

In This Issue...

A Message from the Editors

Accessing Opportunities through Language

The theme of the 2016 INTESOL conference is “Accessing Opportunities through Language,” an idea that is embraced and pursued daily by the membership of INTESOL in our collective work with language learners of all ages and pursuits, whether the learners are preschoolers preparing for kindergarten, high school students working to advance their families, young adults seeking an advanced degree, or Lilly chemists improving their English on the golf course.

Language is much more than a simple mechanism for communication; it is a bridge to new learning, to expanding one’s membership in various communities of identity and of practice, and to new encounters with the wide world. New language learning opens us up to new thinking, to fresh ideas, and to engaging with those we might previously have categorized as “other.” Through language learning, we expand and deepen our capacity for empathy, compassion, and neighborliness—attributes very much needed in this time of incivility and of political discord.

In light of overwhelmingly positive feedback from the membership, we have elected to continue the newly established tradition of inviting Indiana’s ELLs to contribute art to be featured on the cover of *INTESOL Journal* and on the cover of the conference booklet. This year’s journal cover art was created by Ariya Tastha

from Thailand, and was submitted by her art teacher, Deb Singleton from Adams Central High School. We are proud to acknowledge Ariya as the winner of the 2016 INTESOL Art Contest. In addition, a compilation of many beautiful individual student art pieces was “quilted” together to produce this year’s conference cover artwork. We joyfully acknowledge the accomplishments of Rene Caldwell’s elementary ELL students from Noblesville Schools’ Stony Creek Elementary School and are delighted to feature their efforts on the conference program.

In this issue you will find contributions that take us well beyond surface-level thinking about the impact of language learning on English language learners (ELLs). In the first article, Teemant, Hausman, and Kigamwa investigate the effect of higher order thinking teaching approaches by urban educators in English/Language Arts and English language development (ELD) courses. This important study highlights the urgency and a rationale for pedagogies which increase the level of cognitive challenge for ELLs and demonstrates that ELLs make significant gains in English proficiency, particularly when educators receive coaching.

Alejandra Alvarado-Brizuela studies the experiences of three Spanish-speaking Indiana K-12 ELLs and their four teachers in order to understand motivators and demotivators in the ELD setting. In an interesting turn, while

educators considered all emergent themes to be critical for motivation, the focal students emphasized the importance of technology, the difficulty of a task, and peer scaffolding as motivators. This gives K-12 educators much to think about as they design instruction for ELLs.

Next we turn our attention to Chinese university composition students' perceptions of peer review and of the impact of their Chinese identities in a university composition class in the Midwest. Here Wang discovers a problematic gap between the pedagogical thinking of the instructors and the Chinese students' understandings and assumptions of the purposes of peer review—a situation all too familiar for those who have taught ELLs from non-US cultures who have experienced other pedagogical approaches and philosophies which shape their expectations in US classes.

There continues to be great interest in determining best practices for teaching international students enrolled in large R-1 university composition courses. Here Shvidko examines survey data from students and instructors and finds students generally believe the composition courses are effective and that the selected assignments go a long way toward preparing ELLs for university courses. Instructors selected for this study reflect on their experience of experimenting with discipline-specific writing tasks which encourage ELLs to write on topics relevant to their majors.

Finally, Farran delves into the complexities of ELLs learning to read and write in Arabic, a subject that has received little scrutiny, but which promises to be a growing concern in the future. She helpfully provides recommendations emerging from this study for educators. Here Farran's work concurs with the vast majority of literacy studies as she discovers that vocabulary acquisition is once again a strong predictor of reading comprehension in both English and Arabic for these dual language learners.

In this issue you will also find an exciting call for manuscripts for a special issue of *INTESOL Journal* which will focus on the implications and impact of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on Indiana's ELLs students, teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and the Indiana Department of Education. We hope all INTESOL members will consider contributing a manuscript for this important upcoming issue. We anticipate this issue will be released in June 2017. Cover artwork from this year's contest was selected to grace this special issue cover. Congratulations go to Elizabeth Candelario submitted by her art teacher, Careth Flash, from MSD Lawrence Township's Lawrence North High School with many thanks for this contribution to the special issue.

It is an honor and a privilege to present to the INTESOL membership 2016 Volume 13, Issue 1 of the *INTESOL Journal*. As we worked to prepare this issue, we were continually reminded of how much we need one another and that none of

us truly works in isolation if we remember to connect and collaborate with one another. We, the editors, are indebted to each author and to the 2016 INTESOL Board for their support of this issue. You will find each author's contact information located after the conclusion of each article. Please remember to reach out to the authors to let each of them know how valued they are and that their work is having an impact on our professional and academic community. We look forward to hearing from you.

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