

EFL Capstone Portfolio

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### **Abstract**

The three main sections of this capstone demonstrate my successful completion of the Masters of Education in English Language Learners program (international track) and how my coursework meets EFL TESOL standards. The first section, philosophy of teaching, discusses three main points that guide how I view and enact quality EFL instruction. Culturally responsive pedagogy, student driven language instruction, and communicative language teaching are the three main elements that I attempt to use to guide my instruction and evaluate the artifacts presented in the second section. The second section, artifact analysis, examines different pieces of my work to illustrate that I am sufficiently prepared in four professional knowledge areas and their TESOL domains. The final section, application to practice, examines my overall progress of enacting my teaching philosophy, recognizes areas for continued growth, and outlines specific steps that will support personal professional development.

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## **Philosophy of Teaching**

The goal of ESL/EFL education programs is to provide all students with access to quality English instruction where they can acquire the tools they need to meet their educational and personal goals. I believe all students have the right to an education and that a challenging, positive English learning environment can help them take full advantage of opportunities both now and in the future. Quality EFL instruction should include elements of culturally responsive pedagogy, student driven language instruction, and communicative language teaching.

### **Culturally responsive pedagogy**

Culturally responsive teaching or pedagogy is increasingly being recognized as an important part of classroom instruction. It is a framework that can be used as a set of principles to build an equitable and safe environment that recognizes and values the contributions of all learners, particularly those not typically served by a traditional classroom design. Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) is relevant to EFL instruction when developing curricula and materials, building classroom community, and supporting a diverse work environment.

Tenets of culturally responsive teaching put forth by Geneva Gay (2018) emphasize that cultural differences are assets, that it is possible and necessary to maintain students' identity and culture while building classroom community. Gay (2018) discussed the importance of diversity in curriculum content and wrote "content about the histories, heritages, contributions, perspectives, and experience of different ethnic groups and individuals, taught in diverse ways, is essential to culturally responsive teaching (p.142)." I see a distinct need to ensure that CRP plays a governing role in development of curriculum and materials because as observed by Gay (2018), students of color are often "consumers" of classroom content who do not have a voice in

designing or creating or designing curriculum. In my future classroom I envision this taking the form of examining the textbooks and other provided materials with the intention of evaluating how they present information, their inclusivity, and accuracy. In the event that textbooks and curricula do not align with the guidelines of CRP, I believe quality teaching mandates adapting or supplementing to create an inclusive classroom that brings students closer to academic success and personal efficacy.

One specific possibility for supplementing materials to make them more inclusive could be adding bilingual texts and using them to their full potential. Milner (2015) found that bilingual texts increased learning opportunities and had the potential to make students confident to be the authority on a text. This shows the potential benefits of bringing multilingual resources into the classroom and I am to do that in order to access the multilingual and multicultural resources my students will bring to the class. It is important to carefully consider when and how it is necessary to evaluate and adapt materials and curriculum. This can be informed by guidelines suggested by Nation and Macalister (2010). While the systematic approach presented by Nation and Macalister is not focused on CRP, it is concerned with critically examining a text and can be used as a foundation. In order to integrate evaluation of CRP into this, I would suggest adding additional evaluation questions such as “Does this course book include elements of gender equity? Is this course book relatable and accessible to my learners?” These questions can be adjusted to evaluate curricula or assessments. Quality teaching does not only include what happens in a classroom in front of students but also critically choosing what materials to bring into the classroom. By asking critical questions and making adjustments informed by the tenets of CRP, I hope to create a successful environment for students.

Another feature of CRP that is crucial to quality instruction for learners is the cultivation of classroom community and a healthy learning environment. I believe that a healthy learning environment is generated by challenging students and scaffolding appropriately so that they can achieve mastery. All students can achieve mastery (Gay, 2018). This is supported by court rulings which protect ELL students' rights to access grade level content in an equitable manner (*Lau. v. Nichols*, 1974; *Casteñeda v. Pickard*, 1981). Elements of a healthy classroom environment that support mastery also include inclusivity, negotiating shared norms and expectations, and encouraging cooperative learning. I believe inclusivity in a classroom can take many forms depending on the students, their backgrounds, and the larger school environment. There is no one-size-fits-all answer for creating a classroom community. Therefore, I plan to regularly reevaluate the classroom dynamics, including both student-to-student and instructor-student relationships, to make sure that student needs are being met. Ideally, quality teaching helps each student feel welcome, supported, and valued in the classroom.

I believe that setting the tone for a class is extremely important to quality instruction and that it is necessary to explicitly teach expectations for the class and help students reach them. I recognize that the values and expectations for successful classroom teaching need to be based on shared norms. This is directly tied to the principle of an inclusive classroom because it cultivates an environment that is for everyone. In addition to this, another element of an inclusive classroom community can be tied to principles of cooperative learning. Johnson and Johnson (1995) describe cooperative learning and positive interdependence as students having the perception that they will reach their individual goals when the entire class reaches their goals. Facilitating this cooperative effort with quality instruction can appear as intentionally structuring instruction to include group work that can help students make the most of their own and their

classmates' learning. This specific style of instruction values what Summers and Svinicki (2007) identified as mastery goals, expanding skills and knowledge. I believe that cooperative learning and an emphasis on mastery goals can increase students' sense of belongingness in the classroom that, according to Freeman and Anderman (n.d.) as cited in Summers and Svinicki (2007), can contribute to students reporting high achievement motivation. Belongingness is a critical part of the classroom community and also CRP. Gay (2018) explains the importance of focusing on the collective wellbeing of the class while promoting academic excellence. I believe this does not mean to eliminate the individual identities of students but rather make space for each unique person in the class and value their contributions.

Lastly, the classroom community and norms should not be built solely around the values of the instructor. I believe that they need to be informed by the context in which I am teaching and the values that the larger community holds. Because I anticipate working within countries and communities I am not native to, I plan to fully utilize community resources and sources of knowledge. In particular, I believe that my colleagues from the context in which I am teaching can be an excellent resource to consult with questions regarding establishing classroom norms and classroom management. In addition to this, I hope to consult with colleagues on materials and curriculum to gain their insight into their relevance and appropriateness. In the event that changes need to be made, I am a proponent of working collaboratively with colleagues to make improvements. While I value and appreciate the possible collaborations and insights of future colleagues, I also consider it good teaching practice to take responsibility for educating myself on my teaching environment.

Culturally responsive pedagogy can present itself in different ways depending on the context. Regardless of context, an equitable classroom where differences are assets and

instruction is adapted to students must remain the cornerstone of EFL pedagogy. When teaching, I believe it is important to see if classroom practices, materials, curriculum, and instruction align with the key tenets of CRP (Gay, 2018; Milner, 2015). Teaching in a culturally responsive manner is an ongoing process. When and in the event that some elements of instruction don't align with CRP, it is good teaching practice to reevaluate and make changes.

### **Student driven language instruction**

Student driven language instruction can be realized by accessing the funds of knowledge, experiences, and strategies that students bring to the classroom. In addition to this, it is important to utilize bilingual or multilingual EFL students' linguistic knowledge. I believe all of these resources should be viewed as assets and used to inform teaching.

Part of successful teaching includes exploring community literacies and identifying their strengths and funds of knowledge as discussed by Moll et al. (1992) and applying them practically in the classroom. It is insufficient to only know learners in the classroom context because it provides an incomplete picture of learner identity. Beyond this, if what is learned about students' funds of knowledge is not applied to instruction meaningfully, it becomes an underutilized resource. I believe devoting time to understanding context and student specific funds of knowledge and following through in the classroom are critical to student driven language instruction. Integrating community literacies into classroom practices "makes it possible for teachers to better understand the life worlds of their students and build more meaningful relationships with them" (Jimenez et al., 2009, p. 18). This resonates with me because I believe that in order to be a good teacher, it is necessary to understand where students are coming from and to forge relationships with them.



I aim to move beyond a one dimensional teacher-student relationship by following best practices of these researchers and utilizing the historical and communal knowledge of my students to inform how, and what, I teach. Typical teacher-student relationships are understood as one dimensional; they are limited by what can be learned from a classroom that is “encapsulated, if not isolated, from the social worlds and resources of the community” (Moll et al., 1992, p. 134). It is critical to disrupt the typical dynamic by investing in learning about student experiences outside of the classroom and integrating it into instruction. Because I plan to work with university age students, the method of learning about the diverse funds of knowledge of students could be acquired differently than the research Moll et al. (1992) conducted by going to student homes and conducting interviews with families. I envision this could include structuring certain classroom activities to provide space for students to voluntarily share their home or community knowledges. It could also include becoming an advisor or mentor of a student club or event. By showing interest and participating in on campus student events, I can gain valuable insight that can be applied to the classroom setting.

While funds of knowledge can make powerful contributions to quality teaching, I also plan to integrate funds of strategies into my classroom instruction. Daniel and Zybina (2018) contrast funds of knowledge as students’ past experiences and background knowledge with funds of strategies as “how students approach learning new concepts and skills in new contexts” (p. 19). One of my aims as a teacher is to fully utilize student resources and support their individual paths to learning. I recognize that what may work for one student doesn’t automatically work for another student and that classroom instruction must be flexible and adaptable to what students need. Students are experts on what works for them when learning, even if they do not communicate it in the same way as an instructor. As discussed by Daniel and Zybina (2018),

students are “agents of their own learning” and have the ability to share their own “strategies of success in the classroom and express their preferences about what helps them learn best” (p. 3). I hope to enact this in my own classroom by giving students opportunities to explore using different learning strategies and determine what strategies are most successful for them.

With the knowledge and awareness that students are a key resource of information in constructing a productive classroom, I believe it is good teaching practice to listen to student input regarding their own learning and make changes to my teaching so that students can fully utilize all of their learning strategies. I recognize that students’ funds of strategies may vary between teaching contexts and that they may be non-traditional to a typical classroom setting. Regardless, the goal of English instruction is to meet student needs and provide them with the tools to succeed as learners now in the future. Therefore, it is critical to support the development of student agency over their own learning and embrace the use of non-traditional, student driven funds of strategies. By combining both funds of knowledge and funds of strategies, I plan to utilize prior knowledge to inform student driven instruction and also make the classroom a more responsive and productive space for students.

### **Communicative language teaching**

One final critical part of quality language instruction is communicative language teaching (CLT). I believe that this includes providing comprehensible input to learners and encouraging student progress with productive output. Providing frequent and varied opportunities for communicative learning can contribute to goal driven instruction for students. The meaning of CLT has evolved since the 1970s and Dornyei’s (2009) ‘principled communicative approach’ (PCA) is informed by research and relevant to today’s teaching. The blending of explicit and implicit learning serves as a beneficial way to provide authentic input while helping students

focus on form and eventual L2 mastery that is not found with a solely implicit instruction approach (Dornyei, 2009). CLT can be defined as learning with the purpose of communication. As discussed by Duff (2014) types of productive output should not be limited to oral production; written output needs to be considered a type of communication as well. It is also necessary to consider that the target audience for communication can vary based on the goal of an activity and quality instruction plans for this with appropriate scaffolding (Duff, 2014).

In order for CLT to have the maximum positive impact on a classroom, it needs to be implemented consistently and adapted to fit each teaching context. The principle of creating meaning-focused instruction that maintains intrinsic motivation and encourages critical thinking should serve as a guide to creating CLT appropriate for different contexts (Dornyei, 2009; Duff, 2014). While CLT can look different in different contexts, varied interaction patterns emphasizing collaborative efforts to negotiate meaning should be prominent in CLT focused classrooms. I interpret this to include group work, pair work, and opportunities to personalize activities and assignments. One area of PCA that is an important addition to CLT is ensuring that teaching provides a focus on form and function of language within the context of authentic L2 interactions (Dornyei, 2009). When teaching, this can be operationalized as not neglecting accuracy and clarity of student output in favor of general communication skills. I believe that students should be able to communicate appropriately and be understood in the classroom context as well as future contexts.

PCA also discusses the importance of “extensive exposure to large amounts of L2 input” to encourage student’s implicit learning abilities (Dornyei, 2009, p. 41). In the classroom, I plan to provide relevant input to students both orally and in writing. Seeing that students will interact with other L2 speakers of English while studying and in the future, it is important to include

these voices in the classroom as well as my own. L2 input can come from peers, digital resources, textbooks, supplementary materials, and student identified resources. When selecting input sources for students, I will choose resources that support meeting student objectives. When deciding what level L2 input is appropriate, it is beneficial to consult Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input theory of  $i+1$ . While varied and extensive input can be beneficial, it is important to present the input in a way that can be utilized by students while also being authentic and appropriately scaffolded.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, culturally responsive pedagogy, student driven language instruction, and communicative language teaching are instrumental in my view of quality teaching. These principles guide how I view a productive classroom and my role as a language instructor. However, as the TESOL field continues to learn more about best practices, I am certain my own perspectives on delivering quality instruction will evolve. These three main areas create a foundation that informs my teaching and can be adapted as I learn more through research and classroom instruction.

## **Artifact Analysis**

### **Professional Knowledge Area 1: The Learner**

Professional knowledge area 1 refers to the learner or the individual learning English. In some contexts, the learner is a student in an English classroom. However, an individual's identity is not defined by their time in the classroom and they are also a learner in other aspects of their life. When a student leaves the classroom, they continue to be exposed to information in English or stimuli that is relevant and applicable to their identity as a student. Successful instruction for

learners must consider who they are and how their environment influences student needs and best teaching practices. Additionally, in order to teach learners effectively, it is important to understand how a student acquires English both in and out of the classroom. Language teaching should be responsive to the principles of language acquisition and how the specific language learning journeys of learners are shaped by their identity and context.

#### **TESOL Domain 4: Identity and Context**

*Teachers understand the importance of **who learners are** and how their **communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning**. Teachers recognize the importance of how **context contributes to identity formation** and therefore influences learning. Teachers use this **knowledge of identity and settings in planning, instructing, and assessing**.*

Student identity is shaped by external factors and an understanding of the complex layers that create student identity should be used to inform pedagogy. Factors that contribute to student learner identity are specific and context dependent. However, cultural backgrounds, motivations, and community or environmental factors all contribute to who a learner is. I believe it is necessary to examine these external factors and utilize them to create the most beneficial classroom for learners.

#### **Artifact A: Community Literacies in Nashville's Guatemalan Community**

This artifact, written during Foundations for ELL Education (EDUC 6520), explores the Guatemalan community of Nashville's Nolensville Pike corridor. Research for this paper included visiting Nolensville Pike and identifying community resources that could be used to inform instruction in an ESL classroom with a large Guatemalan contingent. I observed different businesses and services with Spanish or bilingual signs in the area and visited several of them to collect information about the Spanish speaking Latino community. I considered how community

literacies related to the Nolensville Pike corridor could be used to generate lessons that were responsive to learner identity and out of class contexts. Artifact A (see appendix, p. 46) illustrates different levels of analysis of community resources and my ability to plan how these can inform classroom instruction.

I had some background knowledge of the concept that students from Guatemala might have literacies in languages other than Spanish. Because of this, I attempted to research the multilingualism of the Guatemalan community in Nashville. I could not find statistics on the number of Guatemalans in Nashville who spoke primarily indigenous Maya languages and instead approached this question by examining census records from Guatemala. While the information I found might not be directly transferable to the Nashville setting, it does provide insights that are extremely useful to learning more about the learner community and heritage languages. Knowing that 41.66% of the population of Guatemala spoke one of 22 Maya languages (XII Censo Nacional de Población y VII Censo Nacional de Vivienda, 2018) changed how I thought about these students' identity as multilinguals with a variety of linguistic resources.

One successful portion of this artifact was my ability to utilize my own Spanish language skills as a resource to communicate with local business people and gain insight into their businesses and their patrons. One businesswoman I spoke to explained the business model of her international shipping company and shared pamphlets on the costs of shipping to central American countries. Without speaking to her, I would not have known that her business was always in demand and that remittance services were a critical part of her community. Having greater awareness of the transnational identities of individuals in the Nolensville Pike area is critical to understanding the complexities of the Nashville Guatemalan population as learners.

In direct connection to my teaching philosophy, Artifact A includes a discussion of a potential future culturally responsive lesson plan that was student driven and conscious of students' background knowledge (see appendix, p. 51). The plan suggests a student project translating informational shipping pamphlets to budget out the cost of shipping specific items from Nashville, and negotiate in small groups what items to send. This task would be student driven and focus on items students wish to send to members of their communities in Guatemala. As some students may have sent or received international packages in the past, they are more likely to utilize their background knowledge rather than invent answers.

One shortcoming of this artifact is the tendency to stay on surface level cultural factors such as types of available food in international markets. This does not contribute to a better understanding of who learners are and how they are shaped by their communities. A better connection to food might be to have students collect and evaluate menus or flyers from different community restaurants and businesses. This could be expanded by having students write or record an advertisement for the location in English. This possible classroom instruction helps students bridge a service that they use in their community with how to talk about it in a different context. As discussed in my teaching philosophy, it is important to go deeper than surface level connections to "culture". This aligns with my views on the importance of utilizing funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) and how to select culturally responsive materials (Gay, 2018).

### **TESOL Domain 6: Learning**

*Teachers draw on their **knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom settings. They use this knowledge to support adult language learning.***

An understanding of second language acquisition is a critical part of a teacher's tool box when helping learners meet their language learning goals. It is necessary to have a working knowledge of the practical applications of SLA in the classroom because it helps a teacher better understand the processes of learning a language and designing relevant resources. This is another dimension of understanding learners and can be supported by designing a culturally responsive classroom that utilizes students' background knowledge and community literacies.

### **Artifact B: Final Case Study Report: A Linguistic Analysis of an Afghan University**

#### **Student**

This final case study for Educational Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (EDUC 6530) was an in-depth analysis of the pragmatics, phonology, syntax and morphology, and semantics of one EL's oral and written language. The subject of this case study was an 18 year-old female Afghan university student and I focused on characteristics of her language, connections to theories of SLA, and how her linguistic profile can be used to inform her English instruction and that of ELs with a similar profile.

In this artifact (see appendix, p. 60), I conducted an interview with the study subject, Nikbakht, to better understand her linguistic background. One of the first things I learned was that in addition to her English skills, she was fluent in two languages and had the ability to read and recite a third language. Without this interview and asking questions about her linguistic background, I would not have known that she had those resources available to her and may have overlooked their potential impact on her acquisition of English as well as how they could be utilized to assist her in her journey as an EL. By attempting to better understand who Nikbakht was as learner, I discovered elements of student driven language instruction from my teaching philosophy, specifically funds of strategies (Daniel and Zybyna, 2018) and pieces of background



knowledge (Moll et al. 1992), that were applicable to creating a student driven learning environment.

This artifact is a snapshot of the student's development as an EL and gave insight into areas of strength and areas for improvement that can be used to inform classroom instruction. One of the phonological challenges identified in her speech was "with is the pronunciation of the fricative dental pulmonic consonants, /ð/and /θ/" (see appendix, p. 66). In the artifact I suggest that "one of the reasons why Nikbakht might have difficulty with fricative dental sounds is because neither /ð/ nor /θ/ are consonant sounds in Dari or Pashto and therefore they are not part of the pronunciation she learned during the sensitive period of language acquisition" (see appendix, p. 67). Fortunately, the student is able to read and recite Koranic Arabic which contains the letters ث , the approximation of /θ/ in the word 'thought', and ذ , which is very similar to /ð/ in 'they' (Lebanese Arabic Institute, 2017). If a connection was made for the student between these sounds in one of her English classes, she may be able to isolate them and produce them with greater accuracy. In order to continue learning this in the out of classroom setting as Domain 6 discusses, the artifact suggests the student continue her habit of watching TedTalks and speeches by President Obama but "watching the speeches with subtitles and focusing on the speaker's pronunciation of /ð/ and /d/ and then reading those lines aloud herself while trying to place her tongue in the appropriate place in her mouth [to produce the correct phonology]" (see appendix, pp. 68-69).

In relation to the philosophy of teaching, the artifact shows evidence of consideration of the cultural context of Afghanistan and discusses the interaction between cultural norms and pragmatics in oral language when disagreeing with peers and persuading figures of authority. It is beneficial to understand the student's perspective on disagreeing and how she contextualized it

culturally. As I am not familiar with the nuances of Afghan culture, this provides foundational information that should be used when teaching this in the EFL Afghan context. The student commented “I don’t know if it is our culture or not, but for me it is very difficult for me to say no to everyone....maybe it is a culture thing somehow but for me it is difficult to say no” (see appendix, p. 62). If the purpose of the interview had focused specifically on pragmatics, this could have been followed up with additional interview questions that could have resulted in more detailed insights.

From the perspective of culturally responsive pedagogy discussed in my teaching philosophy, it is necessary for discussions around pragmatics to include student voices and perspectives on pragmatic norms in their home culture and language. These can be utilized to help students identify appropriate pragmatics in English and the points of intersection with their other linguistic repertoires. Pragmatics can vary greatly depending on the culture and community of origin of a student and these factors should be considered when creating a culturally responsive classroom. This artifact demonstrates an analysis of the learner, her linguistic pragmatic features, and how they are shaped by her identity. However, there is one area of improvement to better meet Domain 6. The artifact falls short of suggesting ways to bridge the pragmatic gap between the EFL classroom context and the out of class L1 context.

Overall, identity and context and learning are two critical TESOL domains that create a clear image of the learner. Identity and context, as illustrated in Artifact A, shapes who a learner is and how they interact with English in and out of the classroom. Artifact A demonstrates the importance of cultural responsiveness and student driven language instruction as well as examples of practical application. It is important to recognize that while Artifact A attempted to explore the identity of the learner, the surface level examination of connections to culture leaves

room for more meaningful exploration of learner identity and how it can be represented in the classroom. Learning, as shown in Artifact B, can be understood from the perspective of second language acquisition. SLA is a complex process and can be examined with analysis of pragmatics, phonology, syntax and morphology, and semantics. Artifact B has four sections of linguistic analysis and when combined, these elements create an image of who a learner is and where they are in their process of English acquisition. This can be used to inform teaching that is responsive to student needs and utilizes their strengths. One notable feature of Artifact B is how much informal information was gathered by doing a longer interview that gathered data on a student's community and perceptions of their own uses of English and other languages. This information was invaluable when designing a culturally responsive, individualized plan that best utilized the learning strategies the student was already using as well as their full range of linguistic resources.

Understanding professional knowledge area 1, the learner, is critical to creating effective classroom instruction. This can be done by developing knowledge of learner identity and how it is shaped by their cultural background, community context, and how an individual acquires a second language. It is important to recognize that the learner does not exist in isolation. The next section of this paper will examine the learning contexts and how the learner interacts with formal and informal learning environments.

### **Professional Knowledge Area 2: The Learning Contexts**

Professional knowledge area 2 focuses on the environments where students learn. Because learning does not stop the moment a student leaves a traditional classroom, it is important to connect traditional and non-traditional student learning contexts. Although students might share the same classroom, their relationships with a formal learning space could be vastly

different due to unique out of class experiences and environments. As facilitators of learning, instructors have a responsibility to understand the intersection between the informal and formal learning environments and tailor their pedagogical approach to meet student needs while maximizing learning.

### **TESOL Domain 2: Instructing**

*Teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners **in purposeful learning** and promote **respectful classroom interactions**.*

TESOL domain 2 discusses the role of teachers to create a supportive learning environment and specifies that a supportive learning environment includes purposeful learning and a respectful classroom environment. This domain highlights the need to engage all learners, suggesting a focus on equitable learning and the necessity to differentiate for mixed ability classes. I interpret purposeful learning to mean having clear, contextualized, language and content goals for lessons as well as a connection to larger student, course, and program outcomes (Brown, 2001). The last part of this domain discusses promoting respectful classroom interactions. This includes interactions between students as well as with the instructor. This is connected to culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018) and I believe “respectful interactions” should be defined and agreed on when building classroom community (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Summers & Svinicki, 2007). These specific aspects of classroom instruction help to make a productive and supportive learning environment for students to meet their goals.

### **Artifact C: SIOP Lesson Plan**

In order to illustrate knowledge of TESOL domain 2 and learning contexts, I have chosen a lesson plan and rationale I designed for Methods of Educating English Language Learners (EDUC 6540). This lesson plan and rationale were designed to meet the needs of adult ESL

students in my practicum at the Vanderbilt University English Language Center (ELC). I designed this lesson partway through the semester of co-teaching the general English class (GES) that focuses on developing conversation skills. While I have not implemented this lesson in the GES class yet, I designed it to contribute to and uphold the classroom community values the class had identified over the semester. I also designed the scaffolds within the lesson to meet the individual and collective needs of students.

I chose this artifact because it demonstrates my attention to learner identity and integrates student opportunities for learning outside the classroom with meaningful collaboration in the classroom. The lesson uses two authentic materials, an article and a video, and is centered on the theme of environmental responsibility. Students are asked to consider the question “What does it mean to be ‘responsible’ when visiting shared natural spaces” (see appendix, p. 83)

This lesson plan followed the SIOP model and included both content and language objectives (see appendix, p. 83). As discussed in the lesson plan rationale, “Based on guidelines put forth by Echevarria et al. (2017), these content and language objectives are written to include specific, measurable goals, be observable, and promote student academic growth.” Scaffolding steps to achieve objectives for the class have been integrated throughout the lesson in individual and group work. This includes having the students begin with reading the text individually and answering questions before they move into discussing it with partners or groups. In this lesson, a variety of interaction patterns are used as scaffolds to differentiate for a mixed level group of students to ensure classroom teaching does not prioritize the learning of one student over another. Echevarria et al. (2017) state that “‘Just because they don’t speak English proficiently doesn’t mean they can’t think!’” Therefore, SIOP teachers include in their lesson plans a variety of higher-order thinking questions and tasks (p.150).” In the lesson, students are asked to use

higher order thinking skills to connect what they read to their own ideas. The lesson excerpt below illustrates how students are encouraged to connect the text to their out-of-class contexts and also to their own opinions:

Do you think returning trash to people by mail is an effective way to get them to stop littering in parks? Why/why not? What other **strategies** could parks use to get people to stop littering? What **strategies** do parks in your home country use to stop littering?

Take notes to support your opinion. Support your opinion with ideas from the text, and your own ideas. Find a partner with a different opinion and share. (see appendix, p. 84)

In the example above, open-ended questions that do not have a clear right answer require students to refer back to the text as well as their own experiences to formulate their answer and support it. If the task had only included the first two questions, “Do you think returning trash to people by mail is an effective way to get them to stop littering in parks?” and “What other **strategies** could parks use to get people to stop littering?”, students may give a yes/no answer for the first question and have limited replies to the second question because there is no scaffolding reminding them to draw on their prior knowledge. The addition of “Why/why not?” and “What **strategies** do parks in your home country use to stop littering?” encourage students to expand on their answers and connect to the out-of-class context. The last instruction, “Support your opinion with ideas from the text, and your own ideas” reiterates the importance of referring to the text and supporting responses with additional information. By explicitly stating students should draw on their personal knowledge, this makes space for background knowledge in the classroom and encourages connections between in-class material and the out-of-class context.

This lesson demonstrates purposeful learning because it connects to student goals that were discussed in the beginning of the semester. At the beginning of the class, my co-teacher and

I gave students a survey to find out what content topics they were interested in and what areas of English language skills they felt most and least comfortable with. This survey, coupled with discussions over the first half of the semester, evidenced that students wanted to be able to converse more easily with others, navigate cultural differences, and understand current topics in the news. The lesson utilizes a BBC news article “Thai national park sends rubbish back to tourists” (2020) and a video titled *Tips on How to Keep National Parks Clean* (2018) to connect students to the topic and provides multiple opportunities for students to share their background knowledge. Because the class has students from seven different countries, the intended group dynamics and activities facilitate cross-cultural knowledge sharing.

In order to support the principle of respectful classroom interactions and make the lesson a reflection of the norms that were set up in the beginning of the semester and reinforced throughout, I refer back to opinion/disagree/agree sentence stems that were the topic of a previous class:

Use discussion sentence stems taught in previous class (handout from previous class) to respond to your partner. Ex: I see your point but... Have you considered ...? I disagree because.... I believe... From my point of view...(see appendix, p. 85)

By reinforcing this vocabulary and providing evidence for opinions essential to achieving the lesson objectives, students are encouraged to have respectful interactions that align with the norms they have set as a classroom community.

While designing this lesson and considering my diverse learners from 7 countries, I attempted to reflect the principles of CRP by consciously making space for students to share their experiences from their home countries and their cultural norms with each other and then compare it to their current U.S. context. This lesson does not intend to prioritize one culture over

another and requires students from different contexts to design a set of norms that include all of their perspectives. The lesson also encourages multilingualism and requires students to practice translanguaging in order to make their final product (a poster) more accessible to a wide audience (see appendix, p. 85).

One area where this lesson could be strengthened is with connecting out of classroom learning to in classroom learning. One student centered modification to this lesson plan would be to assign students to take pictures of signs with guidelines for visiting public spaces that they saw in their own communities to share and analyze with the class. I also think the instructions I included for students to “Choose a specific natural place with your group. For example: a park in your city, the beach, a lake, a national park, a hiking trail” are too vague and could become decontextualized and less purposeful for students (see appendix, p. 85). In order to address this, I would have students identify natural spaces that they had visited in Nashville and then group students based on their background knowledge and interest.

Learning contexts are directly connected to curriculum planning and content. Curriculum should be designed to meet the needs of the learner and must consider how a learning context shapes what curriculum is appropriate and meaningful. A well developed and goal-oriented curriculum is critical to designing opportunities for purposeful student driven learning. The next section will discuss creating curriculum frameworks and content that guide instruction.

### **Professional Knowledge Area 3: Curriculum**

Large curricular goals aim to guide an entire course or program and serve as a roadmap for teachers. Individual lessons, units, courses, and program curricula are connected and build upon one another to contribute to larger curricular goals. Therefore, for the purpose of this



capstone, I will examine my work on course and program level planning as well as lesson level content and instruction in order to illustrate my growth as an EFL teacher in this knowledge area.

### **TESOL Domain 1: Planning**

*Teachers plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals, and **modify plans** to assure learner engagement and achievement.*

TESOL domain 1 refers to the steps that an instructor takes in their own instruction to meet the goals of the learner and their ability to adapt their curriculum choices to meet student needs. In order to do this successfully, an instructor first has to understand the needs of the learner and their goals. If a lesson is well designed but fails to address student learning goals, it will not assure achievement. Artifact D (see appendix, p. 90) will show a backwards designed program curriculum and supporting rationale intended to guide implementation and promote student achievement.

#### **Artifact D: Program Curriculum and Rationale**

The curriculum and rationale were designed in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EDUC 6560) and revised a previous writing curriculum that I created as part of a team at a university. The curriculum was revised with the intention of creating a meaningful document for new teachers in the program and includes information on student English proficiency, course progression, and major writing assignments. The rationale portion of this artifact serves as a reference for new teachers that will assist with implementation.

The original program, referred to as the Academy, was designed as a bridge program and intended to exit students into a four year university program without EFL support. The gatekeeper for the Academy was the TOEFL PBT and if a student scored above a 500, they were able to enter directly into the university. Students scoring below 500 were divided into two levels

and assigned either a one or two semester program track, depending on their English level. Designing the curriculum for each of these courses was a particular challenge because students could take both of the courses or only place into the higher level. There was some overlap between the content of the two courses in order to provide necessary foundational knowledge to the students who placed directly into the higher level. At the same time, it was important to not dedicate too much time reviewing fundamentals that the students are expected to know.

This artifact illustrates attention to promoting student achievement and focusing on student goals because of the backwards design questions that guided my thought process in making changes to the original curriculum I had developed two years prior. The two questions I used to guide the development of this writing curriculum were:

1. Are students prepared to write 5 paragraph academic essays that are sufficiently developed, contain relevant and detailed evidence, and demonstrate coherence and cohesion in the following rhetorical styles? 2. After finishing ENG 098 and 099, do students have the necessary skills to take AUAF's ENG 110, a mainstream first-year composition course, without specific ESL support? (see appendix, p. 90)

Each of the courses, ENG 098 and ENG 099, focused on developing competency in four different rhetorical styles and by the end of two semesters, students would have covered eight different styles that would be applicable to their future goals as academic writers in the university setting. As I explain in the rationale document supporting the curricular choices, the rhetorical styles selected for this curriculum were chosen and sequenced to scaffold them logically according to difficulty and style.

Table 4. (see appendix, pp. 93-94)		
Narrative Paragraph- (Past topics included: overcoming adversity, learning a valuable lesson, achieving something great)		
Stage	Purpose	Typical language features
<b>Title</b>	Attract attention, orient reader to the topic	Possessive pronouns, nouns, descriptive adjectives
<b>Topic Sentence</b>	Introduce the topic with a main idea and controlling idea	Personal pronouns, superlatives
<b>Major supporting detail</b> <b>Minor supporting detail (x2)</b>	X3 Provide support for the main idea (major details) Provide specific examples clarify and give additional information (minor details)	Transitions of time (first, second, next, before..), simple past (regular and irregular)
<b>Conclusion Sentence</b>	Wrap up the topic and remind the reader of the main point	Conclusion transitions (in conclusion, to wrap up...)
*Knowledge of stages, purposes, and language features are cumulative. See previous writing assignments for previously covered items.		

Artifact D's table 4 (see appendix, pp. 93-94), shown above, illustrates "the stages, purposes, and language features" of one writing assignment in the curriculum. As one of the main goals of the Academy is to equip students to develop effective academic writing skills, it is critical to have a detailed analysis of the components of a successfully completed writing task. For example, table 4 is designed as a reference to instructors of the key features of a narrative paragraph and can be used to create logically sequenced lessons that address these different topics. The scaffolding and intention for this guide to inform but not dictate lesson planning provides an opportunity for instructors to adapt the material as needed in order to meet student needs and encourage student engagement. The narrative paragraph table serves as a guide of what should be included, but is not so specific that an instructor cannot have the classroom autonomy to decide *how* this needs to be taught to students.

This curriculum shows a connection to principles of CLT as discussed in my teaching philosophy. Both of the courses include the outcome "Students will discuss ideas, opinions, and personal experiences related to rhetorical genres and topics in class" (see appendix, pp. 92-93). CLT is also present in the corresponding course objective "Students will be able to increase oral

fluency through speaking activities involving sharing ideas, opinions, and experiences on topics from the course” (see appendix, pp. 91, 93). I believe that this macro curriculum demonstrates clear planning that intends to foster meaningful communicative learning across the program.

In addition, the curriculum design includes multiple opportunities for students to produce a variety of written output in English. Each of the major assignments is on a different topic and written in a different style. Therefore, it is possible for students to have the opportunity to communicate with a different audience for each of these assignments. Artifact D also demonstrates that the curriculum intends to engage students in the writing process rather than only focusing on a final product. This encourages additional opportunities for different types of written production as well as engaging with classmates in revision. One of the outcomes listed in the curriculum is “Students will analyze peer writing samples and compose constructive feedback” (see appendix, pp. 92-93). With this outcome, students become both the recipient of a classmate’s work and the individual providing valuable input to a classmate. As the person in possession of knowledge and responsible for this exchange, the student participates in a critical exchange that will be authentically repeated again and again throughout their academic career as they collaborate with others.

The curriculum rationale portion of artifact D (see appendix, p. 97) was designed to provide new teachers with an introduction to specific teaching environment constraints (Nation & Macalister, 2020), student population characteristics and beneficial guidelines for teaching teens and adults (Brown, 2001), and relevant EFL teaching trends. In addition to this, the rationale also touches on Milner’s Opportunity Gap Framework (2015) and its application to the Afghan university context. These guiding principles and tips are critical to understanding learner goals and external factors that influence engagement and achievement. It also shows the

importance of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018) and its connections to curriculum on a program level. This knowledge can be beneficial when implementing the program curriculum and developing individual lessons that act as building blocks of the courses.

One area where artifact D falls short of the professional knowledge area is in the course outcomes and objectives for the two writing courses (see appendix, pp. 91-93). While there are clear outcomes and objectives informed by the concept of planning with the end in mind (Nation & Macalister, 2020), there is not sufficient scaffolding of curricular content between the two courses. As is evidenced by the course outcomes, there is a significant amount of repetition. The curriculum would have benefitted from specific differentiation of course outcomes and explanation of how these would be achieved in a way that utilizes prior knowledge as a foundation. This could have helped this curriculum better align with my teaching philosophy, specifically the portion on student driven language instruction.

While the discussion of curriculum planning above focuses on the macro or program level, the following section will examine curriculum content within one free-standing lesson of a different course.

### **TESOL Domain 7: Content**

*Teachers understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. Teachers understand that the content of the language course is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area. Teachers design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about.*

Content of a language course varies considerably depending on the constraints of the classroom, requirements of administrators, and available resources. However, it is necessary to maintain focus on the goal of teaching students the language they need “*to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area.*” Identifying what language supports this goal as well as principles of a communicative classroom are key steps to developing an environment for successful language learning.

**Artifact E: Observation Lesson Plan and Materials (English Language Center Practicum)**

This artifact demonstrates my ability to create a communicative lesson that helps students learn and use authentic language in a way that is meaningful to their goals and relevant to their lives outside of the classroom. I designed and implemented this lesson plan and materials for a mixed level remote class at Vanderbilt University’s English Language Center (ELC). Each lesson for this class was a stand alone class and students did not have to have attended the previous class to fully participate in the lesson. This lesson demonstrates a smaller level curriculum plan and I focused on attention to student needs, goals, and future applications of the target language when creating the content of the lesson.

When designing this lesson I focused on three objectives: “(1) SWBAT orally use key phrases to agree/disagree about different topics, (2) SWBAT acknowledge someone else’s point of view and disagree/ or affirm while adding more information, and (3) SWBAT identify various perspectives on different topics” (see appendix, p. 101). These objectives show an effort to have specific goals and aims to guide the lesson. While these objectives function well as EFL classroom content, they could be better connected to have a well-developed lesson with an easily identifiable theme or topic. In creating these objectives, I attempted to strike a balance between

specificity and not being excessively detailed because I believe it is important that students understand the purpose of the lesson without being bogged down with too much information.

The lesson successfully introduced a wide range of phrases for sharing opinions in conversation (see appendix, p. 103). The target vocabulary does exceed the normally recommended quantity of new vocabulary for one lesson. However, as indicated in my lesson plan (see appendix, p. 101), students were given the vocabulary in advance and instructed to pick vocabulary that was new and relevant for them. Because the students in this class were mixed level, it was beneficial to give them time to review the target language in advance and self-identify what language they wanted to use in class. This allowed for individualization of the lesson as well as freedom for students to choose what language they would be most likely to use authentically in their lives. The variety of phrases encouraged students to push themselves to gain mastery over new language while connecting it to familiar vocabulary. One area related to CLT that could have been improved is for me to make more explicit connections on when and where students would use this language. Helping students contextualize the language may have been beneficial in creating more authentic, communicative exchanges.

One strength of this artifact is the evidence of pushing for authentic language use in multiple parts of the lesson. Immediately following the warm up, the lesson plan indicates an introduction to the topic (language of agreeing/disagreeing, supporting opinion) and how this language can be used (see appendix, p. 102). The controlled practice portion of this lesson focused on students completing a gap fill dialogue with appropriate phrases that fit the logic of the rest of the sentences. When I wrote this two person dialogue (see appendix, pp.104-106), I intended for there to be more than one possible answer for each gap. When students worked on

this activity together, they had to discuss the perspective of the speaker and then use a different opinion phrase for each gap.

While this activity was meaningful because it required critical thinking, discussion, and application of the target language, it did not fully meet the domain's requirement of focusing content on a "*subject or content areas they want/need to learn about.*" The subject of the gap fill was two people with different opinions discussing a new recycling program in Nashville. This may not have been of particular interest to students and does not align with my discussion of culturally responsive pedagogy, specifically materials development, discussed in my teaching philosophy. This could have been addressed either by choosing a different topic that would have been more accessible to the students or by introducing the activity differently. If the warm up had been related to recycling and activated students' background knowledge on the topic, there would have been a more authentic and natural transition to the content of the controlled practice.

One part of this artifact that illustrates the element of CLT from my teaching philosophy is the freer practice portion of the lesson (see PowerPoint, slides 6-11). The five different topics allowed students to discuss their opinion on a variety of topics. I selected these topics because they would be familiar and students would be able to use their background knowledge to support their opinions. The cognitive work of this activity was focused on using the target language in an exchange with another student rather than trying to understand or discuss a topic they were encountering for the first time. That being said, some of the topics were very low stakes and it is possible that students would not see this activity as transferrable to their day to day conversations outside the classroom. In order to counterbalance this, it may be helpful to ask students to draw support for their opinions from their own personal experiences or cultures.



In addition to this, the lesson the following week utilized the opinion language again to discuss a more controversial topic of the fall of 2020- the U.S. presidential election. While each of the classes for this course is a stand-alone lesson, I introduced students to this language in an intentionally low-stakes context so that they could become comfortable using the target language before they had to apply it in a more complex setting. As a form of cultural responsiveness, I do not think it would have been responsible or beneficial to introduce students to this language using a socially and politically charged topic. By scaffolding these lessons, I believe I prepared them to use the language and communicate successfully, as discussed by TESOL domain 7.

To conclude, curriculum choices must be centered on student goals and reflect the need for authentic language input and output. It is necessary to evaluate English learner development and performance in order to make meaningful, appropriate curriculum choices as an instructor, specifically related to planning and content. The final section and TESOL domain will discuss conducting a meaningful assessment and utilizing the collected information as a guide to inform instructional choices.

## **Professional Knowledge Area 4: Assessment**

### **TESOL Domain 3: Assessing**

*Teachers recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner. **Teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction “on the spot” and for the future.** Teachers involve learners in determining what will be assessed and provide constructive feedback to learners, based on assessments of their learning.*

Assessing student performance is a critical and ongoing part of language instruction. Information obtained from assessments can be used to create meaningful curriculum and instruction choices which can then be assessed for understanding and mastery at a later point. This circular pattern informs future instruction and can help to provide productive feedback to students. Students often want specific, actionable feedback and in order to provide that, instructors need to do frequent multiple types of assessment. This is not to say that all assessment is summative and high-stakes, but that it should take many forms and meet student needs and learning goals.

**Artifact B: Final Case Study Report: Linguistic Analysis of an Afghan University Student**

Artifact B ( see appendix, p. 60) has been analyzed previously in the context of professional knowledge area 1, the learner. In PKA 1 I examined Artifact B to illustrate the importance of understanding the learning process, SLA, and how it related to the learner. For professional knowledge area 4, assessment, I chose to examine artifact B to illustrate assessment of an individual's oral and written language production. The artifact evaluates different features of the student's language and gives individualized constructive feedback and suggestions for continuing to address areas for improvement. These suggestions could be acted on by the student in independent learning outside the classroom, or used to inform the direction of instructor guided learning.

This artifact required the student to respond orally and in writing to prompts that could be used to assess pragmatics, phonology, syntax and morphology. Two oral response tasks focused on examining the student's grasp of pragmatics. Task 1 was "decline to share [your] class notes with a peer who did not take their own notes" and task 2 was "decline to lend 1000 Afghan Afghanis (Afs) (approximately 13 USD) to a friend who needed it to pay for their tuition"(see

appendix, p. 63, p. 64). 1000 Afs was equivalent to 13 USD at the time of the interview and had the purchasing power of buying lunch for five days at the university cafeteria. While it is not an exceptionally large sum, students attending the university may not have a lot of expendable income. The student's responses to these prompts indicated pragmatic awareness and use of politeness and a non-confrontational manner (Yule, 2017). Knowing that this is an area of strength for this student gives necessary background information to make appropriate decisions for future instruction as described in domain 3. In this case however, the artifact does not elaborate on what would be appropriate instructional steps to expand this student's grasp of this concept.

Another assessment task in this artifact required the student to give an oral persuasive argument to an authority figure instead of responding to their peer in an informal setting. Task 3 was "request additional time from [your] professor to go to complete [your] daily prayers" (see appendix, p. 65). The artifact demonstrates that this task and student response were utilized to evaluate pragmatics and syntax. By interpreting the response information for two different features of language, the assessment was able to gather information in a way that was less time consuming and laborious for the student.

The phonology assessment of this student indicated a pronunciation challenge the student faced and also helped to identify that it was a pattern rather than an isolated occurrence.

Table 5 (see appendix, p. 67)			
Fricative dental pronunciation of /ð/			
Word	Standard N. American pronunciation	Produced pronunciation	Comments
the	/ðə/ /ði/ (before a vowel sound)	/də/ /di/	correctly applies rule of different pronunciation of /ə/ and /i/ depending on its position before a vowel sound
this	/ðɪs/	/dɪs/	
that	/ðæt/	/dæt/	
that's	/ðæts/	/dæts/	

they	/ðei/	/dei/	
then	/ðen/	/den/	
them	/ðem/	/dem/	
there	/ðer/	/ðer/	

As seen in the table above, the student consistently struggled with the fricative dental pronunciation of /ð/ and substituted /d/ (see appendix, p. 67). In the artifact, I indicate that this knowledge could be used to provide constructive feedback to the student and give specific examples of how this phonetic challenge can be addressed in future instruction. I suggest “a word sort activity based on how she perceives pronunciation of words (categories of /ð/ and /d/)” followed by having her “identify a spelling pattern within these words, ‘th’ and ‘d’, as well as the corresponding pronunciation difference” (see appendix, p. 68). This would be followed by an activity using an illustrated cross section of a head to help her identify and practice the placement of the tongue for /ð/ and /d/ in the words from the word sort activity (see appendix, p. 68).

Domain 7 discusses the importance of promoting “continuous linguistic development of each learner.” The scaffolded pronunciation intervention described above addresses the need for linguistic development and focuses on a feature that was identified in the assessment as being a potential barrier to communication with other English speakers.

This artifact examined oral and written language samples and successfully recommended specific interventions informed by the information gathered in the assessment. However, the analysis of the oral and written samples overlooks one critical part of the domain. The artifact lacks analysis of the intellectual development of the learner. This could have been improved by an analysis of the logic, reasoning, and support present in the student’s performance. A better understanding of the student’s mastery of these would be useful in tailoring instruction to strengthen these areas and therefore encourage their growth in the content area, not only English language.

One strength of this artifact is that the prompts were realistic situations the student may encounter in their daily life as a university student. The selection of the prompts illustrates attention to student driven instruction and encouraging students to draw on their prior knowledge. The prompts are also reflective of culturally responsive pedagogy because they are informed by learner identity and context. The prompt on prayer was realistic as this is a topic that the student may have encountered before and it mimics a conversation they may have had with administrators or faculty. Negotiating relationships with classmates through conversations about sharing work or struggling with tuition are relatable topics for the learner being assessed. By intentionally selecting prompts that were relevant to the student, I was better able to assess their linguistic skills because they were less likely to be struggling with an unfamiliar topic. Had I prompted the student to request time off from their boss to attend a professional development conference, I would have gotten a less meaningful response and drawn inaccurate conclusions about their language skills. If the student lacked appropriate background knowledge to respond to a prompt, they would not be able to showcase their language abilities because of stumbling on how to respond to an unfamiliar topic. Creating culturally responsive, student driven assessments is an intentional decision that generates more informative and accurate results.

### **Applications to Practice: Implications and Future Considerations**

#### **TESOL Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism**

*Teachers continue to grow in their understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning to the community of English language teaching professionals, the broader teaching community, and communities at large, and use these understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.*

Being part of the TESOL community requires commitment to recognizing areas of personal strength and weakness as a teacher and dedication to self-improvement. Without ongoing self reflection and efforts to grow, it is not possible to consistently enact quality teaching. The teaching philosophy and artifacts illustrate my interpretation of quality teaching and attempts to implement those characteristics into my Vanderbilt coursework. The last section of this paper will discuss how elements of my teaching philosophy were represented in my artifacts, what challenges I anticipate as a classroom instructor and how I will mitigate them, and how I will continue my professional growth after the conclusion of the M.Ed. ELL program.

The three main elements of my teaching philosophy that guide my interpretation of quality teaching are culturally responsive pedagogy, student driven language instruction, and communicative language teaching. CRP is evident in several artifacts through lesson planning and creating space for and validating students' home cultures. In addition to this, artifact D included a rationale (see appendix, p. 97) provided a guide intended for teachers implementing a curriculum. I designed the rationale to show how the learner and context had informed curriculum design and how this could be transferred to culturally responsive implementation recommendations.

Student driven language instruction, inclusive of concepts of funds of knowledge and funds of strategies, is visible in some parts of the artifact analysis. Artifact B, the Final Case Study Report, demonstrates using a student's funds of knowledge and strategies to create a plan to access her full range of linguistic abilities and improve her English. The SIOP lesson plan, artifact C, was intentionally designed to have students draw on their former experiences and apply them to the lesson topic. Student driven language instruction is also present in the assessment portion of the analysis (see appendix, artifact B, p. 60). The focus of the assessment

was to evaluate the student's linguistic abilities, not their knowledge of a specific content area. Assessment prompts given to the student were selected so that they would be able to draw on prior knowledge to answer the prompts.

Communicative language teaching is evidenced in a few parts of the artifact analysis. The SIOP lesson plan (see appendix, artifact C, p. 83) prioritized open ended questions, varied interaction patterns, and opportunities for written and oral production. These features support the principles of CLT. Additionally, elements of the curriculum PKA align with CLT. The course outcomes for artifact D ( see appendix, pp. 91-93) include building students' oral and written communication skills with a variety of audiences and major assignments require multiple types of productive output. The lesson plan and materials in artifact E (see appendix, p. 101; PowerPoint) prioritize meaningful opportunities for scaffolded use of authentic communicative target language in a multilevel class.

While the three parts of the teaching philosophy are present in the artifacts, funds of strategies are underutilized and CLT could have been better incorporated into the artifacts. Understanding how in-service teachers make funds of strategies a part of their teaching would provide meaningful examples of how this could look in my own classroom. When attending TESOL professional development opportunities such as the TESOL International Conference in March 2021, I plan to attend workshops taught by in-service teachers that address this topic. In regards to CLT, it is possible that CLT is not fully visible in the analysis due to the nature of the artifacts. Due to COVID-19 protocols, it was not possible to conduct practicum teaching in person and record my own instruction. Had I been able to do this, there may have been a more accurate representation of CLT in my teaching rather than in my planning. It would be beneficial

to monitor this area for growth by reviewing future lesson plans and, when possible, recording and reviewing my own instruction for CLT.

While I anticipate that advocating for CRP in the EFL adult context might be a challenge, I think it is possible on a program and classroom level. CRP does not need to be at odds with the needs of stakeholders in a language program who may be hesitant to change the program to fit the students. Academic rigor is a critical part of CRP and therefore a culturally responsive approach supports students in meeting their goals and creates a better learning environment. When presented in a way that shows CRP has the same goal of student success, it is possible it may be better received and integrated into program level planning. On a personal classroom level, CRP means shaping classroom norms, providing supplementary materials, and taking time to explore who learners are outside the classroom. These are generally areas within my control as an instructor and it is important not to lose sight of making a culturally responsive classroom even in the event that the larger program is not culturally responsive.

Depending on class size and teaching context, implementing CLT is another area that could be challenged by the amount of course content and allotted time to complete material. It may be beneficial to evaluate what the potential options there are to address this challenge. Is it possible to work with the academic team to modify the syllabus at intervals throughout the semester? Is it more effective to adjust homework assignments to include more productive output? Maintaining CLT needs to remain a main priority in courses overloaded with content. However, this is one area that I find to be a consistent challenge when teaching some courses. I am interested in what academic journals with publications highlighting the knowledge of classroom teachers say about the challenge of implementing CLT in the adult EFL context.



In some cases, students themselves are uncomfortable with CLT because it is unfamiliar and off-script and require additional support through scaffolding strategies. Rather than immediately pushing these students to do something they are unprepared to do, I should provide scaffolding and have a discussion with students about why we are approaching lessons in a particular way. If there is buy-in from the students on what we are doing and an understanding of why, CLT may be better received. I would like to continue to learn more about scaffolding the implementation of CLT.

When enacting my philosophy of teaching, I must reflect often and not be afraid to make changes to my teaching habits or advocate for necessary changes in the field. Growth as a teacher is an ongoing process and I would like to work on developing my ability to evaluate, revise, and adapt curricula to reflect the main principles in my philosophy of teaching. Additionally, I want to be a stronger advocate for creating teaching environments that value the contributions of non-native English speaking teachers. I believe in order to be truly culturally responsive and with an emphasis on CLT, the TESOL field needs to shift their focus away from the native speaker ideal and demonstrate commitment to non-native English speakers. Based on my experiences in the field, this is an area the TESOL community needs to address in order to create an environment that better supports students and their teachers.

Overall, I believe that pursuing professional development opportunities is a necessary form of growth in addition to completing my degree. I have already begun seeking professional development opportunities and will present my primary research and findings at the TESOL 2021 International Convention & English Language Expo Graduate Student Forum. By sharing my own work in a public forum, I am pushing myself to think critically and academically about my own classroom practice. I plan to join the regional TESOL association for my future

employment to network with other instructors and learn from their best practices. However, I recognize it is not always possible to attend conferences and another meaningful opportunity for professional development is through remote study. I am currently searching for virtual workshops on restorative justice circles (Winn, 2018) in the EFL context and integrating communicative language teaching into grammar courses.

Lastly, when considering future growth, it is important to consider if a future work environment will be supportive of professional development. I plan to inquire how institutions use best practices to inform pedagogy and what in-house training they offer to new teachers to consistently promote a culture of quality instruction. With my degree from Vanderbilt I will have a strong foundation to pursue my development as a member of the TESOL community.

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## Appendix

### **Artifact A: Community Literacies in Nashville's Guatemalan Community**

#### Community Literacies in Nashville's Guatemalan Community

In order to better understand the cultural backgrounds and strengths students bring to the classroom as well as how to leverage them, I visited the Nolensville Pike corridor of Nashville over several visits and focused on the vibrant Guatemalan community. For the purposes of this paper, I have elected to use the term Latino to describe individuals rather than Hispanic. In parts of the paper where the term Hispanic is used, it is used because the research cited used the term itself or the community members spoken to preferred to be identified as such. This paper will give a window into the Guatemalan community and associated resources, how the research conducted could be improved upon, and how the information learned can be applied to teaching these ELLs.

Nashville, Tennessee has a vibrant Latino community comprised of people from many countries and cultures. Some of them are foreign-born and others are born in the United States but continue to identify with and participate in their culture of origin. Pew Research Center's Hispanic Population and Origin in Select U.S. Metropolitan Areas' 2014 data stated Nashville's Hispanic community was comprised of 132,000 people and made up 6.9% of the total city population. 45.5% of the Hispanic community was born in another country and 11.3% of them were under the age of 18. The Pew Research Center further identifies the Hispanic populations with the three largest groups being Mexican, Guatemalan, and Puerto Rican, 70.8, 6.1, and 5.8 percent respectively. Newer data, provided by The U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, showed an overall increase as of 2017; 10.1% of the total population of the population of Davidson County was Hispanic or Latino and that 3.1% of those

individuals who identified as Hispanic or Latino were not from Mexico, Puerto Rico, or Cuba (Data Access and Dissemination Services [DADS], 2010).

The presence of a Guatemalan community in Nashville is supported by the Immigrant Community Assessment conducted by Cornfield et al. (2017) that shows a high concentration of Central American born Nashville residents in the Southeastern quadrant of the city (see appendix A). This map was based off of 2000 Census data and I believe that in order to confirm that this is still the trend ten years later, it is necessary to make a comparable map after 2020 Census data has been collected. Because that is not yet possible, I conducted field research in the Nolensville Pike area and identified a high concentration of stores, organizations, and services that would serve the Spanish speaking Guatemalan community of Nashville. However, 41.66% of the population of Guatemala spoke one of 22 Maya languages (XII Censo Nacional de Población y VII Censo Nacional de Vivienda, 2018). It is likely that some of those individuals make up part of the Guatemalan community of Nashville, but it was not possible to find data on the non-Spanish speaking Guatemalan community in Nashville or Guatemalans in Nashville who speak Spanish as a second language. This lack of available data was present in both academic research and site visits to locations that may have had resources in these languages. Additional research is needed to find out what percentage of Nashville's Guatemalan community speaks a language other than Spanish at home and what resources are available in their L1.

In order to better understand the Guatemalan community of Nashville, I went to a community center, several Latino supermarkets, restaurants, and businesses in the Nolensville Pike area. My research was conducted over three visits and in order to have a more representative sample of the community I believe that additional visits to Nolensville Pike as well as to Murfreesboro Pike would be necessary. It is also important to note that because I am

not Latina or part of this community, I believe that additional visits would be necessary to establish trust and ask people information about their communities without making them uncomfortable. This could also be addressed in the future by conducting research with a member of the Nashville Latino community or visiting the same places several times. When conducting site visits, I did have the ability to speak with shop owners in Spanish and therefore was able to gain more information about their businesses, their history, and the services they offer. If I were to conduct this research again in a non-Spanish speaking community, I would try to partner with a researcher who spoke the majority L1 of the community because I found it highly beneficial to my research.

The Nolensville Pike area of Nashville has a plethora of bilingual Spanish-English signs visible from the road and parking lots advertising businesses and specific services (see appendix B-F). These signs provided information for tire shops, used car sales, Catholic church services, cellphone plans, and financial services such as check cashing and deposits, international money transfers, and bill payments. The main focus of my field research included site visits to Casa Azafrán, K&S Supermarket, Pupusaria Reina La Bendición, Plaza Mariachi, and World Wide Market International Groceries. Some of these locations are large but others such as Pupusaria Reina La Bendición and World Wide Market International Groceries were small businesses owned and run by immigrant families. The different locations visited served a wide range of individuals of different socioeconomic backgrounds and countries. Some of the food items offered at Plaza Mariachi were expensive compared to other shops in the same area and seemed to have been ‘Americanized’ or made into ‘fusion’ to appeal to a greater audience. The supermarket section of Plaza Mariachi had a much smaller selection than the other supermarkets I visited but the other sections of the Plaza had valuable resources for Spanish speaking members



of the community such as a Latino barber, a bilingual waxing and threading salon, an insurance broker, and a business that would ship packages to any most Central American countries, including Guatemala.

After visiting several supermarkets, K&S Supermarket offered the greatest number of Guatemalan products and products from neighboring regions that may share similar ingredients for staple dishes. These food items included fresh vegetables that are difficult to find at other grocery stores in Nashville (see appendix G and H). In addition to vegetable products, K&S Supermarket offered a wide range of cured meat and dairy products as well as spices that were regionally relevant to the Guatemalan community (see appendix I-K). These items may be suitable substitutes for Guatemalan goods, but it was difficult to find specific items such as Guatemalan chorizo or hard cheese. Other items were representative of shared cultural aspects of Latin America such as a Catholic population, but the available prayer candles were focused on patron saints and idols popular in Mexico rather than those of Guatemala such as Saint James (see appendix L). K&S Supermarket did have a larger selection of canned, pickled, and preserved goods from Guatemala such as pacaya and coyoles en miel (see appendix M). Both of these items are very specific to Guatemalan cuisine and them being present in the supermarket represents an effort being made to cater to the Guatemalan community rather than Central Americans in general.

In addition to fresh, canned, and dried food items, K&S Supermarket had a small shop with healthcare products with bilingual labels as well a bilingual attendant. Products featured in this shop included over the counter medications common in Mexico and Central America, health supplements and vitamins, and religious items such as rosaries and incense for prayer. In this area, there were free Spanish newspapers, specifically the September 7-20 2019 edition of *Latino*

*Tennessee* and the September 20, 2019 edition of *El Crucero de Tennessee*. These two papers were prominently displayed and there were no old editions which suggests they are regularly distributed and picked up by community members. The publications included local and national news as well as international news focused on Latin American topics. Additionally, there were advertisements for a range of services including restaurants, doctors, dentists, loans, and lawyers. The papers also featured advertisements to connect with local Latino groups through social media. In addition to these two newspapers, there was a 2019 Spring edition of the free biannual publication *Revista Lazos* with articles and advertisements focused towards the Nashville Latino community. While many of the advertisements in this publication were similar to the newspapers, one key difference was that it discussed topics related to citizenship, important information about attending a court hearing, and fraudulent naturalization cases. Another difference was that there were two special interest articles related to politicians and politics in Mexico. While many of the advertisements in all three publications are relevant to the Guatemalan community, the field research did not find any publications or articles targeting Guatemalans as their audience.

As previously stated, Guatemala is not monolingual and it is possible that members of the Guatemalan community in Nashville cannot fully utilize bilingual Spanish-English resources. The excellent resources provided through Casa Azafrán might miss members of this community. That being said, the resources and networks provided by Casa Azafrán are specifically catered to the needs of immigrant communities and they serve an important role in Nashville would otherwise go unmet.

ELLs, specifically Guatemalan high school students from the Southeastern part of Nashville, bring a unique set of strengths to the classroom. They have strong L1 skills and a

community in which they can continue to develop these skills. The businesses on Nolensville Pike provide opportunities for entrepreneurship, part-time work, and cultural exchange which could be connected to work in the classroom. One specific area where the information from the community could be applied a high school ESL classroom is in an ESL lesson with a math component. One of the businesses in Plaza Mariachi was a shipping company that shipped to Latin America. The students could translate the Spanish informational pamphlets to English and then work in groups to create a list in English of what things they would like to send to friends or family in Guatemala and discuss why. This would be followed by calculating the weight of the box they would like to ship, the cost, and when it would arrive at the destination based on the information in the pamphlet. After this, students would complete an oral role-play scenario where one group ‘ships’ their box and the other group confirms the weight, cost, and time. In the long term, the translated pamphlet could be shared with the business owner as part of the project as well as a visual representation of the cost to ship different boxes to different locations. This project is tangible to students in the community because it is realistically something that they might do or a task they might have to negotiate in the future. In the context of a unit, this lesson could be connected to themes of globalization, trade, and remittances as many of the locations I visited offered remittance services. By including lessons and themes related to remittances to and from Guatemala, student might be better able to understand the role that they and their families play in the global economy.

As a way of exercising cultural competency and culturally responsive teaching in the classroom, it would also be helpful to use the Spanish language newspapers as a way to find topics that are currently affecting students’ lives and things they are interested in (Gay, 2018). In addition, Casa Azafrán’s resources and cultural programs provide helpful insight into students

and their community. This could also be used in the classroom as a resource to leverage the cross-cultural competencies of students and honor Guatemalan identity while building relationships with classmates of other cultural backgrounds. During the tour of Casa Azafrán, it was made clear that this was a melting pot and a welcoming place for all people. As a teacher, I envision a fieldtrip for students to Casa Azafrán that would focus on learning about shared aspects of culture between countries. This could then translate to an ESL high school classroom project where students honed their skills of comparison both in writing and orally while focusing on their own culture and the culture of a classmate. This lesson would honor elements of culturally responsive pedagogy as well as prepare students to interact with classmates of other cultures and backgrounds.

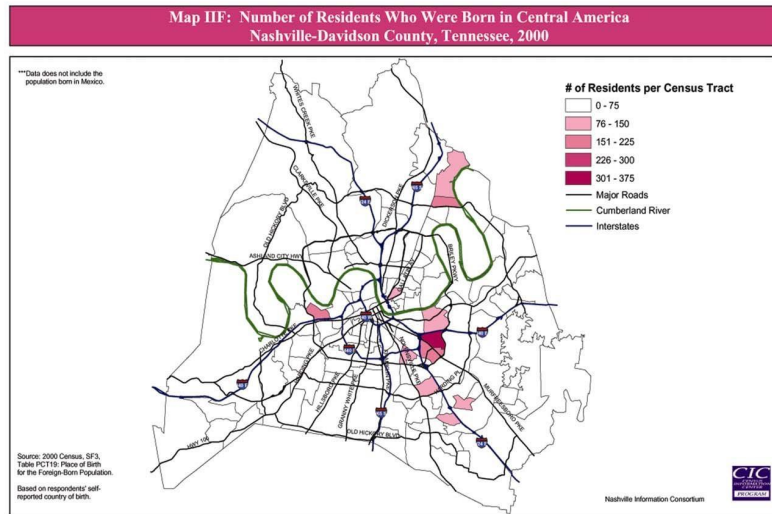
To conclude, entering the community of the students I was interested in teaching was helpful in identifying their strengths and funds of knowledge as discussed by Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez (1992) and applying them practically in the classroom. Jimenez, Smith, & Teague's (2009) assertion that integrating community literacies into classroom practices "makes it possible for teachers to better understand the life worlds of their students and build more meaningful relationships with them" (p.18), also resonates with me because I believe that in order to be a good teacher, it is necessary to understand where students are coming from and to forge relationships with them. The exploration of community literacies and students' funds of knowledge by visiting the Nolensville Pike corridor offered a tangible way to connect these intentions with action.

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Appendices

A.



B.



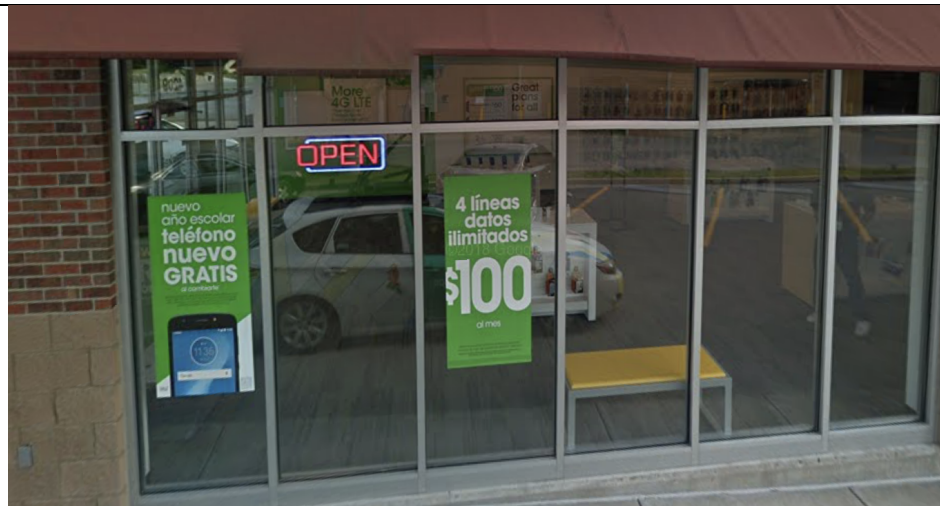
C.



D.



E.



F.



G.





H.



I.



J.



K.



L.



M.



**Artifact B: Final Case Study Report: A Linguistic Analysis of an Afghan University****Student**

Final Case Study Report: A Linguistic Analysis of an Afghan University Student

**Subject Profile**

This case study focuses on Nikbakht, an 18-year-old Afghan female and native Dari speaker enrolled at an English medium university in Kabul, Afghanistan. At the time of data collection, her estimated TOEFL PBT score was 500-525, IELTS 5- 5.5, and she would have fallen in the B2 level on the Common European Framework. Her family was displaced and migrated to Pakistan where she was born in ~2001. She lived there for two and a half years before her family moved to Kabul. Nikbakht speaks Dari at home with her family and completed primary and secondary school where the language of instruction was Dari. She uses Dari in home settings, academically, and for personal expression because she is most familiar and comfortable with it. Nikbakht began studying English as a foreign language at ~7 years old and Pashto as a second language at ~ 9 years old. She studied Pashto for nine years and English for eleven years before entering university. She identified herself as having a near native proficiency in Pashto. Nikbakht also has the ability to read and understand Arabic but is less comfortable in producing the language. I would connect this to the context of her experience as a practicing Muslim in Afghanistan who reads the Koran in Arabic. It is likely that as part of her education she learned to recite portions of the Koran.

**Context**

A forty-five minute interview with Nikbakht was conducted using Skype with both audio and video. The audio was recorded with the knowledge of the participant and she was aware that the interview would be used to create a case study. The participant used an empty office at the

American University of Afghanistan in Kabul, Afghanistan, and I used an office space in my home to conduct the interview. The connection was clear and conducting the interview with the assistance of Skype did not interfere with intelligibility or production. Nikbakht had EFL support over the 2018-2019 school year from courses expressly designed to improve English proficiency in academic writing, reading and vocabulary, oral communication, and study skills. Starting in August of 2019, she transitioned out of English support classes and began taking university subject area classes taught in English.

The first portion of the interview established a baseline of pronunciation and conversational language as well as provided background information about Nikbakht. The second portion comprised of four role-play scenarios to evaluate her pragmatic speech patterns and elicit her ability to interact and disagree with peers and persuade figures of authority. Throughout the interview, there were portions of casual conversation that provided crucial cultural context and information about the participant. The interview also aimed to evaluate her phonological awareness, production, and accuracy. Oral language from the interview was also used to analyze Nikbakht's morphology and syntax. Semantics was analyzed by analyzing oral and written samples collected from the interview and academic writing excerpt. In addition to the interview, Nikbakht provided a 4655 word academic writing portfolio which was a culminating project at the end of her Spring 2019 university semester. The section of oral language used is representative of her language ability throughout the interview and the written sample is representative of her academic writing ability.

This paper examines pragmatics, phonology, syntax and morphology, and semantics. This organization intends to provide an overview of Nikbakht's oral language and then focus on her phonological strengths and areas for improvement. The syntax and morphology section

compares and contrasts spoken and written language and provides a detail oriented view of her linguistic abilities. The semantics section expands on the detailed view of language use and completes a well rounded linguistic profile of Nikbakht as a English language learner.

Instructional recommendations are embedded in each section because they are designed for each of the areas discussed and aim to specifically address different areas for improvement.

### **Limitations of Study**

Potential limitations of this case study include a lack of written informal language analysis and a possible unconscious bias in selection of language excerpts. It is also possible that analysis of collected language was limited by my lack of understanding of the complexities of Nikbakht's cultural identity and how it affected pragmatics. The analyses of phonology and syntax were limited by my unfamiliarity with pronunciation and grammar of Dari and Pashto. In the future, these limitations could be overcome by analyzing larger samples of oral and spoken language and adding diversity to the context of language collected. I would collect written language samples from emails, journal entries, and unedited spontaneous writing as well as authentic oral language rather than role plays to get the most realistic use of language possible. I would also consult a colleague at the American University of Afghanistan who is a native Dari and Pashto speaker and has a near native proficiency in English in order to better understand the influence of Nikbakht's L1 and L2 on her English proficiency and pragmatics.

### **Pragmatics**

It is important to note that Nikbakht explained the cultural context of Afghanistan and that it is unlikely that she would refuse to share notes with a peer for any reason or even refuse to lend a friend some of the money they needed if she had it. To illustrate this, Nikbakht said, "I cannot say no to my friends because if they ask me always I will always give it [notes] to them."

In regards to lending money, she said, “I don’t know if it is our culture or not, but for me it is very difficult for me to say no to everyone....maybe it is a culture thing somehow but for me it is difficult to say no.” These cultural nuances and her lack of comfort in violating them were evident in her responses and I question if Grice’s maxims of Manner and the Co-operative Principle, which are based on Euro-centric standards of interaction, are an equitable and fair way to evaluate her linguistic capabilities related to pragmatics.

The two roles play scenarios with peers relied heavily on informal conversational language skills identified as BICS by Cummins (as cited in Lems, Miller & Soro, 2017, p.47). In the first role play, Nikbakht needed to decline to share her class notes with a peer who did not take their own notes.

Table 1. Role Play 1
<p><b>O:</b> I missed many of my classes and I don’t have the notes for class. Can I have your notes?</p> <p><b>N:</b> <i>mmmmmmmmmm</i> You should you should attend your own classes and be a responsible students and take the notes and be present all the time. Because the professor said you cannot share your notes and everyone should take notes for demselves [themselves]. <i>So how can I share with you the...?</i> In that time, I would not be honest to my professor.</p> <p><b>O:</b> Ah. Ok, I understand so you mean I cannot borrow your notes?</p> <p><b>N:</b> So, I want to help you but I couldn’t. <i>How could I help you then?</i></p>

The first pragmatic marker Nikbakht uses, *mmmmmmmmmm*, makes her appear hesitant to respond to the request. As Yule (2017) discussed, this and other hesitations are used to show politeness and a non-confrontational manner (p. 147). Her pragmatic strengths are further shown by the rhetorical questions she poses to her peer. Both of these questions are evident of her ability to partake in face-saving acts by posing questions for the sake of politeness and make her less powerful in the situation. Interestingly, while she is successful in the situational context of this discussion, she goes beyond the quantity of what could be recommended for a conversation with a peer by offering unsolicited advice on what her peer should do to be a better student. Her

frequent use of ‘you/your’ transfers the responsibility to the peer and could be interpreted as face-threatening. In order to address this in the future, Nikbakht could reduce her critique of her peer’s action and instead focus on sympathizing the situation by recasting what her peer said and then integrate additional face-saving acts such as an apology while still declining to help.

In the second role play, she needed to decline to lend 1000 Afghan Afghanis (approximately 13 USD) to a friend who needed it to pay for their tuition.

Table 2. Role Play 2
<p><b>O:</b> Hello, so I have a problem and I need to pay the rest of my tuition.</p> <p><b>N:</b> <i>mmmmhmm</i></p> <p><b>O:</b> I am 1,000 Afs short. I need 1,000 Afs. And if I cannot find this money, I don’t know what I will do. Is there...can you lend me this money?</p> <p><b>N:</b> <i>mmm I really wanted to help you and lend you, but I don’t have that much money in my pocket. So, can you ask Hosai or Hadia? Because they have... if they have they can help you.</i></p>

Nikbakht illustrates her ability to appear attentive to the conversation with her use of phrases such as *mmmmhmm* and *mmm*. These show that her speech is governed by the cooperative principle (Yule, 2017, p.164). This conversation, albeit brief, also demonstrates her ability to adhere to the maxims of quality, quantity, and relevance as outlined by Dawson & Phelan (2016). Nikbakht’s excuse of not having enough money is believable and therefore follows the maxim of quality and demonstrates her ability to be felicitous in informal conversation. Her response to the request for money also shows her strengths in the areas of quantity and relevance because she implies that two other people may have 1,000 Afghanis without explicitly saying it. In this case, the brevity of the conversation is an asset and Nikbakht is able to convey all of the necessary information while still being suitably polite because she uses phrases that establish her desire to help such as *...I really wanted to help..., but....So....* This conversation could have been improved if Nikbakht had formally used face-saving acts such as *‘I’m sorry but I can’t’*. This



positive face-saving act is culturally relevant to Afghan culture considering the important factors of community and a common goal.

Nikbakht also completed an oral persuasive argument directed at an authority figure. The persuasive argument involved Nikbakht requesting additional time from her professor to go to complete her daily prayers. Time was given for her to prepare before she gave her argument. This task of persuading a professor for additional time for prayers has been used to illustrate her ability to speak with and persuade a person in a greater position of power.

Table 3. Role Play 3

**N:** Hello Professor, uh I want to talk with you about the eh prayer time. Because, uh, it's not enough time for a prayer. Uh, someone who want to pray. Eh because the mosque is, you know that the the new mosque is very far away from our class and it is on the other side of the building and the Women's Center, our class which is in the Women's Center, it is a long distance from here to the mosque. So, in the prayer time we have to take the ablution and then we have to pray and the distance is very long so *can you change the prayer time like to twelv-twenty minutes?* Because then we *would have* more time and then we *would not be* late for that and we want to have more time for praying because the distance is long and we don't want to miss the class as well. And if you *couldn't do* it eh twenty eh you *couldn't* (like) *make* it twenty minutes, so, at least it *should be* fifteen minutes so we *could have* the ablution like in five minutes and in ten minutes we *could have* the pray and then we *could come* to class on time.

Nikbakht showed pragmatic competency and ability when appealing to her professor to change something she disagreed with. The persuasive argument was well organized and identified the topic, why the current situation is problematic, requested a specific change, and then offered a compromise with additional evidence of why this was a good solution. She demonstrated situational awareness and used an interrogative speech act in the form of a question to make a request '*can you change the prayer time like to twelv-twenty minutes?*'. Yule (2017) identifies that this interrogative structure as an indicator that the speaker is using this utterance to be polite (p.149). In addition to this, Nikbakht uses modals and the conditional eight times during her appeal to her professor. This shows knowledge of language formality with an authority figure as

well as the ability to use complex grammar appropriately to avoid use of the imperative which would have had a negative impact on her pragmatic competence. One area where Nikbakht could improve is in adherence to maxims of quantity and manner. While she offers evidence of why the current situation is problematic, she repeats the same information without adding anything new. To resolve this, she could structure her persuasion to present the issue more clearly and succinctly. Nikbakht could achieve this by carefully structuring the discussion to include a brief description of the problem and then move on to one or two specific examples illustrating the problem. She could then introduce her request for a change and the justification for this change.

In order to strengthen her competencies in areas of quantity and manner, Nikbakht can focus on how much information she needs to share and the order in which she shares it. This could be achieved by presenting her with listening excerpts of conversations and having her rate them on the quality and quantity of information provided. She could then provide a justification for how she rated them, offer suggestions, and attempt a similar role play conversation with a classmate. Overall, Nikbakht has strong pragmatic capabilities for formal settings as well as developing abilities in informal settings. She excels at face saving strategies such as asking rhetorical questions and using modals and conditionals.

### **Phonology**

One of the repeated areas that Nikbakht struggles with is the pronunciation of the fricative dental pulmonic consonants, /ð/ and /θ/. She replaced the /ð/ sound with /d/ in seven different words forty-three unique times over eight minutes of conversation, excluding word repetition (see Table 5.) This pronunciation was not tied to one specific consonant vowel combination and Nikbakht substituted /d/ for /ð/ when ‘th’ was followed by /ə/, /i/, /ɪ/, /æ/, /eɪ/. Difficulty with /θ/ was also noticed in the pronunciation of ‘thought’(see Table 6). One

additional minor area Nikbakht exhibited a pattern of pronunciation that could be improve on was with /v/ in words such as have. She replaces the labio-fricative sound, /v/, with /f/ (see Table 7).

Table 4
Language sample:
N: Somehow it is /'dɪf.rənt/ because our teachers are getting strict and [deɪ] like uh [deɪ] uhh (unintelligible) we [həf] uh more /ə.'saɪn.mənt/ and [deɪ] like [deɪ] 'didn't help us like our /ə.'kæ.də.mi/ teachers and [deɪ] just /gɑɪd əs/and say you [həf] to do it by yourself.

Table 5			
Fricative dental pronunciation of /ð/			
Word	Standard N. American pronunciation	Produced pronunciation	Comments
the	/ðə/ /ði/ (before a vowel sound)	/də/ /di/	correctly applies rule of different pronunciation of /ə/ and /i/ depending on its position before a vowel sound
this	/ðɪs/	/dɪs/	
that	/ðæt/	/dæt/	
that's	/ðæts/	/dæts/	
they	/ðeɪ/	/deɪ/	
then	/ðen/	/den/	
them	/ðem/	/dem/	
there	/ðer/	/der/	

Table 6			
Fricative dental pronunciation of /θ/			
Word	Standard N. American pronunciation	Produced pronunciation	Comments
thought	/θɔ:t/	/dɔ:t/	

Table 7			
Labio-dental fricative pronunciation of /v/			
Word	Standard N. American pronunciation	Produced pronunciation	Comments
have	/həv/	/həf/	

Based on my own knowledge of Dari and Pashto, one of the reasons why Nikbakht might have difficulty with fricative dental sounds is because neither /ð/ nor /θ/ are consonant sounds in Dari or Pashto and therefore they are not part of the pronunciation she learned during the

sensitive period of language acquisition. However, it might be possible to leverage her knowledge of Arabic language and pronunciation to assist her in producing these sounds because the letter ث in Arabic is the approximation of /θ/ in the word ‘thought’ and the letter ذ is very similar to /ð/ in ‘they’(Lebanese Arabic Institute, 2017). While Nikbakht expressed she can read Arabic and understand concepts but isn’t as confident with it as she is with English, it can be a useful source to help with this pronunciation topic. As a Muslim in Afghanistan, she has learned to read parts of the Koran in Arabic. Typically, this involves the recitation and she may be familiar with the sounds associated with the letters ث and ذ and be able to apply this knowledge to pronunciation in English.

In addition to using positive transfer based on phonetic similarities, I would suggest a word sort activity based on how she perceives pronunciation of words (categories of /ð/ and /d/). I would then have her identify a spelling pattern within these words, ‘th’ and ‘d’, as well as the corresponding pronunciation difference. To emphasize the difference in pronunciation, I suggest giving her a cross section picture of a person’s head and identify where the tongue is supposed to go for these two sounds. She would identify the tongue tip needs to go against the back of the front teeth in ‘they’ and the tongue tip needs to go on the alveolar ridge in ‘day’. I have chosen these two words as one specific pronunciation pair because the only sound that is different in the word is /ð/ and /d/. Therefore, she would be able to focus on isolating those sounds and the position of the tongue rather than producing additional different sounds. Using a cross diagram of the face, she would then practice pronunciation of vocabulary from the word sort activity.

Additionally, Nikbakht mentioned during the interview that she watches TedTalks and speeches by President Obama as ways to improve her listening comprehension and pronunciation. I would suggest modifying this strategy to include watching the speeches with

subtitles and focusing on the speaker's pronunciation of /ð/ and /d/ and then reading those lines aloud herself while trying to place her tongue in the appropriate place in her mouth.

To address the pronunciation of /v/ and /f/, Nikbakht might be struggling with the pronunciation of the voiceless and voiced labio-dental sounds. In order to help her differentiate, I would model the /f/ sound in isolation and have her look at herself in a mirror/on her phone while she made the sounds herself. I would focus on /f/ being a voiceless sound and that moves the air through the space between the teeth and lip. I would do the same thing with the /v/ sound but emphasize that /v/ is a voiced sound and ask her to put her hand on her throat while making the sound to feel the vibration. I would then have her do a minimal pairs activity with pictures another with words. In both of these exercises, some of the words would have /f/ and /v/ in the beginning of the word while others would have it at the end to ensure she was acquiring the standard pronunciation regardless of the placement of /v/ in a word.

While there is room for improvement, Nikbakht has multiple strengths with pronunciation and phonology. She clearly enunciates when speaking and has a high level of accuracy with multi syllabic words such as /ə.'kæ.də.mi/. She has knowledge and accuracy of word stress and consistently places the stress on the correct syllable. This is evident in her pronunciation of /ə.'sɑ:m.mənt/ and /'dɪf.rənt/. Additionally, for a B2 level English language learner, she shows demonstrates some natural and accurate linking of words. While she doesn't exhibit this with the same level of accuracy as syllables or stress, it is excellent that she shows skill in this at her level. One example of this is her pronunciation of /gɑɪd \_ ʌs/.

While Nikbakht does have an accent when speaking English, it does not impede understanding and her pronunciation is highly intelligible. Because I value communicative

competence over a native speaker ideal, I believe Nikbakht’s accuracy with word stress, syllables, and individual sounds should be commended and recognized language strengths.

**Syntax and Morphology**

Table 8		
Writing sample: 100 words MLU 1.32		
Context: Excerpt from academic essay		
Public and private universities of Afghanistan are not only different in their tuition fees and facilities, but also differ in their accreditation in the society among people. Public universities are more reputable in Afghanistan as they are supported by government that provide more employment opportunities for graduates of public universities. Mainly-because public universities provide extra workshops and activities for students to learn and entertain. Therefore, the priority for the governmental organizations are graduates of public universities as they are already familiar with the government policies and they have attended in lots of workshops that trained them in their field.		
19 inflectional morphemes total		10 derivational morphemes total
16 plural nouns		7 verb to noun
3 regular past tense		2 noun to adjective
		1 noun to adverb
* Some morphemes are repeats of the same word but each is considered an individual example		

Table 9		
Spoken sample: 100 words MLU 1.037		
Context: Student was prompted to request a change in the amount of time designated to prayer from a university administrator		
I want to talk with you about the prayer time. Because, uh, it’s not enough time for a prayer. Uh, someone who want to pray. because the mosque is, you know that the new mosque is very far away from our class and it is on the other side of the building and the Women’s Center, our class which is in the Women’s Center, it is a long distance from here to the mosque. So, in the prayer time we have to take the ablution and then we have to pray and the distance is very long so can you change the prayer time like to twelv-twenty minutes?		
4 inflectional morphemes total		0 derivational morphemes
1 contractible copula		
1 plural noun		
2 possessives		
* Some morphemes are repeats of the same word but each is considered an individual example (Brown, 1973 as cited in Bowen, 2019)		

Nikbakht’s writing and spoken language show distinct morphological differences. Her MLU of written language is 1.32 and she uses a variety of different morphological constructions.

In 100 words there are 19 inflectional morphemes and 10 derivational morphemes (see Table 8). On a morphological level, Nikbakht shows several writing strengths but I believe the greatest is her accurate use of inflectional morphemes, particularly nouns, and following appropriate subject verb agreement. I cannot see any morphological changes that need to be made to Nikbakht's writing based on this sample.

In contrast to the MLU of 1.32 in Table 8, Table 9 indicates that Nikbakht's MLU of spoken language is 1.037. The spoken language, while less morphologically complex than the written language, clearly communicates her point and demonstrates complex syntactical structures. All of the morphological structures in the spoken language sample are inflectional and there were no derivational morphemes used. One area that could be improved is in Nikbakht's accuracy with the third person singular form of verbs. As was seen in other parts of the interview, Nikbakht tends not to add the necessary 's' to the verb. One example of this is 'someone who *want* to pray'. This error is not prevalent in her written language and this could be corrected by having her read some of her own writing aloud, recording herself, and listening to the recording. I would have her underline the 's' in the verbs if she pronounced it, and not underline it if she didn't. Following this exercise to raise her awareness of her own pronunciation, I would have her repeat the activity focusing on correcting the pronunciation of the 's' at the end of the verbs. I believe that she has the grammatical knowledge to fix this error and that it is more of an awareness issue than a lack of understanding how to conjugate the verb. After the language correction phase of this activity, I would prompt her to produce more oral language about a different topic and see if there was any difference in her accuracy. Because it appears to be fossilized in her speech to not conjugate the verb when speaking, I think it would take time to make this change but it would be possible.

Another area that could be improved in oral production would be to integrate more contractions. Throughout the interview Nikbakht uses ‘it is’ ‘do not’ ‘are not’ ‘they are’ ‘we are not’ more often than she uses contractions. In her writing sample, she does not use contractions either which is viewed as an appropriate level of formal language use for academia. However, in her informal spoken language it would be appropriate to integrate more contractions and it would make her conversation English more natural. When explicitly teaching this to her, I would suggest identifying times when you would not want to use this strategy such as when giving a formal speech or presentation.

The contrast in morphology between the written and spoken language suggests that Nikbakht has developed an academic writing voice and an oral communication voice. I believe that the morphological complexity of her written work demonstrates she has control over the most basic pieces of syntax and this helps her accurately navigate and use a variety of grammatical structures. In this case, the MLU difference between written and spoken language does not indicate a deficit but rather a natural progression of language use that mimics that of a native English speaker. I believe that as Nikbakht continues her academic studies at AUAF and develops her written and oral communication skills her MLUs in both areas will increase but not intersect. This would follow the language patterns of a native speaker identified by Biber & Conrad and be a positive sign for her English language development (2009).

Table 10 Writing sample (table 8) syntax analysis	
Syntax feature	Examples
Prepositions	universities <b>of</b> Afghanistan, different <b>in</b> their tuition, graduates <b>of</b> public universities
Present perfect	they <b>have attended</b>
Passive voice	they <b>are supported by</b> government
Conjunction	government policies <b>and</b> they have
Correlative conjunction	<b>are not only different</b> in their tuition fees and facilities, <b>but also differ</b> in their accreditation <i>*small error with parallelism</i>



Definite & indefinite articles	<b>the</b> priority, $\emptyset$ public universities
Linking words (indicating causation)	are more reputable in Afghanistan <b>as</b> they are..., <b>Therefore</b> , the priority,
Subject verb agreement	Public <b>universities are</b> , <b>universities provide</b>
Possessive pronouns	<b>their tuition, their field</b>

An analysis of Nikbakht's writing sample (see table 10) shows a wide range of accurate grammatical structures indicating that her writing is complex and varied. Several of these structures function as linking devices and show that there is coherence, cohesion, and accuracy in her academic writing. In the writing sample there is a dependent clause that is not grammatically connected to an independent clause. However, the idea in the sentence is closely connected to the sentences around it and it would be possible to revise this error by asking Nikbakht to analyze the sentence and identify the parts of speech. When she recognized the sentence was incomplete, she would be instructed to add the necessary information. In addition to the sentence structure variation, Nikbakht has a strong grasp of word order.

Her spoken syntax, while less grammatically complex and accurate than her written language, shows a high level of proficiency and the ability to spontaneously integrate important information in a clear way. Nikbakht inserts information into oral speech to provide richer contextualized information. For example, she said "because the mosque is, you know that the new mosque is very far away from our class and it is on the other side of the building and the Women's Center, our class which is in the Women's Center, it is a long distance from here to the mosque." This sentence starts with a simple subject, the mosque, but then clarifies that it is the *new* mosque. She adds it is very far away from her class, clarifies the location of the mosque in relation to other buildings, and specifies where her class is. This sentence provides more nuanced and detailed information than a sentence such as 'The mosque is far from our class.' While this would be grammatically correct, it would not be nearly as complex. For this reason, although on

first examination Nikbakht's spoken language may appear to be syntactically inaccurate, I believe it is clear and rich in content. Nikbakht uses pauses (indicated by a comma) for the same purpose as conjunctions and other linking words.

Based in the analysis of Nikbakht's academic writing, I estimate her syntax level to be an IELTS band 5.5-6. I believe that her speaking would be an IELTS band 4.5-5. The disparity in level between her academic writing and speaking could be due to several factors. First of all, although the spoken sample used was a conversation with an administrator, it lacks the same formality as an academic paper submitted for a grade and she is still developing her knowledge and use of different spoken registers. Secondly, the spoken sample was spontaneous with only a few minutes of preparation. The written sample was a final draft of an academic paper that had gone through multiple revisions. The difference between these two samples could affect the language level. The main areas for further development are in her spoken language with subject verb agreement, accurate use of linkers and transitions with less reliance on pauses, and integrating replacement of nouns with appropriate pronouns after the subject has been introduced.

### Semantics

Table 11
Context: Academic essay excerpt
Complex words measure: 26.89%
Lexical density: 45.08
<p>Moreover, public and private universities do not provide the same <i>facilities</i> for students in Afghanistan. Public universities cannot provide updated facilities for students because <b>it costs a lot</b>. For example, students do not have <i>access</i> to what they have to have compared to the foreign universities like <i>computer labs, laboratories, projectors and LCDs</i> which <i>detract</i> students' concentration and interests. In fact, not having access to projectors and LCDs not only <u>demotivate</u> the presenters, but it creates understanding problems for <u>audience</u>. In contrast to public universities, private universities provide a lot of facilities for their students. Indeed, students have access to computer labs and laboratories that help them in their assignments like research; for example, I have access to computer labs easily at AUAF. Also, they have projectors and LCDs for PowerPoint slides which makes the presentation easy for both sides,</p>

*the presenter and the audience.* To conclude, another **big difference** between Afghanistan's public and private universities is updated facilities that separated them really well.

Public and private universities of Afghanistan are not only different in their tuition fees and facilities, but also differ in their accreditation in the society among people. Public universities are more *reputable* in Afghanistan as they are supported by government that provide more employment opportunities for graduates of public universities. Mainly-because public universities provide extra workshops and activities for students to learn and entertain. Therefore, the *priority* for the *governmental organizations* are graduates of public universities as they are already familiar with the government policies and they have attended **in lots of workshops** that trained them in their field.

Coding key:

*Italics: use of accurate vocabulary*

Underlined: areas for revision based on accuracy and usage

**Bold: vocabulary choices that could be revised to be more specific**

Table 12

Context: Oral language samples

Complex words measure: 3.17%

Lexical density: 35.56

You should you should *attend* your own classes and be a *responsible* students and take the notes and *be present* all the time. Because the professor said you cannot share your notes and everyone should take notes for themselves. So how can I share with you the...? In that time, I would not be *honest* to my professor.

So, I want to help you but I couldn't. How could I help you then?

I really wanted to help you and *lend* you, but I don't have that much money in my pocket. So, can you ask Hosai or Hadia? Because they have... if they have they can help you.

Hello Professor, uh I want to **talk with you about** the eh prayer time. Because, uh, it's not enough time for a prayer. Uh, someone who want to pray. Eh because the mosque is, you know that the the new mosque is very far away from our class and it is *on the other side of the building* and the Women's Center, our class which is in the Women's Center, it is **a long distance** from here to the mosque. So, in the prayer time we have to take the *ablution* and then we have to pray and the distance is **very long** so can you change the prayer time like to twenty-two minutes? Because then we would have more time and then we would not be late for that and we want to have more time for praying because the distance **is long** and we don't want to miss the class as well. And if you couldn't do it eh twenty eh you couldn't (like) make it twenty minutes, so, at least it should be fifteen minutes so we could have the ablution like in five minutes and in ten minutes we could have the pray and then we could come to class on time.

Coding key:

*Italics: use of accurate vocabulary*

Underlined: areas for revision based on accuracy and usage

**Bold: vocabulary choices that could be revised to be more specific**

Table 11 contains the previously analyzed academic writing sample (Table 8) with an additional excerpt of the same essay. Table 12 presents examples of Nikbakht's casual conversational language (from Tables 1,2) and formal language with an authority figure (Table 3). Nikbakht's use of complex words and her lexical densities (Text Content Statistics Analyser, 2019) confirm the findings of the morphological analysis of her language. She has two distinct semantic profiles, oral and written, and her development of each of these mirrors that of a native speaker. Token-Type Ratio (TTR) (2009) asserts that "A major difference between speech and written language is that speech in conversation is produced in real time. There is limited time to think about, and plan, what one wishes to say. Consequently, speakers tend to select words from a relatively restricted vocabulary. In contrast, an author of a written text has much more time to plan and select just the right vocabulary items that best communicate his or her meaning." This is reflected in the written lexical density, 45.08, compared to the oral lexical density, 35.56, and the complex words measure, 26.89% and 3.17% respectively. I assess these differences to be a strength because Nikbakht's written language shows greater lexical variety and complexity than her oral language. If the percentages were the same, it would potentially indicate that Nikbakht were writing conversationally rather than academically.

Factors influencing Nikbakht's strong grasp of academic vocabulary are her enrollment in fulltime two semesters of intensive English classes at an English medium university, her motivation to improve her English, and her habit of watching TedTalks and other resources with complex vocabulary. The development of Nikbakht's oral vocabulary and accuracy may be due to her exposure to native English speakers and nonnative speakers with a native or near native fluency five days a week. While at university, Nikbakht is immersed in an environment with a wide range of academic vocabulary in the classroom as well as conversational English outside of

class. This gives her the opportunity to learn and practice new vocabulary. Due to my limited vocabulary in Dari, I am unable to assess transfer between L1 and L2 as a factor in her word choice.

Strengths in Nikbakht's written language are use of vocabulary that enhances the accuracy and impact of her arguments such as: 'facilities', 'computer labs', 'laboratories', 'projectors', 'reputable', and 'priority'. Other words such as 'audience', 'accreditation', and 'entertain' could be revised for more accurate and appropriate word usage. In order to help Nikbakht do this, I would suggest identifying five words or phrases per 250 words that need revision, highlighting them, and having Nikbakht look up the definitions in a bilingual dictionary as well as the usage in sentences. Merriam Webster's Learner's Dictionary is an excellent resource for language learners who need to see various usages of the same word in a sentence. Based on Nikbakht's metalinguistic awareness and language proficiency, it may also be helpful for her to use a corpus database to look at examples of how vocabulary words are used in a sentence. Seeing the accurate use of these words in context may help her use them correctly in the future. Once Nikbakht has understood why her word choice was identified as inaccurate by her instructor and the correct usage of the vocabulary, I would suggest she use a bilingual dictionary to look for possible translations of the word she wanted to use and confirm which was the best fit by looking at the use of that word in sentences in English using the Learner's Dictionary or a corpus.

Some phrases in Nikbakht's academic writing are accurate but could be revised to increase the complexity of her writing. I would have her identify phrases such as 'a lot', 'big', 'very', 'good' and 'bad' in her writing and highlight them and the related phrases. For example, in the writing in Table 11 she would highlight 'it costs a lot' and then brainstorm alternative

words or phrases with the same meaning with the assistance of a dictionary. Based on my knowledge of Nikbakht as a learner, I believe that she has the lexical resources to use more complex language but needs to focus on identifying words and phrases that have more academic equivalents. Over time, I believe Nikbakht would strengthen the metalinguistic skill of revising her own vocabulary as she becomes more aware of what to look for in her own writing.

Nikbakht's oral language indicates meaningful and accurate vocabulary use such as the words 'attend', 'responsible', 'honest', 'lend', and 'on the other side of the building'. These words, seen in context in Table 12, are specific and offer important details to the conversations. While the overall lexical density and complex word measure is lower than the written language, it is still accurate and meaningful. There are two inaccuracies, the use of the word 'couldn't' instead of 'can't' and 'in my pocket'. I would suggest correcting 'could' this with explicit targeted instruction on the use of the conditional and then controlled practice activities to reinforce meaning. The vocabulary choice 'in my pocket' indicates circumlocution and it might be helpful to recast this phrase by responding to her and saying 'you don't have it *in your purse/wallet?*' or 'you don't have it *with you?*' Nikbakht's oral language is similar to the written sample in that there are some vocabulary choices that could be revised to be more specific. For example, she uses 'very long', and 'a long distance' which could be modified to be more lexically complex. However, it is important to recognize TTR's (2009) explanation that oral production is naturally less complex than written production and it may not be necessary or appropriate to modify oral language to reflect the tone and lexis of written language.

Overall, Nikbakht's use of vocabulary is mostly accurate, specific, and appropriately complex. The one area for improvement is increasing the accuracy and specificity of vocabulary in academic writing. I believe her awareness of vocabulary and usage is a linguistic strength that

she can use to improve her level. Her metalinguistic skills, environmental factors, and a wide range of vocabulary will allow her to improve her written word choice.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the linguistic profile examining Nikbakht's pragmatics, phonology, syntax, and semantics, I estimate Nikbakht's overall spoken and written English level to be a TOEFL PBT 525-550, IELTS 5.5, and CEFR B1+/B2. Interpreting her language use through Grice's Maxims (as cited in Yule, 2017), MLU (Bowen, 2009), and Token-Type Ratio (TTR, 2009) provided details to support the claim of language proficiency. Nikbakht is on a path to becoming a more independent and competent user with the likelihood that she will continue to be immersed in an English speaking environment with increasingly difficult input that will challenge her to advance her skills as an English learner. If environmental factors remain the same, and identified areas for improvement are addressed with the strategies detailed in each of the above sections, I believe that her language accuracy and proficiency will increase.

### **Implications for Future Teaching**

Conducting this case study has made me more aware of how to conduct interviews and collect diverse language samples that will provide information about a study subject. After planning what prompts to ask the participant and adjusting them to be culturally responsive, I had the opportunity to improve my transcription skills. Examining the pragmatics of Nikbakht's speech under a microscope helped me to identify and understand subtle yet meaningful differences between her oral production and that of a native speaker. Now I can not only identify something that could have been phrased differently, but also explain why and offer a way to make a correction. The phonological research section encouraged me to consider why different

reasons a student has pronunciation challenges, the influence of their L1 on L2 production, and how to harness linguistic strengths to address pronunciation issues. Understanding pronunciation on the level of phonemes has helped me reexamine what it means to pronounce a word incorrectly and offer more constructive and practical pronunciation correction.

The syntax and morphology research allowed me to compare and contrast oral and written language and quantify it with an MLU rating and morphological strengths and weaknesses. Examining the language produced gave me a better picture of what grammar Nikbakht knew as well as specific areas that would be beneficial to address with targeted practice. Understanding Nikbakht's semantics helped me differentiate her conversational English voice and from her academic voice as well as see what strategies she used when she was unsure of the correct vocabulary word or wanted to give specific information. Similar to the other sections of the paper, this was helpful in identifying specific strengths and areas for improvement.

The conclusions about Nikbakht as a native Dari speaker and English language learner could be applied to other students in the same setting with similar demographics. For example, it is possible that they would also struggle to decline doing a favor for a friend without targeted instruction on how to do this appropriately in English. I also think they would have similar challenges with pronunciation that could be corrected with with strategies discussion in the phonology section. The specific recommendations given to improve Nikbakht's areas for improvement could be used to inform classroom instruction and benefit other students who may be struggling with the same things. I believe further analysis and comparison of Nikbakht with other Afghan students with the same English level at the same university would be necessary to identify a trend with syntax and semantics. However, Nikbakht's profile and results offer an idea



of what MLU, complex words measure, and lexical density students should be reaching in order to complete the foundation year at the university with the appropriate proficiency. It would be beneficial to do the same case study with additional students to create a larger and potentially more accurate linguistic profile of Afghan students in the foundation program. However, as it stands, this case study offers a detailed snapshot of an Afghan ELL and provides information that could inform instruction of her fellow students.

If I have the opportunity to return to Afghanistan, I would use the specific information I have learned about Afghans as ELLs and implement the recommended strategies. I believe that the skills learned during this case study are transferable and I will be able to apply them in other contexts as well. In the event that I work in a region with a different L1, I would collect language samples from students and notice strengths and areas for improvement in students' language production. Now that I have the knowledge of what to look for and how to analyze the collected data, I can create strategies and activities targeted at areas that need improvement.

Having lived and worked in the Afghan context for a year before I conducted this case study, I thought I understood my Afghan students as language learners and was offering them sufficient support in increase their skills. After completing this case study, I am more cognizant that regardless of an instructor's familiarity with students' L1, an investigation into different aspects of students' linguistic abilities is necessary in order to identify areas for improvement and provide practical and appropriate interventions.

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**Artifact C: SIOP Lesson Plan****Instructor:** Olivia Bailey – Lesson plan**Class:** Adult General English class**Level:** Lower intermediate

Note: This lesson is designed to be taught in person but could be adapted to the online context

**Time:** 1 hour 15 minute class**Lesson Title:** What does it mean to be ‘responsible’ when visiting shared natural spaces?

**Content Objectives:** SWBAT draw conclusions from a text and video about the impact visitors have on natural places and the responsibilities they have when visiting them. SWBAT identify rights and responsibilities of people who visit parks and other natural spaces.

**Language Objectives:** SWBAT state and justify their opinions regarding what people need to do when visiting parks or other natural spaces. SWBAT work collaboratively to offer advice in the form of a poster on what actions visitors should take when visiting a specific location. SWBAT share their opinions with evidence using sentence stems from the previous class.

**Theme:** Environmental responsibility**Materials needed:**

[https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-54200833?intlink\\_from\\_url=https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/czjm25l2x7nt/litter&link\\_location=live-reporting-story](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-54200833?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/czjm25l2x7nt/litter&link_location=live-reporting-story)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-LgGKPDbpI>

Poster paper, markers

**Other preparation required:** Print article for students, check that there is a way to project/share the video

Stage & Time	Purpose	Interactional Focus	Procedures
Language and Content objectives 1	Present language and content objectives to students	T-WC	Write this on the board- it stays up all class

Warm up 3-4	Activate student knowledge about lesson topic	s-s WCFB	Look at picture. Discuss with a partner: What do you see? Where do you think this picture was taken? How do you know?  (picture on ppt slide, taken from top of reading)
Elicit vocabulary 3-5	Activate vocabulary students know about lesson topic and preteach vocab necessary for reading	T-WC	In warm up, students probably will say 'garbage', also elicit 'litter/littering' 'trash' 'rubbish'. Put these on the board and other key vocab shared by students in warm up. Differentiate between nouns and verbs.
Brainstorm 5	Connect concepts of litter and natural spaces  Connect littering to student's home contexts	Groups of 3 WCFB	Brainstorm types of litter you have seen <b>in nature? Where - Discuss places in your home country, or places you have visited recently.</b> (Prompt students: What are specific locations of 'in nature'? Generate list as class: parks, on walks, hiking, at the beach/lake...).  Write types of litter as many as you can in 2 minutes. (Do one example together as a class)  Students pass their list to another table group- Did they write anything you missed?  Note: Check meaning of word braintorm
Read 7-8	Understanding general concepts of the article	S s-s WCFB	Read the article (5) Guiding questions: What problem does the article discuss? What is the solution in the text?  WCFB checks for conceptual understanding of topic. (Use elicited vocab)
Read for detail 5-6	Reading for detailed information and comprehension checking	s-s ss-ss WCFB	Use the text to answer these questions with a partner: What three punishments can the police enforce? How does the text describe the note in the picture?  Pairs, check with another group (whole table)
Discussion 10-12	Connecting text to student's personal experiences.	S s-s WCFB	Do you think returning trash to people by mail is an effective way to get them to stop littering in parks? Why/why not? What other <b>strategies</b> could parks use to get people to stop littering? What <b>strategies</b> do parks in your home country use to stop littering?

	<p>Supporting opinion with evidence.</p> <p>Connecting previous class (discussion stems) to current class material</p>		<p>Take notes to support your opinion.(3-4 individual ) Support your opinion with ideas from the text, and your own ideas. Find a partner with a different opinion and share. (4-5)</p> <p>Use discussion sentence stems taught in previous class (handout from previous class) to respond to your partner. Ex: I see your point but... Have you considered ...? I disagree because.... I believe... From my point of view...</p> <p>Note: include recasting error correction here as needed, confirm meaning of strategies</p>
5 Brainstorm	Build on concepts introduced in article and connect to video	Groups of 3	<p>We talked about what parks can do... let's <b>brainstorm</b> what WE can do and our responsibility.</p> <p>What <b>actions</b> can we take to <b>avoid littering in parks/out in nature</b>? What should you do when you go to a park? What shouldn't you do when you go to a park?</p> <p>Note: check understanding of the word avoid and brainstorm</p>
5-7	Notetaking	Group of 3 WCFB	<p>Watch a video (2x) with some suggestions about how to avoid littering in parks. Take notes on what suggestions they give.</p> <p>Discuss with your group of 3: Do you have the same ideas/different ideas? Add any new ideas you have now that you have watched the video. Where does this video take place? Are the problems similar or different to your country's natural places? How?</p>
15-20 Generating a poster	Assessment activity/putting it all together	Groups of 3-4	<p>Choose a specific natural place with your group. For example: a park in your city, the beach, a lake, a national park, a hiking trail.</p> <p>Create a poster with guidelines for people visiting this place.</p> <p>What should people do? What should they avoid/not do?</p>

			<p>Remember to include information for visitors about what <b>consequences</b> for breaking these guidelines.</p> <p>Remind them to think about what steps are taken in parks in their home countries/context when deciding what information to include.</p> <p>Do an example with the class: For example... in Nashville we have bicentennial park (show a picture). What can you do here? Can you take a picnic to this park? “Yes, but... you need to clean up.” So... what could we put on the poster? ‘ Please enjoy picnics in the park. Remember to pick up your litter.’</p> <p>Part II of this: Do all visitors speak the same language? Are these signs easy to understand for people who don’t speak English? How can we make <b>accessible</b> for people who don’t speak English? Students might respond draw a picture, translate. (Show a picture of a sign that does this on a PPT slide as an example)</p> <p>It is time to add your translations and pictures to the poster. Each person in the group chooses 1 of the guidelines (can do more if they finish it quickly) to translate to their L1 and illustrate.</p> <p>It is ok if you have more than two languages on your paper!</p> <p>Note: check understanding of consequences and accessible</p>
<p>Gallery walk 3-4</p>	<p>Wrap up and reflection</p>	<p>Groups of 3-4</p> <p>WCFB</p>	<p>Walk around with your group and look at other group’s work.</p> <p>What group... has the strictest rules? ...has a suggestion you want to add to your paper?</p> <p>Will you change your actions the next time you visit any of these places after reading the guidelines and recommendations of your peers?</p>

			Note: If time, add in an extension to previous translanguaging. There will probably be some overlap in guidelines and phrases translated. Select one of the commonly translated phrases and ask students to elaborate on their translation choices.
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### Rationale:

1. How does this lesson align with the CLT approach?

Brown discusses that CLT has many different interpretations and manifestations in the classroom (2001). Table 3.1 demonstrates that CLT can include the use of L1, meaningful translation activities, nurturing students' intrinsic motivation, and prioritizing learning through collaboration and cooperation (Brown, 2001, p. 45). This lesson integrates the use of L1 while making student work more accessible to the larger community. Additionally, this lesson aims to harness the intrinsic motivation of students and their connection to the topic through activities that connect the topic to home country contexts while encouraging them to use language that has a function outside the classroom. The lesson uses two authentic materials (news article and video) that have not been adapted for ELs, but provides scaffolding for students to access these resources in meaningful ways.

2. To what extent are the content and language objectives clear and productive in helping students learn? Which features of communicative competence can learners develop in this lesson? How?

These objectives are designed to focus on what students need to learn about the content area and what students need to learn about English in the lesson (Echevarria et al., 2017, p. 33). Based on guidelines put forth by Echevarria et al., these content and language objectives are written to include specific, measurable goals, be observable, and promote student academic growth (2017, p. 43) Two parts of Celce-Murcia et al.'s model of communicative competence that learners can develop in this lesson are discourse competence (conversational structure- turn taking, utilization of sentence stems), and actionable competence (information- explaining and discussing, opinion-expressing and finding out about opinions and attitudes, and suasion- suggesting, instructing, giving orders, advice, and warning) (1995, Table 3., p. 33). Students can develop these through the activities connected to the objectives such as:

- a. The discussion on: Do you think returning trash to people by mail is an effective way to get them to stop littering in parks? Why/why not? What other strategies could parks use to get people to stop littering? What strategies do parks in your home country use to stop littering? Use discussion sentence stems taught in previous class (handout from previous class) to respond to your partner. Ex: I see your point but... Have your considered ...? I disagree because.... I believe... From my point of view...
- b. Discussion on: What **actions** can we take to **avoid littering in parks/out in nature**? What should you do when you go to a park? What shouldn't you do when you go to a park?
- c. The generating a poster culminating activity

3. How does the lesson plan set up environments, questions, and tasks that have strong potential for engaging learners in meaningful, *rigorous higher-order thinking* related to content and academic language?

Echevarria et al. state that “Just because they don’t speak English proficiently doesn’t mean they can’t think!” Therefore, SIOP teachers include in their lesson plans a variety of higher-order thinking questions and tasks (2017, p.150).” I have kept this in mind when designing this lesson and built it with the intention to challenge students to use higher-order thinking and challenge them to approach the content and language objectives with a critical lens. The brainstorming, discussion, and generating a poster portions of this lesson are intended to engage learners in meaningful, rigorous higher-order thinking related to the content while including vocabulary activated in the eliciting vocabulary stage of the lesson. These stages include critical thinking that requires students to draw on their own personal experiences and what they learned from the text and video to answer open ended questions that do not have a clear right/wrong answer.

4. How does the lesson allow for opportunities for investigating, activating, bridging, and building background knowledge?

This lesson intends to go beyond simply reading an article about a national park in Thailand and connect the concept of environmental stewardship to how students interact with natural spaces and what recommendations they have for their future selves and others. This requires students to critically examine their own cultural norms and actions, to listen to their peers’ experiences, analyze a text and video, and form opinions about best practices with all of this information. Hull and Moje discuss sociocultural perspectives on literacy saying “to learn literacy well, students need meaningful purposes for engaging in literate practice and opportunities to use literacy for a broad range of life activities related to goals and desires beyond the moment of instruction (2012, p.54)”. The opportunities presented by this lesson give students opportunities to engage with each other as well as with the text in a way that goes beyond the classroom to every time they look at a sign with recommendations and regulations for visiting a public space. Students are also able to build their background knowledge through meaningful exchanges with their peers which expand their understanding the topic to include perspectives from additional cultures. This lesson tries to activate student knowledge and resources throughout the lesson from the warm up, vocabulary activity, and the questions ‘What strategies do parks in your home country use to stop littering?’ and ‘Are the problems similar or different to your country’s natural places? How?’.

5. How are activities in the lesson plan sequenced and designed to scaffold tasks that challenge students to develop new disciplinary and linguistic skills? How do you envision opportunities for differentiation?

This lesson, while designed for a lower intermediate group of adult learners, has been designed with intentional scaffolding for students above and below the average English level of the class. The reading activity is designed to introduce the topic and anticipated challenging vocabulary. However, the scaffolding does not assume that students do not know challenging vocabulary and instead encourages students to draw on their knowledge before having the instructor prompt them with vocabulary or definitions. Once the warm up and vocabulary stages have been completed, the lesson intentionally moves into two reads of the same text, each with a different purpose. This is done to give students the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the text with each read and provide expansion questions for students who have a higher level. The interaction patterns throughout the lesson include a combination of individual, partner, group,



and whole class activities to provide multiple opportunities for discussion and clarification from peers or the instructor. Scaffolding for this lesson was drawn from Hammond & Gibbon's approach to using designed-in and interactional-contingent scaffolding (2005). In addition to this approach, I also draw my approach to scaffolding from the verbal, procedural, and instructional scaffolding discussed by Echevarria et al. (2017, p.133). I anticipate multiple opportunities for differentiation in the poster creation activity because some students will be able to contribute more complex ideas to this than others and take a greater role in translation portion of the activity than those who have a lower level.

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**Artifact D: Program Curriculum and Rationale**

Olivia Bailey  
 AUAF Academy Program ENG 98 & ENG 99 Curriculum Design  
 March 28, 2020

Program Overview:

The English 98 and 99 courses detailed below in Table 2 and 3 are the 6 credit writing courses in the AUAF Academy Program, a two-semester intensive bridge program for students who do not have the TOEFL scores required to enter the English medium university as first year undergraduate students. ENG 98 and 99 provide foundational academic writing skills that will be built on in the undergraduate program’s first year writing course, ENG 110. ENG 98 and 99’s broad goals include goals of teaching students the steps of the writing process, genre specific writing, and development of academic language in writing. Table 1. below illustrates the possible progressions the possible progressions into the ENG 110 and the undergraduate program. It is possible for students to enter the Academy as a 098 or 099 level student. It is *not* possible for students to enter at the 098 level and skip 099, and proceed to 110 and the undergraduate program.

The Academy program’s writing courses aim to cumulatively address the following questions:

1. Are students prepared to write 5 paragraph academic essays that are sufficiently developed, contain relevant and detailed evidence, and demonstrate coherence and cohesion in the following rhetorical styles?
  - a. See Appendix A for a sample AUAF Academy rubric illustrating expected organization, content, conventions, and language use.
2. After finishing ENG 098 and 099, do students have the necessary skills to take AUAF’s ENG 110, a mainstream first-year composition course, without specific ESL support?

Table 1.

TOEFL PBT Score	Level assigned on entry to the university	Progression in level	
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3

450-474	098 (Academy)	099 (Academy)	110 (Undergraduate year 1)
475-499	099 (Academy)	110 (Undergraduate year 1)	
500+	110 (Undergraduate year 1)		
*Both Academy and Undergraduate programs accept new students in the Fall and Spring Semesters			

Table 2.

Course	Course Outcomes- Students will:	Course Objectives:
<p>ENG 098</p> <p>Can students: identify, plan, write, and revise academic paragraphs or essays in the following rhetorical styles?</p> <p>Narrative Process Opinion Review</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce one paragraph compositions.</li> <li>2. Produce multi-paragraph essays:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop an introduction paragraph with a thesis statement, body paragraphs with supporting information, a conclusion paragraph with a final comment or recommendation.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Use topic sentences, logical organization, concrete details, and examples</li> <li>4. Use different rhetorical modes in:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Paragraphs (narration &amp; process)</li> <li>b. Essays (opinion &amp; review)</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Correctly use basic transitions and connectives to bridge ideas and help ideas flow smoothly</li> <li>6. Recognize the concept of plagiarism as discussed in the AUAF Honor Pledge (see <a href="https://www.auaf.edu.af/student-life/honor-pledge/">https://www.auaf.edu.af/student-life/honor-pledge/</a>) and develop initial strategies to avoid plagiarism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To solidify writing skills by reviewing capitalization and punctuation rules, one-paragraph compositions, and basic connectives (and, so, but, because, before, after, when).</li> <li>2. To introduce the concept of plagiarism and academic integrity.</li> <li>3. To develop writing skills by introducing multi-paragraph essays, teaching the development of body paragraphs, and teaching basic transitions.</li> <li>4. To introduce revision and feedback skills by teaching self and peer review strategies</li> <li>5. To increase oral fluency through speaking activities involving sharing ideas, opinions, and experiences on topics from the course.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Detect and revise major mechanical errors including: run-ons and fragments.</li> <li>8. Discuss ideas, opinions, and personal experiences related to rhetorical genres and topics in class.</li> <li>9. Analyze peer writing samples and compose constructive feedback.</li> <li>10. Use steps of the writing process to become more effective writers. (Analyze prompts, brainstorm, outline, draft, revise, peer review, final draft)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To generate a writing portfolio with independent revision of work and reflect on progress as writers.</li> </ol>
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Table 3.

Course	Course Outcomes- Students will:	Course Objectives:
<p>ENG 099</p> <p>Can students identify, plan, write, and revise five paragraph academic essays in the following rhetorical styles?</p> <p>Expository, comparison and contrast, cause-effect, persuasion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce five-paragraph compositions:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. developing the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion</li> <li>b. using the rhetorical modes of expository, comparison and contrast, cause-effect, and persuasion</li> <li>c. correctly using transitions and other connectives to help ideas flow smoothly</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Recognize potential instances of plagiarism as discussed in the AUAF Honor Pledge (see <a href="https://www.auaf.edu.af/student-life/honor-pledge/">https://www.auaf.edu.af/student-life/honor-pledge/</a>) and expand strategies</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop writing skills by teaching students to write multi-paragraph essays and develop the introduction and conclusion paragraphs</li> <li>2. To improve writing skills by teaching various types of cohesion</li> <li>3. To develop writing fluency</li> <li>4. To expand the concepts academic integrity, plagiarism, and how to avoid it by teaching basic citations and inclusion of external sources</li> </ol>

	<p>such as paraphrasing or summarizing with appropriate citations to avoid plagiarism.</p> <p>3. Analyze, detect, and revise major syntactical and mechanical errors including: comma-splices, run-ons, and fragments.</p> <p>4. Discuss ideas, opinions, and personal experiences related to rhetorical genres and topics in class.</p> <p>5. Analyze peer writing samples and compose constructive feedback.</p> <p>Use steps of the writing process to be more effective writers. (Analyze prompts, brainstorm, outline, draft, revise, peer review, final draft)</p>	<p>5. To increase revision and feedback skills by teaching self and peer review strategies</p> <p>6. To increase fluency through speaking activities involving sharing ideas, opinions, and experiences on academic topics related to the course materials</p> <p>To generate a writing portfolio with independent revision of work and reflect on progress as writers.</p>
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Table 4 and 5 below illustrate the stages, purposes, and language features of a narrative paragraph and a review essay. The typical language features demonstrate specific areas of focus for that paragraph/essay. This is not an exhaustive list and instructors are encouraged to include features being taught in other support classes such as grammar or areas where students are struggling. These tables should be used to inform the what can be expected from students when using the rubric to grade assignments. Knowledge of stages, purposes, and language features are cumulative. Instructors can consult previous writing assignments for previously covered items.

Table 4.

Narrative Paragraph- (Past topics included: overcoming adversity, learning a valuable lesson, achieving something great)		
Stage	Purpose	Typical language features
<b>Title</b>	Attract attention, orient reader to the topic	Possessive pronouns, nouns, descriptive adjectives

<b>Topic Sentence</b>		Introduce the topic with a main idea and controlling idea	Personal pronouns, superlatives
<b>Major supporting detail</b>	X	Provide support for the main idea (major details)	Transitions of time (first, second, next, before..),
<b>Minor supporting detail (x2)</b>	3	Provide specific examples clarify and give additional information (minor details)	simple past (regular and irregular)
<b>Conclusion Sentence</b>		Wrap up the topic and remind the reader of the main point	Conclusion transitions (in conclusion, to wrap up...)
*Knowledge of stages, purposes, and language features are cumulative. See previous writing assignments for previously covered items.			

Table 5.

Review Essay- (Book, Movie, Restaurant, Tourist Location)		
Stage	Purpose	Typical Language Features
<b>Title</b>	Attract attention, orient reader to the topic	Nouns, descriptive adjectives
<b>Introduction</b> - Topic sentence - Historical background, summary, or anecdote -Thesis	Introduce the topic Provide background information necessary to understand the topic Present the author’s opinion on the topic and focus areas of the review that will be discussed in the body paragraphs	Simple present, simple past, present perfect  Personal pronouns Indicators of opinion (I think..., From my perspective...)
<b>Body paragraphs</b> - Topic sentence - Detail sentences - Conclusion sentence/bridge	Introduce topic of paragraph and connect to thesis Describe and evaluate specific characteristics of the topic Conclude and introduce next body paragraph	Compound/complex sentences with fanboys, adjective clauses, comma use Descriptive adjectives Transition words
<b>Conclusion</b>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restate Thesis</li> <li>- Recommendation</li> <li>- Final Comment or suggestion</li> </ul>	Remind reader the opinion and main supporting points Persuade/discourage the audience to try/avoid the topic Wrap up the topic	Modal verbs of suggestion Conclusion transitions
Adapted from Caplan, N. A., & Farling, M. (2016). A Dozen Heads Are Better Than One: Collaborative Writing in Genre-Based Pedagogy. <i>TESOL Journal</i> , 8(3), 564–581. doi: 10.1002/tesj.287  *Knowledge of stages, purposes, and language features are cumulative. See previous writing assignments for previously covered items.		

Appendix A. General Rubric for ENG 98 & ENG 99 -- From AUAF Academy Program (Fall 2018 – Spring 2019)

	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Organization</b>	Well-developed writing with main idea clearly stated and logical sequencing of ideas with appropriate transitions with strong topic sentence/thesis. Conclusion summarizes main idea and adds a final comment if necessary. Achieves paragraph objective.	Stated topic sentence/thesis and generally revolves around the main idea. Presence of accurately used transitions; logical sequencing of ideas may need work. Conclusion attempts to restate main idea. Mostly achieves paragraph objective.	Attempts organization with a beginning, middle, and end. Weak/too general topic sentence/thesis, inaccurate transitions; logical sequence of ideas may suffer. Missing or incomplete conclusion. Partially meets paragraph objective.	Poorly-developed writing with little attempt at paragraph organization. Very weak or non-existent topic sentence/thesis. Attempts but does not meet paragraph objective.
<b>Content</b>	Clear, original ideas that are richly supported with specific details (examples, explanations, reasons, statistics, descriptions, etc). Writing is fully reflective of the task/genre.	An attempt at clear, original ideas that are meaningful. Supporting details provided but may not be specific. Writing reflects the task/genre.	Supporting details are incomplete and/or do not sufficiently support the main idea. Writing does not fully reflect the task/genre.	Support is repetitious or irrelevant. Content lacks a real focus and meaningful development. Writing does not reflect the task/genre.

<b>Conventions</b>	Consistently uses correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	Generally uses correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Some errors are present but do not affect comprehension.	Multiple spelling, punctuation, and capitalization errors, which occasionally affect understanding.	Extensive spelling and punctuation errors that make text at times unintelligible. Little to no adherence to formatting guidelines. Rules of capitalization are rarely followed.
<b>Language Use</b>	Use of higher-level grammatical forms and a variety of sentence patterns, including compound and complex sentences. Vocabulary is topic-related, rich in diversity, and accurate in form.	Attempts to use complex grammar structures. Acceptable grammar with some errors but generally comprehensible. However, grammar structures are less varied and less accurate. Vocabulary demonstrates some diversity and is mostly accurate.	Little attempt to use complex grammar structures. Simple grammar and sentence patterns which may also be incorrect. Contains run on sentences and sentence fragments. Vocabulary is limited and repetitive.	No attempt to use complex grammar structures. Over-reliance on simple grammar and sentence patterns which are often incorrect. Simple vocabulary lacks precision and variety.



AUAF Academy Program ENG 98 & ENG 99 Rationale  
April 10, 2020

**Guiding principles and tips for successful curriculum implementation:**

1. Examine the teaching environment constraints (Learners, Teachers, Situation) and adapt teaching methods used to implement the curriculum accordingly (Nation & Macalister, 2020, pp. 16-17). Please keep the following factors in mind when implementing the 98 & 99 Academic Writing curriculum:
  - a. AUAF students are highly self-motivated, interested in class, and consistent in completing work. Students view higher education as a key factor in successful employment, improved economic status, and potential emigration to another country.
  - b. Afghan nationals, both faculty and staff, are a wealth of linguistic and cultural knowledge. This resource should not be overlooked as they are subject matter experts when it comes to the educational backgrounds, funds of knowledge, and experiences of young Afghans.
  - c. The turbulent political climate in Afghanistan causes uncertainty regarding university operations and funding. This is a stressor to students and faculty alike. This may also result in temporary closures of the university due to strikes, meetings of tribal elders, or elections.
  - d. Afghanistan is a conflict zone; violent non-state actors, specifically the Taliban and Daesh, pose an immediate physical threat to students commuting to the university and the university campus itself. This threat is mitigated as much as possible but potential attacks are stressors on student education and could potentially derail education.
  - e. The academic writing curriculum relies on instructors' resources and generated materials. Students have limited financial resources and many not be able to print, use computers off campus, or digitally access class materials from home. It may be necessary to modify assignments to function with limited access to internet, books, or student printing. Students may have limited computer literacy and need technology support during their first semesters.
2. This curriculum is informed by a needs analysis of the present knowledge, required knowledge, and subjective needs of students (Nation & Macalister, 2020, p. 25).
  - a. 98 & 99 level students' required knowledge is an increase in academic writing skills in order to succeed in a first-year university composition course without EFL support.
  - b. 98 & 99 level students did not achieve the necessary TOEFL PBT score to be admitted directly into the university and currently have English proficiency associated with a TOEFL PBT score between 450 and 499.
  - c. Subjective student needs might vary but mostly align with the required knowledge needs and expand to communicative skills beyond academic writing.
3. Consider Milner's (2015) Opportunity Gap Framework: colorblindness, cultural conflicts, myth of meritocracy, deficit mind-sets and low expectations, and context-neutral mind-sets (pp. 42-44).
  - a. The Opportunity Gap Framework may serve as a theoretical lens with which to approach curriculum implementation, assessment, and instruction. Instructors should work actively to disrupt these constructs which may be magnified by the racial,

- ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, and context of an American university in Kabul, Afghanistan.
4. This curriculum was informed by the practice of backward design, described as “developing plans based on defining clear goals, determining acceptable evidence of having achieved the goals, then working “backward” to identify what actions need to be taken to close the gap between the current status and the desired result” (Pearson School, n.d., p. 6). This approach coupled with a needs analysis contributed to two guiding questions that informed course outcomes and objectives (see curriculum page 1., questions 1 &2).
  5. Trends in English language teaching are constantly evolving and several of these changes have played a key role in the structure of this curriculum and intended implementation. While implementation methods are not explicitly referenced in the curriculum due to a desire to respect teacher autonomy as well as difficulty quantifying and measuring student achievement of ‘becoming a social change agent’ or ‘critical thinking’, it is intended that they would be reflected in unit themes, course materials, and major assignment prompts given to students. Specific trends relevant to the AUAF context and this student population are:
    - a. “Teaching of English is not simply a project to prepare students to imitate native English speakers as language learners but ... it should produce fully competent language users, critical thinkers, and constructive social change agents” (Crystal, 2004 and Cook, 2005, as cited in Sun, 2014, para. 3).
    - b. “Learning outcomes and learning standards are broader and pursue the development of not only language skills, but critical thinking, learning strategies, and related content knowledge and skills in the real world” (Sun, 2014, para. 5).
  6. The population of AUAF Academy students are in their late teens/early twenties and have characteristics of both teens and adults. Instructors would benefit from considering a few of Brown’s (2001) key principles for teaching teens and adults when implementing the curriculum (pp 91-92):
    - a. “Show respect for the deeper thoughts and feelings that may be "trapped" for the moment by a low proficiency level.
    - b. Do give your students as many opportunities as possible to make choices (cooperative learning) about what they will do in and out of the classroom.
    - c. One of the most important concerns of the secondary school teacher is to keep self-esteem high by: avoiding embarrassment of students at all costs, affirming each person's talents and strengths, allowing mistakes and other errors to be accepted, de-emphasizing competition between classmates, and encouraging small-group work where risks can be taken more easily by a teen.”

### **Key program information and genre justification:**

The following two course program outline of Academic Writing is part of the larger AUAF academy program which consists of the following classes:

Table 1.
----------

098 Level	Credit Hours		099 Level	Credit Hours
Academic Writing	6		Academic Writing	6
Reading & Vocabulary	3		Reading & Vocabulary	3
Oral Communication & Study Skills	3		Oral Communication & Study Skills	3
Interactive Grammar	3			

The AUAF Academy Program ENG 98 & ENG 99 Curriculum Design consists of only the Academic Writing courses in gray above. It is strongly advisable that the Academic Writing program curriculum be used to establish if the support classes' curricula are in alignment when designing course and Academy program outcomes.

Academic writing courses in the Academy cover eight different genres in total: narrative, process, opinion, review, expository, comparison and contrast, cause-effect, and persuasion. These eight genres were chosen with the idea that they would scaffold onto one another in difficulty and style. In addition to this selection and order criteria, a review of university bridge programs in the United States and abroad was conducted to establish what established, accredited programs were doing. A survey of four universities (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, SUNY Plattsburgh, Arizona State University, American University of Central Asia) found some similarities between genres and also found that there was an average of four different genres covered in each course (see Table 2. below for details). The most common genres as well as number of genres per course are reflected in the Academy curriculum.

University	Course Name	Genres/course description
UNLV	Composition I & II for international students	Narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive
SUNY Plattsburgh	ESL 90/ENG 100	Writing course to help students develop sentences and paragraphs for academic writing. Focus is on organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics  essays and argument-based new media written texts, such as a web-based film review incorporating Internet video excerpts; a podcast and script presenting student views on a new graduation requirement
ASU	Introduction to Academic Writing	Definition, summary, analysis
AUCA	EAP: Academic Research Writing  EAP: Academic Writing & Critical Thinking and Presentation Skills	Opinion, summary, description, persuasion  Description, review/critique, proposals

	English for Academic Purposes: Reading and Writing	Description, persuasion, classification, compare & contrast, cause & effect
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**Artifact E: Observation Lesson Plan and Materials (English Language Center Practicum)****Observation lesson plan**

Lesson 7:

Language objective:

SWBAT orally use key phrases to agree/disagree about different topics

SWBAT acknowledge someone else's point of view and disagree/ or affirm while adding more information

Content objective:

SWBAT identify various perspectives on different topics.

Pretask (emailed to students Friday before class):

We are looking forward to seeing you for our next GES class on Monday. There are a couple tasks to prepare for our next meeting.

Please complete the following assignments to prepare for Monday's lesson:

- Write a paragraph (6-8 sentences) about a time you or someone you know disagreed with the opinion of someone in your home country. What happened?
- Review the attached handout with phrases used in conversational English to share an opinion and disagree or agree with someone.
  - Mark 2-3 new phrases from EACH category that you want to practice in class.
  - Put a question mark next to any phrases that are unclear or that you want to review in class.
- Please remember to bring this handout to class with you!

(10) Warm up: Connect to cultural background/home country norms of agreeing and disagreeing

Break out groups of 3: share your homework with your group. You don't have to read the entire paragraph, just explain what happened. Describe a time you or someone you know disagreed with the opinion of someone in your home country. What happened? (Partners: Ask follow up questions if you need more information)

2 min for each person, 6 min in break out groups, 4 min check in as group

(2) Introduce topic: Today we are going to practice how to agree/disagree in a conversation with another person and how to support your opinion in English. You all have opinions about things, but sometimes it can be difficult to share your opinion with someone in a way that is productive and polite in your second or third language. Luckily, English has phrases that are really useful for this and they can help you when having a conversation.

(7-10) Introduce the language: (Using slides) Cue students: here are the phrases you were given for homework about opinions, which ones are new to you that you want to practice today? Which ones do you have questions about?

Review each category (in general) with students, focus on ones students have questions with, or anticipated problems.

(15) Controlled practice: Do gap fill in groups of 3

(demo all of first 'Charlie', part of first 'Sam') - draw attention to context clues/ support that can help find out the opinion of each group.

(10) Check as class: fill out google doc dialogue together. Emphasize context clues during error correction.

(3-5) Read the dialogue out loud (each student gets one line, carry on until end of dialogue)

(5) CCQs/WC: What are the two different perspectives on recycling? Sam? Charlie? Reasons (1-2)

(15-20) Now it is your turn to practice using this language and sharing different opinions. Review the topics (on slides) as a class. Demo one together, typing this out while sharing screen. Break into pairs. Give students topics for agreeing/disagreeing (1 topic per slide) Student A agree on slide 1, student B will disagree, **switch roles for slide 2**

\*\*\* Remind students to provide evidence.

Make it clear in the instructions this is spoken practice, they do not need to write out the dialogue.

2 min per slide (~1 speaking total minute each)

(5-7) Wrap up: Return to whole class, each group does 1 dialogue using phrases in front of class

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End of observed lesson.

Note to self: This lesson will lay the groundwork and practice language necessary to discuss current event topics/pressing issues.

From here the next class will circle back to getting students to reflect on how opinions are shared in the US and linking it to current topics in the United States.

## Materials

Sharing Opinions- GES class handout

### Helpful Phrases for Sharing Opinions in Conversation

Mark 2-3 new phrases from **EACH category** that you want to use in class. Put a question mark next to any phrases you want to review in class.

#### **Giving opinions**

- In my opinion...
- I think / feel/ believe (that)...
- Personally, I think...
- As far as I'm concerned...
- From what I understand...
- From what I've read...
- Another point/argument/reason is...
- The point I'm making is...
- Don't you think that.....?
- It seems to me that...

#### **Asking for opinions**

- What do you think, (name)?
- How do you feel about this/ that?
- What is your view / position on...?
- Do you agree with that, (name)?
- Would you like to add anything, (name)?

#### **Agreeing**

- Absolutely. / Precisely. / Exactly. / Definitely.
- I (completely) agree.
- I couldn't agree more.
- I think you're right up to a point. \*
- You're (exactly) right.
- That's exactly what I was thinking.
- That's a good point.

#### **Disagreeing**

- I don't agree.
- I disagree with what you are saying.
- I'm sorry, but I don't agree at all.
- I'm not sure I agree.
- I don't see it that way.
- Do you really think so?
- It isn't as simple as that.
- I respect your opinion, but...

#### **Acknowledging a point but disagreeing**

- I can see your point; however...
- That's a good point, but...
- I see what you're getting at, but...

- Maybe, but...
- You could be right, but don't you think that..?

### Opinion Dialogue with Answer Key

**Dialogue: Fill in the gaps using opinion phrases.**

C: Hi Sam, it is so good to see you!

S: Oh hi Charlie, how have you been?

C: I've been busy! I'm working on organizing a recycling program here in Nashville!

S: Really? Are you doing it for your job?

C: No, I'm a volunteer. \_\_\_\_\_, recycling is really important, but the city government doesn't require Nashvillians to recycle. I am trying to make recycling mandatory and change the law in Nashville. \_\_\_\_\_ recycling?

S: Well, \_\_\_\_\_ with a recycling law. \_\_\_\_\_ recycling should be a personal choice. I worry that if it is the law, people will have to pay a fine and that isn't fair.

C: \_\_\_\_\_, but recycling can help our entire city be a cleaner, more environmentally friendly place. I think that is important.

S: \_\_\_\_\_. However, \_\_\_\_\_ a recycling law is not the answer. The city needs to do advertising and education so people know how to recycle.

C: \_\_\_\_\_. Once people have had time to adjust to the idea of recycling, then it could be a law.

S: \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ Nashville needs to make it easier to recycle by putting more recycling bins in public places and subsidizing the cost of recycling collection. \_\_\_\_\_, Charlie?

C: \_\_\_\_\_. It does need to be affordable for people to recycle. \_\_\_\_\_, taxes should pay to subsidize the cost of recycling collection.

S: Yes! \_\_\_\_\_.



C: Well, I know we might not agree about this topic completely, but I hope you will consider recycling!

S: Of course I will. Good to see you, have a good day Charlie!

S: Oh hi Charlie, how have you been?

C: I've been busy! I'm working on organizing a recycling program here in Nashville!

S: Really? Are you doing it for your job?

C: No, I'm a volunteer. **In my opinion, OPINION** recycling is really important, but the city government doesn't require Nashvillians to recycle. I am trying to make recycling mandatory and change the law in Nashville. **What's your view on ASKING** recycling?

S: Well, **I'm not sure I agree DISAGREEING** with a recycling law. **I think OPINION** recycling should be a personal choice. I worry that if it is the law, people will have to pay a fine and that isn't fair.

C: **I see your point, but ACKNOWLEDGING** recycling can help our entire city be a cleaner, more environmentally friendly place. I think that is important.

S: **I couldn't agree more. AGREEING** However, **I think that OPINION** a recycling law is not the answer. I think the city needs to do advertising and education so people know how to recycle.

C: **That's a good point. AGREEING** Once people have had time to adjust to the idea of recycling, then it could be a law.

S: **It isn't as simple as that. DISAGREEING/AGREEING\*** **I believe OPINION** Nashville needs to make it easier to recycle by putting more recycling bins in public places and subsidizing the cost of recycling collection. **What do you think, Charlie? ASKING**

C: **I think you are right up to a point. AGREEING\*** It does need to be affordable for people to recycle. **As far as I am concerned, OPINION** taxes should pay to subsidize the cost of recycling collection.

S: Yes. **Definitely. AGREEE**

C: Well, I know we might not agree about this topic completely, but I hope you will consider recycling!

S: Of course I will. Good to see you, have a good day Charlie!