Newsletter

Visit us at
http://vatesol.cloverpad.org/

Board of Directions

President
Paul Phillips
1st Vice President
Ada Chrisman
2nd Vice President
Pamela Smart-Smith
Secretary
Kathleen Cahoon-Newchok
Treasurer
Katia Wooden
Past President & Nominating Chair
Laura Ray
Adult Ed SIG
Jenna Kelly
Higher Ed SIG
Kama Offenberger
Secondary Ed SIG
VACANT
Elementary Ed SIG
Stephanie Sebolt
Teacher Ed/Program Admin SIG
Jo Tyler
Eastern Contact
VACANT
Western Contact
Pamela Smart Smith
Northern Contact
VACANT
Central Contact
VACANT
Membership Chair
VACANT
Legislative Liaison
Kama Offenberger
Webmaster
Debrah Baxter
Liaison to VESA
Jo Tyler
Newsletter Editor
Jiuhan Huang
Parliamentarian
Liz Bowles

Table of Contents

President's Message

Greetings Fellow VATESOLers!

The New Year is fast approaching. Where has the time gone? This is a time for reflection and for looking forward. This is a time to consider the challenges and accomplishments of the past year while looking with anticipation to possibilities for the future. If you're like me, you know that regular assessment is essential to personal and professional growth. Most of us have faced challenging situations in the past year. The good news is that we're still standing! I often ask myself what I can learn from tough situations and how I can carry those lessons into the future. Good times or "bad", it's all a part of life.

Looking at the past year, VATESOL has seen both challenges and victories. Last year's board worked diligently to update our Articles of Incorporation. Though challenging, the many hours put into the project yielded excellent results. A huge debt of gratitude is due those who worked on this project. Happily, the articles were ratified at this year's annual conference—check that one off the list!

Speaking of the conference, we can thank the conference committee for putting together a successful event at Longwood University in October. Being the Conference Chair, I had the distinct pleasure of enjoying the talents and experiencing the resourcefulness of those individuals who put together a wonderful event. The committee made my job (and life!) a lot easier. We can put this conference on our list of victories. Enhancements to the conference included the addition of SIG workshops and a poster session. These will be regular parts of our annual conference format. The information presented was relevant and informative. A victory indeed!

As we look to the future, your board will consider expanding outreach and increasing our visibility. We want to make the VATESOL "brand" recognizable both in and out of our industry. We're looking to increase our involvement with NAFSA and have also entered into discussion with FLAVA (Foreign Language Association of VA) regarding possible partnership. In addition, we look to an integrated partnership with the Virginia Department of Education. The increased number of foreign national in Virginia makes greater involvement in Virginia public education is a must.

VATESOL members are the ones who keep this organization going. Your part in VATESOL is vital to the life of our mission and vision. As you look toward the future, consider how you might be involved. We need your skills, talents, abilities, and—most of all—you passion for English language learning. Please contact me or any of your board members if you have questions, suggestions (ALWAYS welcomed!), or to let us know how you might get involved.

I look forward with anticipation to the coming year as your president. All the best to you—both personally and professionally. You are a gift to English language learners in Virginia. Let's get out there and change lives!

Yours very sincerely, Paul Phillips, President VATESOL

Special Interest Group (SIG) News

Teacher Ed/Program Admin SIG Chair, Jo Tyler
jtyler@umw.edu

Our SIG had an excellent discussion over lunch at the VATESOL Conference on October 11th. ESOL teacher educators from four different universities were present: James Madison, Longwood, Mary Washington, and Regent. Our discussion revolved around current challenges and developments in our programs.

One thing that stood out in the discussion was the variety of programming models. At Longwood, for example, their teacher education program is a "4+1" model, in which students do the main licensure requirements as undergraduates, and take an additional year to study a specialization. At JMU, they have both a traditional 5-year program leading to a MATESOL, as well as an undergraduate minor in ESL which can be part of a 4-year program, giving Bachelor's candidates grounding in ESL. At Mary Washington, our ESL licensure program is part of our Post-Baccalaureate pathway, enabling completers to obtain ESL licensure and an M.Ed. through evening and weekend courses. At Regent, they offer master's in TESOL programs online for both PreK-12 and adult educators, as well as TESOL Certificate leading to ESL Add-On Endorsement.

Representatives from these programs agreed that we are all facing enrollment and budget challenges. A promising response to these challenges comes from Regent University, which has partnered with Virginia Beach and Chesapeake Public Schools to provide TESOL Certificate courses. Regent has adopted an 8-week course model, and admits new students into classes six times per year, a strategy to increase enrollments. Strong partnerships with schools, online course delivery, and flexible scheduling seem to be the wave of the future.

Jo Tyler is chair of the Teacher Education/Program Administration SIG of VATESOL and professor of linguistics and education at the University of Mary Washington.

Elementary Education SIG Chair, Stephanie Sebolt
sselolt@gmail.com

Greetings! I enjoyed meeting the elementary SIG members at the 2014 VATESOL conference at Longwood University. I would like to share a website that I joined after learning about it from the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). The website is Education Connections, offered by CAL through the University of Oregon's Oba platform, and is located at: https://www.obaverse.net/edconnect/ The website is designed to provide a place where teachers can connect with other EL educators, share lesson plans, take part in scheduled Webinars, ask questions and share information about teaching ELs, and much more. The information is current and informative. Over the past few months, I have been following posts about language objectives and the language of mathematics. I have been able to get some great ideas from the posts as well as links to interesting articles. Education Connections is free and easy to join. Please let me know your thoughts about Education Connections if you choose to join. I would love to hear from you. Have a wonderful holiday season!

Stephanie Sebolt is ESL teacher of K-5 ELLs in Roanoke County. She is also an adjunct for the University of Mary Washington and Virginia Tech.

Higher Ed. SIG Chair, Kama Offenberger
kw9703@vt.edu

Hello, VATESOL members! My name is Kama Offenberger and I'm happy to introduce myself as the new Higher Ed SIG Chair. I have been teaching at the Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute for the past four and a half years and am excited to take on this new role. I hope that we can share information, ideas, and experiences to improve the learning of all of our students.

This year I have been teaching Gateway, a class offered at the VTLCI for students who have completed the Intensive English program but are not yet able to enter their undergraduate programs for any number of reasons, primarily TOEFL scores. I know that many of you teach similar courses. In fact, Charlotte Young and Melanie Fernandes gave a presentation on ODU's Bridge Program at this year's VATESOL conference, which sadly I missed because my dog chose that particular weekend to temporarily disappear.

In my experience, and from what I have heard from other teachers, it seems that these students present a particular challenge in terms of motivation and participation. Their needs and struggles are different from the students in lower level courses. They're suffering from burnout and are anxious to begin their university classes, while also being frustrated in their efforts to meet the requirements that they need to move on to that next stage.

On a daily basis, I wrestle with the question of how to best serve these students, and over the past few months I have tried many different things. Some have been successful, while others have admittedly been failures. One success that I wanted to share focuses on exploring the typical research paper in a more visual and interactive way.

Currently, we are using an online program called Thinglink (http://www.thinglink.com) to complete a project that requires the same skills as the traditional research paper, but allows students to approach the information in a new way. A thinglink gives students the opportunity to combine many different kinds of media, beginning with an image or collage of images. They then tag the image with links to videos, scholarly articles, websites, and audio recordings. They can also add text to their tags explaining why they have chosen this source, much in the style of an annotated bibliography. Soon my students will be presenting their thinglinks to the class, which I hope will help them to articulate their ideas and get feedback before they take the next step in their research process.

I would love to hear from you about the methods that you're using to reach your students, as well as any other teaching tips and experiences that you have! Please email them to me at kw9703@vt.edu.

Kama Offenberger is an instructor at the Virginia Tech Language & Culture Institute in Blacksburg, VA.

Adult Ed SIG Chair, Jenna Kelly
Jennifer.Kelly@nn.k12.va.us

Hello! I am pleased to introduce myself as your new Adult ESOL SIG Chair. My name is Jenna Kelly and I am the Adult EL/Civics Coordinator for Newport News Public Schools. I am very excited to start this journey with you all as we discuss key areas of concern and interest in the area of Adult ESOL. Please let me know if you have topics that you would like me to address or if you would like to submit something for the newsletter.

In our region, our biggest focus currently is weaving Civics education into our current ESL classes. Civics education is defined by the state as "An educational program that emphasizes contextualized instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and United States History and Government in order to help students acquire skills and

knowledge to become active and informed parents, workers and community members." So, we have done this by breaking the school year into four quarters and focusing on one component each quarter.

First, we focused on Naturalization. Being that a fair number of our students will never be interested in or eligible for citizenship, our lessons not only focused on naturalization into the US, but also assimilation into the classroom and into America itself. It also focused on family and cultures. That way all of the students were able to enjoy the lessons and come away with new concepts and vocabulary. We also had a lesson on citizenship itself. Uscis.gov/citizenship has great resources, lesson plans and activities that you can directly weave into your classroom.

Our current quarter is on Rights and Responsibilities. These are the privileges and obligations that we possess as citizens. Our lessons have focused on voting and elections, Bill of Rights, post office, writing letters to your local/state/national representatives with a special workshop on parenting in the US. These lessons are written for the students to have a better understanding of what America can offer to them and also what is expected of them in their new country. In the spring semester, we will focus on the other two components and I will share an overview and resources with you. If you would like to see some of the lessons or would like more information, please email me. Jennifer.Kelly@nn.k12.va.us. Thanks for the opportunity to share this with you and I look forward to next time!

Jenna Kelly is the Adult EL/Civics Coordinator for Newport News Public Schools. She has fifteen years of teaching experience, both collegiate and in Adult Education programs.

Treasurers Report, Katia Wooden

BB&T balance as of Dec. 5, 2014: $39,946.47.

PayPal balance as of Dec. 17, 2014: $12,386.38.

Member Articles

The Challenge Is the Solution: Permaculture Curriculum Design in the ESL Classroom
Christina Zawerucha

Introduction
Nature is most abundant on the edge. The interface between two or more ecosystems, organisms, or cultures is often where the most valuable, diverse and productive elements of a system emerge. Like the diversity of a healthy ecosystem, diverse educational communities are more resilient, socially efficient, and sustainable. In the face of global environmental and economic challenges, we as ESL educators have the opportunity to facilitate the interpretation of scientific knowledge for diverse communities of international stakeholders. By teaching language through context and applying Permaculture design to curriculum design, we can facilitate the exchange of ecological wisdom in an international context.

The Context: The International High School at Lafayette
The International High School at Lafayette (IHSL) is a public school in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn that serves 350 late-entry English Language Learners (ELLs) speaking 50 different languages. The Internationals Model of ESL Education focuses on language development through context, heterogeneous grouping, project-based learning, and autonomous decision making. Learn more about IHSL by watching the documentary "I Learn America."

What is SIFE?
According to a recent study conducted by the New York City Department of Education, 9.8% of ELLs have been designated as Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). These ELLs have missed 2 or more years of formal schooling, function at least two years below grade level in reading and mathematics, and may be preliterate in their native language. These students miss schooling for a variety of reasons: Some come from countries where girls are not expected to attend school. Others were migrant laborers, orphans, or refugees. Still others came from oral cultures and speak unwritten languages. SIFE students (long mis-labeled as Special-Ed) are 100% capable of achieving anything their peers can, but require a great deal of patience, scaffolding, and socio-emotional support in order to blossom into their true selves. This is where permaculture as a framework for curriculum design can play a crucial role.

What is Permaculture?
Permaculture is a creative design process that mimics patterns in nature in order to create self-regulating systems. Originally developed in the 1970s by Australian biologists Bill Mollison, David Holmgren and Japanese Argonomist Masanobu Fukuoka, Permaculture is a versatile design approach that has since extended to fields as broad as engineering, urban planning, economics, and now curriculum design.

Permaculture Design and the SIFE Victory Garden Curriculum

Students are like flowers. Each one is unique, each one is beautiful, and it takes nurturing and patience to help them grow. Sometimes, when you plant a seed, it is hard to imagine how big or how beautifully it can grow. From 2010-2012, I was privileged to direct IHSL's SIFE program, a class where at-risk students could receive nurturing support to grow to their fullest potential. Despite differences in education, status, and abilities, my students are resilient transplants. They bring with them incredible strengths, stories, and experiences that enriched and enlightened our classroom every day.

How can educators bring together so many different young people, and assure that every single person is included and engaged in challenging, meaningful learning? How can SIFE students be served with limited space and resources? The permaculture adage goes, "The problem is the solution." All it takes is a little outside the box- and outside the classroom- ingenuity.

Engaging Everyone: The Victory Garden

Every person, no matter where they come from, has a connection to food. This universal human experience was a starting point for students to communicate about the role of food, plants, and agriculture in their different cultural backgrounds. They then connected personal experiences to the larger social economic context of food distribution, hunger, and malnutrition in the world. By analyzing evidence from scientific and news articles, students wrote analytical essays exploring how they could provide healthy, fresh, and economical food solutions within their communities.

After writing about food access, the students became eager to act. We wanted to build a garden- but like most public high schools in NYC, we lacked outdoor space. After putting calls through various channels, Dag Hammerskjold Elementary (P.S. 254) in Sheepshead Bay informed us that they wanted an educational garden, but lacked the resources to maintain one.

Thus began an incredible partnership between PS 254 and IHSL. Ms. Lisa Solo and Ms. Louise Atsaves are two incredible teachers who taught us about the garden's rich history as a Victory Garden during World War II. They collaborated with us tirelessly to bring the garden back to life. 11th grade student Abdoul Akanje, then interning with documentary film-maker Jean-

Michel Dissard, created this beautiful 8-minute video that depicts our garden work. It depicts how to effectively engage SIFE students to use math, science, and English to help their community in a meaningful way:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WwiPiXYrVg&feature=youtu.be

Participatory Publishing

The Victory Garden Project culminated in a work day where my 9th and 10th grade SIFE students taught PS 254's 1st grade students about horticulture. Concurrent with weekly garden sessions were daily readings regarding evolutionary biology, chemistry, and ecology. While learning about plant adaptations, students began writing "Tree of Life" memoirs. Students wrote a series of memoirs about their "Roots," their "Stems of Support" their "Branching Out" experiences and their "Blossoming" Experiences. Students then published a book of memoirs titled "Growing Experiences."

ESL students need a studio, a stage, and an audience to make their classwork meaningful. We celebrated and released our "Growing Experiences" book at our student-organized "Café Night." Students worked in committees to organize the event from the ground-up. Students read their books to their families and friends over fresh food from our garden and food from our different countries. The sense of pride that these often marginalized students had in their accomplishments was tangible. My SIFE students were heroes that day.

For weeks afterwards, my students carried their "Growing Experiences" books with them, eager to read each other's memoirs during SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) or free time. As a final project, students wrote an analytical essay with one important requirement: They needed to use each other's stories as evidence. This worked incredibly well. Students were motivated to read about their peers. These texts were self-differentiated in terms of length and reading levels. Finally, if the reader needed clarification, they could simply interview the author. See Table 1 for the Participatory Publishing Curriculum Design Template.

Permaculture Design and Curriculum Design
When working with SIFE students, it is important to make the community the curriculum. Academic achievement can often be a distant concept for students who have experienced interruptions in their formal education. Simultaneously, SIFE students offer a rich array of experiences and skills that can be exchanged and validated in the ESL classroom. The practical application of literacy and numeracy skills for authentic, observable, and social projects creates a point of entry for SIFE/ELLs that makes academia relevant to their lives. Table 2 (see p. 8) is a chart that shows how Permaculture design principles made the Victory Garden curriculum possible.

Conclusion
The biggest tree can grow from the tiniest seed. SIFE and ELLs are capable of accomplishing great things for themselves and their communities. As demonstrated, Permaculture as a pedagogical approach can be a valuable tool in the multicultural classroom. More research and experimentation must be done to transcend the disciplines of linguistics, ecology, and pedagogy. Our society needs international solutions to the global challenges we face. Every single one of our students deserves to be at the forefront of this discussion.

Table 1. Participatory Publishing Curriculum Design Template for the "Growing Experiences: Victory Garden Curriculum"

Essential Questions Which high-level questions will you explore in this unit?
Texts to read for evidence Which texts will you use as evidence responding to these essential questions?
Texts that model desired writing task Which examples of writing will you use to model for your students?
Authentic Writing Task What kinds of products would you like your students to create?
Writing Process How will students revise and conference about their work?
Publishing How will this writing be published?
Celebration How will this writing be shared with others?
Analytical Essay How will students use each other's writing along with other textual evidence in an essay response to an essential question from the unit?

Works Cited

Educator Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved November 15, 2014, from http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/ELL/Educator Resources/SIFE.htm

I Learn America. (n.d.). Retrieved November 15, 2014, from http://www.ilearnamerica.com

Permaculture Principles - thinking tools for an era of change. (n.d.). Retrieved November 15, 2014, from http://permacultureprinciples.com/

Table 2. How Permaculture Design Principles Made the Victory Garden Curriculum Possible

PERMACULTURE PRINCIPLE IN AN ECO-AGRICULTURAL CONTEXT	APPLICATION IN THE ESL CLASSROOM
Observe and interact: By taking time to engage with nature we can design solutions that suit our particular situation.	When working with students from many different cultural, linguistic and academic backgrounds, it is essential to observe and interact with students to discover what strengths, experiences, and talents they have to offer.
Catch and store energy: By developing systems that collect resources at peak abundance, we can use them in times of need.	How to do you capture and sustain student energy and enthusiasm? By making work student-centered and meaningful so they are motivated over time.
Obtain a yield: Ensure that you are getting truly useful rewards as part of the work that you are doing.	Show students that they can be successful. Celebrate their work and they will push themselves to accomplish more.
Apply self-regulation and accept feedback: We need to discourage inappropriate activity to ensure that systems can continue to function well.	As beginning writers, students need constant feedback and affirmation in order to make their writing stronger
Use and value renewable resources and services: Make the best use of nature's abundance to reduce our consumptive behavior and dependence on non-renewable resources.	As beginning writers, students need constant feedback and affirmation in order to make their writing stronger and more meaningful.
Produce no waste: By valuing and making use of all the resources that are available to us, nothing goes to waste.	Every project must be purposeful. Every activity is a component of a future accomplishment. There is no "busy work."
Design from patterns to details: By stepping back, we can observe patterns in nature and society. These can form the backbone of our designs, with the details filled in as we go.	In a spiraling curriculum, every activity is a component of a future accomplishment. All student experiences build into a final meaningful project that makes a difference in the world.
Integrate rather than segregate: By putting the right things in the right place, relationships develop between those things and they work together to support each other.	Every student, no matter what language they speak or their level of education, has something to contribute to our classroom community. Rather than be marginalized, the toughest kids in the school are brought front and center.
Use small and slow solutions: Small and slow systems are easier to maintain than big ones, making better use	Learning to reading and write for the first time is a slow and tedious process. Great accomplishments take time

of local resources and producing more sustainable outcomes.	and a LOT of scaffolding and differentiation.
Use and value diversity: Diversity reduces vulnerability to a variety of threats and takes advantage of the unique nature of the environment in which it resides.	The vast diversity of our community is our greatest asset. There are so many amazing stories to tell and skills to share.
Use edges and value the marginal: The interface between things is where the most interesting events take place. These are often the most valuable, diverse and productive elements in the system.	SIFE students and ELLs struggle with being marginalized by society. They are at the edge of creative change and are incredibly valuable towards the center.
Creatively use and respond to change: We can have a positive impact on inevitable change by carefully observing, and then intervening at the right time.	This entire project was created out of a 15 foot by 15 foot classroom with no windows with the toughest kids in the NYCDOE. With creative permaculture, there is no limit to what our communities can accomplish.

Christina Zawerucha is a teacher, farmer, and social entrepreneur who specializes in developing sustainability literacy programs in an international context. Focused on working with immigrant populations and ELLs, Christina has developed participatory curricula with public, non-profit, and higher education institutions in Brooklyn, Pennsylvania, Ecuador, Ukraine, and now Virginia. Christina currently works as an ESL instructor at the Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute in Blacksburg, VA. Learn more at www.permaculture4peace.org

Things to be AWARE of When Facilitating Intercultural Programs
Hannah Hahn, Nichole George, & Shira Schieken

Introduction

Traditionally, institutions have expected international students to adapt and modify their communication style to the "American" way of interaction. Programs such as Conversation Partner Program, International Buddy Program, and Cultural Ambassador Programs are created to help internationalize the campus, create a welcoming atmosphere and help build friendships between international students and domestic students. However, these programs sometimes don't always turn out as expected. Domestic students who visit English language classes may not know how to communicate with international students. International students may be disappointed when domestic students are not as outgoing as they expected. Both partners might simply not know how to sustain the relationship. In order for

programs to succeed, intercultural program facilitators must assist domestic and international students' development of intercultural communication skills and actively and intentionally maximize the positive benefits of these programs.

A Different Framework for Effective Intercultural Programs

Gumperz and Hymes (1986) stated that:

> Communities differ significantly in ways of speaking, in patterns of repertoire and switching, in the roles and meanings of speech. They indicate differences with regard to beliefs, values, reference groups, norms and the like as these enter into the ongoing system of language use and its acquisition (p.42).

Language is more than just words. Different communicative repertoires, people's styles and manners of interacting, are incorporated when we engage in social interactions. We must not simply expect international students to adapt to a generic "American" style of communication. Unlike intercultural programs using traditional framework (figure 1.) which focus heavily on international students, we must broaden our focus to include domestic students equally in intercultural communication training.

The AWARE framework (figure 2.) is beneficial for everyone involved. For domestic students, it takes away the assumption that just because English is their primary language, they are masters of intercultural communication. For international students, the pressure to be good at communicating on an intercultural level is lessened. They, like their domestic peers, are learning intercultural communication from the same place: the beginning. This creates a more relaxed environment for the students to build better relationships.

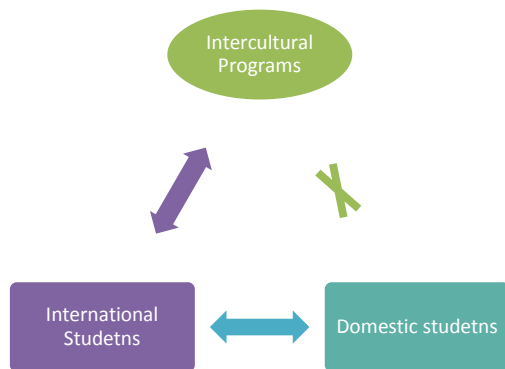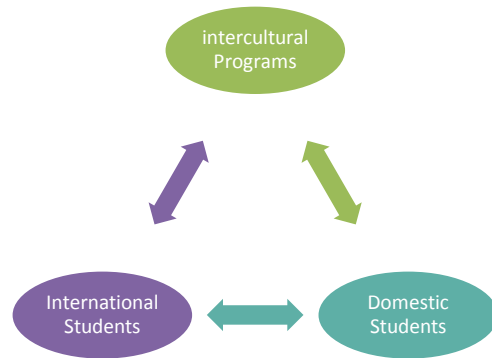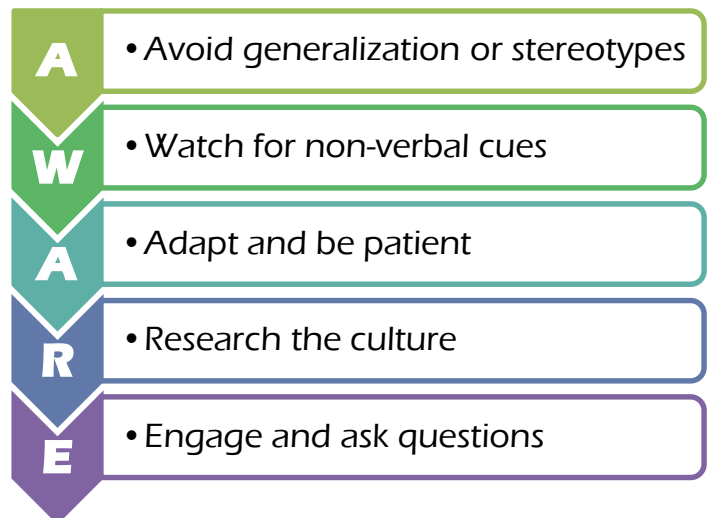**Figure 1. Traditional Framework of Intercultural Programs**

Figure 2. AWARE Framework of Intercultural Programs

Training Interculturally-Competent Students
To strengthen the programs that pair domestic and international students, facilitators should offer training sessions that introduce intercultural communication skills based on the multicultural competencies that culturally-alert counselors are expected to practice with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds (McAulliffe & Associates, 2012). At VCU, we have adapted competencies in cultural self-awareness and multicultural knowledge and skills to foster stronger intercultural communication skills and build better relationships among domestic and international students. Our training program is designed to teach domestic participants to be AWARE when communicating with students from different cultural backgrounds and to model these skills for their international partners.

AWARE VISION STANDS FOR:

A • Avoid generalization or stereotypes

W • Watch for non-verbal cues

A • Adapt and be patient

R • Research the culture

E • Engage and ask questions

1. Avoid Generalizations and Stereotypes
In order to demonstrate cultural self-awareness, domestic student volunteers should be aware of the generalizations and stereotypes that affect the international students they are working with. This awareness will help students avoid conveying messages that might offend their international partners and lead them to respond to stereotypes in a defensive manner. Students that possess cultural self-awareness understand that their own cultural values impact the way they view other cultures. This is beneficial because it can help students avoid projecting their own cultural values on their international student partners.

2. Watch for Non-Verbal Cues
In order to demonstrate effective multicultural communication skills, students should enter their conversation partnerships prepared to utilize a variety of verbal and nonverbal responses in order to facilitate conversation. Students must understand that intercultural communication skills are subject to more than the actual words spoken. The manner in which these words are delivered and received by listeners is equally important. Students should be aware of the speed in which they speak, the tone of their voices, eye contact, facial expressions, and the body language they transmit. Students should also be prepared to watch for nonverbal cues that their international partners share. This might help the student recognize when to change the speed of the conversation, switch topics, or ask questions.

3. Adapt and Be Patient
Students can also demonstrate effective multicultural communication skills by exhibiting patience and a willingness to adapt in order to meet the needs of their international partner. Students from different cultural backgrounds have different styles of speaking and different non-verbal communication norms. It may take a few meetings for student volunteers to figure out the most effective way to communicate with their international partners.

4. Research the Culture
In order to demonstrate multicultural knowledge, domestic student volunteers should possess a basic knowledge of the cultural group they will be working with. This can be achieved by doing something as simple as a quick search online. This helps volunteers demonstrate their interest in their partners' culture and provides fuel for conversations. Volunteers should also understand that the cultural background of their international partners has shaped their personality and the manner in which they communicate. This basic awareness may prevent uncomfortable interactions and misunderstandings from arising due to culturally-shaped behavioral and communication differences.

5. Engage and Ask Questions
Student volunteers should also be prepared to actively seek out information that will improve their ability to relate to their international partners as the relationship progresses. Once rapport has been established, international students may be more willing to share their own opinions and experiences with their partners. Seeking out information about topics that arise may help student volunteers add context to what their partners share and may help international students feel more comfortable.

Implementing the AWARE Vision in Your Classrooms or Your Programs
At VCU, we have found the following strategies helpful.

1. Facilitate training sessions for both international and domestic students. Provide clear and specific guidelines to all students in advance.

2. Use structured intercultural interactional activities.
   a. *Topic discussion* is good for any level of students (Cheney, 2009). For less proficient students, facilitators can suggest situational tasks in which international students practice "survival" language. For more advanced students, discussion topics can be related to intercultural situations such as gender, religion, generation, and region. One thing that you need to remember is to choose topics from which both partners can benefit and discuss without offense.
   b. *Journaling about different ways to communicate* is a beneficial activity for both groups of students. By reflecting what kinds of

communication style they observe from each other, domestic students will expand their intercultural communication skills, and international students will build confidence by understanding there are many ways to communicate in English.

c. *Field trips on campus with assigned tasks* are also a great way to improve international students' communication skills (Cheney, 2009). Less proficient students may be assigned tasks that focus on basic communication skills, for example, visiting a book store. The domestic student is asked to model asking staff for help in finding a book. The international student will then practice a similar task. More advanced students may be tasked with going to the library and requesting help to find an article for a writing assignment.

3. Facilitate introductory group sessions. Small groups of international and domestic students meet together and play icebreaker games, lowering their affective filters. Subsequently, everyone will feel safer and more comfortable. It is also important for a facilitator to introduce each pair of students and support them in their first meeting.

4. To attract more domestic students, offer language exchange opportunities and ask experienced students to bring friends and talk about the program in their classes and student organizations.

Future Benefits of Being AWARE
Experiential learning activities that purposefully engage international and domestic students give them necessary skills to interact with people and cultures in a multitude of personal and professional settings. For international students, a positive experience with domestic students strengthens their resolve to continue in academic programs in the U.S., possessing better communication strategies to be used with their professors and domestic classmates. For domestic students, their training helps them handle group work with international peers and learn more about the

world. Upon graduation, both set of students will have intercultural communication skills to work in a globalized society and interact positively with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. For the institution, the mission of internationalization is realized, having promoted a truly inclusive environment.

References

Cheney, R.S. (2001). Intercultural business communication, international students, and experiential learning. *Business Communication Quarterly, 64*(4), 90-104.

Gumperz, J. J. & Hymes, H. D. (1986). *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication.* Hoboken, NJ: Basil Blackwell

McAulliffe, G. & Associates. (2012). *Culturally alert counseling: A comprehensive introduction* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oak, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hannah Hahn is a Transition Coordinator in Global Education Office serving international students who are transitioning from VCU's English Language Program to undergraduates/graduate programs. In addition to that, she is coordinating Conversation Partner Program. Hannah can be reached at hyunhj@vcu.edu

Nichole George serves as a graduate student intern at VCU's Global Education Office for the past year. She is studying Counseling & College Student Development. Nichole can be reached at georgenl@vcu.edu

Shira Schieken works as an Immigration Advisor for VCU's International Student and Scholar Programs. Shira can be reached at schiekensb@vcu.edu

The Asian /r/ and /l/: An Acceptable Alternative Tongue Placement Can Offer a Quick Fix
Greg Raver-Lampman

In the movie *A Christmas Story*, through a series of misadventures, an Indiana family ends up having their Christmas dinner in a Chinese restaurant. At one point, the restaurant manager gathers all the employees to sing, "'Tis the season to be jolly, fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la." Instead, they sing "fa, ra, ra, ra, ra, ra, ra, ra, ra." Despite repeated efforts to correct them, they cannot produce the /l/ sound.

The scene is played for laughs, but the inability to produce the /r/ and /l/ is a serious problem of ESL students who speak Asian languages such as Japanese, Korean, Thai and Mandarin Chinese. (Goto, 1971; Logan, Lively, & Pisoni, 1991). Research, in fact, has documented that Asian L2 speakers of English often cannot hear the difference between the sounds.

Attempts to correct this mispronunciation often involve efforts to improve the ability to perceive the difference, with the presumption that improved perception will lead to improved production, but those efforts have been marginally successful when it comes to production. Recent research (Raver-Lampman, 2012), however, has documented that approximately 30 percent of L1 speakers of English use an acceptable alternative articulation for the /l/, with the tongue tip touching the bottom of the front incisors, protruding slightly. This alternative articulation is used in the initial position, the medial position and the final position. In addition, there is an alternative non-alveolar articulation for the /r/ that can easily be contrasted with the alternative articulation of the /l/.

These alternative positions take advantage of the mechanics of articulation. Both the /l/ and the /r/ are liquids, meaning that air passes by the tongue without frication. The IPA describes these positions as alveolar, with an additional more palatized position for the /r/. The /l/ is a lateral liquid, meaning the air passes around the sides of the tongue, and the /r/ is a central liquid, meaning that the air passes over the tongue tip. While many tutorials focus on lip position, the lateral or central airflow is what causes the difference between the /l/ and /r/ sounds.

In the case of the alternative placement of the /l/, the air travels around the sides of the tongue, and it's impossible to make the air pass over the central part of the tongue while keeping the tongue tip in contract with the incisors.

To test the hypothesis that this articulation could improve the pronunciation of the /l/, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Chinese speakers were recruited. Before the session, a recording was made of participants reading aloud 20 words that have minimal pairs, words such as *raw-law* or *load-road.* Participants read only one of the minimal pair words, *raw* or *law,* not both, but the list had a balance of lateral and central liquids. Participants then received instruction on the placement of the tongue, with the tip touching the front teeth protruding slightly.

During a teaching 20- to 30-minute teaching session, participants practiced the minimal pairs, and at the end practiced singing, "Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la la la la la." Afterward, researchers recorded participants reading the mirror image of the minimal pair word they read earlier (e.g., if they read *law* the first time, they would read *raw* the second time). At the end of the session, a linguist not involved with the research listened to both the pre- and post-intervention recordings and ranked the clarity. There was significant improvement in differentiation among participants who struggled before the teaching session.

A later session focused on a non-alveolar technique to produce the central liquid. Starting with the alternative articulation of the /l/, participants draw the tongue tip away from the front teeth and push the sides of the tongue against their molars. In such as position, all the air passes over the tip of the tongue, creating the central liquid /r/. With the sides of the tongue pressed against the molars, it is impossible to pronounce the /l/ sound, regardless of the position of the lips. A tongue-and-teeth model demonstrated position and descriptions of how to produce it were translated into Japanese, Chinese, Thai and Korean.

Students who went through the session using both positions continued to produce these articulations during their subsequence courses, but for better generalization all listening-and-speaking instructors in an English language teach center must be aware of these positions and reinforce them on a regular basis.

There are some limitations to this study. The research confirmed the observation that many speakers of these languages have trouble perceiving these sounds, meaning that without orthographic cues they might not hear the difference between *alive* or *arrive, elegant* or *arrogant*. This study, however, demonstrates that ESL students can be taught to produce the difference even before they can perceive it. Evidence exists that improved speech production can result in improved speech perception (Sheldon & Strange, 1982).

The techniques described above have resulted in a quick remediation that can help ESL instructors avoid spending session after session fruitlessly attempting to correct a problem that exists in one subset of a classroom containing students from many nationalities.

References

Goto, H. (1971). Auditory perception by normal Japanese adults of the sounds "L" and "R". *Neuropsychologia, 9*(3), 317-323. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0028-3932(71)90027-3

Logan, J. S., Lively, S. E., & Pisoni, D. B. (1991). Training Japanese listeners to identify English /r/ and /l/: A first report. *Journal of the Accoustic Society of America, 89*(1), 874-886.

Raver-Lampman, G. (2012). *The Asian /r/ and /l/: Does an alternative articulation offer a fix?* Paper presented at the 9th annual TALGS conference, Ashveille, NC.

Sheldon, A., & Strange, W. (1982). The acquisition of /r/ and /l/ by Japanese learners of English: Evidence that speech production can precede speech perception. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 3*(03), 243-261. doi: http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.odu.edu/10.1017/S0142716400001417

Greg Raver-Lampman is an instructor at the English Language Center at Old Dominion University

Announcements

CLLC 2015 Call For Papers

Virginia International University's School of Education is excited to announce our **2015 Conference on Language, Learning, and Culture** is currently seeking abstracts related to our 2015 theme on Next-Generation Assessment. CLLC 2015 will be held on **April 9-11, 2015** at VIU's campus in Fairfax, VA! Please consider submitting a proposal and feel free to pass this on to anyone who might be interested. Submission deadline for abstracts is January 5, 2015. Visit our website at cllc.viu.edu.

THEME

The 2015 theme, **Next-Generation Assessment**, intends to frame assessment in terms of its ability to meet the needs and achieve the goals of all stakeholders: empowering students with awareness of their strengths and areas for development; giving educators additional diagnostic information and tools to adapt their instruction; and providing administrators, testing organizations, policy makers, and community members with rigorous data on outcomes that can be used to improve educational programs. Through the sharing of best practices and emerging trends, the goal is to begin a solutions-oriented dialogue on the next generation of innovations in assessment by acknowledging the interplay among a variety of factors related to language, learning, and culture.

PLENARY SPEAKERS

We are honored to announce that three prominent experts in the field of language assessment have agreed to give plenary addresses this year:

Dr. Robert Mislevy

Frederic M. Lord Chair in Measurement and Statistics at the Educational Testing Service

Professor Emeritus of Measurement, Statistics, and Evaluation at the University of Maryland, College Park

Dr. Margaret Malone

Associate Vice President for World Languages and International Programs at the Center for Applied Linguistics

Co-Director of the National Capital Language Resource Center

Dr. Paula Winke

Associate Professor and Director of the Master of Arts in Foreign Language Teaching at Michigan State University

President of the Midwest Association of Language Testers

CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals for paper and poster presentations, practice-oriented sessions and workshops, colloquia, and panel discussions are invited in the following broad areas:

- **Innovations in Assessment**
- **Ethics, Accountability, and Education Policy**
- **Effective Assessment Design, Implementation, and Use**

For abstract submission guidelines and more details on each of these strands, please visit our **Call for Papers** page: http://cllc.viu.edu/content/call-papers

IMPORTANT DATES

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 5, 2015

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE: February 6, 2015

EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE: March 1, 2015

REGULAR REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 5, 2015

LATE REGISTRATION: April 6-11, 2015
CONFERENCE: April 9-11, 2015

QUESTIONS?

Questions about the conference can be directed to Kevin (kevin@viu.edu) or Rebecca (rsachs@viu.edu).

We hope to see you at CLLC 2015 in April! Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend!