



CELEA News

Newsletter of the Christian English Language Educators Association

Biannual

Volume 7 (2) ~ Fall 2015

Table of Contents	
Letter from the President <i>Jan Dormer</i>	Page 1
The Editor's Note <i>Laura McMullen & Eleanor Pease</i>	Page 2
News and Announcements	Black Boxes
Collaboration and Leadership <i>Quinn Dyrli</i>	Pages 3-5
Spotlight: Michael Pasquale <i>Eleanor Pease</i>	Pages 6-7
Circles of Language and Peace <i>Cheryl Woelk</i>	Pages 8-10
The Virtues: A Curriculum Integrating Life and Faith <i>Jennifer Yung</i>	Pages 11-12

Letter from the President

Jan Dormer, jdormer@messiah.edu

God's Standards or Ours?

I am thinking a lot about "standards" these days. For the past couple of years I have been on TESOL International Association's working group to develop and disseminate standards for "TESOL Certificates". This has included meetings at TESOL, presentations at TESOL 2015 and 2016, a webinar, and countless conference calls. And it's all for one purpose: to try to ensure that people who go around the world to teach English are adequately trained for the job, and will really be able to meet the needs of the English learners.



As Christians in TESOL, no doubt we all aspire to the same goal: to ensure that English learners' needs will be well met through our efforts. But reaching that goal can get complicated! My church has just started an adult ESL program, and much to our surprise and delight, God is bringing many Somali refugees into our program. They have been in the country for many years, but cannot read and write in English. They have significant needs and are desperate for help—but I am the only person trained in TESOL, and I can't teach in the program consistently. What do we do?

It is at times like this, when the needs seem to overwhelm the resources, that I find myself praying, "God, what is Your will here? We want to help these people, but we don't want to claim to be able to provide them with something that we are not really equipped to provide them with. Show us your path forward." Invariably, God is faithful to remind me that He has standards too! And His standards include enabling us to do the things He has called us to do (Phil. 4:13). Our job is to discern His will, continually do our best with what we have, and trust the results to Him.

Are you overwhelmed with too big a task? My encouragement for you today is to remember that it is God's standards that ultimately count. The work at my church is His, not mine. Our program will be imperfect, and our volunteers will grow slowly in teaching skill. But I rest in the comfort that God has a plan, and will work through our efforts, and that His standards ultimately will be met.

Jan Edwards Dormer is Associate Professor of TESOL at Messiah College in Pennsylvania. She spent many years in TESOL ministry in Indonesia, Brazil, and Kenya, and is the author of the book Teaching English in Missions: Effectiveness and Integrity.

The Editor's Note

Laura McMullen, laura.bliss.mcmullen@gmail.com



Dear Colleagues,

I am stepping down from my position as Editor of CELEA News due to ongoing family concerns. I have enjoyed this position but find myself in a season of life where the continuing medical needs of my youngest child require me to take a step back from other work.

If you are interested in taking over this position, please let Jan Dormer know. In the meantime, I am extremely grateful to Eleanor Pease for stepping in and coordinating this issue.

If anything has been made clear over the past few years, it is that God works in and through the weak and is near to the broken hearted. I don't know where you are in your work as an English teacher or coordinator, but I know that often the work is tough; often we feel we aren't enough. When those times hit, remember that God's grace is made perfect in our weakness, and that his grace is enough (2 Corinthians 12:9). Remember, too, that He knows you and knows where you are, and that He can guide you through.

Keep doing the good work you're doing, and keep sharing resources and stories with this community. This is a fantastic organization.

Thank you for the privilege of working with such a great group of men and women.

Blessings to you all,

Laura McMullen
Editor

From the Interim Editor:

In putting together this issue, I found the articles to be interesting and helpful. Quinn Dyrli will show you not only the importance of team planning, but also how effective collaboration can be implemented. In my interview with Michael Pasquale, you will discover that he met Mother Teresa. No one can question the need for peace in our troubled world. You will enjoy reading Cheryl Woelk's *Circles of Language and Peace*. Jennifer Yung describes a curriculum based on virtues; she gives the rationale for the curriculum: "faith is connected with life and the purpose of *The Virtues* curriculum is to connect language with life." Included in her article is link to the website. Check it out.

GPS can also mean "God's Positioning System." Where has God positioned you? I trust that you will find inspiration and encouragement in this CELEA Newsletter. "...He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him..." (From Acts 17:26).

Eleanor Pease

PUBLICATION

The *International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching* (IJC&ELT) has published its second volume (2015), at <http://cook.biola.edu/publications/ijcelt/volume-2/>. If you haven't already, please visit and download the complete issue or the articles or sections of interest to you. This issue includes some short Forum pieces and a book review related to Earl Stevick. The journal welcomes submissions for Volume 3, which is in preparation for (hopefully) March 2016. See the Front Matter of the journal for the Guidelines for Contributors.

Collaboration and Leadership

Quinn Dyrli, qdyrli@luzerne.edu

Last summer, as a student in Messiah College's Graduate Program in Education, I completed a TESOL internship, teaching adult ESL classes at Luzerne County Community College's Adult Literacy and Training Assistance (ALTA) program. I had the opportunity to observe and work with two highly experienced teachers. Although their teaching styles were very different, John and Irena were wonderful mentor-teachers and they both enabled me to learn a lot about teaching English. Because most of my previous educational experience had been teaching in the middle and high school contexts, I was extremely nervous about teaching adults. However, after only one day of working with the Wilkes-Barre class, I realized that I thoroughly enjoy teaching adults!

Not only did this new context provide an opportunity for me to view Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from a different perspective, it gave me the opportunity to reflect on my own views of collaboration, ESL teaching practice and assessment, as well as what it means to be a Christian ESL teacher. As I was writing an assigned paper on leadership, one thing that stood out to me was that the dispositions that are essential to effective leadership are an ability to build trust and develop rapport, and to build skills and confidence in others (Collay, 2006). I was struck particularly by the thought that "teacher leadership is fundamentally about forming collegial relationships with other teachers" (Riveros, Newton, and da Costa, 2013, p. 9).

I believe it is essential for Christians in the workforce to continually strive to improve their leadership abilities, especially in their relationships with other teachers, because I believe those collegial relationships will benefit students and coworkers and improve collaborative efforts. Collaborative teaching, or co-teaching, is an instructional practice that is being used more and more to meet the needs of students with special academic needs, and ELLs are no exception. However, to support ELLs academically, the content teacher and ESL instructor must be intentional about cooperating in order to plan and implement instruction effectively.

Much has been written about the benefits of coteaching to both students and teachers, but its implementation often poses challenges for teachers. However, despite the challenges, research has shown that teachers can benefit from collaborative teaching. Teachers reported greater collaboration with colleagues as well as increases in professional satisfaction, professional development, and personal growth (Hepner & Newman, 2010). Dove and

Honigsfeld (2010) suggested that the challenges inherent in collaboration can be viewed as opportunities for developing capacity for mainstream and ESL teachers to meet ELLs' needs, resulting in enhanced learning for ELLs. The resulting benefits are improved practice in delivering and differentiating lessons for ELLs, greater peer support for other teachers, informal and formal mentoring opportunities among staff, and opportunities for experienced faculty to develop as leaders (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). The benefits of peer support and mentoring are especially important because "approximately 50% of teachers leave their assignment in the first 5 years . . . more than 25% of new teachers leave the profession in their first 3 years, and many more within 5 years . . ." (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010, p. 4).

My first year of teaching was in a public school that adhered to the inclusion approach to educating students with special needs. I was part of a team of teachers from different content areas and we had one special education teacher who worked with our team's students. As a team, we worked together to plan field trips, activities, and to discuss the best approach for meeting students' needs. The special education teacher was in all of the content-area classes with one class that had all of the students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Unfortunately, as a new teacher, I do not feel that I utilized the benefits of having a co-teacher as well as I should have. Although there were times when she would elaborate on or clarify a point that I had made, we were never deliberate about making time to discuss how we could approach our co-teaching efforts. As a result, I believe our instruction was missing some of the advantages that an intentional blending of her expertise and my training could have offered. As Hepner & Newman (2010) suggested, intentional utilization of our team's time to plan, a better understanding of how to teach collaboratively, and mentoring on how to implement the co-teaching model might have improved my experiences as a first-year teacher. I also believe it could have enhanced our students' understanding of the content material. Unfortunately, "the literature suggests . . . that effective collaboration between teachers is not only rare, but extremely difficult to sustain" (Davison, 2006, p. 458). However, I do not believe this should be the case for Christians in education. Mentoring new teachers can be successful by following the biblical discipleship model, in which the older mentors teach and share their experience with the younger men and women. As a Christian teacher, I view collaboration as an opportunity to be a testimony of Christ's love by sharing the load and building collegial relationships based on trust, respect, grace, and, yes, even patience, working through the challenges of teaching. The resulting "culture of collaboration," can be a witness to other faculty members, students and the community (Russell, 2012, p. 445).

I was blessed to have had such a wonderful internship experience and had the opportunity to see this kind of collaboration and teacher-leadership in action. As I worked with John on completing the required paperwork for the ALTA program's assessments and competencies, it was evident to me that he is the kind of mentor-teacher who *wanted* to help me develop the skills that I would need for my future teaching positions. He did a wonderful job of explaining how to complete the paperwork for the assessment system used by ALTA. He and Irena both proved themselves to be ideal teacher-leaders and mentors by offering feedback in a positive manner, by encouraging me in my successful *and* unsuccessful efforts, and by instilling a sense of confidence in me about my ability to teach ESL. Last year, I was honored to be offered a position, teaching General Educational Development (GED) and ESL courses at ALTA. Because of John and Irena's leadership and mentoring, I felt well equipped for the position. I hope to continue this collaborative culture by modeling the kind of teacher-leadership and mentoring that John and Irena demonstrated. As a part-time adult educator at ALTA, I was blessed to have a coworker, Mary, with whom I frequently co-taught. Mary's years of experience in the ALTA program were beneficial to my instruction and my TESOL training supplemented her lessons on life and work skills in the GED and ESL classes. She and I have developed a wonderful friendship as we work as a team to improve instruction for our students. I believe that this cooperative relationship of trust and respect is also a testimony to the students who witness our team approach to instruction. Additionally, in my current role as ALTA's In-house Professional Development Specialist, I continually strive to work with the instructors in a positive, encouraging manner, cultivating a "culture of collaboration" (Russell, 2012, p. 445).

In my experience, most teachers consider a lack of time to be the greatest barrier to deliberately planning ways to co-teach. Finding time to plan collaborative lessons can be challenging for teachers in all content areas. However, the benefits to the students, as well as teachers, and ultimately to the educational community, are well worth the effort.

References:

- Collay, M. (2006). Discerning professional identity and becoming bold, socially responsible teacher-leaders. *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development*, 18, 131-146. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ795116.pdf>
- Davison, C.M. (2006). Collaboration between ESL and content teachers: How do we know when we are doing it right? *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9(4), 454-475. Retrieved from <http://hub.hku.hk/bitstream/10722/45447/1/130990.pdf?accept=1>
- Dove, M., & Honigsfeld, A. (2010). ESL coteaching and collaboration: Opportunities to develop teacher leadership and enhance student learning. *TESOL Journal*, 1(1), 3-22. doi: 10.5054/tj.2010.214879
- Hepner, S. & Newman, S. (2010). Teaching is teamwork: Preparing for, planning, and implementing effective co-teaching practice. *International Schools Journal*, 29(2), 67-81. Retrieved from <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.messiah.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=62988425-7a70-4b47-841c-8805687939de%40sessionmgr4001&hid=4201>
- Riveros, A., Newton, P., & da Costa, J. (2013). From teachers to teacher-leaders: A case study. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, 4(1), 1-15. Retrieved from <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.messiah.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=36&sid=79d7ff71-ac82-4830-88c3-77c5a58f74c1%40sessionmgr198&hid=123>
- Russell, F. (2012). A culture of collaboration: Meeting the instructional needs of adolescent English language learners. *TESOL Journal*, 3(3), 445-468. doi:10.1002/tesj.24

Quinn Dyrli is the In-house Professional Development Specialist for the ALTA program and also teaches mathematics at Luzerne County Community College (LCCC), in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. She recently earned a Master of Education, with concentration in TESOL and a Pennsylvania ESL Program Specialist Certification, from Messiah College, in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. She also holds a B.A. in Mathematics, from Messiah College. Quinn lives in Dallas, Pennsylvania with her husband and five sons.



CELT International Conference

Theme: Collaboration in the Classroom and Beyond

Location: Seoul, Korea

Dates: 24-25 June 2016

Plenary Speakers: Chuck Sandy, Jan Dormer, and John Liang

For Information: <http://www.celea.net/>



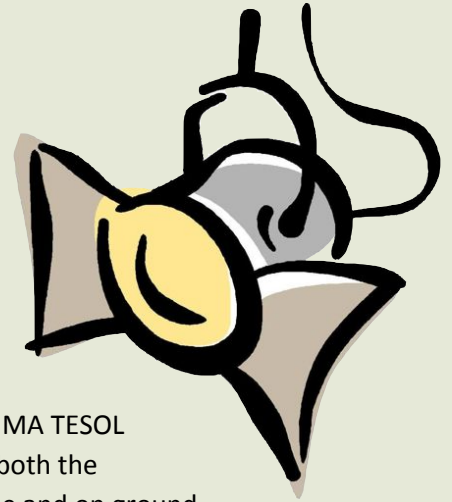


Spotlight - Michael Pasquale

Michael.pasquale@cornerstone.edu

Michael, tell us about yourself and your position at Cornerstone. Also, when did you become part of CELEA?

I joined the faculty of Cornerstone University in 2000. I was brought on to help establish the undergraduate TESOL program. We then added the MA TESOL program in 2006. I enjoy the balance of teaching in both the undergraduate and graduate levels and also in online and on ground formats.



I became involved with CELEA in 2004 when I attended the first CELT conference in Long Beach. I enjoyed the fellowship and connections made at the annual gatherings at the TESOL convention when CELEA was still the Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus.

I was privileged to be elected as Chair of the Christian TESOL Caucus in 2008. This was at a time of transition within the TESOL organization when the TESOL organization dissolved the caucus format and instituted the current “forum” model. At that time the members of the caucus decided to form our own organization and I was honored to be elected as its first president. I served as President of CELEA until 2010 and then continued on the Executive Board as Past President and board member until March 2015. It was a blessing to be a part of the organization at that time of transition and be involved in the process of selecting a name for the organization, drafting bylaws, and growing the membership list. I have really enjoyed working with some great people in CELEA. It has been an enormous blessing.

Reflect on your experiences in CELT conferences, CELEA, and the Christian Educators TESOL Caucus. Why should Christian teachers become part of CELEA?

It is amazing to think that this organization has existed now for over 30 years, first as an informal gathering of Christians attending TESOL and now as a separate organization. I definitely recommend that Christian educators join CELEA. It is a source of blessing and encouragement. I have treasured the time spent with fellow members discussing our classroom situations and teaching strategies, but also and more importantly, being able to talk about our shared faith in Christ. Often we teach in isolated contexts, either as the only Christian in a department of TESOL educators, or as the only TESOL educator in a Christian organization. CELEA provides a way to network and fellowship with those who share similar situations.

Who, in the world of TESOL, has had the greatest influence on your teaching and/or administration?

This is a hard question since I have had many who have influenced me, both personally and also through their scholarship. My strongest influence has been my dissertation advisor and mentor, Dennis Preston. He has been a source of encouragement and has been a model of what a faculty mentor should be—someone who does all he can to support and encourage his students. Tom Scovel was also an encouragement to me. He demonstrated some great ways to encourage others such as sending articles of interest or just praying for them. His strong faith combined with his prolific scholarship has been an inspiration to me.

Is it true that you met Mother Teresa in India?

Yes, it was a privilege to meet Mother Teresa in India, shortly before her death. I visited Calcutta (Kolkata), India in 1996 and was told that there was a time each day when she would emerge from her window and wave at people in the courtyard of the Mother House, where she ministered with the Missionaries of Charity. We went to the mission and asked when we could see Mother Teresa. We thought that the Sister left to check the schedule, but instead she came back and said that it would be a few minutes since it took Mother Teresa a while to come from her room. We were shocked and excited. We spent about ten minutes talking with her. She asked us why we were in India and what we were doing. We asked her about her work there. It was a blessing to meet her and her life continues to be an inspiration to me. When I think of the virtue of hospitality, I consider her to be a great example that we should emulate as TESOL educators.

What is your greatest blessing? Challenge?

It is hard to narrow these down so I will limit my answer to my professional context. I have been so blessed to see so many of my former students thrive as educators in so many contexts! I love hearing from them and about their experiences in schools in the US and around the world. Personally, I am always humbled and thankful when I am able to have a book or article published. I see my scholarship as a way to live out the virtue of loving God with my mind and strength. This also relates to my greatest challenge—which is how to balance a busy life with trying to be an active scholar and author. It is my desire to find ways to be more efficient and balanced in all areas of life.

Michael Pasquale is director of the M.A. TESOL Program at Cornerstone University; also, he teaches undergrad linguistics course. He earned his B.A. from Cedarville College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Michigan State University. In 2007 he received the Provost's Teaching Excellence Award. Pasquale's books, "Every Tribe and Tongue: A Biblical Vision for Language & Society" and "An ESL Ministry Handbook: Contexts & Principles" have recently been published. He enjoys reading, traveling, taking walks with his family, and watching the Detroit Tigers.

Interview by Eleanor Pease

Christians in English Language Teaching (CELT) - 2016 Conference

Theme: Looking Back, Looking Forward

Location: Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, MD

Date: Saturday, 9 April 2016

For information: <http://www.celea.net/>

Circles of Language and Peace

Cheryl Woelk, clwoelk@gmail.com

Circle processes have become popular in North American educational settings in recent years and are one simple way to integrate peace education into English language learning classrooms. Although the ancient practice developed in indigenous cultures across the continent and is found in other cultures around the world, educators have begun adapting circles to educational settings outside of native contexts in intentional ways only since the 1990s (Living Justice Press, 2014). Circle processes can be defined broadly as a method of dialogue that involves arranging all participants, including both learners and teachers, in a circle formation to speak and listen. Most often the process uses a “talking piece,” which is some type of tangible symbol for the group to pass around to take turns speaking. If some are not ready to speak when the talking piece arrives, they may pass until another round. Circles also include intentional conversation to set up values and guidelines for the discussion and some opening and closing ceremony or ritual. Finally, in circle processes, relationships are “treated as equally important as tackling difficult issues” (Living Justice Press, 2014), which means people take the time to address relational aspects of the purpose they have for using a circle.

Details of each circle process vary depending on the situation and purpose of the dialogue. When used in peace education settings for conflict resolution or community building, the emphasis is on resolving conflict and healing harms and has proven very effective (Costello, Wachtel, & Wachtel, 2009). Language educators have also tried using learning circles, decision-making circles, or even circles for conflict transformation. For Christian English language teachers, a circle process can be an useful tool for communicative learning that highlights relational values in the classroom and integrates language education with peace education. While circle processes do not address every aspect of engaging language in education for peacebuilding, they support many elements of creating a healthier and more peaceful classroom environment.

In order to integrate peace education into English language education, educators must have knowledge and experience of peace tools and processes. Circle processes are one example of this knowledge and they contribute to the classroom in two ways. First, the practice of the circle can add to educator and participant experiences of peacebuilding processes. Having completed a learning circle, for example, participants and educators can use a common language and share a common story of their experience drawing the group closer together. Second, circles allow all participants to share their knowledge and experience of language learning with the group. This creates an opportunity for non-dominant knowledge to surface. Certain kinds of knowledge such as academic, practical, literary, or logical forms are often privileged in a classroom. Sharing in the circle can validate traditional, sensory, collective, and other types of knowledge.

Another aspect of integrating peacebuilding in language education is increasing participation and empowerment of learners. Not only is participation necessary for language learning and expression, it is also linked to power dynamics in the classroom and society. Circle processes contribute to empowerment by equalizing the “talk time” and

monitoring learners' turn taking. This reduces issues of status that relate to more vocal personalities, greater background knowledge, or other abilities, which put one learner above another. Each learner in the circle has a chance for language expression and growth. Also, language privilege (Rauf & Iqbal, 2008) can be named in the circle. Through the guidelines activity, or at other points, participants can talk explicitly about which members of the class have language privilege rather than let it remain as a hidden dynamic in the class. On the other hand, circle processes may hide aspects of status in the group that may be present, but do not come out verbally in the circle. For example, age, experience, relationship, gender, and other factors may still affect how a participant shares in the circle. Facilitators need to be aware of these power dynamics in a group before deciding when a circle is appropriate.

Integrating peacebuilding in English language education means building healthy community and relationships. Sharing our lives and stories with each other creates a sense of connection that facilitates learning. Motivation and ability for language learning increase when real relationships form in the learning community. Circle processes are particularly effective at building community through speaking and listening. When people feel truly heard, they feel comfortable in revealing more about themselves and listening to others' stories. The physical space of the circle also creates a certain arena where everyone can see and hear each other. This facilitates attention and energy directed towards relationships. Finally, the circle can "hold the space" for relationships to go through even difficult times such as conflict and grief. While in the language education classroom these moments may not appear, there are always the "storms" of group formation that learners tend to experience. Circles can be part of helping learners get through the storm to the growth on the other side. A particular caution, however, is that a sense of safety must be present before the circle is formed and must be nurtured during the circle. Otherwise, community and relationships could actually be at risk.

Attention to identity and culture is another integral element of peacebuilding in the language education class. This means that members must respect others' individual and collective identities in order for people to learn and experience peace in the classroom. Depending on identity, needs, learning styles, and goals, other aspects of the educational experience will be different. Circle processes make space for all members to be themselves through sharing or choosing not to share. Listening with the talking piece can assist with different styles of communication that may not usually be heard. Also, individual differences, preferences, and needs can be brought into the discussion through multiples rounds or the guidelines activity.

Another significant aspect of peacebuilding in the language classroom is an awareness of narrative and values, which creates space for language through story-telling and shapes attitudes and beliefs of both learners and educators. Circle processes enable the sharing of values openly through the values and the guideline exercise, making space for participants to articulate and highlight values that they have in common. Creating a new group narrative together is another significant contribution of circle processes to a classroom. When people from diverse backgrounds and experiences come together, it is important to form a story that connects each of the members of the group. This may turn into a process of building peace through restorying or renegotiating the ways in which meaning has been constructed. Whether a clear story of the learning community forms or not, the circle can hold complex and contradicting stories together. There is no pressure in the circle process to come to a single narrative, which is often reassuring for language learners coming to a new culture and a new way of expression.

Emotions and spirituality are also important to recognize when engaging in language education from a peacebuilding perspective. Circle processes contribute in unique ways to this aspect. First, the rituals before, during, and after the rounds of conversation create a sacred space for the circle. Humans respond to ritual from a level of emotion and spirit, so the circle brings the participants into a more intimate space than the ordinary classroom. In addition, the

circle is powerful enough to hold the space for difficult emotions and struggles. Learning language, particularly learning English in North America, where language and power have such daily implications for learners, can be an intense experience that is often overlooked in the classroom. The circle creates a place of resonance for learners to share their positive and negative experiences with learning. Granted, safety is important at this point. Some things are not shared with the whole group the first time. The teacher needs to be aware of this and take special care in beginning and ending the space appropriately.

A final part of peace education in the language classroom looks at the role of transformation and change. To some extent, efforts for transformation and change are part of all education, but particularly important from a peacebuilding perspective. Change or transformation is mutual; it does not just involve the learners. Educators enter into the risk of change along with the students. The circle facilitates this mutual experience by inviting everyone to participate in the change processes that transpire through speaking and listening to each other. These changes occur in the circle through consensus and group decision-making, not just structural or imposed change.

Circle processes in English language education can contribute to the integration of peace education in many ways. However, the circle process is only one tool. Reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of circles for particular situations can help Christian language educators create an even more welcoming space for learners through a variety of approaches to speaking and listening to one another.

References

Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2009). *The restorative practices handbook for teachers, disciplinarians, and administrators*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Living Justice Press. (2014). About Circles. Retrieved April 15, 2015, from http://www.livingjusticepress.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={D3B8A1F4-E956-4D80-A1E5-26DA2CAE9170}

Rauf, S., & Iqbal, H. M. (2008). Power of linguistic privilege: Critical discourse analysis of the narratives of Pakistani immigrant learners in American schools. *Bulletin of Education & Research*, 30(2), 45-60.

Cheryl Woelk is coordinator of Language for Peace and specializes in language and peace education in multicultural contexts. She holds an MA in Education and a graduate certificate in Peacebuilding from Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia, USA. Cheryl currently lives in Saskatchewan, Canada with her spouse and son.



TESOL International Convention

Dates: 5-8 April 2016 / **Location:** Baltimore, MD - Baltimore Convention Center

The CELEF Academic Session is scheduled for April 6, 2016 at 9:30 - 10:45 a.m. in room 318 at the Baltimore Convention Center.

Theme: Teaching and Learning English in Difficult Circumstances

Presenters: Esther Bettney, Honduras; R. Michael Medley, U. S.; Tarun Kumari, Kharbamon, India.

Session Summary: ELT professionals work in a variety of difficult circumstances, including low-resource settings, politically or religiously repressive societies, regions suffering from violent conflict, or classrooms serving refugees. Presenters explore the challenges of working in these situations, drawing on research, their Christian faith, and good ELT practices. Support your colleagues by attending this session.



The Virtues: A Curriculum Integrating Life and Faith

Jennifer Yung, jennifercheeyee@gmail.com

The Virtues is an ESL curriculum authored by staff members of the Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries in 2008 and revised in 2010. It was designed with church-based ESL programs in mind. It consists of a series of 14 topical units and a total of 39 lessons. Nine of the unit topics are virtues: Love, Hope, Wisdom, Contentment, Forgiveness, Humility, Honesty, Joy, and Courage; the other five unit topics are festivals and holidays such as Christmas and Easter. Each unit consists of a series of three to four stand-alone, 90-minute lessons. The curriculum is designed for the intermediate English language proficiency level or above. All lessons follow the same format. At the beginning of the curriculum, there is an introduction and teacher's page that explains the philosophy behind the design and the features of the lessons. There are also teacher's notes and student handouts for each lesson. The authors created these materials for ease of use by the regular church volunteers. The entire curriculum has been field-tested and is now available online at <https://sites.google.com/site/eslministries/Home/esl-lessons/esl-lessons-based-on-virtues>.

There are a few philosophical and pedagogical principles behind the design of the curriculum. First, we consider the curriculum to be an "international bridge" because we recognize that the virtues are universal and human themes and that each culture has a lot to say about them. We would like to mine the wisdom of other cultures and welcome their perspectives, while emphasizing the notion that human aspirations alone, without God, are insufficient. We fall short of our own ideals and like the biblical law, the virtues remind us of how much we need God. Still, the virtues function like the wisdom literature in the Bible: as a bridge towards God. Christopher Wright stated in *The Mission of God*: "[T]o engage people's own answers to life's questions and then introduce them to how the Bible handles them can be a friendly, nonthreatening way of gaining people's interest in the wider truth of the biblical revelation" (Wright, 2006, p. 445). Hence the lessons of each virtue follow the sequence of: (a) a world culture focus, (b) a North American focus (to highlight the cultural aspect along with the language emphasis), and (c) a Biblical focus. These foci are reflected in each lesson's reading text, which is usually a tale, a story, or a passage from the Bible.

Second, we would like to provide a place to express honest doubts and struggles with life's difficulties. We believe that biblical answers to life's problems need to come through honest wrestling, and that this may provide the best foundation for a vital relationship with Jesus. This is where the wisdom literature has its place in the curriculum. "Wisdom provides a license to think, to wrestle, to struggle, to protest and to argue. All it asks is that we do so with the undergirding faith and humble commitment encapsulated in its own core testimony that 'the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom / and to shun evil is understanding'" (Job 28:28, NIV; Wright, p. 452). For example, through discussing

a case study of an immigrant couple's struggles in a lesson on Contentment, we ask, "Is it possible to be content in these circumstances?" and "What does *Contentment* mean?" The goal of the curriculum is to open up honest discussions in a loving, open atmosphere and through these questions, lead to discussion of faith issues naturally.

Thus, faith is connected with life and the purpose of *The Virtues* curriculum is to connect language with life. There are five basic sections in each lesson and each lesson begins with small talk and a review of homework. Each lesson ends with homework that is an integral part of the lesson. The section titled *Topic* is a reading text that includes scripture and discussion questions. Other sections consist of a variety of activities including the discussion of quotes and proverbs, pair work, or other interactive but thoughtful exercises. In our minds, the section titled *Topic to Life*, which offers discussion questions, is at least as important as the *Topic* because this is the application of the input of the lesson, whether thematically, scripturally, or linguistically.

These five subsections reflect the 4-A Model of principles for adult education: Ancor the lesson in the students' life experience, Add new information, seek to Apply that information in their lives, and ask what they can take Away from it (Goetzman, 2012). Thus, the subsections are like an arch that starts and ends with the students' lives. Language learning principles are implicit in that pragmatic components such as sociolinguistic, interactional, and cultural competence are just as important as linguistic components such as grammar and pronunciation. We have tried to attend to both categories, with varying degrees of emphasis depending on the content and the writer of the lesson. Speaking and conversation generally play an important part and this is reflected in activities such as class discussions, role-plays, case studies, or debates. We have introduced idioms that add to the cultural dimension. Grammar and other formal elements are occasionally emphasized, though they are not dealt with in isolation. We have tried to emphasize the affective domain by introducing game-like activities that help to lower students' inhibitions. Two examples of these activities are love poems and word search.

It is the authors' hope and prayer that the use of this curriculum will open up new possibilities for engaging language students in life and in faith, and more broadly, for contemplating such topics as language learning and teaching, as well as our missional responsibilities. I hope that this article has stimulated your interest in the curriculum. Why not go online to check it out, see how it reflects the principles expounded upon above, and download some of the lessons for use?

References

- Goetzman, D. (2012, September 26). *4 Steps for learning that lasts*. Retrieved from <http://www.globallearningpartners.com/blog/4-steps-for-learning-that-lasts>
- Wright, C. J. H. (2006). *The mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's grand narrative*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic.

Jennifer Yung is an ESL teacher. She received her certification from TESL Ontario. She has been a coordinator and materials-writer for a church ESL program in Toronto, Canada for the past 10 years. Her research interests include non-western learning styles and reflective practice in teaching. Jennifer is also an editor and a musician.



CELEA Policy on Advertising in CELEA News

At the editors' discretion, in consultation with the CELEA Board, *CELEA News* will publish advertisements that are relevant to CELEA readers. Print-ready advertising space for books, teaching materials, jobs and service opportunities may be purchased at the rate of US \$50 per ¼ page and US \$100 per ½ page. *CELEA News* will publicize relevant conferences and calls for proposals at no cost. All ads must be received in PDF, JPG, or TIFF formats.



CELEA News
Your Contributions Welcome

About CELEA News:

Guidelines for Contributions: CELEA News is the newsletter of the Christian English Language Educators Association (CELEA). We are particularly interested in receiving relevant announcements, news items, and especially submissions or ideas for our Articles section. We welcome short (about 250-500 words) or longer (up to about 2500 words) articles that describe a favorite classroom activity or teaching technique, reflect on experiences or interests you have had or are developing, or report on classroom or other research, etc. We also invite book, software, and other reviews, plus response articles to something published in CELEA News or elsewhere, or to relevant presentations you have attended, talks you have heard, etc. Writers might offer another perspective, raise some questions, or present new practical, philosophical, or theoretical points of view on topics of interest to CELEA members.

Submissions may be drawn from relevant conference presentations or report on readings you are familiar with or research you have carried out. Some articles will include a more obvious or detailed Christian perspective, while others may appear less so. Yet our main audience is clearly Christians, and in particular CELEA members and other people interested in relevant topics and issues from a Christian point of view. If you have an idea and are considering submitting an article, we would be happy for you to correspond with us about it. If it does not seem appropriate for CELEA News we might be able

to suggest other options. If you have something for us to consider, please first review articles in recent issues of the newsletter for models and examples, observing the style and format (e.g., APA, etc.). Prepare your submission as a Word document, and be careful to quote sources appropriately, include all references you mention, and respect the copyright of any authors you cite. Then contact us to state that you have something for us to consider for publication, and we'll work with you on it from there. We look forward to hearing from you, and possibly to working with you on your submission. Contact: ejpease2005@yahoo.com.

Letters to the Editor: We welcome your thoughts! You may want to post your ideas on the CELEA website for discussion. If you would like to write us, send your email to Eleanor Pease at ejpease2005@yahoo.com.

Subscriptions: Are you on our mailing list? If you are not but would like to be, email Eleanor Pease at ejpease2005@yahoo.com. Include your name, email address, where you're from, and a little about the kind of English teaching you do. We want to get to know you!

PASS IT ON! CELEA is a new organization for the benefit of Christian English teachers around the globe. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you feel would appreciate receiving it.

Christian English Language Educators Association

CELEA is a non-profit educational association which functions as the Christian English Language Educators Forum (CELEF) in conjunction with the annual TESOL convention, where it holds an academic session, booth, and networking session.



WEBSITE: CELEA.net

CELEA News

Editors

Laura McMullen, laura.bliss.mcmullen@gmail.com

Eleanor Pease, (online adjunct-Spring Arbor University), ejpease2005@yahoo.com

Quinn Dyrli (Luzerne County Community College, ALTA Program), qdyrli@luzerne.edu

Daniel McClary (Lancaster Bible College), dmcclary@lbc.edu

Photo from <https://letcteachers.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/dsc8356.jpg> (Available 3/17/2015.)