



MULTICULTURAL AND BILINGUAL BOOKS FROM COHORT 2 KICKOFF EVENT



SEPTEMBER 2018

Welcome to our new iELT-Ozarks Project newsletter. We publish a newsletter twice annually. Here you can find updates on our program and learn what is going on with the students, faculty, and staff at Missouri State University.



iELT-Ozarks Team Spotlight

Meet Dr. Ximena Uribe-Zarain. She started with the iELT-Ozarks Project in 2016, and she is in charge of the evaluation of the grant.

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What is the iELT-Ozarks Project?

The overall goal of the Improving English Language Teaching in the Ozarks (iELT-Ozarks) Project is to provide access to affordable, customizable, state-of-the-art English language teacher training to better the educational outcomes of the language minority student population within the Ozarks region.

The Missouri K-12 ELL Endorsement provides a 30-hour graduate-level experience for in-service teachers in Missouri. Additionally, there is an extended service learning project coupled with teacher inquiry that focuses on educators' felt difficulties and the systematic implementation of current best practices.



Cohort 1 PD Presentations

Five cohort 1 members will be travelling this fall to present about ELs at conferences. Four students have been awarded travel grants from iELT-Ozarks Project and will travel with the iELT-Ozarks Project team to present at the regional MIDTESOL Conference in Kansas City September 2018.

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iELT-Ozarks Cohort 1 Graduates

In December 2018, our first batch of students will graduate from the iELT-Ozarks Project. Five cohort 1 students will be completing their studies this fall.

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Cultural Proficiency Workshop

Current cohort 1 students, Project Advisory Board members, district representatives, and iELT-Ozarks Project faculty and staff attended a full-day workshop at MSU on August 29, 2018 about promoting cultural proficiency and fostering communities of inclusion.

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Cohort 1 Updates

Cohort 1 of the iELT-Ozarks Project is made up of thirty K-12 in-service teachers from the McDonald County, Monett R-1, Neosho R-5, and Springfield R-XII public school districts. Here is a look at what the first cohort has been up to over the last year:

- In August 2017, the cohort members met face-to-face with iELT-Ozarks Project faculty, staff, and school district administrators for a kickoff/orientation event in Monett, Missouri.
- From August 2017 through June 2018, cohort 1 took five courses – ENG 691: Introduction to Linguistic Theory, ENG 688: Sociolinguistics for Language Teaching, ENG 695: Principles of Second Language Acquisition, ENG 605: Methods of TESOL, and ENG 690: Grammatical Analysis.



Kari Cox, graduating fall 2018 from cohort 1.

- In August 2018, all cohort 1 students started taking ENG 696/796: Materials and Assessment in TESOL, and a small group of students began ENG 697: Practicum in TESOL.
- In December 2018, the first round of iELT-Ozarks Project completers will exit the program, graduating with a Graduate Certificate in TESOL. Many will also earn their ELL Endorsement from DESE.

This experience has taught me so much about language in general. I have such a better understanding of how to help my students from building background knowledge to alternative assessments. I can say I truly learned a lot in a short amount of time. – Kari Cox, EL Instructor at Monett Middle and Monett High Schools (Cohort 1)

COHORT 1 FALL 2018 GRADUATES:

- **Amber Bledsoe**, Monett Intermediate, Monett R-1
- **Kari Cox**, Monett Middle and Monett High, Monett R-1
- **Erica Johnson**, Neosho Middle, Neosho R-5
- **Melissa Powers**, Monett High, Monett R-1
- **Sean Sides**, Neosho, Missouri

I feel that going through these classes and this program has really opened my eyes to the difficulty that ESL students face every day in our classrooms. I now am more conscious of things they may find difficult and am able to more effectively accommodate their needs with the new tools I have added to my toolbox. I find my fellow cohort members and myself thinking about and discussing our language learners' needs every time we have curriculum meetings, staff meetings, or collaborations. It has been enlightening, and I feel that it has highly benefited me as an educator. I feel fortunate for having taken part in this program! – Paige Oden, 2nd grade teacher at Benton Elementary in Neosho, Missouri (Cohort 1)



Greetings! My name is Ximena Uribe-Zarain, and I am the evaluator of the iELT-Ozarks Program. I am super excited to be part of the program and to get to work with amazing, caring, and knowledgeable people.

I moved to Springfield three years ago, and I have enjoyed it since the first day. I was born and raised in Mexico City, so English is my second language. I always liked math and graduated with a degree in actuarial sciences. Finances and insurance were never

iELT-Ozarks Team Spotlight

my cup of tea, but demography and statistics were. I moved to the U. S. to pursue a doctoral degree in education with an emphasis in measurement, statistics, and evaluation. I graduated in 2007 and worked for the University of Delaware until moving to Missouri.

I have conducted educational research and program evaluation for ten years, and I have taught undergraduate and graduate courses for fourteen. I enjoy designing instruments for data collection, creating procedures for research, and analyzing data. I find it very rewarding to translate research findings into actionable recommendations. One of my favorite projects was researching a dual language immersion program in Delaware. The goal of our study was to investigate how Chinese and Spanish teachers from abroad

adjusted to living here and working within the American school system. We found that the teachers' culture was the greatest factor influencing the extent of their adjustment.

As an immigrant and a continuing English learner, I have a great deal of respect for the work that you do. I truly believe that we, as a nation, need to address how public education interacts with ethnicity, culture, and nationality. The outcome of the iELT-Ozarks Project that excites me the most is that you will learn how to improve the odds of success of immigrant children. And you will do so by teaching English, respecting students' culture, and by inviting their families into the school community. Working to improve the lives of students like these, who are normally underserved, make you rock stars in my book.

Cultural Proficiency Workshop

iELT-Ozarks Project in conjunction with Missouri State University's Agency for Teaching, Leading, and Learning hosted Sanja Bebic from the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. Sanja led a workshop on August 29, 2018 at MSU entitled, *Promoting Cultural Proficiency to Boost Outcomes for All Students*.



Cohort 1 students and practicum supervisors at workshop.

Cohort 1 students, iELT-Ozarks Project faculty and staff, Missouri State University faculty members, and district administrators were invited to participate in this workshop. Participants began the day by going through a stage of exploration to reflect on their understanding of culture and delve into recognizing cultural differences and their own biases. Then, students went through an immersion stage learning about equity, privilege, and perspective. Later on in the day, participants entered the application phase of the workshop, analyzing the continuum of cultural proficiency. Finally, everyone took time for action planning about how they could take this training back to their districts to increase cultural competence.



Cohort 1 students and practicum supervisors doing a sorting game to explore different types of privilege.

Based on participants' feedback, this was an eye-opening workshop about how this type of training is very beneficial and how it is a necessity for educators working with students across various cultural backgrounds. The iELT-Ozarks Project team is looking forward to hosting a similar workshop with our cohort 2 students next year. This allows us to go beyond the textbooks and online classes to interact with one another in a collaborative session.

Cohort 1 PD Presentations

The annual MIDTESOL (Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) conference is the regional conference for all teachers, coaches, administrators, and college students who are interested in learning how to better serve their English Language Learners while meeting likeminded individuals from all over Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

This fall, the iELT-Ozarks Project team and four of our students are going to the MIDTESOL conference in Kansas City, Missouri: Amber Bledsoe, Monett Intermediate School, Monett R-1; Elisabeth Gangel, Wilder Elementary School, Springfield R-XII; Maria Kaufman, Wilder Elementary School, Springfield R-XII; and Melissa Powers, Monett High School, Monett R-XII.

Amber Bledsoe and Melissa Powers will present a poster presentation entitled, *From Burma to Missouri*. Their presentation will discuss how teachers in rural Missouri began to research Burmese Karen culture and the issues facing refugee immigrants when a large number of Burmese students began enrolling in the district.



Bledsoe (left) and Powers (right) with their books at cohort 1 kickoff orientation.

Elisabeth Gangel and Maria Kaufman will present a poster session entitled, *Resources to Engage English Language Learners and their Families*. Their presentation will include games, articles, and printables for use in elementary school classrooms. They will provide a variety of resources focused on classroom instruction and family involvement.

Each of these students submitted a travel grant proposal to the iELT-Ozarks Project and were awarded travel scholarships to attend and present at the MIDTESOL conference.

Additionally, another cohort 1 member will be presenting this fall at a professional development conference on the topic of ELs. Kari Cox, ELL Instructor at Monett Middle School and Monett High School in Monett R-1 will be presenting at the AMLE (Association for Middle Level Education) National Conference in Orlando, FL. She will be presenting on multiple strategies to help close the gap for EL students across content areas.

We are so proud of these teachers and their continuous contributions to the TESOL field. Congratulations to these outstanding teachers!

ON THE HORIZON FOR THE iELT TEAM...

- September 2018 – MIDTESOL, Kansas City, MO
- October 2018 - ICLCLE, Bloomington, IN
- November 2018 – CoTESOL, Denver, CO
- November 2018 – NCFR, San Diego, CA
- March 2019 – TESOL International, Atlanta, GA

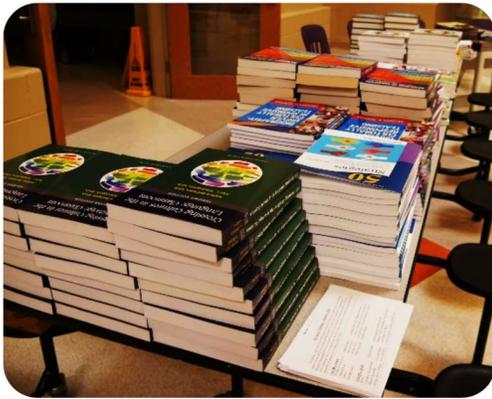
Cohort 2 Updates

Cohort 2 of the iELT-Ozarks Project has thirty K-12 in-service teachers enrolled from McDonald County (5 students), Monett R-1 (9 students), Neosho R-5 (7 students), and Springfield R-XII (9 students) public school districts.

In August 2018, our cohort 2 members completed their orientation. They received textbooks for their first two classes, which will start in spring 2019. They also received a wordless books textbook with lesson plans and ideas to integrate wordless books into their classes. In addition, students chose children's books for their classrooms (see photo on the title page).



iELT-Ozarks Project faculty and staff and cohort 2 students gather for a kickoff orientation event August 2018.



Line of textbooks for cohort 2 students.



Michelle Guy, Neosho R-5, gathers her books.



Wordless books textbook and choices of wordless books for teachers.

Regarding a grant survey for EL parents, "One of my students who speaks Chuukese was so excited to see the survey translated into his language. He doesn't have to translate for his mom for once. He was flabbergasted! It was great to see his excitement." – Gretchen Hughes, Neosho High School English Teacher (Cohort 2)



Melissa Powers, graduating fall 2018 from cohort 1.

iELT-Ozarks Project TESOL certification has provided me with skills that I can use immediately in my classroom with all students but especially my EL students. I have a better grasp on WIDA reports, proficiency standards, and strategies. I have a toolkit filled with articles, instructional strategies, and tips for making input more comprehensible than before. This certification has also been a great chance to network with other EL teachers and leaders from Southwest Missouri. – Melissa Powers, Monett High School Math Teacher (Cohort 1)

The iELT program creates a mindset that creates stronger educators by valuing the culture and experiences that all students bring to a classroom. Finding ways to make connections with every student and celebrating cultural identities provides the essential foundations for learning to occur. Family engagement, building trust, and self-advocacy are keys to leading all students toward success! This is a phenomenal program that will impact the lives of so many! – Sean Sides, Neosho, MO (Cohort 1)



Sean Sides, graduating fall 2018 from cohort 1.

Partner Districts

