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The International Baccalaureate and Ways of Knowing

By William Howell

One benefit of an international education through the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is their Theory of Knowledge (TOK) (Woolman, 2000), which requires high school students to think critically about what it means to know something, and to be able to express this insight in discussions and essays. The IB program states that there are eight ways through which we acquire knowledge (Ways of Knowing): emotion, faith, imagination, intuition, language, memory, reason, and sense perception. To better understand the IB's Ways of Knowing (WOK), I wrote the following essay focusing on reason and perception to describe differing cultural perspectives of two, common occurrences in Tokyo – taking crowded trains and waiting in long lines. The title of the essay is not my own; it is a reoccurring one that came out of the Rubber-Hand Illusion experiment of 1999 (The rubber hand, 2010). Many TOK teachers have used this as a prompt for Ways of Knowing essays.

One way we see and understand the world is through our perceptions: memories, past experiences, language and culture. People engaged in seemingly the same experience define that experience in accordance with their perceptions. These different ways of knowing from which people make sense of the world, vary from person to person making it impossible to claim that there is any one way of seeing or understanding something.

A Holocaust survivor, for example, would most likely have a very different perception of taking a crowded train in Tokyo than a Japanese businessman on his commute to work. The experience of being crammed into a rush-hour train could lead to extreme anxiety, and possibly even panic attacks for some in such a claustrophobic environment. The Japanese businessman perceives riding a crowded commuter train as something that cannot be helped: something to be endured in order to maintain, or improve, his quality of life. They are both on the same crowded train heading into the city, but their perceptions of what defines that experience are different.

Anxiety setting in, the elderly survivor begins to employ deductive reasoning. "I am on a crowded train in Tokyo." "Tokyo is in Japan and therefore not in Europe." "My fear was in Europe in the past not in Japan – therefore, my fears, while real, are unwarranted." This reasoning is enough to get her to the next station where she exits the train. Reflecting on the experience she tries to rationalize her fear, but it doesn't diminish her anxiety. She believes with all her heart

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Hawai'i Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, the local affiliate of TESOL, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.



We see and understand things not as they are but as we are.



The International Baccalaureate . . . (continued)

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that there is something very wrong with having so many people packed into such a small space. Her belief in the wrongness of the experience has made her decide to find another way to get to town in the future. The businessman, on the other hand, sees the same experience differently.

He makes a transfer at the station and races to board his connecting train. It is an express and is extremely crowded. If he takes the local train he might be able to sit, but getting to work early would put him in good standing with his boss. He reaches the train just as the doors are closing. He lowers his shoulder and forces himself into the car with the help of the white-gloved station attendants – firmly pushing him from behind. Tightly wedged in, he gazes out at the crowd of passengers heading toward the escalators as the train pulls away from the station. He feels very lucky to have been able to squeeze into the crowded express and hopes his good fortune will continue.

The following weekend the businessman takes a trip to the countryside with his family. He has enjoyed his time in the mountains and is looking forward to taking a long, hot bath at the local hot spring, or *onsen*, before returning to the city. As he enters the bath he is surprised to see that the line to the wash area is very long. He mutters to himself, “*Sho ga nai.*” – it can’t be helped. He is waiting patiently in line when a Westerner slides open the doors to the bath and releases a long sigh of disbelief. He shakes his head, rolls his eyes back, and mumbles to himself. He is clearly disappointed. Forty-five minutes later, it is the businessman’s turn to wash. He has been waiting for this moment for a while and plans to enjoy the

experience. He washes himself thoroughly once, rinses off, and then repeats the process before climbing into the hot bath.

The Westerner cannot believe the long wait. He has been on his feet for the past eight hours and wants to clean up before catching the train back to town, but the line in front of him is not moving. The men in front of him are taking very long to wash. “How inconsiderate,” he thinks to himself. “They can see the long line of people still waiting, but they don’t seem to care.” The businessman knows that there is



nothing that can be done but get in line, be patient, and try to enjoy the experience. The Westerner, coming from a place where there are few long lines is frustrated. But what really frustrates him is not so much the long line, but what he perceives as a lack of consideration for those still waiting in line to wash.

The businessman and the Westerner are empathetic with the other bathers, in accordance with their own cultural perceptions of the situation. While in the West one might try to hurry through the washing process out of empathy for those still in line, the Japanese allow the bather to wash longer out of empathy for him having had to endure the long wait in line. This

essential difference helps the businessman enjoy the complete bath experience, while limiting the Westerner’s enjoyment to his time spent soaking in the *onsen*.

We see and understand things not as they are, but as we are. People use their perceptions of reality based on memories, experiences, language, and culture to make sense out of the world. These perceptions differ from person to person and are heavily influenced by culture, making it impossible to claim that there is any one way of seeing or understanding the world.

While the Theory of Knowledge claims that there are eight Ways of Knowing, this essay focused on just two - perception and reason, as they seemed most relevant in understanding and describing two, very common situations encountered while living in Tokyo, riding in crowded trains and waiting in long lines. While the WOK exercise is essentially a written one, there is no need to

restrict the exploration of the different ways of acquiring knowledge to writing tasks.

While teaching ESL at the University of Hawai‘i, Hilo, I focused more on having the students discuss how they perceived the world differently through culture and as individuals, and the role language played in their understanding of the world. This led nicely to deeper conversations about the individual communities from which the students come, which of the eight ways of knowing accounted for the largest part of their knowledge base, and words and expressions unique to the students’ mother tongues used to describe certain situations. For your

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The International Baccalaureate . . . (continued)

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advanced students, challenge them with the essay task, making sure to first thoroughly explore the different ways in which we acquire knowledge, on which way(s) their culture places the most value, and finally, how, they as individuals with their unique experiences, understand the world around them.

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OBE's Constructive Alignment in Course Plan Design:

A Case in Point

By Alejandro S. Bernardo

The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework has caught the attention practically of everyone especially the key players in the teaching and learning process. In the Philippines, a couple of years ago, the education sector swung the pendulum from one side to the other, from content-based and competency-based instruction to outcome-based learning. This is a state-prescribed educational reform etched in official circulars and memoranda particularly of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

William Spady seems to be the most popular figure as far as OBE is concerned. Spady (1994) argued that OBE has the following fundamental principles:

Clarity of Focus: Every activity or task is geared towards what the learners should be able to demonstrate

Expanded Opportunity: Inflating the

ways and the number of times the learners get a chance to learn and demonstrate a certain outcome

High Expectations: Veering away from the bell-curve and aiming for all students to achieve the maximum level

Design Down: Designing the curriculum from the point at which the learners desire to end up.

Put more succinctly, OBE is a pedagogical philosophy that focuses on what should be mastered, internalized, and demonstrated, a.k.a. outcomes which are manifested as observable and measurable behavior.

In the university where I presently teach, the OBE paradigm has permeated every single academic unit or department. The Department of English, for instance, staged countless seminar-workshops to introduce the teachers to and familiarize them with the fundamental underpinnings of the

OBE framework and how all these may be put to practical use.

Turning both the undergraduate and graduate English curricula from the content-based and competency-based look into its OBE form started with a revisit of the institutional intended learning outcomes and constructively aligning them with program and course intended learning outcomes. Shuell (1986, p 429) eloquently puts it:

If students are to learn desired outcomes in a reasonably effective manner, then the teacher's fundamental task is to get students to engage in learning activities that are likely to result in their achieving those outcomes... It is helpful to remember that what the student does is actually more important in determining what is learned than what the teacher does.

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OBE's Constructive Alignment . . . (continued)

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Constructive alignment is the usual route to take in making the curricula OBE compliant after convincing all members of the community that OBE-izing the curricula is the new ballgame as far as curricular and pedagogical renewal is concerned. It refers to the coherence between assessment tasks, teaching and learning activities and intended learning outcomes in an

educational program (Mcmahon, & Thakore, 2006).

Below I shall present the product of my attempt to OBE-dize the undergraduate and graduate courses I teach, Language Research 2 and Varieties of English, respectively. The presentation, however, is limited to the constructive alignment of the Institutional Intended Learning Outcomes (IILO), Program Intended

Learning Outcomes (PILO) and Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILO). Only one illustrative case culled from each course plan is presented to mirror how the constructive alignment informs the identification of the elements of the teaching and learning process (e.g., teaching and learning activities (TLAs) and assessment tasks (ATs)).

Language Research 1: Intended Learning Outcomes, Program Intended Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes

Department of English Intended Learning Outcomes	Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILO)	Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILO)
It is expected that the learners will be able to manifest the following:	It is expected that an English Language Studies (ELS) learner will be able to carry out the following:	At the end of the course Language Research 2, the learner is expected to do the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to apply critical thinking skills in various situations the ability to utilize and transfer their language knowledge and skills across a wide range of personal, academic, professional, and global contexts the ability to effectively communicate about a diverse range of topics in English academic and professional preparation, knowledge, and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> progressive demonstration of critical reasoning skills identification of English language and communication issues relevant to human beings and society appropriate application of language knowledge and skills in achieving personal, academic, and professional goals, especially in the global arena critical engagement in written and spoken discourses using English as the primary medium manifestation of appropriate academic and professional knowledge and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compose and revise drafts to achieve clear and direct prose style, and employ standard editing practices for self- and peer-reviews produce a concise and an unabridged versions of thesis apt for their field, specific audience and purpose communicate thesis research in an oral presentation become conversant with research topics, ways of framing arguments, and making points beyond their fields of study, which will help them frame a more interdisciplinary standpoint

Language Research 2: Intended Learning Outcomes, Content, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks

Intended Learning Outcomes	Content	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide how to collect data that will help in answering research questions Demonstrate the ability to design appropriate data gathering instruments content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire Design Conducting Interviews Corpus Generation Other Data Gathering Mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal Article Critique Paired Reading Model Analysis Triadic Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing Data Gathering Tools or Instruments for Students' Individual Papers

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OBE's Constructive Alignment . . . (continued)

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Varieties of English: Intended Learning Outcomes, Program Intended Learning Outcomes and Course Learning Outcomes

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)					
	Institutional (IILOs)		Program (PILOs)		Course (CILOs)
M I S S I O N	Graduate Attributes The graduate is expected to be a:	▶	When you successfully complete Master of Arts in English Language Studies, you will be able to demonstrate:	▶	When you successfully complete Varieties of English, you will be able to demonstrate:
	Competent Professional who, inspired by the ideals of St. Antoninus of Florence, promotes excellence in the production, advancement, and transmission of specialized knowledge and skills in the sciences, the arts, and community services.	▶	knowledge and understanding of established theories, principles, designs, models, and practices in English language studies.	▶	functional knowledge and profound understanding of the sociolinguistic context against which the birth of the different varieties of English is set
C O M P E T E N C E	Scholarly Researcher and Critical Thinker who, kindled by St. Thomas Aquinas' ardor for truth, aspires to become fonts of intellectual creativity and, in his quest for quality research, is proficient and critical in assessing and communicating information in various fields that impact the professions, the church, the nation, and the global community.	▶	knowledge and understanding of critical inquiry skills and creative approaches in conducting research in English language studies.	▶	improved ability and heightened interest in conducting researches that look into the birth, growth, and future of Englishes and the plethora of contentious issues brought about by their continuous use and irrefutable existence
	Professional Christian Leader who, touched by St. Dominic de Guzman Apostolic' fire and warmed by Mary's motherly care, articulates ethics and truth high level of maturity in resolving issues and promoting social justice and compassion for the poor, and care for the environment.	▶	the ability to lead and work independently and collaboratively in exercising ethical actions and in resolving sociocultural and sociolinguistic issues.	▶	keenness in assuming classroom-based and extramural scholarly tasks that allow you to further whet your academic and leadership skills
C O M P A S S I O N	Globally Engaged Citizen who, with ardent advocacy for life, promotes a deeper understanding of tolerance and justice as well as linguistic, religious, and cultural diversities as a result of precise evaluation of modern problems and inquiries.	▶	the ability to promote and raise global awareness and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversities.	▶	willingness to work collaboratively or singly in promoting advocacies aimed at celebrating World Englishes in local or international venues.

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OBE's Constructive Alignment . . . (continued)

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C O M M I T M E N T	<p>Committed Scholar who, nurtured by the dogmas of the Christian faith and values, is dedicated to pursuit of truth through the promotion of an intellectual culture that values academic rigor and freedom of scientific investigation.</p>	▶	<p>knowledge and understanding of concepts in English language studies and the application of such knowledge to issues in the said field.</p>	▶	<p>sustained interest in conducting scholarly investigations of the fertile and unexplored research areas specifically in the field of World Englishes.</p>
	<p>Lifelong Learner who, empowered by St. Antoninus of Florence's zeal for learning, is committed to the advancement of a higher culture through a continuous search of intellectual inquiries and new knowledge as well as faithfulness to Catholic intellectual traditions.</p>	▶	<p>interest in advancing one's and others' appreciation of concepts in English language studies and in advocating continuous search for new knowledge in the discipline.</p>	▶	<p>steadfast commitment to knowledge generation through critical inquiries, research, and publication.</p>

Varieties of English: Intended Learning Outcomes, Content, Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Tasks

<i>Intended Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Teaching and Learning Activities</i>	<i>Assessment Tasks</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze linguistic features (phonology, morpho-syntax, discourse) of a specific variety of English and compare them with another established variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-colonial Englishes Standards and Standardization Inner, Outer and Expanding Circle Varieties The Lesser-known Varieties of English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive Lecture Individual Report Dyadic Discussions Assigned Readings Minute Papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write critiques displaying reactions to research on the developing varieties of English around the world

As shown above, constructive alignment is a process that is inescapably followed when an OBE course plan is drafted. Language teachers should always keep in mind that in OBE, the aim is to build a learning environment that upholds learning activities appropriate and commensurate to realizing the desired learning outcomes. Every OBE course plan should etch what learners should be able to do and demonstrate and how they would construct meaning via appropriate teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks.

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Adapting Popular Songs into Short Films

By Steven Asquith, Erin Frazier and Daniel Worden

When provided a choice of topics from which to study, music is always a popular selection with learners. This however can be problematic for educators who are faced with designing music units that engage learners in using a wide range of skills and promoting learner autonomy. In particular, music activities that encourage creative learner production are not commonly utilized. This article seeks to provide a solution to this dilemma by introducing a simple step-by-step guide to one such creative music project.

In this music project learners are tasked with choosing the lyrics of a popular song, which they can then adapt into a script for a short narrative story. These narratives are transformed by the students from simple scripts into short films, which are then edited together with the original songs to produce highly entertaining iMovies. The project requires learners to utilize problem solving, discussion, and self-analytic skills, while also learning about language chunks and improving their digital literacies. As learners are largely autonomous in this project, with the

teacher taking primarily an advising role, students are able to apply their English skills to the goal of producing a high quality and entertaining short film. These movies are then shown to the students' peers, which not only bolsters confidence but also reinforces this learner autonomy. Those educators interested in utilizing or adapting this project for their own pedagogic needs might consider the following steps.

Preparation

In the institution in question, students are required to have an iPad, and this means that all the necessary apps can be easily downloaded. It would be possible however to adapt the basic design of the project to an environment with less technological resources. Before starting, students should download iMovie, Soundboard and Sounds Right as these apps are used by the students to produce the final project and analyze their speaking skills. As part of the authors' institution's broader syllabus, students learn how to problem solve in groups, have discussions, and analyze spoken production. Students are also taught

how to look for lexical chunks to improve their English production. As the project builds on and reinforces these skills it is preferable for students to have some knowledge of these before starting the project.

Step 1. Song Selection

The first task for students is to choose an appropriate song to adapt. Students in groups of three or four are given the homework of finding a popular song with lyrics that can be easily adapted into a narrative. Each student needs to show the other group members the song and then explain their ideas for changing it into a story. As a group the students then discuss the merits and difficulties of each idea and decide upon the song which they think will make the most entertaining movie.

Step 2. Script Writing

Once students have decided upon a song, they must then write a script which weaves the lyrics of the song with a narrative they have constructed. This is most effective if it is episodic so that each verse corresponds with a

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Original Lyrics: <i>See you again</i>	Adapted Lyrics: <i>Videophone conversation</i>	
It's been a long day without you, my friend And I'll tell you all about it when I see you again We've come a long way from where we began Oh, I'll tell you all about it when I see you again When I see you again	S.1 S.2 S.1 S.2 S.1 S.2 S.1 S.2 S.1	Hi, it's been a long day without you, Brad I miss you so much! I miss you, too and I'll tell you all about it when I see you again. I always love talking to you. We've come a long way from where we began I'm burning up to see you. Oh, I'll tell you all about it when I see you again. I'm all about you, Brad. I love you, Angelina, ok, well until when I see you again.
iMovie Plot Synopsis Brad is at the center of a love triangle with Angelina and Jane. When he calls his true love Angelina to arrange a meeting, jealous Jane discovers their conversation and exacts a terrible, murderous revenge. In a poignant scene Brad weeps at Angelina's grave, while the cruel Jane laughs in the background.		
<i>See you again (Feat. Charlie Puth) [From Furious 7] by Wiz Khalifa.</i>		

Adapting Popular Songs . . . (continued)

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scene in the movie. This then allows the movie to be designed so that a section of the original song is played followed by a corresponding scene.

Music Video Part 1→Roleplay Part 1→ Music Video Part 2→Roleplay Part 2

Once learners have written a draft of this script, they then work as a group and with the teacher to improve its fluency and correct any errors. An example of the type of script produced by the learners is shown alongside the original song lyrics and a brief plot synopsis below.

Step 3. Audio Recording and Analyzing

Once the script is completed, learners should record an audio version of the dialogue to be analyzed. This can be done effectively by using Soundboard which allows learners to record short sections of audio which can be easily compared. As a group, students are able to analyze how better linking, elision, and pronunciation, and which different intonation and stress patterns, most improve the fluency of the dialogue. Once they have an audio recording they feel is acceptable, they can then begin filming the movie.

Step 4. Filming

The application iMovie on the iPad is a really simple and intuitive tool to which learners quickly become accustomed. It is necessary to give some basic instruction on how to add video, images and audio files, and also, how to record and overlay sound, but once this is outlined students soon become captivated by the creative process of producing their movie scenes.

Step 5. Presentation and reflection

Once learners are happy with the completed movies, it is time to present them to their peers. This is most effective if the teacher is able to




collaborate with other classes and then watch all the movies together as a grand premier. Before each movie, students briefly introduce themselves and their production. Presenting the movies to peers like this, not only serves to motivate the students when making the movies, but also more importantly, reinforces what they have achieved by employing the skills that they learned. This is further reinforced by drawing attention to how students produced the movies through focused reflective writing.

Conclusion

The most valuable result of this project, as felt by all three authors, was that it allowed learners to demonstrate their creative language skills by making an actual piece of media seen by their peers. This significantly boosted both learner confidence, and, most notably, learner autonomy. In subsequent classes, where learners had previously looked for instruction, they were more readily able to make decisions by themselves. This appeared to be a turning point in their language acquisition journey. We would like to encourage any educator who wishes to use songs in a creative way to try this fun and creative music project.

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	Sounds Right IPA, Linguistic awareness
	Soundboard voice recording and self-analysis
	iMovie video recording and editing

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Phonetics: The Sounds of American English

By Tetsuko Fukawa

The Sounds of American English is a useful online tool that both teachers and students can utilize to improve their English pronunciation. As the title suggests, the website's contents consist of American English phonemes. This website comes in handy especially for those who are teaching English pronunciation in an EFL setting where students do not get a sufficient amount of language input outside of their classrooms. The main functions of *The Sounds of American English* are to (1) illustrate how phonemes are produced, and (2) provide audio files to model the target phoneme sound as well as the phoneme used in words. In addition, users can follow step-by-step written instructions to produce each sound in case they have difficulty mimicking the sound only by seeing how the sound is produced on the computer screen. In other words, even students with different learning styles (e.g., auditory, visual learners, etc.) may find the website useful. Furthermore, the step-by-step approach helps learners better find difficulties in producing a target sound, and eventually overcome the weakness by repeatedly practicing the specific step(s) they find challenging.

Since this website is quite self-explanatory in nature, teachers can

incorporate it in class in many different ways depending on their pronunciation focus in a specific activity/class/course. The phonemes are categorized and each category is color-coded. The two main categories are consonants and vowels. Within the consonants categories, there are three subcategories: manner (i.e., manner of articulation), place (i.e., place of articulation), and voice (e.g., voiced or voiceless). The vowels category is broken down further into two subcategories: monophthongs and diphthongs.

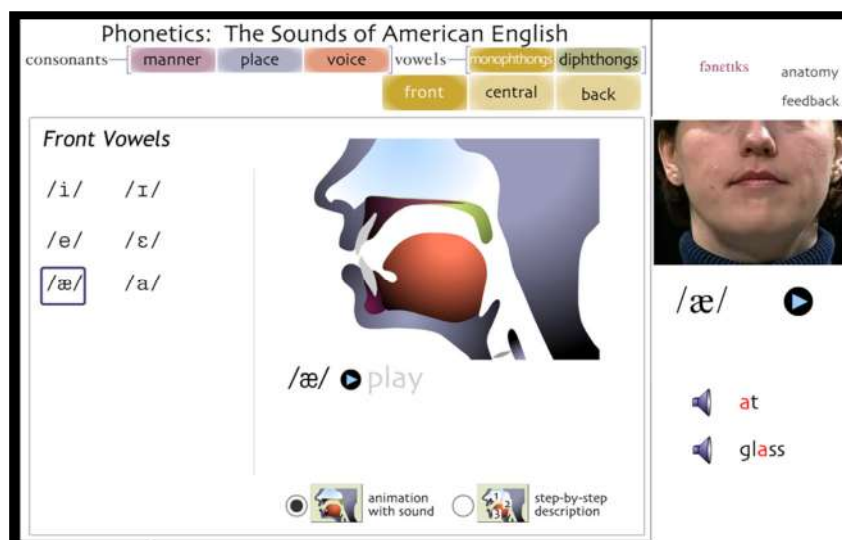
When using this website, there are a few things that needs to be kept in mind. Firstly and most importantly, the website is only accessible from computers. There is the corresponding app for Android and iPads/iPhones called "Sounds of Speech" and is currently sold for \$3.99 on the App Store. In addition, to browse the contents properly on a computer, your computer has to have Flash Player, and you must allow pop-ups. As for browser choices, older Internet Explorer does not show all the contents, so it must be updated to the newer version. I find it easier to simply view it on Google Chrome or Safari.

I find this website useful especially when I teach /r/ and /l/ sounds to my Japanese students because they can understand how they should move their tongues and lips in order to produce those sounds that are considered difficult for Japanese learners. In my class, I also encourage students to bring and use a mirror or a smartphone or tablet with a rear-facing camera to compare the model to their own way of sound production. With this website, you can teach American English pronunciation effectively and efficiently.

Lastly, it is important to note that when you try to show the contents of the app "Sounds of Speech" using a projector, depending on how the projector is connected to your device, you may not be able to show the contents. It may be due to copyright or simply because it is a paid-app. If you need to show the contents in class, I recommend that you use the web version.

References

The sounds of American English.
Retrieved from <http://soundssofspeech.uiowa.edu/english/english.html>



About the Author: Tetsuko Fukawa is a lecturer at Kanda University of International Studies in Japan. She holds an MA in TESOL and is interested in motivation and sociolinguistics.

Image retrieved from <http://soundssofspeech.uiowa.edu/english/english.html>

Assessing Grammar Communicatively: From Theory to Practice

By Justin Pannell and Romina Castagno

Given that grammar tests are often associated with indirect, discrete-point assessments, how do we assess grammatical ability within a communicative approach? In particular, how do we elicit the target structures from a previous lesson communicatively? Using a recent assessment which we implemented as an example, we wish to propose that this goal is both feasible for teachers and profitable for students.

The widely-accepted models of communicative language teaching and assessment concur that linguistic competence is on par with other competencies as part of the multicomponential models of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Knowing that linguistic competence is a part of communicative competence, however, only invites the question of how to assess it communicatively.

In keeping with a communicative focus, it is crucial to first determine a

target language use (TLU) domain and task. Characterizing the relationship of a TLU task and a test task, Bachman and Palmer (1996) stated that

language use can be viewed as the performance of a set of interrelated language use tasks. A language test can be thought of as a procedure for eliciting instances of language use from which inferences can be made about an individual's language ability. It therefore follows that in order for such inferences to be made, a language test should consist of language use tasks. (p.45)

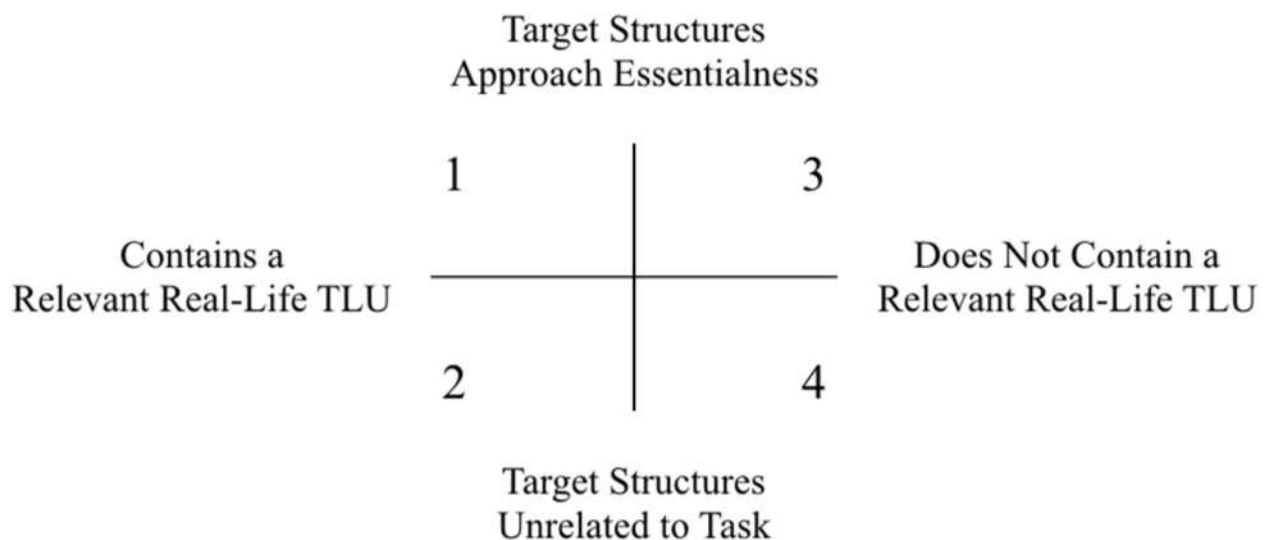
In determining a TLU domain and task, teachers should ideally perform a needs analysis, although teacher's discretion can go far if this is not feasible.

While Bachman and Palmer (1996) justify the basic use of TLU tasks as testing tasks, Purpura, Alderson, and Bachman (2004) recommend choosing

a TLU which is likely to elicit the target structures. Thus, we would like to propose two guiding principles, namely authenticity, in the sense of a TLU task which intersects with a test task, and essentialness, which is the necessity of the usage of a target structure to complete a task. These are best viewed as continuums rather than as a set of binary concepts. This can be seen in the diagram below, where our target is in quadrant 1.



(Continued on page 11)

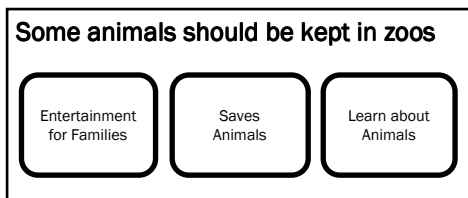


Assessing Grammar Communicatively. . . (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

Most teachers are likely familiar with quadrant 4, in the sense of poorly designed test items, and quadrant 3, both of which are composed of largely non-contextualized, discrete-point assessment items. In our language learning experiences and professional observations, however, we have found many assessments to fall within quadrant 2. In this case, students are given a TLU task relevant to their lives and are told to produce as many target structures as possible, even though the TLU task does not naturally elicit these structures. This assessment strategy ignores the relationship of target structures and the language functions for which we put them to use.

For our assessment instrument, we decided on the topic of animal rights and assigned subtopics within a debate. First, students received written instructions, a statement to defend, the name of their debate opponent, and mind maps with argument prompts. Second, we gave oral instructions, which included the debate structure and timing, an explanation of the mind maps, and an emphasis on avoiding the recitation of written statements. Third, students were given thirty minutes of group work with additional assistance from invigilators. Fourth, each student had roughly two minutes to support her view and forty-five seconds for a rebuttal.



Our motivations in structuring the debate this way were threefold. First, with respect to essentialness, we expected to elicit target structures such as, “Animals should not be kept in zoo (because) . . .”. Second, we chose a TLU task within a broadly academic domain to dovetail with the interests and

possible future activities of the students. Third, we wanted to introduce various forms of scaffolding to enable students to perform within their potential developmental level.

To our delight, the students far exceeded our expectations. Most students offered a number of sustained arguments and used various modal verbs. Though not perfect, we characterize the assessment as a success, which broaches the question of why it was successful.

We would like to cull three points of insight from our experience. First, after a statement of purpose, one of the most crucial considerations to weigh are the continuums of relevant real-life TLU tasks and essentialness. Choosing a TLU task with both characteristics will take imagination and careful thought. However, available resources can be of aid. For example, Van Ek and Trim’s (1991) listed verbal exchange patterns and language functions used in writing and speaking. Other authors, such as Biber (1989), provide typologies of texts according to their linguistic or functional differences. Though written and oral production are different, one might find and adapt ideas to the oral mode after examining those in the written mode.

The second insight we gleaned was that students can push beyond expectations with proper scaffolding. We believe that group work and the use of the mind maps as cultural artifacts and semiotic mediators, along with intervention from invigilators, allowed students to arrive at a situation definition aligned with the invigilators, that is, to share an intersubjectivity with us. Wertsch (1984) defined a situation definition as “the way in which a setting or context is represented—that is, defined—by those who are operating in that setting” (p.8). Our situation definition included action patterns that illuminate how to proceed with structuring an argument. This appraisal is related to the Vygotskian notion of Zone of Proximal Development

(Vygotsky, 1980). Following the sociocultural view of knowledge, external sources of knowledge become internalized and integrated into learners’ conceptual repertoires through social interaction. In this case, the supplied scaffolding allowed most test takers to talk to each other and organize information before and during their speech production. In short, the interactive scaffolding activities allowed students to act within their potential developmental level.

The third insight draws from our experience of accommodating an anxious student, who notified us that she would be unable to speak in front of others. Language learning is adversely affected when a learner’s anxiety level or negative feelings are too high, and a TLU task can be especially anxiety producing, as many students are unfamiliar with them as test tasks. Allowing the student to complete the task in a different room lowered the student’s affective filter (Krashen, 1985). We learned the importance of being sympathetic to learners who are not yet comfortable with the performance nature of a CLA approach and introducing ways to allow them to participate within terms which will enable them to embrace assessments as learning experiences.

Although this experience was only with one class, we hope that we can share the lessons we learned to help readers sympathetic to CLA, especially those assessing linguistic ability, enjoy and perhaps improve their assessments and to pass these benefits on to their students. Despite the heavy ethical responsibilities that we carry as developers of assessments, we found that developing and implementing them can be as invigorating and rewarding as teaching.

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Assessing Grammar Communicatively. . . (continued)

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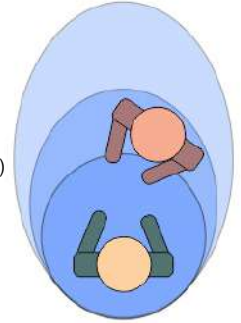
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Beyond current capacity
(future development)

Accomplish with help
(zone of next development)

Accomplish alone
(current development)



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Intuition vs. Science: Targeting Challenge in Language Classes

By Sara Davila

To be frank, I love everything to do with creating a syllabus and a curriculum: thinking about topics; trying to find ways to create content that will be relevant and engaging; planning through a course book; looking at a piece of paper that has my entire semester in order. It is absolutely one of the best times of the year. I truly enjoy the process so much that I started teaching and training others to create and develop programs until finally getting to the point where I could influence program development. As an educator, and one who informs others on content creation and development, I pose a frequent question that is consistently challenging but always useful to reflect on: Is this content challenging my learners?

The Theory

The theory here is very familiar to those of us working in language education. The most common shorthand is *i+1*, or *input plus challenge*, a reference to the work of Stephen Krashen (1981) and his theories and hypotheses on second language learning. The theory is one I have referenced constantly when analyzing a program as a consultant or developing my own programs for a semester. While the approach makes sense—learning only happens when learners are challenged—how do we consistently define challenge in a course? Is it possible to see that challenge from day to day as I build lessons over a semester? I have ultimately found that the challenge is something that comes

from either teacher intuition, experience, or materials I use in the classroom.

And how disappointing it is when you come to class prepared to teach, only to find out that the content not only lacks challenge but also downright bores students? Worse, the other side of the coin, when content is so challenging that everyone leaves frustrated and disheartened with the day's experience. Very little has changed in language education to improve on this situation over the years.

The Science: Stage 1

The introduction of the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2001) or CEFR (pronounced SEE-fur) has certainly

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Intuition vs. Science. . . (continued)

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provided a bit of help. The six levels, each aligned to descriptors of performance, provide a somewhat sensible rubric that can be used to assess if content decisions reflect what learners can do. Yet the CEFR does not provide complete clarity. As research on the CEFR levels has consistently pointed out over the last few years, there are two problems with using the CEFR for curricular alignment: 1) The descriptors in each level are not evenly distributed across either skill or ability; 2) The more you learn the more you need to learn in order to make measurable progress.

The result of this, for program development and curricular organization, is a lot of content that needs to be covered in A2 (novice mid/high), B1 (intermediate low/mid) and B2 (intermediate high/advanced low) levels. Additionally, the descriptors used within each level do not often provide clarity as to how the skill essentially advances. Which speaking act is the most difficult in low-

intermediate? Of the multiple descriptors listed in A2, what will challenge students the most? Information about this would surely help with thoughtful planning applying theoretical concepts like $i+1$. The challenge with the CEFR is lack of granularity, and it often falls to the program developers to try to figure out how to incorporate clarity in student learning outcomes and the more nitty-gritty learning objectives for daily lessons.

The Science: Stage 2

Over the past few years we have seen several advances in tools that explore the CEFR and are designed specifically to help understand level of difficulty within a CEFR level. One tool developed to align to the CEFR and provide more granular insight into learning is the Global Scale of English (GSE). I am fortunate to have been able to work on the development of this project and have seen the research behind the GSE firsthand. What makes this different from other CEFR-related

projects is that the research and the tools are freely available to the public to be used in whatever way is most suitable. Like the CEFR, the GSE is essentially a set of learning objectives that has been rated and evaluated by teachers in the field to understand level of difficulty and the complexity of the skill. By developing over 1,800 descriptors, the GSE accomplishes a task that has frustrated educators for years—creating short observable, comprehensive descriptors of performance around the communicative skills, grammar, and vocabulary.

And with this granular insight, we can move toward curricular planning and lesson development that actively surfaces challenge, informed by research rather than gut instinct, experience, or with reliance on classroom materials to be right. This means a lot less guesswork and a lot more potential to define progress and observe and report on student performance in the classroom.

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B1 Section A			B1 Section B		
Weeks	12		Weeks	12	
Hours	200	3 hours daily/ 5 days a week	Hours	200	3 hours daily/ 5 days a week
Starting	Ss must demonstrate ability between GSE 38-42 (A2+) to be enrolled.		Starting	Ss must demonstrate ability between GSE 47-52 (B1) to be enrolled.	
Ending	Ss must demonstrate ability between GSE 47-52 (B1-B1+) to level up.		Ending	Ss must demonstrate ability between GSE 55-59 (B1+-B2) to level up.	
Objectives	Speaking	5 (GSE 43-50) 3 (GSE 51-58) 2 (GSE 59-60)	Objectives	Speaking	5 (GSE 51-58) 3 (GSE 59-66) 2 (GSE 67-75)
	Listening	2 (GSE 43-50) 2 (GSE 51-58) 1 (GSE 59-60)		Listening	2 (GSE 51-58) 2 (GSE 59-66) 1 (GSE 67-75)
	Reading	8 (GSE 43-50) 4 (GSE 51-58) 3 (GSE 59-60)		Reading	8 (GSE 51-58) 4 (GSE 59-66) 3 (GSE 67-75)
	Writing	3 (GSE 51-58) 2 (GSE 59-60)		Writing	3 (GSE 51-58) 2 (GSE 59-66)

Figure 1: Course sections using GSE descriptors to show $i+1$ challenge

Intuition vs. Science. . . (continued)

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Let's say, for example, that I have recently created a course for B1-level students. B1 as a CEFR level is huge and requires at least 400 hours of study before a learner will see progress into B2. As a thoughtful educator, I will break this B1-level course into two parts: B1 (Section A) / B1 (Section B). Now I need to know what my goals are. I can use the GSE teacher toolkit to find speaking, listening, reading, and writing goals for the learners in the course. Since I plan to have two courses, I can think about the optimal range for enrollment and what I want students to be able to do when they finish the course. I'll need to think about the time I have, the number of weeks, and the usual number of things we take into consideration for planning.

It ends up looking something like this: In the sample courses above, I have designated that performance will be assessed against 35 descriptors of skills. Because these are more advanced courses, the focus for assessment will be on speaking, to improve self-expression and share

ideas, and reading, to build content knowledge and core vocabulary knowledge. Through speaking, reading, and writing, I can also address specific grammatical skills for refinement and improvement in overall fluency. With the GSE, I can see specifically where the i+1 challenge will manifest in the course. In B1 Section A, students must demonstrate A2+ and low B1-level ability. I know the B1 skills will be right about at the level of the students. The skills that are in B1+ and B2 range will be the "challenge" descriptors.

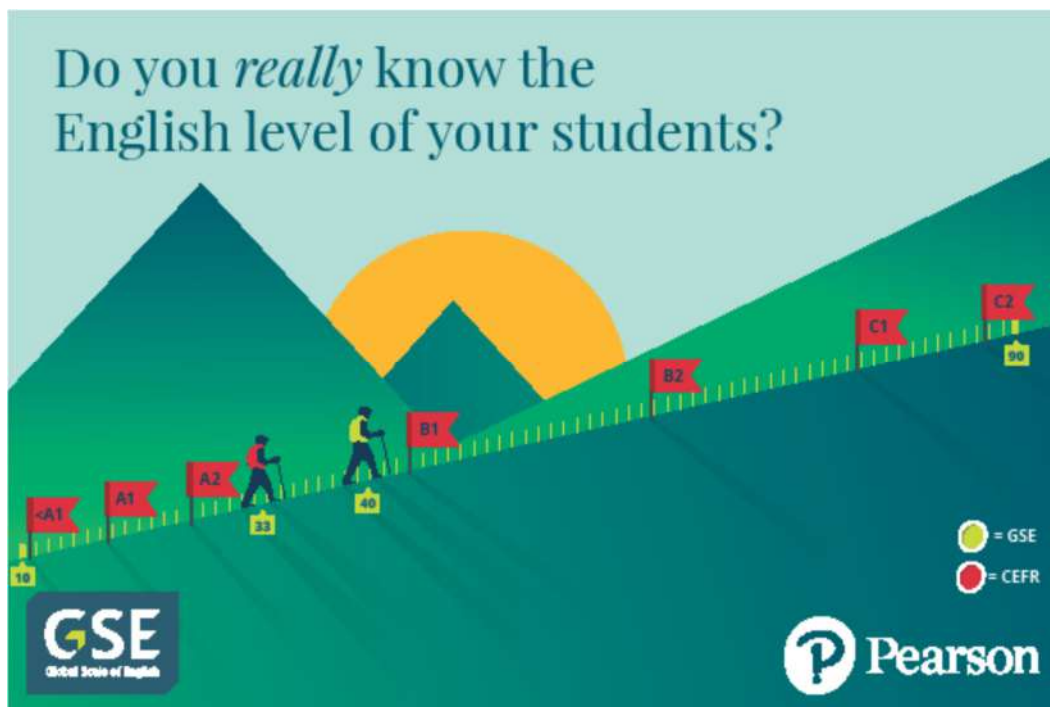
From here, it will be a matter of selecting descriptors that align to course outcomes, the core content of the course, and expectations from administrators and staff on what will be appropriate and achievable given the time frame of the course. The 35 descriptors will become the overall learning outcomes, allowing teachers to use the descriptors to plan day-to-day learning objectives. As we know the ranges we want to achieve and the specific objectives aligned to the GSE, teachers can use the toolkit to discover more information, related

grammar and vocabulary, and resources and activities that will help to build skills. With the tools available and the level of insight into difficulty, I can plan more appropriate challenges, think more carefully about my scaffolding, and even design quizzes and observation assessments that are in line with objectives and really show learning progress.

This practical resource allows me to match up some of the modern uses of research and data with theoretical approaches that can bolster student learning. And now when I ask myself "is this content challenging my learners?", my feelings and intuition are not the only tools I have to use to truly believe the answer is "yes."

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About the Author: Sara Davila is a teacher and educator who has spent more than a decade immersed in communicative language pedagogy and learner-centered teaching. She is currently informing the next generation of curriculum developers as a Learning Expert with Pearson English. Her personal contributions to the field can be found at saradavila.com.

The Academic CV for TESOL Professionals

By Richard Miller

Teaching professionals working in language, like those of all educational genres, should consider creating an Academic CV for themselves as a tool for professional development, a roadmap for future career development, and when opportunities arise, as an organizational tool of their careers in order to show prospective employers. A well written one can be an excellent reference for both keeping track of a career as well as future tailoring for specific jobs.

The term CV refers to the Latin 'Curriculum Vita', which generally means 'life work', and when 'Academic' is added, it should not include work that is outside of academia. The Academic Curriculum Vitae (ACV) is a long (sometimes over 20 pages) document that loosely resembles a shorter resume (with many recommending no more than 1 page (Martin, 2014)). As an educator's CV, there are several differences besides length for the ACV from the short resume (Vick, & Furlong, 2008). It should contain just the facts of all (and only) academic information, no adjectives and keep to two font sizes. Therefore, while the power resume often has rules that dictate the number of specifics that are to be followed tailored to different jobs, the ACV has no real set of specific criteria (Anthony, & Roe, 1998) and is a personal tool that may or may not be shared in whole or in part at some time in the future.

While there may not be specific rules, there are some guidelines to help organize the ACV. There are different sections that need covering, and these can be broken down into four areas (generally from most important to least): education, research, experience, and service (Miller, 2011a).

Education, the first section, is usually the most important, and it should be in reverse chronological

order, with the most recently attained degrees listed first. Within this area, you can also include your thesis topics and even advisors on your thesis. After the degrees, diplomas and certificates should also be listed in the same order.

The research section should include publications and presentations and research grants. An increasing number of institutions are looking for teaching staff with at least some type of publication record, specifically, many want at least three: so be sure to have yours listed in your CV. If it is really weak, then you can add 'abbreviated abstracts' to the publications list. You might also want to divide the list between academic and non-academic publications, including non-peer reviewed articles. Once your publication record has improved, have everything in APA style so that it is easily searchable. Following this is a list of the presentations that you have given at different conferences.

Articulate your teaching record in the third section with a complete list of courses taught. Listing all of the classes taught can seem daunting (at first), but if updated regularly it can be a real asset as all the courses are well organized and easily accessible. By doing so, this will make it easier to find classes that you have experience teaching and are easily qualified to teach. After all, if a certain class or course suddenly becomes available, it is much more powerful to tell the decision makers that you have had experience with a similar class at a specific time with a certain number of students.

The service section of the ACV is the area that explains the academic service that you have performed. Committees that you have been part of, editing that you have done, student chaperone, and curriculum development as a few examples. Here

you can also list different exam proctoring, speech contests and other academic activities. Many positions are looking for faculty who can assist with diverse areas and duties that might be required, and you will want to be able to efficiently find what you need. Professional affiliations that you belong to can also go at the end of this part: alumni associations and other professional organizations.

The academic CV is a living document that needs to be regularly updated and should be considered a central career-enhancing tool (Vick, & Furlong 2008; Miller, 2011). Review it and use it as a way to look at your overall career and where you stand. The term 'balanced scorecard' has been in use in business for several decades as a corporate oversight tool, but the philosophy can be mirrored here; view your career from the perspective of stepping back. Reflect on what the requirements for your dream job are by reviewing the employment ads and thinking of where you are lacking and areas for improvement (Miller, 2011b).

The areas that need further development need to be considered, such as research, and then start to find ways to improve these areas. If it is your publications list, you should be trying to learn all you can about how to publish and think about submitting to publications such as *The Word*. If it is other areas such as experience in service, consider getting involved more in your community (getting involved in conference organization is not only terrific committee experience, it is also invaluable networking).

While this professional history might seem to be very long compared to what you are used to, check other academic CVs that are posted online from State universities and college, and it is easy to see that 20 or more pages are not uncommon. As this is

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The Academic CV . . . (continued)

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your personal bio, you may never send the entire document with a job application. However, you can always consider adding it as an addendum. Notably, when you need to show diverse skills for different opportunities, this will help you get organized very quickly to specifically explain why you are well qualified for a particular position.

As Tom Peters has asked, "What have you done in the past 60 days for your CV? What are you going to do in the next 90 days?" (1999).

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Submission to *The Word*

Topics

I welcome any topic which would be of interest to HITESOL members or ESL professionals in Hawai'i. We are interested in, for example: recommended Internet sites (or a tech type column), book reviews, a grad student's perspective, field trips/learning outside the classroom, reports from members working overseas, content-based teaching ideas, using video and music in the classroom, online teaching, CALL, a "gripes" column, DOE news/concerns, K-12 news, neighbor island news, applying theory to practice, interview with someone in the field, blended learning, and other topics. This list is by no means exhaustive. Please feel free to send any article about these topics or others that you consider interesting to ESL educators in Hawai'i. (You do not have to be a member of HITESOL to submit an article).

Format & Style

Articles should be no more than 4 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point, attached as an

MS Word document. Accompanying photos or clip art are optional but welcome. Please also include a short biography statement about the author (email address optional). In general, articles are written in a fairly informal, non-scholarly style. Please refer to previous issues of *The Word* to get a sense of the types of articles which appear in the newsletter, or contact the editor with questions.

Submission Deadlines

You can send an article to me at any time and it will appear in the next up coming issue of *The Word*. Please note that the deadline for submissions will be posted on the web site regarding the up coming issue.

Please submit the articles via E-mail to Lisa Kawai at <lkawai@hpu.edu>.

I look forward to receiving your submissions.

Lisa Kawai
Editor of *The Word*

Keep up to date with
HITESOL online at
hawaiitesol.wildapricot.org



See you all in September
for the Fall Social
and the next issue of
The Word.