

Professional Development Topic References (African-American English)

Cran, W., Buchanan, C., & MacNeil, R. (2005). *Do you speak American?* Films for the Humanities & Sciences. <https://www.pbs.org/speak/>

This classic three-part documentary chronicles the rich variety and dynamic state of American English. Robert MacNeil, the documentary's narrator and interviewer, travels throughout the United States to interact with speakers of multiple varieties of American English and elicit their unique views on American speech, including their own English varieties. In addition to documenting regional differences in American English, this documentary uncovers widespread societal attitudes toward traditionally stigmatized varieties of English, including Appalachian English (my own native speech variety) and Southern English. I was struck by how readily passengers on a train travelling throughout Appalachia agreed that the English they spoke was a poor imitation of "correct" English. The everyday people interviewed by MacNeil confirm that standard language ideologies are deeply entrenched throughout the country, even to the point that speakers of traditionally stigmatized varieties of English are convinced of the "inferiority" of their own ways of speaking. I have relied on this resource since it was first published in 2005 to continually inform and refresh my own understanding of language variation in English, as well as how individual and group stances toward varieties of English other than the so-called "standard" contribute to standard language ideologies. This resource informed the development of multiple components of my professional development project, especially the first and last modules. Although there will not be time to show this documentary during my professional development short course on African-American English, I will be recommending it to the participants.

Green, L. J. (2002). *African American English: A linguistic introduction*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511800306>

Lisa Green's definitive work on the grammar, lexicon, phonology, pragmatics, history, and social role of African-American English (AAE) is a seminal overview of the subject; it is one of the most widely-cited works in the field of AAE and the first textbook of its kind. This book is a valuable starting point for those without significant prior experience with AAE as well as a useful reference tool for those with pre-existing knowledge of the language variety. This text could form the core of any teacher training program designed to provide instructors with background information on, or instruction in, AAE. A persistent theme woven throughout the book is the fact that AAE is a full-fledged, logical, rule-governed variety of English that is coequal with all other varieties of English, including the so-called "standard." Green emphasizes that speakers of AAE have not acquired an imperfect form of English with special slang, as is often assumed by many who are unschooled in AAE. Instead, AAE differs from "Standard" English (SE) in systematic ways while sharing features with other varieties of English, including Southern English and the Hiberno-English of Ireland. Green places particular emphasis on the AAE verb system, which represents the greatest grammatical divergence between AAE and SE. In addition to its thorough linguistic survey of AAE, Green's text considers the social role of AAE, including how speakers of AAE have been discriminated against based on their language use in employment and education. I have used this excellent book as the core text for my professional development project.

Grogger, J. (2011). Speech patterns and racial inequality. *The Journal of Human Resources*, (46)1, 1-25. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25764802>

This article by University of Chicago microeconomist Jeffrey Grogger presents research from a multiyear longitudinal study comparing the wages of people who “sound black” to those who do not. Grogger’s findings were that African-Americans who “sound black” earn, on average, ten percent less than those who do not “sound black,” even controlling for other variables. Interestingly, African-Americans who do not “sound black” earn about the same as whites, while whites who “sound black” earn six percent less than other whites (thus, whites who “sound black” earn less than Blacks who “sound white”). Grogger’s research also revealed that listeners are fairly good at identifying the race of a speaker just by hearing the speaker’s voice (whites were correctly identified 84 percent of the time while African-Americans were correctly identified 77 percent of the time). This meticulous research constitutes strong evidence that racism is deeply entrenched in American institutions, including organizations and companies, and that it may be more directly aimed at racial identity via language use than race itself. It also provides empirical evidence in support of the tenets of Critical Race Theory. This is a useful resource for the components of my professional development training relating to AAE in use, societal attitudes toward AAE, and the impact of language discrimination in employment. A summary of the findings of this study forms one of the activities of the final module of my professional development project.

Jones, T., & Hall, C. (2015). Semantic bleaching and the emergence of new pronouns in AAVE. *LSA Annual Meeting Extended Abstracts 2015*, Volume 6. <https://journals.linguisticsociety.org/proceedings/index.php/ExtendedAbs/article/view/2994>

Although this article may at first blush appear to be just a technical linguistic analysis of current African-American English (AAE) usage, it in fact has extremely important ramifications for how teachers should orient themselves toward language use among African-American students, particularly Black males. The authors analyzed a corpus consisting of more than 20,000 tweets and field notes from New York City and Philadelphia to determine that the phrase *a nigga* (with the phonological representation /ənɪgə/) has been lexicalized to emerge as a true pronoun (not a quasi-pronoun or a noun phrase with some but not all of the characteristics of actual pronouns, referred to by semanticists as “imposters”) with the semantic features [+male], [+1st person], [+singular]. Thus, its use by male speakers of AAE represents a *grammatical* feature of this variety of English (a first-person singular masculine pronoun), not an obscenity. Consequently, punishing AAE-speaking students for its use is tantamount to punishing them for using a personal pronoun. This emerging research on the lexicalization of a noun phrase into a true personal pronoun by some speakers of AAE informs the development of multiple modules of my professional development project, including those focusing on the grammar and lexicon of AAE. This work also provides one meticulously analyzed example of how linguacultural misunderstandings may emerge between speakers of AAE and other varieties of American English.

Labov, W. (1969). *A study of non-standard English*. ERIC Clearinghouse for Linguistics.

“The farther back you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.”
– Winston Churchill

This was one of the first, and arguably the most important, early works to challenge the deficit approach to children’s use of non-standard varieties of English, especially African-American English, referred to in the literature of the time as “non-standard Negro English,” a term that has obviously fallen out of use and was soon followed by “Black Vernacular English” (or “BVE”), which itself has (for the most part) lost currency in the field. Labov’s 1969 work was one of the first publications to assert that African-American English is a rule-governed, fully elaborated, coequal variety of American English. Many believe that Labov singlehandedly launched the field of African-American English linguistic analysis, and many of his insights are just as relevant today as they were 50 years ago. Because this article is probably the most frequently-cited work in books and articles on African-American English, its inclusion in my annotated bibliography is important for historical depth and contextualization. Despite its age, Labov’s groundbreaking paper is highly relevant to the sections of my professional development project related to the “naming and framing” of African-American English while serving as an anchoring point for the early emergence of the field.

Lee, A. (2017). Why “correcting” African American Language speakers is counterproductive. *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*, 32(2), Article 6. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.2162>

This article addresses the role of African-American English (also referred to as African American Language) in the K-12 classroom and in society more broadly. The author explains why “correcting” African-American English usage harms students, both in terms of language acquisition and their learning and academic achievement. Deficit framing of African-American English as imperfectly formed “standard” English perpetuates racist myths and stereotypes of the intellectual abilities of African-Americans while supporting raciolinguistic language ideologies that privilege those who speak “standard” English (or something approximating it) as their home language variety. The author offers recommendations for how to incorporate African-American English in curriculum and instruction. Although this article does not address how AAE can be incorporated into the ESL classroom (to my knowledge, none yet does), it continues laying the groundwork to help make this goal an eventual reality. This article provides a framework for how to approach African-American English in my professional development project (that is, as a logical, rule-governed variety of English that is different from but no less valued than the so-called “standard”) while providing support for social acceptance of the legitimacy of the variety.

McWhorter, J. (2001). *Word on the street: Debunking the myth of a “pure” Standard English*. Basic Books.

In this book, linguist John McWhorter debunks the myth and conservative view that popular culture is at the root of the destruction of American society through its corrosive effect on the English language. McWhorter begins his rebuttal of the ideology of “Standard” English by presenting the concept of the linguistic melting pot, which views language as in a constant state of change due to linguistic borrowing, cultural diffusion, and the very nature of language itself.

McWhorter continues his rebuttal by exposing the “speech error” hoax that has created a forced and artificial set of prescriptive grammar rules on the English language based on the structure of Latin grammar. McWhorter shows through numerous examples, including the flexible use of pronouns and how the use of pronouns shifted during the feminist revolution, that the idea of a “pure” Standard English is not only a myth but an outright falsehood. McWhorter concludes his convincing rebuttal by examining the use of Black English in multiple parts of the United States, including in the classroom, which demonstrates that the presumed line between “Standard” and non-standard English is much less clear than many suppose. This is a useful resource for the portions of my project that focus on the concept of “Standard” English, including why that sociolinguistic construct is problematic. McWhorter’s book provides a strong counter to dominant cultural paradigms premised on the supposed superiority of so-called “Standard” English.

Spears, A. K. (1998). African-American language use: Ideology and so-called obscenity. In Mufwene, S. S., Bailey, G., Baugh, J., & Rickford, J. R. (Eds.), *African-American English* (pp. 226–250). Routledge.

Published in January 1998, this chapter in *African-American English* (Mufwene et al., Eds.) can be understood as an early approach to the analysis of sociolinguistically multifaceted (and according to some, controversial) vocabulary in African-American English, such as *-ass* words (referred to as “AWs” by the authors; example: *that crazy-ass guy*), which involve a special type of compounding, and use of the “n-word,” both of which may be perceived as obscene by speakers of other English varieties but are (usually) not intended as such by speakers of African-American English. Read in conjunction with Jones & Hall (2015), which is a contemporary, theoretical linguistic approach to the subject, this work informs how we understand and interpret the language use of African-Americans (one language variety’s suffix may be another variety’s expletive). On a personal note, I now regret never having taken any of Salikoko Mufwene’s courses while I was a graduate student in linguistics at the University of Chicago from 1994 to 1997. At that time, I was mainly interested in historical linguistics and phonology, not language variation in English. This book chapter supports the development of the components of my professional development project on the grammar and lexicon of AAE, including differences in word formation strategies in AAE and so-called “Standard” English.

Thomas, E. R. (2007). Phonological and phonetic characteristics of African American Vernacular English. *Language and Linguistics Compass* (1)5, 450-475.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818X.2007.00029.x>

Erik Thomas’ article examines linguistic variation in the speech of African-Americans in the domains of phonetics and phonology. Thomas distinguishes AAVE, which he describes as a vernacular language variety spoken by working-class African-Americans, from AAE, which he characterizes as the variant spoken by middle-class African-Americans. This framework contrasts with the view of Green (2002), who treats African-American English as a single sociolinguistic construct with register differences like any other language or language variety. Thomas examines sociolinguistic variation among consonant phonemes, vowel phonemes, prosody, word stress, and timing to deduce that AAVE shares fewer phonological features with mainstream English varieties than AAE. His overall conclusion is that AAVE exhibits multiple

stereotyped and stigmatizes phonological features (such as full deletion of word-final /l/ and /r/) that AAE does not. Thomas also concludes that speakers of AAVE, as a group, exhibit significantly greater variation in vowel phoneme targets than do speakers of AAE. Thomas' article is a valuable contribution to my project as it provides an alternate framework for viewing variation with AAE compared to Green's position. This article emphasizes that the speech of African Americans is not monolithic but rather exhibits significant variation along social and class lines.

Wolfram, W., & Schilling, N. (2015). *American English: Dialects and variation* (3rd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

This book, now in its third edition, is the definitive, authoritative source for language variation in English. Walt Wolfram and Nancy Schilling's text adopts a dialectologist approach to language variation in English, asking "why dialects?" before embarking on a sociohistorical explanation of variation in English based on settlement patterns, migration, language contact, social stratification, economic ecology, social interaction, and other social and linguistic factors. The authors trace the history of the early emergence of dialects in North America before examining regional and social varieties of American English. The text is expansive in its scope, addressing the role of ethnicity in American English, African-American English, gender and language variation, dialects and style, and the application of dialect study to real-world problems, including education. The book's section on African-American English is especially helpful for the development of my professional development project, as it carefully defines the English of African-Americans, explicates the relationship between European American and African American English varieties, contrasts competing theories that attempt to account for the origin of African-American English, and outlines the contemporary development of African-American speech. This text has provided substantial support for the development of the first and last modules of my course, which focus on defining African-American English and looking at African-American English in use, respectively.

Wolfram, W., & Thomas, E. R. (2002). *The development of African American English*. Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470690178>

This book, along with Lisa Green's definitive primer, is one of the foundational tools for understanding the history, development, and use of African-American English. This text of approximately 240 pages reviews the social, historical, and linguistic status of AAE within the context of American English varieties. It examines sociolinguistic problems in the reconstruction of earlier forms of African-American English while describing and evaluating data and arguments for and against the Creolist and Anglicist theories of the origin of AAE. The text employs a case analysis approach to identify and analyze an enclave dialect community of AAE speakers in Hyde County, North Carolina, which allows the authors to describe one variant of African-American English with a high degree of granularity. This book is required reading for those seeking to do work involving AAE, as it provides a counterpoint to Lisa Green's more general text. Taken together, this text and Green's work provide a solid foundation for understanding both the linguistics and sociology of African-American English.

Zephir, F. (1999). Challenges for multicultural education: Sociolinguistic parallels between

African American English and Haitian Creole. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, (20)2, 135-154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434639908666373>

This article, which was the first to systematically examine similarities and differences which native speakers of African-American English and Haitian Creole have experienced in school systems as well as how multicultural education has differentially treated the needs of each group, is especially relevant to my academic work and instructional context in Miami, where many ESL students are members of the Haitian diaspora community (the Haitian-American population in Miami-Dade County exceeds 100,000 people). As my Haitian Creole language studies progress, I become increasingly amazed at the grammatical similarities between Haitian Creole and African-American English. These insights have allowed me to more clearly understand the basis of the Creole Origin Hypothesis of African-American English, even though this hypothesis has somewhat fallen out of favor among theoretical linguists during recent years. This article has informed the design of the portions of my professional development project related to the origin of African-American English and how classroom teachers can answer students' questions about the variety, particularly those from Haitian Creole speaking learners.

Adult Learners/Project Design References

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design. *AACE Journal*, 16(2), 137-159.

This article makes a number of recommendations for course development based on the characteristics of adult learners. First, Cercone contrasts modern interactive learning models with the traditional instructor-centered (or “sage on the stage”) model, which views learners as passive vessels waiting to be filled with information. Cercone then considers the unique characteristics of adult learners, who are different from traditional college students. Adult learners face challenges that college students typically do not, such as family and job responsibilities, childcare, and for many, fewer social structures to rely on. Biological changes that occur as individuals age, which can impact memory and the ability to form links between new and old information, should also be taken into account when working with adults. Cercone emphasizes that the learning styles of adults must be carefully considered, since in any group of adult learners there will be a wide range of individual differences. As a result, those who design courses for adults should ensure that participants are afforded ample time to master the content and that different learning styles are accommodated through the use of multimodal learning resources. Cercone also explains the concept of andragogy, which is a learner-centered approach grounded in humanistic learning theory. Andragogy is premised on five underlying assumptions: adult learners have independent self-concepts and an ability to direct their own learning; adults have acquired an ever-increasing repertoire of experiences that form a rich resource for learning; an adult's readiness to learn is closely linked to the developmental tasks of his or her social role; as people mature, their perspectives on time change such that they tend to become more problem-centered than subject-centered in their learning; and adults are motivated to learn more by intrinsic factors than extrinsic ones. Cercone's article provides vital guideposts that have helped shape my professional development project, such as the need to provide participants with ample time to complete each module and the importance of utilizing a variety of modalities (oral, written, graphic, and audiovisual) in presenting information in order to accommodate multiple

learning styles. I have also followed the author's advice to focus on project-centered learning activities.

Conceição, S. C. O. (2021). Setting the stage for facilitating online learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2021, 7-13. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.20410>

Conceição's article focuses on the characteristics and needs of adult learners in the online learning context while providing recommended guidelines for the development of an online learning environment based on learner-centered principles. The fundamental traits of adult learners identified by Conceição include prior knowledge, motivation, self-regulation, self-directedness, self-efficacy, and identity. According to the author, these are the characteristics of adult learners that most greatly impact their online learning experiences; these characteristics also affect multiple dimensions of learning (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral). The author then outlines key learner-centered principles that should be included when developing an online course. Building an equitable online learning community that supports diverse learners; engaging learners in the online learning space in order to achieve meaningful learning; optimizing communicative channels mediated by technology to enhance learner participation; meeting the needs of adult learners to help support self-direction, self-regulation, and reflection; and utilizing formative assessment tools to monitor learner progress are the fundamental learner-centered principles identified by Conceição. The author concludes her article with a professional development framework that incorporates deep learning activities, structure/interface, and embedded assessments that are informed by the principles of communication, equity, presence, and learner support. Although my professional development project does not qualify as online learning in the strict sense, it does include some of the components typical of an online learning course, such as prereading, independent research projects, and out-of-class group discussions. I have taken into account several of Conceição's key traits of adult learners in the development of my project, including activating prior knowledge, leveraging learners' intrinsic motivation, utilizing their self-directedness in the form of independent research projects in each module, and exploring their identity as it relates to language use. I have also followed the author's recommended curriculum design framework by incorporating deep learning activities, structure, and embedded assessments in my project.

Courtney, M. B., Constantine, J., & Trospen, J. (2017). *Best practices guidebook: Professional learning communities*. Bluegrass Center for Teacher Quality, Inc.

The *Best Practices Guidebook* by Courtney, Constantine, and Trospen (2017) describes the Professional Learning Community model of professional development. The authors explain that while this model of professional growth and development has become common in the nation's public schools, effective implementation of the model has been frequently reported by teachers. The report makes seven recommendations of best practices for implementing the Professional Learning Community model in order to overcome the difficulties that have been reported. According to the authors, professional learning communities should have ownership of their work, encourage diversity and collaboration, have a common vision, be focused on rigorous professional growth, focus on student outcomes and common problems of practice, include non-evaluative peer observation, and have adequate time and support. Each of these seven recommendations is supported by empirical data and research in the field of education. I have

been able to incorporate several of these recommendations into the structure of my professional development project. The study group component of my professional development project supports diversity and collaboration, as the groups will be formed in order to maximize diversity among group members while the study group concept is itself premised on collaboration. Moreover, by embedding an independent research project into each module, I am encouraging members of the professional learning community that comprises the project's participants to take ownership of their work. By structuring the project's modules to conclude with a session on how participants can apply their new knowledge to answer students' questions, the project focuses on student outcomes and common problems of practice. Finally, structuring the project so that the five modules take place two weeks apart from each other, thereby giving participants time to reflect on what they have learned while they complete their individual research projects and study group assignments, ensures that participants have adequate time and support as they engage with the project's content.

Dana, N. F., & Yendol-Silva, D. (2019). *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry* (4th ed.). Corwin.

I selected the second chapter of Dana and Yendol-Silva's (2019) guide, entitled "The Start of your Journey: Finding a Wondering," because it presents a clear and useful framework for helping teachers achieve maximum benefit from their professional development experiences by encouraging them to identify and explore their passions. In the framework presented by the authors, passions exist at the intersection of the complexity of teachers' work in the classroom and felt difficulties and real-world dilemmas. After analyzing more than 100 teacher inquiries, the authors identified eight passions commonly shared by educators: helping individual students, a desire to improve or enrich curriculum, a focus on developing content knowledge, a desire to improve or experiment with teaching strategies and teaching techniques, a desire to explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice, the intersection of teachers' personal and professional identities, advocating for equity and social justice, and a focus on understanding the teaching and learning context. The authors present recommendations and exercises for exploring each of these eight commonly-felt passions. As I present my professional development project, I will be mindful of these common passions and encourage my participants to leverage them to appropriately differentiate and enhance their learning experiences. This book chapter has also enhanced my sensitivity to the complexity of teachers' classroom work and the relationship of that work to felt difficulties and real-world dilemmas. Consequently, each of the five modules of my professional development project will include a component that allows participants to explore tangible ways they can apply the knowledge they have gained to real-world dilemmas (in the case of this professional development project, communicative challenges their students experience when interacting with speakers of AAE in the community).

Gregson, J. A., & Sturko, P. A. (2007). Teachers as adult learners: Re-conceptualizing professional development. *Journal of Adult Education*, 36, 1-18.

Gregson and Sturko's (2007) article presents the results of a case study that analyzed a professional development activity provided to career and technical education teachers. In characterizing most professional development activities as treating participants as passive learners, the authors noted that the professional development experience under analysis was

informed by principles of adult learning that represent best practices in the field. Gregson and Sturko summarize the unique characteristics of adult learners described by Knowles and colleagues (2005) that must be taken into account when planning professional development experiences for this group of learners. These characteristics include the self-directedness of adult learners who typically learn what they need to know, provided that they are aware of this need; the fact that adults are responsible for their own learning, which is based on adults' concept of self; the wide range of life experiences adults bring to professional development settings; the fact that adult learners must be ready to learn in order for them to take full advantage of professional development opportunities presented to them; adults' problem-centered orientation to learning; and the importance of adult learners' responses to both external and internal motivators, the latter of which Knowles and colleagues deemed more important. In light of these characteristics of adult learners, Gregson and Sturko elucidate six key principles that should guide adult learning. These principles are that professional development activities should create a climate of respect for participants, encourage their active participation, build on learners' prior experiences, employ collaborative inquiry, be immediately applicable to adult learners' professional contexts, and empower learners through reflection and action. I have tried to implement several of these principles in the design of my professional development project. For example, three of the five units begin by explicitly building on participants' prior learning experiences (specifically, their prior linguistic studies), while all of the units include components that encourage or require collaborative inquiry, reflection, and active participation. The modules are taught at two-week intervals for the specific purpose of providing participants with opportunities for maximal reflection. Finally, the presentation and discussion component of each module concludes with an activity to help participants discover how they can apply their new knowledge and understanding to realistic classroom scenarios.

Guthrie, K. L., & Jenkins, D. M. (2018). *The role of leadership educators: Transforming learning*. Information Age Publishing.

Chapter 12 of Guthrie and Jenkins (2018), entitled "Reflection as Leadership Pedagogy," emphasizes the relationship between active learning (which involves experiential learning or learning through observation and action) and reflection on the learning process (that is, the "what" and "how" of learning). The chapter outlines how "critical reflection," or the "metacognitive process of continuous intertwining of thinking and doing—thought and action—and the relationship between them" (p. 205) generates, deepens, and documents learning. The authors advocate for reflective processes in leadership education that incorporate and promote personal reflection, self-development, and self-awareness. Various strategies for engaging in deep and meaningful critical reflection are recommended in the chapter, including journaling, reflective discussions (including weekly structured dialogues), multimethod approaches that engage learners in creative activities, and reflection enhanced through technology. The authors' primary thesis is that active, experiential learning is incomplete unless it incorporates reflective activities that help participants make meaning of their learning (p. 216). Thus, reflective activities, whether individual or group-based, are an essential component of deep learning. In following the authors' recommendations, I have included frequent opportunities for critical reflection in my professional development project. Written reflection activities and group reflection exercises make up a core component of the weekly discussion groups that will follow the presentation and discussion portion of each module. Participants will also be able to engage

in tightly focused reflection as they complete their five individual research projects throughout the professional development short course in African-American English. The authors close the chapter by noting that leaders are often unaware of their perceptual sets and biases. It is my hope that the multiple reflective activities infused throughout the professional development project I have designed will help participants become aware of and address their biases, both explicit and implicit, toward African-American English and its speakers.

Mausbach, A., & Kazmierczak, K. M. (2023). Meeting teachers where they are. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 104(8), 25-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00317217231174709>

In this concise yet information-rich article, Mausbach and Kazmierczak advocate for a differentiated approach to professional development that embraces collaborative learning, individual feedback, clearly defined expectations for and definitions of effectiveness, and a willingness to make mistakes. The authors recognize that teaching is a complex act and that teachers are a diverse group of professionals who follow individual yet potentially equally successful paths in their professional growth. In order to create the conditions for successful differentiated learning, leaders must establish clear and focused learning goals, layer professional learning, and adopt a tolerant and collaborative approach to supervision. Moreover, differentiating learning requires creating an infrastructure of support, utilizing qualitative rather than quantitative feedback, using “look-fors” or “clear statements that describe an observable teaching or learning behavior, strategy, outcome, product, or procedure” (p. 29, citing Mooney & Mausbach, 2008), and accepting mistakes as learning opportunities, which the authors describe as embracing mistakes and the concept of “yet.” In my professional development project, I have embraced the goals of differentiated and collaborative learning through intentional program design. The individual research project component of each module will allow for differentiation based on each participant’s needs, background knowledge, experience, and interests. Collaborative learning is infused throughout each module, both within the presentation and discussion portion as well as in the study group component that follows. I have also followed the authors’ suggestion to rely on qualitative rather than quantitative feedback (all participants who complete the professional development training will receive equal professional development credit and will not receive a mark or grade, which is already the standard practice at my institution). As I present the course, I will also be mindful to treat mistakes as opportunities for learning, not as errors to be remediated.

Nabukeera, O. (2022). The positioning of Black ESL teachers in the United States: Teacher perspectives. *The CATESOL Journal* (33)1, 1-20.

In this article, Olive Nabukeera examines the role that Black ESL teachers’ racial, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds play in their work. Drawing on Critical Race Theory, the author problematizes the severe underrepresentation of African-American teachers in the ESL field, which is otherwise generally ethnically diverse. Despite the many positive contributions Black ESL teachers make to institutions and their students (such as being able to relate to students who have been “othered” as racial minorities, serving as cultural educators from a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences, and taking on the role of “life coach” to support their students’ achievement inside and outside the classroom), they remain alarmingly underrepresented in almost all parts of the United States, including at my institution. The situation abroad is equally

problematic, as Nabukeera points out that Black EFL teachers in East Asia have experienced such severe racialization that they have often been deemed nonnative speakers of English in spite of having been born, raised, and educated in an English-speaking country. Nabukeera reaches the conclusion that the dominant and restrictive racial and linguistic conceptualizations of what an English teacher should “look like” in the minds of English learners serve as ongoing barriers that prevent Black teachers from entering and remaining in the ESL field. Consequently, Nabukeera calls on TESOL researchers to more deeply engage with Black ESL educators in order to gain better insights into their experiences and views. Although this article does not focus strictly on adult learners as a group, it has allowed me to become more familiar with the perspectives and circumstances of Black ESL instructors, who are represented in the group of participants in my professional development project. Because African-American ESL instructors participating in my professional development project may have unique and valuable insights in the subject matter to offer me as well as other participants, this article is an important resource for better understanding their circumstances and contributions. That improved understanding will benefit all the participants in my professional development project, regardless of their backgrounds.