

# The 1<sup>st</sup> Purdue University Graduate Student Symposium on ESL Studies



**April 4, 2009  
9:00 am – 5:35 p.m.  
STEW # 320**

**Purdue University  
West Lafayette, Indiana**

**Adviser:  
Dr. Dwight Atkinson**

**Chairs:  
Fatima Esseili  
Jihyun Im  
Shih-Yu Chang**

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~eslgo/>

**This event is free and open to the public**

# Ten Things I've Learned as an ESL Writing Program Administrator

Keynote Speaker

## Melinda Reichelt

Professor of TESOL and Linguistics  
The University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio

### Lecture Abstract:

While a strong theoretical and practical foundation of knowledge in one's field of expertise is essential for success in administering any type of program, program administration also involves practical concerns that are difficult to anticipate. The presenter describes her experiences as an ESL Writing Program Administrator at one university, hoping that this description will prove useful to Purdue graduate students as they enter the job market and continue their careers after leaving Purdue. She focuses on issues such as negotiating release time for administrative duties, managing the work load of involved with such work, and making colleagues aware of the magnitude of time and effort involved.

### About the keynote speaker:

Melinda Reichelt graduated from Purdue University with an M.A. in English (1991) and Ph.D. in English (1996). She is currently Professor of English at the University of Toledo, where she directs the ESL writing program and teaches courses in TESOL, ESL writing, and linguistics. She has published her work in a range of journals, including the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *World Englishes*, *Composition Studies*, and *Modern Language Journal*, and she has presented her work at conferences such as TESOL, CCC's, AAAL, and the Symposium on Second Language Writing. She is co-author with Tony Silva and Colleen Brice of *Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship in Second Language Writing: 1993-1997* (1999), published by Ablex. She is currently editing, with Tony Cimasko, a collection of chapters on foreign language writing, tentatively entitled *Foreign Language Writing: Principles and Practices*

## Symposium at a Glance

- 9:00 – 10:00 Keynote Speaker, **Melinda Reichelt**, “Ten Things I’ve Learned as an ESL Writing Program Administrator”
- 10:00 – 11:15 **Session I: Teacher Education & Academic Writing**  
*Session Chair: Brian Guthrie*
- Shu-Wen Lan & Dazhi Cheng** “A Linguistic Knowledge Base for Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners”
- Josh Iddings**, “Establishing a Metalanguage for Writing Instruction by Using the Narrative: A Genre Approach”
- Yin-Ling Cheung**, “First-Time Publishing in a Refereed Journal in English”
- 11:15 – 11:30 Break
- 11:30 – 12:45 **Session II: Issues in English Language Studies: SLA & SLW**  
*Session Chair: Kyle McIntosh*
- Beril Tezeller Arik**, “The Cognitive-Social Tension in Second Language Acquisition Studies”
- Haiying Cao**, “A Pilot Study: Given-New Thematic Progression and Incoherence Types in TWE Essays”
- Mira Bekar**, “Trying to Understand the Problems in L1 and L2 Composing”
- 12:45 – 1:45 Lunch Break
- 1:45 – 3:00 **Session III: Pedagogical Practices: Demonstrations**  
*Session Chair: John Hitz*
- Shigetake Ushigusa**, “International Service-Learning of Foreign Languages via the Internet”
- Veronica Jayne**, “Making a Book with Elementary School Writers:”

Process, product and problems”

**Nai-Hua Kuo**, “Preparing Teachers for a Culturally Diverse Population with the Use of Multicultural Literature”

3:00 – 3:15

Break

3:15 – 4:30

**Session IV: Assessment**

*Session Chair: Kinga V. Kacso*

**Lixia Cheng & Nancy Kauper**, “Self-assessment for Teaching and Learning Classroom Presentation Skills”

**Crissy Mc-Martin Miller**, “ESL in ECE: The Purdue School of Electrical and Computer Engineering Writing Sample”

**April Burke**, “The Impact of the ISTEP+ on a School Corporation with a Large ELL Population”

4:30 – 4:45

Break

4:45 – 5:35

**Session V: English in the Expanding Circle**

*Session Chair: Cindy Torres*

**Elena Lawrick**, “English curricula reform as a result of Russia’s participation in the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”

**Harris Bras**, “What do NNS in the EC want from NS EFL teachers? An examination of job advertisements in East Asia”

6:00 – 8:00

Dinner with the keynote speaker

## Detailed Program

Session I: Teacher Education & Academic Writing

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**Shu-Wen Lan** [[slan@purdue.edu](mailto:slan@purdue.edu)] & **Dazhi Cheng** [[cheng19@purdue.edu](mailto:cheng19@purdue.edu)], “A Linguistic Knowledge Base for Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners”

**Co-authors:** Luciana C. de Oliveira [[Ideolive@purdue.edu](mailto:Ideolive@purdue.edu)], Shu-Wen Lan, and Dazhi Cheng

*Time: 10:00 – 10:25*

In K-12 mainstream classes, all students have the challenging task of developing their disciplinary knowledge and academic language. Comprehending specific disciplinary content can be a special challenge for ESL students due to the use of academic language in the content areas (de Oliveira, 2007; Schleppegrell, 2004). Little is known about what content area challenges textbooks present for ESL students and what linguistic knowledge teachers need in order to support ESL students’ content and language development. Most K-12 mainstream teachers rarely have professional development in teaching diverse student populations (Fillmore & Snow, 2000) and may not be prepared to show ESL students how language, content, and texts interact (Allington, 2005). Under the pressure of limited class time and a large number of students, most K-12 mainstream teachers gloss over ESL students’ linguistic challenges in reading content-area textbooks (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). In K-12 mainstream classes, teaching ESL students demands a high level of skill and knowledge about academic language on the part of content-area teachers (Heritage, Silva, & Pierce, 2007).

Drawing on a functional linguistics framework (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) and analyzing language arts, history, mathematics, and science textbooks at elementary levels, the researchers describe the possible linguistic challenges of content-area textbooks for ESL students. The rich descriptions of their linguistic challenges help mainstream teachers decide exactly what language of content-area textbooks they should teach and how to integrate language support into classes. We outline the linguistic knowledge mainstream teachers need in order to support ESL students’ content and language development. We argue that a knowledge base for teacher education must include attention to the linguistic features of academic language and map a framework for application in mainstream teacher education.

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**Josh Iddings** [[iddings@purdue.edu](mailto:iddings@purdue.edu)], “Establishing a Metalanguage for Writing Instruction by Using the Narrative: A Genre Approach”

*Time: 10:25 – 10:50*

One of the difficult challenges for students writing in the university is knowing how to recognize and compose the many diverse genres of academia. This difficulty increases for

second language writers. Using genre theory from a Systemic Functional Linguistics perspective, this paper will use the narrative genre as access into more challenging academic writing by establishing a metalanguage on which practitioners can base their teaching (Martin & Rose, 2008; Halliday, 2004). I will provide a genre description pertaining to many of the structural and lexicogrammatical patterns of the narrative and discuss implications for using this approach to uncover the genre patterns of other types of writing in the classroom. I will also describe one pedagogical approach to how instructors may fashion their teaching of a unit of instruction based on the narrative genre.

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**Yin-Ling Cheung** [[ycheung@purdue.edu](mailto:ycheung@purdue.edu)], “First-Time Publishing in a Refereed Journal in English”

*Time: 10:50 – 11:15*

Applied linguistics doctoral students are often advised to have academic publications in English, preferably refereed journal papers, before entering on the academic job market. Refereed journal papers written in English are considered a prerequisite for advancing to tenure-track positions, even in regions such as Hong Kong. However, many Hong Kong-born applied linguistics doctoral students have no publications. Similarly, when their China-born counterparts do have publications, they are written in Chinese in non-refereed journals in mainland China. To these students, a challenging task is publishing their first refereed journal paper in English. Therefore, strategies in preparing applied linguistics doctoral students to overcome the difficulties that hinder them from publishing refereed papers in English are needed. Given the importance of acquiring a list of refereed journal publications for an aspiring academic scholar, the first attempt of publishing in a refereed journal in English deserves research attention.

Getting published is a complex process of gaining entry into a particular discourse community, engaging in legitimate peripheral participation, and making good use of situated knowledge. The theoretical framework including a discussion of discourse community, legitimate peripheral participation, and situated knowledge has served as a foundation for the current investigation.

The qualitative study explores Hong Kong applied linguistics doctoral students’ first attempt of publishing in a refereed journal in English. The interview data appear to indicate that applied linguistics doctoral students adopted specific strategies to tackle difficulties arising from publishing their first paper in refereed English language journals. The strategies included selecting the context of study where they were familiar with to perform their research, reading the past issues of journal articles, and seeking assistance from their dissertation supervisors. Some suggestions are made to aim at informed teaching in ESL contexts and to better prepare applied linguistics doctoral students to sail through their writing for publication.

**Beril Tezeller Arik** [[btezelle@purdue.edu](mailto:btezelle@purdue.edu)], “The Cognitive-Social Tension in Second Language Acquisition Studies”

*Time: 11:30 – 11:55*

Given the lack of historical accounts of second language acquisition studies, presumably because it is a relatively new field, the rationale behind this research paper is to provide a historical sketch of a very important tension in the field, i.e., the cognitive-social tension. It is my belief that one can learn a lot about a field by looking at the main controversies in it. First, these controversies usually mark an important turning point in the history of a field. Secondly, debates like this not only give clues about the issues and problems in the field, but also make it easier for their audience to see the assumptions made by the parties involved. The cognitive-social tension in the field provides the proponents of different sides an arena to confront each other; to expose the strengths and weaknesses of each other’s arguments; to uncover and question each other’s presuppositions; and to discuss the implications of holding this or that particular view on the topics being discussed.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the arguments made by second language acquisition researchers who advocate a cognitive orientation and their critics, in order to give a partial historical account of the fundamental assumptions held and concepts used in the field. By doing so, my aim is to supply a framework to facilitate further discussion, to uncover the main assumptions of mainstream second language acquisition, and ultimately to invite others to think and decide for themselves where they stand on the cognitive-social tension in second language acquisition studies.

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**Haiying Cao** [[caoh@purdue.edu](mailto:caoh@purdue.edu)], “A Pilot Study: Given-New, Thematic Progression and Incoherence Types in TWE Essays”

*Time: 11:55 – 12:20*

This pilot study examines coherence problems in Chinese and Arabic TWE essays by addressing the different standards of coherence in the TWE scale and the scale of the TOEFL iBT Independent Writing Section. Eight types of coherence problems were proposed and studied by using Functional grammatical methods of Given-New and thematic progression (TP) patterns: brand new Theme, unclear reference, empty Rheme, redundancy, constant Theme, confusing Theme, Intervening material between Rheme and subsequent thematization, Switch of point of view and confusing discursal Theme. 20 high-rated (Score 5 and 6) Test of Written English (TWE) essays were used: 10 essays were written by Chinese and another 10 by Arabic writers. The text of each essay was arranged in a way to identify the location of Theme and Rheme first and then a coding system was used for tagging the problem types. An independent researcher tested the coding system and the inter-coder reliability was .78.

The results showed that EFL writers of different cultural backgrounds and proficiency levels presented different problem patterns in their essays. The last part of the paper discusses pedagogical implications for teaching EFL writing and for training test-raters.

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**Mira Bekar** [[mbekar@purdue.edu](mailto:mbekar@purdue.edu)], “Trying to Understand Problems in L1 and L2 Composing”  
*Time: 12:20 – 12:45*

Understanding the similarities and differences in problems in L1 and L2 composing, as well as the differences in students’ views within L2 groups about the writing processes due to the different language backgrounds, has important pedagogical implications for the writing instructors to be able to address student writers’ specific needs. This paper presentation explains the self-reported difficulties in composing of two groups of 38 freshmen students at Purdue University. This study is a continuation of the studies done in the field of second language writing by Silva (1993, 1997), Connor (1994), Krapels (1990), and Leki (1992).

A questionnaire consisting of 29 statements that referred to various aspects of writing processes and practices was used as an instrument for the study. Descriptive statistics (frequencies) were used in the data analysis and comparisons were drawn between the answers. Despite the common problems, such as writing a good thesis, keeping clarity using appropriate sentence structures, L1 and L2 students differ in their views on what is important for the reader to understand the message of an argumentative essay, regarding presence of visuals. The answers of the L1 group are more homogeneous than the answers of the L2 group. Within the L2 group, Korean and Chinese students responded very similarly; however, Korean students gave more unanimous answers regarding clarity and logical organization of argumentative essays. Surprising findings about the reasons for the difficulties L2 students face when composing in English will be presented. Future implications for designing questionnaires and developing writing strategies to help students overcome problems when composing in English will be discussed.

**Shigetake Ushigusa** [[sushigu1@purdue.edu](mailto:sushigu1@purdue.edu)], “International Service-Learning of Foreign Languages via the Internet”

*Time: 1:45 – 2:10*

Service-learning is a pedagogy that is well-known for its outcomes that are considered optimum by many teachers in various academic disciplines. However, service-learning does not appear to have been discussed as frequently in the field of computer-assisted language learning. This presentation shows an example in which Internet-technology can be useful for connecting foreign or second language learners from different countries for the purpose of enhancing their foreign language learning in a meaningful real-world context. Service-learning links learning objectives and community needs in such a way that learners gain a better understanding of the academic subject and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Service-learning requires collaboration between a learner and his/her community partner.

This presentation will explore how a native speaker of Japanese and a native speaker of English can reciprocally learn each other’s native language. Specifically, the Japanese learner of English is asked to create, with the help of his/her American partner, a brief visitors’ guide in English for his/her hometown, which may be used to help international visitors to the town in the future. Likewise, the American learner of Japanese creates his/her visitors’ guide for his/her hometown in a reversed manner.

Learning activities associated with the three components of the instructional design will be demonstrated with the use of videotaped images from the study. Blackboard Vista (a course management system) is used as the homepage for their service-learning activities. Adobe Acrobat Connect (a multipoint web-conference tool) is used for synchronous communication between the learners. Wiki (a collection of web-pages to modify contents collectively) is used for their asynchronous collaboration in which one learner writes highlights of his/her town so that his/her learning partner can edit them later.

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**Veronica Jayne** [[vjayne@purdue.edu](mailto:vjayne@purdue.edu)], “Making a Book with Elementary School Writers: Process, product and problems”

*Time: 2:10 – 2:35*

Last year, I was asked to create a four week writing course for a group of sixth graders in Korea. Unfortunately, our workbook would not last four weeks, so I decided to incorporate a new project: writing a book. Over the course of this demonstration, I would like to describe the process I took while preparing this project, the practical and ethical issues I encountered in implementing the project, and the outcomes. For this project, students took photos of themselves, wrote short essays and formatted their books using Power Point. They also presented their books in front of other teachers and administration at a book reading.

**Nai-Hua Kuo** [[nkuo@purdue.edu](mailto:nkuo@purdue.edu)], “Preparing Teachers for a Culturally Diverse Population with the Use of Multicultural Literature”

*Time: 2:35 – 3:00*

Preparing teachers for the services of culturally and linguistically diverse students is a popular issue in teacher education. However, the contributions of multicultural literature and the criteria in selecting good multicultural literature do not receive the attention they deserve. In this research, recommendations for selecting quality multicultural literature are introduced to enrich teachers’ knowledge of constructing a multicultural curriculum. Incorporating multicultural literature in the curriculum compensates for the limited life experiences of children and youngsters. Through reading multicultural literature, students are informed about values and experiences of the dominant and underrepresented cultures, and are being empowered to develop sensitivity to social inequalities and foster acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity (Cai, 2002). Multicultural literature enables students to gain awareness of cultural values, beliefs, and identities of self and others.

A crucial responsibility teachers have is to choose suitable multicultural literature for use in their classroom. With a set of guidelines, teachers should no longer find selecting quality multicultural literature an overwhelming task. Good multicultural literature should: 1) Have an authoritative author. The author and/or illustrator should be a member of the ethnic group or have knowledge and experience that allows for credibility. 2) Have a culturally pluralistic theme. 3) Have a good plot and characterization. 4) Have positive and accurate portrayals, accurate illustrations, and historical/geographical accuracy. Characters from diverse backgrounds should be seen as empowered people and not be stereotyped. Cultural features and icons should be truthfully portrayed in texts and illustrations. 5) Be historically and geographically correct.

Multicultural literature should not only appear during “multicultural weeks or months”. Teachers with better knowledge of the selection of multicultural literature will have more confidence to integrate literature that broadens the views of native English speakers and that appreciates the cultural backgrounds of the ESL students.

**Lixia Cheng** [[clixia@purdue.edu](mailto:clixia@purdue.edu)] & **Nancy Kauper** [[kauper@purdue.edu](mailto:kauper@purdue.edu)], “Self-assessment for Teaching and Learning Classroom Presentation Skills”

*Time: 3:15 – 3:40*

Traditionally considered an important component of self-learning, self-assessment can also complement and enhance classroom instruction. In this study, a self-assessment instrument was developed for teaching and evaluating classroom presentations in the ITA (International Teaching Assistants) training class at Purdue University. In order to clarify for the ITA students what kind of performance characteristics are valued by the ITA program and its instructors, the researchers created a self-assessment instrument based on a similar instrument developed by Keith Otto at University at Buffalo.

The self-assessment instrument described in this present paper is composed of a rubric, a “Core Language Skills” grid, and items in which students are asked to write comments about their performance and preparation, and to transcribe parts of their presentation. Students use the rubric and a four-point scale to assess their presentation performance in areas such as “comprehension checks” and “eye contact”. The “Core Language Skills” grid asks students to assess their performance in terms of intelligibility, vocabulary, grammar, and core interactive skills. The transcription section includes tasks such as transcribing exactly what the student said about their English in their presentation simulation of “The first day of class”. This self-assessment instrument was piloted with all three sections of the ITA class in summer 2008, and positive feedback was received from the three instructors. It was then used in all ten sections of the ITA class in fall 2008. At the end of that semester, students were surveyed on their practices and attitudes about the self-assessment instrument. A large percentage of the 78 students surveyed agreed that the self-assessment guidelines were helpful, and indicated that they had used the guidelines to prepare for their presentations.

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**Cristine McMartin-Miller** [[cmcmarti@purdue.edu](mailto:cmcmarti@purdue.edu)], “ESL in ECE: The Purdue School of Electrical and Computer Engineering Writing Sample”

*Time: 3:40 – 4:05*

Although mass-produced, standardized tests are still the norm for large-scale writing assessments, many composition scholars have called for measures that are locally constructed, context-specific and site-based. In this presentation, I will provide a case study of one such writing test, Purdue University’s School of Electrical and Computer Engineering undergraduate writing sample. Following a description of the test’s context, I will supply an historical account of its creation and an in-depth description of the test, including its prompt, its administration, how it is scored, and how its results are used. Because nearly all of the students who fail this test are students who speak English as a second language, I will also discuss possible implications for first-year composition for international students at Purdue. Finally, I will

address this test's alignment with current theories of writing assessment and how this may influence future directions.

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**April Burke** [[amburke@purdue.edu](mailto:amburke@purdue.edu)], "The Impact of the ISTEP+ on a School Corporation with a Large ELL Population"

*Time: 4:05 – 4:30*

English language learners (ELLs) consistently receive lower scores than non-ELLs on the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+). For example, only 52% of ELLs passed the Language/arts section of the 2007-2008 ISTEP+ compared with 78% of the non-ELLs who passed the exam. The performance of a school's ELL population can determine whether or not the school is deemed "failing" and placed on "improvement status." Despite the fact that many schools face these possible consequences, few studies have focused on the ramifications of using the ISTEP+ in schools with large ELL populations. In response to this deficit, this study investigates the impact of the ISTEP+ on a school corporation in which ELLs make up over 26% of the student population. Through interviews with teachers and administrators, this study provides their perspective on the impact of the ISTEP+ on their school's programming, funding, classroom instruction, staff, and ELL students.

**Elena Lawrick** [[elawrick@purdue.edu](mailto:elawrick@purdue.edu)], “English curricula reform as a result of Russia’s participation in the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”

*Time: 4:45 – 5:10*

Educational language policy shows how a country prioritizes its national interests. Recently, mastering English has been declared to be a national priority in Russia. This new, legislatively established, sociolinguistic reality of English has opened new avenues to the presence of English in Russia, and has brought English curricula to the core of the bigger reform of Russian education system.

This paper attempts to show how larger politico-economic factors and national interests have caused the on-going reform of English curricula on every level of education in the Russian Federation. The presentation outlines the current English curricula innovations and situates them within the context of educational reform, decrees and laws which shape educational language planning in Russia, and the multilateral agreements among the countries that signed the Bologna Process - hoping to demonstrate how political and national interests of Russia assure a green light to English in education.

The presenter takes a historical approach and briefly covers (1) the history and core areas of the Bologna Process (i.e. EHEA) and (2) the on-going reform of the Russian education system in order to contextualize the current system of English curricula innovations, on which she puts the major focus of her talk.

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**Harris Bras** [[hbras@purdue.edu](mailto:hbras@purdue.edu)], “What do NNS in the EC want from NS EFL teachers? An examination of job advertisements in East Asia”

*Time: 5:10 – 5:35*

The shifting definitions and relationship between the categories of “Native speaker” and “Non-native Speaker” in Inner Circle ESL contexts have received growing attention in recent years. Less explored has been the relationship between NSs and NNSs in EFL contexts in the Expanding Circle such as Korea and Japan. In Korea and Japan the administration of most language programs and the power to hire, fire, or change curricula lies almost exclusively with NNS of English. There are many legitimate reasons for this, and given that a surplus of willing NNS teachers of English are usually available in both of these countries it is worth asking why NS are imported at all—often at considerable expense. At present hundreds of NSs from Inner Circle countries continue to be hired and imported, but the hiring decisions made by NNSs in these contexts often seem capricious and arbitrary to outsiders.

This study represents a preliminary exploration of what NNSs in East Asia hope to gain from NS teachers by reviewing the literature and examining postings for EFL positions in large national programs such as JET and EPIK. Understanding what program administrators in these contexts want from NS instructors has implications for both teacher preparation and pedagogy, and it give us a glimpse of the role the English language might play in this region in the coming decades.