



# Bonanza for ESL Learners

## Language Learning Cornucopia

If students are to build a sturdy “language house,” they need the right tools and supplies. And at Miami Dade College, my students have found a literal bonanza in the cornucopia of offerings available from ESL Pro Systems. This Washington state-based firm, provides learners everything from free E-Books covering TOEFL® iBT, CBT, TOEIC,® and general English Assessment tests to robust content — online and on CD-ROMs.

The free books alone have added sizzle and sparkle to the classroom. The free materials cover subjects ranging from Academic Study Skills, Raising a Bilingual Child, Tricky Elements of English Punctuation, Issues in ESL Education for Young Learners, Preparing for the TOEFL® iBT Test, How to Improve Your Listening Skills, Accent Reduction Workbook, and Vocabulary Clinic.

## Diagnosis and Rx

One of the most wonderful things about

ESL Pro Systems is the free English assessment tests. The content really lets English learners know their level, and an email with results is sent to them — so they know precisely what to do about buffing up low-scoring skill areas.

The battery of tests is comprehensive and covers Grammar, Reading, and Listening. Students find the tests section to be very effective because it places them into one of six levels: beginner, low, mid-intermediate, intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced. Also, these levels transpose nicely to our six level framework in use at the college for English as an Academic Language Program.

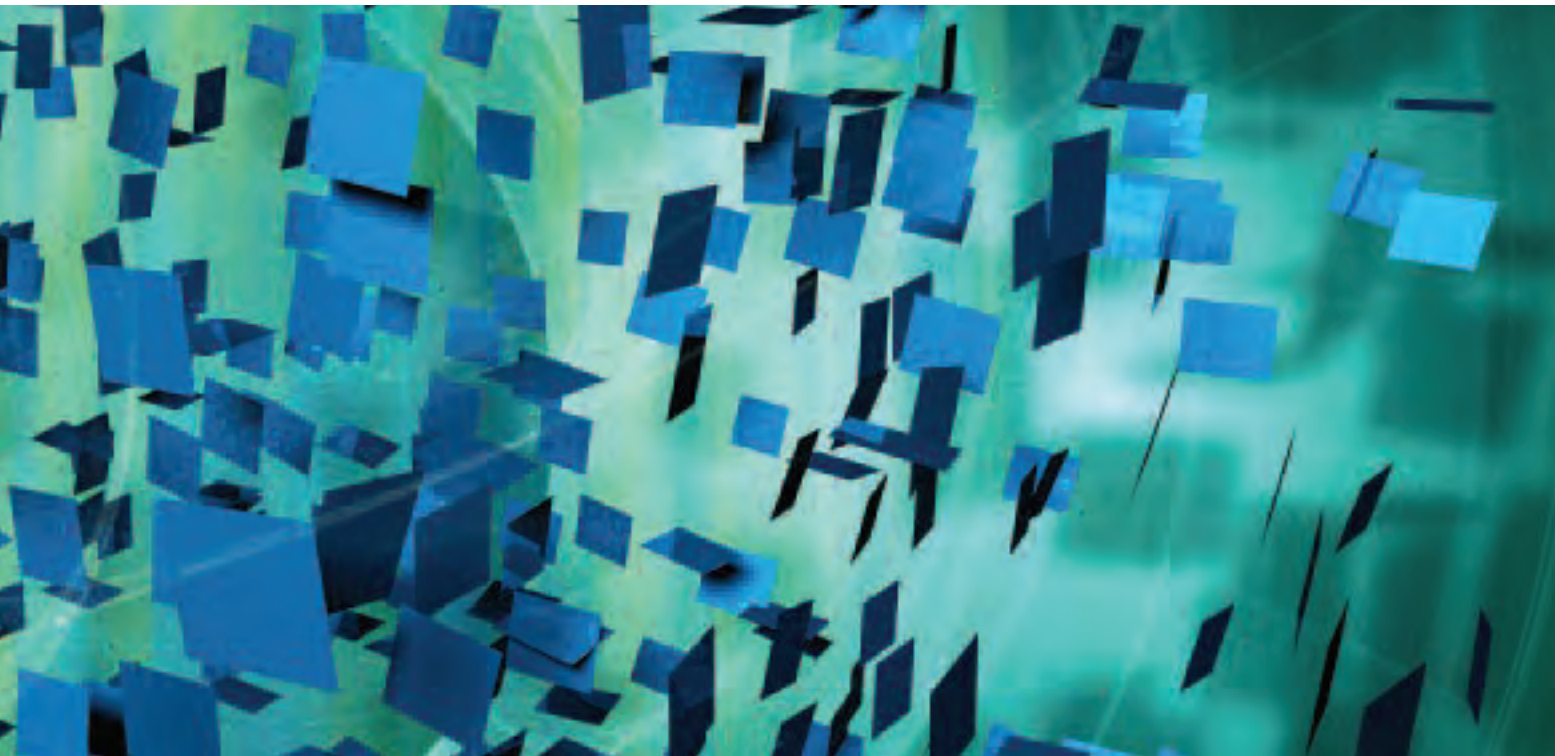
ESL Pro Systems also runs a “Free ESL Lab” (<http://online.free-english.com>) which has been translated into several languages. The Free ESL Lab is designed to give most non-native speaking students access to excellent learning resources at no cost. In fact, there are over 25,000 users of the Lab which includes students, teachers, schools,

and other educational institutions/libraries worldwide.

## Tools for the Job

Moreover, ESL Pro Systems has rolled seven years of “in-the-teaching-trenches” research and development into a galaxy of CD-ROM and Web-based tools that help students learn English for all the critical areas: pronunciation, vocabulary, reading, writing, study skill acquisition, and even curative writing skills.

For instance, the pronunciation software addresses students’ needs perfectly. Speaking and listening are crucial skills, and the ESL PRO program uses a phonetic approach to teaching students how to speak the English language properly. ESL PRO accelerates learning by teaching the key sounds that make up the English language. The student is then taught how to combine these sounds into words and sentences. The software provides the learner with native-



## Steven Donahue enthuses about the wealth of resources from ESL Pro Systems

speaker models to listen to and imitate. Students are able to record their voices and then compare the result with a native speaker's voice. As they practice each lesson and build on prior lessons, their English speaking skills will continue to improve.

### Tutor in a Box

Today, more than 500,000 English learners use ESL Pro Systems worldwide. The learning materials include robust offerings such as English Tutor, which provides instruction in and practice with the core principals of the English language: grammar, reading, writing, and listening — all under one roof.

The full documentation and materials, for both students and instructors, makes teaching and absorbing language lessons easier.

■ **For Grammar, the Learning English Grammar Workbook** provides valuable grammar instruction and hours of practice, providing the student with a strong background in this difficult area of English.

■ **For Reading, the Learning English Reading Workbook** contains several different readings, varying in length from 100 to 880 words.

■ **For Writing, the Learning English Writing Workbook** focuses on the essay and its three different forms: expository, narrative, and descriptive. Tips, techniques, and templates for other correspondence, such as letters and email, are also included.

■ **For Listening, the Learning English Listening Workbook** improves the student's listening skills so that verbal communication becomes easy and fun.

■ **For Usage, the 1000 Key English Words & Idioms Workbook** provides a forum for practice so that the student can quickly develop his or her vocabulary of English words.

After having used the professionally crafted products and gotten positive feedback from many satisfied students, it is obvi-

ous that ESL Pro Systems has an expert stable of English educators, linguists, artists, and programmers creating these effective instructional learning resources. Moreover, the materials are both robust and fun. In short, the resources are crafted to bring hours of enjoyable instruction to learners for all language levels.

In summary, the many products act as excellent tools for teachers and tutors to enhance their English or ESL curriculum. So, for students and teachers who want to build up a "sturdy language house," a fantastic array of great learning materials are awaiting them — at the ESL Pro Systems web site.

For further information about ESL Pro Systems, visit <http://www.eslprosystems.com> and <http://online.free-english.com>. ❧

Features editor **Steven Donahue** is an assistant professor of English as a Second Language at Miami Dade College.