Journal

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TOPICS INSIDE

Gain insights on ESOL teacher education in China

Create rubrics without a 'halo effect'

Use corpora in vocabulary and writing instruction

Create neural connections between colors and vocabulary

Take a look at the future of online and hybrid classroom education

The ORTESOL Journal
Volume 36, 2019

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Feature Article

ESOL Teacher Preparation in China: Insights from a US Perspective

Joshua M. Schulze, Ed.D., & Carmen Cáceda, Ph.D., Western Oregon University

Abstract

This article shares insights developed by two US-based professors as they co-taught an introductory ESOL education course within a teacher education program at a major Chinese university. Namely, the authors discuss how their perspectives on curriculum and instruction for Chinese pre-service teachers were enriched by their experience teaching in an early childhood education program in China. Employing qualitative data analysis methods to reflect on teaching and classroom interactions, the authors identify strengths and challenges of delivering an education course in China and share recommendations for improving teacher education courses for Chinese-speaking students, particularly those who intend to study abroad in US higher education contexts.

Key Words: *English-medium instruction in China, ESOL teacher education, pre-service teachers*

Introduction

In the spring of 2014, Western Oregon University and Tianhua College of Shanghai Normal University entered into a 10-year partnership agreement that allows Tianhua College students to complete a "3+1" bachelor's degree in early childhood education through dual enrollment in both Western Oregon University's College of Education and Tianhua College. In this model of teacher preparation, Tianhua students take courses on their home campus in China for the first three years. In the fourth year of their studies, Tianhua students travel to Oregon to complete their degrees through one academic year of coursework (September to June) at Western Oregon University's campus in Monmouth, Oregon.

All pre-service teachers in Oregon, including those who are dually enrolled students from Tianhua College, must take a course entitled *Introduction to ESOL and Bilingual Education* as part of their teacher preparation program. This course introduces pre-service teachers to the principles and practices of teaching and learning in culturally and linguistically diverse settings with a particular focus on issues impacting Latinx/Hispanic students and their families. For students who are preparing to be teachers in US contexts, focusing on the needs of Latinx students and their families is necessary given that this cultural and linguistic group comprises the largest minority in the US. However, that is not the case in China. While Tianhua College students may teach students who are members of linguistic minority communities (e.g., Cantonese or Gan) they most likely will not teach Latinx/Hispanic students; therefore, the Western Oregon University course required a substantial modification in content focus to meet the needs of Chinese pre-service teachers.

Additionally, the vast majority of pre-service teachers enrolled in Western Oregon University's teacher preparation program are speakers of English as their first language. Designing a course for emergent bilingual students requires special supports and considerations of cultural and linguistic differences to ensure the course outcomes and to make the learning effective.

The purpose of this article is to critically examine how an ESOL/Bilingual Education course can be modified and adapted to meet the needs of emergent bilingual preservice teachers from China and to share the insights gained from our participation as instructors in the program. Both authors are full-time professors at Western Oregon University who have expertise in second language acquisition and ESL teacher preparation and have regularly taught this course to Western Oregon University students. The authors employed their collective expertise in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), to develop the course for the 96 students who were enrolled in the Introduction to ESOL and Bilingual Education course in the summer of 2017. Through a descriptive analysis approach (Loeb et al., 2017), the authors detail the insights they have gained and make visible the opportunities and challenges presented in this course adaptation to inform other teacher educators who may be working in similar contexts. The authors also offer professional recommendations for those in higher education who may be considering delivering teacher education courses to multilingual scholars in China.

Research Question

The central question guiding the research presented in this study was: What insights did we gain from teaching an ESOL teacher education course for pre-service teachers in China?

Literature

Teacher preparation in China has undergone significant changes over the past 20 years. Motivated by a desire to offer a top-notch education that allows students to excel in a competitive global market, the Chinese government has focused on reforming teacher education. This reform movement has been realized by centralizing teacher education oversight and evaluation under the umbrella of the government and merging previously vocational-oriented teacher preparation programs into larger research universities (Zhou, 2014). As part of this countrywide teacher education reform effort, English-medium instruction (EMI) in the People's Republic of China has increased substantially over the last decade creating opportunities for US-based faculty to join English-speaking Chinese faculty in sharing their disciplinary expertise (Hu & Lei, 2014). The vast majority of EMI in China has occurred within the disciplines of medicine, engineering, computer science, and business (He & Chiang, 2016). Studies focusing on EMI within such disciplines have indicated significant challenges. Hu (2008) cites an "uncomplicated view" of bilingual education held by the Chinese Ministry of Education (MOE) as contributing to these challenges because this agency promotes the benefits of bilingual education without acknowledging the complexities of making disciplinary academic content comprehensible to large numbers of non-native speakers of the language of instruction. In spite of this rather simplistic view of the benefits of EMI in China, studies have sought to identify ways of strengthening programs by focusing on the linguistic aspects of teaching in EMI settings. Investigations of teaching in EMI settings have identified key characteristics of instructors, such as personality, English proficiency, teaching approach, language proficiency of instructors, and classroom language use, as being the most important factors in effective EMI in China (Zhang, 2017). These studies addressing the language needs of students in EMI settings are interesting and important; however, a gap in the literature exists. Our research adds to this crucial conversation by sharing our perspective that has been enriched by our participation in the cross-cultural exchange. By sharing what we have learned, we hope to help teacher educators involved in similar cross cultural educational endeavors meet the needs of preservice teachers in China.

Methods

Context

The course examined within this study, "Introduction to ESOL Bilingual Education," is typically delivered in an 11-week format during an entire term. In contrast, the version of this course examined in this study was delivered in an intensive format consisting of eight class meetings of approximately seven hours each over a two-week time period. Each class session lasted for 3.5 hours, and students had two sessions per day. Ninety-six students enrolled in the course and had an approximate 98% attendance rate. The class size represented a much larger enrollment of students than typically found at Western Oregon University; therefore, the group was divided into two equal groups (N=48). This division allowed the instructors to teach collaboratively, not only in delivering instruction but also in planning instruction and assessing student work.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study relied on the qualitative research methods of descriptive analysis to develop a deeper understanding of our perception of teaching within an EMI context. Namely, we constructed a descriptive analysis (Loeb et al., 2017) that examined the conditions and contexts of a phenomenon, in this case, re-contextualizing a teacher education course from a US to China-based teaching context. Both authors served as participant observers who engaged in critical reflective teaching practice (Brookfield, 2017) with the intention of examining and evaluating our practices in relation to the learning needs and professional goals of our Chinese students. Following each class session (morning and afternoon), we debriefed for approximately one hour by sharing observations on content learning, lesson delivery, and student performance. We collected all instructional materials including PowerPoints of lectures, handouts, and student work. Our research was collaborative. We took extensive field notes to aid qualitative data analysis and reviewed, confirmed, and supplemented notes on a daily basis. We used these notes to simultaneously inform our teaching and deepen our understanding of the questions that were guiding our scholarship. Class time restrictions and students' busy schedules prevented triangulation of the field note observations with students; however, our observations were shared with a colleague who had taught the same students the previous year. Given that she had taught the exact same students who were enrolled in our class before and had previously participated in the exchange between Western Oregon University and Tianhua College six times since the inception of the program, her insights proved invaluable in helping us interpret our interactions and confirm our observations.

Insights on ESOL Teacher Preparation Coursework for Chinese Students

This section addresses some of the insights we gained from delivering an ESOL teacher preparation course in China. Some of the most important insights concerned ways that we modified coursework as well as the varying ways the course assessments were taken up by our Chinese students. Both authors recognize that modifying curriculum to meet the needs of students and interpreting varying outcomes on assignments are routine expectations of practice for effective teachers; nonetheless, we wish to make visible the rationale for our modifications and note the interesting results of certain course assignments to aid instructors who may eventually teach in similar contexts.

As previously mentioned, the course, "Introduction to ESOL and Bilingual Education," serves as required course for new teachers seeking licensure in Oregon. Western Oregon ESOL program faculty have designed specific assignments to meet course objectives and measure student performance towards those objectives. In our course, two assignments comprise the primary assessments. These two assignments are considered key performances in the course and are assigned each time we teach the course, whether in Oregon or in China. The first assessment is a "Language Learning Autobiography." The purpose of this assignment is for students to compose a paper in which they reflect on their own experience as a language learner. Specifically, they discuss the instructional activities that supported their language learning, describe the atmosphere for learning created by the teacher, informally assess their performance in the four language domains (Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Listening), and reflect upon the potential impact of this experience on their own future teaching. For the English-dominant students at Western Oregon University, this assignment usually proves very enlightening. Typically, Western Oregon University students report that their language learning experiences were ultimately unsuccessful, but they often point to a variety of teaching and learning strategies employed in the classroom that they wish to replicate in their own English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms. While some students indicate the poor performance of foreign language teachers as accounting for their lack of linguistic progress, most Western Oregon University students attribute their lack of significant linguistic development in a new language to their limited opportunities to practice the language in contexts beyond the classroom or difficulties in maintaining and continuing their language learning beyond formal school contexts.

For the pre-service teachers in China, this assignment was not significantly modified but did result in some interesting insights that informed our perspective. Given that the Tianhua students have earned TOEFL scores high enough to enroll in Tianhua College's EMI teacher education program, it is assumed their language learning experience was at

least moderately successful. Therefore, the project allowed students to focus critically on the language learning strategies and techniques that have contributed to their current linguistic proficiency. The most enlightening finding students discovered from their reflections was the relative uniformity of their classroom experience. As they shared their language learning autobiographies with fellow students, they recognized that their experiences reflected a strong behaviorist orientation to learning. Namely, they noted that a large amount of their language learning had been comprised of teacher-centered instruction that afforded limited opportunity for interaction or independent language practice. They noted that the dominant instructional practices they had experienced had consisted of primarily choral responses, repetition, and dictation, which are the characteristics of the audio-lingual method (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

In spite of having achieved an English language proficiency level that allowed them to enroll in an EMI teacher education program such as this one, many students took a critical stance towards the behaviorist approach. They frequently cited their challenges in engaging in prolonged exchanges with primary speakers of English, such as their English-speaking professors. Based on their reflections, students often expressed their intention to construct a classroom climate that would promote interaction and more productive and authentic language use. That is to say, most students wished to create communicative language lessons in their future classrooms. This desire to embrace a new and potentially more effective approach to teaching was most evident when students were asked to sketch their "ideal classrooms." The majority drew pictures of tables with students engaged in collaborative and interactive linguistic exchanges such as "turn and talk." The different conclusions drawn from the activity by the US and Chinese students reflect the differences in language learning experiences and informed our prospective teacher educators by demonstrating how a similar teacher education activity can lead to vastly different findings among participants from different cultures.

The second assessment in the course is entitled the "Community Linguistic Landscape Project." The goal of this project for all students is to investigate the climate of a school setting through the eyes of an emergent bilingual (EB) learner (Garcia, 2009). Students are not expected to evaluate the school but rather are asked to explore how a language learner would navigate the school setting, with particular attention paid to the semiotic supports that contribute to the learner making meaning. The authors noticed significant differences in the way students at Tianhua College approached this assignment compared to our traditional Western Oregon University students. Typically, Western Oregon University students investigate a local school, and more often than not, discover varying levels of semiotic support such as signs, website material, and bilingual school personnel who speak the home language of the emergent bilingual student.

In contrast, our Tianhua students took a different approach to the assignment. The Chinese students did not have access to a bilingual school setting to investigate within reasonable proximity to the campus. Therefore, students located settings frequented by non-Chinese speaking tourists and made a photo documentation of the bilingual semiotic resources present in the setting. Examples of their findings included advertisements for products in English, Korean, and Vietnamese, directions on signs at the international airport, and movie posters. From the assignment, students realized that they were surrounded by other languages and this linguistic richness gave them opportunities to create instructional activities that incorporated "realia" in their own teaching. For instance, they could collect movie posters or informative travel pamphlets to use in lessons supporting functional English (e.g., finding out movie times) or within lessons designed to support informational literacy.

Insights from ESOL Teacher Education Course Delivery in China

Our observation and experience illuminated several challenges and opportunities for effective instruction. Many of these challenges are rooted in deep cultural differences between US and Chinese educational contexts, while others are less so. In either case, making these differences visible will prove helpful for non-Chinese instructors designing a course for Chinese students.

Teacher Role

Instruction in China remains teacher-centered (Zhao et al., 2014). Thus, the majority of teaching is lecture-based, with little expectation for student engagement in discussion of course content with the professor. Both authors strive to teach from a constructivist paradigm in which we aim to promote active construction of knowledge rather than passive absorption of knowledge in what Freire would consider a "banking model of education" (Freire, 2018). Given Chinese students familiarity with teacher-centered instruction, promoting engagement in whole group discussions remained a significant instructional challenge. Initially, students would often remain silent for long periods of time, beyond the typical "wait time" expected within effective instructional practice. When students did answer, one student in the group would typically stand up, turn to the teacher, and provide a brief summary of the lecture topics. As classes unfolded, some students took the "risk" and responded in English. Teacher feedback also had to be delivered mindfully. Students appeared ashamed when overtly corrected or offered alternative ways of phrasing their oral or written language. Offering "recasts" of student language (Gibbons, 2015) allowed students to have a model of effective forms without

having their errors highlighted, a practice that constitutes a loss of face in the Confucian-influenced culture of Chinese instructional contexts (Han, 2016).

Resources

One of the main challenges the authors encountered concerned adequate access to instructional resources that we were accustomed to having in the US. While lack of resources is certainly not unique to Chinese teaching contexts, both authors faced difficulty delivering instruction because of these differences in resources. For instance, we did not have access to a course management system, such as Moodle or Canvas, that would have facilitated providing supplementary course materials such as handouts. Furthermore, photocopying is limited even in some private institutions. While we appreciate the economical approach to using resources such as copy paper and printing for environmental and financial reasons, not having these resources readily available made teaching less effective at times. To negotiate this challenge, we would share materials with one student who would disseminate those materials (i.e., PowerPoints, handouts, video clips) via social media, such as WeChat. However, in the Chinese setting, one can count on blackboards and screens for projection of slides and video clips.

Pragmatic Differences

Differences in pragmatics related to acknowledging agreement and understanding often puzzled instructors because we were left unsure of whether or not the learning outcomes of our lectures and class activities were effective. Because our students would ultimately enroll at Western Oregon University and would need to employ these pragmatic strategies to indicate agreement or understanding to be effective students in US instructional contexts, we both provided explicit instruction aimed to acculturate our students to employing gestures of acknowledgement such as nodding and making verbal comments indicating understanding. We also instructed students to construct small signs with messages such as "Finished" or "Question" that they would employ to facilitate pragmatic communication typical of the US classroom. These signs were useful during class activities and group work as students could indicate that they were finished, that they had a question, or that they felt confident in the topic.

How Was Instruction Enhanced to Meet the Needs of Pre-Service Teachers in an EMI Context?

Given that both authors have extensive experience teaching emergent bilingual students both in the US and abroad, we were able to incorporate several strategies to enhance meaning making in our course. First, we assigned a number of the readings to be

completed prior to the beginning of the course. Doing so allowed students to work in groups and with a tutor to support their understanding of the readings. Despite the fact that we offered a number of bilingual (English/Mandarin) versions of the research articles to program coordinators who were preparing for our arrival in China, the Mandarin versions were politely acknowledged by our Chinese counterparts but were not shared with students. We were informed that all reading materials were to be in English only. We respected our colleagues' decision, but we were disappointed that the Mandarin language articles and course materials were not shared with students because we viewed reading the articles in Mandarin as an opportunity to engage in translanguaging practices (Garcia, 2016). Translanguaging is a concept in which language users employ all languages at their disposal to make meaning. The opportunity to use translanguaging practices was not encouraged as students were not allowed to complete the course readings in their L1; nevertheless, we incorporated translanguaging practices within our instruction. For instance, during small activities, students were encouraged to draw upon their multi-linguistic resources to craft informed responses by first discussing course topics in Mandarin. By promoting translanguaging practices in our teacher education classroom, we sought to promote instructional practices that encouraged students to use the linguistic resources available to them to make meaning, rather than present language learning as a compartmentalized process in which languages do not intersect. Initially, students pushed themselves to only use English even if it took more time to produce a response. However, as we discussed and gave examples of translanguaging (because both authors are multilingual), some understood the concept and started to translanguage. Last, our instruction was enhanced by employing a workshop model of content delivery. Each lesson began with a clear statement of the purpose and objectives, followed by a "mini-lecture" in which discipline related content was shared. We included videos of modeled teaching practices and strategies. We also delivered multimodal instruction with frequent use of gestures, repetition, and written reinforcement of what we were saying. Employing these ESL strategies allowed us to model the teaching practices we wanted our students to first experience and then employ in their own teaching, and also to enhance the delivery of our own course content.

Conclusions

Delivering an introductory ESOL teacher education course in the context of a teacher education program in China provided insights that have enriched our understanding of teaching. The authors learned that to ensure the effectiveness of the course, we needed to modify our instruction and the expectations for assignments as well as be aware of cultural differences that emerge during EMI in China. As the world of higher education becomes increasingly globalized, we hope that our descriptive analysis of our teaching

experience informs teacher educators in both the US and China about ways to construct programs that meet the needs of Chinese learners and US-based faculty so that international exchange programs, particularly in teacher education, are successful. In light of what we have learned from this experience, we recommend that participants in US/Chinese exchange programs in teacher education contexts consider the following principles:

1. **Be Mindful of Culturally Embedded Communication and Literacy Practices**

   Teacher educators may enter unfamiliar territory when they serve as visiting faculty in China. While they likely have a desire to share their knowledge of how to be an exemplary teacher with a new audience of Chinese students, they may hold preconceived notions of the cultural and linguistic practices that may negatively influence their teaching. Without a thorough understanding of the cultural embeddedness of literacy practices (Flint, 2007), they may experience frustration. Teaching strategies that may work in a US classroom may be less familiar and less effective in China. Conversely, observing with an open mind allows participants to learn why certain cultural practices are expected in the Chinese classroom and allows US teacher educators to gain a new perspective and appreciation for why things are the way they are. For instance, the expectation that students stand while responding to a professor's question is rooted in a deeply-held belief that teachers are to be highly respected, something that was much appreciated. Additionally, small group work can also pose a challenge in a culture that favors a collective view of society over individualism and socializes students in such a way by promoting whole group rather than small group work in the classroom (Park & King, 2003).

2. **Think Critically about the Cultural Practices of Teaching**

   As teacher educators prepare new teachers to both learn in the US and potentially teach in a multilingual environment, it is important that they make the rationale for instructional practices visible. Doing so allows students to think critically about practices and prompts robust conversations about how cultural differences emerge in the language learning classroom.

3. **Gain Familiarity with Chinese Educational Policy and Standards**

   Both US and Chinese teacher preparation programs are shaped by the constraints of accrediting bodies. While professional organizations such as CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) evaluate US teacher education

programs, the Chinese government provides a centralized governing body which determines the way teacher preparation occurs in China. That being said, as cultural exchanges increase in number, stakeholders on both sides must think critically about how course objectives and learning outcomes can be constructed in ways that mutually satisfy accreditation standards. Knowing what is expected from both Chinese and US programs comes from dialog, discussion, and research. With that knowledge, we can focus on our shared commitment to preparing the next generation of teachers.

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Special Extended Teaching Note

New Ways of Using Corpora for Teaching Vocabulary and Writing in the ESL Classroom

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Abstract

The use of appropriate of words in writing, particularly frequently occurring four words combinations in academic register, is very important because it is an effective building block of academic text used by expert writers for effective communication. Yet teaching of four-word lexical bundles is rarely discussed in ESL writing textbooks. Recent research has shown that corpora can be a useful tool for helping L2 writers improve their use of four-word lexical bundles. This article presents an attempt to teach four-word lexical bundles to advanced intensive ESOL students at a community college in the USA. The article shows the application of iWeb for the selection and instruction of four-word lexical bundles to teach different ways of concluding an essay.

Key Words: *corpora, lexical bundles, iWeb, Padlet, L2 academic writing*

Introduction

Teaching academic writing to advanced non-native speakers in an Intensive English Language Program (IELP) at a Community College in the US, I observed that the majority of my students had little realization that expert writers do not always create/write novel sentences. Rather, they have a mastery over the use of fixed phrases or multi-word, prefabricated expressions. They make use of them for a variety of purposes: to express stance, e.g., "*are more likely to"*; to show attitude, e.g., "*it is going to be";* to organize discourse, e.g., "*if you look at",* and to express reference, e.g., "*there is a lot of*"" However, my IELP students would attribute native-like proficiency to native speakers knowing more words.

Formulaic language is a broad term which is defined as "words and word strings which appear to be processed without recourse to their lowest level of composition" (Wray, 2002, p. 4). In the literature, there are more than forty terms describing aspects of formulaic language (Wray, 2002). For this discussion, we consider one such type of formulaic language, which is called lexical bundles — a "recurring sequence of three or four words" (Biber, Conrad, & Leech, 2002, p. 443). It is important to mention that Biber et al. (2002) particularly consider the four-word clusters to be lexical bundles. They argue that two-word sequences are too short and numerous, and they are less significant as textual building blocks than four-word clusters. They are widespread, and they contribute to fluent linguistic production. In the words of Hayland (2012), they are an "important defining feature of academic discourse and a significant component of fluent linguistic production" (p. 166). They are important not only because of their pervasiveness in oral and written discourse but because they are necessary for appropriate, fluent language production and comprehension (Meunier, 2012; Sinclair, 1991).

Course materials for teaching writing skills to non-native writers do not include four-word clusters, despite the research exploring the use of lexical bundles in university teaching and textbooks (Biber, Conrad & Cortes, 2004).

In order to help my students write four-word clusters, I used iWeb. I discovered that by using the iWeb corpus (https://corpus.byu.edu/iweb), released in May 2018, it was possible to help students speak and write like expert users of the English language. iWeb is especially useful for learners as it gives particular attention to the top 60,000 words in the corpus. It provides a wide range of information on each word: frequency information, definitions, synonyms, WordNet entries, related topics, clusters, and key words in context/ concordances lines.

The following are the steps to introduce and teach four-word clusters that I used in my IELP writing classes using iWeb.

What Were My Goals of Teaching?

My goal was to enhance the academic writing skills of my students. Specifically, I wanted my students to write well-tried expressions when finishing their essays. I also wanted them to use and apply new information available to them through the advancement of corpus research, especially iWeb, which is expressly designed for learners and teachers of English.

Why Did I Focus on Lexical Bundles?

A. Their pervasiveness, especially in the written and oral discourse of expert language users, was one of my most important rationales for teaching lexical bundles to students explicitly.

B. My students struggled with the appropriate combination of words, making their academic writing come across as awkward at times.

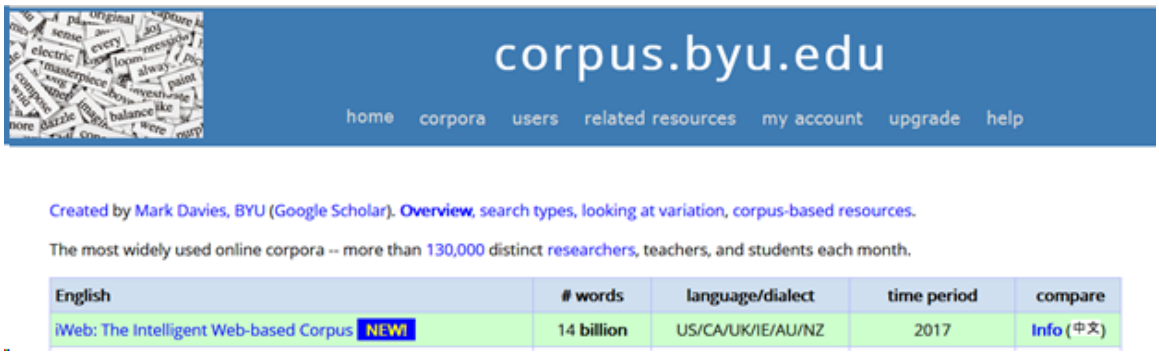
C. Research shows that, "gaining full command of a new language requires the learner to become sensitive to the native speakers' preferences for certain sequences of words over others that might appear just as possible" (Wray, 2000, p. 463). For instance, vocabulary researchers Pauwels and Peters (2015) did classroom-based research with students with Dutch L1 that shows students make significant gains in their writing skills when taught formulaic expressions over the course of a semester.

How Did I Help My Students Finish Their Essays?

Writing an appropriate conclusion is extremely important in all types of essays. It is the last chance to present one's viewpoint to the reader and to leave one's impression as a writer. The concluding paragraphs of my students showed a number of issues, but the one common issue that stood out was their inability to write longer strings signaling the conclusion. The phrases most commonly used by them were the two-word clusters, "in conclusion" and "to conclude," which, although appropriate academic phrases to finish an essay, did not contribute much to their writing proficiency as compared to writing four-word clusters. In other words, my students did not know the other possible variations in the use of the word "conclusion" for finishing their essays. Therefore, I wanted to expose them to a wider range of phrases available to them and help my students to have lexical diversity in signaling the conclusion of their essays.

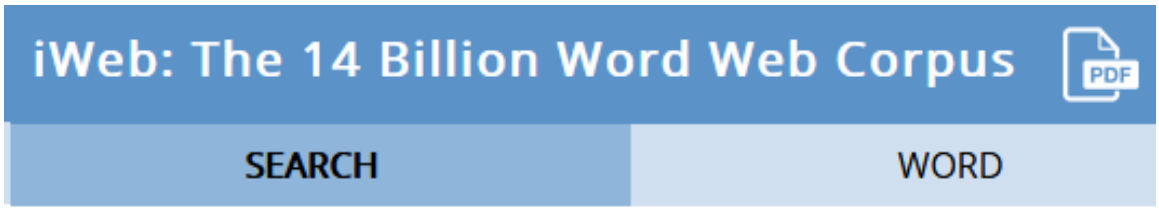
Step I: Introduce BYU Corpora

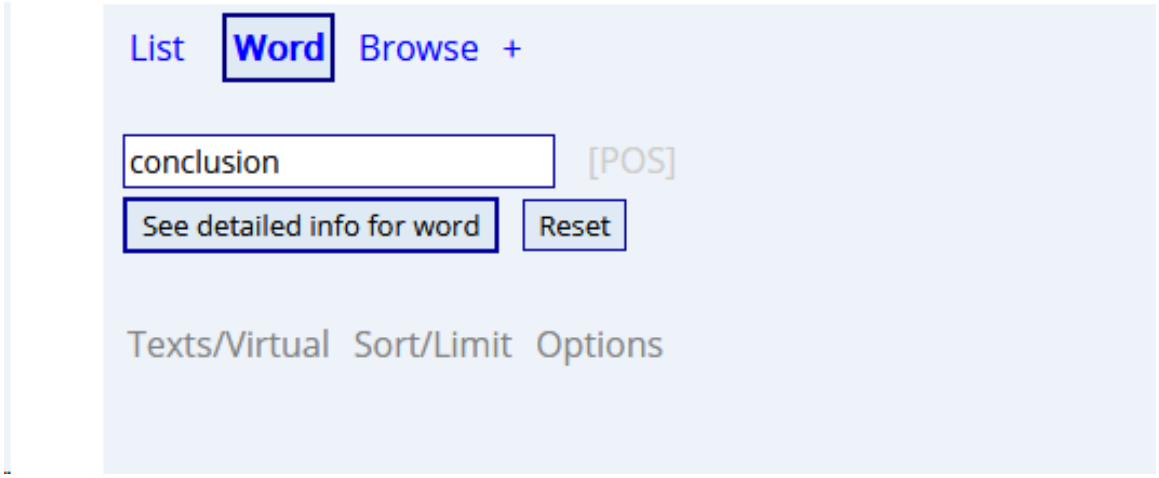
In a computer lab with student access to computers and Internet connection, I asked my students to go to https://www.english-corpora.org/ and click the link to iWeb, titled "The Intelligent Web-based Corpus."



Step II: Type the Word in the Search Box

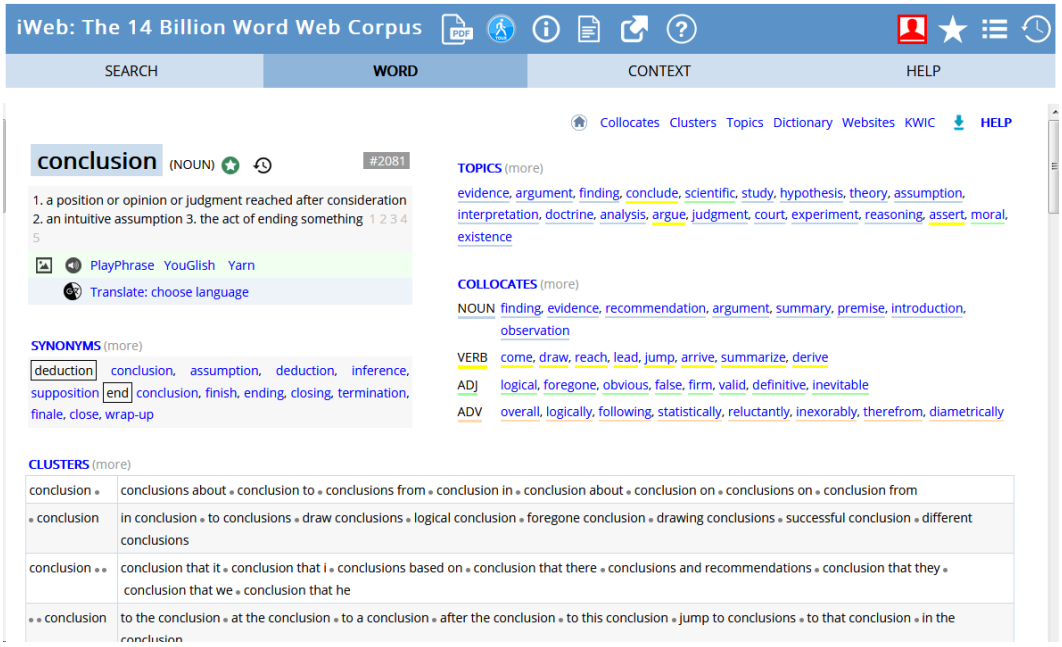
Students typed the word "conclusion" in the search box and clicked the button which says "See the detailed info for word," which took them to the page shown in Step III below.



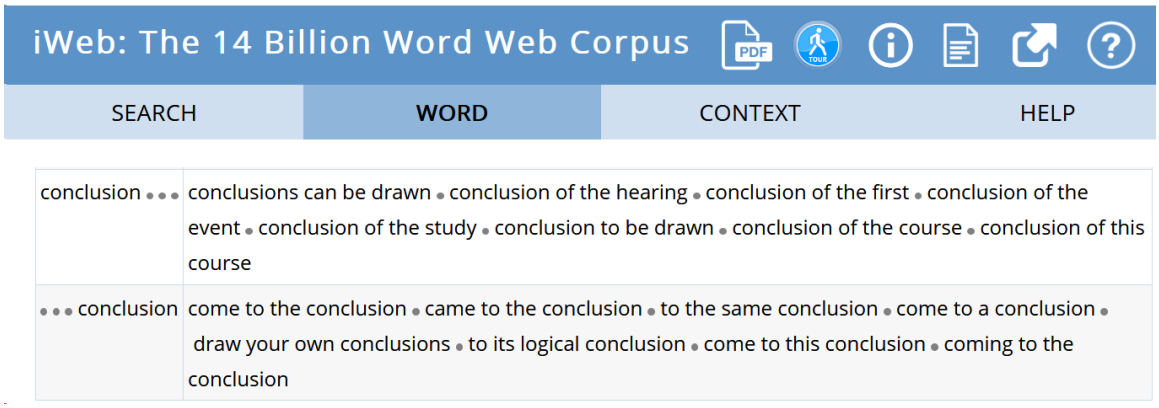


Step III: Survey the Information but Focus on Lexical Bundles

The page below provides an enormous amount of information on the target word (e.g. dictionary, collocates, key word in context, topic).



I informed my students that the Dictionary section has active links which give additional information from online dictionaries and other sources. In addition, they can listen to the pronunciation of the word by clicking the active links to Youglish, Playphrase, Yarn, Google Translate, and Google Images. However, I asked my students to scroll further down on this page and focus on four-word clusters including the word as shown below.



Step IV: Examine the Usage

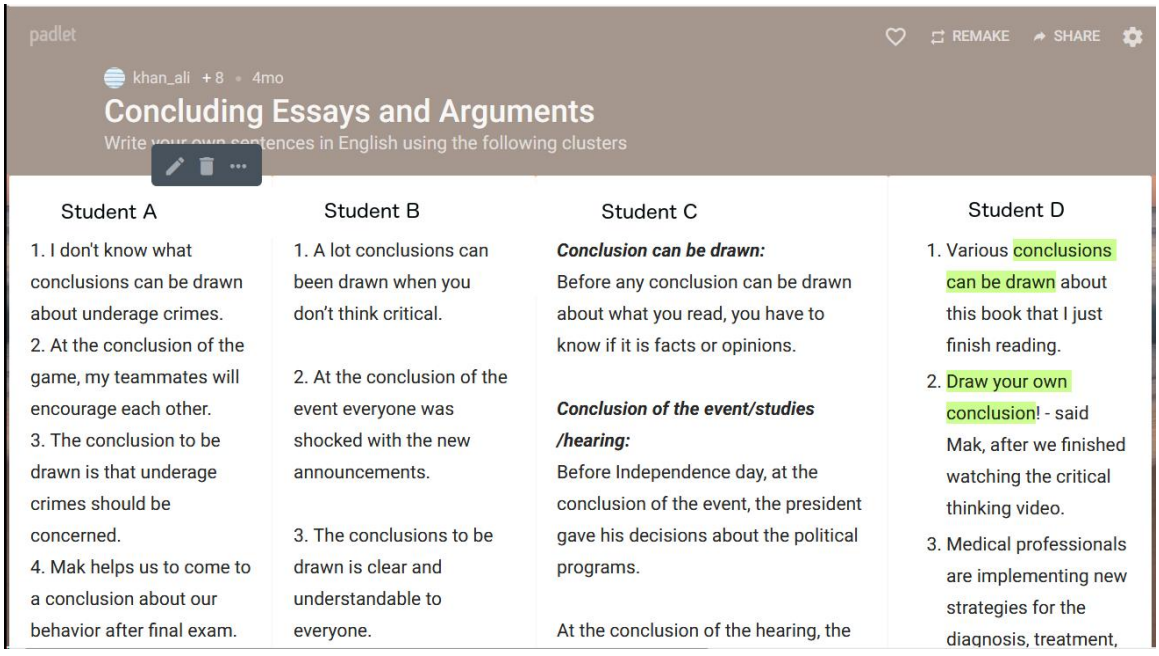
After focusing on the four-word sequences listed under Clusters, students read the actual usage of these sequences under the section Concordance Lines shown below. The activity allowed students to figure out the regularities and patterning in English when authors use the word, "conclusion," as shown below in the concordance lines.

CONCORDANCE LINES (more)

1	nara.gov	they depend on the development of standards in **semantics** . #	Conclusions	**and** Recommendations | # It would be a sound fiscal investment
2	www.oilvoice.com	deemed a key contributory factor . # In **shape** , these	conclusions	**are** similar to those of IPA in reviewing 250 global FPSO projects
3	imoa.info	reproduction and growth in animals . **The** main quantitative	conclusions	**are** summarised here . The reader should consult the original for
4	jampaper.com	our surroundings . It also helps us to **think** and draw	conclusions	at a faster rate . Surprisingly , puzzles do assist us in
5	stephensons.co.uk	the Police Station for interview , all the **way** through to	conclusion	at trial . Death by careless or inconsiderate driving # The
6	powerscore.com	of most strongly support and the fact that **this** has no	conclusion	**correct** ? I probably answered my own question , but as I
7	worldlii.org	preferably to the refugees former place of residence . The other	conclusion	**emphasised** the inseparability of causes and solutions , and the
8	anyflip.com	informal talk . # c. expanding notes G **4** . Drawing	conclusions	**from** an informal talk . real world : d. drawing conclusion
9	mannerofspeaking.org	with which she speaks from 12:00 to 12:30 **and** in her	conclusion	**from** 15:55 to 17:35 . # All in all , a great
10	reactivetrainingsystems.com	Supplement Reference Guide that you can get on **Examine.com** . The	conclusions	**here** are based on actual science and not supplement industry
11	scratchmommy.com	Id like to share my findings with you **and** explain the	conclusion	I have reached concerning
12	www.watoday.com.au	explanation has been given to **exclude** the inevitable	conclusion	in all the circumstances that the action was done as a hostile
13	ndei.org	) . However , this was not statistically **significant** . #	CONCLUSIONS	**in** %EWL terms , bariatric surgery is more effective in
14	typologycentral.com	weigh the facts . Due to this arriving **at** a logical	conclusion	**is** almost always (even if the conclusion is correct) is
15	addbalance.com	why (processes underlying change) ? ? # This sobering	conclusion	**led** to the formation of the largest clinical trial in the history
16	www.pbs.org	and grandchildren out of the good jobs . **That** 's the	conclusion	**of** a new report from the Georgetown University Center on
17	hibid.com	have in their possession their earnest money deposit . At the	conclusion	**of** bidding on the property , the successful bidder will be
18	deniseminger.com	fat and 2 higher saturated fat . If **one** accepts the	conclusions	**of** Gaggiula and Mustad , Clarke et al. , Howell et al
19	easynotecards.com	A # 81 # Which of the following **happens** at the	conclusion	**of** meiosis ? # A) Homologous chromosomes of a pair
20	womenpriests.org	statements of Paul VI over the past three **years** , the	conclusion	**of** the Congregation should have come as a surprise to no one

Step V: Apply the Knowledge

I set a Padlet, a type of digital board, (https://padlet.com/) for students to share their use of formulaic sequences in their own sentences. The use of Padlet encouraged collaboration among students. As their postings were visible to their classmates, they became more responsible in their work and sensitive to language usage while posting on Padlet.



Conclusion

Teaching lexical bundles helps students attain accuracy and proficiency in their writing expressions. The use of iWeb, designed specifically for learners and teachers, provides detailed information on the most frequently used lexical bundles, and the use of Padlet offers students the opportunity to learn from each other. In short, having students work together on their writing skills through the use of lexical bundles is not only an effective way of helping students improve their ability to grasp and produce texts in the academic register but also an interesting and enjoyable use of class time. Once my students arrived at the understanding that language is largely formulaic and then applied that understanding to find the clusters of a given word, they began to use clusters not only for concluding their essays but in all aspects of their essay writing.

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Teaching Note

Creating Neural Connections: Personal Color Associations and Vocabulary Acquisition

Patrick T. Randolph, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, & Nikoleta Dubjelová, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic

Abstract

Drawing from research in neuroscience, this procedural teaching note surveys the impact of color associations on learning vocabulary. Most language learners have a natural tendency to associate colors with lexical items in their first language. This association can also be employed to help English language learners (ELLs) acquire vocabulary and can be used with learners of all ages and at all levels of instruction. This article then gives an example of how to elicit the color associations of lexical terms, and concludes by offering a student's personal reflections.

Key Words: *color associations, lexical items, verbpathy*

Introduction

Creating color associations for lexical items is both a powerful and natural language-learning device, for colors evoke a multitude of emotions and memories. When you hear the word "bicycle," for example, perhaps the color red comes to mind, followed by the smell of autumn leaves and the motivating sound of your father's voice, which helped you learn to ride that special bicycle. In our first language, a word and its color association naturally tend to create a web of connections that lock the word forever in our memory. In support of this, the neuroscience community has shown that the more associations there are in the brain, the more neural connections are reinforced, and the more we learn (Eagleman, 2015). The purpose of this teaching note, then, is to show how color associations can help English language learners (ELLs) develop a personal connection with vocabulary and create a web of associations based on the feeling of colors, the emotions they elicit, and the ELLs' own personal histories.

The Target Audience

The process of using color associations in vocabulary pedagogy is fun, effective, and preparation free. Moreover, due to its accessible nature, color associations can be used from basic to advanced levels of instruction in all types of English language programs. The setting discussed below is a high-level university ESL credit class. However, this tool can also be used in both primary and secondary education.

The Procedure

My students and I have found that the impact of using color associations is most effective after setting the foundation with basic semantic and pragmatic elements. So first, as a class, we define each lexical item, categorize its part of speech, and identify its *verbpathy* (i.e., the positive or negative intuitive feeling of a term; for more on this, see Randolph, 2017).

I, then, ask the students what color they associate with the lexical item and why they chose that specific color. It is important to note that the color association might be different for each student, for their "color response" to a term will be based on their personal history and influenced by their unique personality. And, as we will see below, color associations also lead to other sensory associations that help encode lexical items. For detailed examples, let us turn to those of my student and co-author, who has firsthand insights into the use of color associations. She will discuss the terms "foreshadow" and "come up with."

A Student's Reflections

At the beginning, I was skeptical of this method; however, I quickly realized how important and useful this vocabulary learning approach is. It is so easy and effective. I simply let my senses and imagination work, and then the words and color associations flow. My favorite recent personal color association is with the word "foreshadow." While imagining the word, I could immediately see the continual change from white to black—like a light, slowly fading around me, "foreshadowing" something as simple as the coming of night or as complex as a unique memory magically appearing on a small photo from a Polaroid.

The beauty of colors is that they can be associated with visual mental pictures as well as with feelings. For me, the three-part phrasal verb "come up with" is associated with "sparkling blue." The lexical item's color just flows from my soul like fireworks anytime an exciting idea crosses my mind; that is, for "come up with" is equivalent to "sparkling blue" and exciting creations.

Moreover, there are other possible associations that can be developed from a simple color association. These associations are able to create a "breathing picture" of a term (e.g., personal memories or particular emotions). The more connections I am able to visualize, the stronger and more familiar the words become. In addition to the "sparkling blue" associated with "come up with," I smell a new book full of information and ideas. I see my mother's face, a very special person for me. In my mind, I am telling her, as a small child, what I "came up with" during the day. I can feel the excitement emanating from both of us. The other senses help create a beautiful picture in my mind; they create a sensational story from a single word, phrase, or idiom, making it my own, and thus making it unforgettable.

Concluding Remarks

Colors are a powerful device and a great building block for creating lively personal associations with new words, idioms, and phrases, which can then be locked in the students' long-term memories. This method helps forge stronger connections in the brain, making the process of learning vocabulary more effective. The importance of this approach thus lies in personalizing each term, and this is initiated by consciously making color associations with lexical items.

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Research Note

Checking Your Analytic Performance Rubrics for a Halo Effect

Beth Sheppard, University of Oregon

Abstract

In this research note, the author checks for correlations between different dimensions in an analytic rubric used for scoring discussion performance. Highly correlated dimensions can be cause for concern that the different aspects of performance are not well defined or not adequately observed. The author's analysis showed some weak to moderate correlations, leading to adjustments in how the rubric will be applied. Meanwhile, the author describes how to check for correlations between rubric dimensions and suggests this method as a successful activity for teachers and assessment committees.

Key words: *performance rubrics, halo effect, assessment*

Background

The halo effect is defined by Blum and Naylor (1968; cited in Darby, 2007) as the "tendency to let our assessment of an individual on one trait influence our evaluation of that person on other specific traits" (p. 47). In other words, when a student's excellent organization in an essay influences us to think their word choices were also strong, or when a student's poor pronunciation in a discussion gives us the impression that they also had poor grammar, our assessment has been affected by a halo effect. The halo effect is a common source of error in performance ratings (Rogers, 2005, p. 52); in the ESL context, this effect may appear when we use an analytic rubric to assess speaking or writing performance.

Of course, students who perform well on one dimension of a rubric may also do well on other dimensions without the influence of an erroneous halo effect. However, consistent similarities between scores on different dimensions may also indicate that too many dimensions were being assessed, or that there was too little time for the teacher to adequately distinguish between the different dimensions. If several of the dimensions in an analytic rubric fail to accurately measure different aspects of student performance, then giving scores for these dimensions has wasted teacher time and possibly

misinformed students. For these reasons, I think it is worth investing a little time to check for halo effects in our analytic scoring rubrics.

I became concerned about the halo effect in my own assessment after completing a research study on perceptions of international student speech (Sheppard, Elliott, & Baese-Berk, 2017) in which raters' assessments of different dimensions of student speech (i.e., various aspects of pronunciation, grammatical and lexical accuracy, fluency) were strongly inter-correlated, suggesting a halo effect. This led me to wonder if my classroom assessments might be similarly affected. In this research note, I will describe how I tested a set of rubrics for the halo effect and recommend that you try the same procedure on your own assessments.

Investigation

Having taught the same course for several years, my files included completed rubrics for many classes. I was able to collect scores using the same rubric for 10 academic terms. A few rubrics were missing from the 10 class sets, but none were deliberately excluded. I had 122 completed scores. The assignment was a project in which upper intermediate students in their last class before exiting the Intensive English Program to enter the university led their peers in a discussion on a semi-academic topic. The dimensions scored can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Discussion leading rubric

Expectations	✓	Comments	Score
INTRODUCTION			
• Tells why the topic is important and interesting • Students can easily answer the first question			/10
COMPREHENSIBILITY			
• Pronunciation • Grammar • Word choice • Strategies			/10
GROUP MANAGEMENT			
Balanced Participation and Inclusion • Include everyone • Politely redirect participants who talk too much or off topic • Actively engage participants who haven't spoken much			/10
Interactive Discussion • Ask follow-up questions • Summarize/paraphrase contributions • Ask participants to respond to each other • Base later questions on participant answers			/10
TIMING & ORGANIZATION			
• Finish after 15-20 minutes • Spend the right amount of time on each Q • Close the discussion with a summary and/or conclusion			/10
Additional Comments			Total: _____/50

There are a variety of methods for testing for a halo effect. One is simply to examine the correlations between the dimensions of an assessment (Rogers, 2005, pp. 54-55). Thus, I used Excel to calculate Pearson's correlation coefficients for the five dimensions of my rubric, finding the degree to which scores for each dimension correlated with scores for each other dimension. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - Pearson's correlation coefficients for scores on rubric dimensions (ref. fig. 1)

	2. Comprehensibility	**3. Part. & Inclusion**	**4. Interactive Disc.**	**5. Timing & Org.**
1. Introd.	0.344*	-0.016	0.222*	0.072
2. Compre.		-0.017	0.248*	-0.008
3. Inclusion			0.023	0.075
4. Interact.				0.170*

*=statistically sig ($p<0.05$)

None of the correlations were very strong, but four were statistically significant. The strongest correlation was between the ratings for Comprehensibility and Introduction. On the basis of this correlation, I need to make sure not to consider the comprehensibility of the speaker when I assess the quality of their introductory statement. The other three significant correlations all involved the dimension Interactive Discussion. This indicates that I should have a closer look at the description of this dimension to make sure it does not overlap with skills assessed in the other dimensions. I should also reconsider my own mental model of the "Interactive Discussion" dimension to make sure I have a clear understanding of what I am looking for.

While the significant correlations between dimensions directed me to areas of concern, overall it appears that halo effects did not play a strong role in my scoring of this assessment. Different rules of thumb can indicate that correlation coefficients between 0.20 and 0.39 are weak or moderate. In either case, the correlations leading to concerns about halo effects in previous studies were much stronger, ranging from 0.30 to 0.96 in my own study (Sheppard, Elliott, & Baese-Berk, 2017) and from 0.59-0.84 in Darby's

(2005) dissertation on halo effects. Therefore, I concluded that my use of this rubric was generally acceptable, especially given the adjustments arising from this exploration.

Recommendation

It is not difficult to check the intercorrelation of scores given for different dimensions of an analytic rubric. If you use the same rubrics every academic term, collect them over several terms. You could also collect rubrics from several classes in one term. Technically, you can calculate correlations with any number of rubrics, but I would recommend collecting at least 50 rubrics in order to feel confident in your results.

Open a spreadsheet and create a column for the source of each rubric (term, class, teacher, etc.), a column for a student number (you can call them student 1, 2, 3, etc.), and a column for each dimension in your rubric. The first two columns are just to help you check your work if needed. Then, enter the scores for each dimension into the appropriate column. You can see an example in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Example Excel sheet

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	course	student	intro score	compre scor	inclusion sco	interaction s	timing score
2	12.2	11	8.5	8	9	9	9.5
3	12.2	12	8.5	7.5	8	8	7.5
4	12.2	13	9	8.5	8	9	9.5
5	12.2	14	8	9	9.5	8.5	8
6	12.2	15	10	8	8	9	9
7	12.2	16	8	8	10	7	9
8	12.2	17	8	9	9	9	8
9	12.2	18	8	10	10	8	9
10	12.3	19	8	8	9	7	9
11	12.3	20	8	7	9	7	9
12	12.3	21	8	8	9	9	8

The next step is to create a blank correlations table for your dimensions, like the one in Table 1, above. For each pair of dimensions, you can calculate the Pearson's correlation using the CORREL function in Excel. Go to a blank cell of your spreadsheet and type "=CORREL(array1,array2)," where array1 is a column (scores for one dimension of your rubric) and array2 is another. Excel will fill in the arrays for you if you highlight them. For example, to find the correlation coefficient for Introduction and Comprehensibility, I had:

=CORREL(C2:C123,D2:D123)

This resulted in a correlation coefficient of 0.34377241.

Keep careful track of which two dimensions you are comparing, and enter the result from the CORREL function into the appropriate box in your correlations table. Unfortunately, this Excel function does not calculate statistical significance of the results, but you can calculate it yourself using Pearson's coefficient and your N (the number of rubrics you collected). You can find instructions for this calculation online, for example at https://mariherigstad.wordpress.com/2016/07/05/p-values-for-correlations-in-excel/

I hope that this research note has encouraged you to take a closer look at the dimensions you use in analytic rubrics to analyze ESL performance. After learning about halo effects, I felt a lack of confidence in my own analytic rubric scores; checking for correlations between dimensions in a set of scores set my mind at ease and also helped me refine my approach to the scoring dimensions I had been using. I believe this is a valuable exercise for individual teachers, and checking for halo effects is particularly recommended for departmental assessment committees.

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Book Review

A Review of *Voices: Online and Hybrid Classroom Education*

Reviewed by Tanya B. Benavidez, University of New Mexico

Kesser, G, & Stewart, T. (2018). *Voices: Online and hybrid classroom education.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press.

Editors' Note: ORTESOL would like to thank TESOL Press for providing this book free of charge.

If you wonder whether online learning is working or will work for your ESL students, *Voices: Online and Hybrid Classroom Education* offers a look at the future of both teaching and learning in the increasingly popular world of online and hybrid classes. It is an edited collection of twelve chapters featuring different authors, and it presents a variety of authentic teaching and learning approaches in online and hybrid instructional TESOL. This book demonstrates the diversity of English language study and teaching in online and hybrid environments based on the teachers/authors' experiences in their own classrooms through the evolution of technological change, and it explores what the future may hold for online/hybrid education. The importance of the book revolves around the theme of social networking for language learning and how learner-centered learning environments have maintained human connections.

This collection is unique because it looks at the insiders' perspectives and their experiences in their own classrooms. It is valuable to note that the experiences of the teachers and students in this book are geographically, culturally, and contextually diverse and appropriately presented. The collection is divided into three sections: voices of participants in online and hybrid TESOL teacher preparation contexts, voices of participants in online ESL and EFL contexts, and voices of participants in hybrid ESL and EFL contexts. It is important to take into consideration the attitudes and educational backgrounds of both teachers and learners and how those backgrounds affect the use of online learning. Teachers and learners' attitudes play an important part in the success of using technology in education. The contexts of hybrid learning and online learning require those of us teaching online to methodically reflect on our practices to better our teaching and learning. In Chapter 2, we read about learner autonomy (pp.15-21). In

Chapter 9 and Chapter 10, we learn about flipped classroom formats (pp.79-87; pp.89-94). In Chapter 11, we hear from teachers and students about online mentorship (pp. 95-100). These chapters are highlights because ESL instructors can relate to these viable issues, find valuable information, and learn from fellow teachers that are facing the same issues across educational domains.

In his effort to illustrate online learning, in Chapter 11, "Peer Mentoring Among ESL Learners via a Social Networking Site," Radzuwan Ab. Rashid underscores the importance of student feedback, along with the relationships between teacher and student, and peer mentoring supplemented with online interactions. After listening to the voices of his students, he found that just because students socialize with family and friends on Facebook, they do not necessarily want to be mentored by a professional teacher via Facebook. This points to the need for traditional educational standards to be met by a professional teaching mentor with face-to-face human contact. Teacher-student interaction cannot be replaced by technology. According to Rashid, students feel that the online learning environment is a good supplement, but it is never a substitute for teacher-student interaction (p.99).

Rashid also mentions that there are some disadvantages to online mentoring using informal networking sites (p.98). The online discussions used in academic interaction are often less engaging, resulting in poor levels of student involvement. Motivation can be lower because students do not feel like engaging if they do not like what the other students type. Students may not engage because of the lack of personal human contact and human interaction in the online discussions. Students report that there are a lot of misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and some ambiguity in online interactions.In conclusion, the students in this article did not want to communicate solely with their teachers through informal networking sites because of the lack of face-to-face interaction.

Voices: Online and Hybrid Classroom Education is a useful resource for pre-service teachers, practicing teachers, and administrators at all levels and in all contexts. The book follows a sensible, practical, and easy to read structure. Kessler, the volume editor and Stewart, the series editor, are especially effective at showcasing the voices of actual teachers and students in real ESOL classrooms. The topics cover real-life situations that teachers and students are currently facing in the age of digital media and online learning. There is no better way to learn than from our own peers and colleagues. In developing *Voices: Online and Hybrid Classroom Education*, Kessler and Stewart have opened a discussion about the careful negotiation of online and hybrid learning experiences between teacher and students. If we extend this discussion, we can continue to critically analyze teaching and learning practices in TESOL online and hybrid learning contexts.

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General Submission Guidelines

Please submit the manuscript as an electronic file (.rtf or .doc). Do not include identifying information about the author or the author's institution in the manuscript, but instead include, in a separate electronic file (.rtf or .doc) the author's name, full mailing address, daytime and evening telephone numbers, email address, institutional affiliation and short (50 words) bio-data. Images may be incorporated into the manuscript for review, but should also be available as separate files (as .jpeg or .pdf). All feature-length articles and teaching notes must include a 100-120 word abstract.

Submissions must not have been previously published and should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Submissions should conform to the style guidelines in *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition). Please be aware of conventions for in-text citations and references in APA. Writing should be concise and should follow the conventions of academic writing. The editors retain the right to change wording for the purpose of maintaining clarity or consistent style.

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