



# The English Conversation Group for International Students 2022 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition Washington DC, June 23-28, 2022 Shuzhen Zhao, Rong Luo, Karen Pillon University of Windsor, Ontario Canada

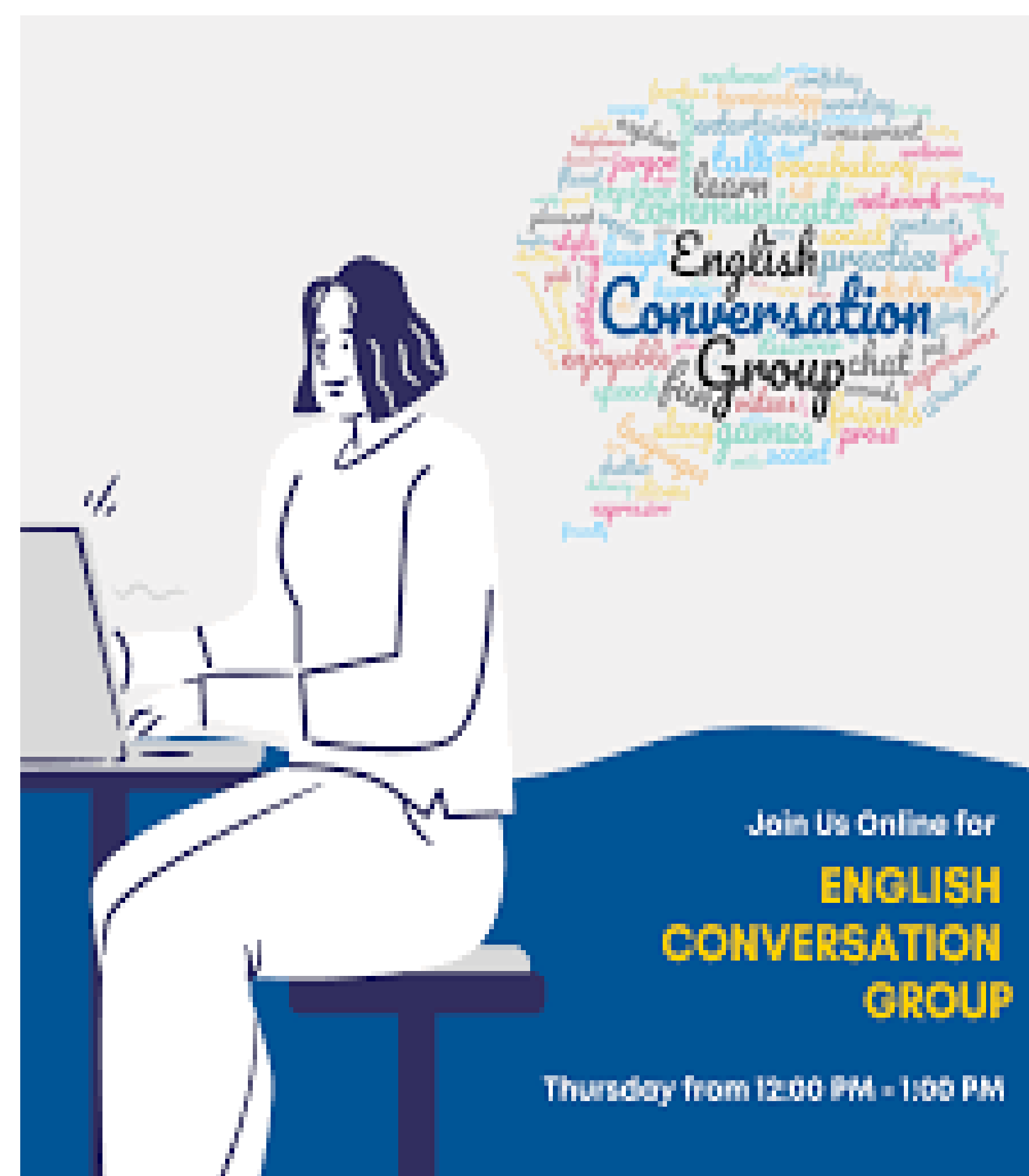


## Introduction

- ❖ The English Conversation Group (ECG) at the Leddy Library has been offering virtual sessions for the first time in the program's history since the Fall 2020 semester during COVID-19 pandemic. Using virtual teaching technology, the ECG is trying to help international students feel more comfortable with their English speaking and writing skills, helping them find and learn to use the library's academic resources.
- ❖ The ECG also invites guest speakers from other important areas on campus such as the International Student Center and the St Dennis Center to talk to students about the various areas of campus life. By using flexible online teaching formats, creating small breakout groups, and encouraging students to share their distinct culture and experiences, the ECG has been successful in assisting international students to build up their confidence academically, socially, and culturally.
- ❖ This presentation will describe the experience of planning and facilitating the ECG virtually using Blackboard collaborate to teach international students for using library services.

## Strategies

- ❖ Improve access
  - Using Blackboard Collaborate to teach international students to use library services
  - No registration required
  - Inspiring communication and engagement
- ❖ Flexibility
  - Interesting and diverse topics
  - Facilitated small group discussion
  - Encouraging self-learning, self-teaching, self-improvement through BB resource for those who could not attend
- ❖ Community
  - Self-enrollment in ECG
  - Leveraging library social media to interact with students



## Outcomes

- ❖ Connection
  - Connect international students with the library, ensure they understand and have access to the resources and help that they need to thrive.
- ❖ Gathering
  - help international students feel more comfortable with their English speaking, research and writing skills, helping them find and learn to use the library's academic resources.
- ❖ A second home
  - Library as place, consider ways to make library spaces a destination of choice for international students.

## Challenges

- ❖ Time zones
  - Most of the international students were working from their home countries or not on campus
- ❖ Network (in) stability
  - The technical barriers
  - Internet issues
- ❖ Keeping the conversation going
  - Encourage speaking throughout the session
  - Resources needed to keep activities going

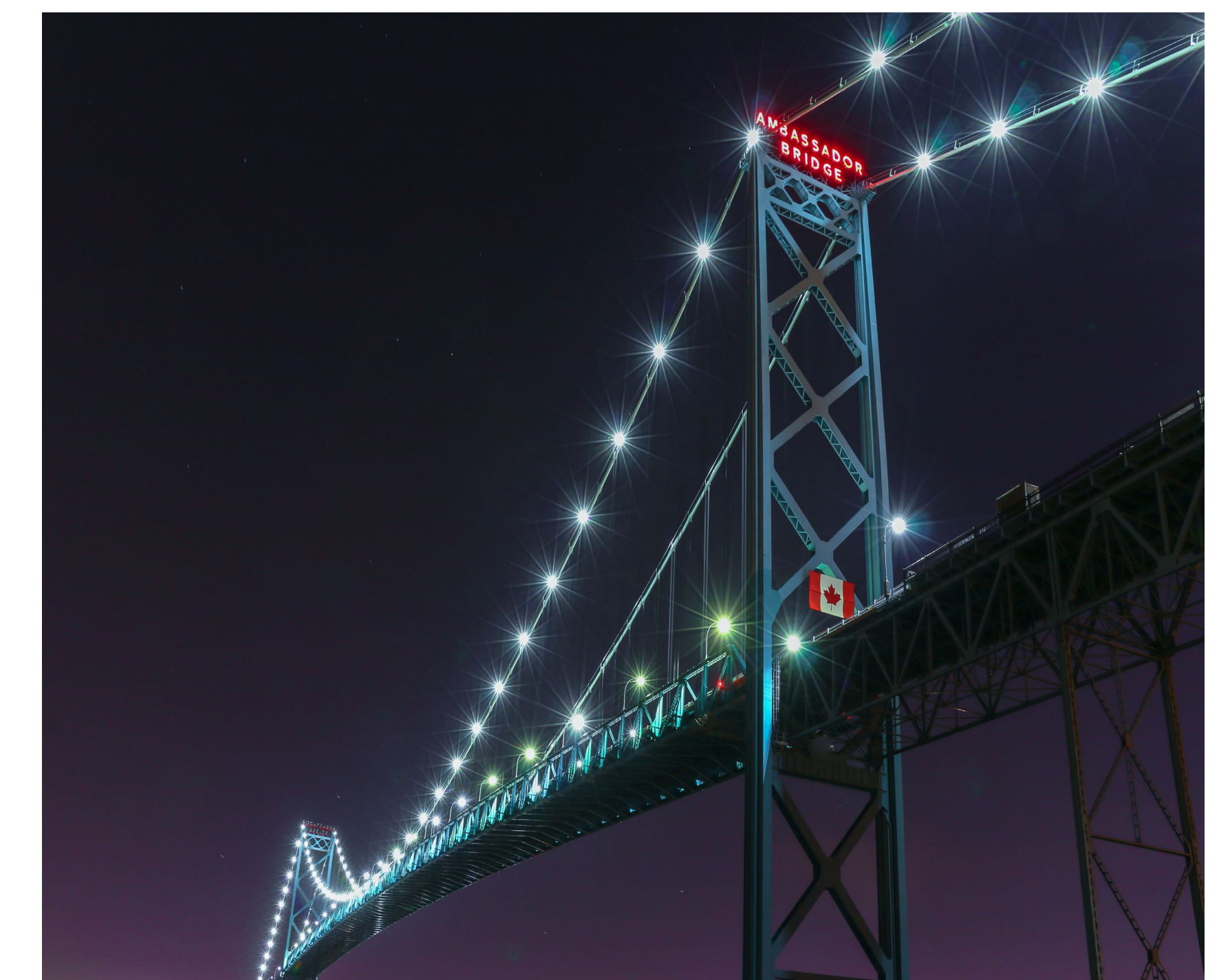
## Conclusions

**ECG:** designed to offer international students a fun time to speak about history, art, and the culture of Canada and other countries and other countries while also discussing IL topics.

**ECG:** the classes focus on non-academic materials

**ECG:** would like to integrate the Library and its materials into each class

**ECG:** it is a bridge to link with the library and the international students, regardless of where we are!



## Bibliography

ECG Team. (2022). The English Conversation Group (ECG) at the Leddy Library for International Students. International Teaching Online Symposium, University of Windsor, June 17-18, 2021  
<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/itos21/session1/session1/11/>