

# ESL Content Teachers Collaborative

School of Teaching and Learning

## Letter from the Director



Keiko K. Samimy  
Project Director

Dear ECTC Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that 2012 is the last year of the ECTC. As a group, we have been learning and growing tremendously through this experience. And we thank you for your active partnership with us. It has been truly a joy to see the transformation that you have gone through, from being content teachers to becoming content-plus-ESL teachers.

In the past five years, we have trained 140 teachers from 20 school districts in Ohio. We have made 14 presentations at 10 national and international conferences. And some of you were presenters with us! We just finished the first three chapters of a book proposal that was submitted to the University of Michigan Press and are now waiting for feedback from the editor. We hope that what we documented in the book will contribute toward increasing collaboration between ESL and content teachers, which will ultimately benefit ELL students.

We are happy to know that our efforts have been germinating in many ways, and we look forward to continuing our current partnership with this year's teachers throughout the spring and summer of 2012.

Keiko K. Samimy, Ph.D.  
Professor, Foreign and Second Language Education

## Contents

- Letter from the Director.....1
- Changes.....2
- News & Announcements.....4
- Share Fair.....5
- Book Review.....7

**Volume 5, Issue 1  
Winter 2012**

**T**his winter, the ECTC finds itself in a new year, with new possibilities for delivering professional development to in-service teachers throughout Ohio. New cohorts of teachers with English learners in their mainstream classes recently started their training in December, and although Dr. Newman is again teaching our online TESOL methods course, she is also currently providing instruction to English-language students herself in Ningbo, China!

Winter means, first and foremost, that the ECTC has welcomed new school districts and content-area teachers into our program. During Year 5, three districts—Akron Public Schools, Fairfield City Schools, and Sycamore Community Schools—approached

the ECTC for the first time, requesting participation in this year’s program and successfully recruiting strong teams of language arts, science, math, and social studies teachers. Two long-time district partners—Dublin City Schools and Hilliard



*Akron teachers collaborating at Workshop I*

City Schools—fielded new teams of content teachers as well, bringing this year’s total cohort to 35 mainstream teachers. We were also fortunate to add a new graduate research assistant to our staff. Jennifer Acan, who is working on her Master’s degree in TESOL at Ohio State, joined us in September and has already provided invaluable assistance to teachers at this year’s first workshop, as well as online in the TESOL methods course.

Moving into our fifth and final year, we can also report changes in those teachers who have undergone ECTC training. Through our research, we have found that teachers are

Continued on page 3

## “Changes,” Continued

becoming more knowledgeable about ELLs and how to provide them with effective content and language instruction, and teachers’ own beliefs regarding how languages are acquired and taught have also shown positive improvement over time. These findings are featured in a new book proposal, which is based on the ECTC’s work over the past five years. As the year progresses, we will continue sharing our findings about the changes observed in teachers and districts who have partnered with the ECTC since 2007. ☞



*Modified Science Lesson in Korean — Workshop I*

### *Recent Conferences*

The ECTC has attended the following education conferences in 2011-2012:

**Ohio TESOL (Ohio Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)**, November 11-12, 2011, in Columbus, OH. The ECTC team presented at two sessions: “Building and Sustaining In-Service Professional Development for Content and ESL Teachers in Ohio” (with three ECTC alumni from South-Western City Schools) and “Professional Development and Content Teacher Inquiry.”

**NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English)**, November 17-22, 2011, in Chicago, IL. Dr. Newman and two ECTC alumni presented on “Professional Development of Language Arts Teachers of English Language Learners.”

**NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies)**, February 16, 2012, in Dallas, TX. The ECTC met and collaborated with other recipients of the U.S. Department of Education’s 2007 National Professional Development Program grants, sharing experiences and successes with training content teachers.

Special **congratulations** to ECTC Graduate Assistants Yunyan Zhang and Sunyung Song on being selected to present at the **2012 International TESOL Convention**. Yunyan will present findings on her recent investigation of the argumentative writing of native English speakers and non-native English speakers. Sunyung will present two papers: on fair hiring practices for non-native English speaking teachers and on scholarly publication by non-native English speaking doctoral students.

### 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).

*Project Director:* Dr. Keiko Samimy  
*Project Co-Director:* Dr. Karen Newman  
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*Graduate Assistants:* Jennifer Acan, Sunyung Song,  
& Yunyan Zhang

## Share Fair: Reading Strategies for ELLs

**D**uring this year's online TESOL Methods course, content teachers have shared and discussed a variety of strategies for helping ELLs with various content-based tasks in the mainstream classroom. Here are two tips for reading activities that teachers in a variety of classrooms can use or modify for their ELLs!

Julie Pinney from North High School in Akron describes a strategy called “**Stretch-to-sketch**”—used with longer readings. Students can focus on and visually record the important information from the reading/text, and the resulting sketch can serve as a study guide or source of prior knowledge when reviewing the reading later.

### “*Stretch-to-Sketch*”

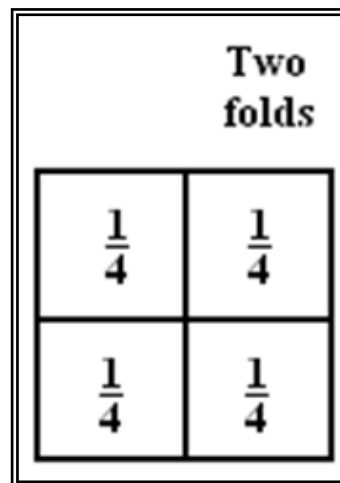
**Step 1** — Give students a piece of copy paper and have them fold it into quarters so that 8 boxes (4 in front and 4 in back) are created.

Students should draw in lines to separate each of their boxes.

**Step 2** — Next, have students listen to a brief amount of spoken text (between 2-4 minutes), and then pause the reading or recording.

**Step 3** — In the first box, students should then draw a picture that is representative of that section of the reading/text, in whatever style they choose. Give students approximately two minutes to draw.

**Step 4** — Continue with the reading/text. Repeat Steps 2-3 in each subsequent box.



Melissa Dillon from Scioto High School in Dublin recommends another strategy called “**Word Identification by Alphabet**” for building academic vocabulary.

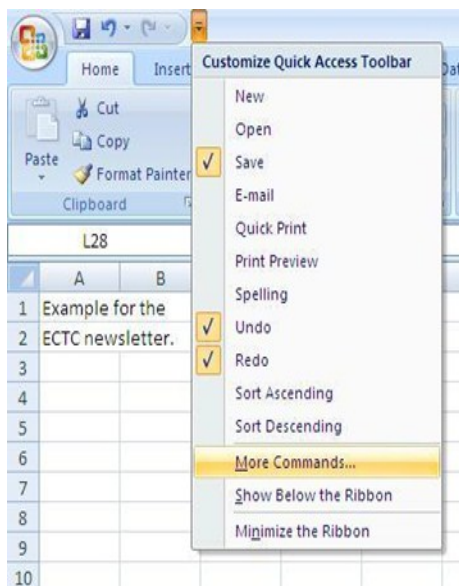
Continued on page 6

## Share Fair, Continued

### *“Word Identification by Alphabet”*

- Using a reading text, students must come up with a “fat” word that begins with at least one letter of a group (e.g, ABC, LMN, TUV, etc.) and is closely related (or believed to be closely related) to the reading. A “fat” word would be one with a strong connection or meaning relevant to the text (words like “the,” “but,” and “and” would not qualify).
- This strategy can be used both as a pre- and post-reading activity. If used as a pre-reading activity, the teacher should select a topic that students have some prior knowledge of for better success, or provide something to help get students started. For example, have students identify words related to “hemochromatosis” (a biology topic). Providing students with the definition of hemochromatosis or breaking the word down into its respective Latin prefix, root, and suffix would help.

To help enhance ELLs’ pronunciation, word recognition, and comprehension of text, LaToya Pitts at Sycamore High School in Cincinnati recommends using **Microsoft Excel**.



### *Microsoft Excel for Read-Aloud*

**Step 1** — Copy and paste an electronic text into Excel 2007.

**Step 2** — Choose “More Commands” from the Quick Access Toolbar at the upper right-hand corner of the screen; then, choose “All Commands” from the drop-down menu.

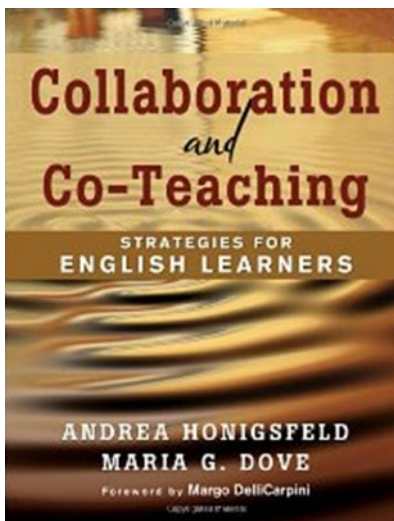
**Step 3** — Add all of the “Speak Cells” commands. Now, when these buttons are clicked, Excel should be able to read the text aloud.

**Note:** If using Excel 2010, search “text to speech” in the “Help” function. ☞

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

Honigsfeld, Andrea & Dove, Maria G. (2010). *Collaboration and Co-Teaching: Strategies for English Learners*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Pp. 225. ISBN: 978-1-4129-7650-3 (paperback).

Teachers participating in the ECTC have recognized the need for more teacher-to-teacher collaboration in order to improve instruction for ELLs. In fact, many have cited collaboration as one of their learning goals during their year of ECTC training. But building such long-term partnerships can be a difficult prospect.



Andrea Honigsfeld and Maria Dove's comprehensive and teacher-friendly *Collaboration and Co-Teaching: Strategies for English Learners* is the first book-length text that focuses on collaboration and co-teaching between general education teachers and ESL teachers. In one handbook, the authors address the rationale for co-teaching and the essentials for making collaboration a reality, not just in a formal co-teaching classroom but also in informal and non-instructional situations. They take the readers through the process step-by-step, from launching a collaborative program to planning, instructing, and assessing ELLs collaboratively; setting up time frames and using physical and virtual environments to enhance collaborative processes; and conducting evaluations of a collaborative ESL program model. The book offers a large number of ready-to-use tables, charts, checklists and assessment tools, online resources, and sample materials.

Continued on page 8

## Book Review, Continued

Each chapter presents a short, authentic vignette about a different teacher at various school levels. Their personal and professional experiences are reflected upon and revisited in the same chapter as they are related to the authors' discussion on the dilemmas, challenges, and successes of working within culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. One chapter introduces six cases studies of exemplary ESL teachers and their collaborative partners.

The authors also highlight the importance of a whole-school approach, where not only teachers but also school administrators play roles and share responsibilities for the sake of ELLs. They recognize and discuss the importance of administrative support to ensure the success of collaborative and co-teaching strategies.

Although this book is meant for a large audience, including in-service and pre-service teachers, school administrators, and teacher trainers, it will be especially helpful for content-area teachers and ESL teachers who seek to establish sustained, professional collaboration within their school buildings and classrooms. ☞