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Series Editors’ Preface

The TESOL Classroom Practice Series showcases state-of-the-art curricula, materials, tasks, and activities reflecting emerging trends in language education and in the roles of teachers, learners, and the English language itself. The series seeks to build localized theories of language learning and teaching based on students’ and teachers’ unique experiences in and out of the classroom.

This series captures the dynamics of 21st-century ESOL classrooms. It reflects major shifts in authority from teacher-centered practices to collaborative learner- and learning-centered environments. The series acknowledges the growing numbers of English speakers globally, celebrates locally relevant curricula and materials, and emphasizes the importance of multilingual and multicultural competencies—a primary goal in teaching English as an international language. Furthermore, the series takes into account contemporary technological developments that provide new opportunities for information exchange and social and transactional communications.

Each volume in the series focuses on a particular communicative skill, learning environment, or instructional goal. Chapters within each volume represent practices in English for general, academic, vocational, and specific purposes. Readers will find examples of carefully researched and tested practices designed for different student populations (from young learners to adults, from beginning to advanced) in diverse settings (from pre-K–12 to college and postgraduate, from local to global, from formal to informal). A variety of methodological choices are also represented, including individual and collaborative tasks and curricular as well as extracurricular projects. Most important, these volumes invite readers into the conversation that considers and so constructs ESOL classroom practices as complex entities. We are indebted to the authors, their colleagues, and their students for being a part of this conversation.

Based on insights gained from using tasks as a research tool, this volume shows how teachers can make pedagogical decisions to use tasks as a teaching tool. Task-based pair and group activities ensure that students take responsibility for much of the work and have greater involvement in the learning process. At the
same time, such activities free the teacher to focus on monitoring students and providing relevant feedback. The teachers writing in this volume found that using task-based applications in their classrooms build a sense of community, develop critical-thinking skills and intercultural communicative competence, increase cultural awareness, and encourage cooperating, all of which prepare learners to engage in real-world language and culture. In addition, this volume inspires with ideas from teachers who skillfully integrated technology with task-based learning using the Internet, video and audio recordings, music, and Web 2.0 tools.

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