

## **November 2025 Fall Coffee Break**

We look back to a wonderful Coffee Break on November 3rd, 2025.

In this Coffee Break, we were given an introduction to the current state of affairs regarding

### **LESLLA Assessments around the Globe**

The subject was introduced to us by  
two presenters:

Martina Franz dos Santos, University of Marburg Germany

Ginger Kosobucki, Immigrant Welcome Center Indianapolis USA and LESLLA Board Member  
and

three co-presenters:

Marie-Anne Morand, University of Fribourg Switzerland,

Jennifer Christenson, abc English Salt Lake City USA,

Franziska Förster, University of Jena Germany.

We were given a short overview of how the various stages in the process of acquiring an additional language are described in a language framework in the USA, Canada, Europe, and Australia. The internationally accepted definition of what we mean by a “language framework” was important in this regard: “a set of standards, or descriptive statements about successive levels of language ability along a continuum”

There is a growing recognition of the need for these frameworks to also describe the stages in the acquisition of literacy in a second language. In Canada and Europe, special language frameworks have been developed that include descriptors for literacy in a second language. The language frameworks in the USA and Australia describe the steps that must be taken to achieve literacy prior to the process of acquiring an additional language too, but the description of these steps is integrated into the language framework used to describe the levels involved in acquiring an additional language.

We also gained an impression of LESLLA assessments developed within these language frameworks by and/or for educational institutions in the regions where the five presenters work. They have been developed for various purposes: measuring the initial level with a view to placement in a course group, an exploration of the extent to which someone is literate in the first language (example from Germany), gaining insight into functional literacy in various social domains, and gaining insight into technical literacy, such as recognizing sounds, words, syllables in words, and the extent to which someone can read a simple text fluently across the line.

The way in which assessments are presented to LESLLA learners requires care and attention. It often helps to give the student an example task. And for tasks that are done in writing, clear instructions are needed about what response is required and how to do it: ‘tick’ or ‘cross out’ etc. In order to provide these instructions effectively, LESLLA assessments are often conducted in one-on-one sessions. It is preferable to provide these instructions in the student's first language, if possible. Conducting LESLLA assessments is therefore labor-intensive. To overcome this, institutes are developing tasks that can be done digitally. Images can be displayed and sound clips can be played in a digital program. Determining the score is also faster.

Authentic material is needed when developing assessments in which LESLLA students can demonstrate functional literacy in everyday practice. This material is often region-specific. The presentations included some excellent examples. Local authorities sometimes attach little value to such assessments because they are not standardized.

After the five presentations, a discussion was held based on three questions: when it comes to LESLLA assessments, what are your challenges and your dreams, and what do you think the next steps should be? There were many responses. One very important observation was: LESLLA assessments should provide useful information to teachers and the assessment experience should be short, positive, and motivating for students. The possibility of establishing an international baseline for the development of LESLLA assessments was also shortly discussed.

It became clear that the subject requires further exploration. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to do so at the upcoming LESLLA Symposium in Brno or during the upcoming EU Speak sessions.

Did you miss the coffee break? Then please visit our resources:

- For a recording of the gathering please click [here](#)
- To view the slides of presentation again, please click [here](#)