



# ORTESOL Quarterly

Fall 2017 News \* Volume 40 \* Issue No. 3

## ORTESOL NEWS

### ORTESOL Fall Conference

TWO DAYS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMING UP THIS MONTH!

The ORTESOL board cordially invites you to attend the 2017 Fall Conference November 10-11th at the University of Oregon in Eugene. Registration information is posted on our website, [ORTESOL.ORG](http://ORTESOL.ORG).

### Congratulations ORTESOL Fall Conference Travel Grant Recipients!

Three ORTESOL members have been awarded travel grants for the 2017 Fall Conference in Eugene, OR. Congratulations to Beth Ronk (Portland), Verena Sutherland (Linfield College), and Susan Safford (Multnomah County Library & SOAR).

### 2018 ORTESOL Elections

The following new board positions will be recruited for 2018 ORTESOL Board: Volunteer Co-coordinator (2), Tech Team Chair (1), Publications Chair (1), K-12 SIG Co-Chair (1), Refugee Concerns SIG Chair (1), and TESOL Liaison (1). See the website for more information.

Follow us  
on Twitter!  
[@ORTESOLboard](https://twitter.com/ORTESOLboard)



Dear ORTESOL Member,

2017 marks ORTESOL's 40th birthday. Since our founding in 1977, ORTESOL has grown to having over 400 active members. In addition to our 20 board members, we have a small advisory council and four paid staff members who edit the ORTESOL Journal, manage our website and membership lists, and keep our books. Over the past 40 years, we've held annual Fall Conferences and Spring Workshops, published a robust peer-reviewed annual Journal, been a host affiliate for the TESOL International Convention, given out thousands of dollars in research and travel grants, and supported professionals in the field of ESL. We look forward to supporting you for the next 40 years!

This year, we hosted "popcorn party" Spring Workshops across the state, viewing sessions recorded from the TESOL 2017 Convention in Seattle. We co-sponsored Delpha Thomas's Pivot Workshop, a professional development event focused on expanding our professional skills beyond classroom teaching. I was proud to be a co-chair of the LESLLA 2017 Symposium, an international conference focusing adult literacy learners held in Portland, Oregon. ORTESOL sponsored 14 members' attendance at LESLLA in order to disseminate more information about the often-overlooked group of literacy learners in our ESL classrooms.

If you are passionate about shaping our field next year, consider joining the ORTESOL board! Visit our website [www.ortesol.org](http://www.ortesol.org) to learn more about the open board positions.

Sincerely,

Jen Sacklin  
ORTESOL President  
&  
Alexis Terrell  
ORTESOL Vice President

Jen Sacklin teaches ESL at Lane Community College. She has an MA-TESOL from PSU and is interested in how identity and social justice intersect in the classroom.



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## ORTESOL 2017 Fall Conference Preview

November 10-11,  
in Eugene, OR

HOSTED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON'S AGATE HALL, NEWLY RENOVATED HOME OF THE AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE, REGISTRATION FOR THE 2017 ORTESOL FALL CONFERENCE IS STILL OPEN!



The annual ORTESOL Fall Conference will focus on "Supporting Diverse Learners in ESOL" and will be hosted by the American English Institute (AEI) at the University of Oregon on Nov. 10-11. The conference theme will embrace ideas about supporting learners with disabilities, LGBTQ students, literacy learners, along with English language learners of all levels.

Both Friday and Saturday feature two plenary speakers. First up, Dr. Kimberly Brown, professor of Applied Linguistics at Portland State University, will share personal stories and strategies for improving equity and access in teacher preparation programs. Friday will also feature Laura Horani, who is the ESOL faculty department chair at the Portland Community College Southeast campus. Her talk will focus on how critical race theory and critical whiteness theory has influenced her role as an educational leader and ESOL instructor.

Saturday's plenary speakers include two educators well-versed in working with language learners with disabilities: Susan Sygall and Justin Harford, both from Mobility International USA. Their presentation, "Start with Yes! Move to How" focuses on ensuring language educators have the skills needed to successfully include people with all types of disabilities in learning English.

In addition to four outstanding plenary speakers, you can expect more than 60 practical, insightful, inspiring sessions related to empowering students and ESOL educators who work with K-12, adult learners, higher education students, and refugee populations. A few highlights include a session on the impact of WIOA by invited administrators representing three of the largest community colleges in the region, a presentation on teaching without textbooks for diverse populations, and another on empowering international students with disabilities. Also

included in this year's conference is a Social Hour hosted by the AEI on Friday evening and a raffle for seven free 2018 TESOL memberships on Saturday. In addition, all ORTESOL members are invited to attend the ORTESOL Open Board meeting at the end of the conference.

A complete conference schedule and link to registration is available online at: <https://ortesol.wildapricot.org/event-2629830>. Hope to see you there!

Alexis Terrell,  
ORTESOL Vice President



## LESLLA Recap: Reflections from Attendees

### Building Student Vocabulary

I went to the LESLLA symposium eager to learn more about my students as well as teaching strategies that would target their unique needs.

In the session titled “How to Turn a Blank Space into a Memory” I experienced being in my students’ shoes when a fellow attendee and I were paired up to apply the suggested method of vocabulary retention. My partner was to teach me five new German words. I was taken aback by how intimidating and unnerving this process could be. This exercise highlighted for us the importance of teachers building a sense of community in their classrooms where students feel safe, accepted and valued. I also learnt I retained best the words I was able to associate with my native language phonetically.

Several sessions devoted to vocabulary building stressed the importance of repetition. For example, in the session titled “Teacher, I Need More Words!” Laurel Pollard observed, “When students meet the word, they say it over and over, and become familiar with it. They know the feel of the word in their mouth”. She proceeded to say that reading should not be an act of discovery but confirmation of what the students have learnt. I have already seen the fruits of this approach.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed the different sessions I attended and I left the conference energized to apply in my classroom various techniques that are relevant to the student population I serve.

CONTRIBUTED BY FRANÇOISE HOWARD

### Smartphone-based ESL in the PNW?

Many of us have known immigrants who want to learn English but cannot get to class reliably, if at all. Work hours, transportation problems, family obligations, remote areas - the list of barriers is formidable. However, one LESLLA conference session presented an intriguing solution; “MOBILE UP! Cellphone First Education for Low-Wage Immigrant Workers.” In California pilot programs, organizations provided ESOL instruction through an interactive, smartphone-based platform. The lessons were combined with texting-based instructor contact for questions, encouragement, and reminders. Students studied on the bus, during lunch breaks, and at other, personally-convenient times. The pilot programs were run in collaboration with worker unions, which provided input on instructional content. Follow-up research indicated that the program was working: students were learning and making progress with their English skills.

In the Northwest, a smartphone-based learning platform could help us serve significantly more students. Developing and sustaining such a program would clearly require leadership, months of research and planning, teachers, funders, and community partners. The challenge seems daunting, but we could start with a brainstorm. Our initial goal could be to sketch out two or three options for the program design. The rewards could be great - not only for immigrants in Oregon, but also for communities throughout the state. Several of us are considering starting a brainstorm in January. If interested, contact linda.bonder@gmail.com.

CONTRIBUTED BY LINDA BONDER



## LESLLA Recap: Reflections from Attendees

### Looking Forward, Looking Back

I wasn't sure what to expect when I applied for a scholarship to attend the LESLLA conference in Portland. Although most of the work I do, writing, presenting, developing professional development materials, focuses on the K-12 learner with limited literacy in first language (SIFE), I wanted to look beyond what I knew to learn about working with adult learners. I was certainly not disappointed! The conference provided an extensive variety of curriculum approaches, programming, interesting lessons, and interactive activities.

One of the important takeaways that could transfer to working with the K-12 learner was the incorporation of art projects to help students speak with a "visual" voice. I attended session in which the presenter offered suggestions, such as something called "photovoice" in which students took pictures with their phones or cameras developing an "I Am: narrative. I also saw the "I Am" narrative in student murals.

Another presenter modeled how she had her students create community maps, one of their home city and one of their current city, focusing on the supports in the community that helped them learn and feel welcomed and secure. For me it was the "I Have" these resources to help me learn my second language with the support of others. It was also an "I Can" turn to someone or some place for support.

The title of this article, "looking back, looking forward" is truly what I've taken away from this experience—looking back on how the adult learner develops first and second language and looking forward to bridging what I've learned from LESLLA that can apply to the K-12 teachers I work with.

CONTRIBUTED BY JUDITH B. O'LOUGHLIN

### LESLLA Homecoming

In 2013, Mission College in San Francisco hosted LESLLA. There, I met Jen Sacklin, Margi Felix Lund, Eric Dodson, Dr. Andrea Capua, and Dr. Kathy Harris. Dr. Stephen Reder gave a keynote "Parking Lot vs. Busy Intersection". Every single one of those interactions have inspired and influenced me with my work at People-Places-Things since then.

LESLLA 2017 for me was a homecoming, with all of these dedicated professionals right here in Portland, bringing educators and researchers from all over the globe to engage with the important, difficult, specific challenges of the intersections between migration, policy and cultural integration. And this time there were people that I have met since then who have inspired and influenced me: Ernesto Aguilar, Blair Orfall, Linda Bonder.

Heide Spruck Wrigley, in her keynote, said: "The days of just being a literacy teacher with your own little program separated from the political reality of the world are no longer possible." The evolution of the world, this country, and this conference makes me feel, with as much determination as ever: language & culture educators are the engineers of multicultural, integrated, equitable societies, particularly in a time of massive human migration. Our work is political from the moment we say "Hello" and begin to facilitate mutual understanding. We know who builds walls. We build bridges.

CONTRIBUTED BY PATRIK MCDADE

FOUNDER & PROGRAM DIRECTOR PEOPLE-PLACES-THINGS

## LESLLA Re-cap: Reflections from Attendees

### Study Circle Program Inspiration

While I learned something from each session I attended at LESLLA, one of the most useful workshops was “Keeping it Real: What works for Adult Emergent Readers” (given by Alice-Ann Beachy and Lindsey Crifasi from the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School in Washington, DC). It was there where I learned of the ATLAS Low Literacy Study Circles.

ATLAS is funded by the Minnesota Department of Education and is a part of the Hamline University School. The study circles are opportunities for small groups teachers to enhance their skills and discuss issues relevant to their work in the classroom, with presentations on current research followed written or classroom reflection tasks and discussions. These circles are offered in-person during the year, but also can be self-organized remotely, with step-by-step guides and questions to create study circles wherever you are located. Much of my personal training in teaching adult literacy has been more informal and piecemeal, so the study circle program seemed like a great way to formalize my training. Once I am finished with PSU’s MA TESOL program, I have been inspired to organize a study circle through ATLAS for interested fellow teachers in the Portland metro area. The list of additional resources they provided during the session will be incredibly useful to me in the coming years.

CONTRIBUTED BY SARAH KEENEY  
CONTACT HER: SARAH5@PDX.EDU

### Tutor Training: Lessons Learned

During the LESLLA Symposium, I attended session called, “Expanding Professional Development to Community Tutors of LESLLA Learners: A Grassroots Collaboration” by Kate Van Roekel, Lissa Fogel, Jenna Altherr Flores, and Amanda Marie Snell. The presentation focused on their journey to train instructors and community tutors to work with ESL adult emergent readers from refugee backgrounds. As a Curriculum Developer at Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization in Portland who had just developed a series of tutor trainings for a pre-employment course and an academic ESL skills course I was eager to learn from the presenters’ experiences.

The two-day training they held was followed up by participant surveys which they shared in the session as well as their own observations. The key take away was to focus on experiential learning and reduce theoretical information. They emphasized that participants needed more direct communication about culture instead of the role playing inappropriate behavior that they had done such as nose picking (nobody caught it!). Modelling and walking participants through a lesson was helpful but sharing too much about the factors of second language acquisition was not. Teaching participants about how to show respect for students and exploring trauma based instruction was useful (don’t ask students to share their traumatic stories).

After the conference, I went back to my own trainings and made them more interactive and cut down on the theory. A few weeks ago I gave a training to tutors, and was pleased with the results.

CONTRIBUTED BY KATHLEEN HOAG

## PSU IELP Prepares Fulbright Scholars for Graduate Life in the U.S.

Each summer since 2015, the Portland State University Intensive English Language Program has hosted international Fulbright scholars through the PSU IELP Fulbright Pre-Academic Program. After six weeks with the IELP, the Fulbright scholars travel to their host universities around the U.S. to pursue Fulbright-funded graduate degrees in various fields. The Fulbright program, administered by the U.S. State Department, aspires to promote international peace through person-to-person educational exchange.

Far from a vacation, the IELP program strongly emphasizes graduate-level academic skills and general readiness for life and study in the United States. Some out-of-class activities this past summer involved the scholars meeting local officials and business owners in Camas, Washington; going to dinner at the homes of various Portland families; discussing their home cultures with residents of a Portland retirement community; and visiting Seattle and the Oregon Coast.

The scholars' deep engagement in the PSU IELP Fulbright Pre-Academic Program enhances their Fulbright experiences. In turn, as feedback from IELP staff and Portland-area locals has confirmed, the insight and warmth of the Fulbright scholars enriches the lives of those who have the good fortune of interacting with them.

CONTRIBUTED BY TARA LYNN ANDERSON



## Teaching Tip: Experience, or Bias?

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR VETERAN TEACHERS

CONTRIBUTED BY RICHARD HAHN II & VICTOR REYES, INTO-OSU

For the last year, Victor and I have been grappling with how to better meet the needs of our students. We discovered that there is a disconnect between our desire to provide students with the best experience possible and a perceived lack of interest on the part of students to fulfill our objectives for themselves.

Through our research, discussion, and experience, we found that we were endeavoring to find better ways to control others, when, we are only able to control ourselves and our choices. As veteran teachers, we often use our experience to make assumptions about the motives and beliefs of our students, and this often blinds us to the reality of their situations and prevents us from truly helping them.

One useful tool to ameliorate this comes from Karen L. Archambault's chapter "Developing Self-Knowledge as a First Step toward Cultural Competence" in *The New Advisor Guidebook* (2015). She suggests

that we must reflect on our biases in order to understand each student as an individual. This reflection empowers us to unravel the complicated web of our students' lives in order to build relationships and shift the power paradigm.

Before you speak to a problematic or troublesome student, we encourage you to ask yourself these questions (adapted from Archambault):

- How do my assumptions about ESL students affect how I interact with this student?
- How does this student's experience differ from my own?
- What assumptions am I making based on past experiences with this student?

Increasing self-awareness of our biases enables us to be more effective in our role as a teacher and to continue building more positive relationships with students.

## Teaching Tip: Oxford English Online

### Librarian and Online English Teacher Shares Resources

BY LINDA RASMUSSEN

What is your philosophy of/approach to language teaching? If it's the prevalent theory of acquisition over grammar-translation, you might have difficulty convincing low-level, mono-lingual students of the effectiveness of your methods. More experienced language learners often see the validity of methods based on acquisition theories and can be explicitly taught their methods. Oxford Online English videos can help.

Although Oxford Online English has a website with free videos in addition to at cost lessons ([www.oxfordonlineenglish.com](http://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com)), the videos are followed better through YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/oxfordonlineenglish>). They are presented by experienced ESOL instructors, who are native speakers from several countries. Of course, most are from Great Britain, including Scotland and Ireland, but they speak clearly and slowly with standard -- rather than heavy or regional -- accents, as do the Americans. Unfortunately, the videos are lectures but for teaching language learning methods and techniques, this works. Several of the videos address how to learn and are what I want to tell you about. They might even give you some new tools.

"How to Learn English" is a video to which I have started referring my new students. I've been tutoring online for over a year, so I just send a link to the video prior to the first lesson with a new student. Most of them are thrilled with the con-

tent and presentation. The teacher, Oli, explains why and how to stop translating and increase student use of English, suggesting some ways to do so. He concludes with directions on how students can find resources and make their own plan of "study," which is one of my services as a professional.

Since I teach online and am also a librarian, I do a lot of research for materials. Oxford Online English is the only resource I use for all students. Other videos I assign are "5 Steps to Improve Your English Listening" and "How to Speak English with Confidence", when appropriate, especially before focusing on one of these skills. I guess they're my shortcuts; I hate to lecture but know my students benefit from some direct instruction and an introduction to my methods. Just before discovering these videos, I gave introductory lessons to daughters of a man set on grammar-translation. For the daughters, I regret not being able to teach the man the values of acquisition; I hope he never found someone to focus on isolated vocabulary and grammar exercises as he wanted.

"I hate to lecture, but I know my students benefit from some direct instruction and an introduction to my methods."

My approach is as a guide and a coach, with some assistance by Oxford Online English videos. I hope you find something useful in these elegant videos lessons.

Linda Rasmussen is an online teacher for [preply.com](http://preply.com) and has taught in US public schools, foreign English Language Institutes, and two-year colleges for 26 years.

## Portland, Oregon to Host 2023 TESOL Convention



The ORTESOL Board was notified by ORTESOL President Jen Sacklin that Portland, Oregon was provisionally chosen as the host affiliate for the 2023 TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo, scheduled for March 21st-23rd, 2023. The site was approved at the TESOL Board of Directors meeting on October 20-21, 2017. Once the acceptance letter has been signed and submitted, the ORTESOL Board of 2021 will approve the Annual Host Affiliate Agreement and begin arrangements for the event.

Responsibilities for the affiliate host include carrying out duties on the Convention Planning Team, recruiting volunteers and staffing the event. The last TESOL International Convention held in Portland was in 2014. Mark your calendars for March 21-23, 2023, and we'll see you there!



## A Report from the Field: Notes from the House Bill 3499 Workgroup

When I first joined the ORTESOL board in 2016, I was assigned to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) House Bill 3499 work group in Salem monthly meeting. This group spawned other groups, one of which was the ODE English Learner (EL) Strategic Plan Work Group tasked with updating the ODE EL Strategic Plan. This written strategic plan is meant to be the basis for conversations held between ODE and districts around the state about how to best support English language learners, most notably in conversations with targeted districts.

The HB 3499 work group was large, membership varied, and attendance was inconsistent throughout the year making it very difficult to accomplish our work. We found ourselves revisiting the same ground for months on end. The HB 3499 work group existed in the time when we were all awaiting the announcement of the list of targeted districts. The purpose of these meetings, after a bill is passed, is to be part of the guidance for the rule making for the implementation. This made these meetings difficult, and somewhat contentious. The largest school districts had factions present in the room, and were interested in influencing the guidance. Also present, were vociferous university researchers,

parent, and community organizations. The most contentious issue was what constituted a long-term English language learner.

The ODE EL Strategic Plan Work Group is quite small with a single representative for each of the various educator roles, e.g., a single superintendent, a university researcher, a district program director, a single K-12 educator, a community agent, etc. The group is intentionally kept small in order to get work done and hold members accountable, but intentionally diverse enough to try to include multiple perspectives. The Strategic Plan emphasizes social emotional support, trauma informed practice, and equity.

In September, the Strategic Plan Work Group hoped to be closing in on its final draft, believing it would be going out for review soon and close out its work in December, instead, we received a visit from a new group working on ESSA implementation. We were informed that we would be working together for the rest of the year to insure alignment between the recently approved Oregon ESSA Plan and the EL Strategic Plan. We were also informed that the federal government was keenly interested in attendance [and chronic absenteeism]; therefore we needed to start discussions about how the EL Strategic Plan would address truancy.

So, it appears a new chapter is about to begin.

After a bill is passed, the purpose of the workgroup is to guide the rules for implementation.

Contributed by Susan Kaller, Refugee Concerns SIG Chair. Contact her at [kallerpdx@comcast](mailto:kallerpdx@comcast).

## Serve on the ORTESOL Board in 2017

ORTESOL is looking for dedicated ESOL professionals willing to commit time and energy to fulfilling our mission as board members starting in January 2018. Serving on the ORTESOL board offers opportunities for networking, CV building, gaining valuable experience and, especially, doing important work in education. Board members attend a base of four board meetings a year (held on Saturdays) and our annual Fall Conference. ORTESOL reimburses meeting travel costs.

For additional information about serving on the ORTESOL Board, we will have a session on this topic on Saturday, November 11th during our Fall Conference, from 3:45-4:40pm in Agate 132. Furthermore, we will have an open board meeting after the conference if you would like a chance to meet current board members, discuss openings and get a sense of board procedure and progress.



# Letter from the Editor

ERIN MALONEY (MA, LINGUISTICS), STUDIES INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (M.S.ED.) AT WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

**G**reetings, ORTESOL members! I hope you've enjoyed this late Fall 2017 Newsletter--it is my last as your ORTESOL Publications Chair. Thank you, as always, to everyone who contributed to this newsletter, and all of the others from these past two years!

**A**s you've read, the ORTESOL Fall Conference is coming up this weekend. Here are some hot(!) takes.

1: Open Source resources are a must for ESL teachers of many student groups, especially underserved populations. Whereas the perception of OS resources used to be hit-or-miss, it is more likely now that you'll find exactly what you need without asking your students to shell out hundreds for a textbook. Check out Sean McClelland's session on Friday at 11:45am and John Busch's session on Friday at 2:00pm for more ideas about incorporating OS resources into your classroom.

2: Even in an ESL classroom, principles of Universal Design are going to help you become a more inclusive teacher. Preparing pedagogical approaches for diverse learners is the first step. Check out Maiko Hata, Lara Ravitch & Tyan Taubner's session at 2pm on Saturday as well as Laura Horani and Cynthia Thornburgh's session on Friday at 2pm.

3: The plenary speakers will be amazing, no matter which session you attend. I look forward to hearing the diversity of experiences that Kimberley Brown will discuss on Friday, followed up with Rachel Drummond's 11:45 session on building an inclusive classroom.

**T**he next issue of our quarterly newsletter will come out in late January--from a new editor! You'll receive a call for contributions shortly after the fall conference, while it's still fresh. If you have something in mind that you'd like to write (or that you've presented!), you



don't need to wait! We would love to hear your feedback, so feel free to email [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org) with any comments or suggestions.

It's been a pleasure,  
Erin Maloney  
Publications Chair

## About Us:

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, PO Box 15148, Portland, OR 97293 or [info@ortesol.org](mailto:info@ortesol.org).



*Photo at left: outgoing ORTESOL president Jen Sacklin & Françoise Howard*

### Newsletter Staff:

Editor: Erin Maloney, Publications Chair (outgoing)

Proofreader: email [newsletter@ortesol.org](mailto:newsletter@ortesol.org) to volunteer!

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