"Awaiting Spring" by Alyssa Wolfe

As we approach the 2023 AAAL Conference, we know that Spring is on its way, even if much of our region remains blanketed in snow. In fact, the first day of Spring yet again falls during our annual conference, on Monday, March 20 with the Spring equinox in Portland around 2pm.

Plus --
Diversity Recommendations
Graduate Award Winners
2023 Conference Preview
GSC Events at AAAL 2023
GSC updates

and more!

Learn more about Portland, the host city for AAAL 2023, in the Conference Preview. Local pronunciation guide included.
Letter from the Co-Editors

Dear AAALGrads Community,

Welcome to the Spring 2023 issue of the AAALGrads Newsletter. We decided early on in our planning for this year’s issues that we wanted to align our Spring issue to the 2023 AAAL Conference by theming it on Mentoring and Collaboration.

Although having a themed issue can be a bit challenging in terms of submissions, in addition to challenges of timing the call for the Spring issue in relation to the holidays and beginning of the semester, we are pleased with submissions we received related to our theme. The Mentoring and Collaboration theme comprises a special section of this issue and leads directly to highlights of the upcoming AAAL Conference in Portland. We also have a section of non-themed submissions and the issue wraps up with GSC news and announcements.

Submissions related to our theme include three feature articles and one professional development article. These begin with Luqing Zang and Vashti Lee’s research focused article on emotion labor among Chinese language teaching interns. Heewon Lee presents a thematic analysis of an interview on mentoring with a professor and then in their article, Sarah Jones and Rebecca Schmor discuss their peer sponsorship relationship. In the professional development corner, Lisa Parzefall details the mentoring needs of novice teachers, sharing research based findings and suggestions as well as examples from her own experiences as a novice teacher.

The non-themed submissions include two feature articles and a professional development article. This section starts with an article from the Diversity sub-committee detailing their recommendations based on the diversity survey presented in the Fall Issue. Closely aligning to the Diversity recommendations, Huy Phung presents the initiative that earned him the 2022 Distinguished Service and Engaged Research award: Multi‘oléolo. This section wraps up with a professional development piece by Bakheet Almatrafi explaining the benefits of Wikipedia for developing academic research and writing skills.

Additionally, the Conference Preview section of this issue highlights the 2023 Graduate Award Winners and events at the 2023 Conference which may be of interest to graduate students. In particular, the GSC is hosting three events, a social mixer and two panel discussions (details on p. 17). We’ve also included a brief introduction to Portland, since one of our co-editors grew up there, including a helpful guide to local pronunciation so you can avoid sounding like an out of towner. The issue closes with GSC news and announcements.

We thank all of the authors who contributed to this issue for both their written product and their ability to work with us on what ended up being a tight timeline.

This is the final issue produced by this team, although some co-editors will be returning next year. It has been a pleasure working together to produce this newsletter and help graduate student gain publishing experience and share their research and experiences with our community.

We hope you enjoy this Spring 2023 issue of AAALGrads.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Wolfe, Edwin Dartey, Leila Gholami and Jieun Kim
Co-Editors

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Letter from the GSC Steering Committee

Dear AAAL Graduate Student Community,

Welcome to the latest edition of our AAAL Graduate Student Council Newsletter. The 2023 AAAL Conference is almost upon us and we are excited to bring you the latest news, updates, and resources for graduate students in the field of applied linguistics. As a community of graduate students, we recognize the unique challenges and opportunities that come with pursuing advanced studies in applied linguistics. Our goal is to create a supportive and inclusive space that fosters intellectual curiosity, professional growth, and collaboration among our members. In this letter, we will share important information about past and upcoming events, opportunities for professional development, and highlights from our ongoing initiatives and conference preparations.

The Diversity sub-committee has submitted recommendations to the AAAL Executive Committee regarding ways to enhance diversity among graduate students, based on last year’s survey results. Our recommendations consisted of promoting diversity and inclusivity along three dimensions (see p. 19 for the recommendations). Similarly, our subcommittee has also partnered with Dr. Jason Mizell to provide mentorship to high school students attending the conference this year. The objectives of this initiative are: to create a pipeline for students particularly interested in pursuing careers in language learning fields and encouraging students to see applied linguistics as something which is ubiquitous to their lives.

In addition to sharing GSC updates and events on our social media accounts, the Social Media sub-committee has organized multiple publications for GSC members, including AAAL GSC YouTube Speaker Series for the 2022-2023 academic year and a blog post published on our website. More details on these outputs can be found on p. 26 of this issue. Additionally, the social media team will be sharing live news and updates from the 2023 AAAL Conference on our social media channels.

The Event Planning sub-committee organized multiple panels, including two online webinars in Fall 2022 and two upcoming panels at the AAAL conference. See the Fall issue for a summary of the first webinar, “Antiracist and Decolonial Applied Linguistics,” organized by Kyungjin Huang. An overview of the second webinar, “Teaching while Grad School-ing: What, Why, How?”, planned by John Wayne dela Cruz, is on p. 26 of this issue. Both webinars are available on our YouTube channel.

We are looking forward to hosting two panels at the conference: “Reimagining Collaboration in Applied Linguistics,” organized by Yadi Zhang, and “Cultivating Positive Mentorship Relationships in Graduate School and Beyond,” planned by Insil Jeon. Details on the conference panels, including the registration link, are on p. 17.

The GSC steering committee, with support from Multilingual Matters, are excited to be hosting the inaugural Multilingual Matters Graduate Roundtable and Mixer on Friday, March 17 at the conference hotel. This new event aligns to the 2023 conference theme of Mentoring and Collaboration by enabling graduate students to talk about and get feedback on in-progress research from faculty mentors and peers. Thirteen faculty mentors, including 5 of the 6 conference plenary speakers and 7 Multilingual Matters authors, are supporting 68 graduate student presenters during the roundtable. Registration for the roundtable has closed but all graduate students attending the 2023 conference are invited to join us for the Social Mixer from 6-8pm (see p. 17 for details).

The AAAL Conference also marks the end of the service term for the 2022-2023 Steering Committee and sub-committee members. Although some members are continuing in their roles for another year, many are completing their GSC service. We thank all Steering Committee and sub-committee members for their time and hard work in service to the graduate student community of AAAL and wish those leaving the best of luck in their future endeavors. Details on how to join the Graduate Student Council as a sub-committee member for 2023-2024 are available on p. 26.

We invite you to engage with us and share your ideas, suggestions, and feedback on how we can continue to improve and strengthen our community. Together, we can build a vibrant and supportive network of graduate students that will shape the future of applied linguistics.

Thank you for your ongoing support and participation in the AAAL Graduate Student Council. We look forward to seeing many of you in Portland.

Best regards,

AAAL Graduate Student Council Co-chairs, Jacob and Oksana.
A Colleague vs. “Just an intern”: Examining Chinese Language Teachers’ Emotion Labor in a Mentorship Program

By Luqing Zang and Vashti Lee
Michigan State University

Teaching is an emotionally taxing profession because teachers often must manage the conflict they may have between their actual feelings and how they believe they should feel in the workplace (Hargreaves, 1998; Benesch, 2018). Emotion labor\(^1\) arises when teachers have to regulate their emotions according to institutional rules and social norms. How they manage their emotions has a pivotal role in their teaching and their students’ learning (Gkonou et al., 2020). Despite the range of research exploring in-service language teacher’s emotion labor, attention has rarely been given to pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum (Song, 2021; Wu & Wei, 2022). Recognizing the importance of effective mentorship in language teacher training, we present a study on Chinese language teachers (CLT) during their practicum internship with their mentor teachers in a U.S. K-12 setting.

**Emotion Labor and Language Teaching**

The concept of emotion labor, coined by Hochschild (1983), explains how people manage their feelings in the workplace as they display what is considered appropriate emotions according to institutional and social norms. This concept has been given increasing attention in the educational field, especially in language learning and teaching settings (Wu & Wei, 2022). Language teachers face unique challenges related to emotion labor as culturally relevant pedagogy is particularly important when introducing and socializing students to different language communities (Loh & Liew, 2016). Emotion labor manifests prominently among CLTs in the U.S., for reasons such as moving from overseas through recruitment, overcoming language barriers, and adapting to locally appropriate teaching languages (Liao et al., 2017).

**Emotion Labor and Language Teachers’ Mentorship**

While mentoring programs are thought to play a pivotal part in supporting new teachers with benefits addressed in much research (e.g., Butler & Cuenca, 2012; De Costa et al., 2022), some unexpected challenges may also appear. For example, Maguire (2001) found that mentees often felt powerless when treated iniquitably or faced disagreements with their mentors due to their power differences, resulting in teachers of the study struggling with heavy emotions of self-doubt and worthlessness. Such situations may also become a source of foreign language teachers’ emotion labor. In order to better understand foreign language teachers’ emotion labor, guided by previously established work (e.g., Benesch, 2017; Zembylas, 2003), we focused on the power relations embedded within the social context of the participant teachers. This prompted us to examine the critical factors impacting CLT’s emotion labor during their first-year practicum with their mentor teachers based on the research questions:

1. What contributes to CLT’s emotion labor in the mentorship process and how?
2. What are the perceived consequences of emotion labor?

**The Current Study**

Three CLTs have been selected as focal participants from our larger research project in this article due to space constraints. Caichun, Yanfang, and Kaili (all pseudonyms) were all graduate students in a U.S. Chinese teaching certification program in the process of completing the teaching practicum. Caichun and Yanfang shared the same mentor, while Kaili was placed with another mentor. All mentors and mentees are all ethnically Chinese. This played an important role in creating a space where mentor and mentee interactions were heavily influenced by Chinese social norms

\(^1\)Following Benesch (2017), we have chosen to use the term “emotion labor” instead of “emotional labor” to minimize gender-associated biases and to better convey the implications of power dynamics.
(cont.) despite all participants living and working in the U.S. at the time of the study. We conducted interviews with participants in Chinese, based on the language preference of the participants, and transcribed the interview excerpts for analysis. We employed in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2016) in our initial coding and sorted these codes into larger categories in relation to the causes of emotion labor. Through multiple rereading of the data, we then organized the different categories of codes that we identified until we arrived at a final set of themes that explained the factors contributing to CLT emotion labor and its consequences.

Findings and Discussion

Mentorship Relationship Distance and Emotion Labor

In this study, we observed that all the participants’ emotions were very much influenced by their emotional proximity to their mentors, which resonates with Hargreaves’s (2000) and Zembylas (2003)’s studies showing teachers’ work experiences to be impacted by their emotional distance with others in the classroom. For Caichun and Yanfang, their relationship with their mentor was marked by a lack of emotional and physical closeness. They were often referred to by their mentor teacher as “just an intern” in front of the students, despite shouldering half of the pedagogical responsibilities in the classroom. The distance felt by Yanfang was exacerbated, as an example, when she tried to suggest a different classroom management approach for their class:

I am very frustrated, but what I can do is very limited. Because you are just an intern, so you have no right to express any critiques... She [the mentor] has said, maybe that worked with this student, but it won’t work with others. The things you learn in university are useless. So I think she is very strong in her belief, and as a mentee, I don’t have enough position to interfere.

Caichun and Yanfang had little emotional connection with their mentor, as demonstrated by their mentor’s frequent reminders of their professional distance. The mentor established herself in the classroom as the legitimate teacher, whereas Caichun and Yanfang were relegated only to the role of an intern. This played an important role in widening the gap in the mentoring relationship, closing doors to a dialogue of trust within the mentorship pair, which exacerbated the emotion labor experienced by the mentees.

In contrast, Kaili expressed having received many emotional rewards as a result of her close relationship with her mentor. This was how Kaili described her mentor in closing the mentor-mentee gap in their partnership:

She still hopes that I will listen to her. Well, it is not that I must listen to her. It’s just when she interacts with you, she will not place herself high up above you... She will share a lot of things. She will share with us her reflections as well, or things she feels were not done very well... Things like these are very similar to the way colleagues get along.

This was shown in the way Kaili described her mentor actively closing the power difference between the two of them by acknowledging her shortcoming and teaching by example. This undoubtedly played an important part in relieving some of the many pressures typically faced by trainee teachers during Kaili’s first year of teaching.

Emotion Labor and Agency

Caichun and Yanfang had borne great emotion labor when their mentor maintained much distance from them in her approach to mentorship, which did not leave many opportunities for the mentees to negotiate changes due to their position of relative powerlessness. Thus, they felt their agency to teach the way they wanted was very limited since they must comply with their mentor. They panned their hopes for a classroom that matched their vision on their future teaching instead. For example, Caichun shared her feelings of resignation as a result of the emotion labor she experienced:

I struggle every time I step into [the mentor’s classroom]. I will have a burden in my heart. I will think, “Oh, today my head will hurt”. It’s a lot of pain, but there’s no solution. Have to just bear it. Because this is the school’s requirement... If I see things that go against my beliefs, or things that are different from what I’ve learned, I will think, next year when I teach, I definitely cannot be like this...I learned a lot from her about things that I shouldn’t do.

The unidirectional mentoring experience that severely limited Caichun’s agency forced her to regulate her emotions internally and perform as her mentor expects her to (continued on page 6)
(cont.) behave and feel in the classroom, which seemed to be in subordination to the mentor. The finding shows the emotions that emerge as a result of particular social relationships, or in this case, the distance in a mentorship relationship, confirming Xu’s (2013) study on language teachers’ emotions. Unlike Caichun and Yanfang, Kaili was able to successfully build and exercise her agency through an “emotionally healthy environment” that her mentor created (Benesch & Prior, 2023, p. 2). Even though there is some degree of emotional exhaustion during her mentoring experience, she was enabled by the closeness in power relation to her mentor, granted by her mentor, to move from experiencing emotion labor to achieve self-transformation:

*Often, I feel relaxed in her [the mentor] classroom, but you still feel pressure when you stay with this person for a whole year... just like we passed the honeymoon...I’m not her roundworm in her stomach, so I couldn’t know her instructions 100%. I feel a little bothered... I realized that this is a path that we must pass through.*

Kaili is aware of her emotion labor but was able to engage in emotional regulation without its potential negative influences. She transformed the pressure she felt in the mentorship experience into an emotional resource to build her confidence that can lead to long-lasting professional development.

**Conclusion and Implications**

In this article, we demonstrated key factors that contribute to language teacher emotion labor in CLT’ mentoring experiences. We have also highlighted the consequences of emotion labor, showing that different sources of emotion labor can be enabling or restrictive to teacher agency. The emotional distance from the mentor can be viewed as either a support or threat to the mentee's learning experience, and in turn impact their agency in building their teaching confidence (Hargreaves, 2000). We believe that fostering a strong mentorship relationship that does not exacerbate experiences of emotion labor will help teachers-in-training to develop greater teacher confidence and to be socialized into their role as language teachers more effectively. In addition, as teachers take the time to reflect on and analyze the sources of their emotion labor, they can begin to recognize that the self-doubt or frustration they feel in the teaching process may not be due to personal failure, but the consequences of larger structural issues beyond their control, as Caichun and Yanfang did. Their emotions can transform into a valuable resource that allows them to make judgments about their ability and willingness to take action or make decisions that can lead to positive changes or help them manage challenging teaching situations. We also emphasize the importance of understanding the implications of mentorship characteristics that cluster closer to either the unidirectional or bidirectional learning end of the mentor-mentee relationship spectrum. Such mentorship is crucial to producing a learning and teaching environment that truly benefits student teachers’ long-term well-being and professional development.

**Luqing Zang** is a PhD student in Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education at Michigan State University, with a research focus on teacher emotions, language teacher education, and multilingual education. Luqing’s work aims to deepen the understanding of the complex dynamics of language teaching and learning and how teacher emotions influence classroom practices and student learning.

**Vashti Lee** is a doctoral student in the Second Language Studies program at Michigan State University. Her research interests include the intersections between identity, emotions, and ideology, particularly as these relate to multilingual or transnational language learners and teachers. She has previously worked as a Mandarin, Cantonese, and ESL teacher.
Paying it Forward: Creating a Virtuous Circle
An Interview with Dr. Daniel Dixon

By Heewon Lee
Georgia State University

What are Mentoring and Collaboration in Graduate school?
Mentorship is defined as a personal and professional development relationship where a more knowledgeable and experienced person helps a less knowledgeable and experienced person navigate their area of practice (Central Washington University, n.d.). Scholars agree that mentoring is associated with a range of positive outcomes such as the retention of qualified students and early-career researchers (Eby et al., 2008; Marino, 2020). It has been shown that successful mentorship entails mutual respect, reciprocity, shared values, personal connection, and clear expectations (Straus et al., 2014). On the other hand, poor communication, lack of commitment, personality differences, conflict of interest, and mentor's lack of experience often signify a failed mentorship (Straus et al., 2014).

The Necessity and Purpose of Conducting Research on Mentoring and Collaboration
There has been a lot of research done on mentorship in academia (Eby et al., 2008; Marino, 2020; Straus et al., 2014). However, little qualitative case study research has been done on advisor-advisee relationships in applied linguistics. In this case study, an interview with Dr. Daniel Dixon will be featured. Dr. Dixon obtained his doctorate (PhD) in Applied Linguistics in 2022. (continued on page 8)
(cont.) from Northern Arizona University with a dissertation titled *The language in digital games: Register variation in virtual and real-world contexts*. He is now an assistant professor in Applied Linguistics and English as a Second Language at Georgia State University (GSU). The purpose of this interview report was to investigate the experience of Dr. Dixon with mentoring and collaboration as a graduate student and as a faculty member.

**Semi-structured Interview and Analysis**

The professor agreed to be named in this featured article as the interviewee. The semi-structured interview consisted of questions regarding best practices for mentoring and collaboration, barriers and challenges to mentoring and collaboration, as well as reports on successful mentoring and collaboration experiences. The interview was transcribed and thematically coded to search for themes and patterns in the data (Glesne, 2016). The procedures of the analysis included line-by-line coding without an a priori set of codes to discover the concepts the interviewee had to offer (Glesne, 2016). The thematic codes were then put through the second cycle of codework to understand the relationship between them and to develop theoretical organizations (Saldaña, 2009).

**Results**

Figure 1 displays the result of thematic analysis and developing a relational organization between the codes.

**Figure 1**

*The Roles of Mentors, Mentees, and the Institution in a Positive Loop*

Dr. Dixon's narratives of his experiences with mentorship and collaboration with his professors during graduate school and his students at GSU and other schools were predominantly very positive. In the interview, he talked about the effective experiences he had in his master's (MA) and PhD programs as seen in excerpts (Excerpts 1 and 2).

**Excerpt 1:** Previous mentoring

*And then also from the University of Utah, MaryAnn Christison was my thesis chair, and she was just an excellent mentor too. She really helped me develop my ideas for my thesis, video games, and language learning.*

**Excerpt 2:** Research mentoring

*I was a research assistant for one year. I worked with Naoko Taguchi and that was just such a positive experience.*

The overall coding scheme manifested the multitude of visible and invisible duties of professors when it comes to mentoring and collaborating with students such as advising students about the curriculum, helping with dissertations, navigating the job market upon graduation, facilitating professional development workshops, involving students in research, and

(continued on page 9)
(cont.) encouraging peer-to-peer collaboration in courses. The codes also showed his and
his mentors’ mindset such as being able to empower different perspectives (Excerpt 3) and
believing in students’ ability to succeed (Excerpt 4).

**Excerpt 3:** Perspectives

*We have a lot of students from diverse backgrounds. And I think that diversity really
gives us an advantage because often we get novel solutions to research questions ... from
different perspectives.*

**Excerpt 4:** Mentor support

*I guess my point is he [Dr. Adrian Palmer, University of Utah] kind of believed in me,
you know before even I did. And that really went a long way.*

Believing in students’ ability to succeed is very important for students that are mentored
as well because so many students have imposter syndrome when it comes to doing
research and teaching in academia as new scholars and instructors. Imposter syndrome
(Clance & Imes, 1978) in academia is the feeling that one is “not qualified” to research or
teach in their area of expertise. The professor mentioned this concept twice in the
interview, saying that this can be a mental block that inhibits students from approaching
mentors and forming relationships with them. Figuring out how we can help graduate
students overcome imposter syndrome and proactively approach mentors in applied
linguistics will be a fruitful area of inquiry both in research and practice. Dr. Dixon gives
the following advice (Excerpt 5) to those students who might be experiencing imposter
syndrome.

**Excerpt 5:** Avoiding imposter syndrome

*Just know that you belong where you are and your research interests, maybe you don’t
have ‘em fully fleshed out and that’s okay. It starts with an idea ... So getting over that
imposter syndrome is important.*

Thematic coding also revealed that mentees or students also play a part in mentorship.
For instance, Dr. Dixon stressed that students should be proactive about figuring out
their research interests, approach professors, peers, and even scholars beyond the
department with similar research interests, and talk with them about opportunities. The
professor highlighted the importance of just “chatting with folks” (Excerpt 6).

**Excerpt 6:** Taking initiative

*My advice would be for graduate students, don’t be afraid to go and just chat with folks.
Not only are the roles of mentors and mentees crucial for the successful mentorship
experience, but also the institutional roles are vital such as setting up a sense of
community through office space (Excerpt 7) or connecting different cohorts of a MA or
PhD program (Excerpt 8). The professor discusses that the communication between
upper-and-lower-level cohorts for PhD students can be difficult. But he encountered
opportunities to meet upper-level cohorts during his graduate studies and found that
helpful. Building infrastructure to support students in meeting one another aside from
conferences or classes can be useful for PhD students who often feel isolated (Bettinon
& Haven-Tang, 2021). The professor suggests setting up opportunities for interaction in
PhD programs (Excerpt 7).

**Excerpt 7:** Office spaces and interaction

*I like the way the department here is set up where we have graduate students just down
the hall, so we’re all in the same area.*

**Excerpt 8:** Peer interaction

*It was great to be able to, especially as a first-year student, be able to talk to some of
the maybe fourth and fifth-year students so that you get a really good idea of what’s
coming ... Maybe we can do more of that.*

The institutional and environmental factors illustrate the ecological perspective when it
comes to mentoring and collaboration (Casanave, 2012). Although Figure 1 displays a
simplified version of how positive mentorship can affect mentees, who in turn become
better mentors, this best-case scenario cannot be generalized beyond the context of this
article. For Dr. Dixon, nevertheless, the positive experience he had at the University of
Utah and Northern Arizona University when he was a graduate
(cont.) student working with professors and peers, experiencing mutual respect, reciprocity, and clear expectations from his mentors (Excerpt 10), led to him showing the sentiment of paying it forward many times during the interview (Excerpts 9 and 10), which is the essence of mentorship (Pomeroy and Steiker, 2011).

**Excerpt 9:** Good mentors

One thing I really liked about them was that ... beyond just simply giving advice, but really taking me under their wing and, and showing me how things work in academia, and involving me in these publications, these projects.

**Excerpt 10:** Paying it forward

I feel really fortunate to have had such great mentors during my time as a graduate student. So again, I just look forward to paying that forward here, in my department.

**Conclusion and Reflection**

This report shows a positive virtuous circle of mentoring in academia, which is great mentoring followed by paying good fortune forward to the next mentee. It also demonstrated how many overt or covert duties professors have as mentors and collaborators in academia. Environmental factors, such as the influence of institutions also played a role in the professor’s experience of mentoring and collaboration, which shows that there are ecological factors that come into play when students and professors are interacting. The limitation of this report was that since this was an interview with one professor, the results may not be generalizable beyond the context of an individual. Future research may investigate more professors and students to find various virtuous circles and/or vicious cycles that might occur in academia regarding mentorship and collaboration.

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**Heewon Lee** (she/her) is a third-year Ph.D. student in Applied Linguistics and ESL department at Georgia State University. She is currently teaching introduction to English linguistics and tutoring Korean. Her research interests include genre studies, corpus-based discourse analysis, and health communications.

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**References**

Peer Sponsorship: A Collaborative Professional Development Practice

By Sarah Jones and Rebecca Schmor
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education - University of Toronto

Recent conversations around mentorship as a professional development practice are calling for a move towards sponsorship - a move beyond giving advice, towards actively promoting a protégé for career-advancing opportunities. A mentoring relationship is one in which a mentor provides professional guidance and support for skill development (Humberd & Rouse, 2016). A sponsor, on the other hand, involves advocacy and opportunities for professional advancement (Sharma et al., 2019). Of course, mentorship and sponsorship are not mutually exclusive: mentors may end up writing a recommendation letter and sponsors may also share advice. However, sponsors intentionally use their power to create career opportunities and provide exposure, feedback, and advocacy (Deitte et al., 2019).

In the context of higher education, some graduate students may be lucky to have found a thesis supervisor who acts as both a mentor and a sponsor. However, others may have yet to develop a productive working relationship with their supervisor or have realized that supervisor-supervisee relationships are inevitably marked by power differentials (Honda, 2017). At the same time, peer resources are often overlooked or underutilized amid the pressures of high individual performance. With this in mind, there is another option for meaningful, collaborative professional development that graduate students may not have considered; that is, “peer sponsorship”.

Peer Sponsorship

Drawing on the distinction between mentorship and sponsorship and acknowledging the immense value of collaboration in personal and professional development (Murrell et al., 2021), we propose the term "peer sponsorship" to describe a growth-oriented partnership between peer colleagues. Partnerships that reflect "peer sponsorships" might include actively seeking out and pursuing advancement opportunities with and for each other, identifying and cultivating key areas for professional development, and/or providing reciprocal coaching and emotional support. Similar to mentorship or sponsorship, peer sponsorship is a professional relationship that requires both parties to consistently define and commit to certain roles and goals. Different from and going beyond most mentorship and sponsorship arrangements, peer sponsors must continuously negotiate the level, degree, and direction of support. Since peer colleagues have no obvious authority over one another, and likely have complementary skill sets, they need to decide when to offer and when to ask for support. By being very intentional about taking turns and combining their individual expertise, peer sponsors can draw on their collaborative power to create career-advancing opportunities for themselves and for each other. In the next few paragraphs, we provide several examples of how we have navigated our peer sponsorship and strategies that have been successful for us thus far.

Our Peer Sponsorship Experience

We are two doctoral students who met at the University of Toronto while preparing for our comprehensive exams. We did not set out to become “peer sponsors.” Instead, what began as an informal study arrangement evolved into a productive writing partnership which, we came to realize, was rooted in an emergent “peer sponsorship” dynamic. Within the last year, our partnership has resulted in two successfully-completed doctoral exams, a half-dozen authored or co-authored manuscripts submitted for publication, four conference presentation proposals, and an edited book currently under development. While it is hard to pinpoint exactly when or how our peer sponsorship relationship became “official”, there are several moments that reflect key features of our ever-developing collaborative partnership.

One example of how our informal meetings developed into a fruitful professional development opportunity is when Sarah lent Rebecca some books on improving academic... (continued on page 12)
writing practices. Then, Rebecca applied some of the strategies in the books to her own writing practice while refining the methodology for her dissertation. A reflection on these strategies developed into a co-authored article led by Rebecca with Sarah's collaboration. Several months later, Rebecca received an invitation from a publisher to submit a book proposal on a topic in her field and asked if Sarah was interested in taking on an edited book project together. We prepared two proposals as co-editors, alternating lead editors according to our subject area expertise (which overlap but are not identical), and had one proposal accepted. This time the topic was more central to Sarah's research, and she is the lead editor on that project in close collaboration with Rebecca. Other examples include Rebecca tracking down relevant job talks and networking events, and Sarah unearthing an opportunity to enroll in a free advanced university teaching certificate. While the nature of our collaborations continues to develop, our peer sponsorship relationship remains rooted in efforts to balance work and credit, promote each other without sacrificing personal development, and leverage mutual respect and support into continued professional growth.

In the examples above, there are elements of both vulnerability and accountability in our collaborative interactions. We have risked being rejected by each other when suggesting new opportunities or ideas and have had to commit to following through on our joint projects as they continued to grow in scale and scope. As a result of this collaborative risk-taking and compounding action, we have both benefited immeasurably. For instance, we have each grown from the process of co-writing, in which we use collaborative cloud platforms to give and receive feedback on everything from brainstorming outlines to refining sentence structures.

As with any meaningful relationship, we have also overcome challenges, such as navigating time constraints, burnout, and the emotional fluctuations that come with being a graduate student. In our peer sponsorship experience so far, we have done so by being proactive and explicit about achieving our shared and individual goals. For example, when embarking on a new idea or project, we have proactively agreed on who will take the lead as the first author or presenter. As part of our ongoing peer sponsorship, we have also been intentional about balancing our contributions. For us, taking turns leading has worked well, as it has allowed us to alternate project tasks, such as transcribing interview transcripts, proofreading manuscripts, or sending emails, and to avoid feeling burnt out or burdened by the same tasks. Taking turns also allows us to accommodate our changing schedules and other commitments. For example, when Sarah was working on her thesis proposal, Rebecca took the lead on a collaborative paper idea that emerged at the time. Then, when Rebecca had an increased teaching load, Sarah took the lead on drafting a co-authored presentation abstract. Our ongoing commitments to open communication and honesty, such as being explicit with each other about our capacities and respective interest in contributing to a particular project, have allowed us to flourish both collaboratively and on our own graduate paths.

Reflections and Takeaways

Reflecting on our own peer sponsorship experience, there are a few strategies that may be effective for other graduate students looking to establish and maintain collaborative partnerships around principles of "peer sponsorship". First, it could be helpful to find a peer with a shared goal; one that is more specific than simply obtaining a graduate degree. One of the reasons why we first connected is because we both intend to pursue careers in academia. This shared professional goal has strengthened our working relationship, as we are able to suggest and collaborate on projects that contribute directly to this goal. We meet synchronously once a week and use a shared folder to organize current and future projects that align with our collaborative goals. We ask for and offer feedback on our separate, individual goals when we meet, in addition to discussing whatever projects we are engaged in together. It has also been important for us to explicitly talk about our relationship. We both value self-awareness and intentionality, and reflecting on our individual strengths and struggles, in the context of what we can offer each other professionally and emotionally, has helped us remain appreciative of each other and of our partnership.

While these are practices and strategies that have worked for us, we hope to conclude with two final points. Firstly, peer sponsorship relationships will undoubtedly be as varied in practice and scope as any meaningful relationship, and while the strategies and insights provided here have proven successful for us, they may look vastly different for another pair. Secondly, (continued on page 13)
(cont.) we hope that by sharing insights from our own partnership, we have illuminated the deep potential that peer sponsorship can offer in terms of both individual and collective growth. Our collaborative experiences suggest that for graduate students interested in mentorship as a professional development practice, peer sponsorship could be deemed a collaborative, dynamic, and grassroots option.

Sarah Jones (she/her) is a PhD student in Language and Literacies Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/UT) in Toronto. She is also a seasoned language educator with over ten years of experience in Canada and abroad. Her current research areas include interlanguage pragmatics, interactional sociolinguistics, and phatic communion in multilingual spaces.

Rebecca Schmor (she/her) is a PhD candidate, course instructor, and research assistant at the University of Toronto. She has taught English, Spanish, and German in higher education and private language institutions in Canada, China, and Cuba. Her research centres around plurilingual language education and teacher identity.

References


Mentoring Novice Teachers

By Lisa Parzefall
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

As a relatively new teacher, I have found myself making huge progress since I started teaching in many aspects of my teaching: my expertise, confidence, teaching practices and beliefs. I distinctly remember feeling overwhelmed at the beginning of my teaching career because I didn’t have prior experience or training in the teaching of writing. I had theoretical knowledge and great motivation, but I didn’t know how to design an effective syllabus, a good lesson, or manage my time effectively while working as an adjunct at multiple institutions. Recently, I re-examined some of the practices and beliefs I held as a novice teacher. Although I know that my own experience and reflexivity are irreplaceable in reaching growth and development as a teacher, I also believe that a mentor at the outset of my teaching career would have been incredibly beneficial for not only myself, but also my students. In retrospect, (continued on page 14)
I could have done many of the things I did as a novice teacher differently, more effectively and simply better. Many of us likely only feel partially prepared to teach after graduating and mentors can offer a great source of help and support throughout the initial year(s) of teaching. After reflecting and sharing some of my own experiences, I would like to place these experiences into the context of research and thus elicit the need for mentoring novice teachers and share the benefits of mentoring and characteristics of effective mentors and mentees.

Many of my own experiences are reflected in research that discusses the mentoring of novice teachers. Examining novice teachers’ challenges, Varela and Maxwell (2015) begin by stressing that teachers are not sufficiently prepared in combining theory and practice. While some programs have offered some practical training for teachers-to-be, most programs focus on offering classes to their students that build on the theoretical foundations of teaching without offering any practical experience. Hence, as Goodwin (2012) points out, since novice teachers receive little to no support or guidance, they often feel overwhelmed and ineffective, especially given the multitude of tasks they need to handle, such as developing a syllabus, preparing lessons, giving feedback to students, and managing the classroom (Gholam, 2018). As an adjunct professor who teaches at multiple institutions, I distinctly remember feeling anxious about being unprepared when coming to class. Because I had little prior teaching experience, I needed a more robust plan and agenda to feel confident and capable in giving a lesson. In addition, as a novice writing teacher without prior experience, I miscalculated the time needed for providing students with extensive feedback on their drafts, while preparing and reflecting on class materials.

To respond to these challenges, Gholam’s (2018) research suggests that novice teachers receive support from a mentor throughout their first year of teaching. I believe a year of ongoing mentorship could be highly beneficial as this is a crucial time for novice teachers in finding their “groove.” While some programs may already have some sort of mentor program in place, in my experience, contact with the mentor may not be consistent and only include one or two meetings to help the novice teacher set up their class on the learning platform the university/college uses. If the mentee has other questions, they are expected to reach out. However, reflecting back on my first year of teaching, I was too overwhelmed and admittedly, too shy to ask for help. I did not want to approach an experienced faculty member in the department and openly admit that I had no idea what I was doing. Therefore, developing a trusting relationship with a mentor who offers ongoing support for a year is an optimal solution if novice teachers should feel heard, supported, and continue to teach at their institution.

Other benefits of mentoring include a strong establishment of collaboration, the development of knowledge and skills that can be applied in a mentee’s teaching practices, the support in novice teacher’s exploration, reflection, and development in their careers, and an overall positive effect on the retention of novice teachers (Gholam, 2018). Another crucial aspect of Gholam’s argument is that mentors not only help novice teachers with the development of course materials and time management, but also challenge them to progress in their teaching practices by reflecting on their teaching skills and revising teaching strategies based on the student body and students’ needs. Both progress and reflection, I believe, are must-haves when reviewing the benefits of mentoring. Although it is important that a mentor can illustrate expertise and offer advice, it is equally important that the mentee does not merely copy the mentor’s materials, quizzes, and teaching style; instead, the mentor should aid the mentee to become a confident teacher who is willing to employ reflection in pursuit of progress.

Transitioning into effective characteristics of mentors, studies on effective mentoring have emphasized the importance of communication along with other interpersonal skills in a mentoring relationship and providing instructional support and feedback, among personality traits such as honesty and trust (Brannan & Bleistein, 2012; Izadinia, 2016; Rowley, 1999; Torrez & Krebs, 2012) . Open and two-way communication is one of the most important traits of a good mentor as they need to be willing to not only share their own experiences but also listen to their mentees (Brannan & Bleistein, 2012; Izadinia, 2016; Rowley, 1999). As novice teachers might hesitate to share their concern and struggles and are adjusting to the workload, it is important that the mentor is able to communicate both verbally and non-verbally, perhaps initiating the (continued on page 15)
(cont.) conversation and sharing some of their own struggles. In my own experience, I feel more comfortable sharing challenges and asking questions with someone who is honestly interested in supporting my teaching journey. Having a mentor who communicates in a positive, welcoming manner and listens to concerns and responds with care can truly affect a novice teacher’s outlook on teaching. Furthermore, establishing a more colleague-to-colleague relationship with two-way communication allows both the mentor and mentee to benefit from interactions that take place.

In addition to communicating effectively, mentors need to provide feedback and instructional support. In the mentor-mentee relationship, feedback should be constructive and helps the mentee understand broader approaches and strategies for effective teaching. Additionally, mentors should help novice teachers develop their own materials, rather than merely handing the mentee materials they can use. A mentee can share what goals they anticipate for the students (in addition to departmental goals) and a mentor can provide their expertise in what this might look like reflected in materials, assignments, course activities, etc. Once again, this practice emphasizes that both, the mentor and the mentee, grow and create knowledge together, not separate from one another.

All of these characteristics, I believe, point to the need of having mentors who want to mentor, as they may more readily employ effective skills, rather than obligating faculty members to do so. However, most certainly, the mentor-mentee relationship goes both ways. Gholam’s (2018) study, for example, reports on a novice teacher who received mentor support and shares three strategies to use mentoring most effectively: building a relationship of trust and comfort with the mentor, being open to constructive criticism and feedback, and upholding a positive attitude. In other words, once the mentor employs effective characteristics, it is equally important that the mentee is willing to listen and implement feedback as well as reflect on their own teaching practices.

In conclusion, although many institutions and departments already welcome their novice teachers to ask questions and for help, this often goes unresponded. In order to fully support novice teachers and with that, improve teaching practices and retention rates, universities and colleges should consider implementing a mentoring program. With this, novice teachers would be able to receive advice, feedback, and help from someone with experience and knowledge. A mentee could observe the mentor’s teaching practices and vice versa to offer support, foster reflection, and receive feedback from another professional. If I had had a mentor to guide me through my first year of teaching, I think I would have not only felt a lot more confident in my teaching, but also more prepared to handle the multitude of tasks involved in teaching a writing class.

Lisa Parzefall is a PhD candidate in Composition and Applied Linguistics at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She received her Master’s degree in English and TESOL from DePaul University and has been teaching a variety of writing and language classes since then. Lisa’s research interests include teacher education, second language writing, and learning transfer.

References

2023 Award Winners

Dissertation Award Winner
David Wei Dai | Monash University (Australia)

Distinguished Service and Engaged Research Graduate Student Award in Relation to Diversity Efforts
Jazmine Exford | University of California, Santa Barbara

Graduate Student Award Winners
Negar Siyari | Georgetown University | Wilga Rivers Award
Thuy Tu | George Mason University | ETS Award
Ann Choe | University of Hawaii at Manoa | Multilingual Matters Award
Liang Cao | Simon Fraser University | GSA-DEIA
Tianfang Wang | Penn State University
Rachel Floyd | University of Arizona | NFMLTA/MLJ
Jazmine Exford | University of California, Santa Barbara
J. Dylan Burton | Michigan State University | Duolingo
Hitoshi Nishizawa | University of Hawaii at Manoa | Duolingo
Mina Hernandez Garcia | University of Michigan | NFMLTA/MLJ
Hector Castrillon-Costa | University of Texas at San Antonio

Design Competition Winner
Iuliia Rychkova | University of Mississippi

2023 Design Competition

The AAAL design is inspired by the International Typographic Style, also known as the Swiss Style, which is regaining popularity in 2023. This graphic design style is very structural in nature – just like we, keen scholars, try to structure and organize the knowledge about the language with each research.

The half-sphered shape pattern is reminiscent of magazine files that metaphorically store the research literature that we base our new research projects on and keep adding new ones on the bottom right corner where AAAL is written. The design style evokes nostalgia, but the bold font pushes us forward, continuing the AAAL legacy.

The big bold words “research, network, and develop” represent AAAL’s mission, i.e. “AAAL promotes high-quality and impactful research, professional networking, and intellectual development in all areas of applied linguistics” and this message can be used as a motto for both experienced and emerging scholars on the winding path of the research process.

Items featuring the 2023 design can be purchased from the AAAL TeeSpring account with proceeds used to support graduate students awards through the Fund for the Future of Applied Linguistics.

Iuliia Rychkova is a PhD student in Second Language Studies and Applied Linguistics at the University of Mississippi. Her research interests include Discourse Analysis, Narrative Analysis, and Intercultural Communication.
GSC Conference Events

**Multilingual Matters Graduate Social Mixer**
Friday, March 17 - 6-8pm
(immediately following the Graduate Roundtable)
Mt. St. Helens

All graduate students attending AAAL are invited to our official social event, sponsored by Multilingual Matters. A cash bar will be available.

**Reimagining collaboration in Applied Linguistics**
Saturday, March 18 - 12:35-1:35pm
Mt. St. Helens

During this panel, invited speakers will share their ideas about best practices for scholarly collaboration, ways in which graduate students can engage in scholarly collaboration, how to start a collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship, and how to foster collaboration with diverse and international scholars, among other topics.

**Moderator:** Sophia Minnillo, University of California-Davis

Register here: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534632649647](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534632649647)

**Dr. Su Motha**
University of Washington

**Dr. Meagan Driver**
Michigan State University

**Dr. Kara Morgan-Short**
University of Illinois- Chicago

**Dr. Angelica Galante**
McGill University

**Dr. Karen Johnson**
Pennsylvania State University

**Moderator:** Insil Jeon, University of Minnesota

Register here: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534622228477](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534622228477)

**Cultivating Positive Mentorship Relationships in Graduate School and Beyond**
Sunday, March 19 – 12:35-1:35pm
Mt. St. Helens

During this panel, invited speakers will share their perspectives about what contributes to a positive mentorship relationship, what grad students should expect from their mentors, and the significance of mentorship in professional development, among other topics.

**Dr. Gloria Park**
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

**Dr. Angelica Galante**
McGill University

**Dr. Karen Johnson**
Pennsylvania State University

**Moderator:** Insil Jeon, University of Minnesota

Register here: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534622228477](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/534622228477)

**Useful AAAL Sessions**

**AAAL Orientation session for First Time Attendees**
Saturday, March 18 – 1:50-2:55pm Willamette Room
Sunday, March 19 – 1:50-2:55pm Willamette Room

**Opening Reception**
Saturday, March 18 – 7:00-8:00pm Exhibition Hall

**Meet the Plenary Speakers**
Sunday, March 19 – 10:10-11:15am Mt. St. Helens

**Multilingual Matters Publisher Session**
Sunday, March 19 – 4:00-5:50pm Mt. St. Helens

**Meet the Journal Editors**
Sunday, March 19 – 4:00-5:50pm Mt. Hood

**AAAL Business Meeting**
Monday, March 20 – 12:30-1:45pm Mt. Hood

**Wine and Cheese Reception**
Tuesday, March 21 – 3:00-4:30pm Exhibition Hall

**Coffee Breaks**
Exhibition Hall
9:40-10:10am
3:30-4:00pm Daily
(no PM break Tuesday)

Coffee breaks are a great time to network with fellow grad students, meet faculty, and get a caffeine boost (or snack). Poster sessions are during the Coffee Breaks.
AAAL 2023 Plenaries

Beyond “Trans-“ Playfulness: “Trans-“ Lingual Precarity
Sender Dovchin, Curtin University
Saturday, March 18 – 11:20am-12:25pm

Opening language testing and our minds to fuller transparency
Paula Winke, Michigan State University
Saturday, March 18 – 5:55-7:00pm

Navigating the research-practice relationship: Professional goals and constraints
Masatoshi Sato, Universidad Andrés Bello
Sunday, March 19 – 11:20am-12:25pm

Collaborating with the Colonial Other: Insights from Ontologías y Epistemologías del Sur
Mario Lopez-Gópar, Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca
Sunday, March 19 – 5:55-7:00pm

A Collaborative Praxis to Counter Gentrification in Dual Language Bilingual Education
Deborah Palmer, University of Colorado Boulder
Monday, March 20 – 11:20am-12:25pm

Quality in quantity: Methodological reform as an intellectual and ethical imperative
Luke Plonsky, Northern Arizona University
Monday, March 20 – 5:55-7:00pm

All Plenaries held in Oregon Ballroom EF (Lower Level 1)
Plenary descriptions and speaker bios are available at: https://www.aaal.org/2023-plenary-speakers

Get to know Portland!

Nickname: City of Roses
Founded: ~1845 (Oregon Trail era)
Population: ~650K (city), ~2.25M (metro)

Fun Facts
- Portland, Oregon is named after Portland, Maine. The name was famously chosen by coin toss - the other option was Boston. The penny used is held at the Oregon Historical Society.
- Portland is home to both the largest wilderness city park (completely in city limits) in the United States (Forest Park) and the smallest city park in the world (Mill Ends Park - located in the middle of Naito Parkway ~5 blocks north of the conference hotel).
- Three volcanos can easily be seen from Portland: Mt. Hood (east), Mt. St. Helens (north) and Mt. Adams (northeast); Mt. Rainier (north-ish) and Mt. Jefferson (southeast) may also be visible on a clear day. There is an extinct volcano (Mount Tabor) within the city limits of Portland.
- Roses are the best known symbol of Portland due to the annual Portland Rose Festival, held in June, and the International Rose Test Garden.

A Brief Guide to Portland-area Pronunciation
Oregon (ORE-uh-g’n) like organ with an uh sound in the middle
Willamette (will-AM-It): Despite the addition of the -ette, it's not actually French.
Couch (COOCH): named for a person
Glisan (GLEE-son): also a person but without matching pronunciation
Marquam (MARK-um): as with Couch
Naito (NAY-toh): originally NIGHT-oh but even the news uses NAY-toh nowadays
Weidler (WIDE-ler): another historic Portlander

GSC Social Media at AAAL 2023

Follow our social media channels for live updates from the conference.
Twitter / @AAALGrads
Facebook / AAALGrads
Instagram / @AAALGrads
LinkedIn / AAAL Graduate Students

If you’re attending AAAL, our Social Media sub-committee members (Eva Jin, Paul J. Meigan, Wei Xu and Juyeon Yoo) will be conducting Red Carpet Interviews, where Grad Students and Faculty can share a little about their research or conference itinerary. For more info or to sign up in advance, go to:
https://forms.gle/u1E9qw4QbxnbCM2o6

PDX Carpet
The teal color used throughout this issue is a nod to the popular PDX carpet design, which mimics the runway layout. After it started being replaced with a new design in 2015, it became an iconic symbol of the city and is featured on many locally made products and even on special Portland Trailblazer’s jerseys. The airport recently announced that the old carpet is making a comeback as part of the ongoing main concourse remodel. A small section is still in place in the back of a store on the E Concourse.

Oregon Encyclopedia. https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org
Recommendations for enhancing diversity among graduate student members within AAAL

By Valentino Rahming, Maverick Zhang, Carla Consolini, Sarvenaz Balali, Chia-Hsin (Jennifer) Yin (2022-2023 Diversity Sub-committee members)

Survey observations
This past year, the AAAL Graduate Student Council conducted a diversity survey to promote graduate students’ professional growth and assist AAAL in fostering an open environment supportive of graduate students from diverse backgrounds while trying to determine ways in which we could serve the AAAL graduate student community better. In comparison to previous surveys, we were curious about how access impacts the participation and inclusion of a wider scope of graduate students in the AAAL. Based on the information we gathered from surveys, the guiding principle or overall approach could be promoting inclusivity along three dimensions:

- Inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Inclusion of diverse research interests
- Additional financial support for graduate student members

Inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds
As it pertains to the inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds, we believe that it is essential that we as an association are deliberate in our efforts to improve access and participation of members from historically underrepresented groups. As most of our members are currently from North American universities, we recommend enhancing student participation from other parts of the world (e.g., the Global South) via introducing our organization to a broader audience and connecting with other international applied linguistic organizations.

In addition, we recommend supporting members who self-identify as LGBTQIA+ and/or from racially/linguistically minoritized backgrounds through having special interest group meetings (similar to AAAL 2022). These groups would be consulted for the implementation of diversity-related measures for the association in order to acquire a better understanding of accessibility to and participation in the conference.

We are also concerned about the participation of indigenous scholars at the AAAL conference. Thus, through continued support and reparative actions (as per JEDI taskforce), we could also advocate for their participation at our annual conference.

Inclusion of diverse areas of research
With regard to the inclusion of diverse areas of research, we have identified three overarching themes that can improve diversity within the graduate student members of AAAL: expansion of research areas, availability of funding opportunities, and initiatives which foster connection and growth. To expand on research areas within the AAAL community, we suggest utilizing the webinar format as a means to initiate conversations about under researched areas in the field of applied linguistics, or areas of research currently underrepresented in our community (e.g., eco linguistics, open science research, interdisciplinary research). This inclusion of underrepresented research can also benefit from a mentoring program with scholars with experience in those under researched areas of inquiry in applied linguistics at large, and within the AAAL community.

Funding
Moreover, in order to expand the funding opportunities, we suggest increasing opportunities for conference attendance for first-time attendees from historically underrepresented groups and additional incentives to awards such as the Distinguished Service and Engaged Research Graduate Student Award in Relation to Diversity Efforts to improve the overall participation of graduate students. Further, to increase initiatives that foster connection and growth, we suggest making the graduate student roundtable we are launching this year a permanent event to encourage interdisciplinary collaborations between students, or between students and faculty.

We contend that this work to enhance diversity among graduate students (continued on page 20)
Bridging the Research-Practice Gap with Multi‘ōlelo: An initiative for language research communication

By Huy Phung
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

The research-practice gap refers to the discrepancy between the results of academic research and their practical application in real-world settings. This gap has been widely recognized as a challenge in various fields, including healthcare, education, management, social work, and applied linguistics. Despite numerous efforts to bridge this gap, it remains a persistent thorny issue. In this personal narrative, I will reflect on the experience of working on a language research communication initiative Multi‘ōlelo aimed at bridging the gap. I will describe what it is, how it began, and lessons gained from working on this project. I encourage other graduate students to contribute to the project due to its collaborative nature and I also share several insights from my experience that others can benefit from if they embark on a similar journey. This article is a personal reflection, which will surely be subjective and idiosyncratic. I hope the core team can share their first-hand experience about the initiative in a future issue of the newsletter.

What is Multi‘ōlelo?
Multi‘ōlelo is an initiative, a platform, and a community of practice. As an initiative, Multi‘ōlelo is a student-led project aimed at making language research findings available and accessible to the public. As a platform, Multi‘ōlelo curates plain summaries in multiple languages beyond English and employs multiple modalities such as video, podcast, infographics, Q&A to help users understand and engage with the findings of academic research. As a community of practice, Multi‘ōlelo has been maintained by a core team of nearly 10 graduate students, mainly based in the Department of Second Language Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM). However, it is also open to any graduate students from other universities that share the mission, vision, and values of the initiative. Multi‘ōlelo is a dynamic and evolving initiative which may have different priorities at different times.

How did it begin?
Multi‘ōlelo is a collaborative initiative that emerged from the need to bridge the gap between research and practice in language education. As a language educator, I have always sought to be better informed and to improve my teaching. When I was a newbie teacher, I drew on information from teacher educators and experienced colleagues, but soon realized that there was a disconnect between what they shared and what was discussed in academic literature. On the other hand, when I tried to read academic articles, I realized that they are arcane and esoteric and sometimes they simply state what practitioners have known and practiced for a long time. This inspired me to learn more about the research-practice gap while I was pursuing an MA degree in Second Language Studies at UHM. At first, I thought it was an access issue, where most articles are locked behind the paywall and practitioners cannot have access to them. I started curating a whitelist of open access journals in language-related fields with the hope that teachers could learn more about research to inform their practice (2015-present). However, as I delved into the literature, I found that the issue was more complicated due to various differences and constraints between the two professions. I shared my findings in two blog posts about how academic discourse differs from professional discourse and how different types of publication can challenge (continued on page 21)
The growing interest in the research-practice gap motivated me to take a seminar on second language teacher education in Spring 2016. In that seminar, I led a workshop on the topic of bridging the research-practice gap where we discussed issues leading to the research-practice divide and devised strategies to encourage research engagement from language teachers. I noticed that most scholarly communication is still text-based while other forms of communication, such as infographics, slide decks, and videos, can reach practitioners and the public better. Furthermore, most extant research communication initiatives are still heavily English-driven, which presents a paradox in relation to what they are trying to accomplish. Being inspired by Professor Graham Crookes's talk on the multilingual multicultural initiative at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, I decided to embark on a project that can address several issues of research communication in language studies in a more ambitious way. Coupled with my enthusiasm for open source and open science, I drafted initial ideas for the project and shared them with the president of Second Language Studies Student Association at that time. Fortunately, she was excited about it and suggested that I should present it at the local conference. We put together the talk in April 2018. In that presentation, Multiʻōlelo was initially formulated as follows:

Multiʻōlelo is a transmedia multilingual platform aiming to curate language-related matters in multiple languages from multiple voices. Multiʻōlelo promotes multilingual, multicultural perspectives and encourages different forms of scholarship for public access and interaction.

(Phung & Reinagel, 2018, slide #14)

The idea was planted and germinated that way, but it has been shaped and expanded as we work together as a team over the years (see who are on the past and current team at https://multiolelo.com/about/the-team).

What has been done?

Apart from setting up the website for the project (https://multiolelo.com), I served as the first coordinator to host monthly meetings during Spring 2019. Other core team members take turns serving as the coordinator as a way to facilitate easy transitions once any of us graduates and move on with other priorities, thereby keeping the initiative going and moving forward.

As an open collaborative initiative, the core team is transparent about what has been done on the website. To provide a roadmap for the future, the team collaboratively produced a white paper describing the goals and plans for the initiative (Phung et al, 2020). As such, MO aims to achieve goals (3Es):

- enable research communication to happen by developing tools and resources so that professors, educators, students can share research findings in accessible summaries creatively.
- engage different stakeholders into a community of practice focusing on language research communication.
- evaluate best practices in language research communication to point out what works and what doesn't work.

Multiʻōlelo is still evolving and it may take various shapes and forms over time. However, at its core is the desire to bridge the gap between research and practice in the field of Applied Linguistics.

What have I learned?

In retrospect, I’ve recognized three themes worth highlighting: collaboration, connection, and reflection. Due to the inherent differences between research and practice, bridging the gap can not be achieved through individual efforts. Collaboration has been a key principle from early on when the idea of Multiʻōlelo started to emerge. Collaboration enriches the goals and scope of the project while helping to break up the information silos. Collaboration also helps us embrace diversity and multidimensional perspectives. For example, while my goal is more or less influenced by professional and academic interest in language education, other members remind me of other groups that need support and attention such as marginalized groups. Collaboration is easier said than done as we tend to specialize in narrow research areas and tend to collaborate with those who share similar interests. However, ‘broad’ collaboration challenges and stimulates our thinking in a productive way.

Connection is crucial for not creating something that already exists so we don’t just work from what we know. The research-practice gap is not exclusively a persistent issue (continued on page 22)
(cont.) in Applied Linguistics, but it is a widely mentioned phenomenon in various fields ranging from natural sciences to social sciences and humanities. Those who are interested in working to bridge this ‘gap’ need to reach out and learn from successful cases in other fields. Our webinar series is one of the efforts undertaken to achieve this goal. Once we looked at challenges and solutions beyond our own disciplines, we could learn from others as a way to practice what we preach: we need to use evidence-based practices in bridging the research-practice gap. Connection also means that we need to reach out to communities we are trying to serve and be willing to learn from them.

Finally, I have learned that being reflective on what we do is necessary and this practice should be embraced more widely. Reflection allows me to think about what I did and how I could do it differently. Working on this initiative for more than 4 years, I realized that much of what I and others have been working on is based on the dissemination model or the deficit model of research communication. This model assumes that practitioners should use research findings to inform their practice and they do not have access to academic research findings due to financial and practical constraints, conceptual and linguistic barriers. The solution could be generating lay abstracts or plain summaries with the expectation that practitioners can access and use them. These assumptions and practices are questionable and alternative models are put forward such as the participative or democratic model (see Phung et al, 2020). I also realized that a single study is often narrow and can rarely be useful for practitioners. Research syntheses could be a better option because they weave together different studies in a comprehensive manner. However, research syntheses are only relevant when research questions align with practical questions practitioners have. Putting researchers and practitioners together in a collaborative project can be a good idea, but we also need intermediary organizations and knowledge brokers who can find the middle way or the common ground to work with both communities.

As an early supporter of open science and open scholarship, I have had multiple opportunities to carry out and communicate research collaboratively, to make connections with various stakeholders, and more importantly to learn from being reflective on my own practices. Putting them together, I believe it’s time to embrace more ‘slow science’ or slow research which values quality over quantity, reflection over speed, and collaboration over competition. Is Applied Linguistics ready for that?

Huy Phung is a PhD candidate in Second Language Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. He is primarily interested in how languages are learned and how they can be taught effectively. He was the inaugural winner of the AAAL Distinguished Service and Engaged Research Graduate Student Award in Relation to Diversity Efforts in 2022.

References
Academic Participation in Wikipedia: Research and Writing Skills Development

By Bakheet Almatrofi
University of Memphis

Wikipedia as a Solution for Research and Publishing Experience
Publishing research is a crucial component of the academic milieu, and graduate students often aspire to publish their research prior to graduation as a means of bolstering their curriculum vitae and professional development. However, the process of publishing research can be challenging for students with limited experience, particularly given the competitive nature of the publication landscape, where established researchers may hold a significant advantage over novice ones. One potential solution for students seeking to gain experience in publishing is to engage in editing and adding content on Wikipedia. This platform offers a low-stakes and low-stress environment for publishing, providing students with an opportunity to gain experience and prepare for the process of publishing in high-impact journals.

It is noteworthy that while Wikipedia could be a useful tool for graduate students, some criticisms have been leveled against it. Academics find Wikipedia unreliable and suggest that their students refrain from using it as a reference source (Cummings, 2020). Michael Gorman, the former president of the American Library Association, posited “A professor who encourages the use of Wikipedia is the intellectual equivalent of a dietician who recommends a steady diet of Big Macs with everything” (2007, p. 1). However, researchers and teachers have begun supporting engagement with Wikipedia to enhance education (Cummings, 2020; Littlejohn & Hood, 2018; Purdy, 2010). A number of academics (Brox, 2012; Jemiñáni & Aíbar, 2016; Tardy, 2010; Vetter, 2018) have embraced Wikipedia as providing a space for innovative pedagogy. One of the most popular Wikipedia-based assignments asks students to directly edit and improve articles related to their course content in Wikipedia (Vetter, 2018). Such assignments give students a chance to conduct research, practice reference-based writing in a specific genre and for a public audience, and engage in digital collaboration and technical communication tasks (Vetter, 2018).

The distrust of Wikipedia by academics is not completely unfounded; in fact, multiple content gaps make many Wikipedia articles underdeveloped and inaccurate (Huang, 2019). Nonetheless, this paper suggests students could use Wikipedia to further develop and bridge these gaps, which will result in improving their skills in research publication and academic writing. In this paper, based on my experience in editing an article using Wikipedia, I will note multiple opportunities Wikipedia could provide for students to make active contributions to public knowledge, resulting in the improvement of their academic and research skills such as source evaluation, collaboration, literature review, and peer review (Tardy, 2010).

My Experience with Wikipedia Editing
As a graduate student in Applied Linguistics, I have had the opportunity to edit and contribute to articles on Wikipedia related to my research interests, that is, second language acquisition (SLA) and language ideology. In my first course during my graduate studies, I was introduced to the concept of Wikipedia editing. As a requirement of the course, my classmates and I were divided into groups of three according to our areas of interest and were tasked with collaboratively editing an article in Wikipedia. My group decided to focus on translanguaging. Since I had limited experience with research and academic writing, I was intimidated by the fact that my edits would be accessible to a large audience. Upon reviewing the assigned article, I found it messy and unorganized, with unarranged texts, confusing sentence structures, and a lack of headings and citations.

To improve the quality of the article, we added two headings to the article to provide more elaboration, deleted unnecessary sections, and reorganized the content to make it more readable. We also added a section for the opposing views to present balanced perspectives. We inserted supporting references for each statement to make the article more reliable. Throughout the collaborative editing process, we were required to report and justify each edit we made on “the discussion page”. After we had finished this process, we received feedback (continued on page 24)
(cont.) from our professor and peers, allowing us to evaluate the effectiveness of Wikipedia in fostering our research and writing skills.

Similarly, during a course in my current Ph.D. program, my professor tasked each student with identifying an article in Wikipedia related to SLA that lacks essential information. I analyzed an article on contrastive analysis, which lacked multiple points of view on the topic. Hence, I added a discussion section to the article where I included the criticisms that contrastive analysis has received. This addition allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and is in line with the principle of providing a neutral point of view in Wikipedia articles (Brox, 2012). This assignment provided me an opportunity to develop my editing and critical thinking skills and to acknowledge the importance of providing multiple perspectives in academic writing. In this assignment, students were required to ensure that the added information were presented coherently and cohesively.

The two aforementioned editing experiences have been incredibly valuable in helping me hone essential research and academic writing skills, such as reading and synthesizing literature reviews, citing and evaluating sources, negotiating meaning, collaborating, thinking critically, and peer reviewing. Table 1 illustrates how engaging with Wikipedia by editing and adding content could potentially result in the improvement of research and academic writing skills.

Table 1
Wikipedia Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandbox</td>
<td>Used for editing, brainstorming, drafting articles, or experimenting with layout and structuring a page.</td>
<td>Emphasizes the importance of brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and creating a research plan needed for academic research. Allows students to practice explaining research interests for a general audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk pages</td>
<td>Used for editing the article collaboratively, with multiple authors discussing how to improve the article.</td>
<td>Fosters students' effective collaboration with multiple individuals in editing, giving feedback, and sharing ideas. Enhances critical thinking by raising questions on controversial aspects of the topic and addressing counterarguments. Hones professional conflict resolution skills through discussion of ways to handle controversial topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchlist</td>
<td>Allows users to keep track of the pages to which they have contributed or are interested in contributing and monitor new changes to articles, collaborations, and conversations.</td>
<td>Fosters an in-depth understanding of a specific topic by learning about the most up-to-date publications. Facilitates collaboration as authors can see who else is contributing to a topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference page</td>
<td>Used to enhance the credibility of content</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for practicing sourcing, citation, and source evaluation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sum, editing articles and contributing additional content to Wikipedia allows students to publish their work in a supportive and low-stakes environment, which can be beneficial for their academic and career development. Through the process of collaboration, peer review, evaluation and citation of sources, and critical thinking, graduate students can gain a deeper understanding of these skills and could apply them in their research and writing. Such practices could also provide students with a sense of community as Wikipedia articles are created through the collective efforts of a community of editors (Cummings, 2020). Working with others to create a high-quality, well-researched article requires effective communication, the ability to collaborate, and the willingness to seek out diverse perspectives. These skills are essential for success in academic and (continued on page 25)
(cont.) professional settings. Through my experience, I have learned to collaborate with others to achieve a shared goal and to receive and give feedback through the peer review process in Wikipedia.

**Bakheet Almatrafi** is a PhD student in Applied Linguistics at the University of Memphis. He is also a writing consultant at the Center for Writing and Communication. His research interests include second language acquisition, academic writing, discourse analysis, and translinguaging. Bakheet has been an English language instructor at Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia since 2016.

**References**


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Webinar: Teaching while Grad Studenting

On December 5, 2022, the AAAL GSC Events sub-committee hosted their second webinar of the 2022-2023 school year. The webinar was entitled, “Teaching while Grad School-ing: What, Why, How?” and featured three presenters: Rhonda Chung from Concordia University, Dr. Cristina Sánchez-Martín from University of Washington, and Megan Heise from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. AAAL GSC events committee member John Wayne de la Cruz served as the moderator. The presenters discussed their experiences with serving as an instructor while balancing research, coursework, service, parenthood, personal well-being, and other commitments during grad school. The panelists also provided examples of how they teach through anti-racist, anti-colonial, and inclusive pedagogies, including universal design for learning. A theme that resonated was the importance of finding “your peeps,” or the folks who will support you during your graduate career and thereafter. The webinar was recorded and is available on the GSC’s Youtube channel shortly.

Webinar Recording: https://youtu.be/G75O17sxhs4

Recent Publications on Social Media

The Social Media sub-committee has added two videos to their YouTube Speaker Series and one blog post to the AAAL Graduate Students’ blog on the GSC website.

BLOG POST
Recognizing and Managing Precarity as Graduate Student Workers
by Megan Heise
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

YOUTUBE SPEAKER SERIES

Speaker Series: Dr. Suresh Canagarajah
Multilingual and Translingual Practices of the Global South
Link: https://youtu.be/P0Z9CPt7_A

Speaker Series: Dr. Wesley Leonard
Indigenous language reclamation and ethical applied linguistics
Link: https://youtu.be/khleBQmTYsk

Serve on the Graduate Student Council!

The AAAL Graduate Student Council (GSC) is currently recruiting members to serve on our different sub-committees.

For the 2023-2024 term (March to March), the GSC has a number of vacant positions in the four sub-committees (Event Planning, Social Media, Diversity and Newsletter). Members typically serve for a full year with a possibility of extension in the same or different position for up to three years.

To apply for a position on the desired sub-committee(s), submit an application stating your interest and why you’d be a good candidate for that sub-committee. You may apply for more than one sub-committee, but please fill out a response for each sub-committee you are applying for. You can find the description of each sub-committee in the application or by visiting our website at https://www.aaal-gsc.org (under About Us). You can also talk to GSC Steering Committee or sub-committee members during our Conference events. Applications close on March 31.

Apply Here: https://tinyurl.com/AAALGSC2024