

ESL Content Teachers Collaborative

School of Teaching and Learning

Letter from the Director



Keiko K. Samimy
Project Director

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**Volume 4, Issue 3
Summer 2011**

Dear ECTC Colleagues,

As we conclude the ECTC’s fourth program year and get ready for our fifth and final year, we reflect back on Year 4 and also look ahead to Year 5 in this quarter’s issue of the *ECTC Newsletter*.

We invite you to read about our recent accomplishments providing TESOL training to six Ohio school districts on Page 2, and be sure to check out which national conferences the ECTC will be presenting at on Page 4. We also share news about a social networking opportunity and online resource for ECTC alumni in the “Share Fair” section, as well as provide another book review for teachers to easily and efficiently access ESL research and strategies to support instruction.

Have a great start to the new school year!

Dr. KS

Keiko K. Samimy, Ph.D.

Professor, Foreign and Second Language Education

Welcome back to another school year! This time of year always finds us wrapped up in the excitement of new routines, new curricula, new lesson plans, and – my favorite part – getting to know new students and new colleagues. I hope you are feeling as enthusiastically as I am about everything that the new year promises and enjoying the annual back-to-school rituals in your respective districts.

As you know, summers at the ECTC are the busiest time for our staff and our current cohort. We’ve just concluded Year 4 of our project, having partnered with 38 content and ESL teachers from Dublin City Schools, Olentangy Local Schools, Licking Heights Local Schools, Wauseon Exempted Schools, Lakota Local Schools, and South-Western City Schools. Again this past year, we were able to offer four graduate-level courses and a series of workshops to our participants, guiding them in their individual professional development quests to develop challenging lessons that engage ELLs in content and English language learning, as well as equitable assessment practices and inclusion of standards in their teaching. Also, we bade farewell to Katie Seyler, one of our graduate teaching assistants, who just completed her Master’s degree in TESOL and accepted a job teaching French and Spanish in Colorado. We will miss her greatly and wish her much success in her new life in mountain country!



ECTC teachers collaborating at Workshop II, 2011

We are now about to launch the recruitment of our Year 5 cohort, whose teachers will comprise the final cohort of our five-year \$1.5 million U.S. Department of Education funded project. As such, we are also looking ahead to what the future holds for the ECTC. Because of the overwhelming need for continuing ESL professional development in Ohio, we must consider how we can continue to provide quality, in-service training for teachers throughout the state after the conclusion of our funding. To this end, we’ve nearly completed the outside evaluation of our program, and our evaluator Dr. Ann Snow, a TESOL faculty

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“Back to School,” Continued

member at California State University, Los Angeles, shared with us that we are one of the few programs of this type and scope in the nation. Dr. Snow created the online survey that we asked you to complete as part of our program evaluation, and we would like to send a hearty thank you to everyone who participated in the survey of your experiences with applying what you’ve learned from the ECTC to your own teaching. The survey will help us immensely with understanding more about you and your students’ ongoing experiences and needs for ESL, as well as provide us with information that we can apply toward future training initiatives and grant proposals.

I wish you a most successful year ahead, and I encourage you to keep in touch with the ECTC! Be sure to join our new Ning discussion board (read more about Ning on page 5!), where we’ll be offering bi-monthly teaching ideas, and where you can keep in touch with fellow ECTC alums and share helpful resources with each other. ☺



Upcoming Conferences

The ECTC is proud to announce that our faculty, staff, and selected content-teacher alumni will be presenting together at the following education conferences in 2011:

Ohio TESOL (Ohio Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages):

November 11-12, 2011, in Columbus, OH <http://www.ohiotesol.org/>

NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English):

November 17-22, 2011, in Chicago, IL <http://www.ncte.org/>

NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies):

December 2-4, 2011, in Washington, D.C. <http://www.socialstudies.org/conference>

Interested in Participating?

Attention district administrators and ESL teachers! Are you interested in ESL training for a team of content-area teachers in your district? Contact Steven about how you can participate in the ECTC in 2011-2012 (swisnor@ehe.osu.edu).

The ESL-Content Teachers Collaborative (ECTC) Newsletter

The ECTC Newsletter is a quarterly newsletter for participants and friends of the ESL-Content Teachers Collaborative—a professional development program in the School of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University. The program is funded by a five-year, \$1.5 million award from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA).

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Share Fair: The ECTC Social Network on Ning.com

By Sunyung Song

We are pleased to announce the “re-launch” of our ECTC social network located on Ning.com (<http://ectctrial.ning.com/>). This network offers all ECTC alumni an opportunity to collaborate with content-area and ESL colleagues; find, share, and post teaching resources for working with ELLs; and stay in touch with ECTC faculty and staff at Ohio State. The ECTC Ning network offers teachers an online community (similar to Ohio State’s “Carmen” system) where colleagues and information can be accessed when and where teachers need it.



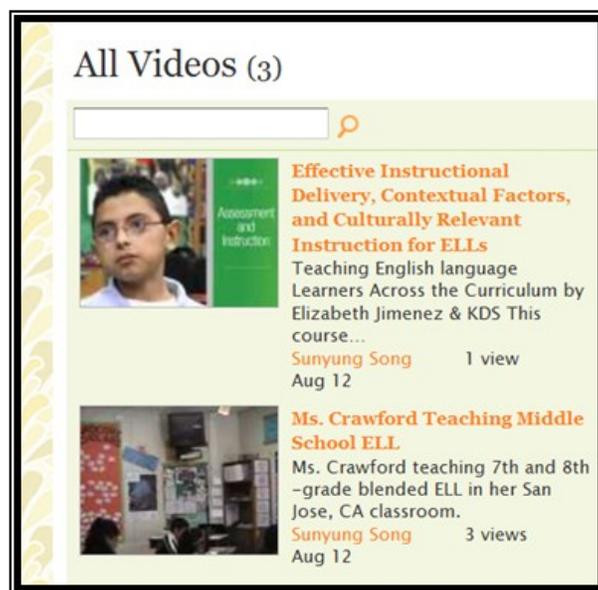
Our network’s home page includes a variety of features that members can simply click on to post their own content or to view what others have posted. Features include—

- **Forum**, which offers a great opportunity to interact with all members of the network. This is a theme-based discussion board that has a new topic each month. For example, since the theme for August 2011 is *back-to-school transitions for English language learners*, members can discuss and share ideas to help ELLs ease into the new school year. Members can initiate their own discussion, reply to an existing discussion, or upload relevant materials to share with other members;

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Share Fair, Continued

- **Text Box**, embedded on the main page, where ECTC staff shares helpful teaching information with members. The content of Text Box is aligned with the monthly theme of Forum;
- **Groups**, which provides an opportunity for members to interact with their fellow content-area colleagues. There are four content groups: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, there are also groups for ESL coaches and school administrators. Members of each group can start their own discussion or reply to an existing discussion. They can also post their comments, videos, photos, and/or other relevant materials through the text box;
- **Blogs**, which offer a great place to share stories and express opinions. While Forum and Groups are geared toward more-focused community discussions, Blogs allows members to write about anything they want to share!
- **Videos**, where useful and regularly-updated clips can be viewed. This feature highlights various topics such as effective instruction for ELL students and ELL parent involvement.

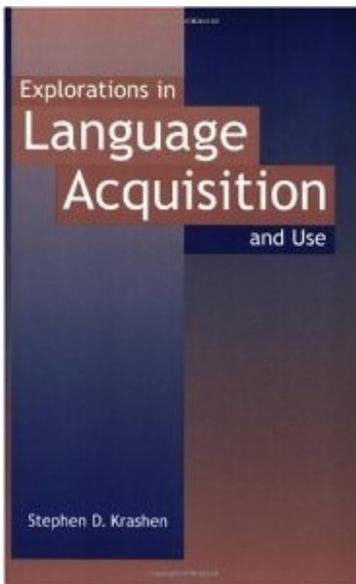


To become a member of our Ning network and begin sharing with colleagues, ECTC alumni should contact the ECTC (song.222@osu.edu) for an invitation email and link to Ning's registration page. ☺

In each issue, the ECTC team presents a brief teaching idea for you to use in your work with English language learners.

Krashen, Stephen D. (2003). *Explorations in Language Acquisition and Use*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Pp. 103. ISBN: 0-325-00554-0 (paperback).

For teachers searching for an easy-to-access text that uses recent research to identify effective classroom practices, this slender book from Stephen Krashen serves as a worthwhile resource.



The majority of *Explorations in Language Acquisition and Use* focuses on three specific teaching and learning issues related to ELLs: their need for comprehensible input, the benefits of free voluntary reading, and the issue of teaching grammar. The book provides summaries of research studies that support Krashen's influential 5 hypotheses of language acquisition, making this book an easy reference guide to some of the guiding principles of language learning for ELLs. Krashen presents his findings and, importantly, their importance for classroom practice. For instance, Chapter 1 dedicates an entire section to "application," listing methods to use with beginner-level ELLs as well as documenting research that supports sheltered instruction for intermediate-level learners.

Chapter 2 offers a passionate defense of voluntary student reading (e.g., sustained silent reading) by summarizing research that shows positive correlations between ELLs' free reading and better results on language tests. With this evidence, Krashen calls for teachers to implement recreational reading (with a modest degree of accountability) to increase their ELLs' language competence. In Chapter 3, Krashen challenges the practice of direct instruction of grammar, concluding from the research that grammar teaching has only a minimal, short-term impact on grammar testing, let alone students' spontaneous language use.

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Book Review, Continued

The final chapter is broader in scope, providing another spirited defense—this time, of authentic *problem-solving* as the primary method for teaching and learning for all students. Specifically, Krashen points to the ability to read and write *in the context of problem-solving* as the distinguishing factor between higher achievers and other students. These high achievers, according to Krashen, have learned to read and write not simply as a way to repeat facts but as a way to think and generate new ideas. This has implications particularly for the many ELLs in content-area classrooms: “When students engage in real problem solving and are exposed to interesting and comprehensible input, they acquire language and learn concepts and facts much more easily” (p.85). ☺