

# KSAALT QUARTERLY

## From the President's Desk

### Inside this issue:

Happy New Year	2
Professional Development Programs	2-3
News from Abha	4, 8 & 9
First GM in Khobar	5
Task-based Activities	5-7
KSAALT Academic Journal	7
Mini Conference in December 2013	8
Supporting Adolescent Learners	9
TESOL Arabia / More Events in Khobar	10

### Special points of interest:

- KSAALT 7th Annual Conference will be held in Riyadh
- Active Abha
- Professional Development Programs in KSA
- Do **selecting** task type activities help with learner's listening comprehension?

### Spectators Versus Participants

As I sit to write this, it is "Super Bowl Sunday" in the U.S. The "Super Bowl" is the annual, year-end playoff game in American football – somewhat like the World Cup in soccer/football, except it happens every year. And, like the World Cup, there is a lot of money involved; tickets to the event, advertising, travel expenses and souvenirs. The ads for the televised game cost an astronomical amount of money and are often debuted at this time. Many people watch the game not caring who wins – they just want to see the ads!

Like many aspects of life, the Super Bowl reminds me that there are participants and there are spectators. In a sporting event, the participants are few – the team members. The vast majority are the spectators. Some "die-hard" fans wear their favorite team's jerseys

and will endlessly debate the virtues of the players. Many spectators sit, watch, give an opinion on the event and move on with their lives. The sporting event is just another thing ticked off their "to do" list.

In KSAALT we have participants and spectators, too. Unlike sporting events, we are not limited to the number of participants. Though each chapter has a limited number of officers, there is no limit on the number of people who can volunteer to participate. We may not be able to give everyone a job right away, but it is an immense help to the leadership to have a good supply of volunteers to draw from as needs arise.

I started in KSAALT as a spectator. It is a good place to start. I hung around, attended meetings, and got to know colleagues in the field that I would have never met had I not gotten connected with KSAALT. After a year, I submitted a proposal to present

at the Annual Conference. It was accepted. And somehow, slowly, I moved from being a spectator to a participant. I didn't mean for it to happen, but I'm glad it did.

So, to all the spectators out there – I encourage you to get a feel for the place, but don't just remain a spectator. Meet some new people, make yourself known, and look for a place in your chapter, or at the Annual Conference, where you feel you can contribute (volunteers are needed!).

Being a spectator can be fun – but being "in the game" can be much more satisfying!



Thomas Wood

### 7th KSAALT Annual Conference

Our annual conference this year will be held in Riyadh. A date has been set for the 7th Annual Conference— Saturday 3 May 2014.

You should be hearing from the organizing committee who are members of our Riyadh Chapter very soon.



## New Year; New Directions

Happy New Year, my dear members of KSAALT!

This year, our annual conference is heading for Riyadh. Our Riyadh Chapter will be the organizer of this amazing event where like-minded professionals meet and get inspired.

New year; New contributors. I'm so pleased that Dr. Mohammad Khattab, who was one of our invited speakers in the December's mini conference, has written an article giving us information of some professional development programmes catered for teachers of ESL/EFL in the Kingdom.

It's also exciting to learn that

our newsletter is known in other countries, such as Iran. Mr. Morteza Bakhtiarvand and Mr. Masoud Bahrami conducted a piece of research on the impact of task-based



*Happy New Year*

activities on EFL learners' listening comprehension. I'll include a highlight of their paper in this newsletter.

Dr. Afeefa Banu is leading the active Abha Chapter into

2014. You will find a lot of energizing news from this newly-created chapter of KSAALT in this issue.

I hope you will also find the news from the Khobar Chapter and Yanbu Chapter invigorating. KSAALT is truly a place for teaching professionals who strive for excellence.

Last but not least, there is an update on the progress of our academic journal which collects conference proceedings from the previous presenters from our annual conferences. If you would like to know more about our publication work, please contact me by email: KSAALTpubMatters@hotmail.com.

*Wai Si El-Hassan*

### English Language Teaching and Learning (ELTL) Professional Development Programs A Case Study in KSA

*"This training program incorporates lessons learned that might be of interest to schools in the Gulf States and the Arab World."*

#### Introduction

ELTL is a comprehensive professional development training program pertaining to English language (EL) teaching and learning, which has continued for almost two decades since 1995/1996, for a private school in the Eastern Province, KSA (Saad National School). This training program incorporates lessons learned that might be of interest to schools in the Gulf States and the Arab World. It is directly related to the

professional development of key English language teachers and leaders in national and international schools in Saudi Arabia. The EL professional development

training program was based on identifying the training needs of the target groups with a particular focus on helping to achieve student learning goals and supporting the learning needs of students as English language learners. The implementation was a collaborative endeavor involving the director of training and development and the EL supervisors who worked together as a team in planning, implementing and assessing the EL training seminars and workshops.

#### The Contents of the EL Training Programs

The contents of the EL training programs implemented during these previous years were always based on school, student and

staff needs. To achieve continuous improvement, the EL training programs tackled a wide range of the following categories and the connections among them: 1) Action Research in the Self Reviewing School, 2) Formative and Summative Assessment in English, 3) Common Core Standards in English, 4) Cooperative Learning for English Language Learning (ELL), 5) Differentiated Instruction for ELL, 6) Effective EL Teaching and Learning Practices, 7) Developing Linguistic Intelligence and Multiple Intelligences, 8) Research-based EL Teaching and Learning Practices, 9) School Accreditation Standards and Quality Indicators, and 10) Student Guidance and Counseling.



Dr. Mohammad Khattab

## EL Teaching & Learning Professional Development (Continued)

### Sources for Training Materials

The sources of the contents of the training programs benefit a lot from educational research studies and findings with special references to the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Alexandria, Virginia, USA, and HighScope Educational Research

Foundation (Ypsilanti, Michigan, USA).

These EL training materials took the form of individualized instructional modules and worksheets in English with the use of Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. Each training seminar incorporated a presentation, worksheets, and a discussion of findings and outcomes that are applicable in the EL teaching/ learning situation.

### Implementation Time Frame

The in-service professional training programs were carried out on a bi-weekly basis during the school years for the different categories of EL educational personnel: teachers, supervisors, and counselors. The training activities took the form of seminar-cum-workshops presented in English. Training was also organized for all teaching staff for two weeks at the beginning of each school year.

### Training

Knowledge, competencies professional development or practical skills provides the b

- On-the-job training tak
- Off-the-job training aw

### Building an EL Professional Development System

The EL professional development program applied an approach which was developed by the UNRWA/UNESCO Institute of Education; i.e., IMMA - The Integrated Multi-Media Approach. It applies a variety of components, such as self-study materials in Word and Ppt formats, seminar-cum-workshops, classroom applications of the targeted EL concepts and practices, self-evaluation tools, action research studies, handouts, and formative and summative evaluation of trainees.

### Main Training Topics Covered in the EL Programs

The main topics covered in

the professional training programs included training assignments, modules and videos covering topics addressed to the EL target groups in schools. The titles of the modules are listed in the Contents of the EL Training Programs. Moreover, the training sessions also included special methods of teaching English: 1) 50 Strategies for English Learners, 2) The Multiple Intelligences of Reading and Writing, 3) Reciprocal Teaching: Group Work with an Interactive Structure, 4) Reading for Meaning: How to Build Problem-Solving Skills, 5) The Best of Both Literacies (Reading and Writing), 6) Starting with Comprehension: Reading Strategies for the Youngest Learners, and 7) Exploring Writing in the Content Areas.

### Professional Development EL Training Program Evaluation

The different training programs were evaluated annually through surveys and questionnaires distributed to all EL trainees. Participants gave immediate feedback on each seminar-cum-workshop. Trainees of different categories were evaluated both with the aid of specific written tests covering the EL instructional materials discussed in the in-service training program and by thorough follow-up carried out by principals, the training and development department and the EL subject supervisors. This ensured that EL teachers systematically applied new ideas and training initiatives with their students in the classroom.

*"The in-service professional training programs were carried out on a bi-weekly basis ..."*

Dr. **Mohammad Khattab** was awarded a PhD in Child Development and Educational Psychology by the University of London Institute of Education, UK and an MA in TEFL from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. He has been a training consultant for Saad National Schools and Saad group of Companies in Al-Khobar since 1996. In a long and varied career as an international trainer and consultant, he has worked for United Nations organizations and universities. He is the author of a great number of instructional modules and seven books in education and educational psychology.

## News from our New Chapter in Abha



### Report of the Inaugural Seminar of KSAALT Abha Chapter

**Abha** Chapter held its Inaugural Seminar on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2013 in the Conference Hall of the College of Arts and Education for Girls in Abha. The Inaugural Programme started at 1:00 PM. The Dean, Dr. Khairyah Hussein, was the Chief Guest for the programme. The other dignitaries accompanying her were Dr. Sultana, the Vice-Dean and Dr. Daulah Man'a, Vice-Dean of Quality Assurance. Ms. Ayesha Fayah, the Vice-Dean for Student

and Academic Affairs, sent her best wishes as she was busy with another meeting. The Inaugural programme began with the recitation of the Qur'an.

Dr. Afeefa Banu, Chapter Representative, welcomed the Chief Guest and the dignitaries. She expressed hope that the twin purposes of establishing KSAALT Abha Chapter, which are improving the academic performance of the department of English and also improving the teaching of English in Abha and in Asir region would be fulfilled by its members. She compared the first seminar to a tentative step towards a giant leap. Dr. Areej

Hussein, the Head of the Department, addressed the gathering. The Dean of the College and the Vice Dean of Accreditation conveyed their best wishes to the members. The Inaugural programme ended with a tea break.

The Seminar resumed after the tea break with two paper presentations. The first paper was on "Strategies for Teaching Speaking Skills" by Dr. Areej Hossein. This paper stressed the importance of speaking skills and gave some strategies that would encourage the students to speak. The second paper was titled "Action Research: Its Uses in

*"Knowing the different learning styles would help maximize students' learning."*

Classroom Teaching and Teacher Development" by Dr. Afeefa Banu. The paper concluded that action research improves the quality of student learning, and helps the teacher take the responsibility for his/her own professional development. The Seminar ended with a vote of thanks.

### Abha Chapter - Report of the Second Seminar

KSAALT Abha Chapter held its second seminar on 25<sup>th</sup>

November, 2013. There were two presentations in this seminar. The first one was given by Dr. Mazeegha Al Tale' on "Learning Styles and EFL Teaching". This presentation provided teachers with useful information on student learning styles. Knowing the different learning styles would help maximize students' learning. The second one was a joint presentation given by Ms. Sanjida Halim and Ms. Tanzina Halim on

"Translation in Language Teaching". They dealt with problems of the teaching of translation and gave the audience very useful suggestions. The seminar ended with the announcement - as the semester was drawing to a close and the end-of-semester exams were fast approaching, the next seminar would be scheduled after the mid-semester break.

**Dr. Afeefa Banu**  
*Abha Chapter Representative*

## First General Meeting at Khobar Chapter

On the 2nd of November 2013, the Khobar Chapter held its first general meeting. There were more than 80 participants in the audience exploring the use of poetry in the teaching of English. Members and non-members of KSAALT teaching in K12 and higher education were in the audience. Our speaker was Mr. Shahata Tantawy.



## A Research Article from Iran

Mr. Morteza Bakhtiarvand and Mr. Masoud Bahrami conducted an investigation in Iran and sent in an article titled "The Influence of Task-based Activities on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension".

Their investigation studies the influence of task-based activities (four specific types of tasks: matching, form-filling, labeling, and selecting) on listening ability of students who are learners of English as a foreign language. Another purpose of their study is to identify the relationship between task type and students' language proficiency level.

In the interest of our KSAALT Quarterly readers, some teaching implications from Mr. Bakhtiarvand and Mr. Bahrami's findings are included as follows.

The authors found that EFL students tended to improve their listening skills through exposure to task-based activities. In particular, *matching*, *labeling* and *form-filling* are effective and they cause positive impact on students' listening skills. These three task types are also suitable to be used for EFL students of different levels. On the other hand, the *selecting* tasks in their study did not statistically show that there was a correlation between the selecting tasks and students' level of proficiency.

The strategies for the three task types mentioned above are listed below:

### Matching

- Look carefully at the graphics within the given time
- Think about what you know about the object in the diagram
- Anticipate the vocabulary and ideas you

might hear  
d) Identify the differences between the pictures

### Labeling a Diagram

- Examine the diagram closely within the given time
- Predict what the parts / sections / places might be named
- Anticipate how locations / features might be described
- Listen carefully to instructions

### Form-filling

- Read the form carefully and think of how the words will sound when you hear them
- Although you must try to predict, do not cling too tightly to your predictions

An example of a selecting task was given by Baker (1989) - a listening comprehension test where subjects are asked to listen to a contrived mini-lecture and then answer a number of multiple-

"The authors found that EFL students tended to improve their listening skills through exposure to task-based activities."

## The Influence of Task-based Activities on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension *(Continued)*

choice questions to demonstrate their comprehension.

The strategies for selecting task type are listed below:

- a) Read the questions within the given time
- b) Anticipate the vocabulary and ideas you might hear
- c) Predict what to listen for to decide the answer
- d) Do not eliminate any answers until you have heard the text, no matter how unlikely they may seem

The authors gave a discussion of their findings and some of it is included below:

### Task input

Prabhu (1987, p. 86) noted that the students in the Communicational Teaching Project (beginner learners in Indian secondary schools) found tasks with an oral input easier than tasks presented in writing. According to Ellis (2003, p. 222), tasks involving pictorial input were easier to process than those that involved written or verbal input, as they made no demands on the learners' linguistic resources. Task types like "matching, labeling and form-filling" that involve pictures and diagrams provided learners with more comprehensible input. The students

participated in this study also accomplished these tasks more successfully and with a greater amount of improvement in comparison with the "selecting" task, which was presented through written inputs. So, it was concluded that tasks of the same type with the same input features would have the same effect (the improved listening comprehension) on the participants' performance.

### Context-dependency of the tasks

Another possible reason for the students' improvement on the tasks of "matching, labeling and form-filling" might be attributed to the dependency of these task types on the context. Robinson (1995) pointed out that tasks supported by visual information in some form are generally easier to perform than tasks with no such support. Nunan (1989, p. 86) also noted that tasks supported by photographs, drawings, tables, and graphs are easier to understand. The results showed no improvement on listening comprehension as a result of students' exposure to the task of "selecting," and it might be due to the fact that the task was context-free. However, it should be mentioned that the research to date has failed to show conclusively that tasks

involving *displaced reference* are more complex than those involving *contextually supported reference*.

### Cognitive effect of task outcome

Prabhu (1987, p. 87) stated that one of the rationales for choosing task-based syllabuses is that they encourage the engagement of learners. He believed that tasks established a reasonable challenge and were cognitively motivating, as accomplishment would provide learners with a sense of achievement. Prabhu's classification of tasks rested on an account of the kinds of cognitive operations that underlie the actual performance of different kinds of tasks. It was based on the premise that using language for doing or completing a project-like task fostered acquisition – a premise that is certainly intuitively appealing. Ellis (2003, p. 214) supported Prabhu's claim but considered it as an untested proposal. He stated that in the case of project-oriented tasks, where a single outcome was required in addition to a sense of security that might arise as a result of knowing that there was a definite answer to a task, language learners might show much satisfaction at the end of successful accomplishment of these types of tasks.

*"tasks supported by visual information in some form are generally easier to perform than tasks with no [contextual] support."*



## The Influence of Task-based Activities on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension *(Continued)*

If you would like to read their full article, please email the authors and their email addresses are - 1) **Masoud Bahrami**, English Language Department, Payame

Noor University, Iran; Bahrami573@yahoo.com and 2) **Morteza Bakhtiarvand**, English Language Department, Ministry of Education,

Andimeshk, Khuzestan, Iran; M\_Bakhtiarvand@yahoo.com.

### References

- Baker, D. (1989). *Language testing: A critical survey and practical guide*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second language pedagogy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, P. (1995). "Task complexity and second language narrative discourse". *Language Learning* 45, 99-140.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## KSAALT Academic Journal UPDATE

A BIG thank-you to our conference proceedings contributors, a total of 12 conference proceedings are now in our collection.

These articles will be peer-reviewed and then published nationally and internationally.



## News from Yanbu

### Activities Conducted

#### Session 1 Feb 19, 2013

(Male Group)

#### Session 1 Nov 5, 2013 (Tue)

(Female Group)

#### Session 2 Nov 12, 2013 (Tue)

Group Discussion  
Discussion Leader

#### Session 3 Nov 19, 2013 (Tue)

#### Mr. Firas Bizarri

Lecture - Teachers' Guide to a Boring Classroom

#### Dr. Jozef Colpart

Topic - How to determine which technology to use, when, where and how: An Engineering Approach

Topic - Code Switching in EFL Setting

#### Dr. Salem Al-Etani

#### Mr. Hamid Khan

Paper Presentation - E-Technologies in the Classroom

### More Highlights

KSAALT Yanbu Chapter members attended the **English in Southeast Asia (ESEA) International Conference** in Malaysia

#### Dr. Junifer Abatayo

#### Dr. Salem Al-Etani

Paper Presentation: "EFL Teachers' Role when Code switching in Tertiary Education"



## Mini Conference held in Dammam on 7 December 2013

Our Mini Conference in 2013 was presented in collaboration with the University of Dammam and the British Council hosted by the University of Dammam. The theme of the mini conference was: **“Strategic**

**Pedagogies for the 21st Century Teacher”**.

More than 300 members and non-members, old and new, were participating in this special event.

Our plenary speakers were Ms. Johanna Stirling and Dr. Adnan Hasan.

There were 3 break-out sessions.

One of the highlights of the conference day was Teachers’ Spelling Bee (see picture on the left).

The activity was well-attended, stimulating and refreshing.

All participants stepped up to their challenge and at the end of the day, everyone went home elated and inspired.



## Abha Chapter Tentative Schedule

### February 2014

EC Meeting – Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (10AM)  
 GBM – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (10AM)

### March 2014

EC Meeting – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014 (10AM)  
 GBM and a Round Table Discussion on Problems of Teaching English in High Schools in Saudi Arabia - A group of teachers to be invited from in and around Abha to participate. Date to be decided.

### April 2014

EC Meeting – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 (10AM)  
 GBM – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014 (10AM)

### May 2014

EC Meeting - Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014 (10AM)  
 GBM – Presentations by members  
 Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014 (10AM)  
 Elections

*Abbreviations:*

**EC** = Executive Council

**GBM** = General Body Meeting.

## Supporting Adolescent English Language Learners' Reading in the Content Areas

Janette Klingner, Alison Boardman, Amy Eppolito and Estella Schonewise of the University of Colorado at Boulder wrote an article, titled "Supporting Adolescent English Language Learners' Reading in the Content Areas." It was published in the *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal* in 2012.

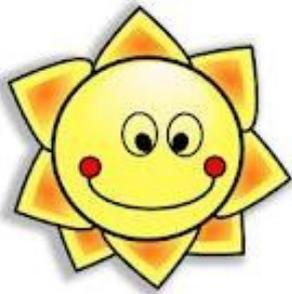
Below is the abstract of their article:

Adolescent English language learners (ELLs) with learning difficulties face many challenges when reading in the content areas. In this article, we review what research tells us about how

best to support ELLs' reading comprehension and content learning. We draw from recent research syntheses as well as individual studies. We highlight one multi-strategy approach for teaching reading comprehension strategies, Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), and point out aspects of CSR that make it appropriate for use with ELLs with learning difficulties in secondary school classrooms. We compare the components of CSR with sheltered English techniques.

**Keywords:** Reading Difficulties, Verbal Memory, Learning Strategies, List Learning

If you would like to read the full article, please visit <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/77593571/supporting-adolescent-english-language-learners-reading-content-areas>, you may be able to read this article with courtesy of your local library.



## More News from Abha

Report of the Third Seminar Abha Chapter held its third Seminar on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2014, in the Department of English, College of Arts And Education, English Society Hall. This Seminar had three presentations. The first one was by Ms. Sadia Asif on "Managing Large Classrooms". Ms. Sadia dealt with the difficulties arising from managing a large classroom that has become a reality in the present day education system. She gave very useful strategies on discipline, group formation, managing homework and

assignments and to overcome these issues and related difficulties. The second presentation was given by Ms. Khadiga Osman, titled "Teaching Translation: Difficulties and Solutions". Ms. Kahdiga's presentation gave empirical evidence of the difficulties in teaching translation and provided methodological strategies to deal with them. The last presentation of the day was made by Dr. Afa Al Saidi on "Cooperative Learning". This presentation gave an explanation of the term: "Cooperative Learning",

clarified its differences from "Group Work" and lastly explained the advantages and disadvantages of "Cooperative Learning". The Seminar ended with a vote of thanks.

**Dr. Afeefa Banu  
Abha Chapter  
Representative**



<b>KSAALT QUARTERLY</b>	
<b>Editorial Board</b>	
<b>Wai-Si El-Hassan</b>	
Dr. Philline Deraney	
Joan Kosich	
Kim Lane	
Jasia Rafiq	
Inam El-Hassan	
David Berry	
<i>email:</i> KSAALTpubMatters@hotmail.com	
<i>Website:</i> <a href="http://www.ksaalt.org/">http://www.ksaalt.org/</a>	



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Association of Language Teachers is a group of language educators interested in promoting and supporting language instruction across Saudi Arabia. Although most members of KSAALT teach English as a second or foreign language, KSAALT welcomes educators that teach in all languages or teach content with English as a medium of instruction. The main mission of this budding organization is to connect those interested in supporting and advancing language instruction. Its success depends on the ethos, logos, and pathos of its members. KSAALT supports educators from all institutions and levels (e.g., K-12, tertiary education, language institutions) and welcomes instructors from all nations.

**We're waiting to hear from you.**

Please contact Ms. Malikah Sisay, Executive Secretary, if you would like to receive more information about our organization. Her email address is: [ksaalt.secretary2013@gmail.com](mailto:ksaalt.secretary2013@gmail.com).

*Pencil this down:*

## More Khobar Chapter events ...

**Three more general meetings will be held in Khobar before this summer:**



**Friday, March 7**

**Friday, April 4**

**Friday, May 30**

**Our general meetings are normally held from 4pm to 6pm.  
Venue to be advised via email.**

**Please come and join us.**