

GATESOL NEWS



February 2019

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Message from the Board



Dr. Lela Horne, President

Thank you all for attending, volunteering, and supporting the 2018 GATESOL Conference. If you were not able to attend, you missed some exceptional speakers. We were honored that Representative Bee Nguyen took the time to provide opening remarks. She is truly an advocate for our students. The Friday keynote address from Dr. Jose Viana, Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) was absolutely inspiring. All GATESOL members should become familiar with the important work of OELA

(<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html>). We appreciated the Title III-A Consortium sponsorship of our esteemed plenary speaker & workshop presenter, John Segota, Associate Executive Director for Public Policy & Professional Relations, TESOL International. There was also a thought provoking plenary session provided by Lorraine Irier, Attorney, Office for Civil Rights, USDOE. On Saturday, we enjoyed an informative joint keynote address by Dr. Serena Walker, Director, Federal/State Grants & Reporting, Technical College System of Georgia and Ms. Stephanie Rooks, Dean of Adult Education, Gwinnett Technical College. Conference speakers and attendees showcased the range of TESOL classrooms that exist across

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Promoting Empathy for ELLs Through Spanish for Teachers



Deanna Whitfield

Educators at Southside Elementary School participated in a professional development research study thanks to funding from the GATESOL Professional Development I (PK – 12) grant. Spanish is the home language of 96% of the 151 ESOL students at Southside. Realizing the need to better communicate with Spanish-speaking parents and students, fellow educators expressed a desire to learn Spanish. As an ESOL teacher, I hoped that the experience of learning Spanish would give other educators more insight into the language acquisition process and help my colleagues become more effective teachers of ESOL students. With grant funding, six educators were able to take Spanish in a blended-learning format. Educators enrolled in the six-week online course, Spanish in the Classroom, through University of Georgia Continuing Education. Participating educators also met with me, the teacher-researcher, four times to clarify lessons, discuss their language learning experiences, and reflect on how they perceived students felt while learning English. Research was conducted to investigate if a language-learning experience would improve teachers' empathy for ESOL students, knowledge of

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the state and confirmed need for continued professional development.

We would also like to acknowledge the support provided by the entire Georgia Department of Education Title III, Part A and ESOL Unit. Dr. Margaret Baker, Dr. Jacqueline Ellis, Dr. Adria Griffin, and Ms. Dely Roberts attended the conference and provided training during a breakout session. Mr. John Wight, Federal Programs Manager graciously attended. We value the hard work of the ESOL Unit as they support Georgia educators and look forward to continuing our relationship with them.

Our next event will be the 2019 TESOL International Convention in Atlanta, March 12-15, 2019. GATESOL is the host affiliate for that conference and our local co-chairs are Ms. Kendra Castelow (immediate past GATESOL president) and Mr. Jack Hardy. We appreciate all of their hard work in organizing volunteers for this special event. While this is a TESOL International Convention, GATESOL members will serve as team leaders, ambassadors, workshop presenters, and volunteers. Don't forget to register for the K-12 Day (<https://www.tesol.org/convention-2019/ticketed-events/prek-12-day>) on Saturday, March 16th.

This year is shaping up to be an outstanding year for GATESOL. We plan to continue building relationships with community stakeholders (educators, government officials, and local businesses) and most importantly, we want open lines of communication with members. Our mission is to provide stellar professional development and advocate for our students. There are many ways you can help. Please email any board member or regional liaison, attend a meeting, or visit our website (<http://gatesol.org/>) to identify service learning opportunities.

Warm regards,

Lela Horne, Ph.D.
President of Georgia TESOL

second language acquisition, and pedagogical skills in ESOL.

Since all educators ($N = 6$) in the Spanish class volunteered to participate, we formed a professional learning community (PLC) which allowed us to share knowledge as peers and learn together. As a certified Spanish and ESOL instructor, I lead my colleagues in reflecting upon and discussing their language learning experiences. Participating educators were all female, Caucasian, and ranged from 2 to 22 years teaching experience. The six educators and I met together to discuss the Spanish-learning experience before the start of the online class, twice during the six-week online course, and once after the course. Participating educators completed the Spanish for Teachers Attitude Survey. The survey contained 21 questions on a five-point Likert-type with one being strongly disagree and five being strongly agree. Survey questions were divided into three categories: empathy, second language acquisition/bilingualism, and pedagogy/teacher effectiveness. Identical surveys were used both before educators took Spanish in the Classroom and after the course, so respondents were also given a Not Applicable (NA) option. Additionally, educators were asked to submit at least two sentences of reflection after each week of the online course. The attitude surveys and teacher-reflections were used to measure educators' responses to the Spanish in the Classroom course in a blended-learning format.

When calculating the results of the survey, I did not calculate gains for any survey question for which at least one respondent marked not applicable (NA). Seven questions had at least one NA response. Three statements regarding an increased awareness of second language acquisition showed the greatest gains. The statement *I understand how my students learn languages* made the greatest gains moving from a somewhat neutral response ($m = 3.50$) to a positive response ($m = 4.33$). This increase was not considered to be statistically significant ($t(10) = 1.81, p = .08$).

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"As an ESOL teacher, I hoped that the experience of learning Spanish would give other educators more insight into the language acquisition process and help my colleagues become more effective teachers of ESOL students."

Teachers' reflections were collected and examined for themes. Six themes emerged from participants' comments: Enjoyment/Utility, Personal Confidence, Empathy, Ease or Difficulty, ESOL Pedagogy/Teacher Effectiveness, and Knowledge of Second Language Acquisition theories. The two themes with the most comments were ESOL Pedagogy/Teacher Effectiveness (14 comments) and Knowledge of Second Language Acquisition (16 comments).

Approaching ESOL professional development as a PLC was important. It was the first time that teachers had formed a PLC about ESOL at our school. The PLC was a powerful format for building capacity in teaching ESOL students. We met as colleagues and I served as a guide for discussion rather than a disseminator of knowledge. From our meetings I observed that the teachers really appeared to reflect on their language learning experiences, share insights, and apply their new knowledge to student interactions. The greatest gains on the attitude survey were in knowledge of the language acquisition process. Although the gains were not statistically significant ($p = .08$), Spanish for Teachers in a blended-learning format appears to be a promising practice based on teacher reflections. One teacher commented, "I can empathize more with the students in ESOL as I try to learn another language. I believe that this experience is opening my eyes to the layers of confusion that come from not understanding the language as well as the concept." Another teacher wrote, "I sincerely hope more of our staff has an opportunity to participate in this course. With the ever-growing Spanish speaking population in our area, it is inevitable that our classrooms will have to find more ways to adapt, and this is just one step in positive direction that embraces these changes."

Thank you to GATESOL for funding this professional learning opportunity! I hope that other schools and districts will consider conducting ESOL professional development in this format. Learning a language can possibly lead to greater teacher empathy, increased knowledge of second language acquisition, and better instruction for ESOL students.

Deanna Whitfield is a K-5 ESOL teacher at Southside Elementary in Grady County, Georgia.

Travel to Peru With the GATESOL Travel Grant



Cindi Toledo

This past summer I went to Peru, and you should travel there too! I have long had the desire to travel, meet new people, and try new experiences. With this goal and my love of teaching ESOL, I decided to apply for the Georgia/Peru TESOL Travel grant that is offered by GATESOL. Before embarking on this great adventure I spoke with a wonderful collaborator and my fellow grant recipient, Alicia Teague, to see if we could take this journey together. She was very agreeable and so we filled out the application, secured our letter of recommendation, and refined our presentation. When we learned our presentation, "Avoid the Single Story: Using Multicultural Mentor Texts" had been chosen as the winning proposal, we were thrilled!

As a result of receiving this travel grant I have grown in ways I had not expected. First of all, I had to use technology differently than I ever had to before. Now I approach technology with a more open mind. Additionally, having a co-presenter made working productively necessary. Collaborating with my partner Alicia was a positive and fruitful experience. I learned how to use technology to work efficiently whether we were working side by side or remotely. Also, being able to share and refine ideas required constructive dialogue and a respectful relationship. Finally, I had to address my fears of presenting in front of large

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groups, so we used our county's professional learning opportunities to practice in front of colleagues. This was difficult, but the positive feedback and comments that we received helped develop confidence in presenting in front of people. While some growth can be uncomfortable, the outcome was worth the time and work involved. I am not sure I would have made so much professional growth without receiving the grant.

While planning for my trip I added several additional days to explore the country and interact with the Peruvian people. I discovered that Peru is a wonderful country full of kind people, interesting sights, amazing food, rich history, and a fantastically diverse culture. During my time in Peru I hiked in the Andes Mountains, day tripped in the Sacred Valley, stood in awe at Machu Picchu, visited the remarkable Floating Islands of Uros on Lake Titicaca, and stayed in an Amazon Rain Forest lodge. Following these unbelievable experiences, I went to the Peru TESOL conference and met many committed professionals looking to share their knowledge or wanting to develop new skills to help in their role as English teachers.

The experience was enriching and I would encourage anyone to apply. Professional conferences are a wonderful opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and meet individuals who have a shared passion. Being in the presence of other English teachers from around the world made me feel like I was part of something bigger, part of a global community, and that I was an important contributor.

To take advantage of this amazing grant, consider some of the effective strategies you are using in your classroom or researching, and trust that these ideas are remarkable and worth sharing. Then simply fill out the application which is on the website and invite someone who knows you and your great work to write a letter of recommendation. The most difficult part of the application process was waiting to find out if we had been selected. The wait for the committee's decision was a small price to pay for the experience of a lifetime.

GATESOL Grants: Deadlines & Information

Did you know that Georgia TESOL Grants & Awards provide a total of nearly \$12,000 each year? Click the links below to learn more about what we offer our members:

[Project/Professional Development Grant I: PK-12](#)

Amount: up to \$1,000

Deadline: April 15th *The purpose of the grant is to support classroom/research projects and promote the professional development of a promising ELL teacher who is a current member in good standing of Georgia TESOL and has a worthy plan or goal that will ultimately benefit ELL students, but lacks the resources or materials to achieve this goal.*

[Project/Professional Development Grant II: Adult or Higher Education](#)

Amount: up to \$1000

Deadline: April 15th

The purpose of the grant is to support classroom/research projects and promote the professional development of an adult ESOL teacher, ELL teacher at a higher education institute, or ELL teacher educator who is a current member in good standing of Georgia TESOL and has a worthy plan or goal that will benefit ELL students, but lacks the resources or materials to achieve this goal.

[Georgia/Peru TESOL Travel Grant](#)

Amount: \$2000

Deadline: March 1st

This grant was created to promote cross-cultural understanding and the sharing of resources between Georgia TESOL and Peru TESOL. Applicants must also show documentation that they have been accepted to present at the Peru TESOL Conference.

UPCOMING EVENT: TESOL

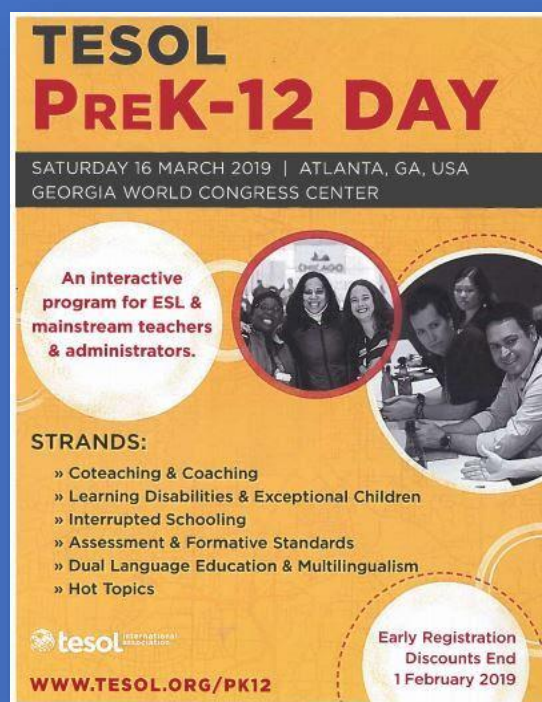
March 12-16, 2019

Atlanta, GA



Did you know that GATESOL is the host affiliate for the upcoming TESOL conference? The TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo is heading to the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia, 12-15 March 2019. We hope you'll join us for this unparalleled event, as well as TESOL PreK-12 Day, which immediately follows the Convention on Saturday, 16 March.

PreK-12 Day is an interactive program designed exclusively for PreK-12 educators. The day features sessions on 6 different strands: Coteaching & Coaching, Learning Disabilities & Exceptional Children, Interrupted Schooling, Assessment & Formative Standards, Dual Language Education & Multilingualism, and Hot Topics. There will also be a keynote address by local Atlanta expert, Dr. Ayanna Cooper, on *What School Leaders Need to Know to Support English Learners*.



Four Tips to Teach Adult English Language Learners



Dr. Joel Floyd

The adult English language learner (ELL) represents a unique student population. Many of these students have come from several cultural and international backgrounds, and they are eager to learn the English language as they adapt and adjust to American society. Therefore, teachers of the adult ELL must be fully equipped in instructing this diverse student population. As the current school director of English for a Lifetime Language Institute, I have discovered several instructional techniques beneficial to facilitating teaching and learning in the adult ELL classroom.

- (1) **Create a compassionate learning environment** – Adult ELLs require teachers who are sensitive to their academic, personal, and professional goals. To demonstrate compassion, adult ELL teachers must always be willing to go the extra mile, proving to their students that the teacher's primary goal is to help every student maximize to his or her highest potential. The teacher must be willing

to advocate and be a voice for their students when necessary, and inform students that their classroom experience will always be a consistently safe space.

- (2) **Implement intentional communicative methods** – Adult ELLs enroll into ESL programs because they need to learn English in order to survive and to participate in American society. Their classroom experience must be filled with opportunities that will cause them to begin using the English language immediately. A primary way to do this is by encouraging students to participate fully in each of their class meetings. Student talk time (STT) should be consistently maximized over teacher talk time (TTT). A good formula for this is 90% STT and 10% TTT.
- (3) **Provide variety in learner assessments** – Adult ELLs may enter the classroom with a college degree, while others enter with highly limited educational experiences, not having obtained even a middle school education. Taken together, the adult ELL teacher must implement learner assessment techniques that align with students' educational background and learning abilities. This may require some work, but in time, the effective teacher will be able to create an assessment program that authentically measures their students' learning progress.
- (4) **Implementing technology** – Implementing various technologies in the adult ELL classroom is one technique to enhance and bolster student learning. The goal of technology must be to make learning English a meaningful experience and to meet students' English as a second language acquisition needs. Some examples of classroom technology, for use, are: video/film, virtual lesson, music, YouTube videos, podcasting and apps. At English for a Lifetime, our teachers use the WhatsApp application to connect with

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students outside of the classroom. We are cognizant that our students will come and work on their English language skills but return to their communities and speak their first language. By using the WhatsApp application, teachers can constantly communicate with students, challenging them to continue practicing and improving their English.

Connecting Media Arts, Proficiency, and English Learners



Felicia Hill

The goal of any English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher is to work to increase the English language proficiency of his or her students. Although teachers have an abundance of online resources, it is possible to be reluctant to use them. Consequently, teachers get stuck writing lesson plans the same way, stuck presenting lessons the same way, and stuck assessing English learners (ELs) the same way. Proficiency stalls. However, presenting a lesson in terms of arts integration, more specifically media arts, may be useful. Embracing media arts moves teachers away from the traditional ways of pencil and paper and towards more innovative

ways of teaching and learning.

What is Media Arts?

Media arts is the use of digital media to produce works of art. ELs can express knowledge of learned concepts digitally. They utilize desktops, laptops, or iPads to access such web sites as Adobe Spark, digitally creating works like web pages, video stories, or graphics.

Why Media Arts?

Traditional pencil and paper assignments and assessments can be daunting to beginning to mid-level proficiency ELs. Using media arts allows students the opportunity to express themselves and prove knowledge of concepts through less intimidating means. For ELs who find expressive and receptive language difficult, digital media allows them to express themselves visually and at times, musically. This allows for differentiation of product.

Secondly, as more and more districts integrate technology and testing, it is imperative that ELs feel comfortable navigating through digital programs and feel comfortable with

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“The teacher must be willing to advocate and be a voice for their students when necessary, and inform students that their classroom experience will always be a consistently safe space.”

keyboarding. Ideas should not stagger simply because students are unfamiliar with number, symbol, and letter placement on a keyboard.

As students learn keyboarding and receive computer-based instruction, they not only learn content but also learn computer-based vocabulary. ELs learn words such as boot up, browse, scroll, folder, and crop. Some ELs may need further clarification of the terms because they have multiple meanings. In a media arts lesson, a folder is not the student's take home folder; it is a virtual location for documents. It provides a way to store and organize work completed on a computer. In addition, the word crop deserves explicit explanation. For example, crop can mean food that is grown. Crop can mean to cut. Surprisingly, crop can be associated with a type of shirt, too. Exposing ELs to technology clarifies multiple meaning words, thereby increasing comprehension.

Furthermore, media arts provides exposure to the same content areas but in a different way. It increases proficiency in digital literacy and English language. For example, after reading an assigned text, ELs can show their understanding in various ways. One way is to build a web site that summarizes the text. ELs can also create a graphic that symbolizes the theme of a text. Alternatively, ELs can create a video story using icons and their own voices to re-tell a story.

Challenges and Tips for the Push-In Model of Instruction

If the delivery model is push-in, implementing media arts can present a number of challenges.

- Keeping devices charged can be worrisome.
- Carrying multiple devices can be heavy and cumbersome.
- Student login can be time-consuming.

To help rectify the logistical issues of using media arts with the push-in delivery model, try to plan as far in advance as possible. Use a laptop or iPad cart. For example, coordinate with classroom teachers or possibly the grade level (if the cart is shared among grade-level teachers) for dedicated days and times for media arts lessons. Purchase a rolling cart to make hauling the devices easier. Then, inquire if

the school has individual chargers. Use the individual chargers to plug in the laptops or iPads when they are or are not in use, thus decreasing the risk of them dying. Also, use the same devices so that student login information is saved on them.

ESOL teachers are charged with teaching content, language, and exposing students to digital literacy. Media arts incorporates visuals so that students can expand their proficiency and simultaneously prepares ELs for the digital world. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a picture is worth much more in the minds of ELs.

***Felicia Hill** is an ESOL educator, teacher-leader, author, presenter, and aspiring administrator. She is a GATESOL member. She has worked as an educator for over 14 years and is currently a K-5 ESOL teacher. She is Arts Integration trained and supports teaching*

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Letter from the Editor



Dear Readers,

I hope your 2019 is off to a good start! I sincerely appreciate those of you who have taken the time out of your busy day to be a part of GATESOL, whether that's through attending a meeting, joining us at our conference, or reading this newsletter – thank you!

When I learned that I would be editor of the GATESOL Newsletter, I didn't realize what was in store for me (and no, I'm not talking about the frustrations of formatting on Word). I have had the opportunity to collaborate and learn from individuals who are invested in equipping our learners with the tools to be successful in language learning. I am truly honored for the opportunity to learn and grow through the experiences and advice I've read about from other educators, and I hope this newsletter offers readers the same joy and insight it has brought me. Please continue to send in your submissions for the May issue. I look forward to reading and learning more!

Sincerely,

Asha Jassani

Review Process

The Editor reserves the right to modify any material selected for publication to fit the available space, or to improve on clarity and style. Authors will be consulted prior to publication if changes are significant and may be given a chance to revise their articles if substantial changes or refocusing are required. Authors will not be able to make changes to their articles after submission. In addition, articles may also be held for future issues.

Call for Submissions

Would you like to write an article for the GATESOL Newsletter? We welcome your submissions!

CATEGORIES:

Articles: Classroom ideas, field-related issues, perspectives and commentary on trends and technology use, and GATESOL grant-related. *Length: 700-1000 words.*

Teaching Tips: Short teaching tips or lesson ideas. *Length: up to 500 words.*

Book and Resource Reviews: Reviews of textbooks, professional development books, websites and other resources. Include a description, your critique, and how this applies to teaching. *Length: 300-500 words.*

News from GATESOL Members: Short announcements of professional achievements of GATESOL members (for example, awards, and publications in peer-reviewed journals) *Length: up to 75 words.*

*****NEW**Excellence in Education:*** *Do you know a member who deserves to be recognized for their work with ELs? We want to celebrate their advocacy efforts, teaching ability and/or dedication to the TESOL field. Their hard work should be recognized. Submit a profile detailing their accomplishments for the chance to be one of our featured educators. Length: 100-150 words and photo.*

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

- All submissions must be submitted in a **word** document (.doc or .docx)
- All photos must be submitted in **.jpg** or **.jpeg** format

All submissions should be emailed to ajassani@gmail.com with the subject GATESOL Newsletter Submission by the deadline date.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION

Issue	Deadline
February	January 1, 2019
May	April 1, 2019
August	July 1, 2019
November	October 1, 2019

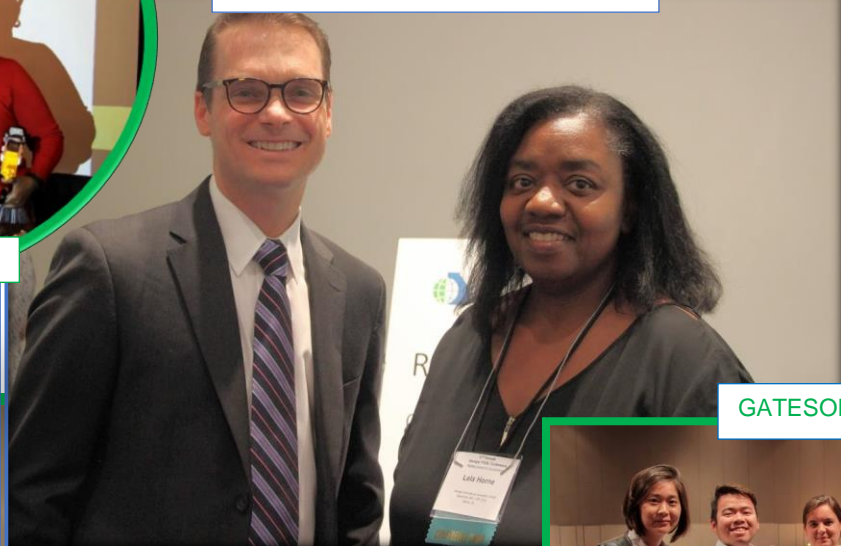
2018 GATESOL CONFERENCE PICTURES



Paula Stinnett and Katie Hildebrand



José A. Viana and Lela Horne



GATESOL Board Members



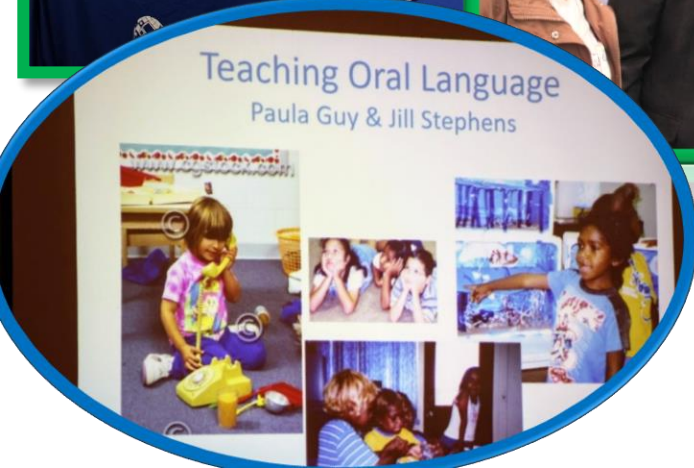
Donna Marsh



John Segota



Teaching Oral Language
Paula Guy & Jill Stephens





Jacqueline Ellis



Bee Nguyen



Lorraine Irier

