Issues in Language Instruction at the Applied English Center

A Journal for Practicing and Interpreting TESL at the University of Kansas

Project J-Hawk: The Vietnamese Teacher Program Issue

LIPPINCOTT HALL

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Professional Growth Opportunities

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- Reflective Essays
- Reviews of (Text)Books, Articles, Policies, Best Practices in...
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- Research Agendas
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If you are interested in contributing to ILI@AEC, e-mail your submission to: mberardo@ku.edu.

Conferences

- TESOL Annual Conference: http://www.tesol.org/convention2016; held in March (around the 3rd week).
- MIDTESOL Annual Conference: http://www.midtesol.org/midtesol/; held in October (3rd or 4th week).
- NAFSA Annual Conference: http://www.nafsa.org/Attend_Events/Annual_Conference/; held last week in May.
- NAFSA Region II Conference: http://www.nafsa.org/Connect_and_Network/Engage_with_a_Community/NAFSA_Regions/Region_II/; held in October (3rd week).
- ACTFL Annual Conference: http://www.actfl.org/convention-expo; held in November (3rd or 4th week).
- The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Source for workshops, presentations, and conferences on language teaching and learning: http://www.carla.umn.edu/

Submitting to Other Journals

- TESOL Quarterly: http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish
- TESOL Journal: http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish
- TESOL Connections: http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish
- TESOL English Language Bulletin: http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish
- TESOL Interest Section Newsletters: http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish
- MIDTESOL Matters: http://www.midtesol.org/midtesol/
- NAFSA International Educator Magazine:
 - http://www.nafsa.org/Learn_About_NAFSA/Staff_Directory/Feedback_Forms/Pubs/Write_for_NAFSA/
- The Language Educator: http://www.actfl.org/publications/all
- Foreign Language Annals: http://www.actfl.org/publications/all
- ELT Journal: http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/
- Modern Language Journal: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/%28ISSN%291540-4781
- English Language Teaching: http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt
- Language Teaching Research: http://ltr.sagepub.com/
- Journal of Applied Linguistics: https://www.equinoxpub.com/journals/index.php/JAL
- Journal of Pragmatics: http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-pragmatics/
- International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching (IRAL): http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/iral
- Teaching and Teacher Education: http://www.journals.elsevier.com/teaching-and-teacher-education/
- Bilingual Research Journal: http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ubrj20/current
- Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/%28ISSN%291467-9922
- Journal of English for Academic Purposes: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/14751585



Editor's Note: Publishing Project J-Hawk and English for Research and Publication Purposes

Marcellino Berardo, Ph.D.

Language Specialist

Applied English Center

The Applied English Center (AEC) is responsible for teaching English as a second language at the University of Kansas. This means the AEC is responsible for the University's Intensive English Program (IEP) and the English for academic purposes (EAP) components of the Academic Accelerator Program (AAP). In addition, the AEC actively applies for, designs, and implements grant-funded programs that can run for weeks, one semester, or even one year. These grant-funded programs are called Short-term Programs. *ILI* has focused mostly on the University's IEP with last year's Special Issue devoted to the new AAP.

This issue of *ILI* spotlights, for the first time, the AEC's Short-term Programs by focusing on one program in particular, Project J-Hawk. Project J-Hawk is a two-semester professional development program for mid-career Vietnamese English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors (see Coffey, this issue). Important goals of the program include increasing the expertise of EFL instruction among Vietnamese EFL teachers and increasing the number of EFL faculty members who can act as agents of change in Vietnam by sharing their deepening knowledge of the profession with colleagues at home institutions and at national conferences.

In spring 2016, *ILI* asked the teacher/scholars of Project J-Hawk if they would be interested in publishing the research agendas that they developed while at the University of Kansas. Fortunately, they agreed. Publishing, which was beyond the scope of the program, poses particular challenges in one's second or additional language, even for accomplished teachers of that language. In fact, a new branch of EAP has recently emerged to address English for research and publication purposes (ERPP). Because ERPP is emerging as a specialty in the field and is immediately relevant to this issue of *ILI*, it is appropriate to briefly introduce this branch of EAP in the context of Project J-Hawk.

In a recent editorial for the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, Kuteeva and Mauranen (2014) claimed that "English for Research Publication Purposes (ERRP) [sic] has become a recognized branch of

EAP...surprisingly under-explored" (p. 1). Cargill and Burgess (2008) offered the following characterization of ERPP:

English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) can be thought of as a branch of EAP addressing the concerns of professional researchers and post-graduate students who need to publish in peer-reviewed international journals. It is now almost a truism to say that the vast majority of these journals are published in English, and that this presents considerable challenges to users of English as an Additional Language (EAL), regardless of the field in which they work. While EAP programs in universities can address some of these needs in a general way, the real-life, specific issues for academics whose first language is not English wishing to publish in English are often broader and more complex (p. 75).

Publication in English-medium journals can be difficult for non-native English speaking professionals. Flowerdew (2008) reviewed studies and anecdotal evidence suggesting that scholars who speak English as an additional language (EAL) "are discriminated against in academic publishing" (p. 77-78) due, in part, to their non-native-like usage of academic English. The culture of academic publishing matters, too. In his 2015 article, understanding the need to go beyond vocabulary and grammar, Flowerdew referenced Swales' ideas of "academic socialisation" and emphasis on mentoring novice writers. He discussed Kwan's points about a researcher needing to learn how to find an academic niche and appropriate journals. Flowerdew also devoted space in his 2015 article to professional aspects of ERPP such as interactions with gate-keeper editors and reviewers. These cultural aspects of academic publishing are foreign to L1 and EAL speakers alike, but navigating the cultural complexity of academic publishing in an additional language adds another layer to the task.

Although the additional language can make publishing more challenging for EAL scholar/researchers, there is much more to ERPP than the native/non-native speaker divide. In fact, the native/non-native distinction seems to disappear at advanced levels of writing ability and experience may play a more significant role in getting published (Hyland 2015, pp. 56-65). Moreover, it may be easier to express knowledge in the language that one used to acquire the knowledge in the first place, which could make the additional language "easier" or

the more natural language to use for publication if key resource material is written in the additional language (Hyland 2015, p. 57). To sum up, language, publication experience, engagement with knowledge, and the culture of academic publishing are all issues relevant to the burgeoning field of ERPP and issues relevant to the publication of Project J-Hawk.

With this volume, *ILI* contributes to the new field by instantiating ERPP within the context of Project J-Hawk. In particular, *ILI* promoted the publication of EAL teacher/scholars by providing the opportunity for publication and the dedicated AEC faculty members to work with the teacher/scholars throughout the research and publishing process. Participants in Project J-Hawk worked with their instructors, two of whom are editors of this journal, to identify research areas and appropriate journals, articles, books, and other materials.

Participants examined the way English is used in published abstracts from TESOL, International Association convention program books and from session descriptions that were accepted by anonymous reviewers of TESOL conference proposals. Participants then articulated their academic agendas following TESOL's guidelines for conference session proposals.

The focus was on conference proposals for presentations and workshops rather than research articles because participants trained to become resource faculty rather than research faculty at their home institutions. The academic genres of presentations and workshops are more directly relevant to the goals of Project J-Hawk, but should also be construed as part of the process of developing an idea into a research paper. Unfortunately, time constraints did not permit the development of the abstracts and session descriptions into research papers, but the participants learned to write for professional conferences and were exposed to the publishing process by submitting their work to this journal.

Readers of this issue of *ILI* will see the 50-word abstracts and 300-word session descriptions of Project J-Hawk participants. Readers will see new ideas and new ways to implement familiar ideas. They will also see ideas inspired by AEC faculty. Technology is a dominant theme in these research agendas along with motivation, feedback, assessment, speaking, and pronunciation skills among others. AEC faculty members are encouraged to contact authors to begin discussions or to follow up on a common area of interest.

Before ending my Note, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Melissa Stamer Peterson, copyeditor, and Dr. Elizabeth Gould, design editor. This special issue of *ILI* could not have been published without their significant contributions. Melissa and Elizabeth are consummate professionals devoted to knowledge dissemination. The AEC is fortunate to have such careful and creative scholars.

To conclude, a special word of acknowledgement of all my AEC colleagues is necessary. AEC faculty members, the primary contributors and readers of *ILI*, are a devoted group of professionals who have remained stubbornly dedicated to their students and to the practice of our profession. The devotion of AEC faculty is now particularly important to mention because over the last few years, the AEC has gone through significant changes including the implementation of a new 5-level curriculum in the IEP, the addition of a Public-Private-Partnership resulting in the Academic Accelerator Program, and the transition of three Directors: an outgoing Director, Interim Director, and new incoming Director. Adding to the stress, the AEC is currently going through accreditation. Moreover, the recent retirement and resignation of key people have affected academic specializations as well as office management. Chris Sundstrum's retirement and Kellie Smith Herrod's transition from the AEC to Shorelight Education will slow the advancement of EAP at the University of Kansas. The retirement of Doris Gasper this semester was also a loss. Over her 30 years at the AEC, she had accumulated more detailed knowledge of the inner workings of the AEC office and student enrollment than any other single individual. The significant curricular changes, the new partnership and program, the coming and going of key people, not to mention the accreditation process have made the last few years turbulent or "bumpy" as some say euphemistically. I would like to acknowledge and commend AEC faculty for showing such tenacity and resilience and for consistently putting students first, especially during these last few difficult years.

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Project J-Hawk: Leadership in English Language Teacher Education

Margaret Coffey
Senior Associate Director, Senior Language Specialist
Applied English Center

Introduction

The University of Kansas (KU) Applied English Center (AEC) has twice been awarded a U.S.

Department of State grant to host a program for Vietnamese high school teachers in 2014-15 (Cohort 1) and 2015-16 (Cohort 2). Each cohort had 13 teachers from gifted high schools, many in underserved provinces that have substantial ethnic minority populations. Officially titled the *English Language and Teacher Education*Program for Vietnamese Teachers of Gifted Students (VNTP), the program is commonly referred to as Project J-Hawk. It is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the U.S. Department of State – Hanoi Bureau. The idea for the program grew out of a connection made by former KU AEC Language Specialist Kellie Smith Herrod with U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer Michael Turner while Smith Herrod was in Vietnam as a Fulbright Scholar (2013-2014). Thanks to Turner's vision and heroic efforts, this unique program was created.

Project J-Hawk provides one academic year (August-May) of English language study and teacher professional development. Its purpose, as stated in the proposal request, is to offer substantive English language enrichment courses and workshop-style programming to

- enhance the program participants' English language teaching capabilities,
- introduce participants to the use of instructional technology in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, and
- prepare participants to train other English language teachers and serve as resource contact points at the U.S. State Department's American Centers in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC).

These program goals were set, in no small measure, because

in September 2008 the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued the 'National Foreign Language 2020 Project' which emphasised English language education as a key factor in national development. As part of this initiative, MOET aimed to ensure that all young people leaving secondary school by 2020 have a good command of English (Dang, Nguyen & Le, 2013, p. 53).

To achieve this, MOET understood the importance of improving the quality of primary and secondary English language instruction throughout the country. The Hanoi Bureau of the U.S. Department of State envisioned a program that intensively honed the teaching and teacher training skills of strong EFL high school teachers as a practical initiative with the possibility of providing long-term benefits to the National Foreign Languages (NFL) 2020 Project.

Keeping in mind the goals of the U.S. Department of State, MOET, and program participants, the author, who was the AEC VNTP program director, built a program with the following components (Figure 1), which are briefly discussed in the subsequent sections.

Program Components of Project J-Hawk

Project J-Hawk is comprised of six components. This section provides an overview of the program with brief glimpses into the different components for illustration purposes. For a more thorough characterization of Project J-Hawk contact the author at the Applied English Center.

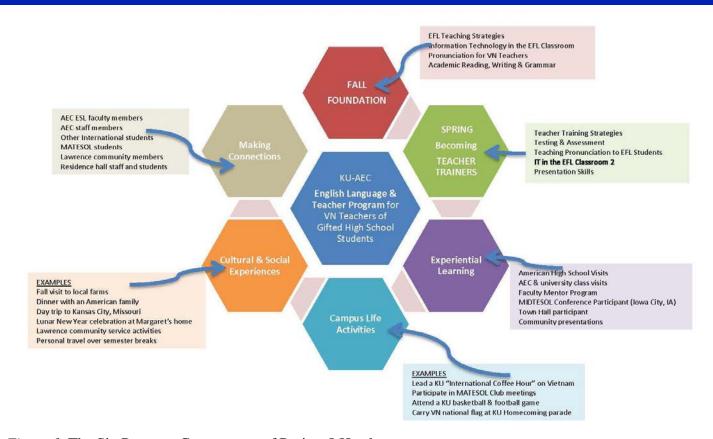


Figure 1. The Six Program Components of Project J-Hawk.

Fall-Foundation and Spring-Becoming Teacher Trainers

The Foundation and Teacher Trainer components of Project J-Hawk include (a) language enrichment, (b) teaching, and (c) teacher training. In language enrichment, the teachers took an advanced regular Intensive English Program English language class. They participated in 8 hours a week of intensive instruction in reading and writing for academic purposes, with the added benefit of observing a fellow English language instructor's teaching strategies over a semester. They took a specifically designed pronunciation enrichment course for native speakers of Vietnamese. They were also held accountable for English language accuracy and fluency in all activities across the program.

In the areas of teaching and teacher training, the group took several specialized professional development courses designed for the participants. In all lessons and activities, AEC faculty asked the VNTP teachers to reflect on how they were learning and on what could be used with their students or shared with colleagues at home. Also emphasized in the professional development courses was the benefit of moving from a teacher-centered to a student-centered classroom by exemplifying those qualities in their own teaching. Additionally,

there was emphasis placed on how to make use of teachable/golden moments during class sessions. The teaching and teacher training courses in these components were called:

- EFL Teaching Strategies,
- Teaching Strategies for Training Teachers,
- Instructional Technology in the EFL Classroom,
- Instructional Technology Training Other Teachers,
- Pronunciation for Vietnamese EFL Teachers,
- Teaching Pronunciation to Vietnamese EFL High School Students,
- English Language Experiential Learning 1 & 2,
- Presentation Skills, and
- L2 Testing & Assessment.

Making Connections, Experiential Learning, and Campus Life Activities

The teachers participated in a wide variety of educational, cultural, and social campus activities outside of the core curriculum. These experiences gave teachers opportunities to use English in authentic contexts. In some instances they interacted with Americans who had had very little, if any, contact with non-native English speakers. Teachers also gave back to the community by participating in several service activities. Some AEC faculty generously invited teachers to join in on various community events, thus giving them a chance to get to know the people of the AEC outside of a purely academic setting. Making genuine connections with different parts of KU and Lawrence communities over time is mutual exchange and learning at its best. Learning became a two-way process for the Vietnamese teachers as well as the AEC, KU, and Lawrence community members. It is through meaningful, sustained connections that we have opportunities to share cultures and professional knowledge. Examples of a few activities that both groups participated in are:

- attendance at the fall 2015 MIDTESOL conference for ESL/EFL instructors,
- participation in KU's School of Education TESOL Club run by university MATESOL graduate students,

- participation in community service activities, including visiting a retirement home and wrapping
 Christmas gifts for families in need,
- participation in the University of Kansas Homecoming Day Parade where teachers carried the
 Vietnamese Flag in the international student delegation, and
- presentation at one session of the University of Kansas International Coffee Hour, where they shared information about Vietnam. The event was open to everyone on campus.

Cultural and Social Experiences: "The Human Touch"

A delegation from the Vietnam Ministry of Education and NFL 2020 did a campus site visit near the end of the 2014-2015 program. During their visit, the delegation shared with us that the teachers called Lawrence "their sweet second home." Dr. Vu Thi Tu Anh, the Executive Director of National Foreign Languages 2020 Project, Dr. Tran Xuan Thao, Senior Advisor to NFL 2020, Kellie Smith Herrod, and the author discussed the importance of "the human touch" in this kind of program. Dr. Vu and Dr. Thao noted that our emphasis on the human touch set us apart from many other English language training programs. This recognition from Vietnam's Ministry of Education was affirming because a signature component of AEC self-contained short-term programming is to attend to the whole person.

Our underlying philosophy is that high quality program content and delivery are essential. At the same time, professional implementation of excellent content alone will not guarantee program success. In the context of the VNTP, we understand that helping talented teachers become leaders in teacher education means bringing them into our professional and, to a certain extent, our personal lives. The AEC faculty and staff involved in this program were highly devoted to it and to the teachers. From the beginning, we were acutely conscious of the fact that these women and men were jumping into a wildly different living and learning environment. They were making many personal sacrifices. On top of that, they would become students again. These accomplished, successful adults allowed themselves to be placed in a setting where they very well might feel vulnerable, afraid, confused, lost, and homesick. Before they even arrived, we admired them! We wanted them to succeed from day one.

The decision to foster the human touch in this program has been deliberate and manifested in several ways. Here are a few examples:

- Everyone involved worked to provide a safe and warm community. We did our best to interact with the teachers in ways that showed we care about them. We did our best to make them feel special, as evidenced by our many interactions and connections with them. From the outset we let them know that they were people first and program participants second. As a result, they opened up and shared with us just as we reached out and shared with them.
- We overtly demonstrated our belief in them and their ability to do what we were asking of them. If something did not go right the first time, we just figured out how to fix it.
- The first time teachers worked on an activity or lesson, faculty often made observations or provided
 feedback without evaluation to emphasize that our primary goal was to help them become better
 teachers, not to give them a grade.
- Almost always, positive reinforcement and encouragement are better motivators in learning than the opposite (Wei 2015, p. 621). In Project J-Hawk, we focused on what teachers learned, succeeded in and improved on throughout the program. With this approach, we saw teachers' confidence grow over time. As an example of success, one cohort's blogs about each other's work was in general highly critical at the beginning of their stay. By the end of the program, comments were supportive and about shared experiences.

In sum, the six components of Project J-Hawk created an environment for the program to prosper academically, professionally, and on a personal level.

Conclusion but Not the End

The conclusion of the ten-month program is not the end of Project J-Hawk, but rather a point of pivot.

For the endeavor to be successful, the next step is for the two (and hopefully additional) cohorts to form a cohesive and growing network of professionals that will work strategically in the next few years to help improve English language instruction in Vietnam. There is anecdotal evidence that this is already happening with Cohort

1. Back in Vietnam for nearly one year, teachers have shared with us teaching strategies and resources that their students really like. One instructor sent us a video on climate change produced by a group of her students all in English. Some instructors from Cohort 1 were selected by MOET to give teacher training workshops in Hanoi.

These are positive steps, but what is needed is a framework that provides a space moving forward for Project J-Hawk teachers to meet, share ideas, create teacher training workshops, and participate in VietTESOL. Making this work is no small matter. The competing demands of family, jobs, and daily life, even local restrictions can create enormous push-back. In fact, Diane Millar, the Hanoi-based U.S. Department of State Regional English Language Officer has a sense that some of the Cohort 1 teachers "are struggling a bit to get things going in their own communities" (Millar 2016, personal communication). At the same time, Millar has made it one of her priorities to focus on how to best continue working with the Project J-Hawk teachers. She and her colleague, Duong Le, have already traveled to the northwest region of Vietnam to meet some of the Cohort 1 teachers. In August, Millar plans to bring together the first two cohorts for some additional follow-up training. Millar has already reached out to the author for the AEC to be involved in Millar's follow-up work; we are eager to do that. Informally, we have made it clear to both cohorts that we are resources for the Project J-Hawk teachers. Near the end of the second program, when Project J-Hawk participant, Quyet Nguyen, asked the author if the teachers could be in touch with the AEC when they had questions, she replied, "You bet! We are with you for the long hau!!"

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Integrating VoiceThread into EFL Speaking Class

Trang Ho Ha Long High School for Gifted Students, Quang Ninh Province

Abstract

In EFL classrooms, teaching speaking is difficult because of limited time, students' inhibitions, and low participation. Incorporating VoiceThread into EFL speaking classes can help with students' anxiety and encourage shy students to participate in multiple conversations. It also motivates students as they can add images and videos to create presentations.

Session Description

One of the ultimate goals of Vietnam's Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in The National Education System, Period 2008 – 2020 Project (2008) states "by the year 2020 most Vietnamese youth whoever graduate from vocational schools, colleges and universities gain the capacity to use a foreign language independently" (p. 1). The project also indicates that in order to fulfill this goal, the integration of information technology in the classroom is a must. VoiceThread, a computer tool which is easily accessible, cost effective, and adaptable to many learning settings (Brunvand & Byrd, 2011) is extremely helpful in developing students' oral competency and encouraging students to speak. This presentation shows how it is possible to integrate VoiceThread into EFL speaking class by (a) guiding the participants through the process of setting up VoiceThread accounts, (b) familiarizing them with VoiceThread's basic functions, (c) demonstrating step-by-step a lesson plan which utilizes VoiceThread, and (d) suggesting inside and outside classroom speaking ideas using VoiceThread. The presenter will also allow time for a discussion on some pitfalls in integrating VoiceThread into EFL speaking class and encourage participants to share their own ideas of using VoiceThread. This presentation is intended for EFL high school teachers interested in incorporating pedagogical knowledge and skills with technology to enhance their ability to teach speaking.

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Assessing Speaking Skills: The What's and the How's

Trung Thanh Lam
Phan Ngoc Hien High School for Gifted Students, Ca Mau Province

Abstract

Assessing speaking skills in TEFL has been a neglected or unmanageable area of instruction in the context of Vietnam's senior high schools. Furthermore, administering end-of-semester speaking tests in large-scale classrooms has been an impossible mission. This workshop will suggest tips and tools to make the assessment of these skills manageable.

Session Description

Assessing speaking skills can be quite challenging for multiple EFL and ESL teachers. Establishing an assessment competence framework for pre-service and in-service ELT teachers in Vietnam is sorely needed (Duong, Pham & Thai, 2012). Akiyama (2003) proposes to include speaking tests as an entrance examination into senior high schools and suggests the demand to construct a task bank for the speaking components for that examination. Kent (2001) suggests a method that EFL teachers can employ when conducting oral tests with their students. The techniques, strategies, and technology tools for the assessment suggested in the workshop are compiled from current research and practices which can be useful for teachers in the setting of EFL/ESL classrooms. This interactive workshop engages teachers in discussing how to design speaking tasks based on the requirements of the curriculum (CEFR-V standard, a Vietnamese version of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) and current standardized proficiency tests (TOFEL, IELTS, TOEIC, PEARSON, SPEAK, VERSANT), and defining what components of oral skills can be assessed. In addition, participants will experience and discuss how to build assessment rubrics which are proven to be essential to teachers' assessment process. The tips and tools in the workshop can be helpful to all teachers interested in integrating technology (Audacity, SoundForge, VoiceThread, and SoundCloud) into the assessment of speaking skills. Participants will receive a copy of selected readings for group discussion and a handout outlining the workshop's agenda and activities.

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Incorporating Pronunciation in Day-to-Day Activities

Linh Dam Mai Ly Hoang Le Kha High School for the Gifted Affiliation, Tay Ninh Province

Abstract

Teaching pronunciation by itself is hard to do without context; it should be related to specific lessons. Moreover, pronunciation is a necessary component for students in everyday and academic tasks. This presentation offers warm-up activities that EFL instructors can use on a daily basis to help students develop pronunciation skills.

Session Description

Studies have shown that some teachers in ESL contexts find teaching pronunciation problematic (McDonald, 2002). The EFL context offers more difficulties. Reasons may vary from the limited time devoted to pronunciation in the curricula to the lack of assessment frameworks (McDonald, 2002). In Vietnamese high schools, pronunciation work is narrowly focused, covering one sixth of a page, and appears only twice in every ten pages of each unit from the textbook used in 10th grade. Assessing pronunciation is in the form of multiple choice written questions. Moreover, the absence of pronunciation materials suitable to current English textbooks can also be considered an obstacle for high school teachers. The consequence that follows is some teachers give cursory lessons and most high school students are not able to get themselves understood sufficiently. This presentation focuses on how to make pronunciation a short, fun, daily activity by integrating pronunciation into almost any lesson. The presenter demonstrates how EFL teachers can design their own pronunciation activities related to each lesson to introduce the new lesson. Examples of lessons will be provided under the theme "inventions" for each of the skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Suggestions of additional exercises are another part of the presentation. After this presentation, the audience members will leave with at least four detailed activities to teach pronunciation at the beginning of lessons and, more importantly, they will be motivated to try out this idea in their own classroom, regardless of what level they

teach or textbook they use. This presentation will be useful to EFL professionals who are in K-12 education and are interested in teaching pronunciation, using authentic materials, or simply interested in having fun ways to introduce lessons.

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Using VoiceThread to Aid Teaching Speaking Skills

Hung Thi Hong Nguyen Thai Binh Gifted High School, Thai Binh Province

Abstract

Speaking skills are essential for English as foreign language students in everyday and academic tasks. However, it is an arduous and challenging task for teachers to teach speaking skills. This session will discuss one of the effective approaches to aid teachers in their teaching by using VoiceThread.

Session Description

VoiceThread is powerful 2.0 web tool that enables users to create recordings and leave comments (Langer de Ramirez, 2009), in many different ways, such as voice, texts, audio files, or video. A multitude of cloud-based conversations can be generated with VoiceThreads by inviting other people to comment in the same ways. It can improve users' sense of connection by creating an online communication environment. Also, this asynchronous tool is extremely flexible – users can access it at different times, and each time they do, their additions will be saved (Haverkate-Ens 2014) making this tool highly applicable in teaching and learning speaking and listening skills. This session will instruct participants to create a VoiceThread account and report on the way EFL teachers use VoiceThread to teach speaking skills by creating an online class setting in which teachers will be the administrator managing students' accounts. The presenter shows how various class assignments can be created and how students can participate in an asynchronous way. The presenter also gives two sample speaking activities in which participants will act as students to do the tasks. Finally, the presenter will generate a discussion among participants about whether these sample activities work in their own settings and explain the reasons for it and explore ways to adapt these activities other classroom settings. Participants will also be encouraged to suggest other ways teachers can use VoiceThread to promote speaking activities. This presentation will be useful to EFL teachers who would like to apply technology to teaching and turn the traditional speaking class into in a fun, creative, friendly, and efficient one.

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Langer de Ramirez, L. (2009). *Empower English Language Learners with Tools From the Web*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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Not Enough Time to Teach Pronunciation? Build Student Autonomy

Quyet Nguyen Thoai Ngoc Hau High School for the Gifted, An Giang Province

Abstract

In Vietnam, teaching pronunciation is mostly marginalized. Many teachers complain about not having enough time to teach pronunciation in their classrooms. Also, assessing pronunciation is not necessarily a straightforward process. To solve this problem, the presenter outlines an approach to build student autonomy in learning pronunciation.

Session Description

It has been believed for a long time that students cannot learn pronunciation on their own since they need teachers to give them models and feedback, especially in countries where English is not spoken outside the classroom. Recently, computer-assisted pronunciation teaching strategies were found to have a significant effect on the learners' perception and production of key suprasegmental features (Tanner and Landon, 2009). Furthermore, student motivation in learning is said to be one of the key factors in whether or not they will succeed in building their autonomy. After attending the session, participants will be able to identify ways to help students build their autonomy in learning English pronunciation. The presenter addresses interesting ways to encourage students to self-study pronunciation. The presenter also provides examples of computer-assisted techniques through which students can access models of native English speakers' speech in such formats as dictionaries, websites, and other computer-based tools. For practicing pronunciation, the presenter demonstrates ways for students to practice articulating particular segmental as well as suprasegmental features ranging from the word to the paragraph. In addition, the presenter discusses useful and practical technology-based tools to help students self-analyze their mistakes at the segmental and suprasegmental levels. Students will see and hear their mistakes and be able to correct their own pronunciation errors. Aside from using technology to build student autonomy in learning, pronunciation is also discussed in this session in terms of peer instruction. Yerian (2014) found that when students become more relaxed in the instruction and practice of pronunciation, they can

become autonomous learners. This presentation will be very helpful to EFL and ESL teachers who wish to help students improve their pronunciation.

References

Tanner, M. W., & Landon, M. M. (2009). The Effects of Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Readings on ESL Learners' Use of Pausing, Stress, Intonation, and Overall Comprehensibility. *Language Learning & Technology 13*, 51-65.

Yerian, K. (2014). Learners can teach pronunciation, too: Building autonomy through peer instruction. Tesol International Association. Retrieved February 2, 2016, from

http://newsmanager.com/partners.com/tesolsplis/issues/2014-10-06/3.html

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Toward Fluent Speaking: Spoken Grammar Instruction in EFL Classrooms

Thao Nguyen
Long An Gifted High School, Long An Province

Abstract

Grammar teaching in EFL classrooms is high-stakes, which can raise anxiety when students try to speak. This also results in their lack of natural and authentic English. The presenter introduces an effective way to help students decrease such anxiety to enhance confidence for more fluency in real-life conversations.

Session Description

The National Foreign Language Project 2020 initiated in 2008 and managed by the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training is aimed at assisting high school students to master their English, which would enable them to communicate intelligibly with various international partners in the future (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2008). However, the English language that students have learned in classroom settings may not be used naturally and fluently in real life since this language is textbook-based, more professionally oriented, and less authentic. Such students' academic English is inappropriate in various social settings because "...spoken and written grammars may draw on the grammatical resources in different ways, reflecting their different purposes and different contexts of use..." (McKathy & O'Keeffe, 2014). This means it is crucial for language learners to be aware of the two distinct modes of communication: spoken and written. The more the learners understand the features characteristic of spoken grammar, the more natural and proficient they can become when using the target language. Based on this concept, this presentation will focus on (a) classroom instruction of spoken and written grammar – their differences and how important it is to differentiate them, (b) six features of spoken grammar for EFL high school students, and (c) increasing students' awareness of spoken grammar. The presenter will demonstrate how to design 10- to 15-minute classroom activities introducing features of spoken grammar, and assigning homework tasks or out-of-class activities to develop students' awareness of spoken grammar. This presentation will raise both teachers' and students' awareness of spoken grammar used in

authentic contexts and show the need to introduce more elements of spoken grammar into the grammar syllabus.

References

Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2008). *National Foreign Language 2020 Project. Article 1.1, Decision 1400*.

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McCarthy, M. & O'Keeffe, A. (2014). Spoken Grammar. In M. Celce-Murcia, D. Brinton, & M. Snow (Eds.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (p. 278). Boston, MA: National Geographic/Cengage.

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Integrating Quizlet and Socrative into Teaching Vocabulary

Hang Pham Lao Cai High School for the Gifted, Lao Cai Province

Abstract

Rote memorization is boring and ineffective for EFL students as it provides no context for usage.

Despite the drawbacks, many teachers still use this method to teach vocabulary. This workshop will present two fun technology tools, Quizlet and Socrative, to help students learn vocabulary in context and monitor their progress.

Session Description

How to teach vocabulary in an interesting and memorable way is a question EFL professionals have been trying to answer for a long time. According to Laufer & Hill (2000), in order to acquire unknown words, students should access a dictionary with various look-up options such as pictorial and verbal cues. However, traditional methods of teaching and learning vocabulary often lack these options. Participants at this presentation will be introduced to two technology tools to teach vocabulary interactively and track students' progress efficiently. The presentation begins with some unique features of Quizlet and Socrative. The participants are first introduced to different ways of using Quizlet to (a) enhance students' grasp of pronunciation, (b) promote language practice everywhere (at home, in class, on the go, etc.), (c) generate interactive games to help students study their course content, and (d) create paper handouts, flash cards, or game materials. Socrative, another user-friendly technology tool, helps teachers design and assess student learning via personal mobile devices. The presenter will involve the audience in designing their own activities using the two applications. Ultimately, the participants will discuss the pros and cons of using these practical technology tools and will brainstorm ways to apply them in various EFL classroom contexts. This presentation will be useful for EFL instructors in disadvantaged areas with a lack of opportunities to stay updated, or ESP teachers who are simply interested in integrating technology into their teaching.

Laufer, B., & Hill, M. (2000). What lexical information do L2 learners select in a CALL dictionary and how does it affect word retention? *Language Learning and Technology*, *3*, 58-76.

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Using Quizlet to Engage the Students in Learning Vocabulary

Linh Pham Thainguyen Gifted High School, Dong Thap Province

Abstract

For most of the students, learning vocabulary is rather monotonous, and it is rather difficult to remember all of the new words. To make the lessons more appealing to them, the presenter will discuss how to adapt Quizlet to teaching vocabulary effectively to involve the students in learning vocabulary.

Session Description

EFL students "know that vocabulary is [crucial] in understanding texts, and long-term...retention is difficult" (Bauer-Ramazani, 2015). However, they find it boring and wearisome to learn words by heart, and sometimes the students even feel tired of trying to remember the vocabulary. Also, the EFL teachers have many challenges in encouraging and engaging their students in the vocabulary lessons. To reduce the burden on the teachers' shoulders, this presentation reports on the effectiveness of Quizlet for teaching and learning vocabulary. "Quizlet is a free Web 2.0 [tool] and mobile app vocabulary flashcard and study program... Unlike the traditional [word] lists and other flashcard programs, Quizlet offers students multiple ways to interact with each word" (Bauer-Ramazani, 2015). This presentation discusses how to make flashcards to match definitions with their respective words and how to guide the students to listen to model pronunciations of those words. For example, with the phrase "football player," the students will have the definition, the picture of a football player and they can hear how this phrase is pronounced. Students can also see how to spell the words they hear, how to check their progress, how to use games for reviewing, and how to find practice tests to take. These intentional vocabulary learning activities expose learners to multiple interactions with the vocabulary necessary for retention (Folse, 2004, Nation, 1990, 2011; Schmitt, 2000 as cited in Bauer-Ramazani, 2015). These activities also support expanded rehearsal

(Nakata, 2011 as cited in Bauer-Ramazani, 2015). With the help of Quizlet, the EFL teachers will find it easier

to engage and involve their students into learning vocabulary and the students will be more engaged in learning and will study more actively and more effectively.

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Nation, I. S. P. (2011). Research into practice: Vocabulary. Language Teaching, 44 (4), 529-539.

Schmitt, N. (2000). Vocabulary in language teaching. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press.

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The Impact of Indirect Feedback on Learning Writing

Linh Phan Nguyen Quang Dieu Gifted High School, Dong Thap Province

Abstract

Correction of writing errors in the classroom requires much time and work from the instructor. A learner-centered approach helps students notice and correct their own errors. This presentation offers instructors techniques to give students indirect feedback, and reviews the major influences on the acquisition of writing skills.

Session Description

Although techniques in writing correction are often analyzed in academic articles about learning and teaching, there is surprisingly little recent research on systematic investigations of the power of indirect feedback in the classroom (Kluger and DeNisi, 1996). In this presentation, the presenter reports on a conceptual analysis of indirect feedback and experiments related to the usefulness of indirect feedback to accelerate the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The presenter then identifies the most effective kinds of indirect feedback from the research. Specifically, the research evidence mainly supports two types of indirect feedback: self- and peer-correction to help increase the learners' writing ability in the EFL classroom. The presenter's primary concern is to focus on kinds of feedback: (1) self-correction with non-coded feedback, and (2) peer-correction as a conference in the classroom (Chandler, 2004). This presentation will be useful to EFL teachers, especially writing teachers who would like to work with EFL learners in high schools, specifically 10th grade or low intermediate level students. Finally, the presenter will suggest ways to increase the effectiveness of self-and peer-correction. Moreover, the teachers' workload could be partly reduced with the application of these techniques, which not only help learners reduce the errors in their writing but also enhances the students' ability to correct their own errors.

Chandler, J. (2004). A response to Truscott. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13, 345–348.

Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119 (2), 254–284.

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Using Online Peer Corrective Feedback to Improve Students' Writing

Minh Tran Bac Giang Gifted High School, Bac Giang Province

Abstract

Among the most crucial language skills, writing may be considered most challenging to ELLs. Learners make various mistakes including simple grammar errors, causing them to feel embarrassed and demotivated when teachers correct them in class. For these cases, online corrective peer feedback is recommended to help reduce writing mistakes.

Session Description

Writing skills involve creativity. As stated by Ismail (2011), writing is "a process of discovery as the writers try to find their way while they are struggling to think, compose and put their ideas together (p. 73)." This quote sheds some light on why learners make mistakes in their writing. In a language class in Vietnamese high schools, little time for writing plus large class sizes hinder teachers from thoroughly pointing out and correcting students' writing mistakes, hence, offering little help. To lessen the difficulty and help students out, the presentation proposes the use of blogs as a means for students to give each other feedback, called online peer corrective feedback (OPCF). Peer feedback, stated by Long (1996), identifies hidden information in grammar input and positive evidence when utilizing language. Therefore, learners would be more aware of their mistakes and try to improve their accuracy. Moreover, OPCF would motivate students through technology, which is one of their current interests and strengths. Also Kamimura (2006) affirmed that students would find it more relaxing to post their writings on a blog and invite their classmates to give comments. Accordingly, they would feel less embarrassed than if corrected by the teacher in class. The presentation begins with the assumption that in the current context, OPCF offers many benefits to students in their writing. Then, the presenter discusses (a) how to instruct students to build their blogs and organize peer comments, (b) what mistakes should be paid attention to, (c) how students would respond to OCPF (d) to what extent OCPF

enhances student language accuracy (grammar and lexicon), (e) what their changes would be to language accuracy, (f) what ideas for future use are. The presentation will be useful to EFL/ESL teachers concerned with teaching writing, student autonomy, and integrating technology in EFL.

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 A Japanese context. *TESL Canada Journal*, 23(2), 12-39.
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Motivation: The Key to Improve Students' Outcomes

Ha Vo Le Quy Don Gifted High School, Quang Tri Province

Abstract

Most students in Vietnam have been exposed to English since the third grade. However, their outcomes are still limited due to a lack of motivation to study English. This presentation will suggest a number of policies to improve student achievement.

Session Description

How to motivate students to learn English and participate in classroom activities enthusiastically in the context of Vietnam is a significant concern among EFL teachers. This presentation reports on different ways of motivating students which definitely influence the teaching and learning process. However, "motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today" (Scheidecker & Freeman, 1999, p. 116). As cited in Thanasoulas (2002), "Dornyei (2001) notes, teacher skills in *motivating* learners should be seen as central to teaching" (p. 1). Also as cited in Thanasoulas (2002), "[e]ven though there have been a lot of education-oriented publications providing taxonomies of classroom-specific motives, they fall short of offering an efficient guide to all or most practitioners" (p. 1). To this point, the presenter, therefore, focuses on analyzing what affects students' interest in learning English more in depth and then suggests what teachers should do to stimulate them, which can undoubtedly help students with their learning accomplishments. The presentation begins with a brief general description of the reality of studying English as a foreign language in Vietnam. Then the presenter presents methods for collecting student feedback regarding their needs for English, and strengths and weaknesses. The presenter then suggests a number of strategies based on the information collected to improve the students' inspiration to learn English. Finally, the presenter discusses ideas about how to maintain students' long-term motivation. This presentation will be useful to current EFL teachers and to those who would like to be future English teachers in Vietnam as well.

Scheidecker, D. and Freeman, W. (1999). *Bringing out the best in students: How legendary teachers motivate kids*. London: SAGE.

Thanasoulas, D. (2002, November). Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom. Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Thanasoulas-Motivation.html.

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Formative Assessment in Teaching and Learning EFL

Ngoc Anh Vu Huynh Man Dat Gifted High School, Kien Gang Province

Abstract

Formative assessment in EFL in Vietnam has previously been marginalized; however, there is now recognition of its important role for generating fair and reliable characterizations of students' performances which cannot be solely made by summative assessments. The presenter will therefore draw attendees' attention to distinctive features of formative assessment.

Session Description

It is widely assumed that formative assessment is important for measuring students' progress and helping them develop the capacity to track the value of their own work throughout the actual learning process. The application of formative assessment creates notable and often useful learning benefits (Black & William, 1998). In classrooms, formative assessment deals with regular, responsive assessments of student advancement and comprehension. It helps determine learning needs and adapts teaching properly. Formative assessment approaches and techniques also help teachers better prepare for meeting a variety of students' requirements through adapting teaching to improve levels of student performance and to achieve a more significant objectivity of student outcomes. This, obviously, brings the teaching and learning process closer to absolute perfection. Throughout instruction, it is suggested that teachers use various formative assessment methods including reporting on books, producing projects, doing homework or other assignments, presenting orally, and asking and answering questions to measure student learning. With the aim of fostering students to attain their goals of learning EFL, this presentation will discuss the nature and function of formative assessment in the EFL classroom. Formative assessment is appropriate to diverse instructional systems in which student outcomes are evaluated qualitatively using multiple criteria. The presenter will show how formative assessment can be used to evaluate and improve the quality of students' work.

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