

**Developing an assessment of face-to-face conversation skills for the  
OEPP:  
My big fat dissertation project**

Nancy Kauper  
Purdue University

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Conversation skills and knowledge of local norms and conventions of interaction are important for ESL learners in an English-speaking community. The interactive conversation (IC) assessment was developed for the OEPP to supplement a curriculum that focused mainly on academic language and classroom communication. The two main goals of this classroom assessment are to help students improve their skills and strategies in face-to-face interaction, including skills in active listening, conversation management, negotiation of meaning, and non-verbal communication; and to give OEPP instructors a broader view of students' overall proficiency and ability to communicate in interactive contexts. My dissertation concerns the development of this assessment starting from the working model of the IC used in the English 001T (now 620) class. Results from a study of this working model were used to develop and improve assessment criteria, evaluation scales, and rating guidelines; and this was followed by further study of instructors' use of the new scales. During this talk, I'll focus on data and analysis, including a qualitative study of paired student conversation assessment performances on digital video recordings; analysis of numerical and prose assessment evaluation data; and a student attitude survey using a Likert scale. I'll comment on some of the challenges I've encountered along the dissertation way, and afterwards there will be time for audience discussion.



Nancy Kauper is a PhD student in the ESL program at Purdue University, where she also teaches for the Oral English Proficiency Program.

*Please join us afterwards for ESL Happy Hour at Lafayette Brewing Company!*

