

## ORTESOL NEWS

### ORTESOL Spring Workshop

JOIN US AT OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY ON APRIL 30TH, 2016

The ORTESOL board cordially invites you to attend the 2016 Spring Workshop on April 30th, 10am at Oregon State University in Corvallis, OR. The workshop is themed "Gathering and Growing: Invigorating your Practice." The day is meant to explore how we can support each other, exchange information, and build community within and among ourselves, while advocating for TESOL.

Registration is free for ORTESOL members, and opens Monday, March 21st. Check our website, [ORTESOL.ORG](http://ORTESOL.ORG) for registration details, or our Facebook page.

### Marge Terdal Action Research Grant

Members should consider applying for the Marge Terdal Action Research Grant (\$1000 awarded; application deadline April 8, 2016). Action research consists of projects or ideas that grow from an instructor's desire to know if a new teaching strategy or new materials are working and effective in helping students. Graduate students completing Masters- or PhD-level research should also consider applying for this grant opportunity.

## In this issue:

Pg 2 | What's Happening in Oregon ESOL: Winter Conferences & Gatherings

Dear ORTESOL Members,

Greetings to all of you! Also, welcome to ORTESOL, our newest members! As a leading organization of ESOL professionals in Oregon, ORTESOL has been committed to providing various opportunities for our members' professional growth. One of the ways we make efforts to support our members has been grant awards we provide to our members. In the past year, we have awarded a number of grants to our members including Tri-TESOL, international TESOL conference travel grants, and free TESOL membership awards. Most recently, we sent out a call for proposals for Marge Terdal action research grant to support our members with funds to conduct research. I hope these funding opportunities are enjoyed by many of our members.

Another way the ORTESOL supports its members has been to offer quality workshops and conferences to provide a venue for disseminating important information and promoting scholarship in TESOL. Currently, the ORTESOL board is diligently working to host our Spring Workshop, which will be held at the Oregon State University in Corvallis on April 30th. This workshop on the theme, *Gathering & Growing: Invigorating Your Practice*, promises to be a great opportunity to learn and connect with fellow professionals in ESOL. This year, we will be offering round-table discussions about issues in the community, focusing on all levels of ESOL instruction across the state (K-12, Higher Ed, Adult Ed, Refugee, and other educational contexts). I hope to see many of you there.

It is an exciting and busy time for ORTESOL, and I am very pleased to announce that Governor Kate Brown proclaimed March 6 – 12 as English as a Second Language Awareness Week. This proclamation reminds us of all the important work that we do to promote our understanding of English learners and ESOL profession in Oregon. This proclamation was also announced at the State English Learner Alliance Conference co-hosted by the Oregon Department of Education and the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators on March 9- 11, 2016.

Thank you for reading this newsletter in your busy time. I hope this edition of the newsletter will provide support in your work and help connect you to the larger community of ESOL educators in the state.

Regards,  
Catherine Kim, ORTESOL President

Catherine Kim is Associate Professor in the College of Education at Pacific University. She is a specialist in TESOL, second language acquisition, and bilingualism.



Pg 4 | Featured SIG: Refugee & Immigrant Services in Oregon

Pg 6 | From Research to Practice, Creative Lessons, Teaching Tips, & More!

## Current Events: What's Happening in Oregon ESOL?



### INTO-OSU Professional Enrichment & Development Day

FEBRUARY 17, 2016: A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES ENGAGED TEACHERS IN LEARNING & DIALOGUE THIS WINTER

On February 17, 2016, the teachers of INTO at Oregon State University gathered for a one-day Winter Professional Enrichment & Development conference. The day consisted of faculty presentations, round table discussions, guest speaker Lara Ravitch from the University of Oregon, tours of OSU academic facilities including the new Student Experience/Learning Innovation Center, the TRIGA Reactor-Radiation Center and the O.H. Hindsdale Wave Research Laboratory, as well as a guest panel of invited faculty from OSU College of Engineering, College of Liberal Arts, and the Writing Center.

Invited speaker Lara Ravitch from the American English Institute (UO) presented a talk entitled, “It’s Perfectly Natural for Me: Working with LGBT Identities in the ESOL Classroom.” Through her many years of research, Lara showed that teachers should address Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender issues in the second language classroom, despite the possibility of differing student attitudes toward LGBT identities, and can do so in a non-threatening and inclusive way. If teachers are prepared to engage students in dialogue about LGBT issues by framing them within a larger context of cultural values, they will avoid stereotypes, debate, or classroom revolution (Ravitch, 2004).



Invited Speaker Lara Ravitch

For instance, adhering to the curriculum of stated Student Learning Outcomes, teachers can facilitate meaningful conversations about relationships and marriage within a cultural context, or discuss fear of people who are different as a way to incorporate minority awareness in the classroom. Teachers should foster inquiry, asking learners who make assumptions, “how did you learn that?” (Nelson, 2004). Finally, teachers in the ESOL classroom should practice linguistic awareness with gendered language such as pronouns, operating under the assumption that at least one student in their class identifies with LGBTQ (but never forcing them to “out” themselves).

By allowing students the autonomy to enter exploratory dialogue, and without placing students in a position in which they could face harsh claims or reactions, ESOL teachers can explore relevant LGBTQ topics, and foster a more inclusive and comfortable classroom environment.

*References available on page 10.*

-Contributed by the Editor



## Current Events: What's Happening in Oregon ESL?

### Fourth Annual International Youth Leadership Conference

FEBRUARY 19, 2016: PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY HOSTS YOUTH FROM PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN LEADERSHIP

BY ANNIE GREENHOE AND OSCAR FERNANDEZ, PHD



Over the last dozen years, International Youth Leadership has worked with local organizations and schools to support the different needs of local youth to become leaders in their communities. International Youth Leadership Africa started in 2004; the first International Youth Conference was held in Dubai, UAE, and now countries and cities around the world hold their own conferences reflecting the needs of their youth in local communities. The Portland Public Schools 4th Annual International Youth Leadership Conference (IYLC) was held February 19, 2016 at Portland State University. This is the first time the conference was held at PSU; the previous years it has been held at local PPS high schools. The mission for the IYLC at PPS is “for students to learn and network with other fellow students, educators and language minority leaders” in the Portland metro area. There were about 500 Emergent Bilinguals (EB) in attendance.

The day’s organization started with Dr. Tamam Waritu, the keynote speaker this year and also in 2013. Waritu was born in Ethiopia and moved to Portland, OR when he was 16. Like many of the attendees, he is a first generation college student and earned his BA in International Studies at Portland State University and an ED.M. from Harvard University. His take-home message was for students to succeed not just for themselves, but for the parents and relatives who work hard to help each student make it to school. He shared a time when he saw his dad smile after he graduated from Harvard; Dr. Waritu was moved because for the first time in his life he saw his dad smile. In short, our successes are the successes of our families.



Additionally, a collaborative panel session between the University Studies Department and the Intensive English Language Program at PSU enabled students to share knowledge about leadership, careers, and college success. This panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Oscar Fernandez, was an opportunity for current college students to share how they plan and juggle necessities of college life as international and multilingual students.

The panelists were from Mexico, Burundi, Malaysia, and Libya with fluency in Spanish, Kirudi, Malay, Arabic and French. The student attendees’ languages were Spanish, Arabic and Somalin. All of the panelists are or have been enrolled in the required Freshman Inquiry (FRINQ) and 3 panelists are also enrolled in the elective Multilingual FRINQ Support Lab, which helps EB students navigate the interdisciplinary course. The panelists discussed the challenges of the amount of work they need to do while balancing jobs, families, culture shock, and homesickness. They detailed the availability of scholarships, the importance of organized study, and time management.

The day’s activities concluded with international fashion show staging international dress representing the students in attendance. This was well-received with the very loud support that only middle school and high school students can give.

Annie Greenhoe teaches in the IELP at PSU and the Multilingual FRINQ Support Lab for University Studies Department.

## Featured SIG: Refugee & Immigration Concerns

### "Homeward Bound"

PSU GRAD STUDENT VISITS ESL CITIZENSHIP CLASS AT PORTLAND'S LUTHERAN COMMUNITY SERVICES NORTHWEST

BY TOM LACKAFF

Anyone seeking greener pastures will find no shortage here in Portland. But while this lush verdure may nourish the soul, it is not particularly helpful when it comes to navigating the innumerable challenges facing those who arrive here from different parts of the world. What services do exist, then, to help immigrants and refugees find a new home here in our misty midst?

As language educators, it is important that we consider the vital role of language support in the resettlement process. Language has a direct bearing on every major step along the journey, from the paperwork and interviews needed to obtain sustainable work and housing, to fulfilling the many requirements of becoming an American citizen.

A number of local organizations provide support for immigrant and refugee populations. These include but are not limited to IRCO (Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization), SOAR (Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees), and SE Works, all of which include some form of language support among their services. Another such organization is Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW), which allowed me to observe one of their Citizenship ESL classes.

LCSNW has been helping people here in the northwest since 1921. It began as a faith-based community, but its services are secular and focus on the most tangible and immediate human needs. Starting in Tacoma, the organization grew in response to the humanitarian crisis of the Great Depression to include agencies throughout Washington, Oregon and Idaho. An influx of refugees to the United States in the 1970s led to the expansion of programs offering resettlement support, including citizenship ESL classes.

According to Domminick McParland, the program coordinator for the LCSNW Citizenship ESL Program in Portland, these classes are "a hybrid of civics and ESL where the content of the citizenship process/exam is woven into English language lessons." I had the opportunity to attend one of these classes at the LCSNW Portland headquarters on SE César Chávez Blvd. These 10-week classes are among the various free services offered by LCSNW to immigrant and refugee populations seeking citizenship, along with assistance in preparing for interviews, filling out applications, filing appeals, and other forms of logistical and emotional support.



Lutheran Welfare Center in Portland circa 1940's. Photo from LCSNW website, [lcsnw.org](http://lcsnw.org).

The class I attended was as lively as it was educational. Teachers Annie Ruonavaara, Jesse Prichard and Daniel Richardson led a class of nine students from various parts of the world through an overview of American history and civics. Students have to learn a huge volume of arcane information in a new language before facing a grueling exam, which includes 100 oral questions. As Annie says, "It's a very arduous process, and I really respect them for trying to climb this mountain," adding, "I'm happy to be able to help them in any way I can."

It is lamentable that the incredible stories of these modern-day pilgrims and pioneers are so seldom heard. Fortunately, through language education and other support provided by various community organizations, there is hope that these brave individuals may tell their stories in a way that we lucky Americans are finally able to understand.

Tom Lackaff is studying his MA-TESOL at Portland State University.



## Featured SIG: Refugee & Immigration Concerns



### Corvallis' Community Treasure

A VISIT TO THE CORVALLIS MULTICULTURAL LITERACY CENTER REVEALS TROVES OF TEXTILES, RESOURCES AND GENTLE WELCOME

I had the opportunity to take a tour of the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center with the Center Coordinator, Dee Curwen. The first thing that struck me is that the place is an *actual house*, complete with various sitting rooms, a craft room, and a kitchen. Dee explained that the mission of the Center is to connect people of all cultures and across generations, and this facility—made possible by a generous arrangement from Oregon State University—encourages just that. The walls are covered with colorful textiles and the tables are adorned with “touchable” art that visitors are meant to pick up and hold.



While the center has much of its own programming, from cooking classes to citizenship tutorials, and English classes to Conversation Partners, many community groups utilize the facility for additional events aligning with the Center’s mission. For example, OSU international visiting scholars have a monthly coffee gathering at the Center, and Corvallis schools use the Center to assess ELL learners—which allows for families to be introduced to the Center and connected to the many services it provides.

In addition to its community programs and acting as a gathering place for community members, refugees and immigrants, the Center has a set of various Culture Kits in plastic totes, available for check-out by community members and educators. Dee called them “Museums in a Box.” Some were geographical in organization (Japanese Culture, Afghani Culture, Cultures of

Mexico); others were thematic in nature (Recyclable Art, The Silk Road, and Instruments from Around the World). The Center has received many donations over the span of the past ten years, and devised this system for sharing the wealth.

Child-friendly playrooms, an International Mom’s group and Leche League, and micro-business workshops that teach women to sell handmade crafts round out the services geared especially for immigrant women. They can take sewing classes and even check out sewing machines from the Center, complete with picture instructions for threading and using the machines. Tubs full of different fabrics and craft supplies line the walls, hoping for creative hands and minds.

Many of the people they serve hear about the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center through word of mouth, but some local organizations in Linn and Benton counties also refer people. The Center is supported through a network of volunteers; many are immigrants the Center has worked with for years. There are two fundraisers each year: “bazaars,” in which goods are donated or made to be sold, as well as the Center receiving private donations and grant funding.

The Center is also the home base for Casa Latinos Unidos, an organization providing services for Latino immigrants to Benton County. For more information or to donate or volunteer, you can visit the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center M-F from 10am-5pm or contact them at 541-754-7225, or email [cmlc@peak.org](mailto:cmlc@peak.org).

-Contributed by  
the Editor



## Research to Practice: Listening Assessments

I'm fascinated by nearly every aspect of listening instruction, and lately, my attention has been drawn to classroom assessment of listening skills.

### Assessment is More than Testing

I will focus mostly on tests, but it bears mentioning that there are many other ways to assess students' listening ability. For example, students could develop a listening portfolio on the basis of reflection on classroom activities and out of class experiences. They could be assigned a listening project in the form of extended aural research on a topic (from recordings or interlocutors). They could be assigned to teach a listening lesson to classmates, selecting a recorded text and creating activities. Students can also participate in listening self-assessment (e.g. strategy/comprehension checklists) or peer assessment (e.g. "Was X able to follow my directions? Did X ask me good questions after I spoke?"). Alternative assessment types can complement or replace testing in many cases.

### Designing Listening Tests

There is so much to say on this topic, from text selection to task creation to testing procedure. To keep this short, I've decided to share just a few facts and ideas that have led to "Aha!" moments for me.

1. Test items created without sufficient care often test reading, writing or speaking better than they truly test listening skills. There's no way to completely eliminate the effects of these other skills, but it can help if you pay conscious attention to making the demands on the other areas easier than the listening. For example, if you are creating a level 3 listening test, try to write the questions and/or other task text as if you were writing for level 1 or 2 students.
2. Similarly, some test items draw more heavily on world knowledge and logic than on listening skills. Make sure that your test items are text dependent by having a proficient language user try to answer the questions without listening to the text, and eliminate items that can be answered under these conditions. To reduce the chance of score differences due to logic/world knowledge, aim

your comprehension tasks at portions of the listening text which depend on knowledge that all students are equally likely to have.

3. You also don't want to test your students' memory if you are trying to assess their listening skill. Note-taking can help take the pressure off of students' memory, but insisting that students take notes can actually reduce their success on listening questions (e.g. Hale & Courtney 1994). You can also reduce the effects of memory by focusing your test items on information that is relevant to the main point of the text, since listeners retain more main ideas and fewer details than readers (e.g. Park, 2004). Don't write your test questions based on the transcript of the text – listen to it to find out what you notice and remember as a listener.

4. We often expect a higher level of comprehension on listening tests than even native speakers achieve in the course of "normal" listening. Fluent listeners achieve a "good enough" level of comprehension and then don't devote further attention, as long as things seem to make sense (e.g. Rost, 2016, pp 29, 44). They don't necessarily achieve the level of detailed comprehension that we ask learners to demonstrate on our tests. This is a good justification for repeating the passage (e.g. Chang & Read, 2007) and allowing students to preview their task between the two listenings (e.g. Sherman 1997). These practices can improve student performance and reduce student anxiety.

5. Constructed response items are almost always better than multiple choice questions, if you're writing them yourself. In his classic book, Buck suggests that one exception to this rule might be questions to determine whether students could make appropriate inferences when listening (Buck, 2001, pp 142-148). In order to score constructed response items reliably, you'll need to think about how you can constrain the range of acceptable answers, communicate clearly to students about how detailed their response should be, and create a detailed scoring key that includes the range of possible correct answers and directions for assigning partial credit.

Test items often created without sufficient care often test reading, writing, or speaking skills better than they test listening.

Beth E. Sheppard is an instructor at the American English Institute at the University of Oregon, and former ORTESOL Publications chair.



## Creative Lessons: "Everybody Reads"

Students tackle a chapter book and later get to meet the author at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall.

Portland Community College (PCC) has partnered with Multnomah County Libraries on the "Everybody Reads" program for a few years now. Some ESOL instructors (including us) have used the selected novel in their reading classes, but this term, we integrated the novel into our communication classes. The book selected for this year is *The Book of Unknown Americans* by Cristina Henríquez. At first, we were a little anxious about using a novel in a communication class, but now we are glad we decided to do it. Here are some projects we developed for our communication classes, which can be adapted to other novels.

1. We made the audio files accessible to students in our classes. In one class, we required the students to read the entire book (approximately 3 chapters a week). The students read and listened to the chapters and recorded a response to the instructor. Sometimes students had to explain their favorite quote; other times they were asked to explain their favorite part. The answers were recorded and e-mailed to the teacher. Most students used their cell phones to record the answer, but we made a free recording tool available for them as well.

2. In another class, instead of reading/listening to the whole book, students read/listened to an audio of select chapters in *The Book of Unknown Americans* that are not related to the main plot of the story (9 brief chapters). Each of these chapters shows a different character and their reasons for coming to the U.S. The students wrote a brief summary and response to one of the 3 chapters assigned each week. In groups, the students put together a Venn diagram of the three characters they read about each week. They also wrote down idioms or vocabulary they were not familiar with.

3. For one class' informative speech, students presented on themes from the novel. Some examples were illegal immigration, war, mental disabilities, and gun control. When possible, students were asked to use examples from the book for their hooks and supporting details.

4. In *The Book of Unknown Americans* the students read about misconceptions Americans have about the Latino immigrant population and how they differ from the stories of the characters. For one of the oral presentations, the students addressed the misconceptions that Americans have about their culture--those they already know about and those they discover through three to five short interviews. Along with their findings they also presented a graphic showing some data about their population that contradicts these misconceptions. Another option was to ask students to present the information in poster format and share the findings with another class in the college (e.g., Sociology or Anthropology).

5. We combined our classes and invited a guest speaker to come to our class and present on a theme from the book. The students took notes and asked questions. For homework, they answered questions about the lecture.

6. We applied for a grant through the Multnomah Library and were able to get 20 free tickets for our students to see the author's presentation at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in March. We asked the students to write or voice record their impressions of the event.

In another class, instead of reading or listening to the whole book, students read and listened to an audio of select chapters, then wrote a brief summary and response.

Although we had some misgivings about using a novel for our communication class, the experience was extremely rewarding. The students were able to practice their speaking, listening and presentation skills as well develop their reading, writing and vocabulary skills. More importantly, the students were also able to connect with a text in ways that may not normally be used in a traditional reading class.



Elise McLain & Luciana Diniz teach at Portland Community College. Luciana is also an Editor of the ORTESOL Journal.

## Creative Lessons: Encouraging Extensive Reading

### Ask the Expert: Newspaper & Academic Article Swap

ENCOURAGE EXTENSIVE READING BY ALLOWING STUDENTS TO CHOOSE INTERESTING CURRENT EVENTS OR ARTICLES FROM THEIR FIELD OF STUDY

BY MICHAEL MORRIS, AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE (UO)

Extensive reading has been a challenge in many university IEP and matriculated ESL classrooms in the US. Not only does it seem that our students are just not reading enough in general, but more specifically they are not exploring the field that they travelled all the way from their home country to study. Moreover, I have found that many of my students are still trying to determine what subjects they want to major in once they finally matriculate into the university.

The following activity is geared towards extensive reading in an EAP setting where students explore current events and/or scholarly articles in their field of interest or study. This can also be an opportunity for students who are undecided about their major to explore different subjects. After researching and reading an article of their choice, the student then swaps with another student who has a different major or topic. Each student will read their partner's article for homework, exploring other classmates' fields of study. This method not only encourages each student to research and learn more about their field, it also provides them an opportunity to teach and be an "expert" when their partner needs help or clarification with technical vocabulary or other unfamiliar concepts.

**Lesson Preparation:** Articles may come from newspapers or scholarly journals (good approach to introducing a university's online library database) and are encouraged to be somewhat easy to read, relatively short (2-3 pages in the early stages of the activity), and, most importantly, interesting. Dedicate a class period/activity to searching for resources on the university library database and/or prominent news agency websites. Explain to students what constitutes a good article, etc.

**Duration:** Weekly reading and exchange (~3-day process); on-going throughout the term.

#### Suggested Procedure:

**Day 1 (in-class):** Students find a partner who is preferably studying a different major than their own.

**Day 1 (Homework):** Students find, read, and print an article in their field of study to bring to class, e.g., engineering students might choose an article about a new bridge being constructed somewhere.

**Variation/Expansion:** Students highlight words in their article that are new to them or being studied in class, e.g., Academic Word List. Students predict what questions their partner will ask about the article. Students summarize and/or respond to their article.

**Day 2 (in-class):** Students meet with their partner, give a brief verbal summary of their article, and swap articles, e.g., an engineering student exchanges their article with a business student and vice-versa.

**Day 2 (Homework):** Students read their partner's article (it may be a new or foreign topic to them) and write three questions to ask them, the "expert", on the following day. For example, a business student will probably have questions about an engineering article regarding specialized vocabulary, concepts, or background information.

**Day 3 (in-class):** Students meet with their partner, ask them their three questions, and discuss any relevant information in order for their partner to understand or engage with the topic more in-depth.

This phase is the teaching opportunity for the "expert" since they are more knowledgeable in their field.

**Variation/Expansion:** Students keep a portfolio of their articles to use as part of a research project or paper later in the term.

Students have really engaged in this activity because it empowers them as the "holder of knowledge" or "expert." It also reinforces their knowledge of the topic since they may have to teach some vocabulary or concepts to their lay partner. Moreover, it prepares them for university classes where they will have to do research using a library database.



Michael Morris is currently an instructor at the AEI (UO), and hiking the Pacific Crest Trail this spring.



## Teaching Tips: Learning Vocabulary

### Encouraging Positive Washback in Vocabulary Study by Writing Original Sentences

PROVIDING COLLOCATIVE WORDS OR PHRASES WITH A VOCABULARY TARGET MINIMIZES MEMORIZED SENTENCES

BY KOREY RICE, AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE (UO)

To assess students' acquisition of vocabulary beyond translation or definition, many teachers ask them to write original sentences using the word. However, too often the result is a sentence memorized from a dictionary entry or an Internet search.

A better way to check a student's ability to use the word is to ask them to use the target vocabulary word along with another commonly known word together in one sentence. For example, if the target word is "cooperation," you might ask them to write a sentence with that target word and the word "when," resulting in a sentence like "Cooperation between students is important when they do group projects."

It is important to coach students on how to include enough context in the sentence so that the meaning of the target word is important. For instance, in the above example, the sentence "I like cooperation when I am with my friends," would not include enough context because "Cooperation" could be replaced by many other nouns (e.g. "Ice cream" or "good music"). A good way to practice for this is to have them create their own blank-fill exercise for another student, who then has to use the student-created contextual clues to complete the sentence with a vocabulary word. If the other student cannot complete their sentence, they will realize that there is not enough context.

The extra word can be a function word, as in the example, or a commonly known content word (e.g. pizza, cat, run)—anything to force them to be original and think on their feet. After all, the true test of productive language is to be able to use the target word in novel situations.

Of course, students need to know that this assessment strategy is coming so they are able to prepare for it, and this achieves an excellent washback effect. With this approach, students are much more eager to find patterns in the way a word is used, so they pay special attention to lessons on how to use corpora such as the Corpus for Contemporary American English (COCA) for this purpose.

Allowing students to use any form of the target word also encourages them to learn to manipulate the verb tenses and parts of speech, as well.

### Using Peardeck to Teach Academic Vocabulary

GOOGLE APP FACILITATES VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH INCENTIVISATION

BY EOWYN FERREY, PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Peardeck is a Google App which, among other features, allows the teacher to create a set of prompts, display the prompts on a projector, beam a fill-in-the-blank screen to students' smartphones or tablets, and see individual student responses on a third screen, such as a tablet or laptop. In other words, the entire community sees the prompt. The student, via their phone, inputs their own individual or their team response, and \*only the instructor\* can see each response.

Here is a step by step guide to operationalizing this activity:

Before class, prepare your Peardeck presentation. This is essentially done in the same way as creating a powerpoint presentation. Before class, create a word list and make a copy for each team. Alternately, create the word list as a Google Doc and share it with each student. In class, begin by dividing students into teams of four. Have students designate which member will fill each of the four roles: Peardeck typist, vocabulary list scanner, Longman dictionary referee, dictionary.com referee.

Project the fill-in-the-blank sentence for all students to see.

Students race to determine the correct response by scanning the possible answers, checking their hunches using online dictionaries, and then inputting the correct response. Assign either 1) the first team with a correct answer or 2) all of the teams who found the correct answer within an elapsed time one point. Most teachers will recognize that it's possible to do a game like this without using tech, but there are some of the advantages to using Peardeck over a more traditional approach, in which students might either shout out or otherwise record their answers for all to see.

First, since only I can see the group's response, if a group responds incorrectly, only I know what the actual response was. Thus, each student or team gets more time to work out the answer without having their own journey to the answer altered by the responses of others. Second, even after one team gets the right response, the others can keep working out their answer. And finally, this technique makes it easy to create a game in which students compete against the clock rather than each other, thus creating a broader learning opportunity.

Give it a try and see what you think! "Academic Word List" and "fun" may soon collocate in your classrooms.

# Letter from the Editor

ERIN MALONEY (MA, LINGUISTICS) WORKS AT OSU-INTO

Greetings, ORTESOL members! I hope you've enjoyed my very first newsletter as Publications Chair of the 2016 ORTESOL Board.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed articles and photos, including Angie Portz from INTO-OSU who shared the photos from the winter professional development day with me. I had a fantastic time visiting the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center and felt so welcomed by Dee Curwen and the volunteer staff.

While I'm sure you've read things that are familiar features to the quarterly newsletter, such as our Special Interest Group (SIG) in the Spotlight

and several great Teaching Tips, I hope you'll be pleased with some of the additions and new names that I've come up with, as well as a new layout (thanks to the Board for giving me access to Adobe InDesign!). I would love to hear your feedback, so feel free to email [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org) with any comments or suggestions.

The next issue of our quarterly newsletter will come out in June. You'll receive a call for contributions sometime in late April, but if you have something in mind that you'd like to write, you don't need to wait!

April is busy with TESOL 2016 and the ORTESOL Spring Workshop--don't forget to stop and smell the spring flowers!



Warmly,

Erin Maloney

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## Next Issue

FEATURED SIG: ADULT ED

**ORTESOL is an association of professionals concerned with the education of students for whom English is a non-native language. Newsletter submissions may be e-mailed to [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org). Those accepted for publication may be edited. The newsletter is not responsible for the opinions expressed by its contributors. Send all inquiries concerning the organization to ORTESOL, c/o Dept. of Applied Linguistics, Portland State University, PO Box 751, Portland, OR 97207 or [info@ortesol.org](mailto:info@ortesol.org).**

