, and organizations they are interested in. Creating a space on Twitter that is actually interesting to view is important. When scrolling through snippets of news, information, and updates from relevant sources, the user will be more likely to continue to open up the Twitter app.

When ready to craft Tweets, start small. A retweet of content or a simple photo of student projects or presentations, along with a comment, is the first step in really building a presence on the site. Twitter is all about showcasing moments in the moment and connecting with others who are interested in the content or who can connect with it as well. The use of handles (otherwise known as usernames and denoted with the @ symbol in front of it) and hashtags (which serve as organizational or topical folders and use the # symbol) will take Tweets up to the next level in terms of connecting with others. Following other users and noticing how they craft their posts will start to give a good idea of what constitutes a good or bad Tweet, and the Twitter novice will begin to see how handles and hashtags are integrated into the body of a Tweet to maximize content and connect with others.
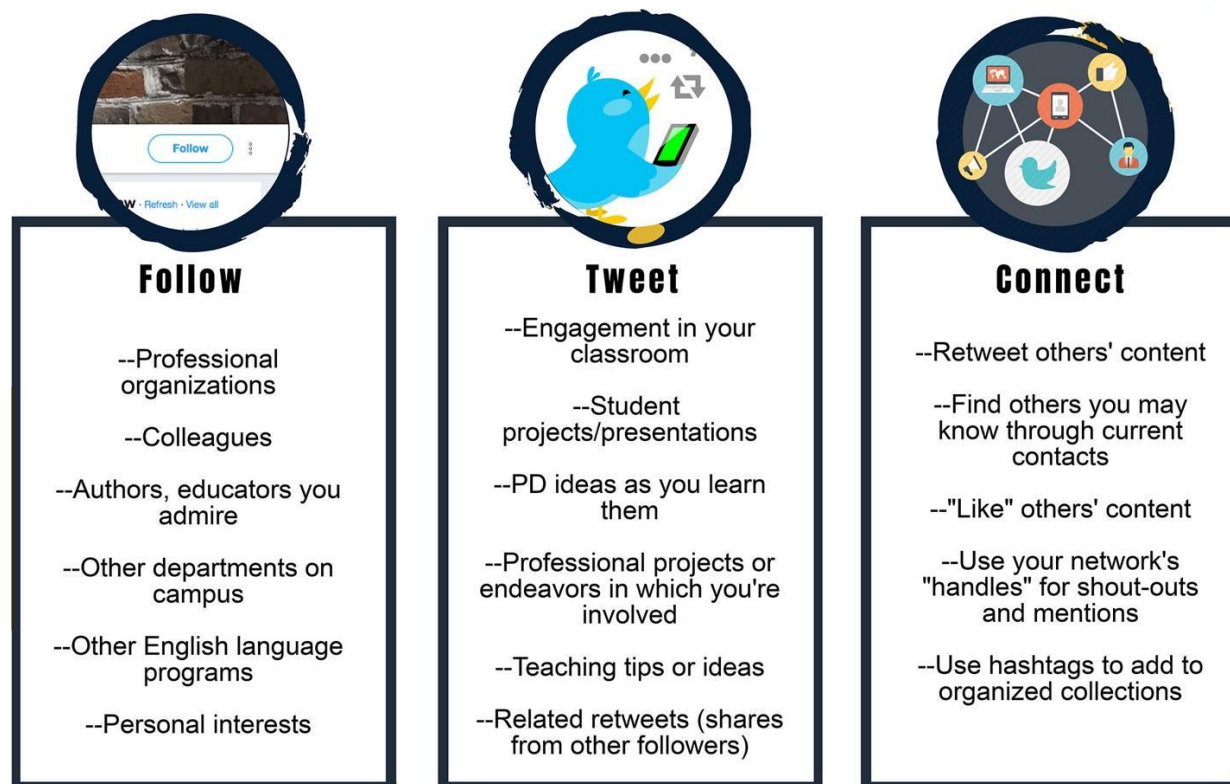
Follow

--Professional organizations

--Colleagues

--Authors, educators you admire

--Other departments on campus

--Other English language programs

--Personal interests

Tweet

--Engagement in your classroom

--Student projects/presentations

--PD ideas as you learn them

--Professional projects or endeavors in which you're involved

--Teaching tips or ideas

--Related retweets (shares from other followers)

Connect

--Retweet others' content

--Find others you may know through current contacts

--"Like" others' content

--Use your network's "handles" for shout-outs and mentions

--Use hashtags to add to organized collections

Figure 2. Three Steps to Interacting on Twitter.

It is important to have specific goals in mind for professional Twitter accounts in order to have effective promotion and engagement. The ESL professional and the IEP cannot be everything to all people and it is important to avoid trying to. At the same time, one can showcase various moments of teaching, service, and activities on a regular basis. Setting goals about with whom to connect and how will help to keep content focused and ensure effective promotion of academic endeavors. To further help keep professional activity focused, construct Tweets with the following three questions in mind:

1. *What exactly is it that you want to showcase?* Remember, you are restricted to 280 characters and up to four photos.
2. *With whom do you want to directly connect your content?* What handles, if any, will you use to directly connect to specific people or organizations? Is there anyone that your Tweet will specifically benefit in a positive light?
3. *What do you want people to do with your Tweet?* Is this Tweet to get someone's attention so that they'll follow you? Do you want them to re-tweet this information? Are you just looking for a like (acknowledgement)?

Just like any form of social media, becoming confident and adept at using Twitter to showcase and connect the IEP with teacher practice, and interact regularly with it as well, will take practice and a commitment to learning how best to use it.

Reminders for Professional Twitter Use

Freedom from restrictive grammar and spelling rules and formatting helps to give professional and departmental posts a modern and authentic voice, but there are a few things that are important to keep in mind when using this platform. First of all, in order to get followed and get "likes," personal and departmental accounts will need to follow and "like" others as well. This will ensure an extensive network in which to engage. Secondly, timeliness is of the utmost importance in this day and age; therefore, Twitter posts should be as current as possible to reflect ongoing involvement. The social media community seeks to engage with content that is not only relevant, but current. When there is something Tweet-worthy happening in the IEP or profession, get it out as soon as possible. The very composition of Twitter, with its short 280-character and four-photo limits, means that content is dense and made to be swiftly consumed, so it is important to get information out there before it is old news.

We have all seen posts that are almost all hyperlinked handles and hashtags—they are impossible to read and do not serve well in connecting with others. An unspoken and general rule for professional posts is to stick to one to three hashtags and handles per Tweet for maximum readability and increased likelihood of engagement from others. It is important to connect via handles in Tweets when possible to increase one's network and exposure, but it is best to avoid over-using the same people and organizations in Tweets when possible. Twitter functions just like any other networking space or opportunity in that connections should be meaningful and personal, but not overbearing.

Conclusion

Twitter has positioned itself as one of the most prevalent forms of promotion and networking in the 21st century, and both IEPs and English language educators can benefit greatly from learning how to use it to their advantage. Its immediacy and personalization make it an approachable and contemporary platform to learn and to use. Many professional and academic networks that would otherwise be hard to permeate become easily accessible on Twitter. In striving for legitimacy and relevancy of IEPs and English language education on university campuses, keeping content on Twitter interesting, relevant, and engaging, will reflect well on the English language educator as well as the university's IEP.

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From General ESL to EAP: A Fall Leap

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Keywords: EAP, EGAP, ESAP, pathways, IEP

Abstract. This paper is based on the presentation by the same name given in Lawrence, KS on December 7, 2018 as part of the Building Bridges for English Language Centers conference. The presenters were two instructors, Diane Taveggia and Parul Sood, who taught EAP courses for the first time after teaching general ESL classes for many years at the Applied English Center (AEC) at the University of Kansas (KU). The presentation focused on the skills taught in two English for Academic Purposes courses - EAP 101 taught by Parul Sood and EAP 102 taught by Diane Taveggia in the Academic Accelerator Program at KU. This paper expands upon the difference between the University's IEP and the Academic Accelerator Program as well as the challenges of the transition experienced by the two instructors who made the leap from ESL to EAP for the first time.

The Intensive English Program and Academic Accelerator Program

At the University of Kansas (KU), there are two programs typically offered to international students who have not yet met the University's ESL entrance requirement: the Intensive English Program (IEP) and Academic Accelerator Program (AAP). While the IEP is a more traditional ESL program with five levels based on proficiency, the AAP is a pathway program where students take General Education courses along with EAP courses to satisfy the University's ESL requirements.

Intensive English Program

In the IEP, there are five levels. Once a student is in a high intermediate (level 4) class or advanced (level 5) class, the student can also take General Education courses.[1] Earning a grade of an A or a B is an automatic pass to the next level, but students can take the proficiency test at the end of the semester to see if they can move beyond the next level. There are two main classes in the curriculum: Reading/Writing/Grammar (RWG) and Listening/Speaking/Grammar (LSG). In addition to the main RWG and LSG classes, support classes for levels 1, 2, and 3 are also

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[1] Level 4 high intermediate corresponds to a CEFR level of B1+/B2 and level 5 advanced refers to B2/B2+.

offered. Nine credits of level 4-5 classes count toward graduation but do not get factored into the student's GPA.

Academic Accelerator Program at the University of Kansas

Students who have been accepted to the AAP and have a proficiency level of 4 or 5 can enter the pathway program. The first year in the AAP allows students to complete a three-semester term before entering their sophomore year. Students are co-enrolled in English language classes and General Education classes within the same semester. (Some of the General Education classes are sheltered, in that they are created only for AAP students and other General Education courses are not sheltered. No English language faculty sit in on the sheltered courses, but some English language faculty teach UNIV, which is a course that introduces university life to AAP students.) The English courses are taught only by Applied English Center (AEC) faculty. There are three options for students who enter the Academic Accelerator Program: Integrated Accelerator Program (IAP), Academic Accelerator Program 2 (AAP 2), and Academic Accelerator Program 3 (AAP 3). Only those students enrolled in AAP 2 and AAP 3 take English classes along with General Education courses. Those in AAP 2 will take English their first semester only, while those enrolled in AAP 3 will take English classes their first two semesters[2].

English in AAP 2. In their first semester of AAP 2, students enroll in two EAP courses, EAP 102 and EAP 122. EAP 102 is a three-hour, integrated skills course and EAP 122 is a one-hour academic grammar course. Students in EAP 102 and EAP 122 are co-enrolled in an American Studies course and Environmental Studies course. No domestic students are enrolled in these courses. The language and activities in EAP 102 are geared for American Studies, while the grammar taught in EAP 122 is relevant to Environmental Studies. Since these courses are related, they are referred to as paired or "sister" courses.

English in AAP 3. Students enrolled in AAP 3 take EAP 101, EAP 111, and EAP 121 along with General Education courses. EAP 101 is a six-credit integrated skills course while EAP 111 is a one-credit class focusing on information literacy. EAP 121 is a two-credit grammar course that is associated with environmental studies, a course AAP students also take. After successful completion of their first semester, students in the AAP 3 track will typically take the same English courses as those in the AAP 2 track.

The IEP and AAP: A Comparison

The ultimate goal of the IEP and AAP is to prepare students to be academically ready for coursework at a university. In all general ESL courses in the IEP, instruction targets learners' thoughts, ideas, and opinions as input and new grammar and vocabulary is dealt with as it arises within the context of textbooks adapted for ESL learners. Most of the same skills are taught in EAP courses: how to read and process information from a textbook, how to think critically about the information, and how to evaluate and apply discipline specific concepts in the essays or oral presentations. A key difference in EAP, however, is that we teach these skills in an authentic

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[2] For more information about the non-English language components of the Academic Accelerator Program at the University of Kansas go to: https://accelerator.ku.edu/undergraduate/.

academic context, using texts from General Education classes. Table 1 below further summarizes some of the differences between the IEP and AAP programs at KU.

Table 1

A Comparison between the Intensive English Program and Academic Accelerator Program

Intensive English Program	Academic Accelerator Program
General ESL Courses	EAP Courses and General Education Courses
Focus on English language development	English as an enabling skill for reconstructing and deconstructing academic content from specific disciplines
Levels 1-5	*AAP 3*: Two terms of English language + General Education courses
General Education courses with Levels 4 & 5	*AAP 2*: One term of English language + General Education courses *IAP*: Only General Education courses
Course grade of A or B = automatic pass to next level	One year of AAP = Sophomore
Course grade of C requires a semester-final proficiency test score to progress to next level	Course grade of D or lower results in a student required to repeat the class
Nine credits of level 4-5 ESL classes count toward graduation for some majors but do not get factored into the student's GPA	EAP courses contribute to a student's GPA Students earn credits toward their graduation requirements (as elective credit)
Main classes – Combined Skills with Grammar: Reading/Writing/Grammar and Listening/Speaking/Grammar	EAP courses integrate the 4-skills
Support courses for Levels 1/2/3	Sister courses with American Studies and Environmental Studies

English for General and Specific Academic Purposes

EAP is often considered as one of the branches of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) which is further divided into English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) (Martin, 2014). EGAP deals with the language skills and the broader academic skills common across disciplines, whereas ESAP is concerned with skills specific to a discipline. It emphasizes the language needed for that particular academic subject together with its disciplinary text conventions. Both include language structure, jargon, subject-

related skills, and appropriate academic conventions. EAP 101 falls under the umbrella of EGAP because it is a mixed discipline course not paired with General Education courses the students are enrolled in. EAP 102 falls under ESAP and partners with an American Studies course. EAP 102 uses the same textbooks as the American Studies course and involves clear collaboration with the American Studies class regarding syllabus, material selection, and assessment.

Both EAP courses are content-, skills-, and language-driven. The general teaching and learning strategy that we used in EAP is AURC – *A*ccess, *U*nderstand, *R*ecreate and *C*ritically think about academic content (Berardo & Smith Herrod 2015, pp. 20-24). Understanding hierarchical organization of texts, learning discipline-specific jargon along with general academic vocabulary and collocations, and using visual representations are some of the activities used to access and understand text. In order to show others that they understand the content, students re-create it by taking notes, paraphrasing, and summarizing main ideas. They also write essays or give presentations. The final step is to critically think about what they have learned in class by reflecting on their learning process, applying the concept in a different situation, or even comparing and contrasting it with other concepts.

EAP 101

This past year, I (Sood) had an opportunity to teach in the EAP program for the first time. It was a new world to me and not knowing what to expect was the main reason for my initial apprehension. Phillip Martin in his paper titled Teachers in Transition: The Road to EAP (n.d.) mentions this anxiety and proposes strategies for overcoming it. "There is clearly a transitional process which needs to be undertaken by the [EAP] teacher in terms of how he or she adapts their role in the classroom and their teaching methods, and takes into account highly specific student needs and expectations" (p. 287). This is particularly interesting to me as a new instructor to EAP because it appears that I clearly had to adapt my teaching role with the knowledge and materials required to teach an EAP course.

EAP 101 is based on the traditional interdisciplinary Liberal Arts education which aims to prepare students for further research or professional work in their specific field of study. One of the learning objectives of this class was to foster individual investigation of disciplinary differences. The book for the course consists of a collection of first-year textbook chapters from various disciplines; communication studies, biology, psychology, economics, and western civilization. The academic skills we focused on were strategic reading strategies, listening to lectures, note taking, writing research papers, giving oral presentations, and reference skills. We worked on understanding hierarchical organization of the textbooks and textbook chapters, understanding visuals, and outlining the key ideas of the text. As part of understanding hierarchical organization, students learned that the section headings, the bold words, and the questions in the margins show the students the words and topics they need to study because those topics are important as per the author. Also, this pedagogy helped them to see the connection between the various sections of a chapter. Finally, since the assignments in EAP 101 relied heavily on research and reference skills, we emphasized how to navigate library databases to find and evaluate sources in order to produce a research paper. There was no explicit grammar

instruction for the research papers but we did use common grammar errors for some remedial grammar instruction after the assignment was turned in.

In EAP, although there was a discussion of language points, I learned that I have to shift the focus to academic skills and make instruction subject oriented. Reading hierarchically, understanding jargon, making oral presentations, and developing study skills were some specific academic skills I taught in EAP 101. After we finished each unit, a test was given to demonstrate whether the students could use English words and phrases common in that field of study. Because my students did not do well on the first test, we decided that instead of using a study guide to study for the next test, students would learn how to make a list of possible questions for the test. Questioning is a study skill that helps students to understand, recreate, and even think critically about what they are reading. We had a discussion about different test question formats, different quizzes, materials, and activities that were previously done in class. As a result, students learned to form questions that allowed them to critically think and apply the concepts. A question written by one of the students was "Can you explain the science experiment you did in class and using that as an example, explain the seven steps of scientific approach?" This kind of question would be in comparison to a direct definition question such as: "What are seven steps of the scientific approach listed in the book?" I consider the first question as an achievement for me as well as my students because it shows the student is using English in a discipline-specific way by asking for an explanation of an experiment and the method or approach that was used.

Specialized Knowledge

One of the biggest challenges that I faced was developing the specialized knowledge and materials that are needed to teach English for a specific discipline. Because we are not content area specialists, linguistic expression of subject matter can be somewhat precarious. Teacher's knowledge of academic texts and its influence on language use in class is the key characteristic of EAP distinguishing it from general ESL. Campion (2016) conducted a series of semi-structured interviews at the University of Nottingham to investigate the experience of six teachers who had made the transition from teaching English for general purposes to EAP, focusing on the challenges they encountered in terms of training, and their experience in overcoming those challenges. In this study, Campion found, as in my own case, that the greatest challenge that teachers face when they first start to teach EAP was "developing the specialized knowledge" (p.64). A major step in my learning process, too, was to grasp the concepts, academic conventions, and the textbook structures of different disciplines.

In EAP 101, I used three textbook chapters, each from a different discipline (communication studies, biology and economics) to teach academic skills, words and phrases in those disciplines. I had to impart both subject knowledge and language competence at the same time, so I had to prepare myself in advance by doing some subject-related research and reading. For example, the textbook chapter had only listed the series of steps followed by scientific investigators to answer specific questions about the natural world without giving any specific example. In order to give my students a practical example of the steps involved in the scientific method used in biology, I decided to do an experiment in class (during the fall semester) to answer the question about something they notice every day, "Why do green leaves change color

in fall?" Students were divided in three groups, each with a number of leaves that had the same color (green, yellow & red). To conduct this experiment successfully in class, I had to read online articles myself to understand the scientific reason behind the change in color of the leaves, as well as the biological jargon. In this process, I reviewed what I had learned as a university freshman and even learned some new concepts. All in all, I learned that willingness to engage with the first-year university material was an important step in becoming a successful EAP teacher. In the absence of such willingness, it can be challenging to teach academic English and study skills especially with authentic material.

EAP 102

When I, Taveggia, was assigned EAP 102, I knew that the approach was different from what I was accustomed to in the IEP, but I was not exactly sure how it differed. Thus, my first step was to comb through a mass of material on Blackboard, a learning management system, to determine the overarching goals of the course (e.g., using AURC to approach authentic texts), discover types of activities that others had found to work well (e.g., peer-to-peer teaching activities), and get my copy of the textbook used the American Studies (AMS 100) course because EAP 102 is paired with American Studies.

Different sections of AMS 100 at the University use various texts chosen by individual instructors, but those sections which partner with EAP 102 classes had to adopt the same textbook so that EAP 102 instructors could develop a sense of what the course offers. Currently, AMS 100 uses *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies* (Benshoff & Griffin, 2009), which focuses on American Studies themes as they are played out through film. Thus, I had to become familiar with these themes to the extent that I could then analyze films in light of them, and guide students in doing likewise.

EAP and AURC

EAP teaching and learning strategies that are used in the Academic Accelerator Program are different from those used in the IEP context. Early on, I discovered that the *AUR* in AURC is assumed in academic course work, but is unfamiliar to non-native speakers. Using AURC as a guide, I helped students to use text features (e.g., unit and chapter titles, subheadings, illustrations and captions) not only to preview a reading, but also to inform their judgments as to what they should access, understand, and recreate within the reading. Because students are non-native readers dealing with extremely dense text, making meaning out of the readings in their entirety is not likely, so learners needed to make informed decisions about what parts of the chapter to focus on first.

As in Soods's EAP 101, my students practiced asking questions about the text, both before reading and after reading. Asking questions about the text or subject matter, a typical pre-reading strategy, serves to focus the subsequent reading by providing a purpose for reading, and is primarily tied to accessing the hierarchical structure of the reading. Asking questions after reading involved revising the questions to reflect what had actually been covered in the text (some pre-reading questions, for example, were not covered, and some new content conflicted with what readers *thought* they knew, so they had to reconcile the two) as well as any evolving

ideas about what information was critical to their understanding of the text. Post reading questioning involved the understanding, recreating, and critical consideration of ideas.

Vocabulary and Grammar

Vocabulary and grammar were taught and learned in the context of the discipline, as represented by a textbook chapter. For example, discipline-specific jargon in this course covered film language (e.g., *producers*, or *independent films* versus *Hollywood blockbusters*), language related to American studies (e.g., representation of female *stereotypes* in film), and general academic vocabulary such as *portray* and *represent*. Students were expected to be able to use this jargon so as to participate in group discussions, teach their peers, and write papers in both EAP 102 and AMS 100 courses. The Benshoff and Griffin (2009) text bolded all discipline-specific concepts, so students knew to keep an eye out for and take notes on those important terms. Together in class, we explored vocabulary sources (e.g., vocabulary.com) to round out vocabulary knowledge so that students could develop a wider sense of the word in order to reinforce its disciplinary use.

Grammar structures in EAP 102 are dealt with only as they are necessary to students' ability to use them in discussing and writing about content. Adjective clauses, for instance, are commonly used to define jargon both in speaking and writing, so we covered adjective clauses. However, we did not name the grammar structures, nor did we explore all of the uses and forms. We only explored adjective clauses in the context of using them to define jargon. In addition, the passive voice and word forms were useful for varying sentence structure containing jargon. For example, *represent* is commonly used for characters and the stereotypes that they portray, but if a student can use the verb in both active and passive voice, as well as use a variety of related word forms, it increases the possibilities for expressing the same ideas multiple times without resorting to the same sentence structure. See below for examples:

- The flapper represented a new openness about sexuality.
    - This sexual openness, represented by the flapper, was new.
- This section covers the representation of white people in film.
    - White people are represented as wealthy and powerful in this film.

Adaptation and Struggles

Ultimately, I came to very much enjoy teaching the class. I had very few issues adapting my traditional IEP classroom approach (general ESL) to an approach more appropriate for EAP and found that the EAP practices actually informed my IEP approach.

Peer-to-Peer Teaching

My greatest takeaway was the peer-to-peer teaching approach used in the course in order to minimize the learning burden on each individual student. For example, a given chapter was 20 to 25 pages long. It was assumed that non-native speakers would have difficulty completing that much reading over the course of just a few days. Thus, the chapters were broken down into sections and subsections, and a given group of students was tasked with becoming the "experts" on one portion. Each group read its assigned text, and then wrote questions targeting the main

ideas and significant support for their section. Then, groups were reorganized to have one expert per section; experts were tasked with teaching group members about their section, and while listening to each expert, group members took notes from the expert. Since we then followed up with a quiz, experts had a strong incentive to be accountable for their classmates' learning.

The first time that we did this activity, much of it occurred in the classroom, with my support as they made meaning out of text, constructed questions to get at salient content, and then prepared their expert lectures. As we practiced this over time, however, more and more of the preparation was done independently, with group members exchanging email addresses and phone numbers in order to keep in touch and work to complete their section. Students reported liking the group approach as it would prepare them to work in study groups in the future, and I found it to work so well that I have adapted the practice in IEP classes I teach.

Challenges

None of the above is to say that I did not struggle a bit, but the issues I dealt with were fairly mundane. One issue was citation manager software. When I began writing graduate papers in the early 2000s, I was unaware of any citation manager systems. As a result, I kept a massive list of all of the sources related to my research until I finished my final degree in 2013. By the time these citation managers were becoming popular, my list was far too advanced to start over, so I had never learned how to use one. I had to go through my own learning curve before I could help my students with it. My most challenging hurdles were learning to use the References tool in Word and changing to MLA formatting.

Another issue was that I was unable to keep up with the reading. Students were reading two to three chapters over the course of two to three weeks. I was unable to keep up with it, just as I suspect my students were. I was familiar with typical American Studies themes (gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity), but these themes as portrayed in film was a new way of considering them. A few weeks into the semester, though, I realized that I had seen enough movies in my lifetime to see the connection quite clearly. I focused my reading on discussion of American Studies themes, using the same AURC approach that I was teaching my students to use, and bypassed the discussions about how the themes played out in film.

Finally, I am fairly narrow in my taste in films. I had never seen any of the Hollywood blockbusters that the students were asked to comment on in their speaking and writing, and I was not interested in paying to rent them or committing an evening to watching them. I used Wikipedia, Internet Movie Database (IMBD), and YouTube to develop at least a surface familiarity of the films. Sometimes my familiarity was so on the surface that my lack of expertise was evident to students. I was concerned that this demonstrated to learners a lack of investment in the course on my part: I was quite invested in the American Studies themes, but not so much as these themes were manifest via film. If I teach the course again, I will give more of my attention to the films.

Conclusion

Overall, we learned that there are a few initial challenges moving from ESL to EAP; however, this kind of transition is manageable by incorporating previous experience from EGAP courses. In our case, the strengths and skills we built through teaching reading, writing and grammar ESL courses as IEP instructors prepared us for teaching EAP courses in the Academic Accelerator Program. The contribution that English teaching experience can make towards EAP teaching has also been recognized by Steph Dimond (n.d.) in her article *The new order: EAP as general English*. She states "I would argue that the need for the knowledge honed through teachers' experience in more generic programs retains key value even in this more specialized context" (p.35). Finally, the key to making a successful transition to EAP is to develop a wider awareness of the shift in teaching approaches. What we learn while making this transition can prepare us for other transitions that might happen in the future.

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Re-Envisioning ESL for Short-Term Programs
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Abstract. ESL professionals have traditionally taught the four language skills, vocabulary, and grammar in Intensive English Programs (IEPs) to help incoming students satisfy the university's ESL requirement. As international education continues to change, however, the ESL profession will need to re-conceptualize its role and make explicit its evolving relevance. IEPs and traditional ESL classes are not necessarily applicable to short-term programs, whose purpose is to give participants some experience at a US institution with a focus on a specific discipline or area of study. This paper demonstrates two ways ESL professionals re-envisioned their role at the university for short-term programs (STPs) by creating English courses for the international education experience. With linguistic and cultural guidance from the ESL instructors, participants in these English courses critically analyzed impactful observations, perceptions, ideas, or events from the STP and gave PowerPoint presentations at a program-wide conference on their analysis of one academic or non-academic concept or observation that had the most impact.

Introduction

American universities are forming partnerships with universities around the world and some of these partnerships include opportunities for international students, scholars, and teachers to come to the US for a short period of time to study, receive professional training, and do research. At the University of Kansas, a short-term program is defined as an international program of non-degree seeking participants (traditional students, professionals and scholars) who are at the university for less than a year (e.g., three weeks to nine months). Programs are developed for each group to meet the goals expressed by the program's sponsor. Participants are admitted and enrolled in university classes, which makes them eligible to live in campus housing and enjoy all the rights and privileges of students at the university.

Short-term Programs and Traditional ESL

Sponsors of short-term programs may choose to exclude an English language component for various reasons. For example, the traditional ESL courses on the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension), grammar, and vocabulary may seem unnecessary because program participants may have higher English language proficiency levels than the Intensive English Program (IEP) offers. Furthermore, traditional ESL classes in the IEP

may seem irrelevant because the program might be designed to give discipline-specific experiences for students in the sciences, professional schools, or disciplines other than English.

The very purpose of traditional ESL classes may be irrelevant to the STP. Traditional ESL classes in the IEP are intended to help incoming students fulfill the University's ESL requirement in order to facilitate the transition into General Education courses or the chosen academic program, which is not the purpose of STPs. Program participants attend the University for brief, intense exposure to a unique academic experience put together by the program sponsor in conjunction with University administrators and Schools and departments at the University. Participants leave the university once the program ends.

Finally, the short-term program may not be a good fit for IEP classes due to scheduling. STPs of varying lengths cannot follow the university's semester schedule, which could disrupt the IEP class community when class numbers suddenly increase as STP students arrive and decrease as the program concludes and participants leave.

Re-envisioning ESL for the Short-term Program

Although traditional ESL classes and the University IEP may not be a good fit for the short-term program, this, however, does not make the ESL professional irrelevant to short-term programs. The ESL professional can and should play a central role in the short-term international education experience even when the purpose of the program is not to work on English language skills.   ESL, or more specifically English for academic purposes, is re-envisioned for STPs as a means for providing the linguistic resources and relevant information about the academic institution, local culture and environment, and adjustment process to help participants interpret and critically reflect on their international experience. In this sense, the ESL classroom becomes the *space* for participants to articulate new feelings, opinions and thoughts, and receive feedback in order to integrate the international experience into the participants' existing understanding of "how the world works."

The international experience itself adds value to the education that participants receive in STPs. Reconciling unfamiliar experiences with one's understanding of how the world works constitutes important change in the individual and therefore should be an explicit and core goal to any international education program, including short-term programs. Moreover, this change is facilitated by a language component designed to incorporate aspects of the STP from both inside and outside the classroom. In this model, language is the key vehicle used to address reactions to and interpretations of the international experience. This central role of the second (or additional) language requires the expertise of the ESL professional. Elaborating on the importance of language in the international experience, Althen (2011) considered language and reflection as key to learning about the new culture, which can be done by asking questions, practicing the local variety of the language, keeping a journal, reading and reflecting (pp. 249-260).

This kind of English language classroom also addresses an important critique in the study abroad literature, namely that simply enjoying a short-term study abroad experience is not academically sufficient. Citing various studies, Landon, Tarrant, Rubin, and Stoner (2017) stated

that "[i]nstitutions of higher education have been challenged to move beyond measuring the success of study abroad in terms of student enrollment and satisfaction and to foster higher-order learning outcomes (e.g., values, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and behaviors)" (p. 1). As part of a STP, the kind of ESL discussed here fosters higher-order learning outcomes by helping participants critically examine their experiences.

English for International Education

ESL is re-envisioned for STPs as English for the international education experienced or abbreviated simply to EIE. The international education experience is broadly characterized here by "psychological reactions to unfamiliar environments" (Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001) that STP participants have. Such reactions extend to any number of new "environments" including the new geography, plants and animals, hygiene, medicine and medical practices, transportation, food and drink, entertainment, social mores, as well as the invisible institutional structures and values of the university. EIE promotes critical reflection and interpretation of reactions and experiences through English. This idea, in fact, is not new. For example, Dressler and Tweedie (2016) examined journaling in short-term study abroad programs because of its role in helping international students articulate topics of interest, "express their feelings, draw upon their learning outside of class (field trips, homestay, etc.), and bring their intercultural learning into the dialogue" with an instructor (p. 940).

An English language component in an EIE course can still be useful even in STPs with participants who are proficient in English. For example, Niranji, Pathirage, Walpitage, and Skolits (2014) report on the benefits of an ESL class for degree-seeking international students who have already fulfilled their university's ESL requirement. They concluded that "…the ESL course was helpful with [the students'] college classes, for their adaptation to American culture, and in creating a broader social network with peer students and the larger community in which they study" (p. 32). This is the spirit of English for the international education experience, where students are advanced speakers and do not need to fulfill the university's ESL requirement to take General Education classes or classes in an academic program. The focus of EIE, then, can be on culture, networking, and the community as well as academics and other new "environments" the students encounter.

Short-Term Programs and the Education Program Coordinator

There are a number of non-academic aspects of short-term programs that affect the participants. Here we briefly characterize the role of the Education Program Coordinator in an STP to reveal some relevant non-academic aspects. The Education Program Coordinator and other STP staff members address the most important among non-academic aspects, basic human needs of the participants. An older but still useful categorization of basic human needs is found in Maslow (1954, pp. 80-92).[1] Maslow's hierarchy of basic human needs specifies five categories: (a) physiological, (b) safety, (c) belongingness and love, (d) esteem, and (e) the need for self-actualization.[1]

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[1] Other examples of the continuing relevance of Maslow's hierarchy can be found in publications on health care such as Lester (2013) and Karnatovskaia, Gajic, & Bienvenu (2015).
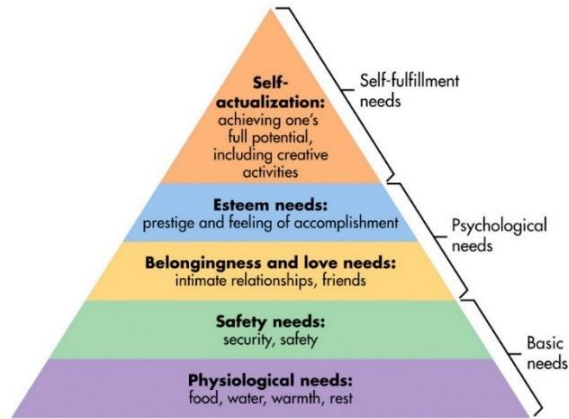
Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a Model for the Education Program Coordinator[2]

The Education Program Coordinator and team address the basic needs of the participants starting at arrival by helping participants get safely to campus and providing assistance with housing needs, and information about the dining hall, health and safety on campus, internet access, and economy shopping for necessities. The STP team also gives campus and downtown tours, explains the city bus system, provides opportunities to meet with both domestic and international students, accompanies participants on local and out-of-town cultural field trips, and helps participants prepare for their trip back to their home country. In short, the STP team provides continuous information and support to all participants from arrival to departure.

It is important to note that STP participants can and do have significant reactions to these experiences, which include opinions on how those needs are met or whether they are met. The Education Program Coordinator can mediate perceptions, but the ESL professional can encourage participants to arrive at a deeper understanding of opinions and reactions.

The relationship between the Education Program Coordinator and the ESL professional can be represented in Figure 2, where the Education Program Coordinator and team, represented by Maslow's Hierarchy from Figure 1, address (basic) needs of short-term program participants while the ESL practitioner, represented by Bloom's Taxonomy (critical thinking strategies), adds value by leading participants to critically examine reactions and perceptions, contributing a layer of depth to the international education experience.

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[2] See (https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html) for more information.
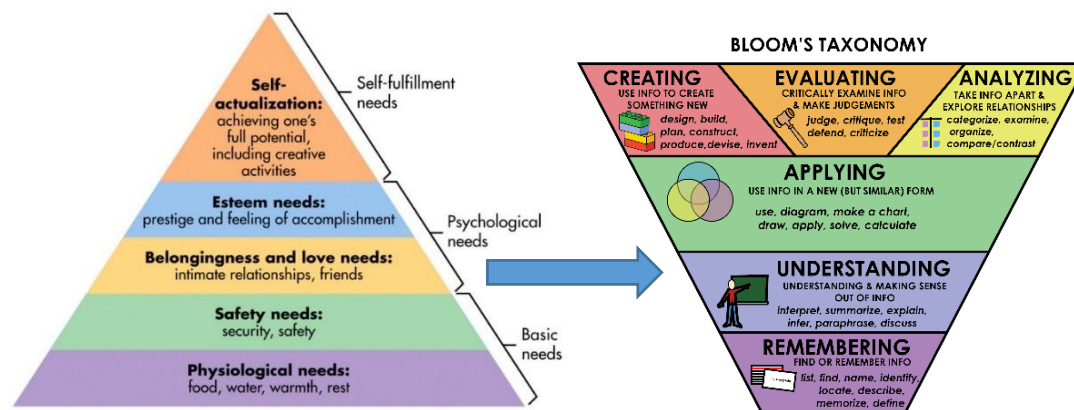
Figure 2. Value Added by ESL Professionals to Maslow's Hierarchy.[3]

Two Short-Term Programs

The two programs discussed below are with Capital University of Economics and Business and Central China Normal University. The participants in the two programs have been selected because of their advanced stage in their academic career, their familiarity with academic English and their discipline. Each program culminated in an international conference, where participants were the presenters. The theme of the conference was a critical analysis of an impactful event or insight from the international education experience. The experience may or may not be academic; what matters is that the participant felt significantly impacted by the experience.

Figure 3 represents a larger view of how ESL professionals added value to the two STPs by helping participants modify their initial observations, reactions, and assumptions concerning any aspect of the international education experience. Acting as cultural and academic consultants as well as language instructors, ESL professionals worked with program participants to critically examine the international experience (e.g., Bloom's Taxonomy, Hall's Iceberg Analogy of Culture) through language (e.g., pronunciation and grammar) and from an academic English perspective, which included summarizing research and giving presentations.

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[3] Source for Bloom's updated Taxonomy: https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/learningtolearnonline/blooms-graphic/
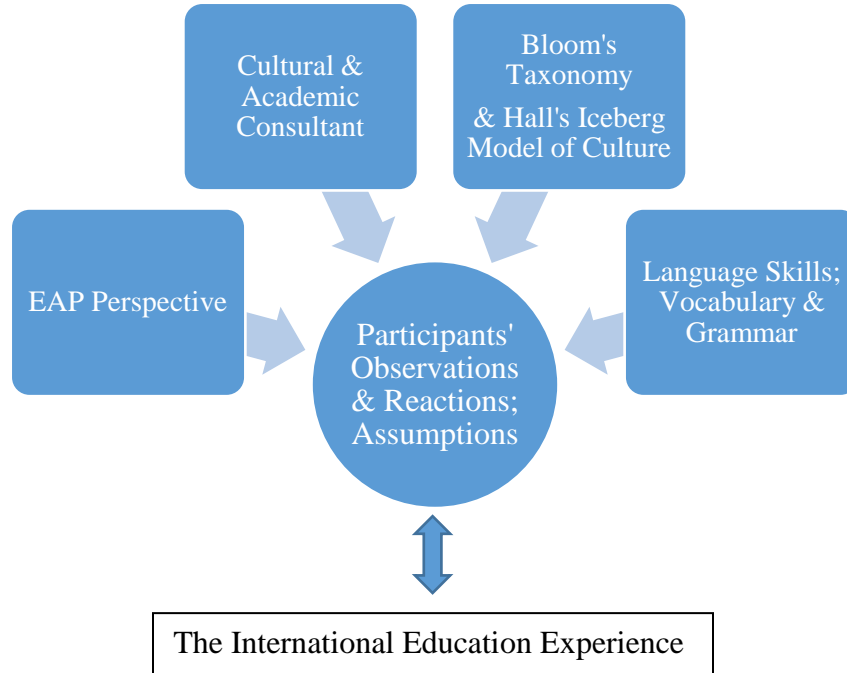
Figure 3. Four Ways ESL Professionals Add Value to STP Participants' Observations, Reactions, and Assumptions.

The rest of the paper offers a brief description of the EIE components of two short-term programs, which differ in their length of stay and disciplinary focus.

Capital University of Economics and Business (CUEB)

CUEB is in Beijing, China. Participants in CUEB come to the University of Kansas for four weeks to study economics, business, and/or public affairs. The short-term program in summer 2018 was geared toward public policy and included a total of 17 participants comprising of undergraduate and graduate students. The academic program centered on lectures (in English) by faculty in the School of Public Affairs and Administration and meetings with graduate student mentors. Also part of the program were a mandatory health center check-in, tours of campus, shopping excursions, dorm life and dorm food, attendance at sporting events, trips to surrounding cities (Kansas City, Missouri and Topeka, Kansas), and a cookout at a local lake.

English for international education - CUEB.

We divided the EIE course into two parts: (a) academic culture and research skills and (b) the international experience beyond the classroom. Our job was to help the students understand what it means to participate in an international education program. Our question was, "how can the ESL professional help CUEB participants critically examine and express impactful experiences from the international experience?" Our task was to facilitate critical reflection and

interpretation of experiences in a program that is geared toward Public Policy and has both graduate and undergraduate students at various advanced levels of English proficiency. A brief description of the EIE curriculum in the CUEB program is given below to illustrate how we answered our question and addressed our task.

Part A: Academic culture and research skills.

The organization of the American university. We began the semester with a general introduction to how the US University is organized into Schools and Colleges and further into departments. We included academic titles (e.g., assistant, associate, and full professor) and roles (teaching, research) as well as administrative titles (e.g., Dean, Provost, and Chancellor) and roles (e.g., raising funds, oversight of instruction and research) and used the university webpages as materials. This discussion included orientation to the organization of the university and allowed for the CUEB participants to identify similarities and differences between their university and the University of Kansas toward exploring (dis)advantages of each school.

Finding Research in Library Databases: In this section of the program, we brought the participants to one of the library's computer labs to introduce them to the available databases. After a general orientation to the databases, students researched topics of interest, which may or may not have included topics in the lectures they were attending. Important here was the orientation to library databases that participants returned to throughout the program.

Summarizing and evaluating research. After researching topics, participants had the opportunity to practice summarizing and evaluating the research. For this part of the program, the instructors used summary/evaluation activities inspired by Swales and Feak (2012). Summarizing activities included multiple readings of a text, listing key points and some support, and reflecting on the strength of the claims made in the article (Swales & Feak, 2012, pp. 189-190). Evaluation activities included considering the audience and the purpose of the material, relevance of the claims or hypotheses, and critical examination of the evidence, conclusions, and assumptions (Swales & Feak, 2012, pp. 249-250).

Pronunciation and Grammar Practice. Participants also had the opportunity to give in-class oral reports on their formal research or any other impactful experience. At this point phrasal stress, intonation, and the pronunciation of vowels were reviewed and practiced. Also practiced were key grammar structures associated with reporting verbs such as noun clauses. The specific reporting verbs were chosen from the field of marketing: "suggest, argue, demonstrate, propose," and "show" (Hyland, 1999, p. 349). Examples of formulaic phrases for reviewing literature and referencing include, *the main claim in this paper, the authors provide evidence for,* and *Smith (2019) adds to the literature with*. For more examples, see Feak and Swales (2009).

PowerPoint Presentations. We found that CUEB participants had much experience with PowerPoint technology but still needed feedback on organization and the use of bullet points to summarize ideas using parallel grammar structures. Also, included in this part of the course was a review of citations, PowerPoint design with visuals, and appropriate uses of animation. Of course, there was also ample opportunity for participants to practice explaining their ideas using PowerPoint slides. This component was key to the EIE course and CUEB program because

students needed to use a PowerPoint presentation to report on their insights into an international education experience at a program-culminating conference.

Part B: International Experience beyond the Classroom.

An international educational experience goes far beyond the classroom. Toward the end of the program, we wanted to help the participants identify and examine any aspect of their international experience that had a significant impact.

Iceberg Concept of Culture. To provide a way to think about their experiences in some depth, we introduced Hall's (1976) familiar *Iceberg* analogy of culture to demonstrate the idea of overt, easily seen aspects of culture (e.g., food, behavior, language) and covert or "unseen" aspects of culture such as values, beliefs, attitudes, and underlying assumptions. We wanted the participants to attempt some analysis or explanation for their observations and reactions, not to arrive at *the* answer but to guide the participants in thinking more deeply about their international experience.

Journaling. From the outset of the course, we introduced journaling to encourage critical reflection on experiences and reactions and to enter into a dialogue with the instructor. Each student received a Blue Book, which is a stapled blue-colored booklet consisting of lined paper traditionally used at universities for essay exams. Participants were encouraged to document and explore observations, reactions, sounds, smells, tastes, behaviors, surprises, and any insights, reflections, or frustrations.

The participants turned in their journals periodically and received two kinds of feedback: linguistic and critical guidance. Linguistic feedback included grammar, word use/choice, collocations, and formulaic expressions. Critical guidance included cultural information, questions, and suggestions to help the participants get more information and think more deeply about their experience. For example, one participant was baffled at why US students did not use umbrellas on hot, sunny days. She explained that even with an umbrella she was getting a tan, a sign of ugliness. She had anxiety about how her family would respond when they saw her tan. She was encouraged to investigate attitudes toward the sun and beauty. She also received feedback to help approach students in her dorm about this issue in order to understand this seemingly irrational American attitude about tans and choosing not to use an umbrella on hot, sunny days.

Debriefing Sessions. In addition to journaling observations and reflections, time was allotted for debriefing sessions, where participants brought in their Blue Books and discussed with the class what was impacting them. These sessions provided participants with an opportunity to convert their international education experiences into speech by practicing turn-taking and conversation skills. A typical session allowed for each participant to introduce one issue and for others to comment. Comments were often shared such as the universal curiosity about the American practice of drinking ice water and the appearance of cheese in seemingly almost every dish.

KU-CUEB: Conference on International Education.

The CUEB program concluded with a conference, where each participant created a brief PowerPoint presentation to highlight one academic or non-academic aspect of the international education experience that had the most impact. Participants prepared for and practiced their presentation in the EIE class. A representative list of conference titles is given below to offer a sample of topics that participants found noteworthy.

Selected Presentation Titles.
- Umbrellas and Cold Water: Strange Customs or Something Else?
- My Discoveries of American Teaching Style
- Three Interesting Observations of America: Guns, American Dream, and the Capitol City
- Some International Experiences and My Takeaways from the Program
- Differences between Chinese and American Sports Culture
- The Culture of Sneakerheads

Central China Normal University (CCNU)

CCNU is located in Wuhan, China. This eight-week program was for juniors and seniors majoring in education. The academic program centered on lectures by faculty in the School of Education. Participants also took a core course in the School of Education, *Universal Design for Learning,* and attended lectures on current practices in teaching mathematics, science, the humanities, and language. In addition, participants observed classes in local primary and secondary schools as well as courses at the University. Outside of the classroom, participants went to a pep rally, college football game, basketball game, and homecoming parade. They also traveled to the state capitol to see the capitol building and the Kansas History Museum. Several optional activities were also available such as the community arts and music festival, the Halloween community outreach event, and the Mid-Autumn Festival moon viewing party.

English for international education – CCNU.

Our job, again, was to help the students understand what it means to participate in an international education program. Our question for this program was, "how can the ESL professional facilitate critical reflection and interpretation of impactful experiences in this short-term international program that is geared toward education majors interested in advances in US teaching practices?" Similar to the CUEB program, CCNU students were required to journal their experiences in Blue Books. Unlike the EIE course in the CUEB program, the EIE course in CCNU included an English for academic purposes component (EAP) for education majors.

The organization of the School of Education. Unlike discussion on the general organization of the American university in the CUEB program, focal points in CCNU were the organization of the School of Education as one School at the University with five departments, namely the Departments of Curriculum and Teaching, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Educational Psychology, Health, Sport, and Exercise Sciences, and Special Education. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences houses content departments such as

history, physics, psychology, and mathematics. This part of the course also reviewed the University's General Education requirements and what the University considers as a well-rounded education. The point of this discussion was to explore what *education* means in the US and identify (dis)advantages of how teachers are educated in the US by contrasting with CCNU.

Overarching goals. The EAP course was organized around the four goals of EAP developed at the University of Kansas: Access, Understand, Re-create, and Critically question/discuss disciplinary content or *AURC* (Berardo & Smith Herrod, 2015; Sood & Taveggia, this volume). Students used the pedagogical design of the e-text to *AURC* selected chapters. This kind of EAP component of CCNU was not present in the CUEB program because CUEB was shorter in length and materials were not as available.

EAP for education majors. Another difference between CUEB and CCNU was that all CCNU participants took a course in the School of Education called, *Universal Design for Learning*. The e-textbook for the education course was also used in the English course, but our EAP focus was on education *discourse* as represented in the e-textbook. The discourse took the form of definitions of key terms, extended explanations and examples, applications, and summaries. Unfamiliar and discipline-specific vocabulary, phrases, and collocations were highlighted. Also examined in the EAP component were short videos of K-12 teachers talking about their classes. This was made possible because the e-textbook had short embedded videos of the teachers.

Oral discourse. Additionally, the CCNU participants were exposed to a variety of spoken academic registers in the EAP classroom. Analysis of the UDL embedded videos and educational-minded TED Talks afforded the participants the opportunity to evaluate academic language through the lens of a variety of presentation approaches. Moreover, participants were tasked with creating their own digital stories based on a particular audience. Practice in the digital humanities through the use of Pecha Kucha, a presentation format which relies on visuals, was contrasted with "live" in-class mini-talks. This in turn allowed participants to critique language (e.g. word choice, transitions, discourse markers, non-verbal communication) as well as body gestures (e.g. facial expressions, eye contact, hand movements) in diverse academic approaches.

Journaling. As in CUEB, participants in CCNU journaled their opinions and reactions to what they were experiencing in the classroom and outside the classroom. Some "classroom" or academic topics that participants wrote about were new, intellectually interesting ideas and discussions with graduate student mentors in the School of Education. Participants were also asked to journal about their visits to local K-12 schools and university classes as well as campus life (dorm life, library, transportation, recreation, and college sports), the city of Lawrence, Kansas, interactions with American students, perceived American attitudes and motivations of behavior, the food, weather and cultural adjustment issues. For example, some participants found it odd that domestic students washed their clothes in washing machines and used driers rather than simply doing their laundry by hand at the end of the day. This observation and perception opened an avenue for learning about social practices.

KU-CCNU: Conference on international education. Unlike the participants in the CUEB program, CCNU participants chose more academic topics to present at the conference. This sampling of presentation titles reveals the range of topics that made an impact on the CCNU students.

Selected Presentation Titles.
- A Comparison of Chinese and American High School Chemistry Textbooks
- Adjusting *Universal Design for Learning* to the Physics Classroom in China
- A Comparison of Chinese and American High School Music Curricula
- Nice to Meet Hip Hop
- My Ideal Math Curriculum: Taking the Best from Chinese and American Pedagogy
- My English Language Experience: A Key to a New World

Conclusion

Short-term programs provide participants with a brief opportunity to study, research, or simply experience how a discipline is taught or a profession is practiced overseas. The more proficient the participants are in English, the more they can benefit from the program. In fact, participants in the two programs discussed in this paper were chosen because of their advanced English proficiency as well as their advanced level in their studies. On the surface, it might appear that ESL professionals would not be relevant to these kinds of short-term programs, but as international education experts, ESL professionals can re-envision their role and enrich the international experience by providing (a) cultural and academic information about the US and institution, (b) critical guidance to help participants reach deeper insights into the educational experience, (c) linguistic tools to articulate evolving understandings, and (d) an EAP perspective. The conference presentation, as a culminating event, facilitated critical reflection on the international education experience.

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Addressing Cultural Challenges of Teaching English to Chinese Students for Beginning ESL Instructors

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Keywords: Chinese students, teaching English, ESL teaching challenges, cultural challenges

Abstract. Teaching English to students from an Asian cultural background presents unique challenges. This article uses the author's experience of studying and teaching in China and working with Chinese students in a multicultural context in the USA to identify persistent challenges, share the reasons that she believes are behind these challenges and offer practical solutions that instructors can use in their classroom today. Although the focus is primarily on Chinese students, the information might also be useful for ESL teachers working with other Asian learners. This article brings to attention cultural aspects rather than linguistic aspects.

Introduction

Most instructors who have experience teaching Chinese students are aware of the cultural challenges the students face. As an experienced ESL instructor who studied and taught in China, I find the following seven topics particularly relevant to many students with a Chinese cultural background.[1] Since I interpret my interactions and experience with Chinese students from a Western perspective, statements in this paper also reveal my North American cultural values. I limit discussion to behaviors which I have seen affect classroom performance in the US:

1. Fear of speaking and making mistakes in class;
2. Communication mainly with other Chinese students;
3. Hesitation with asking questions due to risk of embarrassment;
4. Critical thinking and different perceptions of plagiarism;
5. Tests as the only measure of success in a program;
6. Immaturity by US standards;
7. Privacy and cross-cultural experiences.

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[1] I studied and worked in Dalian, China during the period from August 2007 to January 2012.

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The rest of the paper addresses these behaviors from my personal and professional perspective.

Fear of Speaking and Making Mistakes in Class

For some ESL instructors it might be surprising to see Chinese students excel on their reading and grammar assignments, or even listening tests, while being unable to hold a beginning level conversation in English. From my personal observation, the Chinese educational system teaches students to be diligent from a young age, listen carefully to the teacher without asking questions, and complete all homework assignments, which often includes memorizing long passages from books. This kind of educational system can produce hard workers who tend not to openly question their assignments or learning outcomes. Language classes in China can have up to 60 students in one class with cramming and test analysis as the main activities. While language is defined as a means of communication, I have observed that even specialized English language schools in China often fail to teach the very basics of oral communication. Adding to this, entire generations of children raised under the one child policy with high expectations of parents and both sets of grandparents, we can imagine students fearing to make mistakes and lose face, which could happen if one speaks up.

So, what can be done to help our Chinese students verbally participate in the US classroom? First of all, they need to feel it is a safe environment. At the start of the term, it is important to reassure the students that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process, and the instructor is there to help them. If they know they can be graded on some assignments according to their efforts and participation rather than accuracy, they may feel more relaxed and therefore progress faster.

Secondly, it is vital to be patient. Students should be given the time they need to get used to the new environment. Pressing students to open up within the first few days might produce additional anxiety. They usually start slowly improving by the end of the second week and progress from then on. It is important to bring balance and gently draw out the students until they feel comfortable enough to actively participate on their own.

Another tool that can be used is creating a WhatsApp or a WeChat group for the students. Students can be encouraged to use the group to ask questions and exchange opinions with one another outside of the classroom. Instructors can guide the conversation, post announcements related to class and social activities on campus, as well as share interesting links for extra practice. Also, such groups help students to connect with their instructor much faster than e-mail or other forms of communication and are particularly helpful in case of emergency.

Communication Mainly with Other Chinese Students

The tendency to communicate only or mostly with those from one's home country can be common among internationals, including students from China. From my observation, it is rare to see a new Chinese student quickly making friends with other internationals who are not from

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mainland China. This behavior could be consistent with collectivistic behavior as explained in Cherry (2018) about China and collectivistic culture:

> In such cultures, relationships with other members of the group and the interconnectedness between people play a central role in each person's identity. Where collectivism stresses the importance of the community, individualism is focused on the rights and concerns of each person. Collectivist cultures are also associated with low relational mobility, a term to describe how many opportunities individuals in a society have in forming relationships with people of their choosing. Low relational mobility means that the relationships people have are stable, strong, and long-lasting. These relationships are usually formed due to factors such as family and geographical area rather than personal choice. Strangers are more likely to remain strangers to those from a collectivistic culture than they would be to people from individualistic cultures (Cherry, 2018).

Although behavior of "staying with the familiar" might be viewed as common, ESL instructors also know that students should interact with local people to enrich the international education experience and more quickly improve their English. How can we help Chinese students better integrate into the larger community while in the US? First of all, peer interaction can be encouraged by pairing Chinese students with those from other countries for in-class partner work. Some may have better reading and listening skills, but may be weaker in terms of speaking and oral fluency. For example, when one of my Chinese students kept asking me for extra listening and speaking homework saying the book was too easy for her, I came up with an idea. Instead of giving her more exercises from the book to do on her own, I asked her to go to the school cafeteria, start a conversation with an American student, talk to the student for at least 20 minutes and at the end do a short voice recording of that student stating her name, major, and the topics they just discussed.

Needless to say, at first the task seemed challenging for my student, who seemed horrified at the idea of initiating a conversation with a stranger. I encouraged her after class and explained the benefits of speaking to other American students. I watched the fear in her eyes slowly giving way to hope, as she reluctantly said, "Ok, maybe I can try." I gave her several days for the assignment. However, the next day she walked up to me with a big smile on her face. "Here," she played the recording. "It worked!" Not only did she get to practice her English for half an hour, but she also made a friend who invited her over to her room the next day to chat and practice more. This was a small victory. It was even hard to determine if it was my student or if it was I who was more excited at that moment. Real and meaningful conversation with a native speaker of English clearly had a more positive effect than another exercise in a book. I believe this was also a turning point for my student. As the months went by, she became actively involved in various international festivals, activities and projects on campus, and her English quickly improved, which was reflected in her grades.

Now, let us move on to the actual class time. For listening and speaking classes, instructors might ask students to survey American peers in the cafeteria or library. Giving them a sample of survey questions may help; however, I find it is best to let them make their own

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questions on the current textbook topic. For instance, if the topic discussed in the textbook is honesty (Scanlon, 2015, pp.120-141), they could potentially create survey questions such as the following:

- How do you define honesty?
- Do you consider yourself an honest person?
- Have you ever been dishonest or told a lie?
- If you were dishonest and did not get caught, would it be okay?
- What would you say to a person who wants to act dishonestly?

After reviewing the students' questions and making the necessary corrections, instructors can ask students to conduct the survey outside of the classroom, having them use a voice recorder to record the answers and then share the recording with the instructor.

In addition to all mentioned above, it is important to encourage students to take part in social activities on campus. From my experience, they are usually more motivated if other people they know also come to the event, so ideally it would be best for the instructor to invite the whole class and to consider participating in the social activities from time to time. If students are presenting or performing, their instructor's support will energize them tremendously.

Hesitation with Asking Questions Due to Risk of Embarrassment

It can be especially difficult to determine if students are not asking questions out of embarrassment because it may appear that students are not asking because they understand. Even if they say they understand; however, it does not necessarily mean that they do. In Mandarin Chinese, the word "question" (问题) is the same as the word "problem." I interpret the dual meaning of the word as a way of understanding my observation that many Chinese students do not want to cause problems, so they prefer not to ask questions. In fact, they can see Western students' behavior as disrespectful when they ask instructors questions. It can simply be difficult for the students to understand that it is appropriate to disagree in the US classroom.

Therefore, during the first encounter with students, instructors can make clear that they expect to hear different opinions during discussion, and that students do not have to agree with them or anyone else. Students need to know they are expected to ask questions as long as the questions are related to the topic. I find it more helpful if the students are not even given a yes/no answer option. When students voice their questions, instructors should pay attention to their facial expressions and never make comments that would imply the question was strange, or it might shut the students down. Instructors might, instead, offer positive feedback, such as, "Thank you for your question, Lee. Yes, this is interesting," and then proceed to answer the question.

Critical Thinking and Different Perceptions of Plagiarism

From my personal observation, Chinese students are encouraged to copy and cram from a very young age. There is little place for creativity. For instance, I had college students unable to analyze a reading passage and think how it could be applied to real life. Instead, they would read

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it out loud all over again. They would rather memorize the whole page than think of how it could be analyzed or interpreted. From what I have seen, students at Chinese schools have to memorize enormous amounts of information, often without thinking or knowing how it can possibly be applied or connected to prior knowledge. The research shows that while this is an effective strategy for tomorrow's test, it is highly ineffective in the long run, as there is very little retention. Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel (2014) state:

> Rereading text and massed practice of a skill or new knowledge are by far the preferred study strategies of learners of all stripes, but they are also among the least productive. By massed practice we mean the single-minded, rapid-fire repetition of something you're trying to burn into memory, the "practice-practice-practice" of conventional wisdom. Cramming for exams is an example. Rereading and massed practice give rise to feelings of fluency that are taken to be signs of mastery, but for true mastery and durability these strategies are largely a waste of time (p.3).

From my observations, many Chinese students seem to be more used to writing dictations than original compositions and often struggle with analyzing reading passages. They would quote what the text says, but they often would not interpret it or practically apply it. This is where critical thinking goes hand in hand with plagiarism.

Combining materials from other sources is considered as the main requirement for creating one's own work. I can give an example from my own experience of getting a Master's degree in Liaoning Normal University in Dalian, China. The topic I chose for my thesis was "Creative Learning Strategies for Adult Language Learners." I combined the articles I had already written with some new research, included examples from my personal experience, results of the survey I conducted, and proposed lesson plans, among other activities. The work included approximately 50 pages at that point, written in Mandarin Chinese. After my professor looked through it, he simply drew a gigantic "X" across the front page as he said, "This is very interesting, but you can write your book only after you graduate. Right now, for your thesis, in order to graduate, you must go to the library, find other books on the topic and combine the quotes to make your work. You must only copy and paste what the others said. Take out everything that comes from you."

In my case, this meant rewriting the whole thesis, which was a challenging task to do considering how hard it was for me to find any material about creative learning strategies in Chinese libraries. Although I did eventually present my fully rewritten thesis, I was not satisfied with it. However, it served its purpose as an eye-opener for me. Taking such education system standards into consideration, it is not surprising to see Chinese students try to "copy and paste" here in the United States without having second thoughts. Therefore, most plagiarism cases I am familiar with occur among new Chinese students, who have not studied abroad before. Plagiarism, in this context, can mostly be seen just as a learning curve.

According to the estimate of WholeRen Education, a US company that caters to Chinese students, some 8,000 Chinese students were expelled from American universities in one year alone because of poor grades and cheating. Cheating on exams, plagiarism and finding other

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students to write papers for them were frequently cited as the specific causes of expulsion (Qi, 2015).

Instructors should be explicit in their expectations at the beginning of class about plagiarism and defining it for students. They need to be explicit in teaching what plagiarism looks like and give students examples so that they can understand. If they are low level and the instructor does not speak any Chinese, they might want to assign a specific time for this and ask another Chinese student of a higher level to interpret in order to avoid misunderstanding.

Tests as the Only Measure of Success in a Program

I found that Chinese professors tend not to give students participation points. They usually do not encourage class discussion or in-class practice. The educational system is focused on excellent academic grades and getting the highest possible score on tests. That is the reason why there may be some students with a 6.5 overall IELTS score (which is typically the entrance score for proving a student's English is adequately proficient for the university) that are not able to answer a simple "How are you?" question appropriately. Our ESL instructors at Park University, USA, repeatedly find that some Chinese students are surprised that they still need to put more effort towards improving their English even when they had already passed all required tests.

Making adjustments to grading criteria can assist with this issue. One helpful idea is to give students participation points separately from test points and even home assignment points. Instructors may want to explain in the beginning that participation points are about how active the students are in class, whether they volunteer to speak, ask and answer questions or just sit passively and remain silent. This way, they will be motivated to participate in class because there is an incentive to do so. For example, I usually divide the grade into three parts: one third class activity, one third oral presentations, and one third testing. Then I further break down class activity into participation (35%), attendance (30%) and home assignments (35%). This lets the students see their class score progress unaffected by their success or failure on a test, while the overall score would reflect everything. There is also an option to not include some test scores into the final grade, as long as the institution can give instructors some flexibility in regards to grading. It is worthwhile to remember to stress to the students the importance of skills that they learn. They need to know that being able to use their newly acquired knowledge of English to communicate with others is far more important than their test scores because ideally, their ability to communicate will be reflected in a test score.

Immaturity by US Standards

From my observations in China, a number of students appeared immature (by US standards) until after graduation from college. I found that many students did not know how to cook, do laundry, buy groceries, put on make-up, drive and even swim. I would always see hundreds of Chinese adults using swim rings on the beach, since they never got a chance to learn how to swim. Almost all my Chinese student friends told me they have to eat out or buy snacks every day because they have not learned how to cook yet. Parents do everything for their children because they want them to be successful academically.

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In my opinion, the main reason seems to be that Chinese students basically live at school. They start attending numerous classes from as young as three years old and do enormous amounts of homework. I have taught two- and three-year-olds in Chinese language schools in a classroom environment, as well as 12 to 17-year-olds who had to come to my English class on Sunday afternoons because it was the only time they had. They looked absolutely exhausted every time and it was hard to keep them motivated. By high school, students often stay at school until nine in the evening and then do homework until midnight after they come home, only to wake up at six in the morning to start it all over again. When asked about their hobbies, Chinese high school students will typically respond, "eating and sleeping." These are the only things within their reach that they enjoy, as they have no time for anything else.

Although instructors cannot parent their students, little things can make a big impact. This can include being available for their students after class to tell them about the university's food pantry, and check with them about how they like cafeteria food and whether they are getting along with their roommates. I find that it is best to talk to them in private to guard against the possibility of the students losing face.

Privacy and Cross-Cultural Experiences

Many Americans who live in China might initially say that such a thing as privacy simply does not exist there. In my experience, it is not unusual to hear a Chinese person asking about one's age, relationship status and salary at the first encounter. These are conversation topics as common as asking "How are you?" in the U.S. These questions do not necessarily have to be answered. They are wondering about age because they want to address the person appropriately, and they ask the rest simply because they are curious or want to break the ice and keep the conversation going.

Therefore, it is helpful to incorporate ideas of privacy from a North American perspective into ESL classes when appropriate. Instructors probably will not be asked many personal questions, but that does not mean the same for other students. ESL teachers will do students a favor and spare them from embarrassment if they share about the concept of privacy in America. Privacy extends further than asking questions. For example, I had students attempting to look over my shoulder on my computer screen as I was grading them. When I was a student in China, my roommate would even try to sit with me on the same chair and read my e-mails out loud. The point is simply that Chinese students come to the US with their understanding of privacy. The more we understand different perspectives of privacy, the less confusing some behaviors will appear.

Concluding Thoughts

Cultural challenges many Chinese students face are not insurmountable. Once instructors understand the reasons behind these challenges, it becomes easier to overcome them in the context of a multicultural environment. The ideas suggested here come from a North American perspective of an ESL instructor who studied and taught in China. As result, these ideas also reveal my US cultural values. The intent is for these ideas to serve as tools in the process of helping Chinese students adjust and learn English better and faster in the USA. This article

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covers only a few main cultural challenges that Chinese students face. It is important to remember that these are only common trends which may not fully apply to every Chinese student in class.

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