

Framing the issue

Jen Vanek & Michelle Benegas

Welcome to the 2020 Volume 2 issue of the *MinneTESOL Journal*. This issue addresses timely topics, covering the COVID-19 pandemic and its racialized impact on schooling, as well as book reviews and articles providing instructional guidance for ESOL teachers for learners of all ages and in multiple contexts.

We are thrilled to include an article by 2019 MELEd keynote speaker Dr. Luciana C. de Oliveira. In “Planning and Application Using a Language-Based Approach to Content Instruction (LACI) in Multilingual Classrooms,” Dr. de Oliveira presents a language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) and provides a framework for addressing content and language needs of multilingual learners.

Two additional articles addressing instruction touch on reading and assessment. First, Holly Krech Thomas in “The Big Picture: Visualization As A Tool For Decoding And Reading Comprehension,” provides guidance for leveraging a visualization strategy to support literacy development; the article provides a variety of activities that encourage students of all ages to visualize both the forms and meanings of words. In the second article, former Minnesota State University, Mankato student Kadidja Koné writes about her experience teaching English in Mali as a Fulbright Scholar. In “Assess Us, But Don’t Torture Us: Transforming An Assessment Into A Moment Of Learning And Enjoyment,” Koné describes weaving performance based assessments (PBA) and learner journaling to understand how Directed Motivational Current (Muir & Dörnyei, 2013) was at play in learning.

The issue includes two articles on the impact of racism and white supremacy on schooling for students of color. Dr. Jenna Cushing-Leubner, in “Looking For Racial Equity In English Language Teaching,” describes the agentic experience of multilingual youth labeled “long-term English learners” and “heritage language learners” as they participated in ethnic studies and youth participatory action initiatives. The article includes suggestions for educators who seek to center their English language teaching as anti-racist and anti-biased work. In a related piece titled “Fearful No More: Teachers Amplifying Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Familial Voices in Technological Spaces,” Drs. Katherine Barko-Alva, Lisa Porter, and Socorro Herrera report on their field research and observations about racialized impacts on the learning opportunities available for emergent bilinguals during the pandemic. They provide recommended tech-rich instructional strategies buoyed by critical consciousness and a priority to create equitable learning spaces.

Finally, we offer two book reviews. First, Jacqueline Noiset breaks down *Navigating the Common Core with English Language Learners: Developing Higher-Order Thinking Skills*, by Larry Ferlazzo and Katie Sypnieski (2016). The review offers specific examples, illustrating how Ferlazzo and Sypnieski share practical guidance to help teachers support their learners’ higher-order thinking skills. Then, adult ESOL instructor Nan Frydland offers a review of the recently published edited volume, *Teaching Adult Immigrants with Limited Formal Education: Theory, Research and Practice*, by Joy Kreeft Peyton and Martha Young-Scholten (2020). In this review, Frydland offers a synopsis of each contributed chapter and observes that as early

advocates for Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (LESLLA), Peyton and Young-Scholten's are well situated to offer much needed in a time of mass displacement and forced migration around the world.

This issue also marks a change in *MinneTESOL Journal* leadership. Having served as the *MinneTESOL Journal* Technical Editor (2015 - 2018) and then as a Senior Co-Editor (2017 - 2020), I (Jen Vanek) will step into the role of Senior Editor Emeritus. This journal has been a labor of love—there is no other edited journal I can think of that mentors and then publishes the work of new scholars and practitioners alongside luminaries in our field. The journal also serves to bridge a research to practice divide by publishing in an open access format—ensuring that innovative work reaches classroom teachers. This important work will continue as Suzanne McCurdy, currently in the PhD program in Second Language Education at the University of Minnesota, joins Dr. Michelle Benegas as Senior Editor.

We hope you will stay connected to our *MinneTESOL Journal* community by following the journal on Facebook and on Twitter (@MnTESOLjournal). Share articles with colleagues, and consider publishing your work here!

Dr. Jen Vanek and Dr. Michelle Benegas

References

- Ferlazzo, L., & Sypniewski, K. (2016). *Navigating the common core with English language learners: Developing higher-order thinking skills*. Jossey-Bass.
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- Peyton, J. K., & Young-Scholten, M. (2020). *Teaching adult immigrants with limited formal education: Theory, research and practice*. Multilingual Matters.

Author bios

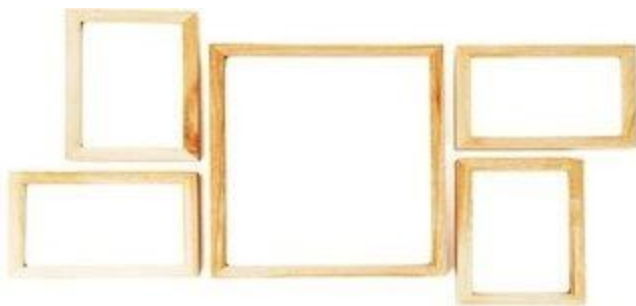
Jen Vanek, Ph.D., is the Director of Digital Learning and Research at the EdTech Center @ World Education. She conducts field testing on promising new educational technologies, facilitates a community of practice on distance and blended learning called the IDEAL Consortium, and collaborates with talented colleagues to build the capacity of educational institutions to use technology to reach more adult learners working to develop language and literacy proficiency.

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Michelle Benegas, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at Hamline University. She has taught ESL in K-12, adult basic education, and college settings. In her work with teachers and schools, she promotes a model in which ESL teachers serve as site-based experts and coaches to their general education colleagues. Her research interests include ESL teacher leadership, teacher leader identity, and systemic approaches to improving EL services.

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