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ABSTRACT

Issues in this volume include the following feature articles: "Grammar: Rules and Reasons Working Together" (Diane Larsen-Freeman); "TESOL Sets Sail for Vancouver" (Nancy Storer); "The Reading Lab: An Invitation to Read" (Jean Zukowski/Faust); "Quebec: A Unique North American ESL Teaching Experience" (Jacquelyne Lord); "Video in the Classroom: Making the Most of Movies" (Susan Stempleski); "Teaching Journals: Writing for Professional Development" (Anne E. Delaney, Kathleen M. Bailey); "Proposed English Standards Promote Aviation Safety" (Robert L. Chatham, Shelly Thomas); "Latina Educators: Building Bridges for Those Who Follow" (Michele R. Hewlett-Gomez); "John Rassias: Giving Life to Language Worldwide" (Kathleen R. Beall); "Title VII Funding: Make Your Program Dreams a Reality" (Pat DiCerbo); "Representing ESL Students in the School Community" (Sandra Prager); "What Does it Take to Acquire a Language?" (Stephen Krashen); "Swiss Learners of English: Engaging the Advanced Student" (Nancy Kaye, Don Matson); "Your Professional Partner: The Center for Applied Linguistics" (Allene Grognet); "Strengthening the School-Home Connection" (Patty Orndorff); "From Writing to Speaking: Enhancing Conversation" (Nancy Kaye, Don Matson); "The Expansion of English Language Education in South Korea" (Patrick Hwang); "Getting Started in Private ESL Tutoring" (Thelma Wurzelbacher); "Corporate Universities: A New Frontier for ESL/EFL Professionals" (Nina Weinstein); "Four Ways to Listen" (Catherine Sadow); "Hmong Students: A Quarter of a Century of Progress in the U.S." (Julie Adler); "Putting Tests to the Test" (Stratton Ray); "Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Students" (Marjorie Hall Haley); "Official English: Bridge or Barrier?" (Stephen Krashen); "English Language Education in Brazil: Progress and Partnerships" (Francisco Gomes de Matos, Abuendia Padilha Pinto). Regular departments include the following: "Editor's Note," "Letters to the Editor," "News Briefs," "Conference Calendar," "Reviews," "Catalog Showcase," and three

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regular columns by Christine Meloni, Thomas Nixon, and Elizabeth Hanson-Smith. (KFT)

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Volume 3 Numbers 1-6
January – December 2000

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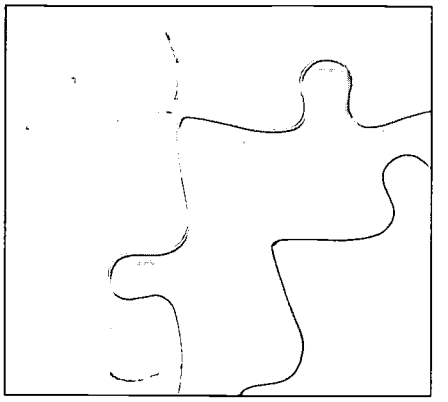

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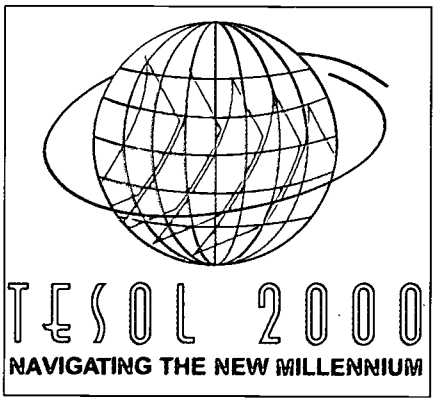

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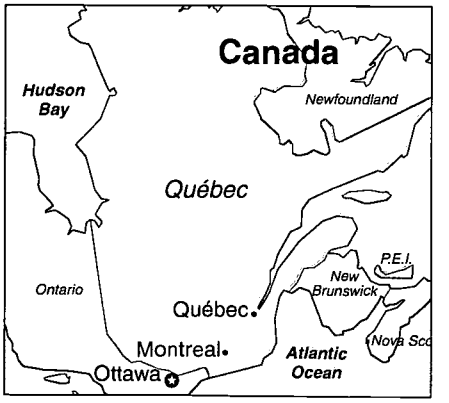

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Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?

Jennifer Ranabhat
Director of Midwest Teacher Training Program, a TEFL certificate course offered by Wisconsin ESL Institute (WESLI) in Madison, Wisconsin

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(lots of links)

Reasons—The Power Behind the Rules!

Welcome to the first issue of *ESL Magazine* in the new millennium! With the celebrating behind us, let's focus again on our important work of helping people learn English.

In this exciting issue, Diane Larsen-Freeman challenges teachers to get students thinking about the reasons underlying the grammar rules they learn. These reasons will equip them to go on learning and communicating successfully.

Reading labs invite students to discover reading. Jean Zukowski/Faust surveys the great variety of ways in which creative teachers motivate students to read.

Jacquelyne Lord takes us to Québec, Canada, and informs us about the educational system, the value of languages and the work of English teaching there.

TESOL Conference Chair Nancy Storer previews the upcoming TESOL 2000 conference and the professional adventures and unique attractions that await you in beautiful Vancouver, Canada. *ESL Magazine* will be there—stop by our booth and say "Hi!"

Best wishes for the new year,

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
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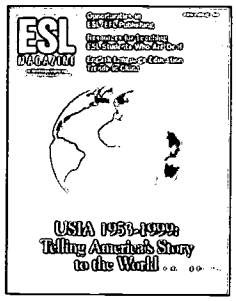

Send letters to eslmagazine@compuserve.com or ESL Magazine, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401. Include your name and position or address.

USIA

▷ I enjoyed Gloria Kreisher's informative article about the USIA in the November/December 1999 *ESL Magazine*. Having worked as an English Language Specialist for USIA on four continents over a period of more than thirty years, I feel very connected to the Agency. I was, therefore, chagrined to learn last year that it was to be "enfolded into the Department of State and [cease] to exist as a separate agency." Ms. Kreisher's article optimistically concludes that the Agency's "mission and the wide variety of activities to accomplish the mission will continue within the Department of State... by sharing America's story as well as its language, culture and knowledge with the world...to foster international understanding and cooperation. To that end, I would—in the spirit of the eminent British linguist David Crystal—hope to see in that mission a greater emphasis on English as a world language with a literature of astonishing reach and diversity, one no longer owned by the Mother Countries or the Settler Nations. That surely would help to foster international understanding and cooperation.

—GEORGE R. BOZZINI
Associate Professor of English
The George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

ESL/EFL Publishing Opportunities

▷ Marilyn Rosenthal's highly informative article on opportunities in publishing provides invaluable advice to all ESL/EFL teachers, whether aspiring authors, editors or happy-to-stay-in-the-classroom teachers. Her suggestion to start out by writing manuscript reviews is excellent. Not only does this build a network of grateful editors, but critiquing someone else's manuscript provides training in how to write one. It gives insight into new trends into our field and provides a chance to help shape the next generation of textbooks our students will use.

—ALISON RICE
Director, IELI, Hunter College
CUNY

Teaching Deaf Students

▷ The article by Dr. Lylak is generally good, informative and accurate. It would be helpful to include information comparing and contrasting the structure of American Sign Language and English and to explain how ASL can help deaf students learn English. It is also important to mention that deaf students need visual means of processing English and constant exposure to printed English (other than captioning). Visual graphic organizers come to mind, as well as photographs. Deaf students need a continuous stream of English presented visually via print or electronic text from early in life.

—TIMOTHY ANDERSON
Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

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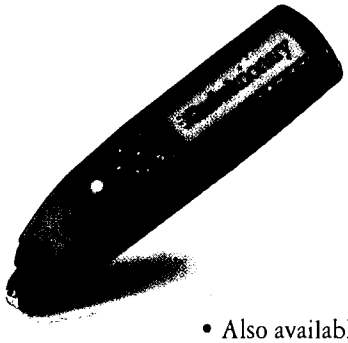

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National Education Goals Report 1999

At their 10th anniversary conference in December, the National Education Goals Panel released the *National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners, 1999*, which contains new and updated data for a broad range of indicators that measure progress toward the eight National Education Goals first articulated ten years ago. The Panel declared overall that the Goals are effective in promoting educational reform. The Goals address school readiness, school completion, student achievement and citizenship, teacher education and professional development, mathematics and science, adult literacy and lifelong learning, school safety and parental participation. The report may be downloaded from www.negp.gov. Created in 1990, the National Education Goals Panel is a bipartisan body of federal and state officials made up of eight governors, four members of Congress, four state legislators and two members appointed by the President.

Language Course Finder Online

For anyone wishing to study a language abroad, there is a Web site to help find a program: Language Course Finder (www.language-course-finder.com). It lists more than 5300 institutions in 77 countries teaching 54 different languages from Arabic to Zulu. Access to all information is free and available in 19 languages. One can search for programs with a combination of parameters such as location (urban, rural, etc.), course type (general, business, academic, special purpose, etc.), sports and activities, special services /accommodation (visa support, facilities for disabled students, host families, etc.), and additional programs (work experience/internships, further academic studies, etc.). Complete contact information is provided.

U.S. Census 2000

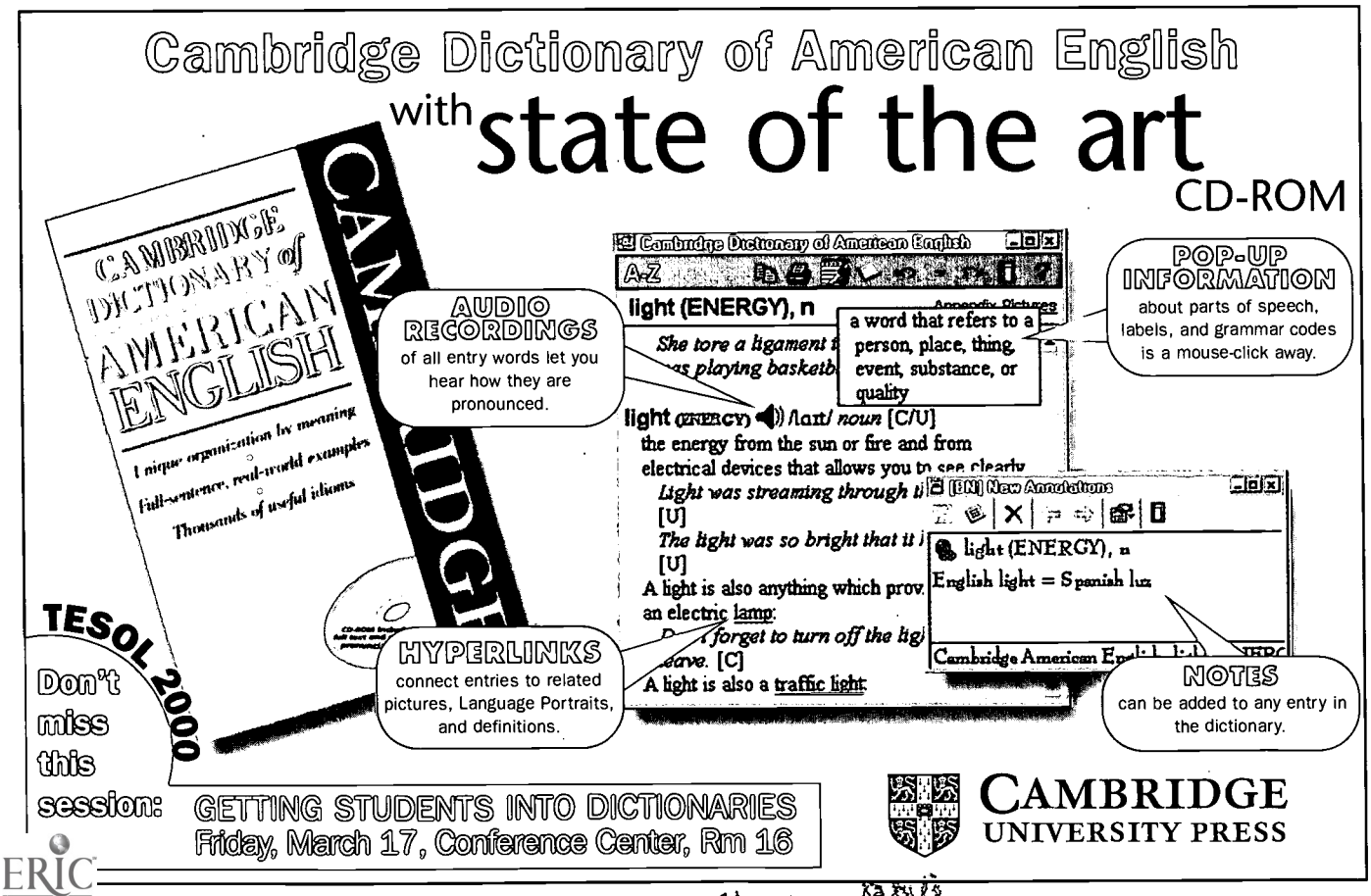
United States Census 2000

April 1, 2000 is the day for U.S. Census 2000. Households will receive their forms before this date but are asked to describe what their household composition will be on April 1. In an effort to increase participation, the Census Bureau has launched its first paid advertising campaign using TV, broadcast, and print in 17 languages at a cost of about $167 million, focusing on hard to count populations. The advertising messages remind, educate, and motivate people to participate by completing census forms, mailing them back promptly, and cooperating with census enumerators during follow-up for non-response.

The Census Bureau is establishing partnerships with state, local and tribal governments, private industry, and community groups to increase awareness and response rates, especially among historically undercounted populations. Educational Partners include Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and the National Association for Bilingual Educators (NABE).

The Census in Schools Project provides teachers with interactive lesson plans that meet national and state curriculum standards to help students understand the importance and benefits of the census, to promote awareness and encourage greater participation in the national census at the local level and to improve the accuracy of the census.

In an effort to overcome language barriers, the Census Bureau has printed the questionnaires (over 300 million) in five languages plus English. Language assistants for forty-nine languages are available. For more information, visit www.census.gov.



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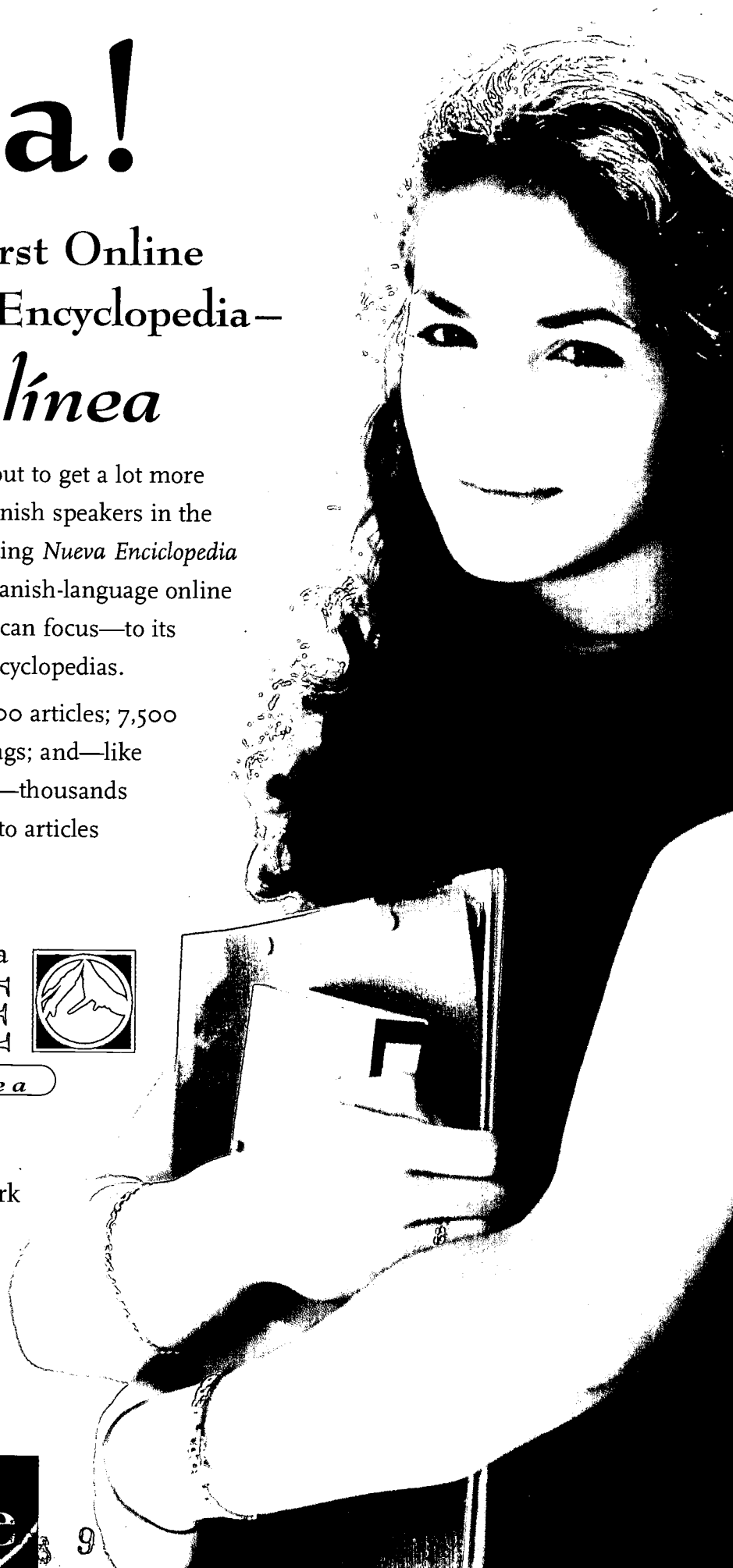

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Conference Calendar

January 2000

- 7-8 **TESOL Pre-K–12 ESL Standards Training of Trainers Conference,** Long Beach, CA. Contact Stephen Grady, 703-836-0774.
- 21-22 **Massachusetts TESOL,** Boston, MA. Contact Andrea Tobias at 508-366-0505.
- 20-22 **Thailand TESOL,** Khonkaen, Thailand. Contact Naraporn Chan-Ocha at naraporn.c@chula.ac.th.
- 25-26 **TESOL Ukraine,** Lviv, Ukraine. Contact Paraskeviya at pyerch@ext.franko.lviv.ua.

February

- 15-19 **National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE),** San Antonio, TX. Contact 202-898-1829.

March

- 2-3 **Spring Bilingual Conference,** Texas A&M University-Kingville, TX. Contact Dr. Gustavo Gonzalez, 361-593-2871.
- 2-4 **Carolina TESOL,** Beaufort, SC. Contact tqmrg@ hotmail.com.
- 11-14 **American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL),** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Contact 612-953-0805.
- 14-18 **TESOL Annual Conference,** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Contact 703-836-0774.

April

- 1 **Kentucky TESOL,** Louisville, Kentucky. Contact David Cignoni, 270-762-3422.
- 6-9 **California TESOL,** Sacramento, California. Contact Janet Lane, 530-754-6357.
- 6-8 **Tennessee TESOL,** Memphis, TN. Contact Charles Hall, 901-678-4496.
- 7 **Louisiana TESOL,** New Orleans, Louisiana. Contact Contact Dr. Georgette Loup, 504-280-6141.
- 8-9 **TESOL Greece,** Athens, Greece. Contact Eleni Giannopoulou, +01-7488-459.
- 12-14 **TESOL Arabia,** Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. Contact Les Kirkham, leslie.kirkham@hct.ac.ae.
- 15 **TEXTESOL V,** Ft. Worth, TX. Contact Jeana Remington, 214-915-4800.
- 28 **Arkansas TESOL,** Conway, AR. Contact Philip Less, 501-569-3468.
- 28-29 **Illinois TESOL,** Chicago, Illinois. Contact 847-803-3535.

May

- 11-13 **Sunshine State TESOL,** Daytona Beach, FL. Contact Sandra H. Morgan, 352-797-7070.
- 12-13 **Georgia TESOL,** Athens, Georgia. Contact Terry N. Williams, 706-542-7389.
- 17-20 **MidTESOL,** Omaha, Nebraska. Contact Kim Kreicker, 785-296-7929.
- 19-21 **Venezuela TESOL,** Caracas, Venezuela. Contact Lucius Daniel, 582-232-5969.
- 28-2 **NAFSA: Association of International Educators,** San Diego, CA. Contact 202-737-3699.

June

- 8-10 **Int'l Conference on Caribbean Language and Culture,** Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. Contact Humberto San Pedro, sanpedro@fie.uo.edu.cu.

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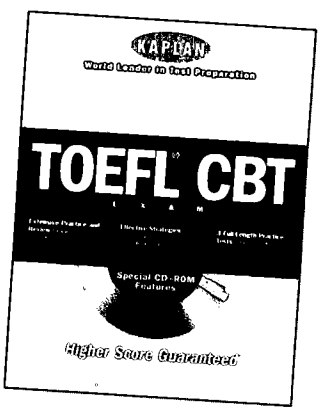

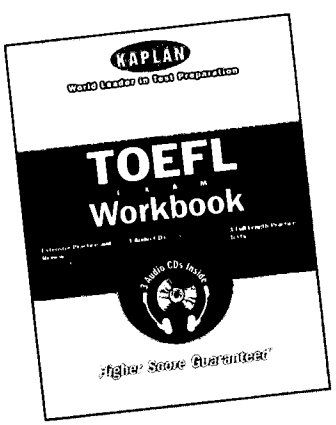

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Grammar: Rules and Reasons Working Together

BY DIANE LARSEN-FREEMAN, PH.D.

Probably the most common association that language teachers and their students make with the word "grammar" is the word "rule." Applied linguists write them, textbooks feature them, teachers present them, and students memorize them. The association has proven fruitful. Rules have served the learning of language in that they capture generalizations about morphosyntactic regularities, such as that the subject and operator are inverted in English questions (See Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999 for many additional examples of rules and other matters discussed here). Rules also offer materials developers "right-sized" chunks of language to present, they confer authority upon teachers, and they provide a modicum of security for language learners—rules are something students can hold on to.

Drawbacks to Associating Grammar with Rules

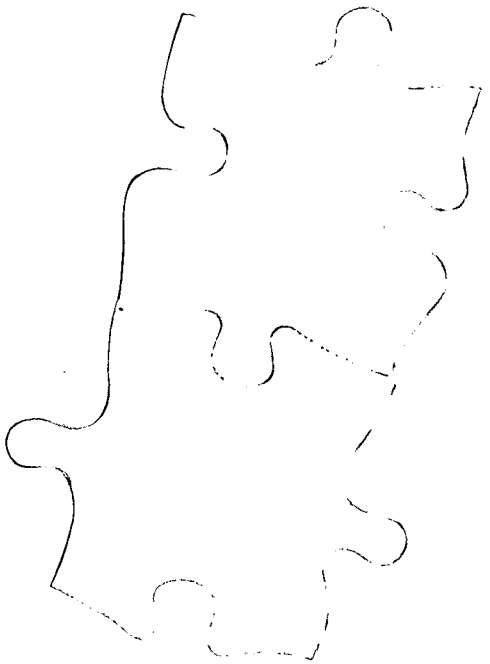
However, from a pedagogical perspective, there is a cost to associating grammar with rules. First of all, rules are static. They don't allow for change, yet language is changing all the time. One result is the need to distinguish between prescriptive and descriptive grammars. The former prescribe how people are supposed to speak or write according to the rules of grammar. Prescriptive grammars contrast with the latter, which describe how people actually do speak and write (See Celce-Murcia 1999 in the July/August issue of *ESL Magazine* for discussion and examples). Second, the generalizations that rules capture are rarely broad enough. There are always exceptions. These are not necessarily due to the fact that the rules are poorly formulated, but rather that grammar is exquisitely flexible, allowing for the expression of new meanings—and we humans are meaning-making beings. For example, the following verb form would appear to violate a rule in English which says that the *-ing* of the progressive aspect cannot be attached to a stative verb such as *love*:

I am loving every minute of my class.

And yet, most English speakers would agree that combining the progressive aspect with a stative verb, as has been done in this example, accomplishes the special effect of intensifying the emotion expressed by the verb, which makes it at least conversationally acceptable, and meaningful, in English.

To return to the rule about question formation stated above, inversion of the subject and operator is the normal (unmarked) way to form a question in English, but a certain type of question in English can be formed without inversion. When such questions are uninverted, a different pragmatic interpretation is called for. For example, in the following exchange, Ann's use of an uninverted question with rising intonation indicates that she is anticipating confirmation of her presupposition. This is not the function of ordinary, unmarked questions in English.

Brad: I just got back from San Francisco.
Ann: You had a good time there?



The problem is that rules usually deal with form, but grammar is much more than form. Forms have meanings and uses as well (Larsen-Freeman 1991). By changing the form, new meanings or new uses are created.

However, there is an additional problem, besides rules not allowing change and having exceptions. The third problem is a political one. Who owns rules? Who makes them up? Rarely is it the case that language students do. Rules are therefore somewhat external to language learners. This is a problem if we truly want our students to feel that they own the language. At the least, we will want our students to understand the reasons underlying the rules. They need to understand the internal logic of English in order to be free to convey new meaning in accurate and appropriate ways themselves.

Understanding the Reasons Underlying Rules

Contrary to the impression they give, rules are not always arbitrary. There are reasons for the generalizations they capture. And if our students understand the reasons, they will understand a great number of syntactic phenomena beyond the instances which the rule attempts to account for. For example, a rule exists in English that states that the article preceding the noun phrase following the verb must be indefinite when existential *there* fills the subject position in the sentence:

There is a snowstorm coming.

Snowstorm requires the indefinite article *a* in this sentence with existential *there*.

Now upon first consideration, this rule might seem rather arbitrary. Why does the article modifying the noun which follows the verb need to be indefinite? It turns out the answer is not at all arbitrary. The article must be indefinite because the function of *there* is to introduce new information. And in English, new information, information being introduced for the first time such as the coming of a snowstorm, is marked with the indefinite article.

Here is another example. There is a rule in English which says that if the direct object is a lexical noun and the verb is transitive, phrasal, and separable, speakers have a choice as to where to put the direct object—before the particle of the phrasal verb or after it:

She looked *the word up* in the dictionary.
She looked *up the word* in the dictionary.

However, when the direct object is a pronoun, it must come between the verb and particle, not after the particle, the asterisk indicating its ungrammaticality:

She looked *it* up in the dictionary.
*She looked up *it* in the dictionary.

This condition does seem arbitrary. However, if we start from the premise that there is an underlying reason, we will come to see that this condition is far from arbitrary and has to do with the information status of the noun phrase. A fundamental fact about English word order is that the preferred position for new information is toward the end of a clause. This is called "end focus." Given a choice, and unless some extra nuance of meaning is being conveyed, English speakers will not choose to put a pronoun in clause-

final position, since pronouns are by definition not new information. In order to use a pronoun, its referent must be clear from the context, through, for example, prior mention. Thus, the pronoun *it* is old information and should not be in clause-final position.

Reasons are Broader-based than Rules

Another commendable attribute to this way of thinking is that reasons are broader-based than rules. They explain more phenomena than single syntactic structures. For instance, the fact that the information status of a noun phrase influences word order explains other word order restrictions and choices that exist in English.

For many dialects in English, the indirect object cannot follow the verb immediately when the direct object is a pronoun and the indirect object is a noun:

We sent it to John.
*We sent John it.

Conversely, when the indirect object is a pronoun and the direct object is a noun (especially a nonspecific one), the indirect object is likely to precede the direct object:

We sent him a package.

These observations can be explained, as we have seen, by noting that pronouns refer to old information and are therefore not likely to be put into end focus. This is not to say that an indirect object that is a pronoun would never occupy the position at the end of a clause, but when it is located there, a different interpretation would likely follow—for example, a contrastive one.

We sent a package to *him.* (not her)

Furthermore, with verbs that allow two different word orders with direct and indirect objects:

Sally gave Jack advice.
Sally gave advice to Jack.

the choice, as you may have guessed, is determined by what speakers want to give end focus. In answer to the question, "What did Sally give Jack?" the first would be appropriate. "To whom did Sally give advice?" would be answered by the second, that is, if full sentence answers are given.

Incidentally, it may seem arbitrary from a present day perspective that certain verbs, such as give, allow the direct and indirect alternation patterns and others do not, e.g., *explain*:

Sally explained the situation to Jack.
*Sally explained Jack the situation.

There is less arbitrariness than it seems, however. Although admittedly it is difficult to know which verbs allow both patterns and which verbs don't, the difference has to do with the source language from which the verbs were borrowed into English. In general, Germanic verbs permit both sequences; verbs of Romance origin do not allow both.

Implications for a Reason-based Approach to Teaching Grammar

What are the implications of teaching reasons rather than rules? Well, first of all, it would be no more appropriate to lecture about reasons than it would be to lecture about rules. After all, what we want students to be able to do is to use the reasons/rules, not recite them. Thus, I prefer to think of us teaching "grammaring," (Larsen-Freeman 1991; forthcoming) — helping students acquire the skill to use what they know to communicate accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately by introducing structures in a way that the reason underlying them is made transparent. The following are some ideas for doing this:

1. When working on a structure, create a context in which the reason is implicitly clear. For example, if you are introducing sentences with existential there, use cuisenaire rods to describe a place. As you describe the scene, place rods to represent a feature of the scene on a desk where they are visible to class members. For example:

In the heart of many New England villages, there is a town common. On the common, there are trees and benches. There is also a war memorial. Etc.

After you have described the scene, ask the students what they can remember. If the students have trouble remembering the features, point to the rods to trigger their memories. Later, students can take turns describing a scene with which they are familiar to the class or a partner, using the rods or drawing the scene as they speak. What is important is that students see that the *there* is used to introduce new information. Notice that it would not work to hold up a picture of a town common and point to the trees as you describe the scene. This is because it would not be appropriate to use the existential *there* if everyone can see the trees; the trees would not be being introduced linguistically, but rather pictorially. Someone describing a scene using a picture might instead say, "This is the town common. It has trees..."

2. If you do give a rule, qualify it if possible. When a student asks you if it is true that you never use *-ing* with a stative verb, rely on the familiar but accurate teacher's reply "It depends." Because it does depend; it depends on what you mean or the appropriateness of use. Even a seemingly simple and straightforward rule such as subject-verb agreement—singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs, e.g.,

Ten miles are to be added to the new highway next year.

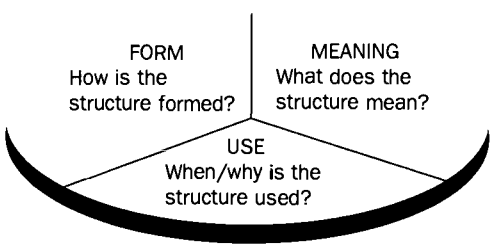
is not always true. Certainly the following sentence with a plural subject and a singular verb is grammatical in English:

Ten miles is a long way to drive to get groceries.

Empower Students to Find Reasons

Empower your students by teaching them how to figure out the reasons that grammatical forms are the way they are in English. Teach students to learn to look at language.

1. Give them a framework such as the following pie chart:



2. Help them learn to ask the questions in the wedges of the pie. For example, here are the answers to the questions for one of the structures we have considered above, the existential *there*.

Q: How is it formed?
A: *There* is in subject position in a sentence. It is usually followed by the verb *be*. The form of the *be* verb is determined by the noun phrase that follows it. This noun phrase takes an indefinite article.

Q: What does it mean?
A: The *there* tells us that something exists and/or where it is located.

Q: When/why is it used?
A: It is used to introduce new information.

3. Give students a principle that when two different forms exist in a language, they will vary in either meaning or use. For example:

There is a book on the table.
A book is on the table.

The meaning of these two sentences is more or less the same, but the sentence with *there* would be used to introduce new information in normal discourse. The second sentence is much more limited in frequency and scope. One of its functions is in giving stage directions to the director of a play, telling the director how to stage some scene in the play. While it may be difficult for students to figure this difference out on their own, the principle will help them learn to look for ways that particular grammar structures are distinctively meaningful and/or appropriate.

when the subject, *ten miles*, is conceived as a single entity.

3. Whenever possible, work with structures as they are embedded in discourse. Often reasons are impossible to see at the level of sentence. For example, there is a reason why the present perfect tense is preferred over the past tense, although the reason is very difficult to perceive if you simply contrast the two tenses in a given isolated sentence. It is their discourse function (for example, the present perfect serves as a bridge between the present and past), which makes one more acceptable than the other in a given context.

4. It is important to underscore, however, that part of the attractiveness of rules for language learners is the learner's need for security. Rules give them something to hold on to. If you are not going to meet this need by giving them rules, you will have to find other ways of providing for their security. Perhaps having them memorize particular exemplars illustrating the reasons would be something more useful to hold on to than rules.

5. Help your students see that they need to understand the why's and the wherefore's of English grammar so that they are indeed free to create new meaning for themselves. Empower them by giving them a framework so that they can figure out for themselves the reasons underlying the grammatical forms (see sidebar on page 11).

Finally, as is true for the learning of anything (Larsen-Freeman 2000), encourage them to be curious, to see that there is a logic to English and that they have the tools to understand it and to make it their own. Such an attitude will serve their learning well, long after they leave your classroom. And that is *reason* enough!

Diane Larsen-Freeman, Ph. D., is professor of applied linguistics in the Department of Language Teacher Education at the School for International Training. She is the author of many books and co-author of The Grammar Book *and series director of* Grammar Dimensions.

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When a Rule is "Broken"...

When you come upon a rule that seems to be violated, try to figure out why. Is it that the language is changing? Is there a new meaning being expressed? Is there a reason that can account for what appears to be an exception? Here are some examples:

1. "Everyone should do their own homework."

This sentence appears to violate the rule that says that a compound indefinite pronoun, such as *everyone*, should be referred to by a singular pronoun, e.g., *his* not *their*.

REASON: In prescriptive grammar, the rule still holds. Many people, though, accept sentences such as #1 because they see it as a way to avoid using the third person singular masculine possessive adjective, *his*, to refer to members of both sexes.

2. "I don't like that." (said or thought by someone standing nearby someone else who is wearing a strong-smelling perfume or cologne)

This sentence would appear to violate the rule that says use *this* not *that* when the thing that you are referring to is nearby.

REASON: The relative distance conveyed by the choice between *this* and *that* need not only be spatial. In this sentence *psychological* distance is expressed by the speaker through the speaker's use of *that*.

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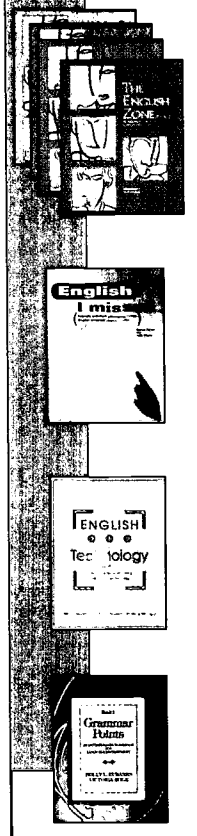

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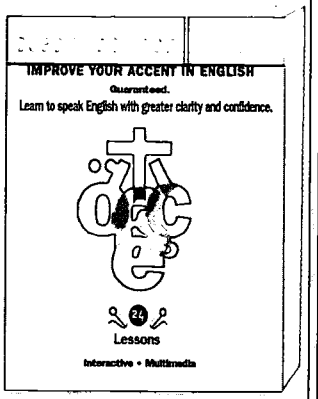

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An article appeared in the November 8, 1999 issue of *Time* magazine entitled "People to Watch: Michael Hart." In the June 1999 *UNESCO Courier,* Jim Coates, a Chicago Tribune columnist, is quoted as saying, "Michael Hart should be as famous as Bill Gates."

Who is this Michael Hart? He is the man who, way back in 1971, decided that the most valuable use of the computer was not for computing but for storing and retrieving the materials in our libraries. To this end he established Project Gutenberg with the goal of creating e-texts of 10,000 books by the end of 2001.

Hart's philosophy is to make as many texts available to as many readers as possible. For this reason the e-texts are chosen to appeal to the widest audience possible and are accessible in "plain vanilla ASCII" for easy retrieval from any computer. Texts are prepared by many volunteers around the world. They can be downloaded free of charge, but donations are very welcome.

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At the beginning of this year I went to the titles list and decided to print it out. I ended up with a printout of 45 pages! Among the titles I found the following: *A Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, *Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" by Ambrose Bierce, Cicero's *Orations, Divine Comedy* by Dante (translation by Norton), *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, *Rashomon* by Akutagawa Ryunosuke, *Some Short Stories* by Henry James, "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe, and *White Fang* by Jack London.

All of the literary texts converted to e-texts for the Project Gutenberg Library are in the public domain and are therefore no longer under copyright. As Hart suggests, users can download the e-texts and "improve" them in any way they see fit (e.g., changing the fonts and other features, adding graphics and sound). This library should prove to be an extraordinary resource for teachers of English around the world.

Christine Meloni teaches in the EFL Department at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She welcomes comments and suggestions at cfmeloni@hotmail.com.

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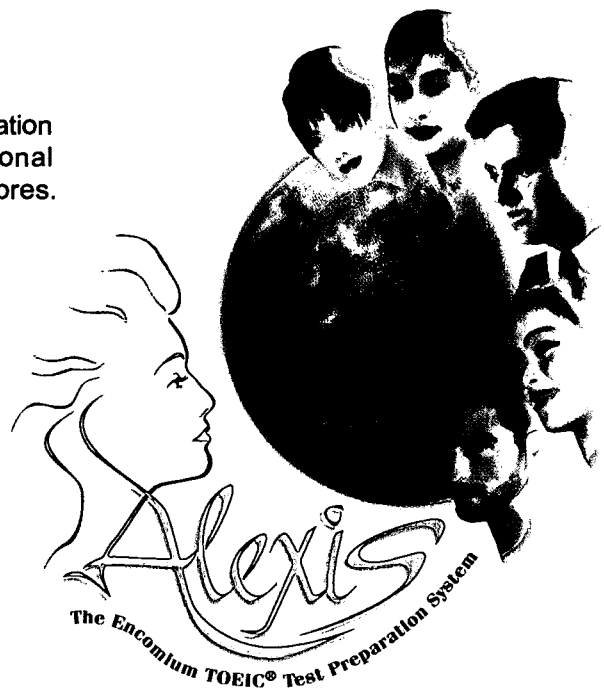

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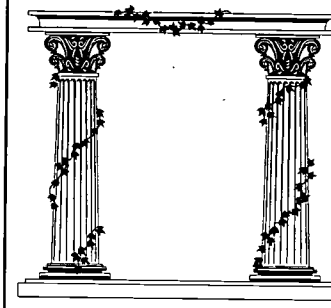

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TESOL Sets Sail for Vancouver!

BY NANCY STORER

It will soon be that time of year when thousands of ESOL teachers wend their way to the largest gathering of their professional clan—TESOL's annual convention. From March 14-18, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages will begin navigating the new millennium in the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre, Vancouver, British Columbia. The convention center is a highly distinctive landmark with a roof that mimics sails, a natural expression of its waterfront position in a city bounded on all sides by either water or mountains.

Vancouver is the perfect site to contemplate the future of English language teaching. It is a fascinating mixture of cultures as new immigrants arrive daily. The city boasts ethnic neighborhoods, countless and varied restaurants, and an array of natural attractions. More than half of the children in the city's elementary schools speak a first language other than English!

Language teachers, program directors, curriculum developers, linguists, media specialists, bilingual educators, professionals working with refugees, and others will find something of value at this event. It offers a week of fabulous choices for every educator, with themes ranging from professional development, assessment, methodology, teacher education, critical pedagogy, to career management.

Technology in the Classroom

A key feature of TESOL 2000 will be a focus on online education at four special Invited Sessions and the classroom use of computers and other technology. In the Electronic Village, participants will have access to a state-of-the-art multimedia learning center, the Internet, and demonstrations by accomplished computer-assisted language learning (CALL) authors.

Standards and Assessment in Focus

The program includes robust discussions about the development of standards, both from U.S. and non-U.S. perspectives. These topics are being addressed in many countries and at every level of ESL/EFL. The convention features Board-sponsored sessions, the new Strand sessions (five to seven sessions that relate to a particular hot topic), and PreConvention Institutes (PCIs) devoted to the subtleties of standards and assessment.

TESOL Highlights

Featured international speakers will look ahead to see where teachers and students must prepare to navigate. David Nunan will address seven hypotheses about language learning and teaching and the importance of experiential learning. Mary Ashworth will speak on "navigating the new millennium." Deborah J. Short will highlight the characteristics of teachers who are effective at integrating language and academic content instruction. Donald Freeman will address developing teacher knowledge. Edwin Thumboo will consider literary creativity in English among the non-Anglo-Saxon nations and countries of the former British Empire and the pedagogical implications. Randy Bass will discuss learning culture in a "wired world," and Ujjal Dosanjh will examine immigration patterns and future directions for English language teaching.

The Uses of Research

Classroom teachers can further their professional development at the Research Symposium, which will acquaint them with three interactive [illegible]s for self-development: reflective practice, exploratory practice, and investigative practice. Discussion will help participants understand classroom issues through reflection, take practical action to reach understanding, and make changes in classroom practice.

Educational Visits and Cultural Tours

Vancouver offers a fascinating array of educational settings. A carefully chosen program of educational visits will take participants to elementary, secondary, community college, and university programs that boast special achievements. Cultural tours will visit the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, the Vancouver Museum, the Vancouver Public Library, and the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre. These exciting tours will satisfy the souls of historians, artists, athletes, geographers, and shoppers. Along with social events, tours offer the dual benefits of networking and camaraderie.

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TESOL's tradition of service to the international ESOL community is well matched with the charms of a global city. TESOL 2000 and Vancouver will both offer unparalleled opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Nancy Storer of Baker University, Baldwin City, Kansas, is TESOL 2000 Convention Chair.

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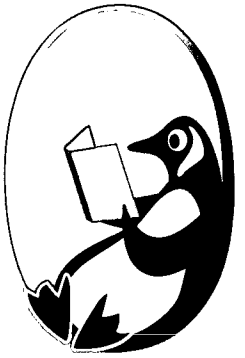

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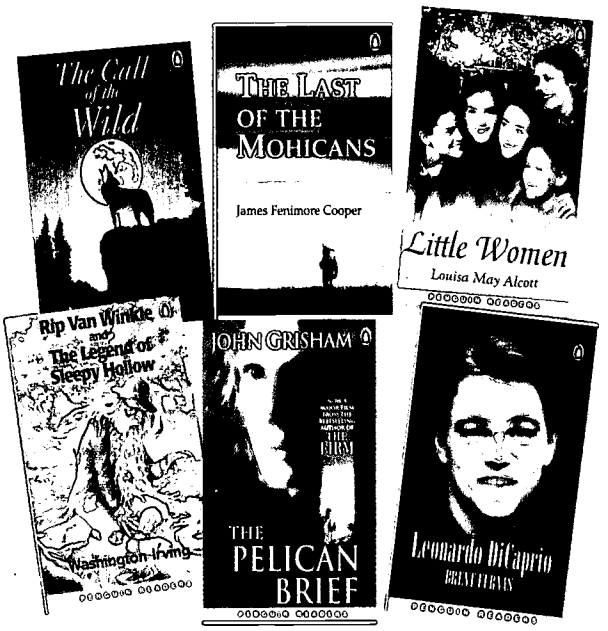

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The Adventure of Self-Employment

Self-employment in ESL is very appealing to many of us for the same reasons that it is appealing people in other professions. Although the risk factor is certainly greater, the possibility of success and building something of your own can outweigh that concern. Being your own boss is a very attractive concept.

Corporate training is a popular avenue for those considering the "private sector." The basic premise behind this is that you approach companies that hire English language learners as employees. You convince them that you can provide a service that will increase productivity and employee interaction. They hire you, and you're on your way.

In real life, it doesn't always work exactly like that. Often it's hard to quantify the benefits that your service will actually provide. Companies may not view increased English skills as a tangible asset for employees who do not need it for their jobs. Most people who work in this area tend to promote English as a means of making more productive, happy workers who are more likely to stay with the company. Companies prefer long-term employees because of the decrease in work-related training costs.

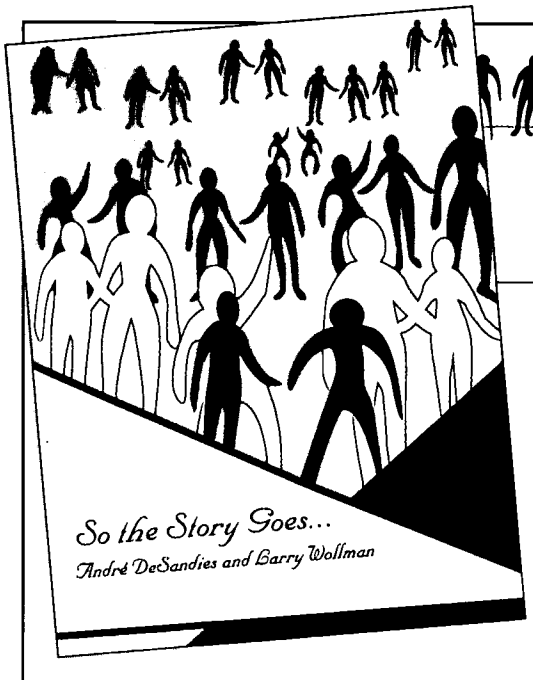
Don't forget that with all the desirable aspects of self-employment, there is the downside. You now have a lot more responsibility. If you don't make enough money this month, you could be eating lots of rice and beans. Although this could be healthy for you, the goal for going into business for yourself (or at least one of the goals) is to have more control over your destiny. Certainly that includes your financial destiny.

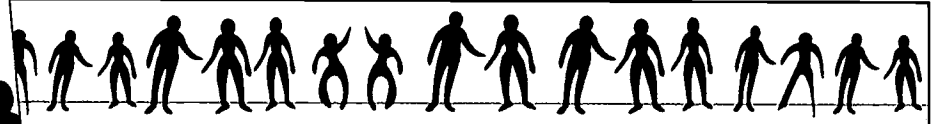
Before venturing out into the big, wide world on your own, evaluate yourself. Are you good at keeping records? Do you know what generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) are? Do you know the difference between a 1040 and an I-9? How about retirement? What's the difference between a Keogh plan and a Sep-IRA? If you hire any other teachers, do you have to do payroll taxes?

If you don't know much about the above, all is not lost. There are many good books on small business management. Definitely read a few. Consider finding a partner with whom to share the highs and lows and who has knowledge in the areas you don't.

In the next issue of *ESL Magazine* I will have interviews with people who have taken the plunge and gone into business for themselves.

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teachEFL.com.





So the Story Goes...

André DeSandies and Barry Wollman

So The Story Goes...is a reader of 16 stories designed specifically for beginning adult, continuing education and vocational ESL students. The readings are based on ESL students' experiences in America. It can be combined with other books in a series for a sound linguistic foundation.

The presentation of the book is clear and consistent, yet provides a variety of activities. Each chapter has the following format:

- ***Get The Picture?***—Pre-reading picture with simple discussion questions
- ***The Story***—The text (generally thematically based)
- ***Check Mark***—TRUE / FALSE comprehension exercises
- ***To the Point***—Grammar and vocabulary building

  OR
- ***What Do You Think?***—Multiple choice or fill-in exercises
- ***Crosswords***—A crossword puzzle based on story vocabulary
- ***So Your Story Goes...***—Composition suggestion
- ***So the Song Goes...***—Typical song based on story theme

"The authors realize and respect their students' problems and are eager to give real help...So the Story Goes... is a wonderful and promising start. Bon voyage!"
—Zoya Bromberg, former ESL student of IIE UCC and Senior Editor of Finance & Statistics Publishing Office, Moscow

This book would be an excellent addition or enhancement to any ESL program, or would be able to stand on its own. It is currently being field tested at Union County College, which has the largest ESL student enrollment of any community college in NJ.

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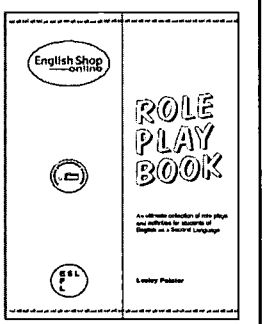

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THE READING LAB: An Invitation to Read

JEAN ZUKOWSKI/FAUST

Reading labs have been part of English language programs since the 1960s, to my knowledge. At the American College for Girls (now Robert College) in Istanbul, we didn't call it a reading laboratory, but it was. Ours began as a small, loose-jointed, push-around library cart with angled shelves bearing out-dated American magazines, some thin books, and resource books—world atlases, old almanacs, and monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. The rolling reading lab was a popular diversion for girls in this dormitory school.

I remember when Sema and Gülümsüm, two bright lycée-preparatory students, found a *Seventeen* magazine on the cart. Delighted to find topics of urgent teenage interest, on hair styles, skin care, and clothes, they smuggled the magazine out as I congratulated myself on having found something that engaged my students so completely. I noted that *Seventeen* reappeared on the cart by Friday—and also that it was picked up immediately by a day student, disappearing again into a book bag. Recognizing a successful component on my reading cart, I wrote to my sister Gloria in Wisconsin, asking for more. She sent a box full of teenage girl magazines, and my reading lab grew.

Students should be taught how to choose books for themselves that will be easy and enjoyable to read.

After Istanbul, I went to the University of Arizona's Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) in Tucson; there the reading lab was contained in moveable boxes. Teachers talked about students "reading the boxes." The first box was SRA Reading Lab materials (Science Research Associates), readings of general interest and appeal, printed one to an 8 x 10-inch card. Graduated in length and difficulty, these SRA readings had been assembled for native English speakers to improve their reading skills. Each reading was followed by what we glibly called comprehension questions. Students who read an article and answered questions about it were assumed to be reading successfully. To answer some questions, particularly for high intermediate and advanced readings, student readers had to synthesize the information. Other questions, particularly after the simplest readings, were empty exercises in manipulating language elements.

To have readings that would lead to good academic reading practice, we knew that we would have to develop some to add to the SRA materials, which were good but predictable in format and therefore somewhat boring. Stout brown banker's boxes were filled with file folders with multi-colored labels, coded for difficulty level and arranged by topic. Individual folders held single articles—gleaned from textbooks, selected and copied from easy classics, culled from magazines, or photocopied from newspapers. Each folder also held questions created by reading teachers to help students practice reading skills. Like the readings from the skills-rich Barnell-Loft series (sets of which were added to the boxes), these articles could help students learn to recognize main ideas, figure out meaning of words or phrases from context, skim and scan for details and gist, become aware of the sequence of events, draw conclusions, and make inferences. The boxes sat on long tables against the back wall, ready for selection of appropriate readings for individual students. The number of reading boxes increased as teachers added lessons, expanding the range of topics and deepening the coverage.

The Many Facets of Reading Labs

Today's reading lab equivalent at the CESL has several facets. The boxes are gone (I don't know why), but there is a rolling book cart (sturdier than the one in Istanbul) with high-interest readings that teachers can take to their classrooms to "push" extensive outside reading. Teacher Laurel Pollard also takes her students to the juvenile section of the university library. She teaches them how to select a book that will be easy and enjoyable to read, by surveying and sampling it, and follows through by having the students show what they have chosen to her and to the other students. In addition, CESL has a magazine table from which students can choose magazines of interest to them (motorcycles, photography, fashion, bodybuilding!), and a system of reading report folders on which students record and report their outside reading. In addition, in the computer-assisted language learning (CALL) lab, there are many reading lab-type options.

In a Delaware school reading lab, LaNell Stahl used a program called *"Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego?"* (Broderbund). This computer reading activity, now expanded, requires that the students be detectives; they learn to do research—to use reference materials like maps and atlases as they figure out where Carmen is and where they should go to catch this criminal. It teaches critical thinking, vocabulary, geography, reference skills—and there is always another puzzle to solve. Today's *Oregon Trail* (The Learning Company) is another computer program. Like the old adventure format, *Oregon Trail* presents challenge after challenge as students imagine traveling toward Oregon: blizzards, disease, dry watering holes, and even imminent starvation. Technology has added a new dimension to reading labs so that in many middle and high schools the reading lab and the CALL lab are synonymous.

In a public junior high school in Chinle, Arizona, John Clark teaches reading to native speakers of Navajo. In his reading lab, he typically uses The Accelerated Reader computer program (Advantage Learning Systems, Inc.).

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Students read books and then on computers test their understanding of what they have read. As students come into the classroom, they select books from the shelves to read on their own. His shelves hold books from the pre-reading to eighth grade level. At some point every day the students will have sustained silent reading (SSR).

In another activity, John reads chapters to his students from books about young Native Americans, books such as *Sing Down the Moon* by Scott O'Dell (Dell Publishing); the themes validate the students' culture and allow them to use personal background knowledge so they can understand what may otherwise be above their reading levels. With the students, he summarizes the events in the book up to the stopping-point of the previous lesson, shows pictures and asks questions about what is going on in the picture. He asks questions about vocabulary that few but Navajos know (as in *Annie and the Old One* by Miska Miles, Little, Brown and Co. and *Monster Birds* retold by Vee Browne and illustrated by Bahe Whitehorne, Northland Publishing); then he reads the next part of the book aloud to them. He sometimes models surveying what he will read, doing a "talk-aloud" of his process as he flips slowly through the pages of books: "Hmm, I can see that this chapter has no pictures, but I see the words *tracking, trail, footprints in the dust*, and *horses*. Hmm. I wonder what this chapter is going to be about. Well, let's find out."

John knows that Navajo families have a strong oral tradition, but because of limited literacy tradition in their homes, he must encourage his students to become involved with print. Therefore, he uses this class activity to lead them to anticipate, modeling how to use small clues to guess what will probably happen. He uses the oral story telling traditions of the Navajo to get students to open up when writing journal entries about their readings.

Teacher Ruth Botwinik at Queensborough Community College, City University of New York in Bayside, uses a lab that includes computers with reading software and many kinds of equipment. Her students find technology isolating; therefore, she is careful to maintain an interactive human aspect when using equipment. She reports that aides monitor the reading lab at the high school where she taught because administrators felt that the machines were doing the teaching.

Inviting Students into Reading

Teachers know that the success of any reading lab depends on two things: 1) teachers' making sure that students have the right readings for their ability levels, needs, and interests, and 2) teachers' creativity in devising ways of inviting students into reading.

The creativity of reading teachers, by stereotype, knows no bounds. I tried to live up to that expectation in developing a variety of activities for a reading lab:

- **Manila envelopes with strip stories:** Some of the easiest were Sunday funny paper cartoons laminated in clear plastic and cut into squares for the students to put into sequential order. Students read the captions and determined how the pieces fit together. Some were stories I made up myself or paraphrased from vignettes like "Humor in Uniform" or "Life in These United States" from *Reader's Digest* magazines. I enriched the plots with transition forms and clear pronoun references so that the students could follow the story line.

- **Matching games:** I photocopied newspaper articles of high human interest, separated headlines from articles, and grouped them in manila envelopes (5-10 per package) for students to match articles to headlines.

- **Title-less newspaper articles:** The student's job was to create a title for an article—that is, encapsulate the main idea in a title.

- **The Word Box:** I save the cartons of boxes like crackers and cereal and packaging of other products. I cut out words in many kinds of print (like *Cheer* from a Cheerios box or a box of Cheer detergent; *Salt*, *in*, *Crack*, and *rack* from a Saltine crackers box) and put them in a greeting card box until I had hundreds of words. Then I encouraged students to create sentences from the cut-out words, adding as many words as they wanted.

- **Taskits©:** My colleague Charlotte Acker and I have recently created dozens of Taskits for an adult education program reading lab. Large manila envelopes hold lessons for two to five students. Each envelope contains a lesson stimulus and worksheets for up to three different levels if the Taskit is for a mixed ability group (with different expectations for beginner, intermediate, and advanced students). Here are some examples:

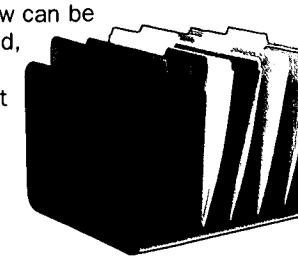
  - a small stamp collection with questions that lead beginning students into in-depth reading.
  - a sheet of drawings of a dozen girls in Dutch costumes—only two of whom are alike. The students go through a reading process to determine which two are twins.
  - leftovers from a box of all-occasion cards. Students match the appropriate card to a situation described on the worksheet.
  - a set of advertising sheets with coded envelopes containing different amounts of "funny money." Students examine the advertising sheet and then "spend" as much of the money as they can buying gifts or food for the week. They have to read, talk, and figure what they can buy with the money in their envelopes.

We view these Taskits as on-going materials development for an adult education reading lab. We collect menus, application forms, bulletins, and cards. If English is printed on it, we consider what we might do with it because it is potential

Labeling Topics and Reading Levels

Selecting print materials for a student can be made easier by arranging articles according to topics and coding the difficulty level. Years ago at a conference, Harris Winitz suggested that all human activity could be categorized under 14 headings, which he required the session attendees to generate. In every methods class since, my students have done the same. No matter who the students are, they generate the same headings: business, celebrations and traditions, education, the environment, the fine arts, food, health and medicine, history, jobs and occupations, recreation and sports, religion and spiritual development, science, social systems (family, government), world geography and cultures. I have added architecture, fashion, people, psychology, stories, and puzzles for critical thinking, but there really is no limit. However, the simplicity and all-encompassing nature of these topic titles have served well, even as folder labels for teacher-made picture files.

On the labels for readings within any particular topic, a simple system of noting easy-to-difficult facilitates finding the right reading for a student: red-bordered for easiest, green for intermediate, and violet for advanced level. For finer distinctions, the whole rainbow can be used to denote easy to difficult: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Such coding means that every lab supervisor and teacher need not have read and remembered every reading to assist a student making a selection.



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material for our reading lab.

Challenges to Success

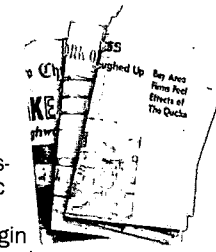
There is a down side to reading labs: some students simply refuse to participate. They may be unmotivated to learn on their own, easily bored or distracted, shy or lacking confidence, or culturally conditioned to expect a teacher to teach them and therefore unfamiliar or uncomfortable with learner-centered or learning-centered instruction. Another down side is that teachers have to keep readings current; as topics cease to be interesting, new readings must be found. Teachers who require outside reading and reports on that reading must also read through what the students have written.

Dennis Oliver of Arizona State University's American English and Culture Program reports that the current trend of integrating reading and writing labs sometimes means that neither skill gets enough focus and attention. He observes that the students use the computer labs to collect and answer e-mail—a good purpose if the messaging is in English. In self-access centers, lab-type reading materials can work on a self-instructional basis, but most don't because students need trained monitors to help them with hurdles like material selection. Oliver states, "Simply reading and reporting is better than not reading, but exercises that guide the student into using reading skills can strengthen the learning experience. Reading cannot be learned well enough by teacher-fronted classes using only a class text. Students have different needs, different skill levels, different degrees of motivation, so an 'all with the same material' approach will not have optimum results."

With a variety of readings—from Marvel comics to cookbooks, maps, almanacs, and desk encyclopedias, the reading teacher can turn the lab into training for academic success. Students become better critical readers—kept interested and reading beyond their actual reading level while building familiarity with concepts and exploring topics they enjoy. The weakness of every reading class, including reading labs, is that the reading material won't reach some students. A well-developed lab has something for every student to read. If the teacher can match student and reading material efficiently enough, then the lab will be doing what only a reading lab can do: get students reading. The reading lab is limited only by the lab supervisor's imagination and creativity.

Jean Zukowski/Faust is a professor of applied linguistics at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. She teaches in the MA-TESL program and is a frequent conference presenter. She has published more than twenty textbooks in ESL.

Selecting Readable Materials

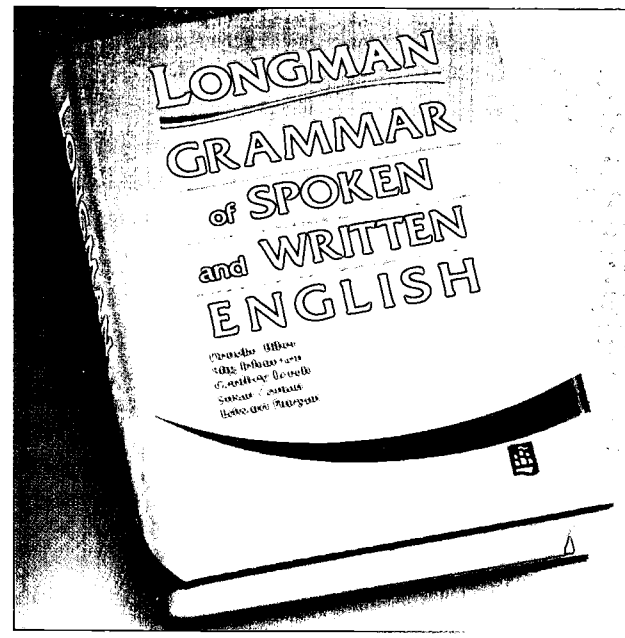


The easiest reading on any subject has relatively short sentences in active voice, a measure of white space, graphic support, limited scope, a single topic focus, and explanatory redundancy in the text. It is printed in a clear serif font of at least 12-point, in narrow columns, with ragged right margins (not justified), on light colored paper, in a dark ink.

The hardest reading on any subject has sentences both long and short, text crowded next to text with little empty space on the page, no pictures, and no repetition. It covers a broad range of related topics and is printed in small sans-serif type (like Gothic or Arial) all the way across a page—margin to margin, justified, and sometimes even superimposed on pictures or printed white on black.

Magazines and newspaper articles (if printed on plain paper in dark ink) are easier to read than the pages of a novel; the narrow columns allow the reader's eyes to sweep quickly across and down the column, naturally increasing reading speed.

"For the foreseeable future, anyone with a serious interest in English grammar will have to take into account the information this book contains." *- David Crystal*



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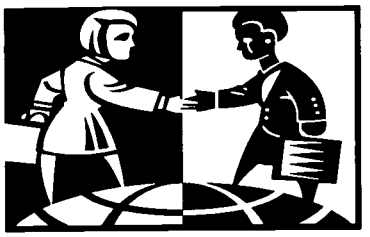

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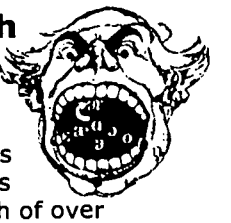

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At the Movies: The Focal Skills™ Program

Although first instituted in the late 1980s, the video-based approach at the Intensive English Program (IEP), University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, is what one still might call extraordinarily innovative. Developed by Ashley Hastings (1996, 1997), this approach involves watching feature films (on video) chosen for their supportive visual content with a variety of teacher interventions to assist comprehension.

The program depends upon the skill of the teachers to discover what the students need in the way of vocabulary and grammar. In this sense, each class presents slightly different challenges and expectations. In a lower level listening module, the teacher might stop the video, and talk about what is on the screen, replay segments, describe the action, paraphrase the dialogue, talk about the movie as the class sees parts of it repeatedly, etc. Students don't have to speak unless they wish to. Because of the "tangibility" of what is on the screen and their engagement with the characters and the storyline, students are highly motivated to understand what is going on. The teacher models and explains authentic language; the students, immersed in both visual and linguistic cues, are awash in comprehensible input at an appropriate level.

As students develop better listening skills, they move into reading and writing modules including such activities as reading plot summaries and eventually writing their own scripts. The IEP has also created banks of comprehension questions and readings in the short stories and novellas on which the movies are based. Multiple inputs and responding through writing to what has been read or viewed help to round out the skills needed for higher level language use, academic skills such as note-taking, summarizing, and analyzing. Films also provide the language of emotion and the non-verbal signals that are so often lacking in academic curricula.

Does it work? From what I have seen of the instructors' long-term commitment to and enthusiasm for the program, Focal Skills™ must be doing something right. You can check out Hastings' Web pages below to find out more.

REFERENCES

Hastings, A. J. 1996. Focal Skills: A brief sketch. http://www.su.edu/tesol/fss-ketch.htm.

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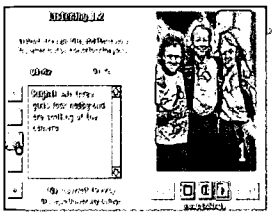
Alexis, the Encomium TOEIC® Test Preparation System
Encomium Publications, 1999
http://www.encomium.com

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has been moving inexorably towards computerized testing (see *ESL Magazine* March/April 1998 on the TOEFL). Because of the benefits of individualized testing, flexible test dates, and faster score reporting, perhaps within another few years there will no longer be paper-based standardized exams.



Predictably, publishers are rushing to prepare practice CDs to give students a chance to work in this new testing medium. Encomium has created Alexis, a Web-based CD with practice exercises to prepare for the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), an ETS product oriented toward the business and workplace environment, as opposed to the more academic orientation of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Although the TOEIC is still paper-based, Alexis takes advantage of the Web's audio streaming technology to give students a hands-on feel for the tape recorded listening questions. The same general types of questioning strategies prevail, with some additional multimedia advantages. Seven sections grouped under Listening Comprehension and Reading offer students lots of practice in hearing, reading, and responding.

In the Listening sections, students see photographs and hear audio prompts, or they listen to short conversations or monologues with audio prompts alone. They receive written feedback for both correct and incorrect answers and have the option of seeing the written scripts.

On the Reading side, students are asked to choose the best word to fill in the blanks in sentences, recognize parts of a sentence with an error in grammar or form, and to read short passages followed by multiple choice inferential questions.

Perhaps the nicest feature of Alexis is the Pictures section, which presents photographic stimuli as well as audio. The photos look beautiful on the Web and give an aura of realism to the audio prompts that require inferential listening skills. The streaming feature works well, although on a feeble little 28.8 connection, I found it was faster to click to download the audio files first and then play them again once they were safely cached away. Another nice feature is the Short Conversations, which were mildly amusing and had an instructional side as well as they offered advice about comportment at work, relations with the boss, and other job-related situations. I would judge these to be challenging for the intermediate level student.

The Incomplete Sentences and Error Recognition sections suffer from the defects of the ETS approach: I have always felt that filling in the blanks and error-finding are not a particularly good way to approach the teaching or testing of grammar, and possibly these [illegible]he "Reading" section would be better named "Grammar." Also, I felt the feedback in these sections was not as good as in the Listening sections. To mention one example, telling the student, "*So* doesn't work at all here," is not terribly explanatory. In other parts, the language of the explanations seemed more difficult than that of the prompts.

One of the more innovative parts of Alexis is the Reading Comprehension section, which makes use of the browser to go to a Web page. The student reads the prompt and answer choices, and then scans the Web page for information in order to select the best answer. This seems to me to be a realistic reading task.

For all the debate over whether one can teach to the test or not, the reality is that students want practice that looks and feels like the ETS environment. Alexis offers exam-oriented practice but also a good deal more in the sheer quantity of its audio and written input. Students will get lots of practice related to the workplace and will also feel satisfied that they are studying to the test.

Encomium's Web address is www.encomium.com. It is an excellent site with links to all the major ESL Web sites.

Elizabeth Hanson-Smith is the technology columnist for ESL Magazine *and can be reached at ehansonsmi@ aol.com.*

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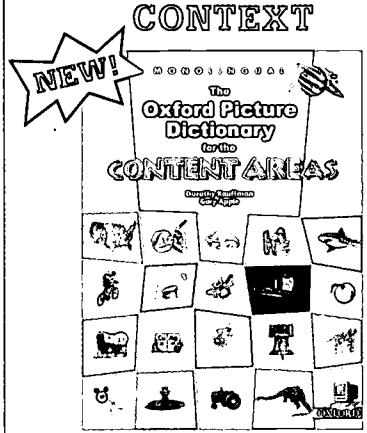

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QUEBEC: A Unique North American ESL Teaching Experience

BY JACQUELYNE LORD

Elementary, secondary, cegep (post-secondary program), adult education, universities, private language schools —when it comes to ESL teaching, Québec has it all. For this article, however, we will focus on elementary and secondary ESL teaching with its clientele of over 600,000 students.

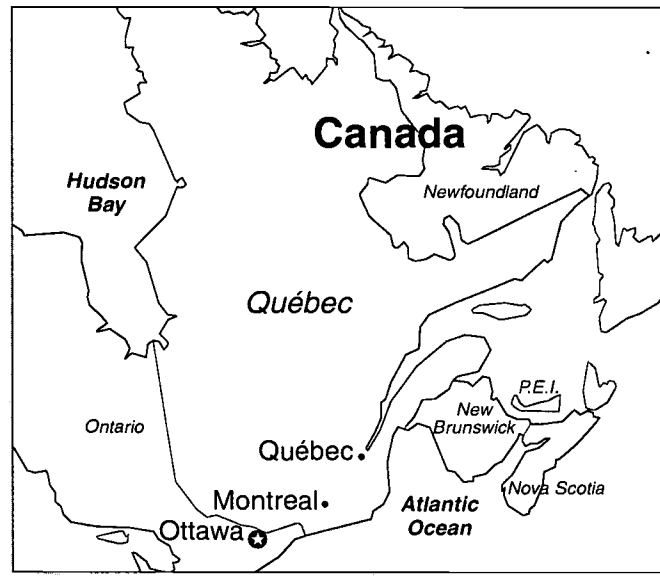
In Québec, which has a population of approximately 7,000,000 people, French is the official language. So is ESL teaching really what we are doing here? In most areas in Québec, where not a word of English is heard outside the classroom, where everyday life is conducted completely in French, it would probably be more accurate to speak of EFL. Outside the classroom, students do not use the English they have learned in the classroom. While it is true that the influence of English music, the Internet and English television (if you have cable, which is not always the case) is present, this influence is often peripheral. In many areas, it is impossible to rent an English video or find an English book in a local library. This is not a complaint, simply a statement of fact.

In areas with a high immigrant population, it might be more accurate to speak of EAL, English as another or additional language, because for those students who began life with a first language such as Vietnamese or Albanian, and who attended French schools and learned French as a second language, English is their third language. Meeting the needs of all these students are the challenges ESL specialists have to face.

The Educational System and Second Language Requirements

[illegible] boards in Québec are defined lin[illegible]ally and of the 72 in existence, 60 are Francophone. In these boards, ESL courses are mandatory for all students starting in grade four and with the reform in education that is presently underway, the ESL program will begin in grade three.

The structure of the education system is somewhat different in Québec. Children begin, as they do elsewhere, with kindergarten. After this, comes six years of elementary school and five years of secondary school. Then, if students wish to continue and earn a professional diploma in some field or enter a university, they must attend the cegep (Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel), a post-secondary institution. After two or three years at the cegep, they either get their diploma and enter the work force or move on to university.



At the moment, from grade four right through the cegep, students must study and succeed in ESL. A student who has not passed the Secondary IV Ministry ESL exam cannot receive a secondary school diploma, and the student who has not passed the Secondary V ESL exam cannot enter a cegep. Obviously, students must also pass other courses such as French and history to qualify for their diploma. During their cegep years, as part of the qualifications for the cegep diploma, students must pass two ESL courses.

The same rules apply to students in the Anglophone sector who must succeed in FSL (French as a second language). The programs for elementary and secondary schools, and the exams in which the students must succeed at the end of secondary are set by the Ministry of Education. This gives an idea of the importance the Ministry of Education accords second language instruction.

How many students does all this involve? According to recent statistics from the Ministry of Education, grades four, five and six serve a total of 228,000 students and Secondary I-V, 409,610 students. Students taking the Ministry of Education year end ESL exam in Secondary IV number 72,000 and in Secondary V, 65,000. In grades four, five and six, students are supposed to have at least one hour of ESL a week and in secondary, 100 hours a year.

Schools and school boards are encouraged to find ways to offer more time to students for language study and many succeed in doing so. At the elementary level, 32 school boards offer some form of intensive English (as much as four hundred hours in one year) to certain groups of students. Intensive English is not to be confused with immersion because in intensive, other subjects are not taught in the target language. Instead, students work in English on a great variety of activities, most of which are prepared by their highly-dedicated teachers. Intensive ESL is usually offered during the grade five year.

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In secondary school, approximately 100,000 students benefit from some form of language enrichment. Local enriched programs are offered to 68,000 students while the others work with ESL-LA (English Second Language—Language Arts) or advanced conversation.

Educational Reform

In the program reform currently underway in Québec for all subjects, the emphasis is on having the students become competent learners by developing and exploiting diverse learning strategies so that they will know what to do, as well as how and when to do it. An effort is being made to put more stress on learning than on teaching so that the students will not be a passive audience but will increasingly take on responsibility for their progress.

This fits in well with the goals towards which ESL teachers have been working over the past few years. The core ESL programs have been using the communicative approach, the aim of which is to get the students actively involved in learning from their very first day of class. Grammar is introduced to support learning but is not the focal point of the program. ESL practitioners are an integral part of the new program, which is being developed in close collaboration with the people who will have to use it in the classroom.

Perhaps one of the biggest difficulties, the one over which program reform seems to have no control, is the size of classes. When you have a group of thirty or more students, not all of whom see the necessity of learning a second language, having an active, positive, motivated group is not always easy. Fortunately most ESL teachers seem to be eternal optimists and keep on trying with the result that amazing things do happen in classes throughout Québec. But everyone, from the Minister on down, admits that having smaller groups would make teaching and learning much more effective.

The Ministry of Education is encouraging schools and teachers to make greater use of the technology of the Internet. ESL is one subject in which the Internet could play an important role since it would give students the opportunity to apply the English skills they are acquiring in class. However, everyone is aware that you cannot place the students in front of a computer and hope for the best. A pedagogical approach to Internet use must be developed in order to integrate this learning tool into classroom practice successfully.

Professionals and Parents Advancing ESL Instruction

Several different groups work year round to improve the quality of ESL education. The ESL teachers' association, SPEAQ (Société pour la promotion de l'enseignement de l'anglais, langue seconde, au Québec) holds a yearly convention, organizes colloquia, publishes a pedagogical journal, sponsors research and, in general, looks out for the welfare of ESL teachers and teaching. Two groups of ESL pedagogical consultants, RREALS (Regroupement des responsables de l'enseignement de l'anglais, langue seconde) and RCCPALS (Regroupement des conseillères et conseillers pédagogiques en anglais, langue seconde) have regular meetings for the exchange of information, preparation of material and training. Parents are active as well and have their own association, PPAALS (Parents pour l'apprentissage de l'anglais, langue seconde).

Becoming an ESL teacher means taking a four-year university program, a program which gives students the opportunity to see what is involved in teaching at the elementary, secondary and adult education levels.

There is a saying that goes as follows: "An individual is like a bicycle: to be balanced it must be in motion." Believe me, we have a lot of balanced ESL specialists here in Québec who, because they keep advancing, are making it possible for ESL students and ESL programs to keep moving ahead.

Jacquelyne Lord was for many years a Secondary IV and V ESL teacher in La Pocatière, Québec. She is co-author of the ESL textbook series Flight, *past president of SPEAQ, a member-at-large of the Board of Directors of TESL Canada, a teacher trainer, workshop leader and consultant in evaluation.*

Teaching ESL in Québec *by Alain Bouchard*

I have been teaching English as a second language for five years now to children and teenagers. I teach in a very small town in the southern area of the province of Québec, an area called "Beauce" which is near the U.S. border. You might think that people living so close to the United States would speak English, but this is not the case. I would say that for seventy-five percent of the population, the language of Shakespeare is as complicated as Chinese.

On the other hand, in the last couple of years, interest in learning the English language has grown impressively. A lot of parents now understand that even when they go just a short distance away from home, they find themselves in situations where they need English if only to ask for information. And when the parents discover this, it improves the attitude their children have when they come to class. All I have to do is to put my students in everyday circumstances like a trip, a meal in a restaurant or a business call (all things they will have to do sooner or later) to have them realize how important it is for them to learn English.

Alain Bouchard

As teachers, we have to make them feel that it's possible for them to speak another language, and as long as they can relate in some way to what we teach, they will learn. But again, there is still a lot of work to be done because we have many students who, like their parents, think that they won't ever leave their little hometown and therefore won't need English. So the question is "Who should we teach first, the kids or the parents?"

In order to teach ESL in a fun and lively manner, you really have to put your heart into it. Time and money are also important. I would not want to generalize, but some schools still have to be convinced that ESL is important for the future of our students. If you ask them, they will answer, "Of course, it's important," but when you come right down to it, they are not ready to invest half the money needed for ESL teachers to buy new books and new computer programs to make the learning process easier. So maybe someday we will not only have to teach the parents and the students about the importance of ESL, but we will have to teach the schools as well.

Alain Bouchard teaches ESL in the Polyvalente Bélanger, a secondary school in St. Martin. Since beginning his teaching career five years ago, he has taught at both elementary and secondary levels. He is also a co-writer and musician for an ESL songbook, Homemade Soup.

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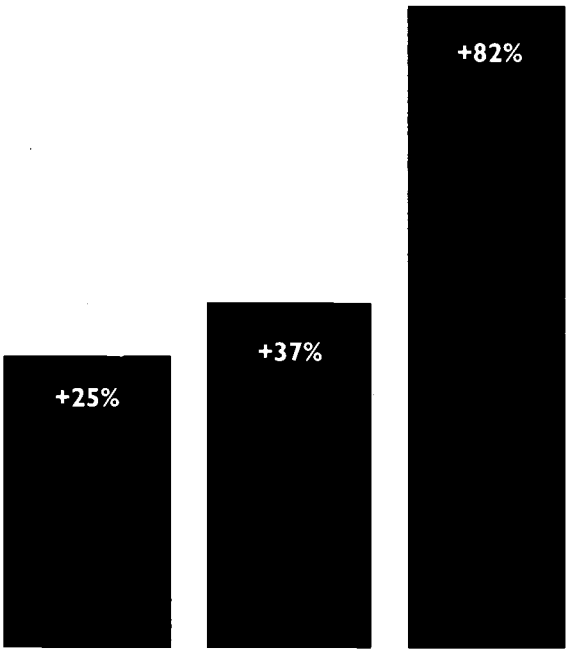

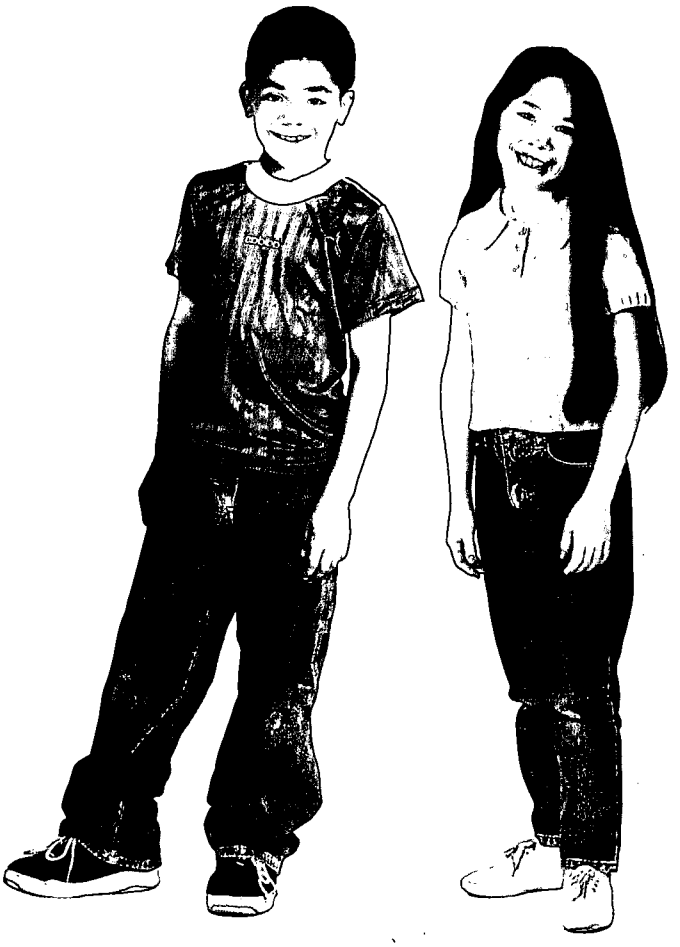

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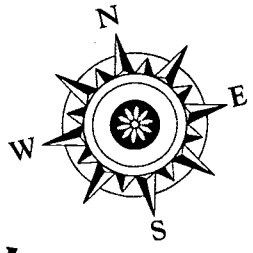

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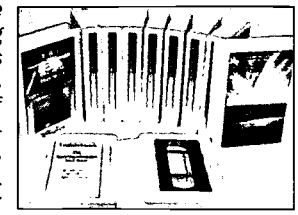

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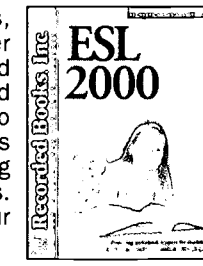

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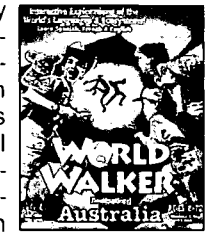

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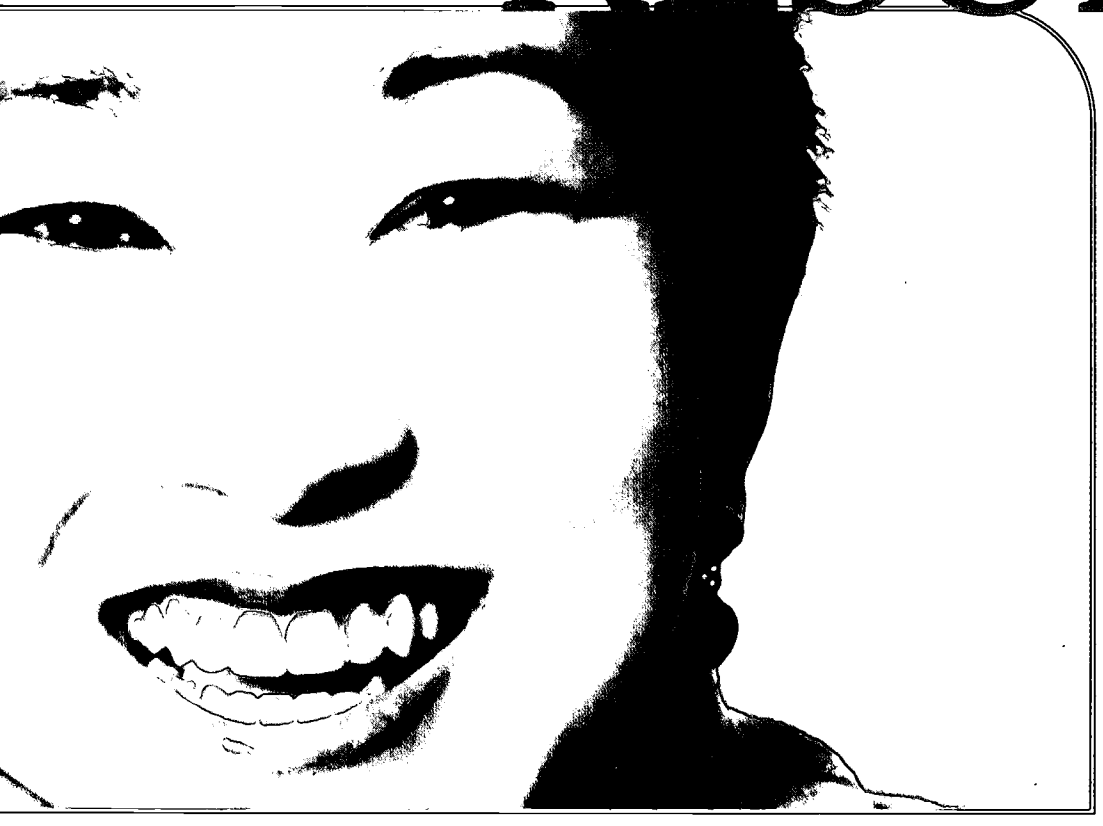

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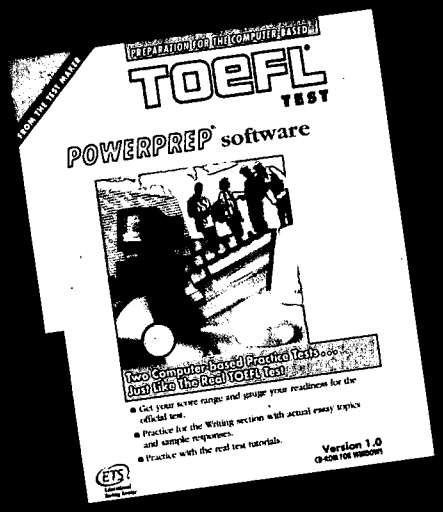

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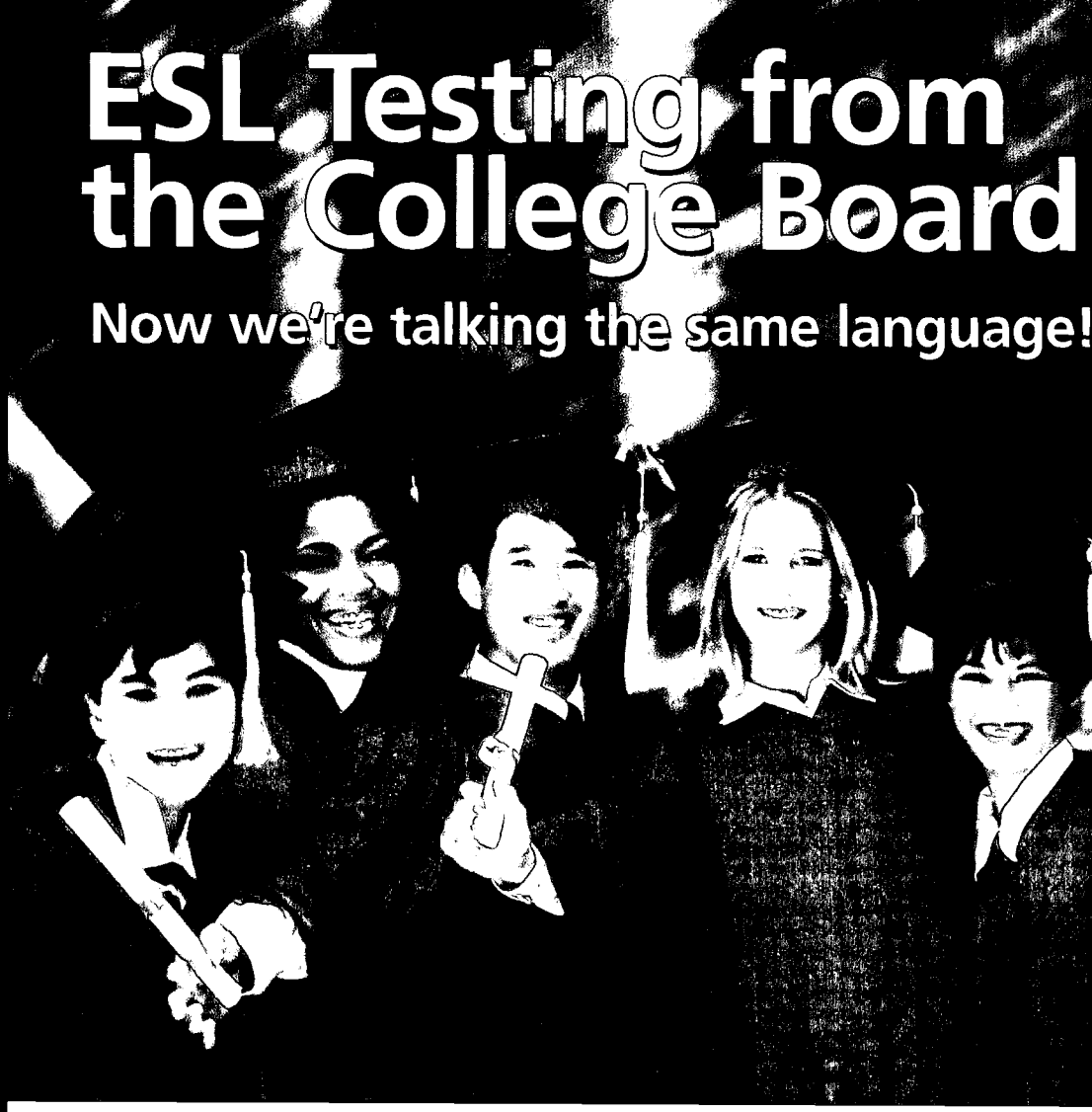

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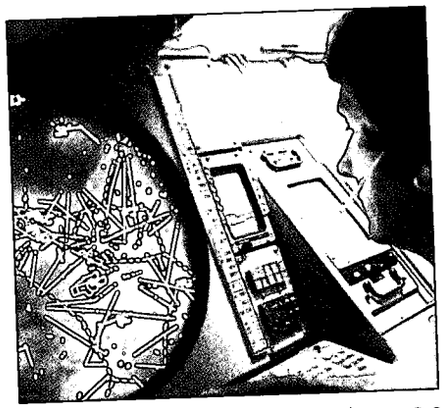

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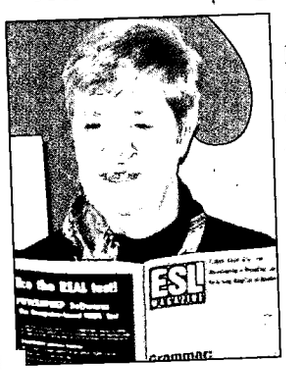

Penny Cameron
Publications Manager at Insearch in Sydney, Australia. She is former chair of the TESOL Materials Writers Interest Section and has written about and taught English in Hong Kong, the U.K. and Australia.

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(lots of links)

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Movies Bring Language to Life!

As the seasons change in many parts of the world, some of us are leaving winter behind and greeting spring and new life in many forms. We know that much of life is closely tied to language. That's why movies are such valuable resources for teaching—they bring life into the classroom and with it, language. Well-known teacher, trainer, author, and consultant Susan Stempleski shares ideas for making the most of the language learning opportunities of movies. She is founder of the TESOL Video Interest Section.

Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. Some form of this surely applies to teachers in the classroom. Anne Delaney and Kathleen Bailey explain how teachers can keep reflective journals to examine how they teach, to improve their practice, and to grow professionally.

There are many contexts in which language proficiency becomes a safety issue. One of these contexts is air travel. Robert Chatham reports on a recent project to move toward standards of English language proficiency for international air traffic controllers, a subject of interest to us professionally and, no doubt, personally.

Many of us have had important mentors throughout our lives and in our careers. Many of us are mentors for others. Michele Hewlett-Gomez shares how Latina educators are influential role models for Latina students who face big challenges in completing their education and pursuing careers. All teachers serving Latina students will gain insights that will help them teach and mentor these women.

Shkurte

We thought our readers would be interested to know that Shkurte, pictured at right, and her sister, who's family was featured on the cover of our Kosovar refugee issue last summer, have continued to keep in contact with *ESL Magazine* as e-pals. Shkurte is a big fan of *ESL Magazine*, and we are big fans of her!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

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The magazine for English as a Second Language professionals.

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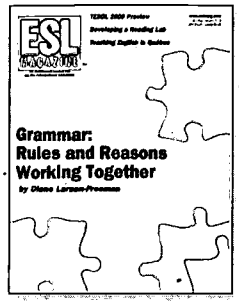

Send letters to eslmagazine@compuserve.com or ESL Magazine, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401. Include your name and position or address.

Grammar

▷ Hats off and deep bows of appreciation to Diane Larsen-Freeman for her fascinating article "Grammar: Rules and Reasons Working Together!" The textbook *The Grammar Book*, which she and Marianne Celce-Murcia authored (1999), is the one which we are currently using in our English Grammar Analysis course at University of Colorado-Denver, and this recent article complements the textbook beautifully. As an M.A. student, learning grammar can actually be made fun, and this article is one of the reasons. As an ESL teacher, a basic, solid knowledge of and increasing familiarity with English grammar enables me to explain some of the reasons for what is done (or not done) in English structures, but perhaps more importantly and interesting, I should be better able to provide examples in the future that make the language come to life in a more productive, understandable and entertaining manner.

—PHILIP N. CARSON
Colorado Springs, CO
fillerup@mgram.com

Reading Labs

▷ I enjoyed reading Jean Zukowski/Fausts' article about reading labs. I hope that teachers in settings with few resources realize how much can be done with self-access centers without fancy technology and huge budgets. Zukowski/Fausts' article emphasized the power and potential of self-access centers. ESL/EFL students are empowered by reading; Zukowski/Faust showed us how we can use our imaginations and creativity to give students the opportunity to read.

—FREDRICKA L. STOLLER
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona

Québec

▷ Congratulations on your article about ESL teaching in Québec (Jan./Feb. 2000). As Ms. Lord pointed out, our situation here is indeed unique. Yet, in many ways we do feel a strong kinship with the international ESL community in that the teaching practices we promote are on the cutting edge of second language research. We are convinced that, in spite of insufficient teaching time, overcrowded classrooms and meager resources, you will find a lot of dedicated teachers all over the province who, like Alain Bouchard, work minor miracles every day. They succeed in preparing their students for the challenges they face in a world where bilingualism is a minimum requirement.

—MICHELE NETHERSOLE
President, SPEAQ (Société pour la promotion de l'enseignement de l'anglais, langue seconde, au Québec)

Technology

▷ I enjoyed your column on the Focal Skills Program in the Jan./Feb. 2000 issue. I'm glad you found that the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee program is still "extraordinárily innovative," a view that I certainly share. The original impetus that I gave to Focal Skills was only the beginning for that talented and dedicated teaching staff. One of the main ideas we tried to build into Focal Skills was that it should unlock the creativity of the teachers, and the UWM staff has more than lived up to that.

—DR. ASHLEY J. HASTINGS
Chair, TESOL Department
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TESOL 2000 Convention Report

The 34th annual convention and exposition of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) was held March 14-18 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The attendance was 8,124 people from over 65 countries. Over 1800 sessions were held on topics related to English language education. The exhibit hall featured 140 exhibitors of organizations, products and services for English language professionals. The 2001 convention will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, February 27-March 3. Proposals for papers, demonstrations, workshops and colloquia are due May 1, 2000. In-progress, poster and video proposals are due August 14, 2000. Visit www.tesol.edu/.

TESOL 2000
NAVIGATING THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Strategies to Promote Family Literacy

In the February 2000 issue of *Education and Urban Society*, Donna D. Amstutz's article "Family Literacy: Implications for Public School Practice" discusses recent literature and research in the area of family literacy. The article includes strategies that have been shown to be effective in promoting family literacy: giving specific attention to cultural issues, assuming a leadership role in promoting parents' involvement in their children's education, scheduling activities at convenient times for parents, opening channels of communication with knowledgeable community leaders and fostering community among parents, planning sustained involvement strategies, and examining current school attitudes and expectations. For more information, contact Corwin Press in Thousand Oaks, California at 805-499-9774 or via email info@corwinpress.com.

Education Secretary Riley Promotes Language Learning

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley spoke at Bell Multicultural High School in Washington, D.C., on March 15, 2000. His speech was entitled "Excelencia Para Todos (Excellence for All)—The Progress of Hispanic Education and the Challenges of a New Century." Following are excerpts:

On the Importance of Languages: "If we see to it that immigrants and their children can speak only English and nothing more, then we will have missed one of the greatest opportunities of this new century, namely, to take advantage of the invaluable asset that helps define a culture."

"Proficiency in English and one other language is something that we need to encourage among all young people. That is why I am delighted to see and highlight the growth and promise of so many dual-language bilingual programs across the country. They are challenging young people with high standards, high expectations, and curriculum in two languages."

On Bilingual Education: "Bilingual and ESL programs are working well in many states toward this goal of bi-literacy, and they will continue to work well if we set clear performance measures and provide the resources needed to meet the rising demand with quality teachers."

"Good, solid bilingual programs can make a difference in helping students learn English and achieve academically. I am pleased that the budget plan that the president recently submitted to Congress for fiscal year 2001 increases funding for bilingual education to $296 million and nearly doubles investment in foreign language education."

On Dual Language Programs: "There are many different and effective strategies for teaching English, from bilingual to sheltered English to ESL. Today, I want to spotlight the dual language approach, which is also sometimes referred to as two-way bilingual or dual immersion education.

They are the wave of the future. In Salem, Oregon, for instance, Grant Elementary School has instituted a high-achieving Spanish-English dual-language program to help both Spanish- and English-speaking students develop language skills in the other language. Our nation needs to encourage more of these kinds of learning opportunities, in many different languages. That is why I am challenging our nation to increase the number of dual-language schools to at least 1,000 over the next five years, and with strong federal, state and local support we can have many more.

Richard W. Riley

Right now, we have about 260 dual-immersion schools and that is only a start. We need to invest in these kinds of programs and make sure they are in communities that can most benefit from them. In an international economy, knowledge—and knowledge of language—is power.

Our nation can only grow stronger if all our children grow up learning two languages. The early school years are the best and easiest time for children to learn language."

The complete text of the speech is available at http://www.ed.gov/.

ERIC

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Seeks Summer 2000 Scorers

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is seeking English as a new language (ENL) teachers to serve as scorers of portfolio and assessment center exercises in the summer of 2000. The National Board recognizes accomplished teachers who meet rigorous standards in their field. Candidates applying for National Board Certification complete an assessment process that involves two activities: 1) the compilation of a portfolio of their teaching practice during the course of a school year and 2) participation in a one-day assessment center activity documenting their content and content pedagogical knowledge.

NBPTS is seeking ENL (bilingual, ESL, and English Language Development) teachers to score National Board assessments. The training/scoring process will be conducted over a two to four week period during June, July, and/or August 2000. Scorers will be paid a daily honorarium and receive a letter of appreciation and a certificate of participation. Scorers are eligible for two graduate credits per week (up to a maximum of 6 credits) from one of five participating universities. Qualified participants must currently be teaching in the certificate area they are applying to assess, hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, possess a valid state teaching license/credential or the equivalent, and have three or more years teaching experience in ENL (bilingual, ESL and ELD).

The NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization governed by a 63-member board of directors. The directors are classroom teachers, school administrators, school board leaders, governors and state legislators, higher education officials, teacher union leaders, and business and community leaders. Its mission is to establish standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, to develop and operate a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet these standards, and to advance related education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools. Call 1-800-22TEACH or visit www.nbpts.org.

Conference Calendar

March

- 2-3 **Spring Bilingual Conference,** Texas A&M University-Kingville, TX. Contact Dr. Gustavo Gonzalez, 361-593-2871.
- 2-4 **Carolina TESOL,** Beaufort, SC. Contact tqmrg@hotmail.com.
- 11-14 **American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL),** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Call 612-953-0805.
- 14-18 **TESOL Annual Conference,** Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Contact 703-836-0774.

April

- 1 **Kentucky TESOL,** Louisville, Kentucky. Contact David Cignoni, 270-762-3422.
- 6-9 **California TESOL,** Sacramento, California. Contact Janet Lane, 530-754-6357.
- 6-8 **Tennessee TESOL,** Memphis, TN. Contact Charles Hall, 901-678-4496.
- 7 **Louisiana TESOL,** New Orleans, Louisiana. Contact Contact Dr. Georgette Loup, 504-280-6141.
- 8 **American U. TESOL,** Washington, D.C. Contact 202-885-2852.
- 12-14 **TESOL Arabia,** Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. Contact Les Kirkham, leslie.kirkham@hct.ac.ae.
- 15 **Oklahoma TESOL,** Tulsa. OK. Contact Tom Rowe 15-1450.
- 15 **TEXTESOL V,** Ft. Worth, TX. Contact Jeana Remington, 214-915-4800.
- 28 **Arkansas TESOL,** Conway, AR. Contact Philip Less, 501-569-3468.
- 28-29 **Illinois TESOL,** Chicago, Illinois. Contact 847-803-3535.

May

- 11-13 **Sunshine State TESOL,** Daytona Beach, FL. Contact Sandra H. Morgan, 352-797-7070.
- 12-13 **Georgia TESOL,** Athens, Georgia. Contact Terry N. Williams, 706-542-7389.
- 16-17 **NJTESOL,** Somerset, NJ. Contact 201-432-0362.
- 17-20 **MidTESOL,** Omaha, Nebraska. Contact Kim Kreicker, 785-296-7929.
- 19-21 **Venezuela TESOL,** Caracas, Venezuela. Contact Lucius Daniel, 582-232-5969.
- 20-21 **TESOL Greece,** Athens, Greece. Contact +01-7488-459.
- 27-30 **TESOL Croatia,** Opatija, Croatia. Contact Tbknez@pfri.hr.
- 28-2 **NAFSA: Association of International Educators,** San Diego, CA. Contact 202-737-3699.

June

- 8-10 **Int'l Conference on Caribbean Language and Culture,** Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. Contact Humberto San Pedro, sanpedro@fie.uo.edu.cu.
- 9-11 **TESOL Academy,** San Antonio, TX. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 9-11 **JALTCALL 2000,** Tokyo, Japan. Contact 703-836-0774. Contact campbell@media.teu.ac.jp.
- 15-18 **Far Eastern English Language Teachers Association (FEELTA),** Vladivostok, Russia. Contact feeltacon@dvgu.ru.
- 23-25 **TESOL Academy,** Boston, MA. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 23-25 **The English Teachers Association of Georgia (ETAG),** Republic of Georgia. Rusiko Tkemaladze. Contact rusikot@hotmail.com.

July

- 2-5 **Australian Council of TESOL Associations and QATESOL,** Brisbane, Australia. Contact Jenny Miller. at J.Miller@mailbox.uq.edu.au.
- 8-9 **TESOL Southern Cone Academy,** Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 10-12 **Uruguay TESOL,** Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact gabo@multi.com.uy.
- 11-12 **ETAI-ISRATESOL,** Jerusalem, Israel. Contact valerie@vms.huji.ac.il.
- 17-20 **Brazil TESOL,** Sao Paulo, Brazil. Contact nadias@yazigi.net.br.
- 21-23 **TESOL Midwest Academy,** Chicago, IL. Contact 703-836-0774.

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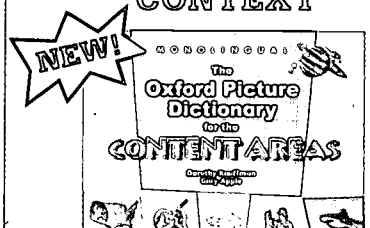
CONTENT THROUGH CONTEXT



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Converging Your TV and Computer

Convergence is often talked about as the melding of wireless telephone, cable television, computer and Internet. For classroom teachers, however, the most beneficial convergence may be between your TV and computer. Newer computers (3-4 years old) have all the ports and software that allow you to watch TV on your computer. Conversely, anything you see on your computer monitor can also be viewed on your TV screen.

Before we talk about "how," let's talk about "why." Maybe you'd like to show your students how some software works, step by step, but your school doesn't have a projection system. Chances are, however, it has a TV that you can wheel into the lab or classroom. Plug in your computer, and what you see on your monitor shows up on the TV screen, too.

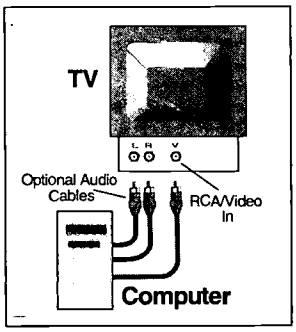

Diagram for connecting your TV and computer.

Now the "how-to." Fortunately for people like me, audio-visual cabling is quite simple: if a plug doesn't go firmly into the port, it wasn't made for that purpose. A yellow plug is for video, red and white are for audio. If you mix them up, absolutely nothing happens, so there is no need to worry about damaging something. Also, most equipment has tiny stamped or printed labels though you may need a flashlight and a magnifying glass to read them. Plugs are "male" or "female," and you will quickly recognize the difference. The male plug inserts into the female outlet.

To hook up a computer to a TV, you need a Video/RCA cable, obtainable at any Radio Shack or computer store. It usually has two male ends. Look for the VIDEO label on your computer's hard drive case, usually over or next to a round port. (On newer computers you can use the S-video port with a short length of adapter cable that usually comes with the computer.) Now find the VIDEO IN port on your TV. Put one end of the video/RCA cable into each port, turn on your TV, and boot up the computer.

The hardest part of this exercise is getting the right input channel on the TV. You will probably have to use the remote control and menu. Usually channel 3 or 4 and Line 1 works, but you may need to experiment. Some TVs have a Line 2 port, and you can select Line 2 input from the menu. If you get a fuzzy picture or the colors are not right, you may also have to adjust the computer screen resolution to the lowest possible setting. Check your user's manual or Help menu if you don't know how to change your monitor's resolution.

Once your TV and computer are shaking hands, you can show what you are doing on the "big screen." Next time I'll describe the hook up to let you (or your students) make a video tape that they can take home to help their parents get started with computers.

Elizabeth Hanson-Smith is an education technology consultant and can be reached at ehansonsmi@aol.com.

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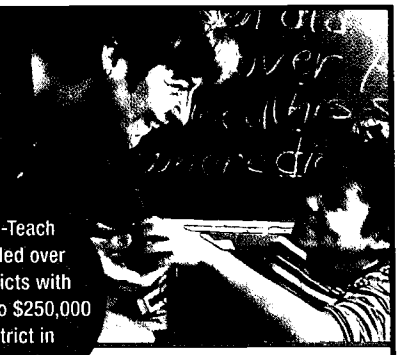

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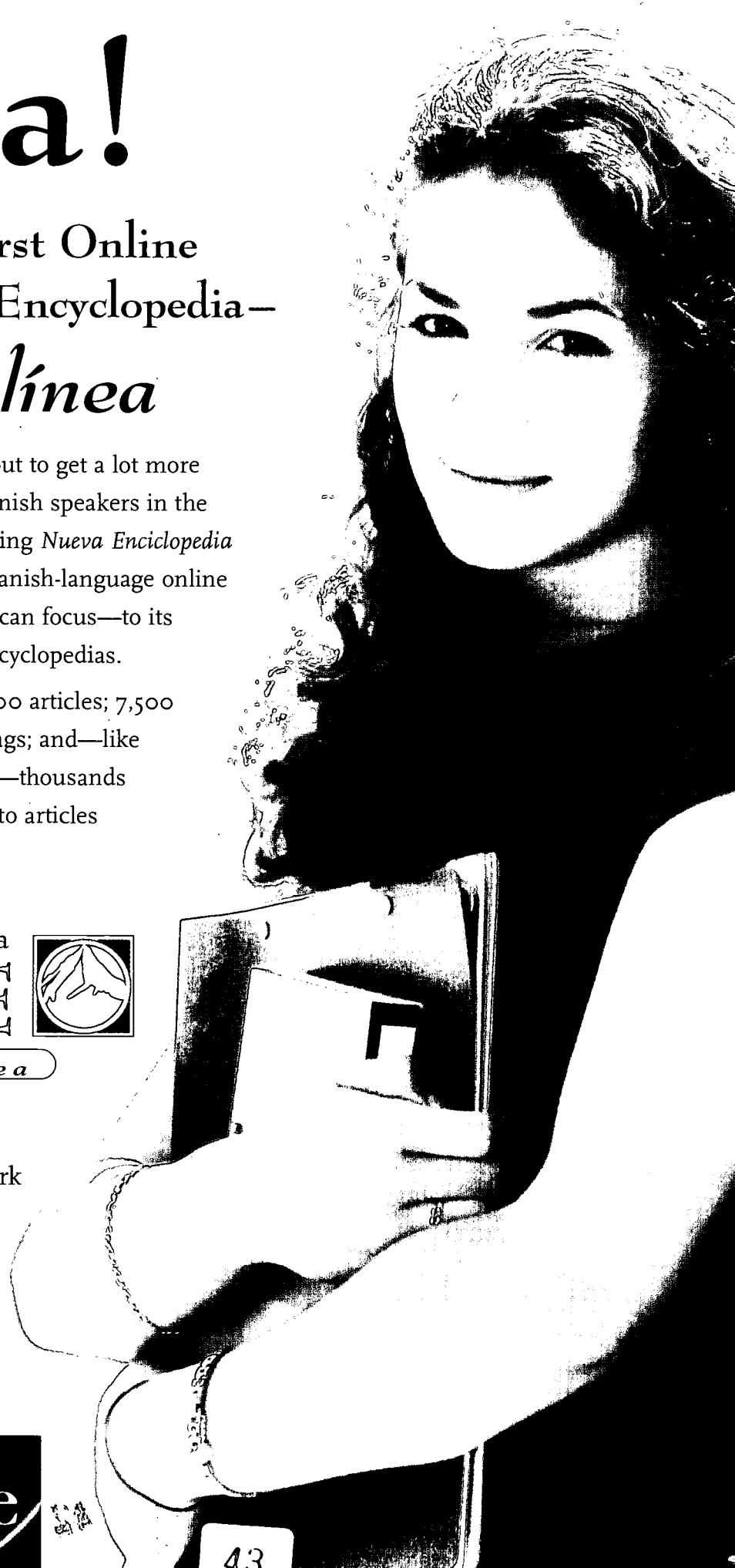

Video in the ESL Classroom: Making the Most of Movies

BY SUSAN STEMPLESKI

ESL teachers have been using video for many years and in many different ways. For some teachers, "video" means the use of videotaped TV broadcast material such as commercials or sitcoms to present language examples and content. For other teachers, "video" means the use of a published ESL video series such as *Crossroads Café* or *The ABC News ESL Video Library*. "Video" can also refer to the use of a video camera by individual teachers and their students. Finally, "video" can mean the use of feature films, what most of us call "movies," in whole or in part, to provide language examples and content.

Movies as Classroom Material

Videos of movies are a rich source of exciting material for classroom listening comprehension and fluency practice. As a popular art form, they are intrinsically motivating to students. Braddock (1996) singles out the realism of movies as their strongest attraction. For example, a scene from the film *Witness* makes the culture of the Amish people come alive in a way that would be impossible with any other medium. Summerfield (1993) highlights the advantages of movies for cross-cultural learning: they speak to the emotions as well as the intellect; they provide an entry point into controversial topics; and they act as catalysts, creating interactions on the screen and, at the same time, in the audience.

On the down side, some teachers school administrators view movies as a trivial form of entertainment that has no place in the language classroom. Other educators may be friendlier to the medium of video but still see it as little more than a Friday afternoon treat. My own view is that movies can be a powerful language learning tool. What matters most is how the movie is used. We need to use movies in ways that will make our students use their eyes, ears and minds in ways not usually associated with the leisure-time activities of "going to the movies" or "watching TV." Effective use of movies in the classroom is largely a question of providing students with tasks and activities that will promote active viewing. To promote active viewing and make the most productive use of movies, teachers may find it helpful to observe the following guidelines.

Guidelines for Using Movies

1. Use short sequences.

Video, particularly movies intended for an audience of native speakers, is an extremely dense medium. A two-hour feature film is just too long and difficult for the average ESL student. To deal with the problem of overload and length, use short, bite-sized chunks that students can more easily digest. As ability levels rise, students can move on to longer sequences and eventually to whole films. For students at the less advanced levels, a three- to five-minute sequence can easily provide enough material for a one-hour lesson.

2. Integrate the sequences into the course as a whole.

Instead of using the movie as an add-on or babysitter—something to use when you've got nothing better planned—make the film sequences an integral part of your course as whole. Teachers who follow a theme-based curriculum will find the subject index in *102 Very Teachable Films* (Mejia et al, 1994) useful for locating films on a variety of themes such as the old West, family relationships, and the Vietnam War. Teachers who organize their courses along structural or functional lines will have a more difficult time. Rather than spending hours previewing movies to find multiple examples of a particular grammatical structure or language function, it is wiser to create activities

in which students use a particular structure or function to talk or write about a movie sequence.

3. Decide what function each sequence will perform.
Movie sequences can be used for a variety of purposes: to provide a focus for classroom discussion, to give students practice in listening or viewing comprehension, to illustrate a grammar or pronunciation point, to provide material for note-taking practice, to present background knowledge on a particular theme, to stimulate interest in a topic, to provide a focal point for written composition, or to illustrate a cultural point. These are just some of the possibilities. In many cases, a teacher will have more than one function in mind. The important thing is that the teacher has at least one good pedagogical reason for using a particular film sequence. When selecting sequences, teachers will find it helpful to ask themselves several questions: What can I do with this sequence in class? What kinds of activities will motivate my students? What activities will benefit them the most?

4. Provide active viewing tasks.
Provide students with challenging activities that make them actively focus on different aspects of the sequence such as the setting (time, place, situation), characters (sex, age, occupation, etc.), plot, displays of emotion, cultural differences, facial expressions, gestures, intonation patterns, vocabulary, mood of the scene, sound effects, music, and point of view. Present activities to students before they view the sequence to focus their attention more effectively on the viewing task at hand.

5. Allow for repeated viewing.
In my experience, students are happy and eager to view a well-chosen sequence again. This is especially true if they are engaged in a variety of activities that give them a chance to master vocabulary, identify characters, and examine other aspects of the film more closely. Once is not enough. Students usually need (and want) to see a sequence at least twice (more often, three or four times) to feel they have adequately understood the sequence as a whole.

Lesson Planning
To take the greatest advantage of a movie sequence, teachers should plan their lessons as an integrated series of previewing, viewing, and postviewing activities. The particular activities teachers use will depend on the video selected and teaching time available, the teachers' instructional goals, and the students' needs, ages, and language levels. The following activities can be adapted for different ages and proficiency levels.

Previewing Activities
Previewing activities prepare students to watch the sequence by tapping their background knowledge and stimulating interest in the scene. In addition to encouraging active viewing, previewing activities aid comprehension of the video. The following are some examples of previewing activities:

- **Predicting:** Inform students of the situation in the sequence (e.g., a birthday party) and ask them to predict the dialogue and behavior of the characters: What are some words and phrases they expect to hear? What are some things they expect to see?

- **Skimming a Summary:** Students read (or listen to the teacher read) a written summary of the sequence for main ideas, for specific details, or both. Ask students questions to highlight information that is important for comprehension.

- **Student-generated Questions:** Inform the students of the situation in the sequence (e.g., a man proposes marriage to a woman) and have them make up questions of their own about the possible content of the sequence.

- **Key Vocabulary:** Introduce or review key words that are used in the video.

Viewing Activities
Viewing activities should help students focus on important features of the story such as character or plot development. The following list of examples is by no means exhaustive.

- **Checking Predictions:** Students watch the video and check to see if the predictions they made in the predicting activity were correct.

Using Movies in the Classroom: Some Internet Resources

▷ **Cinemachine**
http://www.cinemachine.com/
A movie review search engine.

▷ **Drew's Scripts-O-Rama**
http://www.script-o-rama.com/
Scripts and transcripts of feature films.

▷ **The Grammar of Television and Film**
http://www.aber.ac.uk/~dgc/gramtv.html
A list of some of the important conventions for conveying meaning through particular camera/editing techniques, as well as some of the specialized vocabulary of film production.

▷ **The Greatest Films of All Time**
http://www.filmsite.org/films.html
Plot summaries, background information, and review commentary of more than 150 films, an extensive film bibliography, and other resources.

▷ **The Internet Movie Database**
http://us.imdb.org/
A searchable database offering information on over 200,000 movies, TV series, and miniseries: reviews, plot summaries, movie quotes, movie goofs, and more.

▷ **Moviefinder.com**
http://www.moviefinder.com/
Information about where to buy videos of feature films you are looking for, and where and when you can see a particular movie on TV or in a theater.

▷ **The Movie Turf**
http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/9371/script.htm
Screenplays, scripts, transcripts, and drafts for 450 feature films.

● **Focusing on a Character:** Write the following questions on the board: What was the most important thing this person does in the scene? Do you like or dislike this character? What are this character's good points and bad points? Would you act the same way in the same situation? Students may focus on any one of the characters in the scene they are about to watch. After watching the video, they write their answers to the questions.

● **5 W's and H:** Students watch a movie sequence and answer questions about the main points in the scene: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

● **Matching:** Students match the names of characters, places, or things with related information (e.g., match names of characters with lines of dialogue or match names of places with descriptions).

Postviewing Activities

Postviewing activities stimulate language use and encourage students to integrate information from the video.

● **Follow-up Discussion:** Students relate the situation on the video to their own lives or their home country or culture.

● **News Articles:** Students write a newspaper-type article reporting the [illegible]s in the movie sequence.

● **Letter Writing:** Students pretend they are a character in the movie sequence and write a letter to another character.

● **Role Play:** Students role play the characters and situation in the video.

●**Vocabulary Review:** Students review idioms, colloquial expressions, and other words and phrases used in the sequence.

The previewing, viewing, and postviewing activities I have described above are merely options, and the list is by no means all-inclusive. For a more comprehensive selection of possible activities, see Stempleski and Tomalin (1990). Creative teachers will no doubt come up with original ideas of their own. Preparation of original viewing activities takes time, but teachers who have done it agree that it is well worth the effort and results in student motivation and a feeling of satisfaction.

A Final Note

In this article I have focused on the *how* of using movies in the ESL classroom. For a stronger focus on the *what* (i.e., suggested movies to use in the classroom), see Mejia et al (1994). Resch & Schiker (1992) also present a useful collection of videographies organized by theme (e.g., family relationships, fantasies and myths) and by genre (e.g., comedies, musicals, science fiction), and some interesting ideas for teaching students how to watch films.

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What About Video Copyright?

Don't let the FBI warning notice at the beginning of most commercially available movie videos prevent you from using a video in class. The words are a caution against unauthorized commercial use or duplication of the video. U.S. copyright law permits the educational use of original purchased or rented videos if they are part of "face-to-face" teaching activities. The word "original" is important; any duplication of purchased or rented materials is illegal without prior licensing. To stay on the right side of the law, use only original purchased or rented videos.

When it comes to recording TV programs (including movies), the law is not so teacher-friendly. Copyright guidelines allow nonprofit educational institutions to record TV programs, but they must be used within ten school days and destroyed after 45 calendar days. For more information about video copyright, see Copyright: Frequently Asked Questions http://web.mit.edu/cwis/copyright/faq.html).

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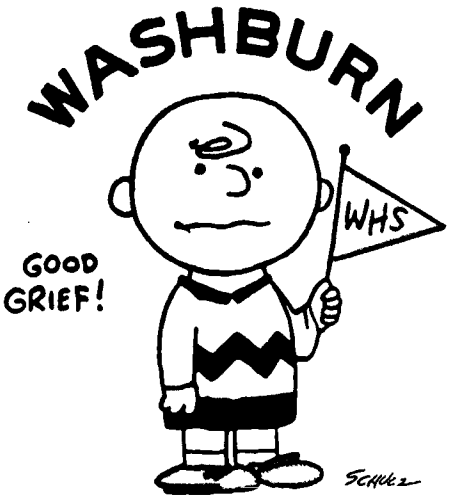
Farewell, Charles Schulz... You were special!

Charles Schulz, the beloved creator of "Peanuts," died recently, but he will live on for many years to come in his memorable characters—Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, and the others.

In the 1950s when I was in high school and living with my parents, Schulz was our neighbor. He lived next door to us in a large white house with an orange roof on Minnehaha Parkway in Minneapolis. He was a very quiet person, and we didn't see him around the neighborhood very much. He spent a lot of time working on his strip. However, when I was a student at Washburn High School, he would always graciously accept our invitations to come to talk to us. He drew us an adorable picture of Charlie Brown holding a pennant with WHS on it which became a kind of mascot for our class. During the winter months, he always flooded his backyard to make a skating rink for his kids and the neighborhood kids. I feel so privileged to have known this very special individual.

Given his immense popularity around the world, it is not surprising that one can find many Web sites dedicated to him and his life's work. I will highlight a few of these sites.



Official Peanuts Web Site
http://www.unitedmedia.com/comics/peanuts/
This site offers a variety of pages. Of particular interest are the following:

- **About The Artist**—This page presents a biography of Schulz with photographs.
- **Profiles**—Read short profiles of the unforgettable Peanuts characters. Then play an interactive game to see how well you recognize them. You are given a small part of a character (e.g., a pair of sunglasses) and asked to guess who the character is (e.g., Snoopy).
- **Link Icons**—You can choose a Snoopy icon and place it on your own Web page. It is a link back to the official snoopy.com website.
- **Game Gallery**—The Gallery has a crossword puzzle and other word games.
- **Coloring Book**—Children can either color online or print out a Peanuts character to color offline.
- **Postcards**—Write a postcard and send it electronically this page.
- **History**—Click on a date along the Peanuts Timeline and learn some facts about the history of Peanuts.
- **Trivia Games**—Have fun trying the interactive quizzes.
- **Window Shopping**—Find an online catalogue of all Peanuts products.

Snoopy's Internet Gift Shop
http://www.snoopygift.com/giftshop.htm#index
The number of Peanuts items available is absolutely amazing. In this online gift shop you can find, to mention a few, rugs, bandage strips, pillows, buttons, pins, calendars, mugs, books, Christmas ornaments, clocks, and bath accessories.

Sally's School Malapropisms
http://www.peanutscollectorclub.com/sally.html
Derrick Bang, a Peanuts fan, has compiled a list of many of Sally's malapropisms. This should be of special interest to teachers of English!

Silver Snoopy
http://www.hq.nasa.gov/osf/sfa/snoopy.html
This NASA site provides information about the Silver Snoopy, an award presented to a NASA employee for outstanding performance.

Charles Schulz was a native of Minnesota, but through his popular comic strip "Peanuts," he touched people around the world. Why did this quiet, humble, and religious man have such a tremendous impact? Why did he appeal to people of all ages and backgrounds? Ponder these questions as you visit these sites. Then bring Schulz and his cast of characters into your classroom.

For inspiration go to the "Peanuts Guide: Using the Charlie Brown Crew in the Classroom" Web site at http://www.teachers.nick.com/supplies/shows/charlieguide.html.

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Teaching Journals:

Writing for Professional Development

BY ANNE E. DELANEY AND KATHLEEN M. BAILEY

Are you interested in developing a convenient "low-tech" way to monitor and improve your own teaching? Are you comfortable writing about your teaching and thinking back over your lessons? If so, keeping a teaching journal may be an appropriate professional development tool for you, as it has been for us.

We are two ESL teachers working in California, but recently we each taught EFL—Anne in Shantou, Guangdong Province in the People's Republic of China for three months, and Kathi at the Chinese University of Hong Kong for a year. Anne is a new teacher who has just completed her master's degree in TESOL while Kathi has been teaching English for over twenty-five years.

While we were in Asia, we both kept journals of our teaching experiences. The purpose of this article is to share what we learned about our own classroom practices by keeping teaching diaries and to explain how we made the entries in our journals while still teaching full-time.

Our Teaching Contexts

First, a bit of background about our teaching contexts when we were keeping our journals: Anne's students were employees (engineers, marketing and clerical staff) in an on-the-job training program in a corporate setting. They were native speakers of the Mandarin and Chaoshan dialects, ranging in age from twenty-two to forty-five. They attended class during their working day or right afterward. The class was considered a bonus for the employees so attendance was not mandatory.

Kathi's students were university freshman and sophomores who were taking English enhancement courses as electives along with other courses. They were eighteen to twenty-one years old. Most were native speakers of Cantonese although there were some native Mandarin speakers and a few Japanese exchange students.

Composing Journals

How did we compose our teaching journals? Anne used her lesson plan as a springboard for reflection and wrote on the computer for up to forty-five minutes once or twice a day, depending on her class schedule. She wrote about her successes and failures, recording both details and her general impressions of the lesson. An interesting challenge in Anne's situation was that she was using a public computer shared sporadically by about twenty people, so sometimes her writing was interrupted.

Kathi also used a computer to write her diary entries although in the past she has kept journals by hand. After every class (or after two classes if they were scheduled back-to-back) she wrote her impressions of the lesson(s)—usually for about thirty minutes at a time although some writing sessions lasted up to an hour.

We both attached our lesson plans and copies of our handouts to the journal pages. In addition, since the purpose of the journals was our own professional development, we wrote our entries to ourselves—we were not envisioning a wider audience. We found that one important practice was to maintain consistency in writing a diary. For example, we both tried to make our diary entries directly after class since the richest and most reliable entries are those written immediately after teaching events. Anne also found that making brief notes during class while her students were writing or doing group work provided her with interesting perspectives on what the students were doing.

What Journals Teach

What did we learn by keeping our teaching journals? Anne learned that she is more aware of her motivations when she writes them down. "I think a lot emerges from the act of actually putting our thoughts on paper," she said. "We are able to see our thoughts rather than hear them, to process what happened in class in a disciplined and thoughtful way, and to keep those emergent motivations for ourselves, so as to better examine and enhance our practices." For example, Anne cites her growing awareness of her frustrations with some classroom management issues, with the students' overuse of their first language, and with student attrition. She feels she wasn't so aware of these frustrations until she wrote them down and that

writing in her journal provided catharsis like a private debriefing.

Also, Anne discovered that much of her writing centered around what it means to be a teacher since being a novice influenced how she planned her lessons and what she wrote about. Nervousness about teaching, overplanning, and underplanning are issues she addressed that emerged from many lessons. Questions about preparedness are important issues for many teachers —perhaps especially those who are just setting out. (See Numrich, 1996, for an analysis of the diaries kept by several novice teachers. Bailey, 1990, also uses various teachers' journal entries to show what they learned about their own teaching.)

Kathi found that even though she was very familiar with the classroom research on language learners' turn-taking behavior, including the research on Asian language learners, she was still having trouble getting her students to participate orally in class. Her journal revealed that she was over-explaining vocabulary and idioms to the students without checking to see what they already knew or could explain to one another. By writing in her journal, she recognized this tendency to over-teach and was able to correct it and resist the urge to explain everything. She thereby turned more of the talk-time and responsibility for learning over to the students.

As the above comments show, the investigative focus as well as the journal-keeping process can be determined by the individual diarist. For professional development purposes, we can direct our own introspective reports, rather than setting out with structured themes or foci, or with formal hypothesis testing or research questions posed in advance. In this way, important themes naturally emerge, including our developing awareness of previously hidden issues.

Recommendations

What advice would we offer to teachers considering keeping journals? First, even if you are disciplined, there can be distractions (both internal and external) that disrupt your writing process. Try to commit to writing at a certain time each day and keep at it or return to it in spite of disruptions. Secondly, some internal resistance is natural. To self-examine can be difficult although in our experience it became more comfortable over time. Writing down our thoughts also yields some distance. We can stand back from what we have written about and look at it from a dispassionate viewpoint. Third, often the subtleties and nuances of teaching remain out of awareness until we write about them. Keeping a teaching journal gives us the vehicle for discovering things we might not have otherwise noticed. Finally, although keeping a teaching journal does require a time commitment, we feel the benefits are worth the investment. We would encourage you to try to continue the practice over time to see what emerges as you write about your own teaching.

In case you would like to know what other teachers have found or how they have kept their journals, there is now a growing body of literature based on language teachers' journals. For example, Joachim Appel wrote a book (1995) based on the diary he kept for six years as an EFL teacher in Germany. Vivian Paley (1997) wrote an article about keeping a diary of her life as a kindergarten teacher, and Sylvia Ashton-Warner's (1963) classic story of teaching Maori children was based on her journal entries. Lee Enright (1981) investigated science teaching by keeping a diary. Martha Clark Cummings wrote about her successes and failures in teaching an ESL composition course to "multiple repeaters" (people who had already failed the course). Mark Brock, Bart Yu and Matilda Wong (1992) wrote independent teaching journals but then read and discussed them together every week for a semester.

We agree with Jo McDonough, who has noted that in investigating our teaching, "a diary alone will not cope with all possible questions, and other methods and data sources will need to be used, depending on what we wish to investigate. There are also many issues that can perfectly well be examined without recourse to a diary. What a diary can do is to help us document and formalize the everyday working experience that might otherwise be lost" (1994, 64). By writing about our everyday working experience and then examining it, we can capture what otherwise might escape us. When events are recorded, they are no longer just

Tips for Keeping a Language Teaching Diary

1. If you are teaching a regularly scheduled language class, set aside time each day immediately following the class to write in your diary.

2. Write your diary entries in a place you like (your favorite desk, outside with a pleasant view, in a sunny kitchen) where you won't be disturbed by friends, students, or ringing telephones. If you are using a computer, save your file often and try not to let people interrupt you while you are writing.

3. The time devoted to writing about your teaching experience should at least be equal to the time spent in class. If you are there all day every day, you will probably not record everything that happens in class, so you may want to focus your diary on some particular aspect of your experience that interests you.

4. Keep your diary in a safe, secure place—a locked drawer, file cabinet, or briefcase. If you're using a word processor, save your journal entries on a secure diskette. The idea is for you to be able to write anything you want without feeling uneasy about other people reading and reacting to your ideas.

5. When you record your diary entries, don't worry about style, grammar and organization. The idea is to get complete and accurate data at a time when the information is still fresh in your mind. Thus the original diary entries sometimes read like stream of consciousness.

6. Each time you write an assertion, ask yourself, "Why?" Why did you write that? What evidence do you have for the statement you just made? Some of the language teaching journals that have been kept to date are full of fascinating but unsubstantiated insights. Try to support your insights with examples from your class sessions.

7. At the end of each diary entry, jot down ideas or questions that have occurred to you to consider later. This is one way to narrow your focus somewhat during the diary-keeping process. It's also a great source of new teaching ideas.

The suggestions above are intended to make writing the diary entries a pleasant, easy experience. Try to set up the conditions for writing so that diary-keeping does not require a great deal of effort. The actual process of writing should be (or should become) almost effortless.

memories but rather a retrospective account. Keeping a teaching journal makes the elusive tangible.

Did the rewards justify the time and effort involved in keeping our teaching journals? For us, the answer is definitely "yes." We discovered patterns in our teaching (both negative and positive) that we did not know existed. We generated new ideas for our lessons, and we vented our frustrations in appropriate, private ways. For all these reasons, we recommend keeping a teaching diary as a valuable tool for professional development, whether you are a new teacher or an "old hand."

Anne E. Delaney completed her M.A. in TESOL at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in December, 1999. She is now teaching ESL at Hartnell Community College in Salinas, California.

Kathleen M. Bailey is a professor of applied linguistics at the Monterey Institute, where she teaches courses in language assessment, classroom observation and language program administration. She was president of TESOL from 1998-1999.

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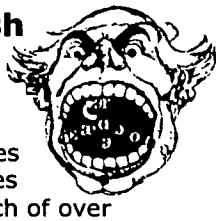

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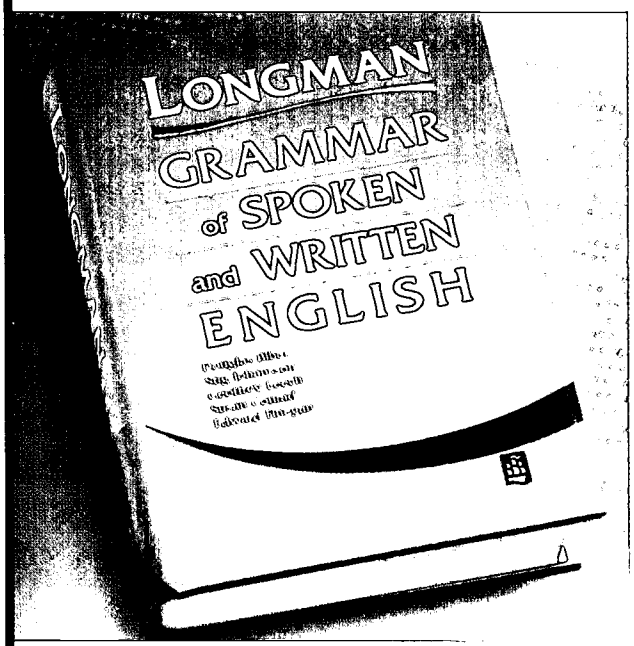

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More Professional Adventures in ESL

As promised in our last issue, I herein present stories of ESL teachers who have followed alternative career paths. The first, Sheryl Sever, started her own company, Cross Currents Communications, in 1995. The second, Jerry Bicknell, opted to work for The Chauncey Group International as a test developer.

Sheryl Sever started her own company for a number of reasons. One was a perceived need for English language and cross-cultural training and curriculum design in corporations. She felt this need was particularly acute in the area of customer service. She took the skills that she already had as an ESL teacher and combined that with her interest in cross-cultural issues and went from there.

Sever has found that there are both positive and negative aspects to working for yourself. She makes twice as much money as she did when she was working for other people. She also likes the empowerment of being responsible both for her own performance and for the growth of her clients.

The part that has been most challenging for her is the constant marketing required to keep the business profitable and moving forward. Another aspect that can be difficult, as Sever notes, is working alone. Others have mentioned this as well. If you are a particularly social creature, you should probably make sure that you have other outlets for that social nature. One possibility is to take on a partner in the business.

Although not working for himself, Jerry Bicknell has certainly gone the corporate route. He now works as a test developer for The Chauncey Group International, Ltd. Chauncey is a subsidiary of Educational Testing Service (ETS), the world's largest test development company. Bicknell spends his days developing Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) tests and related products.

One of the reasons he left teaching was the relatively low pay in the United States and the lack of benefits. His salary is now roughly double what it was previously. Low pay and lack of benefits seem to be common elements in many stories from people who have gone the corporate route, whether working for themselves or for a company. What does Bicknell like about his work now? Everything—from assembling tests to working on non-assessment products.

Clearly there are positives and negatives about going the corporate route, but for some it has certainly paid off.

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teachEFL.com.

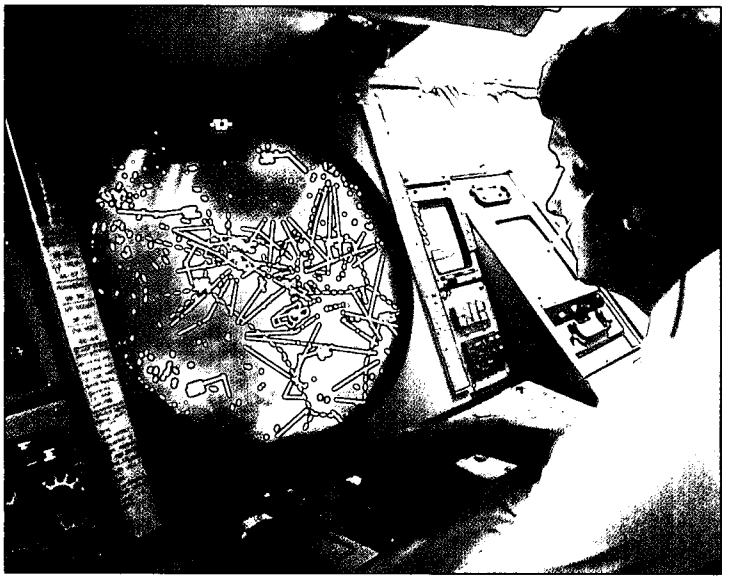
ERIC

Proposed English Standards Promote Aviation Safety

BY ROBERT L. CHATHAM AND SHELLEY THOMAS, PH.D.

As international air traffic expands into areas of the world that have previously been sheltered from air commerce, the probability of encountering an air traffic controller with limited English proficiency also increases. Furthermore, recently televised incidents relate how international pilots flying in U.S. airspace have encountered difficulty or tragedy due in part to their lack of English proficiency.

The following is an actual account of a non-routine event in which the word "traffic" is used by the controller and the pilot in two different ways. The commercial aircraft is on a runway waiting for the proper wind conditions for takeoff. A road crosses behind the aircraft, and vehicle traffic is being held up until the airplane departs due to the possibility of damage from jet blast.



Pilot: "We're holding up traffic here on the highway. Uh, um, how about lettin' us taxi back clear of the runway until we get the winds that we need."

Local Controller: "(Airport) tower, we don't have any traffic."

Pilot: "Yeah, but they're holdin' all the traffic up on the highway behind us."

Local Controller: "O.K., uh, the wind will change, uh, hopefully in five or ten minutes. We don't have traffic coming to (airport) at this time."

Pilot: "O.K."

At the end of the conversation, senses the resignation in the pilot's voice—another miscommunication, unresolved except by time and circumstance. If the controller had a stronger foundation in English, perhaps he would have been able to recognize the two meanings of the word "traffic" and would have been able to correct the miscommunication.

Addressing the Issue

Aviation safety is a worldwide concern, and more emphasis is being placed upon the need for clear communication between pilots and air traffic controllers and even between pilots in the same cockpit. English has been the traditional language for pilot-controller communication, and air traffic controllers must be able to communicate successfully especially during non-routine events.

In November 1997 the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Air Navigation Commission approved a task to develop minimum skill level requirements in English for air traffic control. In August 1998 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), in support of the ICAO task, entered into an agreement with the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) to address the issue of minimum English language proficiency. They agreed to collaborate on a project to propose a minimum standard of English language proficiency for international controllers.

Phase I: Language Task Survey

The first step was to determine what types of tasks international controllers need to perform in English. We identified the major listening and speaking tasks required to perform the job of air traffic control by examining a previous study that included a broad range of tasks that controllers perform. We shortened the list to 173 tasks by eliminating redundancies and combining related tasks.

These tasks were used to construct a language task survey, which was then administered to 108 U.S. air traffic controllers in nine facilities in New York, Miami, and San Francisco/Oakland. We asked the controllers how often they performed the tasks and how important the tasks were. We wanted to rank the tasks according to criticality. The task list was translated into Spanish and examined in Mexico City by six of their controller-managers who eliminated irrelevant tasks and clarified the language on others. The final list consisted of 146 tasks.

Phase II: International Data Collection

In September 1998 a three-person team from DLIELC, accompanied by a Spanish-speaking FAA controller-

manager, collected data in Maiquetia (Caracas), Venezuela and Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The team collected 56 language task surveys, administered 100 Oral Proficiency Interviews to active air traffic controllers, and collected 100 job language radio samples from the same controllers who were interviewed.

The purpose of Phase II was threefold. First, we wanted to include a sample of international air traffic controllers in determining the most critical language tasks to ensure that we weren't isolating U.S.-specific language tasks and to get a broader, more international population involved. All together, 164 U.S. and Latin American air traffic controllers rated the language tasks.

Second, we wanted to administer the Oral Proficiency Interviews (see below) to as many controllers as we could in the time available to begin to determine an international baseline proficiency level. These would later be rated by FAA professionals after minimum proficiency levels had been proposed. Baseline English language proficiency data were collected on 100 international air traffic controllers.

Finally, we wanted to collect samples of the interviewed Latin American controllers as they communicated with pilots on the radio in English. These job language radio samples would also be evaluated later by the FAA professionals. These radio samples were very short—in most cases, less than two minutes.

Phase III: Development of Minimum Proficiency Levels

The purpose of Phase III was to determine what level of English language proficiency each task required and what proficiency the overall job required. To accomplish this, we used three teams of FAA air traffic controllers, specialists, and pilots for a total of 19 participants. We convened at the FAA's Air Traffic Control Academy in Oklahoma City in November and December 1998 and July 1999.

Each team began with a two-day orientation to the project, the Oral Proficiency Interview and the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale used to rate oral proficiency interviews. The Oral Proficiency Interview was selected for data collection and rating because it is the official government oral proficiency assessment tool and has also been used successfully by the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in their language needs assessment. The training emphasized rating the interviews rather than administering them.

After their orientation, each FAA team worked with two DLIELC oral proficiency interviewer/raters. Of the 146 tasks surveyed in Phase I, each team evaluated approximately 80 tasks. They were not rating recordings of persons performing the tasks, just the statements describing the tasks. Each task was discussed one-at-a-time then rated by individual team members and then by consensus on the ILR scale. Also, participants indicated their confidence level in each rating they gave. After the tasks were rated, a proficiency level required for the overall job of air traffic control was proposed, both individually and by consensus.

Some of the tasks evaluated included receiving pilot notice of emergency and determining assistance needed, detecting a pilot or aircraft problem (e.g., oxygen deficiency), requesting information from a pilot on the nature of an emergency situation, approving or denying a clearance request, issuing arrival or departure instructions, or terminating radar service.

Phase IV: Language Sample Evaluation

In this phase, the teams evaluated the current language proficiency of a

Oral Proficiency Interviews and the ILR Scale

The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was originally developed in the late 1950s and has been used by several U.S. government agencies. It is used by the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State, the Language School of the CIA, the Peace Corps, and the Defense Language Institute's Foreign Language Center and English Language Center.

The interview, which is normally face-to-face with two certified raters, lasts from 30 minutes to an hour. It assesses the interviewee's listening comprehension and speaking proficiency and takes into consideration factors such as fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and ability to work through various linguistic tasks. It consists of a warm-up that includes autobiographical information, level checks to assess ability to perform linguistic tasks at a base level, level probes to determine ability to perform linguistic tasks at the next higher base level, and a wind down.

The interview is rated on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale of proficiency. In July 1985 ILR skill level descriptions were adopted by the Office of Personnel Management as the official standards for documenting language proficiency within the U.S. government. The 11-point scale ranges from 0, no functional proficiency, to 5, educated native-speaker proficiency, with plus levels (0+, 1+, 2+, 3+, 4+) assigned to those who demonstrate inconsistent proficiency at the next higher level.

The following are a few examples of the speaking proficiency levels:

- **0 level**—no functional ability to communicate; no topics addressable; and unintelligible speech;
- **2 level**—ability to fully participate in casual conversations; give instructions; report on current, past and future activities; handle situations with complications related to concrete topics such as work requirements, family, and travel; and be understandable to a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners;
- **4 level**—ability to tailor language to fit the audience; counsel, persuade, and negotiate; represent a point of view on all topics normally pertinent to professional needs; and be nearly equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.

99 - 55

small sample of the air traffic controllers interviewed in Venezuela and Honduras. This allowed them to judge the reliability of the proficiency levels they had proposed for the tasks in Phase III. Each team listened to and evaluated 30 Oral Proficiency Interviews and 29 or 30 job language radio tapes using the ILR scale. Ratings were made individually and by consensus. Raters also indicated their confidence level in each rating they gave.

They also rated the interviews and radio tapes for linguistic competence—their professional opinion as to whether or not the sample indicated adequate competence in English to perform the duties of an air traffic controller. They used a 5-point scale to rate each interview and radio sample that they evaluated: 1=definitely not sufficiently competent to control air traffic, 2=probably not sufficiently competent to control air traffic, 3=borderline, 4=probably sufficiently competent to control air traffic, and 5=definitely sufficiently competent to control air traffic. They rated the interviews and radio tapes individually, discussed the individual ratings, then rated them by consensus.

Results

The overall findings were that:

- There was agreement between the U.S. controllers and the Latin American controllers as to the importance of specific language tasks of air traffic control, even when the tasks had been translated from English into Spanish.
- The ILR ratings of the tasks were consistent within and across the three groups of raters, with higher proficiency ratings assigned to tasks related to emergency situations.
- Within the three rating groups, the FAA and DLIELC raters rated Oral Proficiency Interview tapes similarly on the ILR scale.
- On the Oral Proficiency Interview tapes, there was a strong positive correlation between the ILR ratings and the linguistic competence ratings.
- There was a small positive correlation in linguistic competence between the Oral Proficiency Interview tapes and the job language radio tapes.
- The FAA experts were adequately trained in ILR rating procedures, and their ratings of general English language proficiency and air traffic controller English language proficiency can be comfortably used as a basis for a proposed minimum proficiency standard.
- An overall minimum English language proficiency was proposed. However, since we do not wish to preempt or influence any deliberation on the part of the ICAO working group that was established to treat this issue, we will not be revealing the proposed minimum ILR proficiency level at this time.

Implications for Training

By determining the minimum level in ILR listening comprehension and speaking proficiency that would be appropriate for international air traffic control, certain implications for training an existing, experienced population of air traffic controllers can be expected to follow.

First, either a single, standard test of English proficiency that yields ILR levels or one that yields statistical equivalents should be used to determine initial and recurrent proficiency. Second, any English language training should concentrate upon the fundamentals of the language, not just air traffic control terminology/phraseology, in order to solidify the foundation of generic language competence. Third, the training should be intensive, that is, 20-30 classroom hours per week, plus associated homework. Fourth, depending upon the level of proficiency at entry into training, it may take a substantial number of weeks for trainees to progress to the required minimum level, with some language groups possibly taking considerably longer. Fifth, if training is conducted in the controller's own country, a longer time to reach adequate proficiency would be required than if the training is conducted in a country in which English is the native language. Sixth, any training curriculum should include the following elements:

- Abundant practice with tasks that require trainees to demonstrate the ability to participate in conversations about themselves and the world around them, to include describing in concrete terms such as giving instructions and directions, narrating in the past, present, and future, and handling situations with complications (e.g., dealing with loss of luggage, misfiled hotel reservations, or inoperative products).
- Ample opportunities for trainees to speak in paragraphs, controlling sentence structure and exhibiting pronunciation intelligible to native speakers not used to dealing with non-native speakers, including pronunciation practice and emphasis on accent reduction.
- Abundant practice in comprehending everyday English speech with only occasional slowing down, repetition, and rephrasing, such as conversation with native speakers, watching CNN and other English-language satellite broadcasts and reporting on them, and listening to English-language radio programs (including short wave).
- Increasing opportunities for trainees to respond without hesitation to oral questions, to practice speaking while performing other tasks, and to improve comprehension under adverse conditions (such as excessive background noise, etc.).
- Increasing opportunities for trainees, formally and informally, to hypothesize and support their opinions, to deal with unfamiliar topics and situations, to provide abstract explanations, to describe in detail, and to incorporate an increasingly broad range of high-frequency abstract vocabulary and complex sentence structure.

Seventh, any training to proficiency should be supported by appropriate English language maintenance training offering regular and consistent opportunities for controllers to engage in extended general conversation with native speakers of English, plus whatever materials would be deemed appropriate as additional resources. Finally, provision should be made for recurrent testing of proficiency to ensure continued English language competence.

Significance of the Project—A Series of Firsts

This project represented the first U.S. government-sponsored initiative to measure existing English language proficiency in the international air traffic controller population. It was the first project to demonstrate that U.S. and Latin American air traffic controllers rate language tasks similarly in overall importance, the first to demonstrate that U.S. air traffic control professionals can be trained to rate English language proficiency and apply that knowledge to rate English language competence to perform the duties of air traffic control, and the first to address the need for a minimum standard of English language proficiency among international air traffic controllers and to offer the International Civil Aviation Organization a positive, solid proposed minimum standard of worldwide English proficiency for air traffic control.

This project was just a beginning in the examination and treatment of English language proficiency among international air traffic controllers. Further research needs to be done to build the proficiency database, and a similar examination of the other side of the air safety equation, the international pilots, needs to be initiated. Although this research was a beginning, it is an important step toward improving aviation safety.

Robert Chatham is chief of specialized curriculum at the Defense Language Institute English Language Center, Lackland AFB, Texas. *This research was developed under an InterAgency Agreement between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Defense Language Institute English Language Center. Contract No. DTFA01-98-Z-02070. For further information, contact Dr. Shelley Thomas, Project Manager, AAT-30, FAA, Washington, D.C., 202-267-8098*

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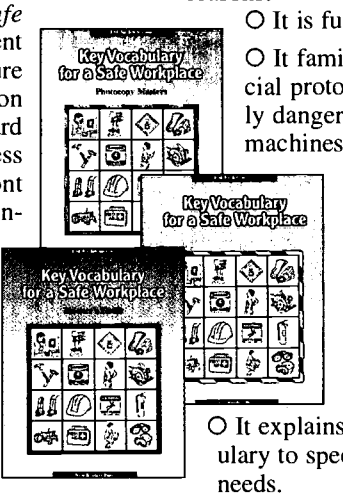
Ramos, R.A., Burnfield, J.L., Chatham, R.L., Henning, G., Thomas, S., & Mogilka, H. (1999). *Air Traffic Control English Language Project (ATCELP) I: Identifying basic English language proficiency for international air traffic controllers* (HumRRO Final Report FR-EADD-99-62). Alexandria, VA: Human Resources Research ion.

REVIEWS

Reducing Risk in the Workplace

Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace
by Harry Ringel, New Readers Press, 2000

Many workplaces involve machinery, tools, or chemicals that can pose health hazards. Workers with limited English proficiency may especially be at risk. Many employers do not train non-English-speaking workers thoroughly regarding safety issues. *Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace* can help prevent accidents and over-exposure to hazardous substances on the job. It is geared toward practitioners eager to address safety issues that confront anyone working in a potentially hazardous environment. The text could also be used in a tutoring situation or by an individual learner not enrolled in any education program. Even at home, many learners also deal with tools and hazardous substances. The target audience is primarily ESL or vocational ESL learners above high-beginning level, as the exercises contain some challenging language and grammar reflecting the vocabulary they will encounter in work situations.



Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace includes a student book, a teacher's guide, and photocopy masters. The book consists of four core units: Workplace Safety Basics, Safe Use of Tools and Machinery, Health and Ergonomics, and Safety Information and Labeling. The fourth unit includes a Safety Tool Kit with information about how to read a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS), a Glossary of Health and Injury Terms, Health and Safety Policies, Lockouts and Tagouts, and Helpful Exercises for the Workplace. The Answer Key and Key Word List (essentially an index) complete the text.

This book is appealing for many reasons:

- It is full of visuals.
- It familiarizes learners with crucial protocol for handling potentially dangerous or hazardous machines, tools, or chemicals.
- It is neatly divided up into short chapters with suggestions in the teacher's guide as to how they can be supplemented.
- Lessons can be used independently, in any order.
- It explains how to adapt key vocabulary to specific job or company needs.
- Many of the exercises are open-ended (no right or wrong answers).

Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace can be adapted for any group by creative teachers and learners. It is sorely needed for the health and safety of those who work with the added risk of limited English proficiency.

Barbara Schloss is an ESL teacher, job specialist, musician, and interpreter who lives in Syracuse, New York.

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Latina Educators:

Building Bridges for Those Who Follow

BY MICHELE R. HEWLETT-GOMEZ, PH.D.

During a recent conversation I had with school administrator Eva Garcia Lopez, we reflected on the success of Latina women in the marketplace and the professional challenges we faced as bilingual educators. I asked, "What has kept you so successful in this demanding field for over twenty-three years?" Her answer, "Simple. Just as in *The Lion King* there was a 'circle of life' and within that circle of life, a circle of love, I also had my circle: great mentors and a strong support system. I have succeeded as a bilingual teacher, administrator, wife, mother, and, most recently, a grandmother because of my circle."

As Latina educators like Ms. Lopez talk about their career paths and what they have experienced along the way, they provide windows of understanding into the lives of Latina students. What they share will help educators assist Latina students in meeting the particular challenges they face.

Building Bridges for Themselves and Those Who Follow

Ms. Lopez, as do many Latinas, grew up speaking Spanish. (Latinas are defined as Spanish speakers from the United States, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and other Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America.) Her "circle of love" included a strong-willed mother who constantly pushed her to achieve, a supportive father, and a tireless grandmother who took care of her two children while she pursued a graduate degree. With the support of her family, she has been able to balance the demands of marriage and family, education, religion and culture. Family support and balancing demands are the keys to [illegible]s in a Latina woman's career.

The successful Latina educator, whether first, second or third generation, is determined to overcome barriers and build bridges to reach her goals. Bridges are structures that create paths over rivers, ravines, or roads. In life, Latinas must create paths over any obstacles that stand between where they are and where they want to be. Their bridges are supported by the vision and guidance of family and mentors. The span is also strengthened by religious values, first and second languages, and native and host cultural heritage. Obstacles that could block a career path become something to be bridged, not the end of a dream.

Many Latina educators enter the profession to help other Latinas overcome barriers to success.

Many Latina teachers enter the profession just because there were difficulties to overcome—they want to teach others how to do the same. As Ms. Lopez said, "I have a sense of pride and honor for having the privilege of caring, determined and loving parents who supported me unconditionally. They played a major role in my decision to give others what they gave me, and I chose teaching, in particular, to be a "bilingual teacher."

With strong family values, Latinas develop a sense of self that enables them to bridge two worlds—the American and the Latino. Rich cultural identities—foods, languages, and beliefs—often work together in a career as a teacher. A sense of pride grows when speaking Spanish and English in the workplace. Latinas learn to balance the differences between two worlds and use their language fluency in social or professional contexts with a clear identity in each.

As teachers, Latinas have an understanding of and empathy for their Spanish-speaking students, whether they are from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, or countries in Central or South America. They help students bring together different dialects, foods, family traditions and historic celebrations. Latina teachers use the formal schooling process to develop a strong foundation in their students' language and academic skills to make sure they are not left behind, closing the academic and socioeconomic gaps and building cultural understanding to help students become productive citizens in their communities. Latinas often refer to their "maternal roots" as the reason for choosing education as a career path and as a reaffirmation of their cultural heritage.

Identity Factors for Latinas

Latina educators are able to understand the identity factors of their Latina students, factors by which they identify themselves: marriage and family, education, language, and culture. They share these factors (except for marriage) with the Spanish-speaking students they teach in public schools. These students, more than ever, have a thirst to be accepted by other students, to succeed academically in

school, and to use their knowledge and home language, Spanish, as a vehicle to learn English.

A host of culturally related issues can interfere with Spanish-speaking students' ambitions. For instance, recent immigrant status, interrupted schooling, age, language proficiency and nonverbal communication skills in both English and Spanish, dress, family conflicts, war, eating habits, and social/attitudinal differences can all present their own formidable obstacles. Because of their own experiences, Latina teachers are able to reassure their students who do not readily "fit" into a school environment that they have a solution to enable their academic success.

Growth and Diversity

Today, the faces of these Latina voices are each different. They represent an array of Spanish cultures and dialects from every Spanish-speaking country—well beyond the United States and Mexico boundaries. Texas is now the home of many Hispanics—second largest in the nation—with more than 5 million Hispanic voices. Nationwide, Hispanics increased 53% in the 1980s just in a five-state region (Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri). Hispanics account for 51% of all U.S. population growth between 1995 and 2000. Now, as the new millennium begins, there are 32.1 million Latinos, which represents over 12% of the total U.S. population. Census Bureau projections indicate not only will Hispanics comprise 37% of the total population by the year 2010 within the five state region, projections are 87.4 million nationwide by the year 2050.

The steady growth of the Hispanic population and the revitalization of bilingualism has strengthened the mission of many Latinas serve as teachers and role models.

Challenges Along the Career Path

Latina educators will play an increasingly important role in helping Latina students build their own career paths. As young adolescents, Latinas learn to use support systems, be it their family, peers, or extended family, to guide them as role models. Teachers often replace the family support system periodically as students' career paths encounter curves or detours in the road and as they struggle with the complex realities of career choices, preparation, and their working lives. Fitzgerald, Fassinger, and Betz (1995) found that success in a woman's career is far more complex than for men because women frequently interrupt education and career preparation to integrate work and family life.

Latinas are no exception. They face a number of complex career challenges they must strive to understand: (1) family influence, (2) language proficiency, (3)

Tips for Teaching Latinas in School

- ▷ Treat them as "us" and not as "them."
- ▷ Treat them as individuals, not as stereotypes.
- ▷ Find out what their needs are as Latinas, not what they should be or what you think they are.
- ▷ Respect their language and culture.
- ▷ Present Latina role models often as examples of success.
- ▷ Discuss what it means to be Latina in this particular school district.
- ▷ Discuss what "success" means to each Latina in class.
- ▷ Discuss what it takes for a Latina to be successful in this country.
- ▷ Accept the significance of immediate and extended families.
- ▷ Overlook, at first, grammatical correctness when communicating is more important.
- ▷ Treat the native language as a friend, not an enemy of learning English.
- ▷ Emphasize practicing English over learning grammatical rules.
- ▷ Do not accept "I can't" as an excuse. Constantly encourage "You can."

CONNECTING WITH PARENTS:

- ▷ Greet parents in Spanish at the front desk to help create a comfortable welcoming environment.
- ▷ Discuss with parents their child's classroom responsibilities and academic accomplishments through frequent phone calls, written notes, and parent meetings.
- ▷ Encourage parents to participate in students' homework by preparing "home backpacks," story kits with a reading selection (e.g., book, tape recorder and assignments) in English and/or Spanish for child and parent to read and work together.
- ▷ Prepare written notes and homework activities using "academic" Spanish with standard vocabulary common to your community.
- ▷ Emphasize to the campus principal and administrators the usefulness of a community liaison to meet with the parents in their home to discuss medical, social, or academic concerns hindering their child's success.
- ▷ Encourage the use of a central translator to edit for clarity intended messages and policies.
- ▷ Respect parents' different levels of schooling and literacy in their native language, Spanish, and in English.
- ▷ Create computer literacy and English as a second language programs for parents.
- ▷ Create cultural exchange opportunities with parents through informal meetings with faculty and/or students.

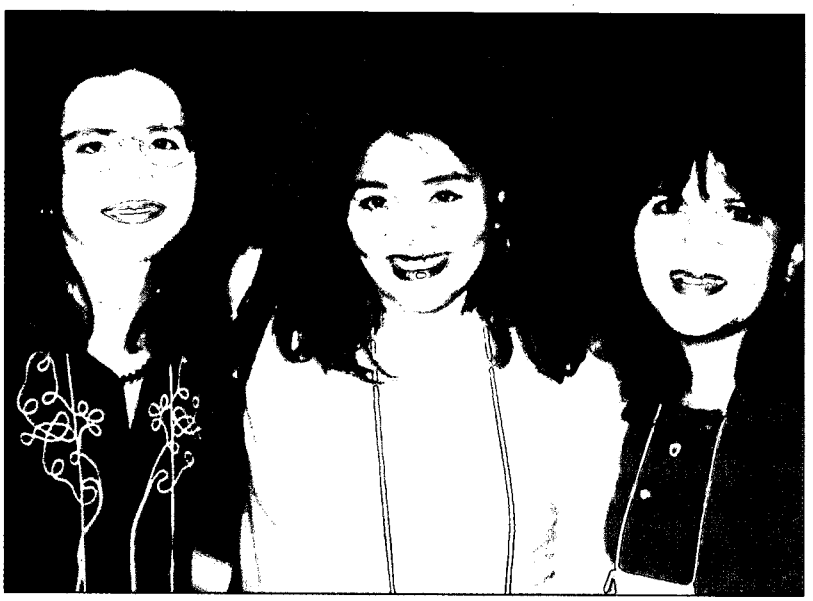
HELPING NEW STUDENTS ADJUST IN SCHOOL:

- ▷ Try to remember that new students, especially recent immigrants, have a vision of the ideal school setting and ways Americans live and act, which may be very different from what they find here.
- ▷ Treat newly enrolled students with care and understanding. Students may be in shock if they have not been to this country before, not attended school previously, and/or no one speaks Spanish.
- ▷ Help the new student adjust by putting him/her with a buddy similar in age and grade level who speaks Spanish and/or is from the same Spanish-speaking country.
- ▷ Talk with the student about his previous formal schooling in Spanish and English in the United States and in his home country, community, home, and friends.
- ▷ Respect the Latino who enters school not speaking or writing Spanish.
- ▷ Informally evaluate the level of academic knowledge in Spanish and in English before making high instructional demands; then align the curriculum accordingly to the language and academic levels of the student.
- ▷ Emphasize the Latina has to be "ready," or adjusted to the new environment, to learn.

interrupted schooling, (4) the perceptions of others, and (5) workplace culture.

Family Influence

For Latinas, choosing a career path often becomes a family decision. Latinas often need approval from their family to pursue formal schooling, of-ten beyond both parents' level of education. Parent's socioeconomic status and beliefs about education impact the degree of schooling pursued by their children. A need to excel academically and obtain a high school and college degree becomes a priority. Latina teachers often teach many adolescent females residing in economically depressed inner cities and communities. These young Latina students need teachers as role models to stimulate their academic achievement and to guide them regarding future employment opportunities. Latina teachers create positive perspectives on career options and stimulate their students' aspirations for future jobs. DeLeon (1996) noted that often students' perceptions about what they can achieve are influenced by higher unemployment rates for young Latina women as compared to white females or males of all ethnic and racial backgrounds. This unfortunate comparison further misleads adolescent girls considering their career options and results in a cycle of school dropout.



First year bilingual teachers Leticia Carrizales, Lori Ann Garcia and Juanita Acevedo will continue to be important role models for their Latina students.

Language Proficiency

For many Latinas, communicating socially in Spanish provides a strong feeling of identity. Language proficiency in Spanish and English differs vastly for each Latina, which, in turn, affects how they perceive themselves and how others perceive them. The degree of Spanish proficiency among Latinas is directly related to the amount, length of time, and level of language used in the home, community, and, in particular, during "formal academic schooling." One of my preservice teachers who is a second generation Latina stated, "Just because I am Latina doesn't mean I know how to speak, read, and write in Spanish. My parents didn't speak to me in Spanish. They wanted me to learn English, so I had to learn Spanish in school, and I still don't know Spanish very well. But I am determined to learn Spanish now from my grandmother and in college so I can be a ...ual teacher."

Young Latinas who enter our schools also have different levels of language proficiency in both English and Spanish. One preservice teacher helping a third grade Spanish-speaking student prepare for the state reading test during an observation in a bilingual classroom noted, "This student is having difficulty comprehending what she reads in English, yet she seems to speak English and Spanish well. I am not sure in which language she is most proficient."

Latinas with strong academic foundations in their first language generally have had consistent instruction in a core curriculum (English, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences) and only minor interruptions in their schooling process, which can be said to have contributed to their academic success in school. This implies that a strong foundation in one language builds onto a second and then a third language; similarities in one language reinforce the familiar concepts that stimulate thinking and curiosity when bridging unfamiliar concepts within a second language. Once a teacher understands how language learning occurs, then she further facilitates an understanding of the school culture for the students. Teachers also need to understand that delays in becoming proficient in a second language, in this case English, can then be shortened by the amount of prior time spent within a consistent curriculum in the student's native (Spanish) language (Collier and Thomas, 1999).

Interrupted Schooling

Often Latinas struggle because they have have to choose between family and completing an education, resulting in interrupted schooling. Beatriz Alvarado, a nontraditional undergraduate (first time college enrollee over the age of 25 or reenrollee with an interrupted degree) who returned to pursue a teaching degree to become a bilingual elementary teacher stated, "If it wasn't for my family, husband and teenage boys, who believe in me, I wouldn't be able to return now or accept a scholarship to go to school full-time, tutor weekly in the schools, and participate in monthly professional development seminars. My husband is a supportive Hispanic, who understands what it means for me to be a teacher. I had dropped out of school and always knew I wanted to be a teacher; however, family became more important."

Ms. Alvarado is not alone. Over 65% of the young Latinas returning to college have interrupted degrees or dreams due to family, and/or financial constraints. Leticia Carrizales, a young Latina single mother, interrupted her education right after high school because of family considerations. She completed her dream of becoming a bilingual teacher three years after she reenrolled. Ms. Carrizales and other young Latina mothers completed their education by seeking alternative employment within their communities, the schools in particular.

Innovative school districts that reach out by addressing the needs of their community members are an important part of Latinas' success. An innovative program such as "Grow Your Own" in Houston, Texas, schools (Aldine and Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School Districts) offers a mentoring program for instructional assistants to work part-time with release time to attend college as full-time students. Latinas who enter this program have teachers as role models who understand the struggles of childcare, family, marriage, preparation for college courses, and after-hours professional development meetings. Ms. Carrizales has often said, "I couldn't have completed my degree without the support from my mentor, my family, or my principal. I knew I couldn't drop out again. There were too many people pulling for me to make it." Other young Latina mothers, Lori Garcia and Juanita Acevedo, completed their teaching degrees as bilingual teachers after balancing the complexities of a marriage, family, and professional life. Yet, a common thread for each Latina was a strong support system with people who understood their struggles.

Yet, even when Latinas do not reach their dreams as anticipated, they still are reassured that they can achieve even with longer detours. A colleague, Norma Hernandez, mentioned, "when making decisions, one's political alliance and historical perspective is necessary. The degree of success is not worth giving up one's beliefs in the American dream—as a country of political freedom and freedom of speech—to identify one's views." Latinas often lack the tools, access and/or knowledge to work through a university or school district system. Positive mentors and a strong network system keep the doors open and reassure Latinas of their values and the right direction to work as a team and as successful teachers.

Perceptions of Others

Latinas understand, through personal or professional experiences, that the perceptions of others (even discrimination) and communication in English in a school environment are important to understand. A colleague, Dr. Anna Pedroza, a campus administrator, reinforced the importance of communication when she described an incident in which two non-Latina teachers removed two second grade Hispanic girls from a school play within two weeks of the performance. When she asked the teachers why, they explained, "It's because the students were not learning fast enough, and their parents cannot buy them the costumes." Dr. Pedroza asked, "Have you spoken to them or to the parents in Spanish?" They said, "No." Dr. Pedroza promptly cleared up the confused and bewildered looks in the children's eyes by giving them the lines and dance step directions in Spanish for their roles in the play. The students then clearly understood their roles and were immediately reinstated to the play, going on to outperform the other students. A subsequent conversation in Spanish with the parents outlined the necessary items and related costume costs, which settled any further miscommunication.

Perception and sensitivity to the students' language played a major role in these students' socialization and acceptance in the school culture. Dr. Pedroza understood how the students felt when the barriers dissolved and the parents' pride blossomed as they watched their children's performance and acceptance by other students. Dr. Pedroza said, "As the oldest of nine brothers and sisters, I often reflect on how my parents felt when we couldn't speak sufficient English in school, and I had to be the translator; I felt that same urgency to find a workable solution when I saw the students' confusion as a result of lack of communication." Latinas like Dr. Pedroza and Ms. Lopez mentor their students as they work t[illegible] oductive solutions.

Workplace Culture

A need for family support and empathy for students carries over into the workplace and may become a professional issue of workplace culture. This empathy and support is often seen when Latinas use words of endearment and physical gestures such as hugs to show a sense of caring and appreciation. Though these gestures are intended to be supportive, they can be misinterpreted by non-Latinas since they are well beyond the physical contact guidelines of most schools.

Support for students and their families or even colleagues can also be in the form of personal time. Latinas often extend time with students to discuss personal lives (e.g., family and children's activities), which is often misinterpreted as a "waste of time," "mismanagement," and even "laziness." One bilingual teacher said, "My principal asked that I don't stay so long talking to the parents and children after school." She said, "I was surprised by the comments and explained to her that my intentions were to make the parents feel more comfortable." Differences in perceptions regarding the use of time and relationships with colleagues can have an impact on a Latina's success.

Latinas with strong support systems are able to appreciate their home culture and language, develop understandings between different communities, and encourage effective communication. These Latinas are ready to succeed in bridging the knowledge gap between their two worlds. Lent and Brown (1996) said that helping Latinas with career paths can be accomplished by facilitating their understanding of (1) the work world, (2) family factors, (3) environmental factors, (4) socialization, and (5) sexism and racism.

In integrating all these factors, Latinas face a special challenge. Enlightened educators know that good teachers do not teach anything. Instead, they create the conditions under which learning takes place. In short, they build their students' learning environment. Latinas must construct their curricula from the cultural materials provided by two different worlds. Indeed, it is a challenge. Still, viewed from another perspective, they have twice the raw material to work with. This sort of opportunity is the plum at the end of the Latina struggle for a successful teaching career. ¡Viva la diferencia!

Michele Hewlett-Gomez, Ph.D., is associate professor at Sam Houston State University, Texas.

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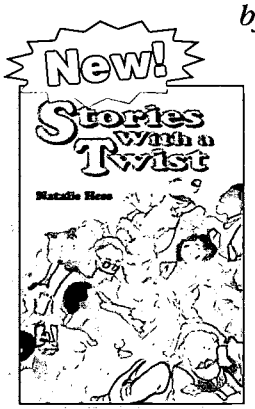

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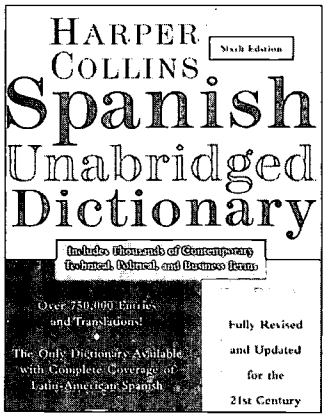

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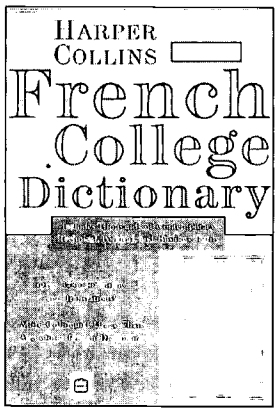

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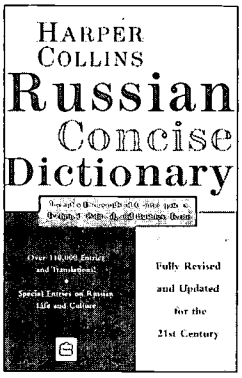

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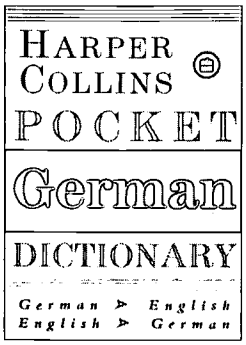

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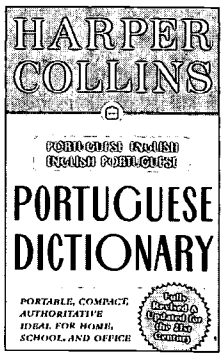

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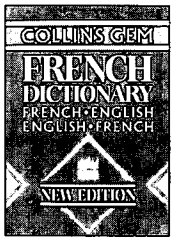

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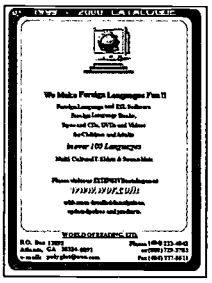

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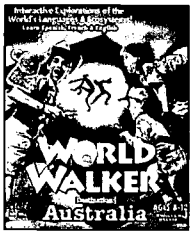

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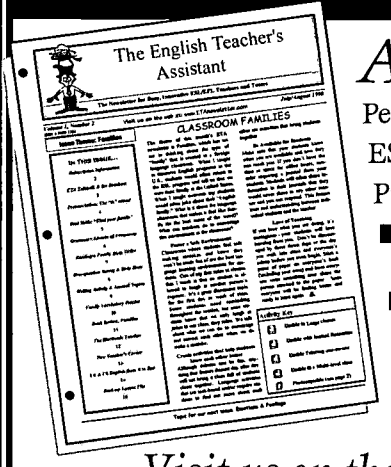

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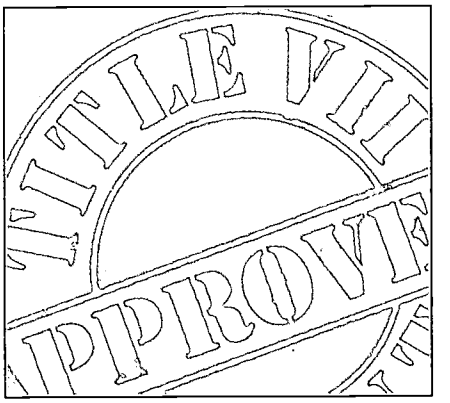

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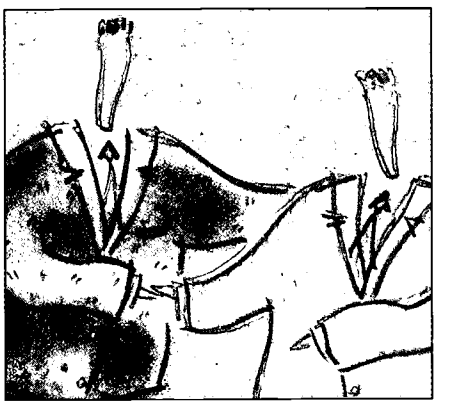

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Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?

Leonor E. Cabrera
National English Advisor, Ministry of Public Education, Costa Rica.

ESL Magazine ONLINE!
www.eslmag.com
(lots of links)

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ERIC

Going All Out!

Once again, I'm amazed and thrilled by the talent and commitment of professionals in the field of English language teaching. The creative ideas, the hard work, the compassion for students—you are making a difference! Our contributors in this issue, like those before, are just few of the talented professionals in our field who are investing their talents daily in the lives of students.

To say that John Rassias is enthusiastic about language teaching is like describing the sun as hot when, in reality, it's a blazing inferno! So is John! His passion and vision are contagious. Read his interview and catch some of his enthusiasm and love for teaching language, which stem from literally a world of experience.

Pat DiCerbo outlines clearly how you and your colleagues can apply for Title VII funding to make your dream program a reality for your English language learners. She's got great tips to make the grant writing process a little less daunting.

From her experiences on both sides of the fence, first as a teacher, now an administrator, Sandra Prager shares essential principals for ESL professionals who want to lead the way in ensuring the success of English language learners in their school community.

Nancy Kaye describes some very exciting and creative ways that teachers at the Global American Language Institute in San Diego engage their Swiss students, who are typically quite advanced in their English skills. These ideas will certainly be valuable for anyone looking for ways to help advanced students use and improve their English.

An article in the *Los Angeles Times* caught Stephen Krashen's eye. A gentleman from Mexico learns Hebrew in the United States while working in an Israeli restaurant—that is, he acquires Hebrew. Ever curious and ever researching, Krashen gets to the bottom of this "success with language" story and shares some challenging thoughts.

Keep up the good work!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

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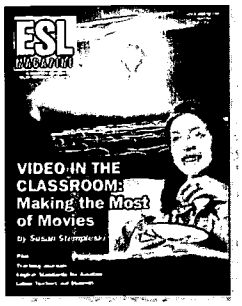

Send letters to eslmagazine@compuserve.com or ESL Magazine, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401. Include your name and position or address.

Video in the Classroom

▷ For anyone using video in class or training teachers in the use of video, Stempleski's article is indispensable. As a teacher trainer, I appreciate her inclusion of Internet resources and copyright laws, something students often ask about. In addition, she offers creative ideas that can immediately be transferred to the classroom. Congratulations to you on a short article that says so much.

—IRENE E. SCHOENBERG
Hunter College

▷ I use movies quite a bit in my ESL classes but sometimes feel I'm not doing as much as I could with them to help my students. I was very pleased to read Stempleski's article. I particularly like her clear, easy-to-follow guidelines and activities. I plan to do more intensive work with short sequences rather than just watch the movie as a whole.

—JAMES WILLIMETZ
New York, NY

▷ The article "Video in the Classroom" was excellent. It was clearly written, "teacher friendly" in the best sense of the term, and full of useful strategies. The side bars were very informative, also. As an ESL consultant who works with novice ESL teachers, articles like this are very helpful when I provide on-site technical assistance. Maybe a future issue could focus on using electronic technology with ESL students as a method for developing academic communicative competencies.

—ROBERT C. PARKER
ESL Consultant, Fall River, MA

Aviation Safety

▷ I was pleased to see the article "Proposed English Standards Promote Aviation Safety." The issue of English language competence in global aviation is very important and will continue to be so as each year more people fly in our international skies. Being intimately involved with aviation and the development of English language standards for nonnative English-speaking pilots, I was glad to see a well-written, research-based, informative, ground-breaking and long overdue article on the topic. Organized collaborative efforts are definitely in order to pursue a resolution to this serious problem.

—MARJO MITSUTOMI, PH.D.
University of Redlands

Latina Educators

▷ Dr. Hewlett-Gomez's article about Latina educators discusses well the importance of family support in the success of Latina students. She also shows the potential of these students to be role models. One of my students commented: "I want to be a bilingual teacher because my teacher helped me so much when I came to the U.S. from Mexico when I was in the third grade." Each of these students has a wealth of linguistic and cultural knowledge to share with students. Now to encourage more Latino role models in schools, too!

—DR. KAY E. RAYMOND
Sam Houston State University, Texas

Teaching Journals

▷ We read the Delaney and Bailey article about teaching journals with great interest for two reasons. First, we are engaged in a TESOL research methods course (one of us is a professor and the other, a student). The readings have focused on principles of qualitative research and research that has used journals for data collection. Second, we are currently engaged in a research project while team-teaching an ESL writing course. The article gave us the idea of keeping teaching journals as part of the data we collect for our project. We were amazed at Tip #3: "The time devoted to writing... should at least be equal to the time spent in class." Our class meets 65 minutes a day, four days a week. We couldn't imagine finding an additional 65 minutes to write in the journal, but we decided to at least keep a journal. To our surprise it was difficult to write all our thoughts and reflections in a short amount of time. Each of us has spent 30 to 45 minutes recording entries. The journals have provided valuable insights into our teaching. We look forward to comparing our entries as we complete this project.

—NEIL J. ANDERSON, PH.D.
—MARK WOLFERSBERGER
Brigham Young University, Utah

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Summer Institute: Teaching English Language Learners

On June 27-29, 2000 a summer institute entitled Teaching English Language Learners: Effective Programs and Practices will be offered at the University of Connecticut. Presented by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE), the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), and the University of Connecticut at Storrs, the institute will address standards for pedagogy and effective programs for linguistically and culturally diverse students. The institute has been designed for preservice and in-service teachers at all levels, school and district administrators, and policy makers involved in bilingual and English as a second language education. For registration information, call 860-486-2005.

International Children's Literature Project

The award-winning International Children's Literature Project links classrooms in different countries for book and e-mail exchanges. The program was developed at the Cathedral School in New York City by librarian Constance Vidor. The project was designed to give students a better understanding of world literature. Participants discuss their favorite books, authors and illustrators with students from around the world. For more information, see the April/May issue of *Reading Today,* the bimonthly newspaper available to members of the International Reading Association (IRA). For membership and subscription information, go to http://www.reading.org/publications/newspaper/rty.htm.

New Online Career Center

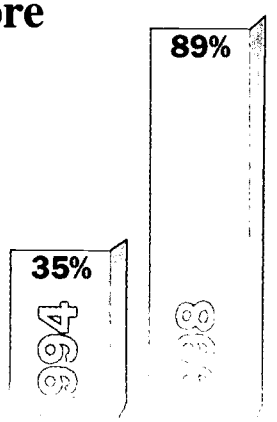
TESOL Online now offers a career center that enables visitors to search worldwide job listings, find out how to become qualified in teaching English, and obtain job search advice. http://career.tesol.edu/

Adult Education ESOL Program Standards Available

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) recently announced the availability of Program Standards for Adult Education ESOL Programs. This document defines at a national level the components of a quality adult education ESOL program. It describes program quality indicators in eight distinct areas: 1) program structure, administration, and planning; 2) curriculum; 3) instruction; 4) recruitment, intake, and orientation; 5) retention and transition; 6) assessment and learner gains; 7) staffing, professional development, and staff evaluation; and 8) support services. Developed by a task force of adult education ESOL instructors and coordinators from all over the United States, the standards reflect the great diversity among adult ESOL programs. The task force sought information on effective program components from adult ESOL programs and literacy organizations across the country. As a result, the standards provide sample measures and performance standards that programs of any size can use to measure continuous improvement, which is a requirement of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. To order, contact TESOL Publications, 888-891-0041.

Internet Access More than Doubled

Between the fall of 1994 and 1998, Internet access in public schools increased from 35% to 89% of schools. The percentage of public school instructional rooms with Internet access also increased during this time period (from 3% in 1994 to 51% in 1998).



Source: NCES

In Memoriam

Rossina Bolaños, the Costa Rican EFL/ESL teacher who was responsible for the Foreign Languages Program in the elementary schools in Costa Rica, passed away recently in a car accident in Honduras. At the time she was working for the World Bank developing an interactive radio program for secondary education, a similar program to the one she successfully established in Costa Rica to teach English through radio to students in rural schools.

Her absence in our everyday professional and personal lives is manifested by the loss of her ideas and actions which always invigorated our common projects and programs.

Rossina Bolaños

The energy she put into the program for elementary schools helped it grow throughout the country, in inner city and rural schools. Her vision for giving young Costa Rican children the ability to communicate in another language gave the privilege of negotiating with the administration to support the growing number of schools where the languages are now taught.

Rossina loved teaching above all. That is why, although she held different administrative positions while working for the Bicultural Center or as program director for the Ministry of Education, she always found the time and energy to teach a group of students. She was delighted by the efforts the Ministry was making through the program, especially when she had the opportunity to be in the classrooms with the students and teachers conducting class activities. Her eyes would sparkle like stars and her heart pound with excitement.

She was a wonderful teacher and educator and is an inspiration for all Costa Rican English teachers and educators. May she rest in peace.

—Leonor E. Cabrera, National English Advisor
Ministry of Public Education, Costa Rica

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ERIC

Listening on the Web

Opportunities for students of English to improve their reading skills on the World Wide Web are abundant. Now the number of Web pages that include audio are rapidly increasing so that students can also improve their listening comprehension. Let's look at five sites that offer authentic listening materials. Most are constantly updating their material on a weekly, daily, or even hourly basis.

HarperAudio (www.town.hall.org/Archives/radio/IMS/HarperAudio/)
The Internet Town Hall has been granted permission by Harper Collins to post computer sound files of the selected literary works of 32 authors. The authors include Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Anne Frank, Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, May Sarton, J.R.R. Tolkien, and John Updike.

VOA Internet Audio (www.voa.gov)
The Voice of America has a variety of audio materials. Those of greatest interest to learners of English, especially beginning and intermediate students, might be the selections in Special English.

National Public Radio (www.npr.org)
NPR has audio files for its most popular programs including Morning Edition, All Things Considered, and Science Friday. One can also order transcripts for the audio materials.

President Clinton's Saturday Radio Addresses
(www.pub.whitehouse.gov/search/radio-addresses.html)
President Clinton gives a weekly radio address, and all of these can be listened to by going to the White House Web page.

CNN Videoselect (www.cnn.com/videoselect)
In addition to news in text form, the CNN Web site offers Headline News and The Day's Top Stories in audio and video.

Software Needed
Special software is needed for the audio and video files. If you do not already have the necessary software, you can download it free of charge by following the instructions given at the site where you need it.

Downloading Time
Of course, downloading text from the Web is generally faster than downloading audio and video files. If you already have the necessary software and a fast Internet connection, however, it is only a matter of a few minutes at most.

Christine Meloni teaches in the EFL Department at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She welcomes comments and suggestions at cfmeloni@hotmail.com.

All of the Christine Meloni's Networthy columns are available online. See the index at http://www.eslmag.com/networthy.html.

Conference Calendar

May

- 11-13 **Sunshine State TESOL**, Daytona Beach, FL. Contact Sandra H. Morgan, 352-797-7070.
- 12-13 **Georgia TESOL**, Athens, Georgia. Contact Terry N. Williams, 706-542-7389.
- 16-17 **NJTESOL**, Somerset, NJ. Contact 201-432-0362.
- 17-20 **MidTESOL**, Omaha, Nebraska. Contact Kim Kreicker, 785-296-7929.
- 19-21 **Venezuela TESOL**, Caracas, Venezuela. Contact Lucius Daniel, 582-232-5969.
- 20-21 **TESOL Greece**, Athens, Greece. Contact +01-7488-459.
- 27-30 **TESOL Croatia**, Opatija, Croatia. Contact Tbknez@pfri.hr.
- 28-2 **NAFSA: Association of International Educators**, San Diego, CA. Contact 202-737-3699.

June

- 8-10 **Int'l Conference on Caribbean Language and Culture**, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. Contact Humberto San Pedro, sanpedro@fie.uo.edu.cu.
- 9-11 **TESOL Academy**, San Antonio, TX. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 9-11 **JALTCALL 2000**, Tokyo, Japan. Contact 703-836-0774, campbell@media.teu.ac.jp.
- 15-18 **Far Eastern English Language Teachers Association (FEELTA)**, Vladivostok, Russia. Contact feeltacon@dvgu.ru.
- 23-25 **TESOL Academy**, Boston, MA. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 23-25 **The English Teachers Association of Georgia (ETAG)**, Republic of Georgia. Rusiko Tkemaladze. Contact rusikot@hotmail.com.

July

- 2-5 **Australian Council of TESOL Associations and QATESOL**, Brisbane, Australia. Contact Jenny Miller at J.Miller@mailbox.uq.edu.au.
- 8-9 **TESOL Southern Cone Academy**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 10-12 **Uruguay TESOL**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact gabo@multi.com.uy.
- 11-12 **ETAI-ISRATESOL**, Jerusalem, Israel. Contact valerie@vms.huji.ac.il.
- 17-20 **Brazil TESOL**, Sao Paulo, Brazil. Contact nadias@yazigi.net.br.
- 21-23 **TESOL Midwest Academy**, Chicago, IL. Contact 703-836-0774.

September

- 15-17 **Panama TESOL**, Panama City, Panama. Contact Carlos A. King, cking@sinfo.net.
- 15-17 **Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic (ATECR)**, Plzen, Czech Republic. Contact Dana Hurtova, hurtova@eryz.zcu.cz.
- 22-25 **TESOLANZ**. The Seventh National Conference on Community Languages and ESOL, Auckland, NZ. Contact Helen Nicholls, hkniche@ipro-link.co.nz.
- 28-30 **TESL Canada and TESL Nova Scotia**, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Contact Sandra Heft, smheft@navnet.net.

October

- 14 **Washington Area TESOL**, Fairfax, VA. Contact Richard Grant, 703-684-1494.
- 15-17 **Michigan TESOL**, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Contact 734-763-6377.
- 27-28 **TexTESOL State**, San Antonio, TX. Contact Dr. Chris Green, 210-444-1710.
- 27-30 **New York State TESOL**, Rochester, NY. Contact www.nystesol.org/AnnualConf.html.

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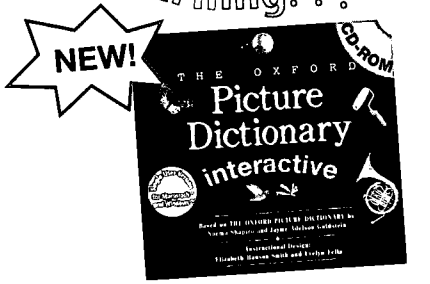

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JOHN RASSIAS

Giving Life to Language Worldwide

BY KATHLEEN R. BEALL

John Rassias is one of the most famous language teachers and teacher trainers in the world. His career has spanned four decades and five continents. Rassias has taught English and other languages as well as his unique instructional methods to tens of thousands of teachers and students. His dramatic techniques have attracted much attention through the years and have been featured in numerous national and international television. programs including *60 Minutes*, *PBS* and the Australian Broadcasting Company's *Four Corners*. He has also been featured in print media including *Time*, *Newsweek* and *The Beijing Review*. He pioneered language instruction for the Peace Corps in the early 1960s and conducted language teaching workshops for the United States Information Agency in Europe, Asia and Africa. He also served on Jimmy Carter's Presidential Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies.

Currently chair of the department of French and Italian and professor of French at Dartmouth College and holder of the William R. Kenan endowed chair, Rassias also lives out his passion and vision for languages and teaching as the president of the Rassias Foundation at Dartmouth. The following is an exclusive interview with John Rassias. We hope you learn from and are inspired by what he shares.

Tell us about your background. What has brought you to where you are now?

I was born in the state of New Hampshire. Then I did a tour for the Marine Corps. I came back, did my college work, went to Paris, did my doctorate degree in literature, and did some acting while there. At the completion of my degree, I had to make a critical choice, acting or teaching? Aha! Put them together—Bam! And that ne into the classroom again. It was perfect combination.

What about your linguistic background? What languages do you speak?

I speak French and Greek and have some ability in a few other languages. Greek is my first language and English is my second.

So, you were also an English language learner?

Oh, yes. I lived in a Greek ghetto. My mother lived to be 100 years and six months and didn't know a word of English. She and my father both came from Greece, so I'm first generation. My father had to learn how to speak English in order for us to live, but not my mother. We all lived in a Greek ghetto; everyone spoke Greek. You had your baker, pharmacist, grocer, cobbler—everybody was there. Why bother to learn this barbaric English language? My father worked in various capacities: he was grocer, he worked in a bar, he had a very small sausage factory. He had to do about two or three jobs a day, and I'll never forget that. He had to leave early in the morning and came back at eleven o'clock at night.

That personal history is one that many share. I'm sure it has helped you connect with people. Now, tell us about your approach to teaching language, which has a lot to do with personal connections.

I take people through a five-step framework. First, I try to get teachers to get to know who they are in order that they can understand the problems students have when they come to class. This sounds very simplistic and banal, but believe me, it's an urgent first step. I have them analyze themselves. This is not a touchy-feely thing—you do this in the privacy of your home. You look at the prejudices you absorbed as a child. This is a crust that locks people in. Then I have them look at the prejudices in language—the ethnic jokes, the racial slurs, etc. Then there is another layer, the second layer, the peer layer, where all these influences are imposed on us, and we have to follow them because we want to belong to the tribe. The third layer is the career layer—the taboos we're told not to do in the classroom—which most often cripples the effectiveness of teaching itself.

The second step, which evolves from the first one, is how do we connect with people? How do we connect with ourselves? How do I connect with you over the telephone? How do I connect with the classroom? I have to make everything play with me. So the topography of the room is adjusted according to what I think is an effective way to reach people. And in addressing people, authenticity and sincerity have to be prominent, obvious and clear because without the truth, everything fails. So I have to be truthful to myself, knowing who I am, and I have to convey to you who I am and what I'm trying to teach with all my many strengths and weaknesses.

The third step is developing a special delivery system. How do I engage the student? What can I show him or her through drama? How can I show him that what

we're doing is a vital thing in the world. That comes through a choreographed approach to drill reinforcement—a bit like Pavlova the ballerina or Mohammed Ali as he "floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee." The choreography is very important. People don't pay much attention to that, but it should be addressed. It's a way to keep people off guard, a way to involve them in the lesson, but also to make a person feel like an individual and that you're talking to him or her.

The fourth step, very quickly, would be to work on stage presence, which for me does not mean how one looks, how one dresses—that's superficial, artificial and worthless. I want people of whatever age or identity to feel their presence and to realize that they have enormous responsibilities and ultimately that they should make their presence felt on the stage of the world.

And the fifth step in this framework has to do with getting people to realize that the emotions are good instruments for instruction, and the senses are the means for acquiring wisdom and knowledge. We don't use them enough, I believe. The emotional quotient to me is as important as the intellectual quotient. I like to say that the best learning is really anti-intellectual. By that I mean we address the gut immediately. Without the emotions, the mind will register an experience, an act, a word, but it won't mean a thing. I want people to feel something with their entire being. That's one of the points I want to get across. We have to learn through our senses, so why don't we sharpen our senses? Nikos Kazantzakism, the author of *Odyssey,* had a simple philosophy. He said, "look, listen, smell, taste and touch all things with all your heart." But it's not look, its *see* what's out there. It's not listen but *hear* what's going on in you and around you. And smell. Smell life and smell death—the stench of death where life should be. This makes people come alive. Then taste—what food we have, what food is denied others. And finally touch, in order to be touched. That's it in summary. That's how I approach language.

Isn't fun also important because it lowers affective filters?

By the word "fun" we mean something that includes everyone, lowers their inhibitions and takes us back to when we were kids. No defenses, no inhibitions, no walls [illegible] e to be penetrated. I think we [illegible] a lot of this by drama. Drama I consider the key to the system along with the emotions and the senses. The psychiatrist Adler I think put it well. He said, "drama is the artistic expression of empathy." What I'm trying to say is the empathy a teacher feels is transmitted and absorbed by the students. It's that harmony, that drive. This is an active participatory engagement, and we are all going to benefit from it. So the drama is important. The emotions are crucial and, again, the lack of inhibitions on the part of the teacher. If the teacher is intellectually or emotionally slow or slow through the senses, then learning will be somehow hindered and slower.

So to me, the whole notion of how do people learn comes from the teacher sharing specifically what they're doing. Sharing, not dispensing information—there is too much of that—but feeling it, the vitality, the language, the dynamism, the explosive nature. All these things have to come through in the lesson. It's holistic, it involves the human touch, that's the whole point. Language is reality, and reality means engagement.

What metaphors best describe the role of the teacher in your approach?

I mentioned Mohammed Ali and Pavlova and their choreography as part of the drill technique. Also, the teacher, I think, should combine, one, the earliest impressions of when language was acquired. I remember in my own case when I started learning Greek. I came home one day a dirty, snotty, beat up little kid from the playground. I wanted a piece of pita but couldn't quite get it out in correct syntax. Now, my mother could have done one of two things: she could have given me a quick karate chop and said "Oh, no. First learn to say it correctly" or with a pat on the head and nice little kiss said, "Bravo, my boy." She did that and I was never able to articulate it until I got much older. I realized that's the trick! You reward effort and performance will follow. And that's what she showed me. Reward the effort of the kid, don't shoot him down, go with him. If a kid makes an error in my class, I hug him and kiss him as gleefully as if he had explained Einstein's theory of relativity in ten words. I reward their effort and get performance, and it works! The kid feels good even though he or she knows they made a mistake.

Two, the flexibility of Mohammed Ali or Pavlova moving around the room gracefully, involving the students with touch, rhythm and dance. Three, I like the metaphor of the basketball player. When they dribble the ball to the goal, they use "no-look passes." Now the no-look pass means to me that I'm looking at one student, concentrating on him or her, but if I move around and pop my fingers together and "pass" to someone else, that person has to catch the pass and respond immediately. There is no dead space in the lecture. There is constant movement.

Four, the other ingredient I would say is giving 150% of oneself—like the orchestra leader who picks up the baton, which weighs two ounces, and sweats like a bull—every muscle, every corpuscle, every blood cell in his body is blazing with activity. It's that driving force. And I think teachers should realize one thing that I picked up years ago: when we look at a teacher, often they are judged by a mechanical efficiency—do this right, do this right, do this right, etc. But there's a beautiful Sanskrit proverb that I have in my office that says, "I do not come to hear your discourse—I come to see how you tie your shoes." And that's what I think addresses the key of authenticity—you're not a phony, you're not putting on a mask, but you're exposing yourself to us. How do you tie your shoes? Who are you? I don't play any mind games. The kids know flat out what's going on. No cynicism. Everything in my classroom is positive man, positive, positive—sadly, what life isn't always around us. And it yields! It yields tremendous, tremendous profit. There's no doubt in my mind about these things.

Are your methods essentially oral language instruction? How are all the skills addressed?

At Dartmouth there are two components. First, it is largely oral because through the years the medium of oral communication has proved to be the best method of acquiring the language. Then as you go up the scale, it changes. We have language I, II and III. Language I is predominantly oral, but there is some writing and reading, obviously—70% oral and 30% other. At Level II it drops to 60% oral/40% other. At level III, it's 50%/50%. You're engaged in the language, culture and everything that preceded that. So it's a progression, but I think oral facility has to be dominant. There are too many courses called "spoken" language, and they do too much writing.

"I think people might also say that it's draining. And it is! But why die of boredom? Die of exhaustion!"

In the summer we do a lot of these 10-day courses—100 hours of instruction—so it's a brutal experience. I call it Club Med for language masochists. The program is an all-out assault on one's sensibilities and it works! They leave and they know and speak the language at various levels of competency, but they are proud of their achievement and they are pleased with themselves. That is so important. Again, it's this all-out attack and full assault on all the senses—it's tremendously energy driven. You have to have a bundle of energy.

I'll give you an idea: just to ensure the energy level, I will hire something like 90-100 instructors to do the drilling in our two 10-day programs so that we have waves of people going into the classes. What I'm driving at is that the more emotional commitment is evident, the more a person is literally dying in the process of teaching in an all out energetic blast, how can someone opposite you not really become involved? A person would have to be a statue. It shatters indifference. Indifference is enemy number one. It's a living entity, that unbelievable sharing process. Right off the bat, a totally authentic human being, aware of strength and weakness, and willing to share life, breath, content, word, language—it's a winning combination! I've never honestly seen it fail. It's a dramatic enterprise.

Tell us more about your drilling techniques.

The drilling is a phase. It's all sequential. First, they see a master teacher. The master teacher is a regular faculty person whose job and whose training is to explain the lesson. To present the lesson, pronunciation, cultural ties, to get the rhythm of the language and all the parts that represent the language fall under the purview of the master teacher. There's a clear presentation of the text, the material, the corpus to be absorbed, from all possible angles, fully exploited. That is followed up by a drill student who is usually a highly trained student, quite competent in the language, who is trained to elicit 65 responses per hour *per student* by using all of these blazing techniques.

Over the years, I've developed some 50 techniques that are applicable to instruction in ESL or any language, for that matter. I did these at TESOL, by the way, as a workshop. And so the reinforce- 's done by the assistant teacher mov- ound the room, blazing around the room. That's what I meant by the no-look pass, too. The assistant teacher will address you, elicit an answer and then immediately, after he or she gets the answer from you, snap quickly—the snap is to indicate the rhythm of the language, the beat of the language—pop their fingers and without warning he or she addresses the next person then continues the rotation. Rapid fire, in and out. And I take them very carefully over the preparation for these jobs. They respond at three different levels: they stand, they crouch, they go beneath eye-level to get answers out of someone. It's a complete choreography. They move around, they listen carefully, they correct appropriately and they encourage, and it's just a lot of fun!

What if I'm not an extrovert. Can I teach this way?

In that case, you could still function because you would benefit, I trust, from the 50 techniques. Not everyone is an extrovert. I admire those who try, and they usually succeed. This is what I've noticed over the years. If you give someone a technique, and the person develops it, makes it his or her own, then there's a sense of triumph that allows them to become someone else. They assume another persona and somehow, though they could be introverted, when they get to the class they go all out. I've seen that happen. It's like getting on the stage and performing another role. Even though on the outside you might say, "Oh my goodness, this person wouldn't do it." But it's like a feeding frenzy. Once they get the reaction of the students, everyone feeds everyone else, and it's that whirling dervish kind of supportive system.

What have people criticized about your methods?

Well, there's always going to be criticism, and thank God for that. It keeps you alert. I've gotten less and less over the past few years. What they might criticize would be this movement, the drill reinforcement part. They might find it to be sort of an old technique but, of course, nothing is new. I think what we try to do is revitalize it, dramatize it, energize it, incorporate new approaches to it, different stratagems for getting people to respond.

I think people might also say that it's draining. And it is! But why die of boredom? Die of exhaustion! I think that's true. It is draining. The master teacher need not do everything that the drill person does. What I suggest master teachers do in the 50-minute lesson is devote 40 minutes in presenting the normal material as dramatically as possible. Then the drill can be shown in the regular class for ten minutes, bearing in mind that we have fifty different techniques to rely on.

So you've taken drilling, the "old technique," and revitalized it.

And incorporated it into a total package. It's not all that one does. The snap itself might have been criticized originally because it seems aggressive. No. They're not snapping to keep you awake or to insult you. The snap is basically to indicate the rhythm of the language. You can set it to a guitar; we've done that. So, Greek has a different beat, so does English. It becomes almost subliminal. The subliminal learning is very important. For instance, if you're in a room and you know that you might be called on at any second, not any minute or any ten minutes, but any second, your mind is functioning every minute of that time. So, the subliminal learning is reinforced by that kind of short pause and the beat, that little "tap, tap, tap" gets into the skull subliminally then surfaces when you are obliged to speak. That's how I see it.

How can teachers see this method in action?

I did a three-month stint in China, and PBS did a film on it, *Rassias in China*, that aired in 1992. I taught some 350 teachers on ESL methodology. It's available from the Rassias Foundation. And then there are other ways of doing it. In the city of New York at Baruch College, they have classes taught entirely this way and the contact is Augusta Malacarne, 212-802-5603. They teach day-long courses in this method. At Fairfield University in Connecticut the contact would be Joel Goldfield, 203-254-4220. And in Chicago, there's Harold Washington College and the contact is Michael Intoccia, 312-553-5849.

We also hold up here summer immersion programs, accelerated language programs, and they're held over two sessions. This year the first term is July 1-11 and the second term will be July 15-25. ESL is taught in the first term. Of course, anyone who is in the area is always invited to come to class. All they have to do is call me a minute before they get here. It's something that's such a joy to be involved with.

Do you think English language teachers should be language learners themselves so that they can be better teachers?

Yes. Emphatically. I believe that language teachers should study another language, look at it, see how it's done, and compare to what is done by oneself. And then look at the techniques that might work well and then realize, too, that it's not entirely difficult nor is it easy. It reinforces one's own convictions about what's being done, and I also believe that it is a good way to test one's own style. I think it should be done. I really do. I wouldn't say it's an absolute requisite for someone to teach a language, but I do believe it's highly recommended.

Do you think you could estimate the number of students and teachers you have taught?

Oh, I think it would go into the thousands. I was involved in the Peace Corps in the early 1960s, soon after it was formed, training people who would go to host countries largely to teach ESL, which was a primary thrust of those early years. We would take college graduates and teach them something of the language of the country that would host them and at the same time give them an approach to a methodology that we subsequently broadcast throughout the world. The associate director of the Peace Corps came here in 1996, and there was a wonderful party that they threw. I'm boasting in a way, but you'll have to forgive me for being proud of this achievement—namely, a beautiful plaque which says, "In recognition of your pioneering efforts to develop the Peace Corps language program, your labor has facilitated president Kennedy's dream of men and women serving overseas, promoting world peace and friendship. The Peace Corps is better because of your grand contribution." The associate director added, "as of 1996 over 145,000 volunteers were taught through these methods. And, John, you're the father of them all." And when you take the workshops I've done in China, Africa, Europe, South Pacific—thousands—I can't even estimate. I think I've been in almost every country. And the workshops perpetuate themselves. It's endless.

With USIA I did an assignment teaching ESL methodology and instruction in Crete, Greece and Turkey. I did an enormous workshop in Turkey with Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks and Americans to see if such a diverse group of people could harmonize and work together. It was really successful and a lot of fun. Last year I was in several African countries—, Burk-Ina Faso, Togo—working with hundreds of teachers in ESL. A government film will be released on that at some point in the future.

Tell us more about the Rassias Foundation.

The Rassias Foundation was created by Dartmouth College in 1985, and it's an arm that allows me to go beyond normal academic activity. We are one of the very few foundations that is totally devoted to the cause of advancing language and communication. Our ultimate goal, believe it or not, is to have enough money so that we could give all the teachers in the U.S. a fellowship to go study language. This need became apparent to me when I served on Jimmy Carter's Commission in 1978-79. I realized we needed to do something to get languages taught in an effective way. How do we do that? I think we need to send teachers back to the country of the language they teach to retool. I want to have the money to send these teachers. And it wouldn't take that much, believe it or not. I headed a commission for the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America to look into similar problems. I've noticed the same thing: people should have money to study language and go back to the country where the language originates. Teachers are underpaid and deserve this luxury. So this is one way to reward them. Other objectives of the Foundation are to continue research in pedagogy, to continue the use and application of technology and learning, and also to codify cultural gesticulations. It's very exciting. It's a big dream that I hope to see realized.

Much of what you have told us can serve as valuable advice for ESL teachers, but what message would you most like to share?

Well, I think the advice I would give anyone would be to go at whatever is being done with an all-out attack, hold nothing in reserve. Let the five senses come ablaze, I mean ablaze, on fire. And I think that students would appreciate that if teachers are authentic. You cannot be a phony and survive in any classroom. Kids would smell you out and you're dead. But if, I believe, you invest in whatever you do 100% of your entire being, soul, body, and embrace language with gusto, I don't see how anybody could miss. It seems to me that the gusto of which I speak is not *carpe diem*, no that's a stupid and selfish cop-out. No, to me, gusto and seizing the moment is to extend the moment and make it rich for others so that if I'm doing something, for instance, I'm trying to show you this thing from a specific angle, I have to show you how to see rather than look. Too much look and listen rather than see and hear is taking place. So, there's one level of passivity that I reject totally in the classroom. I would encourage teachers to be bold, to shatter the crust, blow the inhibitions out. You might be fired but at least you'll have good time. I don't mean that frivolously—it could be done within measure—but I just don't see how one can live without giving everything, which is life itself. The classroom, for me, is virtual reality. It is life itself. You don't pass through it. I do believe that it's in doing that you learn, rather than learning how to do it. There's a big, big difference. We spend too much time having students learn how to do things rather than do it immediately. Do it and learn by experience, by making mistakes.

John, thank you for talking with us. Your work is extremely important and that's why we asked you to speak to our audience of English language teaching professionals. We believe each of our readers will gain something valuable and will be challenged and inspired by what you have shared.

TITLE VII FUNDING

Make Your Program Dreams a Reality

BY PATRICIA ANNE DICERBO

When you have a lot of new students, a lot of good ideas but need help getting a program started, what can you do? If your students are English language learners, you can apply for a Title VII grant. That's what acting ESL coordinators Teddi Predaris and Keith Buchanan did in Fairfax County, Virginia. They tried for, and won, a three-year grant to put together a mathematics curriculum for English language learners with little or no formal schooling. The curriculum they developed is called FAST Math (Focus on Standards in Teaching Mathematics). FAST Math emphasizes learning mathematical concepts through concrete manipulation.

Since that first grant was awarded in 1991, the school district has received three additional Title VII grants. Eighty-two Fairfax County public schools now have FAST Math. The FAST Math Title VII project has helped the district develop a set of English and Spanish curriculum materials for elementary through high school and pay for the professional development of FAST Math teachers. Project goals have been expanded from a basic math curriculum to pre-algebra and geometry, reflective of the high expectations that this Title VII project has for its students.

What is Title VII?

Title VII refers to the federal legislation that provides funding for the education of English language learners in grades K-12, the part of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (as amended) designed to

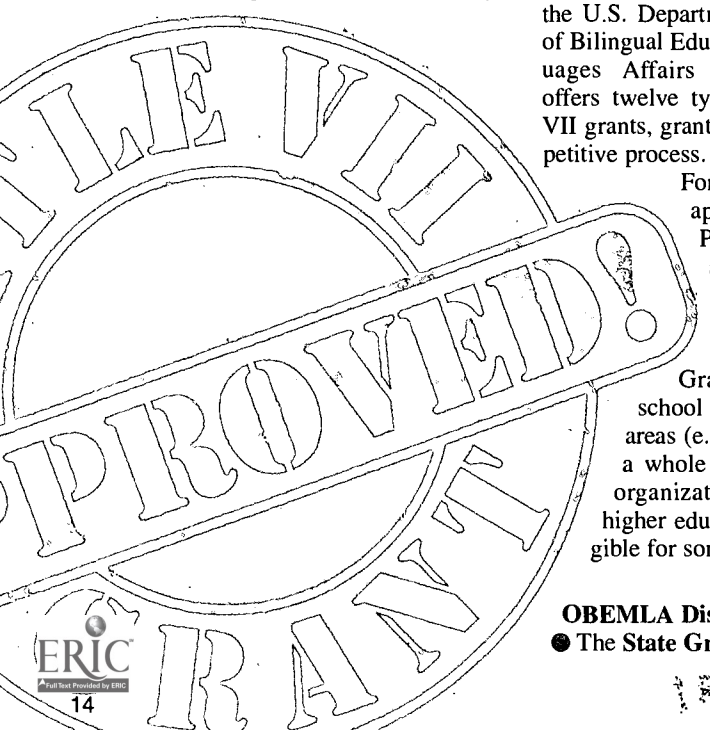
"ensure equal educational opportunity for all children and youth and to promote educational excellence, to assist state and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education and community-based organizations to build their capacity to establish, implement, and sustain programs of instruction for children and youth of limited English proficiency" (Public Law 103-382, Improving America's Schools Act of 1994).

A 1996-97 survey of state education agencies (SEAs) found that, of the more than three million (3,452,073) students with limited English proficiency (LEP students) enrolled in grades K-12, approximately 480,000 participated in Title VII projects.

By the way, the Title VII legislation does not require projects to include native language use. What it does ask is that you use the most educationally sound, research-based approach to language education possible. In some cases, that may mean English as a second language (ESL) or other special alternative instructional programs (SAIP).

What grants are offered under Title VII?

The federal agency that runs the program is the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA). OBEMLA offers twelve types of discretionary Title VII grants, grants awarded through a competitive process. Eligibility for each varies. For example, only SEAs may apply to the State Grant Program, while both state and local education agencies (LEAs) may compete for a Bilingual Education Teachers and Personnel Grant. LEAs are usually school districts, although in some areas (e.g., rural), a school may be a whole school district. Nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education (IHEs) are also eligible for some grant programs.



OBEMLA Discretionary Grants

- The **State Grant Program** funds SEAs to collect information on LEP students and provide technical assistance to LEAs.
- **Academic Excellence Awards** fund LEAs, SEAs, nonprofit organizations and IHEs to implement exemplary educational programs.
- **Comprehensive School Grants** support school-wide reform, while **System-wide Improvement Grants** fund district-wide reform efforts. For either of these, LEAs may apply alone, or collaborate with the SEA, an IHE, or a community-based organization.
- **Field-initiated Research Grants** are available to current or recent Part A Title VII grantees that are planning research on issues related to LEP students. (Part A is the bulk of Title VII, the part that is specifically titled "Bilingual Education" and that includes most of the programs we think of when we talk about Title VII grants.)
- **Foreign Language Assistance Program Grants** help LEAs and SEAs to establish and/or improve foreign language instruction in elementary and secondary schools.
- **Program Development and Implementation Grants** assist LEAs in designing and implementing new bilingual education, ESL or SAIP programs. **Program Enhancement Project Grants** can be used to expand or improve existing programs. LEAs may apply alone, or apply in partnership with the SEA, an IHE, or community-based organization.
- **Training for All Teachers Grants** and **Bilingual Education Teachers and Personnel Grants** are designed to support preservice and in-service professional development for bilingual education, ESL, and other educators. **Bilingual Education Career Ladder Programs Grants** help educational personnel achieve certification and licensure. Consortia of IHEs, LEAs, SEAs and other organizations may apply for these three programs.
- **Graduate Fellowships in Bilingual Education** are awards for graduate studies and research related to the instruction of LEP students. Eligible applicants are IHEs.

How do I apply for a Title VII grant?

The basics for all of these are the same. First, you have to find out what is being

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offered in the grant, what the criteria or funding priorities are, when the application package is due, and whom to contact for more information. All of that is included in the *Federal Register* "Notices Inviting Applications for New Awards." The *Federal Register* is available online (www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html) and in most public libraries. Grant competitions are also announced on the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) and OBEMLA Web sites (www.ncbe.gwu.edu/new/funding.htm, www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA/funding.html).

Federal Register notices will list the grant title and CFDA number (a number based on the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance that identifies the grant program.) This number is useful in finding out more about the grant you are applying for as well as the specific regulations that you'll need to follow. Education Department Grants Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) relate to all grant programs, but there may be others for a particular grant.

The *Federal Register* notice often includes the complete application package of specific instructions and forms. Form ED 424, for example, is an application for federal education assistance that must be filled out, along with other certifications and assurances that have to do with complying with federal rules and regulations.

If the application package is not in the *Federal Register*, you can usually download it from the U.S. Department of Education Web site (www.ed.gov), or contact OBEMLA for information on where to get a copy.

What can I do to write a winning proposal?

Keith Buchanan's advice is to find out as much as you can before you start—about the needs of your school district and the grants that are being offered. "You're much more likely to win if your grant proposal matches the priorities of the grant," he maintains.

Grant priorities are just what they sound like—priorities OBEMLA will use to select the best grant proposals. Some of these may be suggested (invitational) or a means of getting more points (competitive) while others are required (absolute), but all funding priorities should be considered carefully when developing a proposal.

Carol Manitaras of OBEMLA suggests that grant seekers do a "thorough needs assessment and have well thought-out goals and objectives before applying." It's important to remember that Title VII grants are designed to "supplement not supplant" existing resources, she asserts. Knowing what you plan to do before you start makes it easier for you to build a successful and lasting program.

"A Title VII project always wants to lay the groundwork for continuation," Keith Buchanan would agree. "Capacity-building is really your goal—long-range planning."

From what staff say, the FAST Math project that Keith Buchanan helped implement is well on the way to accomplishing this goal. "The project would be sustained anyway," teacher Margo Dias de Pareja asserts. "It would tough for these kids to be in the mainstream without some sort of special program."

Keep these points in mind as you put together your winning proposal:

- **Follow the application notice exactly.** Know the specific selection and scoring criteria and shape your proposal accordingly.
- **Be concise, clear and complete.** Why do you want funding? What does your project propose to do? For what population? How long will it take? How will you know that you have met your goals?
- **Make sure that what you are proposing is what is being funded.** How well do your project goals match the priorities listed in the grant notice? Why is your proposal the best?
- **Use "insider" language in your proposal.** Rephrase your ideas using the language in the notice or the other "buzz words" relevant to your subject.
- **Review, edit, and review again.** Errors in spelling, grammar and math will cost you points. If you exceed the designated page limit, your proposal won't be read at all.
- **Mail or deliver your application package to the designated address before the closing date.** Late application packages are not accepted and you will not be able to send additional materials after the deadline.

Focus on a Title VII Project: FAST Math

Margo Dias de Pareja is one of the teachers trained through the FAST Math project. She teaches FAST Math and reading at Stone Middle School, a rambling, cheerful building in a Fairfax, Virginia, suburb that holds a mix of about 1,250 seventh and eighth graders. Margo's classroom is really a trailer behind the school, but sunlight comes in the clean windows and student artwork and math problems decorate the walls. Student desks are clustered in groups of four in the narrow space. Separate columns on the board list the objectives, agenda and homework for the day.

There's a trickle and then a stream of students coming in for the fourth-period FAST Math class. Many different languages are heard, Spanish, mostly, and English, but many countries are represented here—Columbia, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Korea, India, Iraq, Mexico, Peru. Margo greets each student, chatting with a few as they take their seats.

The class starts with a warm-up question: 10% of what is 15? Instead of just asking her students to solve the problem, though, Margo wants them to describe how they would help someone else find a solution. A few students start writing, their heads bent seriously as they work. Some students are unsure: "Do I solve it first?" one asks. Margo explains again, using Spanish for a less fluent English speaker.

They move on to the main lesson, the difference between estimating and guessing. Margo holds up a clear bag of M&M candies, asks each student to tell her how many M&Ms they think it contains and carefully writes down each response next to the student's name on an overhead. She holds up an opaque wooden box and goes through the same process. "That's the difference between an estimate and a guess," Margo explains. Each student gets a bag of M&Ms first to estimate and then to count. Eating the M&Ms is reserved for after class.

"The FAST Math program really meets the needs of these students," Margo emphasizes. "There's a perception that math is just numbers, but it's also reasoning...and vocabulary."

Margo's students seem to agree with this appraisal of their FAST Math class. "Math is important for life," 13-year-old Surbhi says with a serious expression. "And for every job," adds Margaret, an impish 12-year-old from Ghana. Although 14-year-old Maria would rather take science than math, she finds FAST Math more interesting and understandable than math class in Peru because "my teacher explains well and answers questions." Her remark prompts the other two to talk about how their teacher will stay after school to help them with their math, something they aren't used to. "In India," Surbhi explains, "you have to pay for extra help."

Recent Title VII Projects

Academic Excellence Awards
Project SEA (Sheltered English Approach)/SWELL, Glendale Unified School District, CA

Project SEA serves the needs of LEP students in grades 4, 5, and 6 by developing sheltered curricula for social science and science and providing intensive staff development in sheltered strategies and cooperative learning.

Comprehensive School Grants
Project AZEVADA (Achieving a Zenith of Excellence, Vision, Academics and Diversity for Azevada), Fremont Unified School District, CA

The goal of Project AZEVADA is to redesign the bilingual education program at Azevada Elementary School into a two-way immersion program that supports full bilingualism and biliteracy in Spanish and English, oral fluency in a third language, multicultural proficiency, and content learning.

Program Development and Implementation Grants
Project CARE (Computer Assisted Reading Enrichment), Osage County Interlocal Cooperative School District, OK

Project Care focuses on developing the literacy and critical thinking skills of LEP students in grades 1 through 8 through computer-assisted instruction, small group learning, and ongoing assessment practices.

Bilingual Education Teachers and Personnel Grants
Project ESCALERA, Elgin Community College and William Rainey Harper College, IL

Project ESCALERA funds bilingual staff and parents who want to get an associates degree (to be a teacher's aide), bachelor's degree in education with bilingual endorsement, teaching certification with bilingual endorsement, special education endorsement, or reading endorsement.

Graduate Fellowships in Bilingual Education
Project CLASS (Chinese Language Achievement through Sequential Study) University of Hawai'i at Manoa, HI

Project CLASS is designed to establish a model program for the study of Chinese language (Mandarin) and culture, develop a sequential Chinese language program for elementary through middle and high schools, create a community networking system to promote Chinese language and culture in Hawaii schools, and provide professional development [illegible]ese foreign language teachers [illegible]ated staff.

How do I get help with my Title VII proposal?

"Grant proposal writers deserve some models," Keith Buchanan emphasizes, "models posted on the Web, exemplary grant applications and why they were rated as they were."

Although there are not a lot of model proposals on the Web, there are quite a few online resources and other sources of help. You can contact the person listed in the application package with your questions. You can go to the U.S. Department of Education, OBEMLA or NCBE Web sites. NCBE has a special section of online information about current funding opportunities and guides for writing a grant proposal.

What happens once I turn in my proposal?

First, your application will be given a "PR" number (an award number) and sent to the appropriate program for review. Then, your application will be screened to make sure it is complete, and that the basic proposal guidelines have been followed. Be careful because incomplete or ineligible application packages will not be considered. If you make it through this initial screening, a panel of experts from inside and outside the federal government will review and score your application based on the funding criteria published in the Federal Register or the selection criteria published in EDGAR. Your application will be ranked by panel score—the average score an application has received by all the reviewers. If your application scores high enough to be considered for funding, it will be put through a cost analysis. You may have to provide verbal or written clarification of your budget or other pieces of your proposal. Recommended proposals are then sent to an authorized person (usually the regional grants administrator) for final approval. Remember that you are not guaranteed funding until you receive an official Grant Award Notification signed by an authorized person.

How long does it take to find out?

Typically, you can expect it to take from four to six months to have your proposal approved or denied. OBEMLA and the rest of the U.S. Department of Education are moving toward an online process for applications, something that is expected to shorten the process. Right now, only OBEMLA's System-wide Improvement Grants program applications are being accepted online.

What happens after notification?

If you've won, great! Breathe a sigh of relief and then start the real work. You'll have to show progress to get continued funding. Keep your PR number handy—you'll need it when you submit reports or ask questions.

If you didn't get funded this time, make sure you talk it over with your proposal team and OBEMLA staff. Ask OBEMLA for a copy of the reviewer's comments. There is always a new idea, a new proposal.

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The ESEA and its Title VII program is up for reauthorization by Congress this year.

Patricia Anne DiCerbo is a research associate with the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education at The George Washington University.

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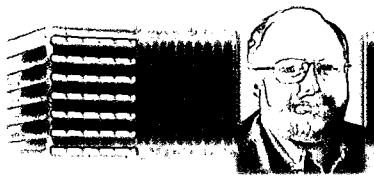

Thomas Nixon's

Employment Focus

ESL Teaching Jobs With the Government

While some people are willing to travel anywhere at a moment's notice with little more than a toothbrush and a change of socks, some teachers prefer the stability of a connection to some governmental organization. There are a number of organizations that hire teachers for positions here and abroad.

The Peace Corps is arguably the best known of such organizations. They recruit teachers each year for various positions around the world. The positive aspect of such positions is that Peace Corps experience is well respected and a number of people now in the upper echelon of ESL-dom in the United States have been volunteers. Add to that the fact you can make a real difference in people's lives, and it seems like a win-win situation. As a volunteer you are paid a salary commensurate with local wages in your country of assignment. However, you are also given a relocation allowance that is paid at the end of service. You can reach the Peace Corps at 1-800-424-8580 or on the Web at www.peacecorps.gov.

The U.S. Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) are located in some places where it is more difficult for ESL teachers to find legal employment (e.g., Scotland, Spain, etc.). To be happy in one of these schools, you should be comfortable working with military people within a military environment. If you don't like what the military does, then this would be a very difficult working environment for you. Typically, they require K-12 certification and a minimum of two years of experience. This program is on the Web at www.dodea.osd.mil. It's important to mention that the Department of Defense also runs schools within the United States. That information is also available on the Web site.

The Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange Program is available for elementary school through university teachers. There are several requirements for the program. You must already have a full-time teaching or administrative position, participation must be cleared through your administration, and you must be in at least your third year of teaching or administration. The advantage to this program is the cachet that comes from being a Fulbright program, a name that carries great weight. Contact Fulbright at 202-314-3520.

Obviously, these are cursory examinations of these programs and there are other governmental programs as well. Stay tuned to future columns for more in-depth analysis of these and other programs.

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teachEFL.com.

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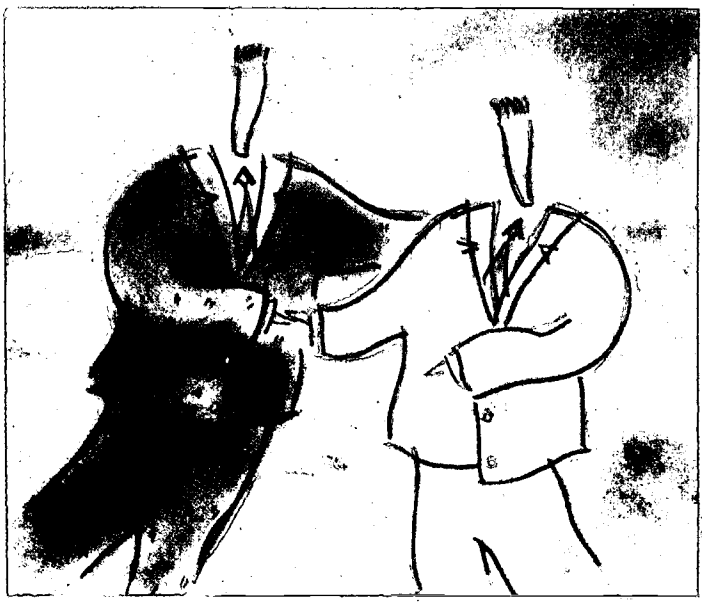
The College Board

Representing ESL Students in the School Community

BY SANDRA PRAGER

ESL teachers regularly face situations in which students are not dealt with appropriately, whether intentionally or inadvertently. For example, how many ESL teachers have faced a a situation in which testing accommodations were viewed as inconveniences, budget requests were deemed "extraneous," or even subtle attitudes were negative such as viewing students who don't speak English as being "dumb"? The onslaught of negative attitudes can produce frustration, resentment, and even accusations, eventually leading to a negative cycle of recrimination between the teacher and the administration.

Such a situation is certainly not conducive to a positive educational atmosphere. Neither students nor teachers can flourish in such an environment. The question is, what can a teacher do to change the situation? What can he or she do to change attitudes and practices that may be well ingrained in the school culture? And finally, what can a teacher do to ensure that his or her own level of knowledge and sensitivity to the cultures and experiences of the students does not lead into this cycle of conflict and alienation, thus destroying professional efficacy.



Various Response Strategies

There are a variety of strategies teachers commonly use when faced with such a situation. Some teachers withdraw and "take it," feeling progressively more abused until emotional distress leads to a change in environment, wherein he or she is more sensitive to offense and likely to repeat the cycle again, only this time more quickly from the "lessons learned." Some teachers are explosive and confrontational in approaching administrators, acting under the concept that "I'm right, therefore I'm justified." Almost always, these two reactions are destructive and do not achieve the goal of making significant, foundational changes within the prevailing culture of the organization in order to represent better the needs of the students, and to ensure their academic, personal, and social success.

The first thing an ESL teacher must do in facing such a situation is the same thing he or she is asking others to do: enlarge your perspective. The fact is that most ESL teachers are the resident experts within their schools about their students, their backgrounds and their needs. This is reasonable, since the ESL teacher has spent years becoming familiar with these concerns. However, when others are not aware of issues pertaining to ESL or international students, it's easy to assume that "they know as much as I do, so they must just not care about my kids." This is a common error, which breaks down positive interaction between the teacher and others. There are times when actual prejudice or callousness is involved in poor decision making. However, even this can be overcome by a dedicated professional who is willing to follow some simple principles.

Principles of Successful Representation

Principle #1: Educate, educate, educate! Ignorance is the root of negativity, and many people are not aware of the many academic, personal, and cultural issues of our students. You will be the most important person in building an educated community.

Principle #2: Work from the top down, if possible. The closer to the top you can muster support, the fewer people you have to influence. If the top isn't receptive, you can still work at lower levels to develop support, but then more people have to be involved in order for their combined influence to be able to effect change.

Principle #3: Put yourself in "their shoes" when making proposals or presentations, taking into consideration how the program will affect the person to whom you're presenting. For example, the principal is interested in student outcomes, test scores, grades, parent involvement, etc. A direct tie-in to these issues should be established as you make any kind of a proposal, even if you're promoting something to the teacher next door. Despite his or her altruism toward students, you should still include how this will make his or her life easier—cover the "what's in it for me" base.

Principle #4: Participate in decision-making mechanisms such as school based management or school improvement teams, department meetings, etc. This is a way to make connections and have a forum for sharing your concerns. It also allows you to provide input before final decisions are made, possibly influencing decisions from the outset. Additionally, co-members who are exposed to these issues begin to gain a heightened awareness of ESL students'

issues, eventually becoming able to represent the needs of the ESL students independently. Accessing decision-making bodies is the easiest way to build an educated community from the top down.

Principle #5: Make connections with key program representatives such as the testing coordinator, scheduler, administrator, etc. These people make independent decisions in their arenas of responsibility, all of which have an impact on ESL students. Timely input can affect decisions. Additionally, influencing the opinions and perspectives of these key persons can produce more support and representation for your program from different angles. As you begin to build support within the key advisory groups and representatives of the school, that influence will translate into support for students and their needs.

Principle #6: Establish positive professional relationships. One of the biggest mistakes ESL teachers can make, even with the best intentions, is to assume a negative, critical, confrontational stance with others. Teachers need to take the attitude of giving others the benefit of the doubt, as it were, that behaviors or decisions were made on the basis of lack of understanding as opposed to lack of willingness to support the students. With that attitude in mind, it becomes much easier for the ESL teacher to approach others to make them aware of his or her concerns. Perhaps the number one rule of thumb in representing the population is not to assume a confrontational stance with others, especially administrators or key decision makers. The goal of the school is to create an environment that is conducive to the learning of all students. It is impossible to create community through confrontation. Despite one's frustration, despite the unfairness of the situation, more progress will be made if the teacher can assume a collaborative stance from which to attempt to reach consensus with others as to how all students' needs can be represented. This means that from time to time, the teacher will have to postpone a discussion about a situation until he or she can approach it from a positive stance, one that respects the position and the person with whom there is a problem. If we are working toward the goal of attaining respect for our population of students, we must first demonstrate that same respect toward others. Neither the ESL teacher, nor any other teacher, should vent their frustrations on others. That's not to say that we don't all need support and an ear to hear us from time to time. However, that becomes the realm of personal support as opposed to the professional relationships that we are trying to establish.

As a vice principal, I regularly make decisions that affect the ESL student population. I find that despite my background as an ESL teacher, there are many times when I simply can't see the issues with the same clarity as the teacher who is "in the trenches." At times I have been treated with derision, as though I were "the enemy." However, I know that from my perspective, I genuinely need the assistance of the ESL teachers to help me be aware of and representative of the ESL population. I don't want them to feel offended that I need their input. If I were not responsive, I could justify their discontent; however, the fact that they have to speak up in order for subtle issues to be attended to is not, in my opinion, a bad thing. I don't believe that we should work for the goal of not needing the input of the ESL teacher.

Don't wait until you need something from someone to begin to establish the groundwork for mutual collaboration on problems. It is almost certain that problems will arise eventually, so establishing positive professional relationships from the outset is good practice in preparation for all kinds of situations. By the time a difficulty arises, it may be very difficult to engage the support of others if there has been no groundwork established of professional respect. This is simply positive professional behavior. Despite our frustrations with inequities, which do indeed exist, we must maintain our professionalism at all times in order to maximize our influence on decision makers. The worst thing for students is for teachers to have relationships with decision makers that make them want to run in the other direction when they see the teacher coming.

Principle #7: Be patient. Teachers who become advocates for their students must be realistic in their expectations about how quickly attitudes will shift and changes take place. Change begins slowly and takes time. Typically, if an advocate senses a positive reception to the issues he or she is bringing forward, eventually he or she will see changes in the policies and practices of the decision makers. Those changes will not take place immediately. Usually, a period of time is required for the new information and perspective to be assimilated and transformed into practice. One should expect this delay time and realize that it is a part of the natural change process. Expecting immediate change is self-defeating because it accentuates a sense of failure and heightens frustrations in an already difficult situation. In the meantime, efforts to represent students and educate decision makers should continue, in the confidence that the changes will be forthcoming.

Principle #8: Be persistent. The "slow and steady wins the race" adage applies here. More and better progress is made through persistent, gentle effort than a sudden push. People assimilate information slowly and after many repetitions. Gently bring your students' issues to the forefront continuously in a positive professional manner to attain maximum results. Even if only because people tired of hearing you, your efforts will begin to produce results.

Principle #9: Be proactive in representing your program. As situations arise in which you can celebrate students' successes or accomplishments, if presentations need to be made, if someone needs further information about students' personal or academic needs, be available and willing to step forth. Work to develop a sense within the community that these students are an integral and valuable part of the program. Don't just wait until someone does something you don't like. Work on promoting your students—everyone wants to be a part of success. If you share your students' successes, they are more likely to be well received by others.

If possible, provide ways in which teachers can become more aware of the needs of this population. For example, present mini-lessons in faculty meetings about cultural differences such as gestures, eye contact, proximity, etc. Provide cultural awareness or language training sessions during in-service days or as a class. Some counties have such programs in place. If the school will enroll enough teachers, the course can often be offered on-site, thus reinforcing community growth. Share your knowledge. Watch for opportunities to present your students in a positive light. It's not necessary to mandate an eight-week staff development program to "enlighten" your co-workers. Simply representing your students' perspectives as situations arise will begin to open others' eyes that there is more to the situation than what they initially perceive.

Principle #10: Work on "softening up" resistance. From time to time, teachers will encounter genuine resistance rather than what might be explained as an inadvertent oversight. This takes the form of refusal to take into consideration the information being provided by the ESL teacher (and/or others) about the needs of

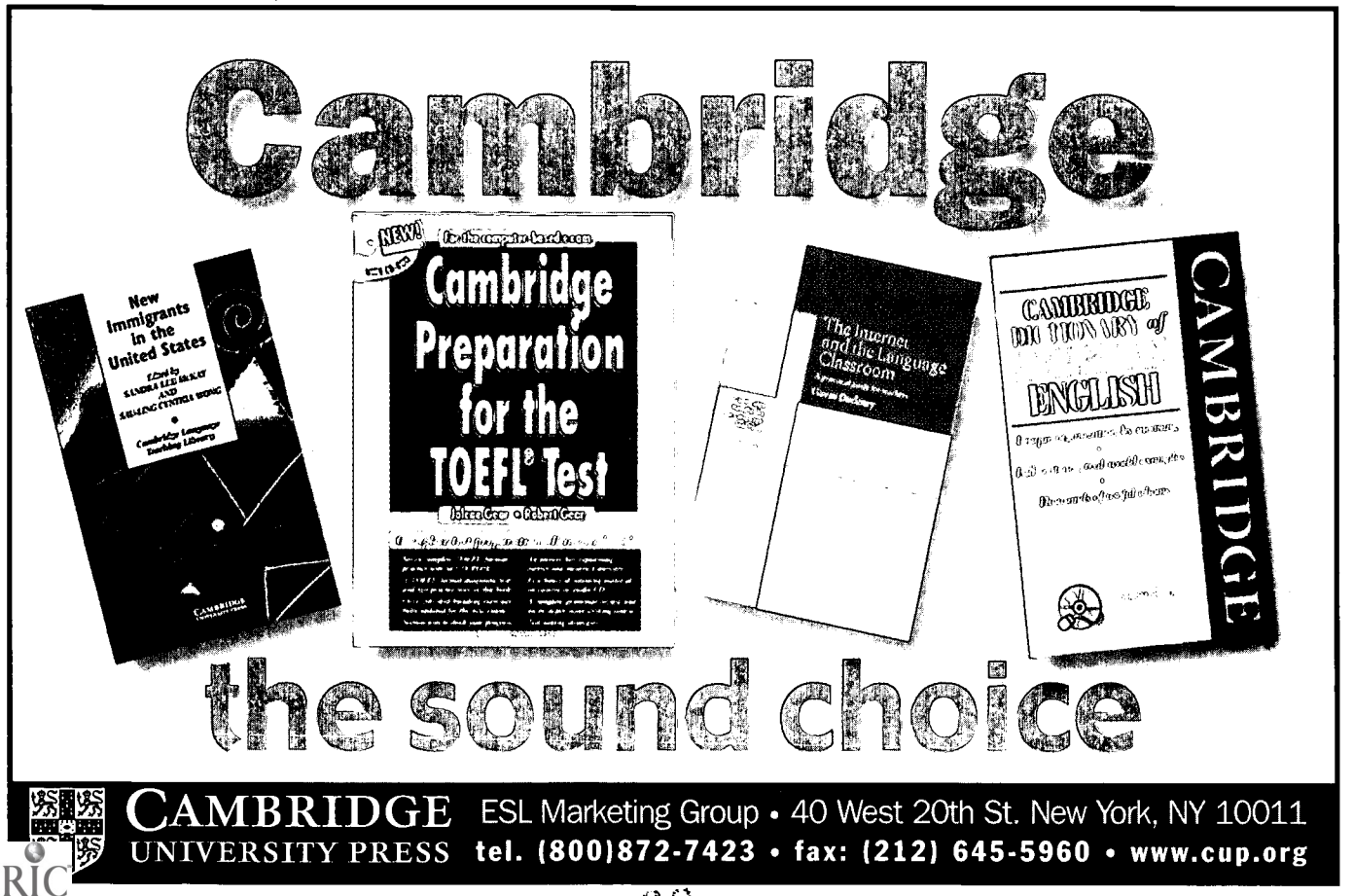
the ESL population. Rather than responding to explanations about why these needs must be taken into consideration, others may continue to demonstrate prejudicial attitudes and make pejorative decisions that have a negative impact on the students. When issues are brought up, there is overt refusal to take those issues under advisement. Even under the best of circumstances, decision makers will usually not respond to input by immediately embracing all of the suggestions made. However, it is reasonable to expect that consideration be given to the issues, that they be taken into account, and that if there is common ground that can be easily implemented, that efforts be made to do so. If consideration is not given to the issues and the person is intractable in their stance, that person must be "softened up" to the issues at stake.

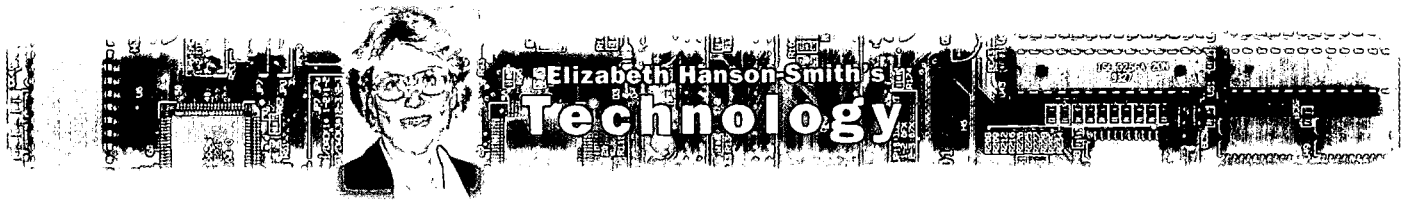
Applying a variety of the principles described here will work together to overcome resistance. By actively promoting students' qualities and needs in a positive professional manner, with patience and persistence, in decision making groups from the top down, using the perspective of the stakeholder, and by continuing to educate, educate, educate, most resistance can be overcome. The more people you have influenced to understand the issues, the more people can help in exerting their influence for change. The option which some people jump to first, that "going over the heads" of decision makers should be an absolute last resort. If no other option is available, or abuse is severe, then the person must be brought to account by an appeal to a higher authority. This option is effective but is also costly and should not be applied without considering the impact on the people involved, which is usually a negative backlash to the relationships between parties. At times this is a necessary sacrifice, but it should not be the standard operating procedure.

Individual teachers can make a tremendous difference in their school community on the attitudes and practices of others that affect their students. Ignorance and/or resistance to the concerns of a special population of students is commonplace, to say the least. However, this does not constrain us to defeat. We must realize that as representatives of an increasing population of English language learners, we are the torch-bearers for raising the level of awareness of the people around us. Indeed, true change is only accomplished in this way, with one individual leading the fight, not against others, but against ignorance and prejudice. My own experience is that by following these principles, not only can we better represent our students, but we begin to be perceived as essential sources of valuable input as to how to prevent problems from arising and how to deal with them when they do. Attaining this status is professionally beneficial in a variety of ways.

This is not a calling for the faint of heart. The easy response to these difficulties is to shut ourselves in our rooms and complain rather than exert the extra effort and influence necessary to overcome. However, if we are truly to help and represent out students, we must consider the nature and the value of the people we represent and the very special task we bear.

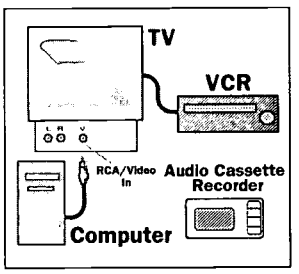
Sandra Prager is a vice principal at Buck Lodge Middle School in Prince George's County, Maryland. She has worked as an ESL teacher, literacy specialist, and instructional administrator at the elementary through high school levels. Her doctoral research focused on how special needs programs can be implemented successfully in schools.





Converge Your TV and Computer—Part II

In the previous issue of *ESL Magazine*, I spoke of the convergence of different technologies and showed how you can do your own low-tech and inexpensive version by hooking up your computer to a television. This capability is very useful in schools where an expensive projection system is not available. I like to use a computer-TV setup to demonstrate a software application (such as a word processor or an instructional multimedia program) before I have students sit down at a workstation.



Another useful way to use the computer-TV convergence is to create instructional videotapes. A number of schools and community centers are instituting programs where students may take home software or videos or other instructional materials to share with their English-learning parents. A video made for your students can be a great asset to their parents, who then need not rely so heavily on their children for instruction.

For example, to create a demonstration of the appropriate keys to push in a software program, you will need a videotape, an audio tape, and four pieces of readily available equipment:

- a computer or laptop
- a television (TV)
- a video cassette recorder (VCR)
- an audio cassette recorder

Plug in the computer to the TV using the video/RCA cable as described in the previous issue (you may need a short adapter to use the S-video port on newer computers). Make sure that the VCR is plugged into the correct ports on the TV. Turn on both the TV and the VCR before booting up your computer. Make sure the TV is tuned to the appropriate channel, according to how it has been preset and where the computer has been plugged in. As suggested previously, you may need to fine-tune the computer screen resolution.

Once the image on your computer monitor appears on the TV screen, push "Record" on the VCR to start making your tape. Open the application on your computer and walk through each of the steps you wish students to take as they use the software. Even though your voice will not record, talk through each step slowly, as if you were explaining in person. This is your rehearsal for the next stage.

When you finish the demonstration, stop the videotape and rewind it. Since the VCR will not record your voice, you will have to make a separate audio cassette. Start your audio recorder, and while playing back the videotape, record the instructions on the audio cassette. If you don't use a microphone, the audio recording will also pick up the computer's beeps and sound effects. Students can play back the audio cassette on a portable recorder while watching the videotape on their home TV. Happy recording!

Elizabeth Hanson-Smith is an education technology consultant and can be reached at ehansonsmi@aol.com.

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What Does it Take to Acquire Language?

BY STEPHEN KRASHEN, PH.D.

A front-page article in the Los Angeles Times (Silverstein, 1999) described the case of Armando, a 29-year-old immigrant from Mexico who has lived in the United States for 12 years. Armando, who attended school in Mexico up to grade nine, has worked in an Israeli restaurant in Los Angeles nearly the entire time he has lived in the United States. While Armando speaks English quite well, he says he speaks Hebrew better.

Silverstein provides some description of how Armando did it: "He learned by observing and listening to co-workers and friends," through interaction and conversation, occasionally asking for the meanings of unknown words. Silverstein also provides some information on how good Armando is in Hebrew, quoting the "patriarch" of the family-owned restaurant, who claims that Armando "speaks Hebrew like an Israeli" (p. 1).

Armando's Experience

Thanks to Silverstein, I was able to meet Armando and get more details. First, it must be pointed out that acquisition of Hebrew took time: Armando told me that it was two or three years until he was comfortable in conversation even though he heard Hebrew all day on the job. He said that he never forced or pushed himself with Hebrew, that his approach was relaxed. He also informed me that he had a very friendly relationship with the other restaurant staff, with the owners, and enjoyed chatting with Hebrew-speaking customers. Armando's good relationship with speakers of Hebrew was confirmed by Silverstein, who noted that Armando formed "close friendships" with the family that owns the restaurant, his Israeli-born co-workers, and many ners. When Armando was seri- injured in a car accident in Arizona, several members of the family visited him in the hospital, there were calls "nearly every day," and prayers were said for him at nearby synagogues.

Armando told me that he had never learned to read Hebrew, never studied Hebrew grammar, had no idea of what the rules of Hebrew grammar were, and certainly did not think about grammar when speaking. He said that he received about five corrections a day, but none of these were aimed at grammar; it was all vocabulary.

An Informal Evaluation

I conducted an informal evaluation of Armando's Hebrew competence. I tape recorded a brief conversation, somewhat contrived, but the best that could be done under the circumstances. (It would be have much better to obtain some completely unmonitored speech, recorded when Armando was not aware it was being recorded; this, of course, would hardly be ethical.) At my request, Armando chatted with a native speaker, an Israeli friend of his, about what he did the day before (it was the Sabbath). The conversation lasted about five minutes.

The recording was played the next day for four adult native speakers of Hebrew: two employees of the Israeli consulate and two employees of the Israeli tourist office in Los Angeles. I did not indicate who the speaker was but only asked them to listen and evaluate Armando's Hebrew. The judges listened to about two minutes of Armando talking about his activities on Saturday. The listening was done in a corridor in an office building (because of tight security in the consulate), and the recording was not of high quality. The judges were not told anything about Armando until after they made their judgment.

Here are the results: Judge 1 felt that the speaker was a native speaker of Hebrew, had no accent, and made no grammatical errors. Armando's language, however, was judged to be "unsophisticated."

Judge 2 felt that Armando was a long time resident of Israel and could have been born there. He thought that Armando might speak Hebrew as a second language and speaks another language at home. Armando's Hebrew was "not quite standard" but was acceptable. This judge guessed that Armando was Moroccan, which is quite interesting, because the owners of the restaurant are from Morocco.

Judge 3 decided that Armando was not a native speaker of Hebrew, but felt that he was very good: "He can clearly say anything he wants to say," but shows "some hesitancy." This judge guessed that Armando had lived in Israel "perhaps one or two years" and has had lots of interaction with Israelis.

Judge 4 thought that Armando was Ethiopian. She felt that he was not a native speaker of Hebrew but is clearly very good, clearly fluent. He is, she felt, obviously "comfortable" in Hebrew and speaks like someone who has lived in Israel for a few years. He uses slang but uses it appropriately.

The range is thus from "very good but nonnative" to native. This is very impressive.

Discussion

The measure used to evaluate Armando's Hebrew was quite crude, but ecologically fairly valid. Native speakers of Hebrew regard him as a fluent, comfortable speaker of Hebrew, and two of the four judges thought he spoke Hebrew like someone born in Israel.

The case is quite consistent with current theory (e.g., Krashen, 1985; 1999), and shows that "acquisition" alone can lead to impressive levels of competence in a second language.

Armando had the necessary ingredients: comprehensible input (although it was not comprehensible at first) and a low "affective filter." The most striking aspect of this case, in my opinion, is the support it provides for the notion of club membership, the idea that we "talk like the people we perceive ourselves to be." (Smith, 1988, p. 4; see also Beebe, 1985). Armando, it can be hypothesized, made the extraordinary progress he did because he had comprehensible input and because he joined the club of speakers who used the language. (Note that the "club" in this case was a circle of friends, not a national or ethnic group; Armando has not converted to Judaism.)

Of course, Hebrew was not comprehensible for him right away. His great accomplishment was due to patience, being willing to acquire slowly and gradually with a long silent period (or period of reduced output). With a "natural approach" language class Armando would have had comprehensible input right away and would moved through the beginning stages more quickly, and real conversational Hebrew would have been comprehensible earlier. I predict that a traditional class focusing on grammar would not have had this effect.

Armando's case also shows us that one can do quite well in second language acquisition without living in the country in which the language is spoken and without formal instruction. The crucial variables appear to be comprehensible input and having a good relationship with speakers of the language.

Stephen Krashen, Ph.D., (Linguistics, UCLA) is currently professor of education at the University of Southern California. He is author of many books including Language Teaching: The Easy Way.

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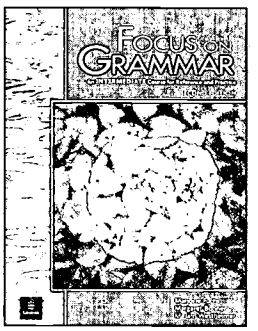
ESL MAGAZINE

Learning Grammar in Context

Focus on Grammar: An Intermediate Course for Reference and Practice, 2nd edition
by Marjorie Fuchs, Margaret Bonner and Miriam Westheimer
Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 2000

It could never be said that this grammar text doesn't provide enough exercises or cover enough topics. In fact, the intermediate text for the *Focus on Grammar* series has 38 units. This can be daunting for anyone who plans to cover this book in one semester.

However, upon looking further at the text, one quickly realizes that each unit is really a "mini-unit" and these mini-units form eight parts. The text is dense and there's an enormous amount of information, but I have found the book very manageable and my students feel a real sense of accomplishment upon completing it.



Each unit begins with a short reading using the grammar point to be discussed. This is called "Grammar in Context" and helps students make the connection between grammar and communication. Students can also listen to the often entertaining and interesting reading on the audiocassette.

Many of these stories or articles are relevant to the students' lives and some include cartoons which give the book a humorous slant. (Unit 31, "Stop Forgetting," includes a cartoon of a man who forgets his own name at a party.) The audiocassette is better than any I've ever heard. It includes true-to-life background noise and music. It also uses a variety of voices and accents to help students get used to different speakers.

The second part of each unit is called "Discover the Grammar." In these short exercises students are asked only to interpret the meaning of what is written. For example, students read, "John's been coughing." They have to decide if the sentence means a) He coughed several times, or b) He coughed only once. Exercises such as this help teachers determine when students are ready to try to produce the structure on their own.

After the "Grammar in Context" and "Discover the Grammar," teachers have a minimum of six practice exercises to choose from, including editing and writing exercises. The exercises gradually increase in difficulty, and the interest level is high.

At the end of each part, there is a Review or Self-Test section. Exercises here cover all the structures in the part. They are combined so the students see all the structures working together. The exercises are structured like TOEFL questions to give students practice for that test.

There are two aspects that are difficult in the text. First, the level of vocabulary is very high. Students will struggle in the beginning. I believe the high level of vocabulary helps students in the end, but it was a struggle for them to accept that they would not understand everything immediately. Second, the only answer keys provided are for the self-tests. It would be more useful to give answer keys for the practice exercises in each unit since there is no way to cover all of them in class.

The series also comes with a workbook and computer program. The workbook contains even more unique, interesting exercises and unit tests. The computer program is very user-friendly and gives students immediate feedback on their learning. My students have enjoyed it quite a bit.

I have enjoyed using this text. The format is very conducive to teaching grammar, and my students have responded well.

Heather A. Linville is an ESL teacher for Baltimore City Community College and the Refugee Assistance Program at the Baltimore Resettlement Center.

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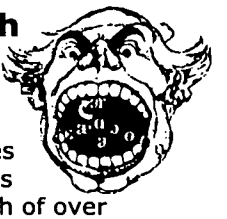

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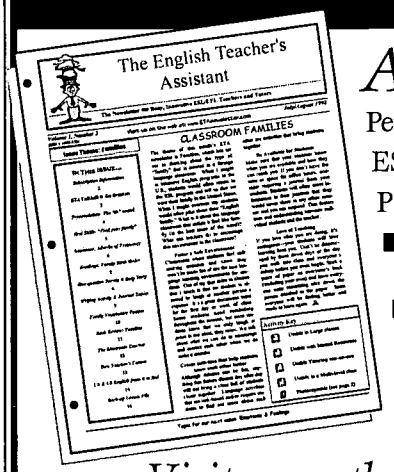

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SWISS LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

Engaging the Advanced Student

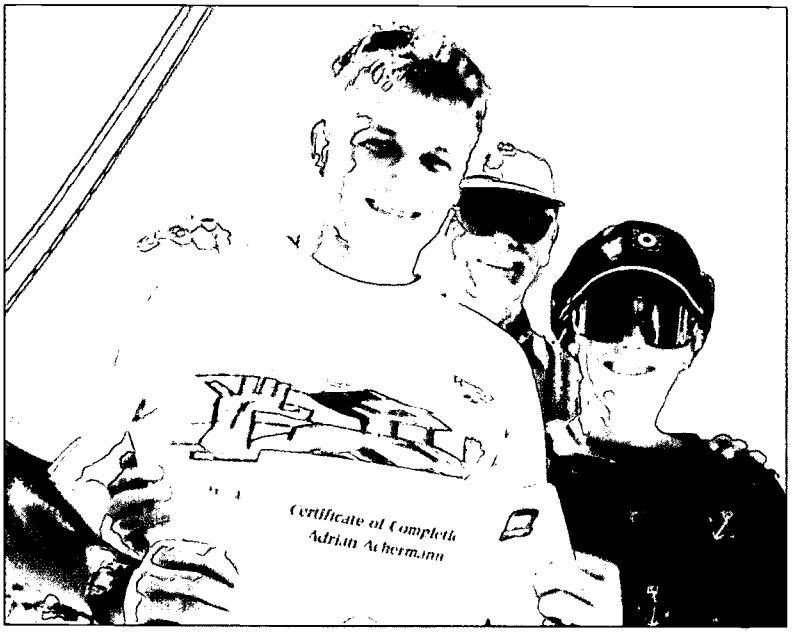
BY NANCY KAYE AND DON MATSON

The Swiss student of English is different from other learners of English in several respects. Most Swiss students speak either Swiss German, French, or Italian as a first language and then one or both of the others with considerable fluency as additional languages. Furthermore, most Swiss study English for several years at school. This means that they have had a great deal of practice in "language learning" and they know how they can best learn a foreign language. They are also motivated to perfect their English because Swiss businesses reward them for their proficiency in foreign languages, especially English.

So the Swiss learner of English is experienced in language learning, already familiar with English, and highly motivated. It is also important to note that most Swiss students have also studied "high" German, with its complicated grammatical structures, and thus have a basic understanding of the grammatical forms of all "Germanic" languages (which include English). In contrast, the Japanese student of English, for example, is often learning his or her first "Germanic" language and has little experience in the process of language learning.

Obviously, the needs of the Swiss student studying English are quite different from those of students with other language backgrounds. Most Swiss students have reached an intermediate level in English before the take their first "ESL" course. At Global American Language Institute (GALI) in San Diego, we have ed that the Swiss students who to the United States to improve their English need to be challenged in the four fundamental areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They are ready to watch American films in English and to discuss the plots and characterization. They are ready to read reviews of films, books, plays—and to write reviews themselves. They are prepared to study business and other subjects in English.

With regard to the "Accuracy vs. Fluency" issue (*ESL Magazine*, March/April, 1998), the Swiss students of English already have a great deal of fluency and are ready to sharpen up their accuracy. Their goal is to increase the precision with which they are able to convey ideas in English. They need to process complex texts in a variety of subject matter areas, to practice composing texts in English, and receive feedback where they encounter problems. In order to challenge the high intermediate and advanced Swiss students, GALI has developed several approaches that have been popular with most students.



Adrian, a Swiss student, Dr. Matson and Nancy Kaye celebrating graduation aboard the Global American Language Institute yacht Orion.

Tapping Into Students' Interests

A "subject matter" approach is popular with the Swiss students because it presents an added challenge. It is true that some excellent textbooks are available that touch on many subject matter areas, but the Swiss students are usually prepared to go into these subjects in greater depth. At GALI, they often focus on business, law, and other subjects, in addition to just English language. Thus, they learn English by using it to learn about subjects that interest them. The following case history is one example of this approach.

Manfred took an extended leave from his job in Switzerland and came to the United States to improve his already excellent English. His grammar was good, and he did not want to spend his time in the United States studying what he could learn just as well at home in Switzerland from a book. He wanted to learn how to use American English with the same proficiency as he did Swiss German and High German. He had already achieved fluency in many contexts. His goal now was to expand the number of his fluency contexts to include all of his areas of interest and to increase the precision with which he spoke English in general.

One of Manfred's goals was to sail a boat around the world. A good knowledge of English would help him do this, but he also need a working knowledge of celestial navigation. GALI was able to make use of Manfred's motivation by developing a study program in which he read a book on celestial navigation chapter by chapter as homework. He was to bring to class "digested" versions of the

navigational principles in his own English words. The instructor would point out any errors in his written texts, and Manfred would present his newly gained knowledge to the group in English.

In Switzerland, Manfred had learned a technique of language study used in Germany for many decades called "Nacherzaehlung," in which the student listens to a narrative in the target language and then repeats it to the best of his ability in his own target language words. Manfred was able to apply this technique to his study of celestial navigation in English. In cases where he ran into difficulty, he would read the difficult passage over a few times and then compose it in his own words.

When Manfred presented a lesson in celestial navigation to his classmates, their task was to understand the information. To do so, they needed to ask questions to gain clarity, and Manfred's task was to provide this clarification. Through this process of learning celestial navigation and "teaching" it to his classmates in English, Manfred faced the kind of challenge that stimulated him, resulting in a great deal of language acquisition in a short time. Eventually, Manfred bought an inexpensive plastic sextant and demonstrated to his group the procedure for taking a sun fix.

In addition to learning the English necessary to understand and teach celestial navigation, Manfred was prompted by questioning from his classmates to discuss his reasons for wanting to circumnavigate the earth. He came to realize that some of these reasons were still not clear in the Swiss German language of his mind, and for the first time in his life, he found himself exploring new territory in English. He faced the challenge of using English to gain insight into himself and to discover what was motivating him. This Swiss student, who began the course at GALI somewhat bored and distant from his group members, grew increasingly engaged and lively through the weeks and at the end of the course, enrolled for additional study.

Manfred is only one of many Swiss students who needed a particular kind of challenge in order to learn English at GALI. When a student first enrolls for a course of study at GALI, we make a special effort to determine her or his interests and the subject areas that will have the most appeal so that we can tailor at least some of the language instruction to these interests. The Swiss students, perhaps more than most others, seem to require a special challenge—one that goes beyond what is offered in even the ESL texts available. For example, another Swiss student who appeared a bit bored at the beginning of her course at GALI was able to make an accomplishment similar to Manfred's by reading in English about her future occupation of flower arranging and teaching her class about the techniques that she was learning and actually demonstrating some arrangements in class—in English, of course. She returned to Switzerland not only a better speaker of English, but a better flower arranger.

Using Theatre, Television and Film

In addition to developing individualized study programs for the Swiss students that are based on their hobbies and interests, GALI has found that the high intermediate and advanced Swiss students readily accept the challenge provided by a study of English through the theater, television, and film. Students often have the opportunity to study a play in class that will be produced at one of San Diego's many excellent theaters. Then they go to the theater as a group and attend a performance after which we are usually able to arrange interviews with some cast members or the director.

Film has been very popular for teaching advanced Swiss students at GALI. The school's library has copies of screen plays that are used in learning English. The instructor works through the written dialogue of a screen play line by line with the group, discussing idioms and providing students with the opportunity to play the various parts. After getting to know a movie in this manner, the students are thrilled to watch it on videotape. For once, they understand everything—all of the English in the film, and it stays with them. Then comes a further challenge: writing about the plot and characters and composing a movie review. As another form of challenge to the Swiss students, GALI assigns the composition of skits and plays, which the class presents to other GALI classes.

Using Personal Histories

Perhaps the most successful technique that we have found to challenge the intermediate and advanced Swiss students is the "Life Story." The autobiographical approach asks the students to write their own life stories with emphasis on the major "turning points" of their lives. They then present them to the class, one chapter or episode at a time. The group members are responsible for understanding and remembering the life stories of their classmates. That means that they have to pay close attention and ask questions to gain a clear picture of the life being presented. Each student writes his or her own version of the life of each group member as a continuing process through the course of instruction. These biographies of classmates encourage a kind of bonding that rarely occurs in classes that limit instruction to grammar or to the typical ESL texts. And this bonding in turn promotes more complex language interactions, stimulation, and added incentive to acquire the language.

One Swiss student discovered, as she worked through her autobiography at GALI, that there was a distinct pattern in the course of her relationships with men. When she expressed a desire to explore the dynamics of such relationships, her instructor found a copy of John Gray's book *Men Are From Mars; Women Are from Venus* in the GALI library. This student was fascinated from the first pages and, in addition to her other homework, read the chapters one after another, learning the new vocabulary and summarizing the ideas. At the end of her course at GALI, she told her instructor that she was amazed at how much English she had learned and how much she had learned about relationships. Before she went back to Switzerland, she bought other books and audiotapes by Gray so that she could continue her study.

The Swiss students respond particularly well to these strategies. The written texts are read carefully by the instructor, errors are identified, and suggestions are made for improving the writing. During oral presentations, the instructor makes appropriate comments on the language use when it will not interfere with the actual communication that is taking place.

The approach that GALI takes particularly with Swiss students in emphasizing English as an instrument, as a means of communication, does not intend to minimize the study of the English language itself. The focus is on the process—English in use—rather than on English as an object to be analyzed. Appropriate occasions often arise in contexts of dynamic use of English for analyzing syntactical patterns and generalizing about the forms of the various parts of speech, but as noted earlier, the Swiss students have already done much of this analyzing. The real challenge for the Swiss lies in the increasingly complex and precise use of English to explore subject matter fields and areas of personal interest.

Nancy Kaye has taught ESL for many years. She currently manages the Global American Language Institute (GALI) in San Diego. Don Matson, Ph.D. (UCSD), is director of GALI and has taught ESL since 1960.

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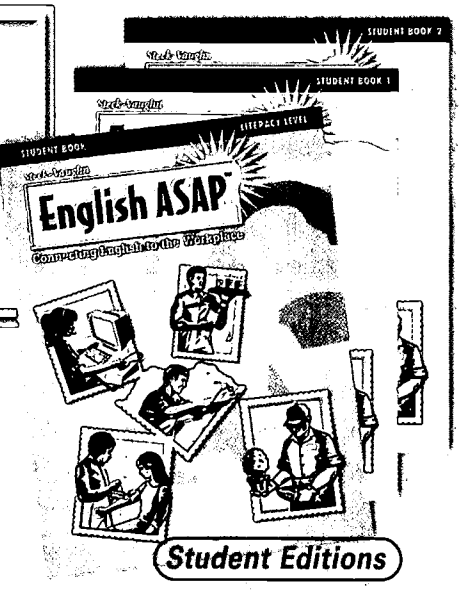

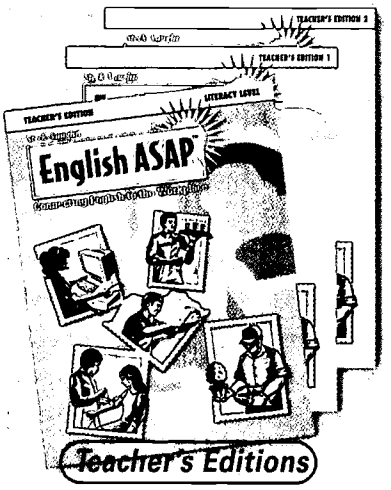

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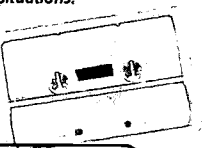

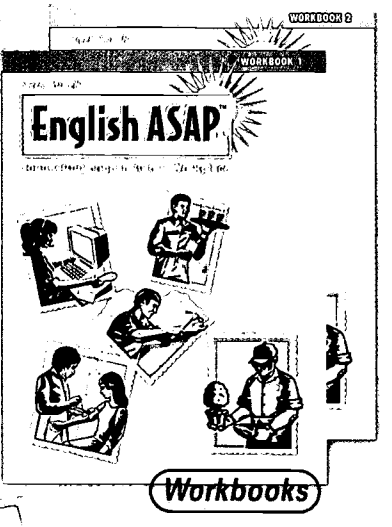

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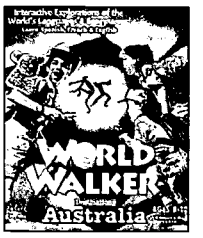

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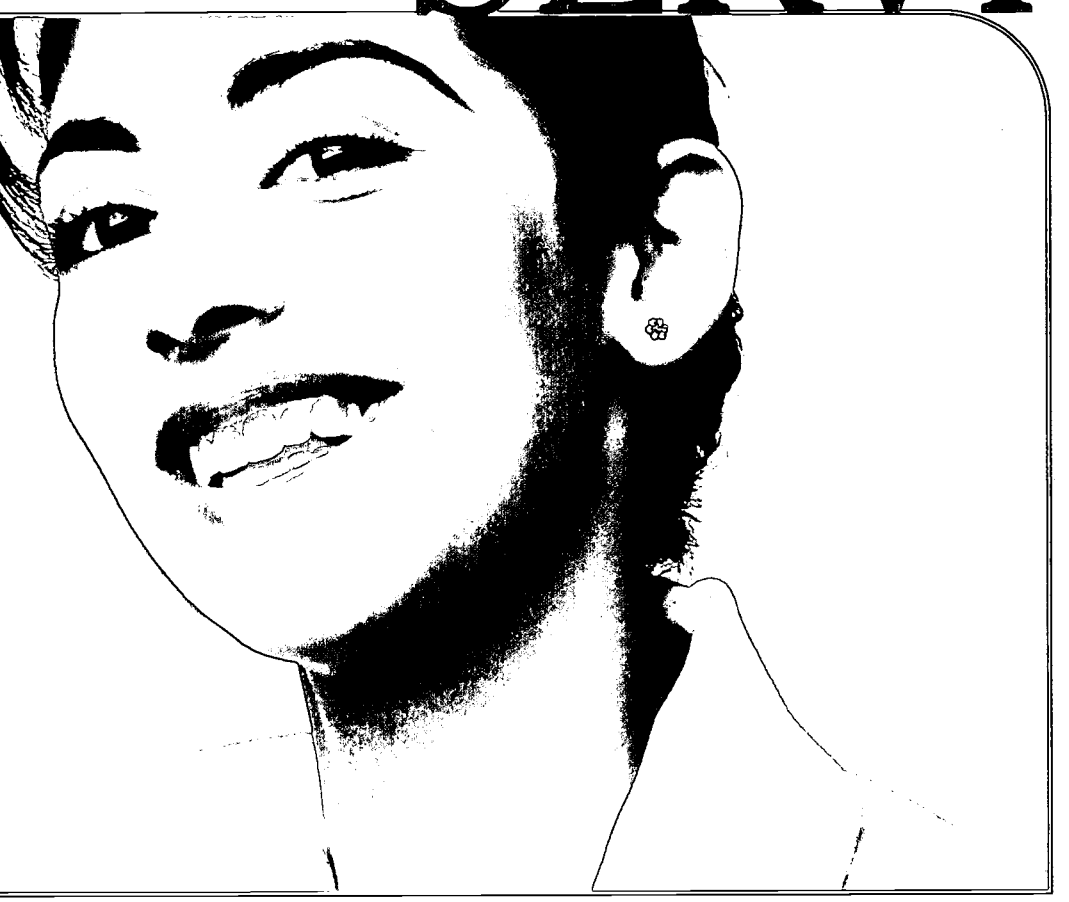

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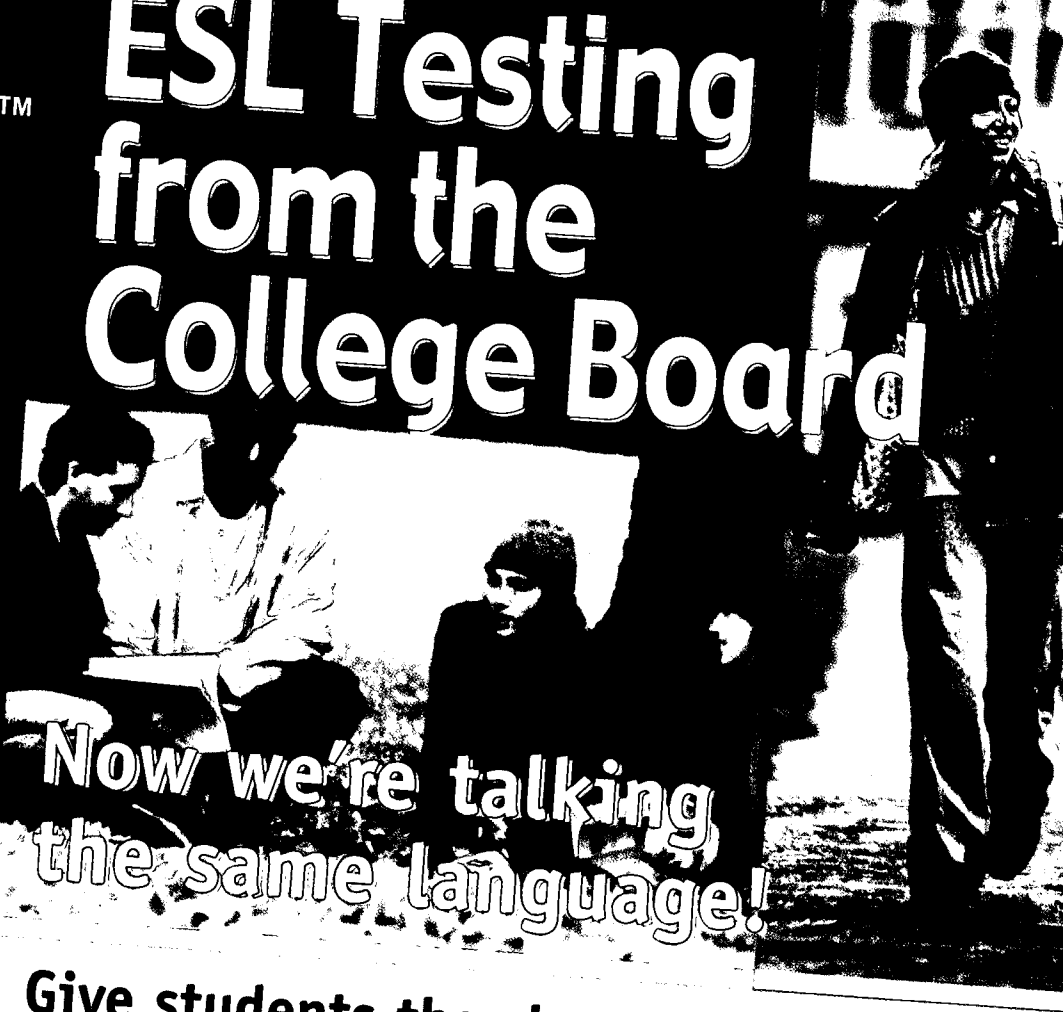

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July/August 2000
Vol. 3, No. 4

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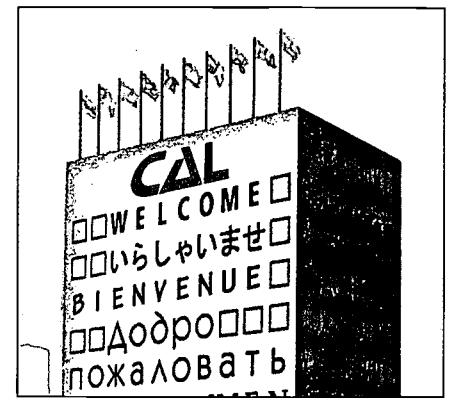

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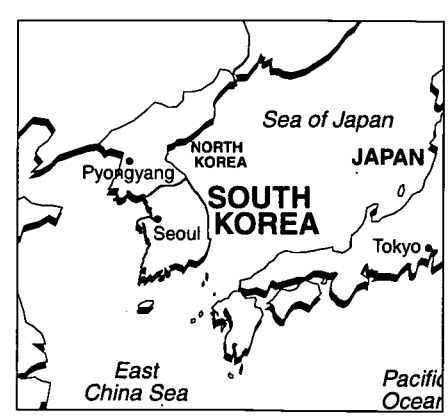

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Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?

NEST MORTUZANS

Virginia Jama
Director, ESL Services, Office of Bilingual Education, Board of Education of the City of New York

***ESL Magazine* ONLINE!**
www.eslmag.com
(lots of links)

ERIC

At Your Service!

For many of us, it's time to begin a new school year. This often produces a mix of emotions for both students and teachers: excitement, anticipation and, perhaps, anxiety. For the English language teaching professional, there's a resource at your service that should be of help to you whether you're facing the new year with confidence or uncertainty. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is a true professional partner for teachers. Allene Grognet explains the mission of CAL and how its activities during the past 40 years have contributed to accomplishing that mission.

Many students may face the new school year with apprehension because school is a like a foreign country—with a different language and culture than home. Patty Orndorff describes how the Anne Arundel County, Maryland, public school system is strengthening the connection between school and home to help ESL students and their parents find greater success and satisfaction with their school experience.

Advanced students of English often feel that they have reached a plateau in their conversational ability. Nancy Kaye and Don Matson describe some interesting ways that teachers can use writing to help students go deeper in their conversations and say exactly what they want to say, not just the closest approximation they can manage in the new language.

As in many countries around the world, the use of English is expanding into the daily lives of many South Koreans. Patrick Hwang describes how English language education is growing and changing there and how teachers and universities from outside Korea are contributing.

Best wishes in the new academic year!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

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The magazine for English as a Second Language professionals.

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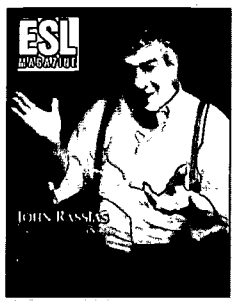

Send letters to eslmagazine@compuserve.com or ESL Magazine, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401. Include your name and position or address.

John Rassias

▷ I was pleased to see my esteemed colleague John Rassias on the cover of *ESL Magazine* (May/June 2000). In my opinion, his method of using drama to teach language is very powerful—one of the best ways of providing students with truly interesting and comprehensible input.

—STEPHEN KRASHEN
University of Southern California

▷ I write as an early doubter to congratulate you on your profile of John Rassias. It managed to shed light upon both the extraordinary personal qualities of this giant in our guild but also upon the broader dimensions of the still-controversial Method as practiced at Dartmouth and in dozens of countries.

I have a certain sympathy—though less and less, frankly, as firm evidence accumulates—for those to whom the Method seems extreme (it is) and an assault upon their dignity as professionals (it is) because I scoffed at first at this huffing, whuffing, vandalizing intrusion into the placidity of the world I'd learned in and taught in for so long.

But I concluded along with Anouilh that, just as "l'honneur du soldat c'est de vaincre," the dignity of the professor is to have conveyed, freshly and profoundly, the "best things of the culture" to the next generation. I've followed Rassias across continents, in and out of the classroom, among adults and younger students for some twenty years now and find with ever-renewed amazement that he's still at it with unrepentant and undiminished vigor.

—BRIGADIER GENERAL
ALAN FARRELL, PH.D.
Virginia Military Institute

▷ Thank you for the frank and revealing interview with John Rassias of Dartmouth College. It brings background and reality to the "how" and the "why" of his experiential approach to language learning, making a solid case for including meaningful and appropriate emotional ties to the soul of language learning as a complement to the analytical and sometimes passive learning that often seems to occur in so-called communicative classrooms.

—DR. JOEL GOLDFIELD
Director
Culpeper Language Resource Center
Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT

▷ I wanted to tell you that I enjoyed your article on John Rassias very much.

—SANDY BALDWIN
Florida

Title VII Funding

▷ The article on Title VII funding gave a very helpful guide for applying for Title VII funds. While I cannot apply for those particular funds since I am an administrator of an ESL program for adults, it provides me a step-by step process for finding out about and applying for federal funds targeted to adults learning ESL.

—CAROLYN HARDING
ESL Specialist
Adult and Community Education
Fairfax County Public Schools

Representing ESL Students in the Community

▷ Sandra Prager's article on managing the relationship between ESL professionals and other school faculty is so important and well done. Stress and misunderstandings between colleagues really do lead to a "negative cycle of recrimination between the teacher and the administration." This is the first time I have ever read anything that addressed this problem! The article describes how to diplomatically and effectively win over colleagues and administrators in a professional way. Her 10 principles are very practical and comprehensive, tackling the issue from just about every angle. This article has really helped opened my eyes to the big picture and has given me encouragement in how to overcome these issues. Most of these principles would be appropriate for just about any working relationship. I recommend that all ESL teachers, administrators, directors and faculty read this article and be encouraged!

—HEATHER FOWLER
Pennsylvania

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Grants Announced for Hispanic Serving Institutions

Education Secretary Richard W. Riley announced in mid June the award of $25.8 million to fund 76 new grants to Hispanic serving organizations (HSI) to improve their facilities, academic programs and student services. HSIs are colleges or universities in which Hispanics represent at least 25 percent of the student population and in which at least half of those students are low-income. About 195 two- and four-year schools have been designated as HSIs. About 40 percent of Hispanic undergraduate students are enrolled in these schools. Funded under Title V of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, the program aims to enhance academic offerings, program quality and institutional stability. Seven of the grants are one-year planning grants to give institutions the opportunity to analyze their strengths and weaknesses and take steps to prepare a Title V development grant application for the following year. The remaining 69 grants are five-year development grants to implement specific activities such as establishing community outreach programs with local elementary and secondary schools, offering special programs to improve students' academic success, purchasing books, telecommunications materials, scientific or laboratory equipment, and supporting exchanges, fellowships and other faculty development programs. www.ed.gov.

Richard W. Riley

New Report on School/Community Partnerships

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) recently released its report *Broadening the Base: School/Community Partnerships Serving Language Minority Students at Risk.* The report outlines findings from a study of partnerships between schools and community-based organizations that promote the academic achievement of language minority students. It describes the types of community-based organizations that partner with schools, the ways that partners work together, and the work that they do. The study, based on surveys of 31 partnerships and visits to 18 throughout the United States, found four elements to be essential to successful partnerships: adequate resources (staff, funding, space and materials), partnership and program flexibility, responsiveness to clients needs, and evaluation.

The report concludes with recommendations for developing partnerships and programs: 1) assure that potential partners are fully committed, 2) maintain communication, 3) ensure strong leadership at the program level, 4) start small and build carefully, and 5) look for opportunity. To order copies of the report, which includes descriptions of many of the partnerships, contact Dissemination Coordinator, CREDE, Center for Applied Linguistics, 4646 40th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016-1859; 202-362-0700; crede@cal.org.

McGraw-Hill to Acquire Tribune Education

Tribune Company announced in June that it has agreed to sell Tribune Education to The McGraw-Hill Companies, a global publishing, financial, information and media services company, for approximately $635 million in cash, subject to certain adjustments. The sale will allow Tribune to focus on its media businesses of broadcasting, publishing and interactive.

The McGraw-Hill Companies' educational publishing unit, McGraw-Hill Education, will acquire Tribune Education's Everyday Learning/Creative Publications Group, Instructional Fair Group, Landoll, NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group and The Wright Group.

The Wright Group is a leading publisher of elementary school language arts materials that promote a comprehensive approach to literacy through a variety of strategies including immersion into literature and direct and explicit skills instruction. The Wright Group provides professional staff development, annually training about 75,000 teachers and administrators in more than 1,500 workshops nationwide.

NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group publishes educational materials for elementary through adult learners including ESL materials.

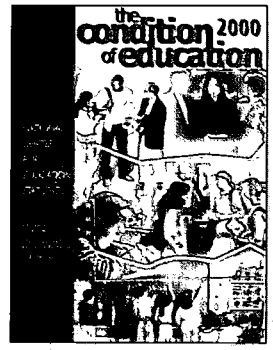
The sale of Tribune's education businesses to The McGraw-Hill Companies is subject to Hart-Scott-Rodino approval and the approval of The McGraw-Hill Companies board of directors. The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of 2000.

McGraw-Hill has been publishing academic English language instructional materials since 1984 and currently publishes multi-skill materials for adult, academic, high school and elementary levels as well as books on methods of second language teaching. Popular McGraw-Hill titles include the "Connect with English" video series and the *Interactions* and *Mosaic* series.

The McGraw-Hill Companies is a global information services provider serving the financial services, education and business information markets through leading brands such as Standard & Poor's, *Business Week* and McGraw-Hill Education. Founded in 1888, the corporation has more than 400 offices in 32 countries. Sales in 1999 were $4 billion.

Tribune, a Fortune 500 company in 2000, is a media company with businesses in 23 major U.S. markets. Through its television and radio broadcasting, publishing and interactive operations, Tribune reaches nearly 80 percent of U.S. households daily. Tribune Broadcasting owns and operates 22 major market television stations as well as the Chicago Cubs baseball team. Tribune Publishing is the third largest U.S. newspaper group with 11 market-leading newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Condition of Education 2000 Report Just Released



The congressionally mandated annual report *The Condition of Education* was released in June by the U.S. Department of Education's National Clearinghouse for Education Statistics. The main sections of the report are Participation in Education, Learner Outcomes, Student Effort and Academic Progress, Quality of Elementary and Secondary Educational Environments, The Context of Postsecondary Education, and Societal Support for Learning.

Of particular interest to educators serving minorities and language minority students are statistics regarding participation in preprimary education, racial-ethnic distribution of public school students, parental education by race-ethnicity, and undergraduate enrollment of minority students. The 386-page report may be viewed and printed from http://nces.ed. gov./pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid =2000062.

Multiple Intelligences Research Opportunity

Foreign language and English as a second language teachers (grades K-12) who would like to participate in the second national Multiple Intelligences Research Study this fall should contact Marjorie Hall Haley at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, (703) 993-8710, mhaley@citizen.infi.net or mhaley@gmu.edu. For more information about multiple intelligences, visit http://members.aol.com/kluton/ or see the article by Mary Ann Christison in *ESL Magazine*, Sept/Oct 1999.

Free Technology Training for Teachers

To help educators become more computer literate, the non-profit National Education Foundation CyberLearning is offering 5,000 applicants a full tuition scholarship of $2,000 to take Internet-based courses. Among the more than 400 topics offered are Microsoft Office, WordPerfect, Web design and Web applications, E-commerce and Oracle. Sign up at www.cyberlearning.org. Registration is $75.00.

Conference Calendar

July

- 2-5 **Australian Council of TESOL Associations and QATESOL**, Brisbane, Australia. Contact Jenny Miller, J.Miller@mailbox.uq.edu.au.
- 8-9 **TESOL Southern Cone Academy**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 10-12 **Uruguay TESOL**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Contact gabo@multi.com.uy.
- 11-12 **ETAI-ISRATESOL**, Jerusalem, Israel. Contact valerie@vms.huji.ac.il.
- 17-20 **Brazil TESOL**, Sao Paulo, Brazil. Contact nadias@yazigi.net.br.
- 21-23 **TESOL Midwest Academy**, Chicago, IL. Contact 703-836-0774.
- 24-28 **Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)**, Minneapolis, MN. Contact 612-626-8600.
- 31-1 **Association of Binational Centers of Latin America (ABLA)**, Lima, Peru. Contact dacjate@icpna.edu.pe.

August

- 7-8 **Utah State Office of Education**, Salt Lake City, UT. Contact 801-538-7844.

September

- 15-17 **Panama TESOL**, Panama City, Panama. Contact Carlos A. King, cking@sinfo.net.
- 15-17 **Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic (ATECR)**, Plzen, Czech Republic. Contact hurtova@eryz.zcu.cz.
- 22-25 **TESOLANZ**. National Conference on Community Languages and ESOL, Auckland, NZ. Contact Helen Nicholls, hkniche@iprolink.co.nz.
- 25-28 **ACE of Florida**, Tallahassee, FL. Contact 850-222-2233.
- 28-30 **TESL Canada and TESL Nova Scotia**, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Contact Sandra Heft, smheft@navnet.net.
- 30-1 **Korea TESOL**, Taegu, South Korea. Contact Jane Hoelker, hoelkerj@hotmail.com.

October

- 7 **Michigan TESOL**, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Contact Brenda Imber, 734-763-6377.
- 13-15 **ASCOCOPI (Columbian Association of Teachers of English)**, Cartagena, Columbia. Contact JoEllen M. Simpson, jsimpson@columbianet.net.
- 14 **Washington Area TESOL**, Fairfax, VA. Contact Richard Grant, 703-684-1494.
- 14 **Indiana TESOL**, Indianapolis, IN. Contact John Graney, aafgrane@isugw.indstate.edu.
- 19-21 **Southeast Florida TESOL**, Miami, FL. Contact Allene Gronet, allene@cal.org.
- 19-22 **Mexico TESOL**, Aguascalientes, Mexico. Contact MEXTESOL2000@yahoo.com.
- 27 **Oregon TESOL**, Oregon City, OR. Contact Molly Williams, 503-657-6958 x2596.
- 27-28 **TexTESOL State**, San Antonio, TX. Contact Dr. Chris Green, 210-444-1710.
- 27-30 **New York State TESOL**, Rochester, NY. Contact www.nystesol.org/AnnualConf.html.

November

- 2-5 **Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**, Shizuoka, Japan. Contact jalt@gol.com.
- 3-4 **Washington TESOL**, Seattle, WA. Contact 425-788-7593.
- 3-5 **Egypt TESOL**, Cairo, Egypt. Contact Deena Boarie, cdc@intouch.com.
- 4 **Maryland TESOL**, Arnold, MD. Contact Elizabeth Holden, 410-767-0631.
- 9-11 **Colorado TESOL**, Longmont, CO. Contact Larry R. Fisher, 303-938-2584.
- 10-11 **Minnesota TESOL**, St. Paul, MN. Contact Larry R. Fisher, 651-962-5987.
- 10-12 **Slovak Association of Teachers of English**, Bratislava, Slovakia. Contact andlichova@fphil.uniba.sk.
- 23-25 **TESL Association of Ontario**, Toronto, Canada. Contact 905-737-8562.

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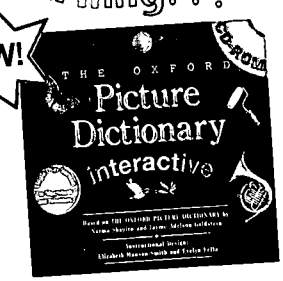

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Explore 33,000 Museums!

I always skim through the Cyberscope column in *Newsweek*. In the June 19, 2000 issue the heading "What Place Art?" caught my eye and brought to my attention a true gem: the Museum Network (http://museumnetwork.com), a Web site that provides information on 33,000 museums worldwide.

Home Page

The home page of this incredibly rich site is attractive and well organized. The primary sections are Entertainment, Shopping, Learning, For Museum Professionals, and Images & More. You can click on any of these titles to go directly to that page. Links are also provided to feature stories. The current feature stories are "Commemorating the National D-Day Museum," "The Last Stop for the Art of Bloomsbury," and "Historic Costume Collection Goes Digital."

The Quick Directory divides the museums into seven categories, and Quick Picks provides links to a few museums in each. Some examples are the Museum of Bad Art in Boston (Art & Design), the Salem Witch Museum (History), the Bath Postal Museum in Bath, UK (Special Interest), Museo de la Real Plaza de Toros de Sevilla in Spain (Sports), and the Kindermuseum Zoom in Vienna, Austria (Kids). I would especially recommend the excellent Salem Witch Museum site.

The Home Page also offers a search feature that can be used to find a specific museum, exhibit, or place.

Entertainment Page

This page links popular movies with museums. For example, you can read about the movie *The Gladiator* and then click to visit the Galleria Borghese in Rome to see a well-preserved, ancient mosaic of a gladiator. Dinosaur films are always popular, especially with young people, and this page includes a link to a dinosaur museum.

Learning Page

Teachers will find this page interesting and useful. It features learning exhibits, feature stories, school and family resources, and theme tours on the Web. The four theme tours listed were the "Children's Book Tour" (all about books for children), "Flight" (from Leonardo da Vinci to the Wright Brothers), "Meander through the 1870s" (how people lived in the Wild West of the United States in that decade), and "Exploring Portraits" (a tour of famous faces and the artists who painted them).

Shopping

I sometimes find that I like the museum shops almost as much as the museums themselves. Here one can shop in many museum shops after visiting the exhibits. The books, videos and CDs will probably be of particular interest to teachers.

Note: Visitors to this site should be warned that downloading can be slow because of the many graphics. Touring the entire site can be frustratingly slow. It is probably best to go to the site with a specific purpose, not for casual browsing (unless, of course, you want to get an overview of this excellent site).

Christine Meloni teaches in the EFL Department at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She welcomes comments and suggestions at cfmeloni@hotmail.com.

All of Christine Meloni's Networthy columns are available online. See the index at http://www.eslmag.com/networthy.html.

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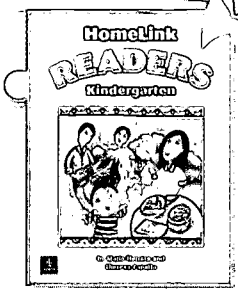

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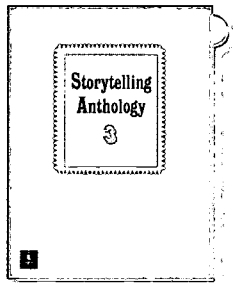

Storytelling Anthologies
Grades 1-3

- Collections of multicultural literature for enhancement of oral listening skills.

Newcomer Phonics
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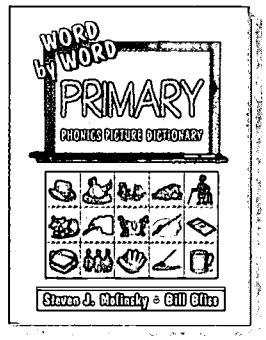

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Your Professional Partner:
The Center for Applied Linguistics

BY ALLENE G. GROGNET

In 1999 the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) celebrated its 40th birthday. That is quite a milestone for an organization that has relied on "soft money" throughout its existence. But CAL is like no other language and linguistics organization in the world, and its value for language teachers and other language professionals is inestimable.

CAL is a private, non-profit, non-affiliated organization with its main office in Washington, D.C., and a satellite office in Sarasota, Florida. CAL's staff is comprised of about 60 scholars and educators who use the findings of linguistics and related sciences to identify and address language-related problems. CAL conducts a wide range of activities including research, teacher education, analysis and dissemination of information, design and development of instructional materials, technical assistance, conference planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis. Its current mission is to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture.

Clearinghouses for Languages, Linguistics, and Literacy

The longest running of CAL's projects has been the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. Through a contract with the U. S. Department of Education/Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the Clearinghouse maintains a print and Web information base about foreign language education, English as a second language, bilingual education and linguistics. Except for a two-year period, the Clearinghouse has always [illegible] CAL home.

CAL also houses the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE), an adjunct ERIC clearinghouse that publishes print and Web-based information about literacy education for adults learning English as a second language. NCLE also operates an e-mail list serve.

Research and Resource Partnerships

CAL is also a partner in the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE), which is operated by the University of California, Santa Cruz. CREDE is one of the topical research centers funded by the U. S. Department of Education/OERI. For this center, CAL conducts research on two-way immersion education, sheltered instruction, and newcomer programs and assists in the dissemination of CREDE's findings.

CAL is also a partner with Georgetown University and The George Washington University in the National Capitol Language Resource Center and is a partner with Iowa State University in the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center.

A Focus on Language Teaching

Since its founding, CAL has also taken the lead in studying the teaching of the less commonly taught languages in the United States. More recently, CAL broadened its foreign language scope to look at foreign language in the elementary schools (FLES) and the teaching of the commonly taught languages (French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish), as well. CAL helped establish and now maintains the secretariat for the National Network on Early Language Learning, an organization of teachers, administrators, and researchers that promotes opportunities for all children to learn additional languages.

In the last year, CAL has undertaken a comprehensive national consensus development project for the framework of the first National Assessment of Educational Progress for foreign language. CAL also conducted a survey of state certification boards, local school districts, and teacher preparation programs to determine how foreign language competency is being assessed for K-12 teachers.

In the area of bilingual education, CAL has researched and documented the status of two-way immersion programs in the United States for the last 15 years. A database of program profiles is given on the CAL Web site. In addition to that area of investigation, CAL is currently conducting research on how reading skills acquired in Spanish transfer when English language learners begin reading in English and how this transfer

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benefits the development of English literacy. The CAL staff regularly provides professional development for bilingual educators including in-service training for bilingual paraprofessionals and summer institutes for teachers in two-way programs.

Since its inception in 1959, CAL has been involved in English as a second or foreign language. In the early 1960s CAL sponsored a series of conferences that focused attention on the need for a professional organization for teachers in the rapidly growing field of ESL/EFL. These conferences were pivotal in the formation of the professional organization Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). CAL has worked closely with TESOL over the past 40 years, most recently conducting the Pre-K—12 ESL Standards and Assessment Project. In the 1960s CAL also convened and acted as secretariat for the National Advisory Council on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (NACTEFL), which brought together U.S. government agencies, university professors, and others to discuss national and international language education needs and strategies. CAL was also instrumental in the development of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), recognized today as the standard in international testing in English as a foreign language.

A Focus on Refugee Needs

In late spring 1975, shortly after the fall of Saigon, CAL established the National Indochinese Clearinghouse to focus on the needs of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian refugees and the teachers and social workers working with them. By the opening of school that fall, CAL had developed and disseminated materials on Southeast Asian languages and cultures to schools across the country, as well as materials and methods of teaching ESL to adults and children. This same work continues with refugees today—only the ethnicities, languages, and places of origin of the refugees have changed. The current information collection and dissemination activities to serve refugee needs are conducted by CAL's Refugee Service Center with support from the U.S. Department of State.

Research and Practice in ESL

Need for expanding the knowledge base in ESL has persisted to the present, and CAL has been heavily involved in both research and practice. In the 1980s CAL developed and disseminated the Basic English Skill Test (BEST) to measure authentic language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for adult ESL learners. CAL also produced the technology-driven *English for Industry*, a videodisc course for self-instructional English in industrial settings. CAL also worked in content-based ESL, conducting research and developing materials to clarify the language of mathematics, science and social studies that posed learning problems for limited English speakers.

Addressing Immigrant Needs

In the 1990s CAL continued many of the ESL/EFL programs developed in the 1980s and expanded upon them. Addressing the needs of immigrants remained an important focus. CAL conducted a three-year program in adult immigrant education to improve instruction in ESL and employment skills for that population. CAL studied short-term newcomer programs for recently arrived secondary students with limited English proficiency and evaluated the effectiveness of these programs in promoting successful transition into U.S. schools. CAL also coordinated a program of research and development on program reform for secondary immigrant students. CAL became a partner with Educational Testing Service in one of 15 Comprehensive Regional Technical Assistance Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education to focus on the needs of children in high-poverty areas of Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Professional Development

As we head into the next century, CAL's attention is turned to ongoing professional development for teachers and teacher educators in ESL/EFL and content education. In Massachusetts and North Carolina, CAL has worked with educators to integrate language and content instruction for English language learners. CAL has also developed video and print materials on what all teachers need to know about language in order to teach reading to linguistically diverse students. CAL has published two comprehensive professional development programs (one for elementary teachers, the other for sec-

Mining the Riches of CAL

www.cal.org

A wealth of resources at the Center for Applied Linguistics is just a click away. The following list is only a sample of what CAL has to offer.

- **News** about CAL and upcoming events.
- **Topic Areas** including:
  - Adult ESL Literacy
  - Bilingual Education
  - Dialects/Ebonics
  - Foreign Languages
  - Immigrant Education
  - K-12 ESL
  - Language and Testing
  - Public Policy
- **Clearinghouses** where documents can be viewed and downloaded:
  - ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (www.cal.org/ericcll)
  - National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (www.org/ncle)
- **Centers** such as:
  - Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (www.cal.org/crede)
  - CAL's Refugee Service Center (www.cal.org/rsc)
- **Research Briefs and Digests**, excellent two-page publications on topics of interest in the field of education. Some examples include:
  - Professional Development for Teachers in Culturally Diverse Schools
  - Promoting Language Proficiency and Academic Achievement Through Cooperation
  - Multiple Intelligences: Theory and Practice in Adult Education
  - Native Language Literacy and Adult ESL Instruction
  - Poetry in the Adult ESL Classroom
  - Reading and the Adult ESL Learner
  - Using Videos with Adult English Language Learners
- **Resource Guides** (some examples)
  - Internet Resources for Teachers of English as a Second Language
  - Preparing to Teach English Abroad
  - Two-Way (Dual) Immersion
- **CAL Reporter**, a newsletter published twice yearly. It is available in print and on the Web.
- **Additional Products**
- **Services**
- **Databases/Directories**
- **Projects**
- **Links** to other services and organizations.

ERIC

anl CAL 109

ondary teachers) to help them meet the needs of English language learners in their classrooms.

Publications

CAL has had a long and distinguished publication and dissemination program.The following are illustrative of that history. In the 1960s CAL and the University of Chicago Press published ten volumes on contrastive linguistics of English structures and phonology with the five most commonly taught languages. The 1960s also saw the publication of the *Urban Language Studies*, beginning with major studies on Black Vernacular English and expanding to regional varieties of English such as Appalachian and Puerto Rican English, and the social stratification of English in New York City.

In the 1970s CAL published *Current Perspectives in Bilingual Education*, four volumes which dealt with bilingual education from the point of view of social science, linguistics, education and law. Titles published in the 1980's included *From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults* and *Second Language Proficiency Assessment.* In this past decade CAL produced *Approaches to Adult ESL Literacy Instruction, A Guide to Resettlement in the United States* (in 17 different languages), *How to Integrate Language and Content Instruction*, and many other publications.

CAL currently publishes most of its material through Delta Publications, recently publishing ESL works such as *Immigrant Learner's and Their Families* and a series of four books on immigrant education. The two professional development programs *Enhancing English Language Learning in Elementary Classrooms* and *Enriching Content Classes for Secondary ESOL Students* are the most recent Delta/CAL collaborations.

Funding

Most of CAL's funding comes from federal and state grants and contracts, but foundation and private funding also contribute to CAL's support. Starting with two five-year grants from the Ford Foundation, CAL has received funding from such foundations as Bell South, Arthur Vining Davis, Carnegie, Arco, Andrew W. Mellon, Robert Wood Johnson, and William and Flora Hewitt, to name a few. Corporations such as United Auto Worker/General Motors, IBM, and Xerox have also provided funding.

At the beginning, CAL built its foundation on professionalizing the field of teaching the English language, the teaching of the less commonly taught languages, and conducting research into language diversity. In the past 40 years CAL has ranged broadly but has maintained the focus expressed in its mission: "Improving communication through the better understanding of language and culture." This continues to be the goal of CAL's work in all its dimensions. Since this is also the goal of language educators, CAL is a partner that no language teaching professional should be without.

Dr. Allene G. Grognet is a vice president of the Center for Applied Linguistics, director of CAL's Florida office and has worked at CAL for 38 years. She is one of 25 people identified by ESL Magazine *as a pioneer in ESL.*

Some CAL/Delta Systems Publications

- **Enhancing English Language Learning in Elementary Classrooms** by Allene Grognet, Judith Jameson, Lynda Franco and Maria Derrick-Mescua
- **Enriching Content Content Classes for Secondary ESOL Students** by Judith Jameson
- **Into, Through and Beyond Secondary School: Critical Transitions for Immigrant Youths** by Tamara Lucas
- **Through the Golden Door: Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents with Limited English Schooling** by Betty Mace-Matluck, Rosaline Alexander-Kasparik and Robin M. Quinn
- **Access and Engagement: Program Design and Instructional Approaches for Immigrant Students in Secondary School** by Aida Walqui
- **New Concepts for New Challenges: Professional Development for Immigrant Youth** by Josue Gonzalez and Linda Darling Hammond
- **Writing our Lives: Reflections of Dialog Journal Writing with Adults Learning English** edited by Joy Kreeft Peyton and Jana Staton
- **Making Meaning, Making Change: Participatory Curriculum Development for Adult ESL Literacy** by Elsa Auerbach
- **Approaches to Adult ESL Literacy Instruction** edited by JoAnn Crandall and Joy Kreeft Peyton
- **Immigrant Learners and Their Families: Literacy to Connect the Generations** edited by Gail Weinstein and Elizabeth Quintero
- **A Day in the Life of the Gonzalez Family** by Carol Van Duzer and Miriam Burt
- **From the Classroom to the Community: A Fifteen-Year Experiment in Refugee Education** edited by Donald Ranard and Margo Pfleger
- **Literacy and Language Diversity in the United States** by Terence Wiley
- **American Bilingual Tradition** by Heinz Kloss
- **Profiles in Two-Way Immersion Education** by Donna Christian, Christopher Montone, Kathryn Lindholm and Isolda Carranza
- **Making the Connection: Language and Academic Achievement among African American Students** edited by Carolyn Adger, Donna Christian and Orlando Taylor
- **Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL** edited by Daniel Holt and Carol Van Duzer
- **Of the People...: U.S. History, By the People, For the People...: U.S. Government and Citizenship** by Deborah Short, Margaret Seufert-Bosco and Allene Grognet

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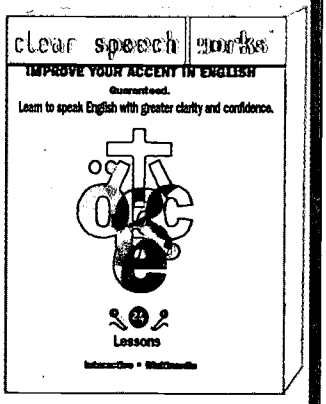

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Strengthening the School-Home Connection

BY PATTY ORNDORFF

On March 22, 2000, at Bell Multicultural High School in Washington, D.C., U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley delivered a speech entitled, "Excelencia Para Todos (Excellence for All): The Progress of Hispanic Education and the Challenges of a New Century." His remarks included this statement: "The heart of the Latino community is the family. Parents must be supported in guiding their children to take challenging courses and in providing them the support to stay in school and go on to college."

In Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Public Schools the ESOL team has taken this concept to heart for all English language learners and is using several approaches to connecting with students' families at home. Currently, Anne Arundel County has 744 ESOL students, pre-K through grade 12. Most of our students are Spanish-speaking. Our second largest language group is Korean-speaking students. Our outreach efforts thus far have focused primarily on Hispanic and Korean parents.

Parent outreach meetings help parents get involved in and support their children's education.

Bilingual Parent Outreach Liaisons

Four years ago, bilingual parent outreach liaisons were hired to strengthen the school-home connection by providing support for these two parent groups. The duties of these liaisons include explaining school and district policies and state testing initiatives, translating during parent conferences, working with ESOL students in the classroom, and making home visits. For the past three years they have also planned and held a series of parent information meetings, workshops, and field trips to help Hispanic and Korean parents feel informed about and involved in their children's education.

We have three Spanish-speaking liaisons and one Korean. Two of the liaisons are full-time in their respective schools. The other two are available to any school in the county that needs their assistance. Because of the great demand, some schools have to deal with language barriers without the liaisons.

The liaisons all work full-time during the day providing translation support for parents. They also work many after-school hours making home visits to explain school policies and help parents get the necessary medical care for their children. They also work evenings doing informational meetings and workshops such as the ones described here.

For the 2000-2001 school year we plan to hire another liaison for each language group. They will work full-time in two high schools in the county in an effort to decrease the number of dropouts among our ninth and tenth grade ESOL students. Liaisons must be fluent in both English and the second language, have good interpersonal skills, and be able to deal with unexpected situations.

Workshops for Parents

Parent involvement opportunities have been many and varied. The liaisons and several ESOL teachers recently conducted a three-session workshop for Hispanic parents using *Leamos/Let's Read!: 101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write* by Mary and Richard Behm (Edinfo Press). The first meetings were small group brainstorming sessions facilitated by the teachers and liaisons during which parents asked questions and expressed their concerns related to their children. Next, the liaisons and teachers conducted training sessions to give parents tips for helping their children learn to read. Even parents who were illiterate felt empowered when they were made aware of "wordless" picture books. The culminating session for this series

was a field trip to the local public library. A Spanish-speaking ESOL teacher took the parents on a tour that ended with the parents receiving their own library cards.

To encourage parents to attend the sessions, we provided supper for all and babysitting for the children. High school ESOL students were hired to help the adults supervise the children. As a result of these first sessions, the public library wrote and received a grant to provide computer literacy training specifically for the Annapolis, Maryland-area Hispanic parents. This training occurred in May 2000. At this time, approximately 30 Hispanic parents who participated in the program are now able to use the Internet.

ESOL students enjoy a tasty treat provided by a newly involved parent.

In other parent sessions this year, liaisons in three more elementary schools brought in community resource people from the police department and the health department to provide important information to parents in their own languages.

The Korean bilingual liaison and the ESOL teachers who work primarily with Korean-speaking children and parents have also focused on information briefings regarding community resources. They have also planned and presented a workshop on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP), which tests students in grades three, five and eight on the state learning outcomes. The parents received hints on how to help their children prepare for the state assessment. Parents actually experienced an MSPAP activity called "Where Rabbits Live." During this task, parents read the selection (which had been translated into Korean) and answered the questions using R.A.R.E. responses—restate the question, give an answer, give reasons for the answer, give examples from the text to support the answer. By completing the entire task, from reading and responding to discussing their reactions in Korean, they were able to understand what their children are required to do in order to be successful on the tests.

Parent Interest Surveys

During all parent sessions this year, an interest survey was distributed to parents to get their input regarding meeting logistics, parents' level of involvement, and future topics for the meetings. We found out from both Spanish-speaking and Korean-speaking parents that they want to meet with their children's teachers, visit their classrooms, help with field trips, participate in the PTA, and help in the classroom. They are interested in learning more ways to help their children achieve in reading, writing, math and science. They want information on students' rights and responsibilities, how to get their children into college, and how to help with homework. Personally, they need information on health care, ESL classes, immigration issues, and parents' rights and responsibilities.

Online Translation of School Forms

Another means of strengthening the school-home connection is the school system's use of the TransACT Translation Library of school forms available online (www. transact.com). This service provides more than 100 commonly used school forms in 20 languages. With this service, a school staff member can quickly access a registration form, school lunch form, field

Parents Enriching Education

Strengthening the school-home connection is both challenging and rewarding. Many different factors can make it difficult to connect with parents at home, even the weather! However, once the connection is made, the rewards are great for parents, students and school personnel. The rewards come in many forms as explained here by one ESOL teacher:

"I first met Ana Ruth Carranza when I knocked on her door to invite her to our February Parent Outreach Program. In Spanish-flavored English she expressed her commitment to become more involved in her children's success in school. Unfortunately, this first outreach meeting was cancelled due to bad weather.

"In March, I invited her fourth grade daughter, Miriam, to help me teach an after school Spanish cluster to twelve peers. Miriam volunteered to ask her mom to send in a Spanish treat for our last session. I expected a "finger-food" dessert. Not from Ana. We feasted on a complete dinner—corn pupusas!

"March brought improved weather and our first Parent Outreach Meeting. Ana's family arrived first. Thank goodness! A mom was on the phone asking for directions in Spanish. 'Mrs. Carranza, please help,' I said. And once again, she did."

—Linda Opiekun, ESOL Teacher

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Planning Effective Parent Outreach Programs

▶ **Effective Collaboration and Communication**
- Plan with the principal
- Invite staff, teachers and counselors
- Collaborate with ESOL staff
- Establish norms and procedures for ESOL staff involvement
- Invite PTA and key people related to parent involvement
- Determine concerns, needs and interests of ESOL parents
- Inform invited guests of logistics

▶ **Key Players**
- Principal
- Bilingual parent outreach liaisons
- Parents
- ESOL teachers
- School staff
- Migrant and Title I parent liaisons
- Child care staff
- School counselors
- PTA president
- Guest speakers

▶ **Communication**
- Send translated invitations to parents
- Call parents, especially the day before the meeting
- Send home a bilingual school newsletter
- Make home visits

▶ **Program Agenda**
- Allow 1 to 2 hours
- Allow time for introductions of all participants
- Provide a format for parents to ask questions and express concerns
- Use questions for planning future meetings

▶ **Sample Presentation Topics**
- Our School Culture
- Culture Shock & Beyond
- District/State Assessments
- The ESOL program
- The Public Library System
- *Leamos/Let's Read!*

—Linda Opiekun

trip form, etc. for parents who would prefer this information in a language other than English.

Through all these means, we hope to enable our Hispanic and Korean-speaking parents to become partners with teachers and administrators in their children's education. During our parent meetings, parents learn about the educational system and have the opportunity to become involved. At the same time, teachers and administrators learn new ways of relating to all children and their parents, especially those from other countries or with backgrounds different from their own. It's a good partnership for all!

Patty Orndorff is coordinator for foreign language and ESOL for the Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Public Schools.

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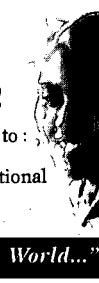

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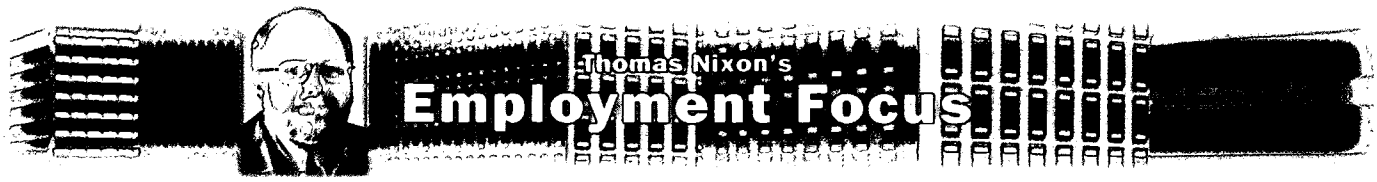

The Future of Full-Time

If you want to know about employment in the field of ESL, you want to know Adelaide Parsons. Dr. Parsons runs the employment workshops at the annual TESOL convention (although not in 2001 as she'll play a major role in the St. Louis convention). She is the author of TESOL's guide *The ESL/EFL Job Search* (www.tesol.org). She is also the director of international programs at Southeast Missouri State University. The following is the first part of an interview with Dr. Parsons concerning the future of full-time employment in ESL and strategies to use in getting a full-time position.

TN: What do you see as the cause for the lack of full-time positions within ESL?
AP: There are at least three main causes. First, ESL programs need to be as cost-efficient as possible in order to generate income for the larger unit, and part-timers are cost-efficient—no benefits, no paid planning time, a straight hourly wage. Second, ESOL is not a priority in our institutions of higher education or in public schools and adult education. We get the last of the allocations. The same is true in other countries as well. Finally, there is a perception that ESL is a temporary situation—soon everyone will know English and the students will disappear.

TN: Do you see this getting any better?
AP: I think it is getting better. First, we are educating the public about our field and our roles within that field. Second, accrediting agencies such as North Central are raising concerns via self-study and review about the balance between full-time and part-time faculty. (Note: U.S. universities are accredited by one of six regional accrediting agencies.) Third, as part-timers begin to receive benefits, it is becoming apparent that a full-time employee is more cost-effective than a part-time one.

TN: What recommendations do you have for people going into the ESL field now?
AP: Get a teaching certificate! Allow time for relocation if you are looking in the United States and are currently located overseas. Do your research carefully: look for possible jobs that are related to your interests and your personal needs.

In the next issue, Dr. Parsons will offer specific, practical advice for a successful job search.

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teachEFL.com.

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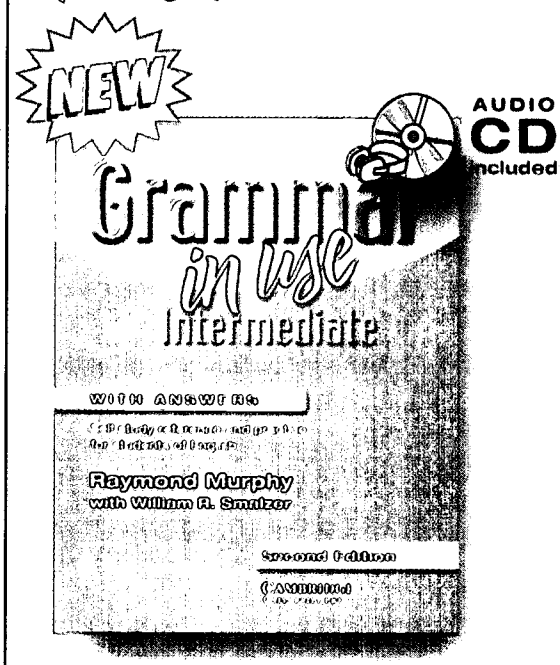

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From Writing to Speaking: *Enhancing Conversation*

BY NANCY KAYE AND DON MATSON

In the natural process of learning a language, speaking usually precedes writing. Furthermore, speaking and listening are often considered to be quite distinct from writing and reading. It may be surprising, therefore, to consider an instructional progression from writing to speaking.

Quality vs. Quantity

In order to become a better speaker of a foreign language (or even one's own native language), one must practice speaking it. "The more you speak, the better a speaker you become" is true, but it is a limited approach to teaching conversation in a foreign language. We all know people who talk a lot and don't really communicate very much. What is often overlooked in discussions of teaching foreign languages is that the *quality* of the message plays an important but often neglected part in the process of language acquisition.

We would like to propose that it is just as important in teaching a foreign language to emphasize the *quality* of the message as it is the fluency of the message. By *quality* we do not refer to the grammatical correctness of the message but to its meaning. We hold that the transmission of the content of the message is of greatest importance in the communication process.

The quality of the message, in the that we are using the term, is often overlooked by both teachers and students. Most of us who have acquired a second language are aware at times of a strategy that we use semi-consciously when speaking in the new language in which we ease the difficulty of expressing a particular idea or concept by articulating the closest approximation to it that will allow us to maintain the flow of our speech. In other words, we sacrifice some of the message for the sake of a fluent transmission of the message.

Advanced students' progress toward quality conversation can be enhanced with a variety of writing-to-speaking activities.

Those who have not acquired a second language may note that we unconsciously use the strategy of sacrificing the message even in our native language. We find ourselves making compromises at times by articulating a somewhat simplified version of our intended message and presenting it as though it were the message itself. Of course, if we never sent these "compromised" messages, conversations would not take place. Most conversational contexts demand an immediate adequate reply. The problem is that many of us begin to accept our "compromises" as our actual intended messages. We allow ourselves these weak, poorly articulated messages particularly in the second and third languages that we speak. Often we even congratulate ourselves for being able to compose any kind of message at all.

As "compromised" messages in a target language become habitual, we grow accustomed to a lower quality of communication than we are actually capable of. We get by, but we live with the vague awareness that what we say does not really represent what we mean and who we are.

How is it possible to avoid this lapse into "compromised" messages and instead stress the quality of the message in teaching conversation in English? First of all, the importance of quality communication needs to be recognized. We think of "quality communication" as the transmission of important, stimulating ideas and concepts in precise and

powerful language. Our advanced and high intermediate students of English have already acquired most of the techniques of superficial conversation and often feel that they have reached a "plateau." They feel they are no longer improving their conversational abilities at the rate that they did in the earlier stages of their study. Just doing a lot of speaking, using the patterns and techniques that they already know, has ceased to give them the feeling that they are learning.

Writing to Improve Speaking

Writing, we have found, can play a determining role in the advanced student's progress toward learning quality conversation. The act of writing is necessary at this stage to improve speaking. Writing can temporarily "freeze" the message during the process of its transmission so that the writer is able to refine it and "sculpt" it until it reflects the intended meaning of the writer with a degree of precision far greater than that of the initial, more spontaneous utterance. In fact, most writers are aware that they often "discover" the intended meanings of their discourse in the process of composing. The "refining" and "sculpting" are an exploration that leads to meaning. The writing and the discovery of the meanings to be communicated occur simultaneously.

Speaking, in contrast to writing, does not promote the same kind of exploration, discovery, and precise articulation that writing does for a number of reasons. Often, the social context of a conversation works against quality communication. The focus of a conversation frequently shifts so there is little chance of exploring ideas in any depth or with any degree of precision. Often speakers in conversation feel that it is more important to convey an impression of confidence and self-assurance than to express important thoughts in their complexity with grace and precision.

Quality conversation is an art, one that can be learned through writing. Of the various modes of discourse, we find that narration and argumentation can be most helpful to the student who wants to improve the quality of her or his conversation. Everyone has stories to tell, opinions to share, and comments about life to make, but few people actually take the time or have the [illegible]on to articulate their ideas effectively. We have several successful methods of presenting the students with occasions to express their views in depth and detail.

Games for Writing to Speaking

One approach is based on a game called the "Ungame." We use it with students at all levels. The Ungame comes in number of versions—for families, couples, kids. The couples version, for example, consists of two decks of cards, one "light" and the other more serious. Each card in the deck asks the participant to comment on or answer a question about some aspect of relationships or just life in general. Here are some of the "light" couples cards: "Make a statement about your childhood," "Make any statement about love," "Do you think marriage should be a fifty-fifty partnership?" These cards are designed to encourage people to express their feelings and ideas about life, relationships, or themselves.

The game may be played by two to eight participants. It is called "Ungame" because it is not competitive and there are no losers—the goal is communication. In many games the players engage in the act of pretending, but the Ungame allows the participants to be themselves.

When we use the this game as a basis for creating written texts that will be used to improve the English conversational abilities of our students, we deviate from the suggested "rules" in several respects. Most important is our use of the cards as writing prompts instead of speaking prompts. Our students browse through the cards and choose one that they find interesting. They copy the prompt on a piece of paper and take it home with them. Their assignment is to think about the prompt for several hours and then write a response to it. The students hand in their responses to the instructor, who reads them and arranges mini-conferences with the students to discuss them. The goal at this stage is to encourage the students to develop the response in greater depth and detail.

The next assignment asks the students to continue the response, writing and/or rewriting as suggested in the mini-conference with the goal of creating a more complete and complex piece of communication. When the students hand in the results, the instructor meets with them individually again. If the response has become a more effective piece of communication, developing the ideas to a higher level of complexity, the instructor will give the student feedback on the most important editing considerations including sentence structure, diction, grammar, and style. The student then edits the response until the instructor is satisfied that it is close to a response that would be made by a native English speaker.

The students' next task is to read over their responses a few times but not memorize them. Then the students meet as a group and each tells the others his or her prompt and response. They speak in their own words, usually using much of the text that they developed as they have rewritten the response in increasingly complex and detailed form. The instructor reminds them that they are to speak "naturally" and that they should not attempt to recite their written text but only to allow it to serve as an influence on their spoken presentations.

There is an Ungame rule that the group is to remain silent as each group member speaks. We follow this rule during the first round of presentations, and we ask the listeners to take notes and record their own version of each member's response as accurately as they can. A second round of presentations of the responses (and sometimes a third) is necessary for the students to complete their written versions of their classmates' ideas. Of course, the presentations are not exactly the same each time, but this is an advantage rather than a disadvantage.

When the students have completed their written versions of all of the responses, they hand them in to the instructor, who notes any problems in language use and gives them back to the students for editing. The students then read over their set of edited responses and prepare to articulate each of them.

At the next stage in this conversational exercise, the group members present their own responses again, after which the listeners ask questions or make comments that the author must respond to and later integrate into the written response. The result is an enriched message with this further increase in text complexity.

There is really no end to the stages of this exercise. Since all of the group

members have their own versions of all of the responses, they may present the response of any other member and field the ensuing questions and comments. It should be emphasized that the speakers are not memorizing these responses; they are articulating in their own target language words the ideas that they have discussed and digested.

Free Writes from Personal Experiences

Another effective exercise has been "free writing" from personal experiences. This can be used with students at all levels. Students are instructed to write about a personal experience but not to concern themselves with punctuation, grammar, spelling, sentence structure, looking up words, what time it is, erasing, etc. This frees them to let the creative ideas flow from their heads to their hands and on to the paper. Before writing begins, our teachers discuss the topic ideas for a few minutes with students to awaken memory and add color, texture, voice, tone, shape and form to the writing experience. The instructor says "begin" and students write continuously for 20 to 30 minutes until prompted to stop.

When the free write is complete, students read their papers out loud and mistakes are overlooked at this point. Active discussion ensues with questions from classmates. The students each have a turn reading and discussing their writing. Papers are later corrected by the instructor, and students create a final piece for a second round of discussion. This time the conversation is enhanced because students have practiced and polished their language.

Create a Scene

Dialogue is particularly effective in teaching idiomatic English. We use the following exercise with students at all levels. We pair up students for the first stage of writing dialogues and ask them to "create a scene." They have a few days to think about their scene and to meet with their partner out of class and brainstorm. After the period of preparation and incubation, the pairs sit down and work out their dialogue along with its setting. They usually work through several versions then hand in the final version to the instructor. The instructor then gives feedback to the pairs in a mini-conference, focusing on idiomatic language use. The students revise until their dialogues have an American ring to them and use some appropriate American English idioms.

A second exercise asks the student pairs to "produce" their scenes, casting their class members as characters and perhaps putting together some simple props. Sometimes one class will present its scenes to another class. We like to videotape these productions for use as teaching tools. In general, we have found that writing dialogue before moving into the speaking phase has many advantages and provides feedback from the instructor during the process of creating the scene.

Autobiographies

High beginners and above enjoy another exercise we use in going from writing to speaking: the autobiography. We have our students write their life stories and receive feedback from the instructor before they tell their stories. They work on one chapter at a time, focusing on the "turning points" in their lives. We have found that once the students have written a life story chapter, they are much more fluent and effective in their speech than they would have been without the writing exercise. This exercise allows learners to find out what they have in common with the other students. An added benefit is that they have a permanent diary to take home with them to review and reflect on later. This exercise helps strong bonds to develop among the students, some of whom become lifelong friends.

Argumentation

In another writing-to-speaking exercise, we have our high intermediate students and above write arguments as preparation for debates. While the autobiographies encourage the students to find what they have in common, writing arguments and debating highlight their differences. In many conversational situations, people tend to avoid differences instead of exploring them. However, when people are encouraged to develop their opinions in a systematic manner in writing, they are able to present a reasonable and interesting position, one that stimulates others to think about their own views on the issue in question.

We base our exercises in argumentation on Stephan Toulmin's argument analysis, in terms of "claims," "grounds," and "warrants." The Toulmin approach, in a simplified form, is easy to learn and encourages students to explore their opinions systematically, in depth and detail. In these exercises, the instructor responds to student arguments in mini-conference, first making suggestions to strengthen the argument then pointing out any problems in language use. We then arrange debates. We find that the speech of the students taking part in the debates is of a much higher quality than it would have been without the writing exercises.

As a result of these writing-to-speaking exercises, our students are able to increase their active vocabulary rapidly, learning the words and constructions they need to express their own particular views and experiences. In other words, these students are not just learning "new words," they are learning the particular new words that allow them to express their own ideas. Different people have different interests, opinions, and experiences, so they need the vocabulary that will allow them to express their individual perspectives. We have also discovered, that these exercises may be the first time an international student has been asked to express an opinion or take a stand on an important issue.

Our students gain confidence with each exercise and attempt to express increasingly complex ideas with precision. The focus on quality in communication encourages them to overcome the common tendency to compromise a message. Instead of simplifying, they strive to say precisely what they mean. In many cases, this involves "discovering" what they mean as they write in preparation for speaking.

Nancy Kaye has taught ESL for many years. She currently manages the Global American Language Institute (GALI) in San Diego, CA.

Don Matson, Ph.D. (UCSD) is Director of GALI and has taught ESL since 1960.

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Preparing Authentic Texts With a Word Processor

Many ESL/EFL teachers use content- or theme-based materials to teach language. Often you will find a text that is the perfect supplement to a content unit, but you fear the vocabulary level is too high for your students. Using word processor functions, you can prepare such a text as a reading on short notice and also give your students cues to ready them for a thoughtful writing assignment. While the example here is from Microsoft Word 6.0.1 (1994) for a Macintosh, most word processors have similar functions. If the document is not already in electronic form, e.g., downloaded from the Internet or on CD or other disk format, you will also need a scanner.

Plan carefully before you choose a tour. Are you only interested in wildflowers, or do you also want to learn about an area's geology?

What would you like to see when you travel?

Geology is the study of land, rocks and fossils.

The Text Box function in MS Word allows you to call attention to parts of a text anywhere in a document. You can use different colors for different functions—perhaps a yellow background to indicate a gloss for a vocabulary word and a blue background to indicate a question or idea as food for thought and writing.

To get started, scan the text using optical character recognition software (OCR), setting a wide right (or left) margin to hold the text boxes. OCR recognizes the words and produces text rather than scanning the page as an image that can't be edited.

After scanning, open the text in your word processor, leaving an extra inch or more in the margin, depending on how long your messages will be. Be sure to spellcheck the scanned text to clean up any errors in the optical character recognition. Be sure you have the appropriate toolbar open in your word processor. For MS Word, you will need the Drawing toolbar: pull down the View menu and release on Toolbars. Click to check the box next to Drawing and close the window. The Drawing tools will now appear at the bottom of the page.

In MS Word the Text Box icon looks like a little page on the Drawing toolbar: Click on the icon, and the cursor will change to a crosshair. Simply click anywhere in the text and drag diagonally to approximately the size rectangle you want. When you click again inside the box, you will be able to type in a message. You can reposition and resize the box as often as you wish by clicking along any edge. When a crosshair appears, you can drag to a new position. If you click in the middle of any side, a two-edged arrow appears, and you can drag the edge to lengthen or widen the box.

Color in the box by clicking on an edge to highlight it (little black squares will appear around the border). Then hold the Fill Color button to select a shade.

You can erase a Text Box by clicking on its edge to highlight it then pressing the Delete key. You can change the message at any time by clicking inside the box and typing in new text.

A tip on scanning newspaper items: Newsprint does not scan well. Photocopy an item first, lightening the copy as much as possible to eliminate the bits of black that confuse the character recognition software. Then cut the article up into pieces in order to scan one column at a time (columns otherwise show up as tabs). Instead of scanning, it may be easier to find the article on the Internet or have the newspaper fax it to you.

Elizabeth Hanson-Smith is an education technology consultant and can be reached at ehansonsmi@aol.com.

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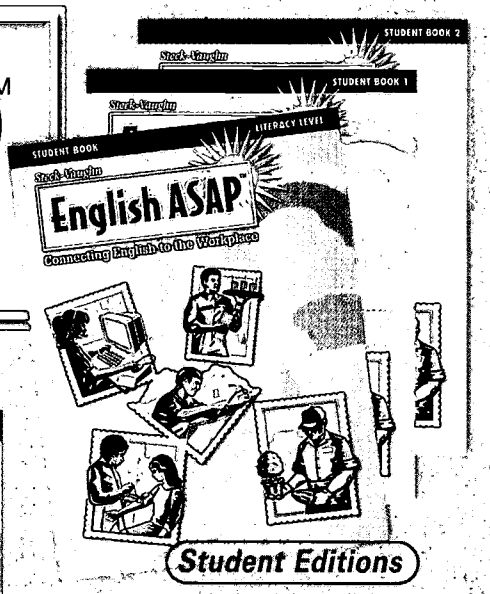

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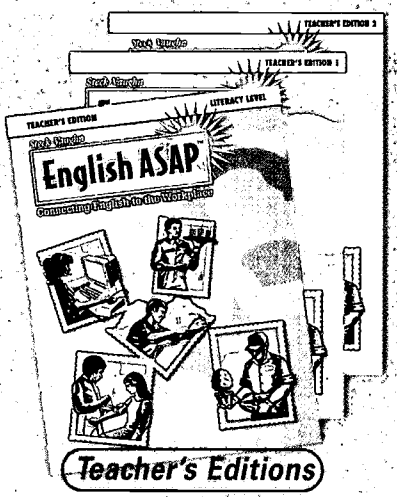

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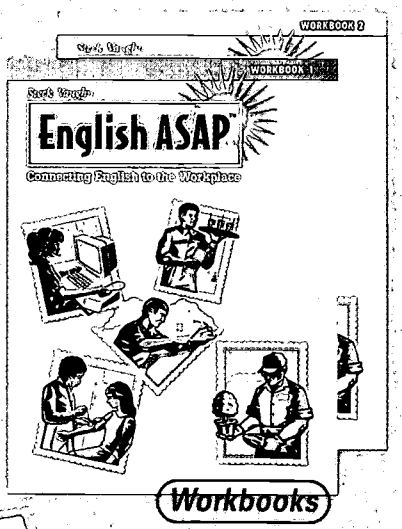

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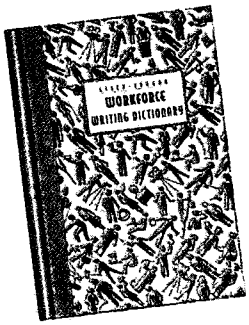

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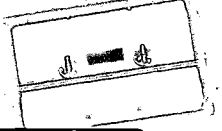

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Meeting The Citizenship Challenge

On Common Ground video and print series
Produced by INTELECOM, 1999

Citizenship instructors face the challenge of preparing students for the Immigration and Naturalization Service interview, but, more importantly, they must prepare students for the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of citizenship.

The *On Common Ground* video and print series meets this need by delivering content that prepares students to *be* citizens, not just *become* citizens. The videos feature characters that reflect the cultural diversity of this country including ethnicities, professions, and life interests. Each episode shows these characters using principles of law and government to resolve local challenges and conflicts as they co-exist in a typical United States city. The series targets intermediate to advanced ESL students and includes 15 half-hour videos, transcripts, two correlated multi-level worktexts, and two teacher resource books—a classroom and a distance learning edition.

A unique feature of each video is the short, documentary-style video sidebar called "Turning Points." The "Turning Points" segment highlights a sequence of events or a situation that proved to be a turning point in the history of the United States. For example, in the story "Skin Deep" a city is divided when an immigrant's small business angers other business owners in his neighborhood. The accompanying "Turning Points" discusses reasons for immigration to the United States and the economic contributions of immigrants to this country. This juxtaposition of history with real-life practice accents the complexities of our democratic form of government.

In my role as ESL program coordinator, I have introduced these materials to several intermediate, advanced, and citizenship classes. I have always been impressed with how easily students in these classes actively engage in discussing and debating the key concepts of each episode. The following are some of the comments students have written about the *On Common Ground* series:

"The video had a lot of important and real things for us. My class can discuss about it for a long time."

"Today we talked about important ideas. For me, it's important to communicate not only usual things but also to exchange ideas with people."

On Common Ground challenges our students and promotes problem-solving. The series also provides teachers with important tools for effective citizenship instruction, emphasizing the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of being a United States citizen.

On Common Ground was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service and the departments of education of California, Florida, and New York. To learn more about the English Literacy and Civics Education funding allocation for your state, contact your state office of adult education or visit the National Institute for Literacy Web site at www.nifl.gov/lincs/directories/state_local.html.

Sylvia Ramirez is an ESL instructor and coordinates the noncredit ESL program for MiraCosta College in Oceanside, California.

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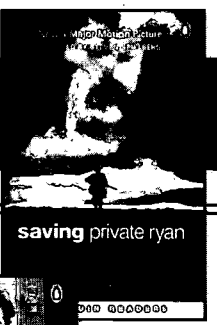

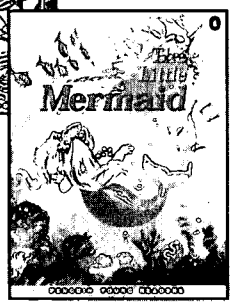

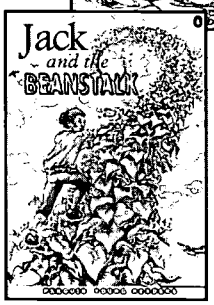

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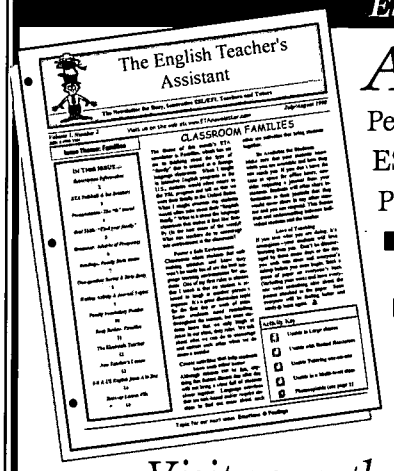

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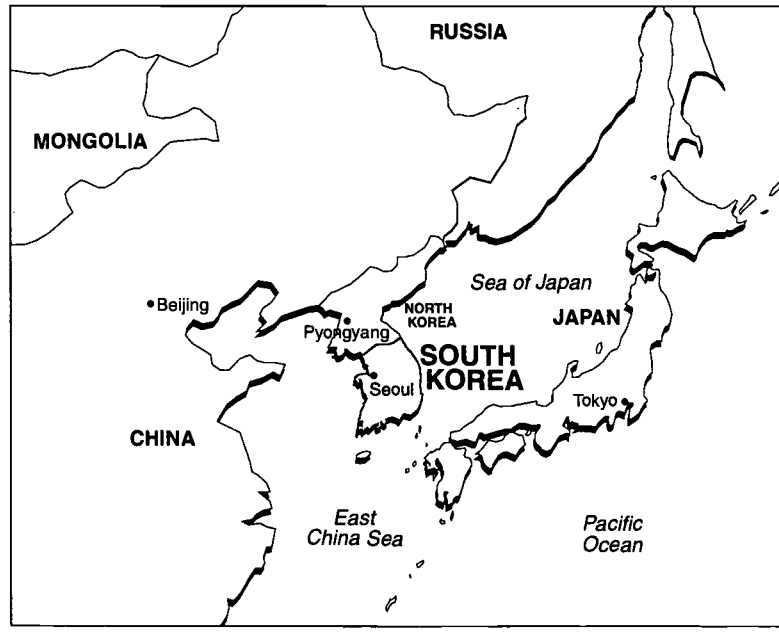
The Expansion of English Language Education in South Korea

BY PATRICK HWANG

It's dawn in the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and a Korean businessman can be seen entering a language school. He attends English conversation class for an hour or two then goes to work. Despite their heavy workloads, most business people in Korea feel it is essential to invest time in improving their English.

Seungwook Choi, a successful young executive in a venture company, is looking for a native speaker of English to help him with his English. Being a graduate of Seoul National University, the most prestigious university in Korea, Seungwook had a good knowledge of English when he graduated. He also attended early morning English conversation class for half a year during his post graduate study. Still he laments, "I can communicate in English, but I still find it difficult to debate in English. I feel terrible when I cannot get my overseas business partners to come to an agreement with me because of the limitations with my English proficiency."

He believes that his frustration could be overcome by improving his negotiation skills in English. This is not a concern for Seungwook alone. Most Korean business people would like to have a good command of English, but they feel their level of English is inadequate.



Daily Life with English

Beyond the business world, English has become an essential part of daily life for most Koreans. The population of Korea is densely packed on a small percentage of the land (over 70% of Korea is mountainous). Tightly clustered apartment buildings have become familiar scenes. Because of this population density, Korea has seen a rapid expansion of Internet access throughout the country. By the end of this year, all the primary schools in Korea will be equipped with Internet servers linked with high-speed Internet connections, which are usually only available to high-tech businesses.

School teachers, parents and kids are already communicating via the Internet. They usually use their native language, Korean, to communicate on the Web, but whenever they want to go beyond exchanging e-mails, looking at bulletin boards, and other Internet basics, they feel their need for English acutely. "How can I download shockwave/flash? I couldn't do it because the instructions were all in English," writes a child in Korean on a Web bulletin board for children. Another child writes in Korean, "The stories on your site are all in English. Do you have the translation for them?"

Many Korean students travel to English-speaking countries to learn English and to experience the culture. The director of VIP Travel in Korea reports, "it is impossible for a family to make a reservation to visit major cities in the United States and Canada (during the summer vacation) because of the students going to summer English language programs there."

English in Primary Schools

In 1997 the Ministry of Education introduced English inst-ruction as an obligatory subject in primary schools. During the first year, English was taught to third grade students only. The plan was to add English to one additional grade level each year.

This required major preparation and commitment from the people and organizations involved in implementing the policy. Who would do the teaching and the need for teacher training were the biggest points of controversy. Some suggested that English education majors should teach English. Most primary school teachers and people at education colleges suggested that primary school teachers should do it. The Ministry of Education decided to train primary school teachers to carry out the English instruction.

Primary school teachers, regardless of their English proficiency, were provided with 120 hours of training that included lessons in methodology and conversation. This did not guarantee that all primary school teachers would be capable of carrying out their job of teaching English. There was a small number of teachers who showed great ability in teaching English to children. The writer

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of this article was involved in the teacher training for three years.

A dozen different textbooks have been approved for use in the schools, and the Ministry of Education provides guidelines for English instruction in the primary schools. For example, third grade students are taught spoken English with a focus only on listening. Reading instruction is introduced to fifth grade students and writing to sixth grade students. However, these guidelines are too arbitrary in determining what skills are to be introduced in each grade. Many children enter the third grade with some ability to read English. There is no reason not to integrate the teaching of all the skills even to those with less English in their backgrounds. In fact, we often see the use of alphabet flash cards in third grade classrooms. Apparently many teachers feel comfortable teaching reading to the 9-year-old third grader while also teaching spoken English.

The introduction of English instruction has led many parents to get serious about English education for their children. Many parents send their children to private language schools or arrange private tutoring for them. The Ministry of Education has banned English instruction for the third grade in private language schools under a government regulation preventing regular subjects from being taught outside the schools. However, this did not have a great effect on children learning English outside the public schools.

The average English proficiency of Korean children has obviously improved over the past three to four years since the introduction of English as a regular subject. This should probably not be attributed solely to the instruction in regular schools. Private language schools and private tutoring have been more influential. It is estimated that there are now about 3,000 language schools in Korea and the language school business is certainly growing.

English in Secondary Schools

The teaching of English in secondary schools has been influenced mainly by changes in the national entrance examination—the Korean version of Scholastic Aptitude Test. Until the early 1980s, the teaching of English in secondary schools focused on the teaching of reading and grammar. Since the addition of the listening test to the national examination, secondary schools no longer focus only on the teaching of reading and writing but now use a more balanced approach that s all the language skills.

English in Conversation/ Proprietary Schools

In the early 1990s the language school business in Korea expanded rapidly to meet the increasing demand for English language instruction. There were nearly 25 organizations running franchised language school businesses. There were about 2,500 language schools nationwide. However, the country's economic troubles of the mid 1990s and the banning of English instruction in particular grades in private language schools caused many language schools to fail. Most franchising organizations have closed down their businesses, and many of the franchised language schools, which cost $200,000 to $500,000 to establish, closed down in 1997 and 1998.

The private language schools that survived the economic hardships are now quite successful. Many people are setting up new language schools with the hope of achieving that same success. The franchise fiasco, however, has made potential language school owners hesitant to join any language school franchise.

Children usually go to a language school three times a week and pay between $60 and $130 per month. They study English for an hour or two during each visit. Most courses for adults are offered five days a week. They also range in cost from $60 to $130 per month depending on the number of hours of daily study. Private language schools are important sources of English language learning experiences because these are the only places where children can meet and communicate regularly with native speakers of English.

Internet English Instruction

Another means of learning English is drawing more and more attention: the Internet. There are many Web sites in Korea that provide English instruction. Korea has great potential for English language teaching on the Internet. The Korea Information Society Development Institute reports that by the year 2004, over 6.38 million South Koreans will have high speed Internet access.

Many publishers and private exam preparation schools are jumping into the Internet business to provide instruction. This also applies to the language teaching business. Com-mercial Web sites offer English language programs, some for free and some for a monthly fee of $8 to $10.

There has been a flood of e-mails from non-Korean Web sites promoting their Internet-based instruction. However, many non-Korean Web sites charge too much—from $25 to $60 or even more—for the same content available for free on Korean Web sites. This is because these Web sites have been translated into many languages to provide the service in different countries. These sites do not reflect the needs of local people in local situations.

The Internet will have a significant effect on public education in South Korea. Quite a few authors and publishers of school textbooks are already developing Web content to support their textbooks. To be able to market a particular textbook successfully, it seems inevitable that publishers will have to provide Internet content that can be used with textbooks.

English in Junior Colleges and Colleges

There are about two hundred colleges in Korea. In the past most college courses were taught in Korean, but now many colleges encourage more courses to be taught in English. Colleges offer various English courses, both credit and non-credit. Regular credit courses are usually required for a term or two. Students can also take as many courses as they want at the language institutes associated with the colleges. Most language institutes offer courses in English conversation, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and the Test of English for International Communi-cation (TOEIC).

There is a great demand for the TOEFL and TOEIC. Every year in South Korea, approximately 150,000 people take the TOEFL and one million people take the TOEIC. The TOEFL has mainly been used to decide whether a student is capable of academic study in English-speaking countries. Now within Korea, the TOEFL is used to select students with outstanding English language ability. A dozen Korean universities and colleges choose a limited number of students on the basis of TOEFL scores only. This has caused many secondary school students to work on preparing for the TOEFL. Most college students study for the TOEIC, too, since one's TOEIC score is an important criterion for getting a job in many companies.

TESOL and Certificate Programs

Many universities offer training programs for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). The introduction of English teaching in primary schools has created an enormous demand for teachers nationwide. This demand, in addition to the need for universities to

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finance themselves, is leading many of them to develop teacher training programs that generate good income.

One of the most successful programs is Sookmyung Women's University's (SMU) TESOL program established by SMU and the University of Maryland/ Baltimore County. The program was launched in May of 1997 with great success. With the increasing demand for TESOL training in Korea, Sookmyung foresaw the need to cooperate with the University of Maryland. Many graduates feel that it is a great challenge to attend lectures given in English and they find it a great opportunity to prepare for further studies overseas. Many graduates would like to see the addition of more practical elements to the program to address the needs of Korean teachers who will face Korean students learning English in Korea.

Ewha Woman's University provides a program that has combined the theoretical aspects of TESOL and practical ideas extracted from the teaching experience of the lecturers. Some graduates from SMU-TESOL enroll in the Ewha Certificate Program of Elementary English. Sungky-unkwan University has also recently opened a TESOL program in cooperation with Georgetown University. There are still other universities planning to offer TESOL programs in cooperation with U.S. universities.

American, Canadian, and British Teachers

Twenty to thirty years ago most people teaching English in Korea were Americans, many of them with the Peace Corps. Almost all the textbooks and cassettes used in schools were in American English. The first question posed to a textbook sales person was usually "Is it in American English?" When a foreigner walked down the street, the first question that he most likely heard was "Are you an American?" This shows how much influence Koreans had from Americans and American English.

In the early 1990s, non-Korean English conversation teachers were mostly Americans and a few were Canadians. During and after Korea's financial crisis, many American teachers left Korea because of the collapse of language schools and the devaluation of Korean currency. Now almost half of the conversation teachers are Canadians.

At ordinary private language schools, it is difficult to find teachers from Britain. Koreans find it difficult to from someone who speaks an English different from the kind of English they have been exposed to for a long time. Despite this, the British Council is regarded as one of the best institutes teaching English, and many Koreans have confidence in the qualifications of the teachers at the British Council.

> *"Koreans deserve to be given a vision of the joyful adventure of learning English, not the fantasy of 'shortcuts' nor the illusion of a 'magic potion.'"*

Teaching Opportunities

Broadly there are three different kinds of teaching opportunities in Korea. First, people with an M.A. in areas such as TESOL, applied linguistics or English language and literature could apply for a faculty position. They are treated as a university faculty member and are expected to teach college students and graduate students in the regular curriculum at a college or university. Second, people with the same qualifications can apply for teaching positions at English language institutes run by colleges or universities. Third, a person with a B.A. in any field could apply for a teaching position in a private language school. The second and third options are not much different in terms of salary and job stability. The first option provides the most benefits for the teacher. It secures reasonable housing and vacation with the university faculty-level salary.

Realism and Enthusiasm

Koreans struggle with learning and improving their proficiency in English. A good command of English is not just something Koreans want but is something they believe they need. However, there are a few things that have given the Korean people distorted ideas about learning English.

There are many publications on learning English in which authors talk about so-called "shortcuts" to mastering English. Others emphasize the hardships of mastering English. Too few of them talk about how enjoyable it can be to embark on an adventure into a whole new world by means of English. Not many of them say, "We learn English through continuous exposure to English in a meaningful way."

English teachers often come across requests from students such as "Teach me how to master English?" but they are not asked questions like "Would you please make English lessons more interesting?" or "Would you help me find interesting books to read in English?" Koreans exert a great deal of effort to learn or improve their English. They deserve to be given a vision of the joyful adventure of learning English, not the fantasy of "shortcuts" nor the illusion of a "magic potion" that leads to frustration.

Patrick Hwang is president of David English House Korea. He teaches for the Certificate for Teaching English to Children program at Ewha Women's University and is a tutor for the distance M.A. TEFL program for the University of Birmingham.

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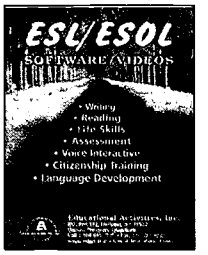

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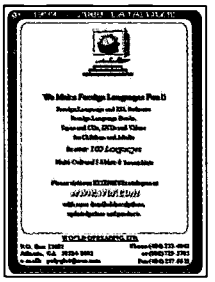

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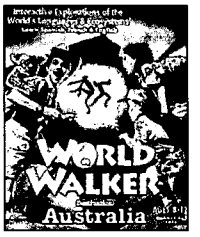

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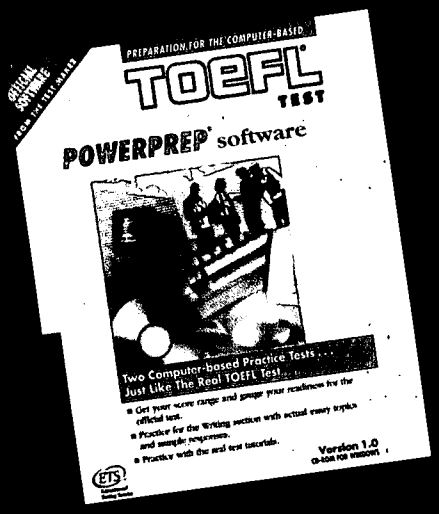

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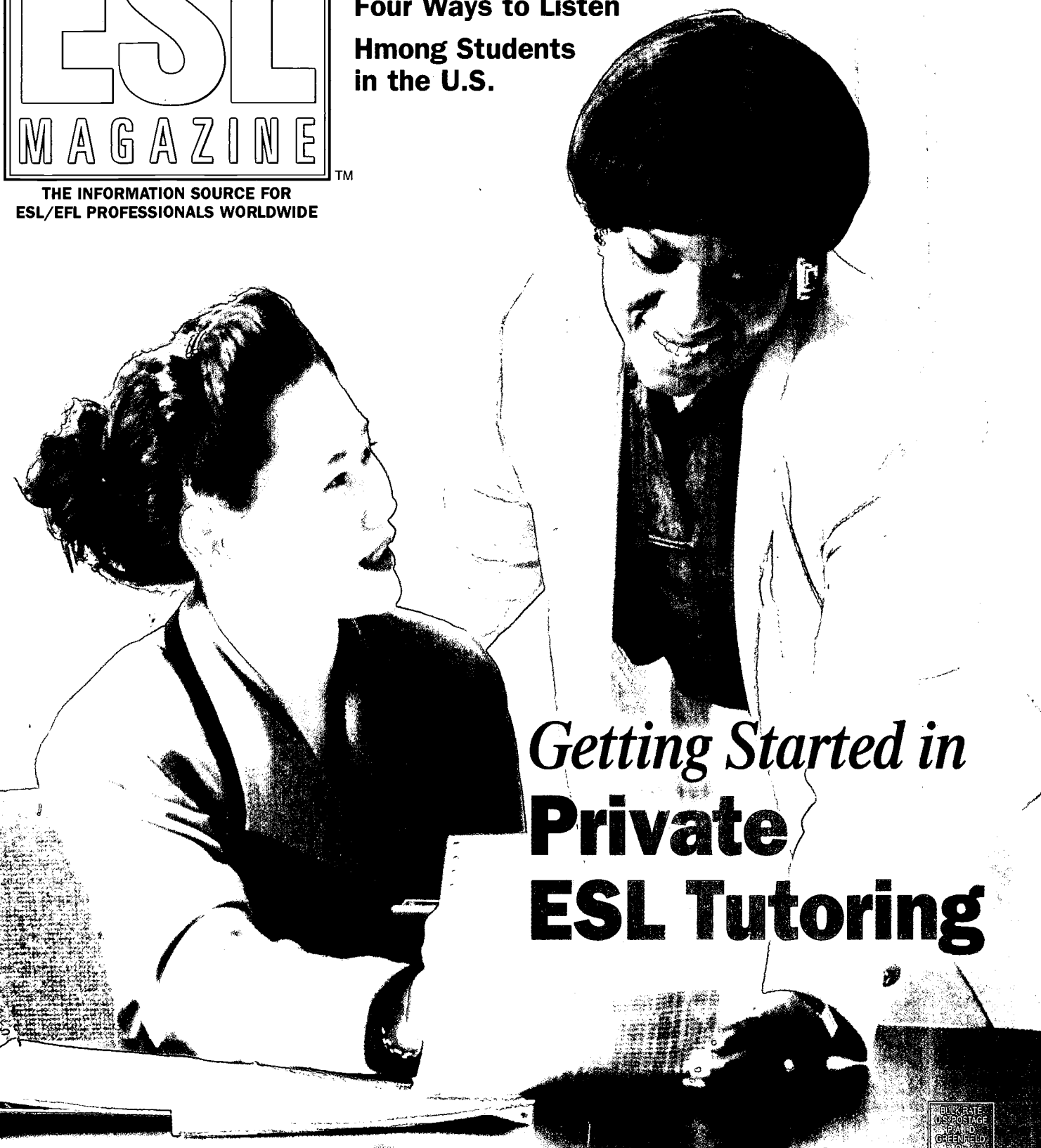

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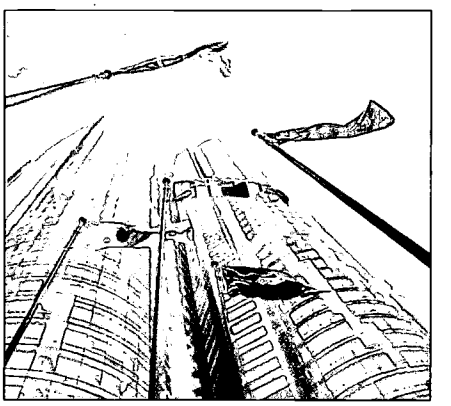

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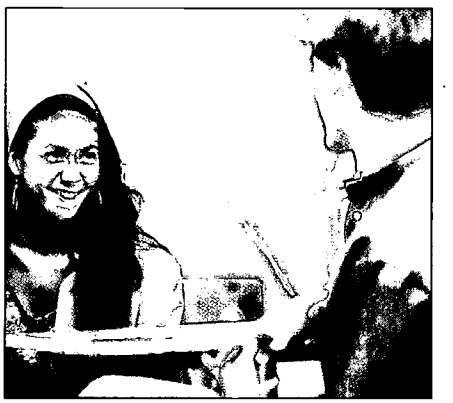

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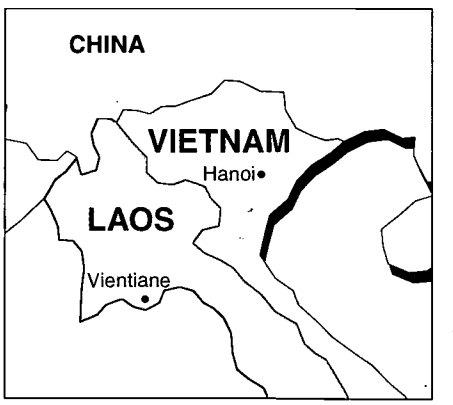

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Mary Jeannot
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Variety is the Spice of...ESL?

One of the great things about the field of ESL is the variety of ways and arenas in which English can be taught. Private tutoring is how Thelma Wurzelbacher is making her mark in this field, and she shares important information for considering and starting a private practice in ESL tutoring.

Work or school? For many, it's a choice between the two, but not if you work for a company that has a corporate university. Nina Weinstein explores this growing phenomenon by which corporations provide employees with education customized to their work. English language instruction does not yet figure prominently in the curricula of corporate universities, and ESL professionals will find this is somewhat of a blank slate waiting to be written on by those in our field.

How do you know what your students need to learn? Ask them. Catherine Sadow listened to her students on their need to learn to listen. She shares a variety of creative listening activities she has incorporated into her classes to teach this important skill.

We know there are many factors that affect students' success in school—cultural values, learning styles, native language literacy, background knowledge—the list goes on. Julie Adler describes how teachers are helping Hmong students, with their unique culture and history, succeed in schools in the United States.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

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—VIRGINIA LEZHNEV
Georgetown University

▷ What a tremendous service you provided in your July/August, 2000 cover article on the Center for Applied Linguistics! I'm sure that most ESOL professionals are aware of CAL, but I'm not so sure that many of us—in particular, classroom practitioners—know what an enormous number of services and resources CAL makes available. Reading the article led me to visit CAL Web site a number of times; with each visit, I was more than amazed at the wealth of information I found—including (but by no means limited to) full-length online articles, links to other organizations, research briefs and digests, a publications list, access to databases and directories, and Web-based resource links. CAL provides a veritable treasure trove of timely and well thought-out information on so many of the topics with which ESOL educators are concerned: standards, the "English Only" controversy, Ebonics, literacy, immersion programs, needs of refugees and immigrants, public policy, research and practice, and much more. Thank you for reacquainting me and other ESOL professionals with CAL and with the scope and value of its offerings and contributions.

—DENNIS OLIVER
American English and Culture Program
Arizona State University

School-Home Connections

▷ Your article "Strengthening the School-Home Connection" is important for everyone involved in a school with ESL students. I'm a parent with kids in a school with a large Spanish-speaking population. These are families who want to be involved in their children's education. We as school communities need to do everything possible to help them succeed. Thanks for your ideas and attention to this subject.

—BECKY GRAHAM
Maryland

English in Korea

▷ I thoroughly enjoyed Patrick Hwang's excellent and timely article "The Expansion of English Language Education in South Korea". The article points out the great potential for Internet-based English language teaching in South Korea. At present, according to NCA, 6.7% of the population in South Korea has access to the Net. Based on the article, by the year 2004 over 6 million South Koreans will have high speed modem connections. Many more South Koreans will have the opportunity to improve their English language skills online.

—MARYAM HALLEZ
Encomium Publications Inc.,info@encomium.com

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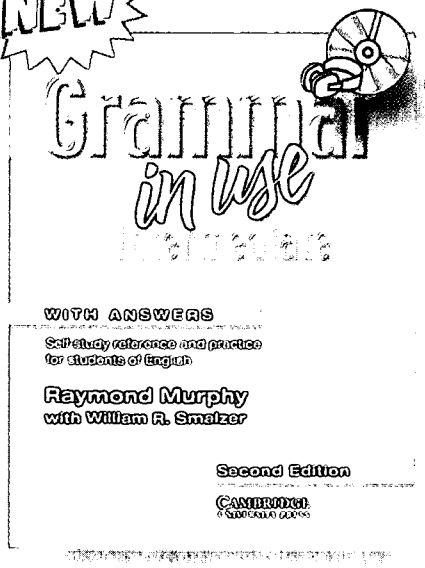

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Improving America's Schools Conferences

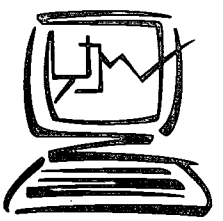
The Seventh Annual Regional Conferences on Improving America's Schools, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, will convene in Sacramento, CA, on September 18-20, in Louisville, KY, on October 2-4, and in Washington, D.C., on December 13-15.

The conferences will address how to coordinate federal programs, integrate federal programs with state and local efforts, access the Department's technical assistance network, and use resources to implement comprehensive school reform. The Department's priorities and initiatives, recent research and data, and funding opportunities will also be addressed.

Encouraged to attend are principals, counselors, teachers, parents, representatives of teacher education and higher education, superintendents, state education officials, local education officials, program managers, grant administrators, representatives of community-based educational organizations, representatives of national educational organizations, technology coordinators, and members of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.

Also invited are grantees of programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Offices of Elementary and Secondary Education, Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Vocational and Adult Education, Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, Educational Research and Improvement, Educational Technology, and Postsecondary Education. For more information, call 1-800-203-5494 or visit www.ncbe.gwu.edu/iasconferences/index.htm.

Updating the Basic English Skills Test: Making the BEST Better



In 1999 the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) received a grant from the U. S. Department of Education to develop a prototype of a computer-adaptive update to the oral skills section of the Basic English Skills Test (BEST).

The BEST was developed during the early 1980s to serve the need of adult education programs in the United States for a reliable assessment of adult learners' oral proficiency and literacy skills. Use of realia—photos, coins, forms—is an integral part of the test. The oral skills section employs a task-based, guided interview scored on the spot by a trained test administrator.

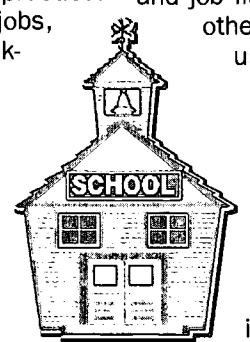
CAL finished the prototype in June of this year. This prototype was built to investigate the feasibility of using a computer program to help the test administrator choose items to test proficiency in different content domains including family, community, and workplace language skills.

CAL's pilot tests of the prototype show that the face-to-face nature of the assessment can be preserved while the technology facilitates the selection of test items. The next step will be the creation of a full-scale test. For project updates, see www.cal.org/public/compbest.htm. For more information about the BEST, see www.cal.org/public/bestest.htm.

—Stephanie J. Stauffer, CAL

New Web Site Links Teachers to Jobs

A new online teacher recruitment clearinghouse is available to help schools and districts find the more than two million qualified teachers the nation will need over the next decade. The Web site, www.recruitingteachers.org, is a one-stop source of information about teacher recruitment and offers practical resources for recruiters, teachers seeking jobs, prospective teachers and school districts seeking ways to retain teachers. The clearinghouse also offers resources and guidance to individuals considering careers in teaching. For school districts, the clearinghouse provides new information about innovative strategies to improve their recruitment and retention efforts.



Developed by Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (RNT), under a $350,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the new service uses advanced Internet technology to inform teachers of classroom openings in participating school districts. Districts and states can add their job opening information to the clearinghouse by completing a short online questionnaire at www.recruitingteachers.org/survey/. By adding job banks or listings to the clearinghouse, districts and states can direct teachers to their Web sites, gaining access to a national teacher pool.

The Web site links teachers with online job banks and job listings and provides links to more than 150 other educational institutions' Web sites. By using the clearinghouse, educators can access online job banks and job listings across the country, compare school districts and job offerings on a national basis, find out how to prepare to become a teacher, learn how to finance teacher preparation, determine which geographic and subject areas need teachers most, find out about new incentives districts are offering new teachers, learn about proven strategies for finding and keeping teachers, expand a district's reach to a national audience of prospective teachers, explore strategies for recruiting teachers.

RNT is a national nonprofit organization that works to attract individuals to teaching careers and helps districts find and keep teachers.

Lunchtime Reading Program Improves Students' Academics and Behavior

"Everybody Wins! When Adults Read with Children" states the Everybody Wins! Power Lunch program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service. The program paired professionals from the public and private sectors in the Washington, D.C. area with elementary school students for weekly lunchtime reading sessions. Students read to the adults or took turns reading with them. Working with classroom teachers during the 1998-1999 school year, the study found that 25% of those in the Power Lunch program who were reading below grade level improved their academic performance, more than double the 12% in the control group who did so. Sixteen percent of the poor readers in the program improved their classroom behavior, more than five times the 3% of control-group students who did so. Fifty-five percent of poor readers in the program said they always or often enjoyed reading, well above the 31% of control-group students who felt that way. An executive summary of the study is available at www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/eval/everybodywins.doc.

EVERYBODY WINS!
When Adults Read With Children

Free Survival Guide for New Teachers

The U.S. Department of Education's *Survival Guide for New Teachers* features the reflections of award-winning first-year teachers who talk candidly about their successes and setbacks and emphasize the relationships they formed with their colleagues, university professors, and students' parents. The Guide also includes resources for first-year teachers. Free copies are available while supplies last from the Education Publications Center, 1-877-4ED-Pubs or at U.S. Department of Education, ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398.

Children's Mental Health Campaign

The Caring for Every Child's Mental Health Campaign sponsored by the Federal Center for Mental Health Services has released a free online coloring and activity book to help young children understand and recognize feelings as part of their emotional well-being. The booklet encourages children to share their feelings with caring adults. It's available at www.mentalhealth.org/child or go directly to www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/childrenscampaign/cartoonsheet.pdf. Mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time. An estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not getting the help they need. Helping children understand and talk about their feelings is an important first step. For free, downloadable information about children's mental health, visit www.mentalhealth.org/child.

Conference Calendar

September

- 15-17 **Panama TESOL**, Panama City, Panama. Contact Carlos A. King, cking@sinfo.net.
- 22-25 **TESOLANZ**. National Conference on Community Languages and ESOL, Auckland, NZ. Contact Helen Nicholls, hkniche@iprolink.co.nz.
- 25-28 **ACE of Florida**, Tallahassee, FL. Contact 850-222-2233.
- 28-30 **TESL Canada and TESL Nova Scotia**, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Contact Sandra Heft, smheft@navnet.net.
- 30-1 **Korea TESOL**, Taegu, South Korea. Contact Jane Hoelker, hoelkerj@hotmail.com.

October

- 7 **Michigan TESOL**, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Contact Brenda Imber, 734-763-6377.
- 13-15 **ASCOCOPI (Colombian Association of Teachers of English)**, Cartagena, Colombia. Contact JoEllen M. Simpson, jsimpson@columbianet.net.
- 14 **Washington Area TESOL**, Fairfax, VA. Contact Richard Grant, 703-684-1494.
- 14 **Indiana TESOL**, Indianapolis, IN. Contact John Graney, aafgrane@isugw.indstate.edu.
- 19-21 **Southeast Florida TESOL**, Miami, FL. Contact Allene Gronet, allene@cal.org.
- 19-22 **Mexico TESOL**, Aguascalientes, Mexico. Contact MEXTESOL2000@yahoo.com.
- 27 **Oregon TESOL**, Oregon City, OR. Contact Molly Williams, 503-657-6958 x2596.
- 27-28 **TexTESOL State**, San Antonio, TX. Contact Dr. Chris Green, 210-444-1710.
- 27-30 **New York State TESOL**, Rochester, NY. Contact www.nystesol.org/AnnualConf.html.

November

- 2-5 **Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**, Shizuoka, Japan. Contact jalt@gol.com.
- 3-4 **Washington TESOL**, Seattle, WA. Contact 425-788-7593.
- 3-5 **Egypt TESOL**, Cairo, Egypt. Contact Deena Boarie, cdc@intouch.com.
- 4 **Maryland TESOL**, Arnold, MD. Contact Elizabeth Holden, 410-767-0631.
- 9-11 **Colorado TESOL**, Longmont, CO. Contact Larry R. Fisher, 303-938-2584.
- 10-11 **Minnesota TESOL**, St. Paul, MN. Contact Bonnie Olson, 651-962-5987.
- 10-12 **Slovak Association of Teachers of English**, Bratislava, Slovakia. Contact andlichova@fphil.uniba.sk.
- 23-25 **TESL Association of Ontario**, Toronto, Canada. Contact 905-737-8562.

December

- 1-2 **TESOL Italy**, Assisi, Italy. Contact Rosanna Fiorentino, blasco@rpilo.it.
- 14-16 **The University of Hong Kong International Language in Education (ILEC)**, Hong Kong, SAR, China. Contact ilec2000@hkucc.hku.hk.
- 14-16 **International Association for World Englishes (IAWE)**, Portland, Oregon. Contact Kimberley Brown brownk@pdx.edu.
- 27-30 **Modern Language Association of America**, NY, NY. Contact convention@mla.org.

January 2001

- 3-7 **Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL)**, Hyderabad, India. Contact congress@ciefl.ernet.in.
- 4-7 **Linguistic Society of America**, Washington, D.C. Contact Margaret Reynolds, 202-835-1714.

February

- 21-24 **Language Testing Research Colloquium**, St. Louis, MO. Contact Craig Deville, 319-335-6424.
- 24-27 **American Association of Applied Linguistics**, St. Louis, MO. Contact 612-953-0805.
- 27-3 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)**, St. Louis, MO. Contact 703-836-0774.

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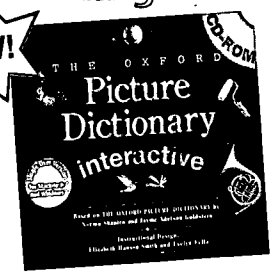

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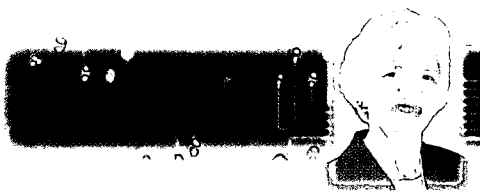

Christine Meloni's NETWORTHY....

ESLoop: An Unending Resource for Teachers

http://www.linguistic-funland.com/esloop/esloop.htm

The ESLoop was established in 1996 by Kristina Pfaff-Harris. It is a webring that currently contains 123 sites that are related to the teaching and learning of English as a second/foreign language. A webring is a collection of Web sites connected in a circle. When you go to one of the sites, you can continue around one by one (or by groups of five) to all of the sites. The sites in the ESLoop cover many different areas but are not in any particular order. However, it is an interesting and useful collection of sites. I use it primarily as a reference page when I want to gain a quick overview of what's available on the Web in the field of ESL. To provide an idea of what is included in the ESLoop, here are brief descriptions of eight sites. Such a small number does not give, however, an idea of the great diversity in this webring.

Culture Capsules: A Web Project That You Can Do! (www.lclark.edu/~krauss/ortesol98/home.html) Michael Krauss presents a collection of multimedia Web pages created by intermediate and advanced ESL students at Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon, that can serve as models for other teachers.

The Holiday Zone (www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/9087/index.html) This site offers descriptions of numerous U.S. holidays. Interested teachers are encouraged to use these materials in their classrooms.

One World, One People (members.aol.com/Jakajk/Oneworld.htm) This site provides lesson plans, games, and resources with a focus on multiculturalism for K-12 teachers.

Topics in Medical English (http://interserver.miyazakimed.ac.jp/~kimball/med/table.html) Jack Kimball has compiled useful information in English on medical topics. His site includes a World Health report, an interactive health quiz, and essays by students at Miyazaki Medical College in Japan.

Online Resources and Journals: ELT, Linguistics, and Communication (http://Ilc2.doshisha.ac.jp/Kkitao/online) Kenji Kitao and Kathleen Kitao have created a useful list of resources for teachers.

An Evaluation of the Usefulness of the Internet in the EFL Classroom (Home.plex.nl/~jgraus/thesis/Evaluation.htm) Here you can find the completed text of the master's thesis of Johan Graus of Nijmegan, The Netherlands, 1999.

Collaborative Writing Projects on the Internet (www.hut.fi/~rvilmi/Project) Ruth Vilmi provides explanations of various writing projects carried out by her students at the Helsinki University of Technology and other university students around the world.

English-Zone.Com (Members.home.net/englishzone/index.html) This site offers a wide variety of online activities in many areas including grammar, spelling, easy jokes, idioms, and study skills.

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at the George Washington University. cfmeloni@hotmail.com

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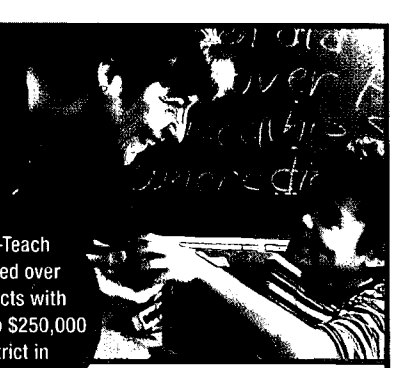

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Getting Started in Private ESL Tutoring

BY THELMA WURZELBACHER

Private ESL tutoring is a specialized form of education for both the tutor and the student. Although it's not for everyone, private tutoring offers unique opportunities for educators who enjoy the challenges and rewards of teaching, possess an entrepreneurial spirit and appreciate flexibility in their schedule. If you love teaching English but desire more freedom in how you do it, thrive on being ingenious, prefer working outside a system or would simply like to supplement your current income, read on and find out whether or not a private tutoring business might be for you.

Tutoring manifests itself in many ways since students differ in language skills, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, needs, goals and countless other variables. One can specialize in a particular skill area or tutor all the language skills. It can be a full-time job or provide supplemental income. The focus here will be on individualized tutoring covering a range of skills that is independent and private (not contracted by a school or business) and fee-for-service (not volunteer or barter-for-instruction).

Before starting a tutoring practice, or any business for that matter, three factors should be considered: 1) readiness—do you have what it takes? 2) market—is there a need? and 3) service—how will you meet the need? Careful consideration will help you decide whether or not to pursue private tutoring and will help you get started.

Assessing Your Readiness

A number of factors will determine whether or not private practice is for you. First, are you motivated? Motivation can stem from a number of factors: creating a business and being your own boss, having a flexible work schedule, meeting an important need, discovering your own teaching preferences, growing professionally or earning income.

A number of personal traits are also important for setting out on your own. As a practical way of assessing your readiness, take the Readiness Profile (see sidebar) to reflect on the traits that might be indicators of your success in the business of tutoring. A minimum score of 45 would be realistic for saying, "I can do this."

As with any English language teaching position, a repertoire of language teaching skills is critical in tutoring. A tutor needs the ability to teach one-on-one. There is no pair work or group activities during the session; you and the client fill the time. One also must be able to adapt to a variety of learning styles. A tutor should be able to act as a director, choosing assessment tools and helping to define goals and expectations.

An ESL tutor should have some form of accreditation or certification. Although ESL credentials or certification vary within and between states, training in teaching ESL is basic to any tutoring enterprise. A certification in tutoring like the one offered by The College Reading and Learning Association (www.crla.net) is also desirable.

Depending on the circumstances, size, and purpose of your practice, your readiness may also depend on getting information and advice from financial and legal experts on issues such as taxes and liability.

Determining the Need

If you feel you have the personal traits and qualifications to run your own tutoring business, consider the need in your area for English language tutoring. This information can be acquired from your local chamber of commerce, school systems, religious entities, immigrant organizations, economic and industrial reports, ESL enrollment figures at the local universities and adult education centers, and state and national education associations. Find out whether or not ESL enrollment is increasing, decreasing or static locally. Find out if there are many free services and year-round classes that are accessible by public transportation at all times of the day. Determine whether or not there are any competitors offering ESL tutoring. If there are needs in your area, you can decide what services you will offer to meet those needs.

Providing a Service

An ESL tutoring service can take many forms. One could supplement classroom ESL instruction, help with homework in the language arts, provide content assistance for college courses, offer citizenship or TOEFL preparation, etc. Your service could concentrate on individual language skills such as conversation, oral presentation, reading and writing, or integrate them. Specialized instruction in sales or management or in daily living activities are also service options.

Your clients could be beginning, intermediate or advanced students of any age, from elementary to adult. Spouses of immigrants or visiting internationals may request tutoring services. Short-term companion tutoring for visitors wanting cultural enrichment is an option. You could teach employees in local businesses. The focus of your work will depend on your abilities and resources and the needs in your area.

Marketing Your Services

There are many different ways to announce your services. I don't advertise

because referrals from previous students and colleagues work very well for me. I do not recruit from the universities where I teach because I feel that could be a conflict of interests.

Here in Columbus, Ohio, the Literacy Council distributes a list of all ESL programs—commercial, tuition-based, and volunteer—and includes a list of about 15 private tutors. The information is not endorsed by the Council, just shared. The private tutors are listed with their geographic areas, times available, and fees. Most frequently, we network among ourselves and refer inquiries to each other based on students' needs and our availability.

You may decide to promote your services in school systems, industries and businesses, or through existing groups and organizations. Possible methods of promotion are mailings, distributing flyers or word of mouth.

Getting Down to Business

Location. A private setting with few distractions is important for any tutoring service. This could be your home, a student's home, a room at the public library, church, civic building or tutoring center. Conflicts can arise when you use non-profit space for fee-based services, but I sometimes use a public space for the initial class. At home, a tape recorder, VCR, videos, games, supplies and the computer are easily accessible. This is not the case when working out of your car. Whatever the environment, phones and other distractions should not be allowed to interrupt tutoring sessions.

Lesson Planning. Planning a tutoring session is always a work of art, especially with individualized lessons. Particularly during the first session, be enthusiastic, clear and busy. Get to know the tutee and his or her concerns. Give a significant assignment. After getting acquainted, reviewing assessments, listening to needs, and planning the first three to five lessons, I find that a rhythm of content and pace can be established. Of course, the plan can be interrupted by special needs: a letter to an official, a parent/teacher conference explanation, entrance exam practice, or a business presentation outline. Expect changes to the lesson plan in at least 30% of the sessions. It helps to keep a segmented pocket notebook or folder for each client to organize the sequence of topics, schedule, assignment log, and evaluations. A computerized system of record keeping and planning may also be useful, but it may be difficult to standardize given a variety of clients.

It takes time and commitment to gather ideas and materials for lessons by attending state or national ESL conferences, evaluating texts, finding relevant [illegible]s and printing worksheets, creating exercises and interacting regularly with other tutors. Eventually a basic collection of materials develops, and building a library and supplementing files can really be enjoyable.

Lesson planning also includes supplementary activities when I know in advance that a student has to miss a session. For example, a business person or student on vacation can keep a written journal and create a list of ten questions for discussion when they return. They can make five-minute recordings of their daily observations or listen to a tape from the library or my collection (e.g., pronunciation cassettes). When instruction resumes, we use and expand on this material in the first lesson or two.

Evaluations. Evaluations are both formal and informal. Sometimes "unexpected" visitors provide an opportunity to practice small talk. Quizzes from the text, recorded dialogues, reading comprehension and listening tests help me track student progress. We also do video recordings.

When I am asked to give written evaluations to a foreign employer, I limit it to half a page and make recommendations for further study. I share this with the student before sending it abroad. When teaching younger students, I may confer with school teachers by phone, but I only report to the parent who hired me. Sometimes family relationships, gender, or viewpoint make it necessary to designate one parent for these discussions.

Closure. Ending a tutoring agreement calls for special consideration. When students end tutoring, I listen to their first recordings and their most recent, review their reading and writing then summarize their progress. Sometimes I present students with a small gift such as a book, state symbol, or pre-addressed postcards.

Service Agreement. A written service agreement is vital to a healthy tutoring arrangement. It clarifies expectations, content, and administrative issues. This document should outline the content of the tutoring, evaluation, materials, location and time of classes, cancellation/late policy, and fees. By carefully delineating the services you will provide, the agreement can help you maintain the professional distance you are comfortable with when requests are made for help beyond the services you want to offer.

I usually prepare a draft based on a phone conversation and present it to the tutee after the first session. The language must be at a level the tutee or a representative can understand. After two sessions we agree on changes based on the needs of the individual. By the third meeting, we have a working understanding and a semi-formal agreement of goals and services.

The description of the content to be covered is typically the most difficult for the tutee to understand but is usually

Readiness Profile for Private ESL Tutoring

Circle the number after each statement that best indicates the accuracy of the statement as a description of you. Highly accurate=5, completely inaccurate=1.

I am a "take charge" person; I like to control what happens.
5 4 3 2 1

I am able to see the "big picture."
5 4 3 2 1

I feel exhilarated when facing obstacles or problems.
5 4 3 2 1

I have excellent health and lots of energy.
5 4 3 2 1

I can influence most people.
5 4 3 2 1

I assess my abilities realistically.
5 4 3 2 1

I can ask for and accept help or advice in areas outside my special expertise.
5 4 3 2 1

I set my own activity level and deadlines rather than waiting for others to impose them.
5 4 3 2 1

I enjoy the thrill of calculated risks.
5 4 3 2 1

I have the emotional ability to bounce back after failure or temporary setback.
5 4 3 2 1

I can make sound decisions in a hurry, if necessary.
5 4 3 2 1

I have the "staying power" that enables me to keep at a project in spite of discouragement, delays, disappointments or rejection.
5 4 3 2 1

If you scored 45 or over, you may be a good candidate for becoming a private ESL tutor!

(Profile not standardized.)

embraced enthusiastically. Sometimes students request certain skills for more emphasis (such as pronunciation or writing). Beginners are often happy when content is presented simply as a text, tapes, handouts and homework. In this part of the agreement, I always include my expectations regarding assignments that the tutee will complete.

I establish the contact times and hours at the beginning of the relationship and rarely change them. The students seem to follow this example and appreciate the firmness of my approach. This helps confirm the importance of the session and enhances my credibility. It also communicates the value of punctuality in American culture and business. After meeting three times, we decide if there is a comfortable fit with needs and expectations as described in the agreement and a good match between us personally. Sometimes I try to establish the length of the relationship to get a feel for how many clients I can accommodate. In my experience, tutoring relationships have usually lasted from six months to a year with adults and as long as two years with children.

Purchase of materials is addressed specifically in the initial conversations and in the agreement. The client is responsible for purchasing all materials. Usually, clients can review the suggested materials before buying them. I document all purchases with receipts. Ordering by mail from ESL suppliers works best for me although materials for younger children can sometimes be found at discount stores. I emphasize the need for a tape recorder and tapes for assignments and evaluating progress. I sometimes require a prepaid copy card from a local print shop if I know we will need a significant quantity of worksheets.

A cancellation/late policy is essential for good business and as a courtesy when scheduling clients back-to-back. I require 24-hour notice of cancellation. If the notice is less, half of the hourly rate is charged. Class is not extended for late arrivals, whatever the reason. So far, my only client dissatisfaction occurred when the lessons were ending and the client felt I owed him instruction for all the minutes he had been late. I was astonished and explained that I would not offer more lessons nor a refund. I subsequently added "lateness for whatever reason is not made up" to my agreement page. There is some humor in this business!

Fees are paid weekly or pre-paid monthly by check or cash. I give a receipt for each payment. Company-sponsored students usually take care of reimbursement with their employer. In some cases, tutors use a spreadsheet that lists all the lessons; both tutor and student sign the sheet after each meeting, and the tutor submits this documentation directly to the sponsor for reimbursement.

The hourly fee is determined by the market in a given area. Typically, I would determine what ESL tutors are being paid on local campuses and in the public school systems. The 15 tutors on the public listing in Columbus charge from $10 per hour per person for group lessons of up to six persons and from $15 to $35 per hour for individual lessons (June 1999 figures). Tutors who contract with companies typically charge higher rates. If you travel to the client, charge a door-to-door mileage fee in addition to the contact hours. Remember that all your time spent preparing lessons, reporting to parents or employers, traveling, and meeting with students needs to be included in your hourly fee.

Your Professional Development

Once you've got your business up and running, don't neglect your own professional development. Membership in an organization of experts and practitioners is one of the best means of growing professionally. Teachers of English to Speakers of Others Languages, Inc. (www.tesol.org) and the Association of Education Practitioners and Providers (www.aepp.org) are my top choices for publications, conferences, and networking. In addition, phone conversations with colleagues and a small network of private tutors have helped me be creative and resourceful. Some tutors may benefit from a TESOL interest group or an online professional exchange forum such as TESL-L.

Defining Success

As one ventures into the business of private tutoring, it is important to develop a personal working definition of success. The definition needs to be concrete and realistic enough to support you through the insecurities and challenges of the endeavor.

For me, success as a tutor includes personal satisfaction with my day-to-day sessions, a sense of service to the global community, and income proportional to my experience and qualifications. Beginning tutors should strive for a balance between their personal criteria for success and the energy expended in facing the challenges and constraints of a start up. Since tutees are the core of the effort, tutors need to consider the diversity of clients and find an appropriate match with their backgrounds and interests. Success for tutor and tutee is more likely when there is this match.

Private ESL tutoring is challenging and rewarding because it provides the opportunity to respond to a vast range of needs. It's also the kind of job you can customize to fit your life. If you have the necessary motivation, personal traits, and qualifications, consider taking the next exciting step toward the business—and art—of private ESL tutoring.

Thelma Wurzelbacher, Ph.D., is a faculty member in the Liberal Arts Division at the Columbus College of Art & Design in Ohio.

Checklist for Getting Started

- ✓ Decide why you want to do private tutoring in ESL.
- ✓ Evaluate your personal assets—Do you have the academic, financial, emotional and physical strengths to be a private tutor?
- ✓ Determine what services you will provide—Integrated skills? TOEFL preparation? Writing? Conversation Practice? Job search consultations? Citizenship preparation? Cross-cultural training?
- ✓ Select your clients—Students? Professionals? Spouses? On-site business people? Off-site referrals? Age range? Levels?
- ✓ Arrange a location.
- ✓ Acquire resources such as teaching materials, diagnostic instruments, equipment.
- ✓ Contact the most relevant and useful professional associations and obtain the latest publications in the ESL/tutoring field.
- ✓ Organize a record-keeping system to track contacts, expenses, lesson plans and student progress.
- ✓ Get legal and financial advice.
- ✓ Advertise your services—Geographic areas? School systems? Industry and business? Existing groups and organizations? Word of mouth? Mailings? Flyers?

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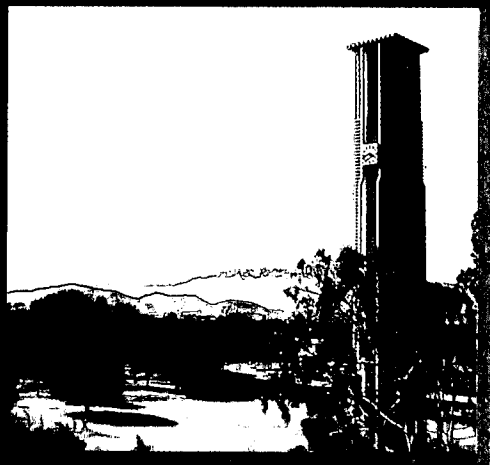

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Corporate Universities:

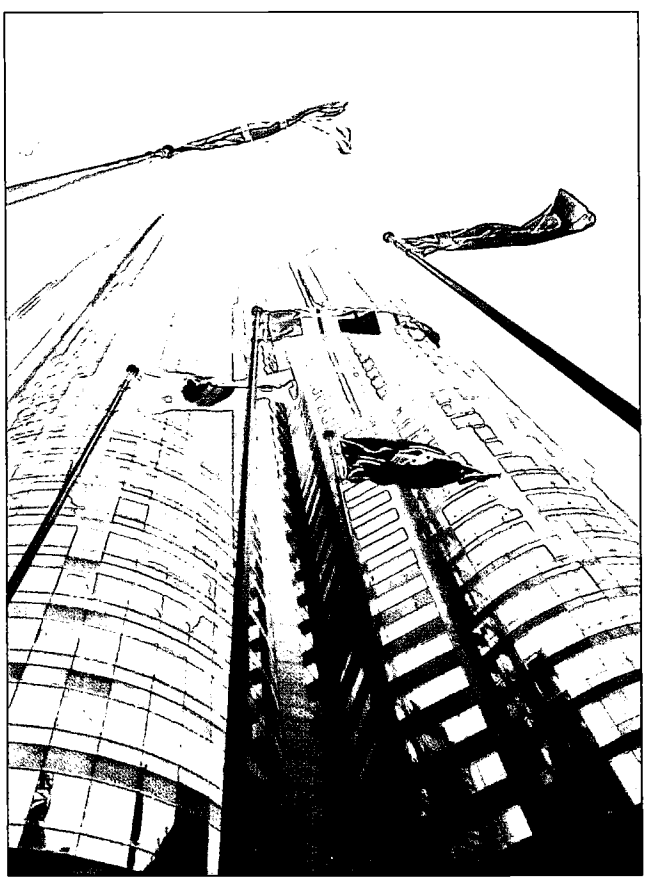
A New Frontier for ESL/EFL Professionals

BY NINA WEINSTEIN

I'd been teaching English to non-native speakers in corporations since 1979 when I contacted Toyota Motor Sales to offer my services. I was unprepared for the message left on my answering machine: "This is . . . from the University of Toyota." The University of Toyota? Before meeting with them, I spent several hours researching corporate universities because I had no idea what this university was and why I'd never heard of it.

Corporate universities are the fastest growing segment of the adult education market. Although they have been around for over forty years since the launch of General Electric's Crotonville in 1955, the real surge of interest in corporate universities began in the late 1980s. In 1988 there were 400 businesses with some entity described as a corporate university, college, academy, or institute of learning—there are now over 1,000. Forty percent of Fortune 500 companies have corporate universities. If this growth continues through the year 2010, corporate universities will become the primary educators of post-secondary students in the United States (Meister, 1998).

Jeanne Meister, an internationally recognized expert on corporate universities and author of *Corporate Universities: Lessons in Building a World-Class Workforce*, attributes the astounding growth of corporate universities to the shortened shelf-life of knowledge. Rapid technological change requires that firms provide continuous learning to employees in order to stay competitive.



Not the Traditional Corporate Training Program

A corporate university is different from a traditional corporate training program, which typically trains its people in response to a perceived problem or issue, for example, a new computer system. The ing programs are usually short-term. orate universities, on the other hand, address the need for lifelong learning caused by rapid and continual changes in the workplace. They are the strategic umbrella for developing and educating employees, customers, and suppliers to support an organization's business strategies. Corporate universities drive change in the corporation. They spread common corporate culture and values while teaching new skills. Because of competition for the best workers, corporate universities are seen as an employee benefit—they develop the employability of the worker and hopefully provide an incentive for the employee to stay. Corporate universities educate not only the employee, but the entire network surrounding the corporation—suppliers, dealers, and in some universities, employees' families.

Almost forty percent of corporate universities are interested in granting an accredited degree (Meister, 1998). Usually this is in partnership with an institution of higher education. For example, the T. Eaton Company, a retail business in Canada, and Ryerson Polytechnic University formed a partnership to address the need for "customized corporate education." Before 1995 there was no business degree with a major in retail and services in Canada. The purpose of the partnership is to equip students with critical skills for success in a retail environment. T. Eaton chose Ryerson because they understood their goals, were flexible in wanting to work with industry, and had a strong desire to create a professional program in retail management.

In the United States, Megatech Engineering and Central Michigan University have created a unique bachelor of science degree with a major in vehicle design. The program was created to alleviate a shortage of qualified designers in the automotive industry (Meister, 1994). Some corporate universities are even aligning with traditional institutions of secondary education to help shape their ultimate workforce.

The most controversial implication behind the development of the corporate university may be that higher education is failing to equip graduates with the knowledge and skills demanded by today's employers. Corporate universities allow companies to customize employees with the changing knowledge needed for their jobs taught in a way that matches the goals and philosophy of the corporation.

A New Frontier for ESL/EFL Professionals

Very little has been written about ESL/EFL in corporate universities. A year ago, I found 175 corporate university sites on the Internet. I recently found 4,268 sites. I've contacted leading professionals in the very new arena of corporate universities and have not found a significant emphasis on ESL/EFL programs. This is somewhat surprising given that most Fortune 500 com-

panies are international, and one might expect them to employ many foreign-born employees with limited English language ability.

ESL/EFL in corporate universities is a new frontier, and new approaches need to be created to fit into the corporate university model in several ways. First, corporate universities address the need for lifelong learning. As an ESL professional, I strive to build continual language support rather than short-term courses. Corporate clients are rarely trained in ESL, so they look to ESL professionals to assess their employees' needs and create courses to meet them. I follow the corporate university model even when I'm teaching in corporations without universities because the model mirrors my beliefs—to support and assist employees long-term.

Second, corporate universities drive change in the corporation. When I first began teaching in corporations, they didn't want to interrupt the regular work day to have English classes. All classes were held after work hours. Now, two of the companies I work with have decided to hold some of their English classes during the work day. This demonstrates their growing support for language instruction for their employees.

Third, corporate universities teach company-specific and job-specific information. Although there are many books and other materials written for English for special purposes, these materials are often too general for use with a specific corporation. In other words, ESL professionals need to create a lot of the materials that they use.

Fourth, corporate universities educate not only employees, but in some universities, employees' families. I began custom language classes for employees' families to support them both as partners to the employees and in their own goals.

Finally, ESL professionals must interpret changes and growth in corporate universities and "translate" them into appropriate approaches for ESL learners. For companies without ESL professionals, ESL decisions may be made by professionals without language teaching expertise.

New Teaching Issues in a New Environment

There are many ways to deliver knowledge in a corporate university. Some corporate universities have no campus and deliver knowledge in a virtual arena. Some rely on distance learning. Both of these methods are growing in popularity. I currently teach at a corporate university and have been teaching in U.S. corporations since 1979. Based on my experience, I support virtual learning and distance learning in some situations but feel that English conversation and listening comprehension work best with a teacher physically present to give feedback, so I teach on site. However, the site isn't always a corporate meeting room. My learners are different at each location, but they all need to communicate with native English speakers not only on a daily basis, but on an hourly basis. In other words, if they can't speak and understand English, they can't do their jobs.

Focus on Spoken English

Because of their time constraints, I give language learners tools that will have the greatest impact in the shortest amount of time. For my basic listening class, I begin with two crucial elements of spoken English—reduced forms (e.g., "gonna," "wanna," "hafta," etc.) and conversational strategies. Students can immediately hear these elements of spoken language reinforced when talking with their native English-speaking co-workers. I use *Whaddaya Say* to teach reduced forms and *Whattaya Hear* to teach conversational strategies. In my higher level listening class, I use *I'm Listening As Fast As I Can* so that students can practice hearing reduced forms, conversational strategies and other elements of spoken English in natural, unscripted language. When students can't understand a speech segment, we analyze it for reductions, conversational strategies or other elements of spoken language. In my basic conversation class, I use *Whattaya Do?*, a business English conversation/ culture book. It teaches everyday business conversation and behavior for business greetings, introductions, small talk, etc. We do role plays for each situation based on learner needs.

For my more advanced conversation class, I use a business idiom book called *The Language of Meetings*. Every two or three weeks, we choose a topic of interest and I record my learners having a spontaneous "business meeting" including the business idioms we've learned. I transcribe the entire meeting and make copies for everyone in the class. Each learner can comment on his or her speech segment—are there more natural or accurate ways to express the ideas? Are there any grammatical errors, and if so, can he or she now correct them? I collect the most common errors and create lessons based on them. This saves time by addressing only the grammar, vocabulary and other lessons that are needed. I create a list of these common errors that everyone keeps it in front of them for each subsequent recording. Rather than getting longer as we record additional meetings, the list gets shorter because we've customized our lessons and kept the potential problem areas in mind.

Time is of the Essence

The executives that I teach need the highest level of conversational and listening ability to interact with their native English-speaking colleagues. My challenge is to achieve these high linguistic levels in one or two class meetings a week. Because of business trips and business meetings, some partici-

Companies with Corporate Universities

- Dell University
- A Partnership Between Duke University & Pensare
- Sears University
- Air University, United States Airforce
- The Busch Learning Center, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.
- Cable & Wireless College
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- Employee Development University, Southern California Water Co.
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pants don't even receive that amount of face-to-face instruction.

For listening classes, anyone who is going to be absent knows the units we'll cover and listens to them on audio while they're gone. I review material every few weeks in all my classes, but I don't call it review. I present material differently each time so that the learners who have already studied the material are challenged by a slightly higher level or a new context. After presenting a review, I bring in new material so we're always moving forward.

When I teach other classes such as vocabulary or pronunciation, my goal is to find the approach that will make the most difference linguistically in the shortest amount of time. These learners don't have time to take exhaustive courses on a given topic. In over twenty years of teaching in corporations, I've never been in a situation where learners had enough time to do everything they needed to do.

Beyond Corporate Walls

Corporate universities support the entire network surrounding the employee, in some cases, their spouses. Some spouses worked in their native countries, but their visas don't allow them to work in the United States. Their focus here is to support their partners and families in their new homes.

I teach a class for wives of non-native English-speaking executives. They want to learn about American culture and need to be able to entertain in their homes. My house makes a wonderful "laboratory" filled with realia. They learn how to set an American table, show guests their homes, make an American bed and use American cleaning products. By examining my lousy plumbing, they learn about renters' rights and learn the vocabulary needed to explain problems to their landlords.

We also focus on listening comprehension and conversation so that they can comfortably converse with Americans in a variety of situations. Some of my students have decided to further their professional training in universities in the United States, and two of my students have decided to train so they can use my approach as EFL teachers in their own countries. In short, these classes in my home have supported students linguistically, culturally, personally, and professionally.

Conclusion

The job of teaching ESL in a corporate university is one of supporting learners and their families in the learning environment that gives them the language tools they need for the most effective business experience. Although it's difficult to predict the future of corporate universities, the needs of businesses are a powerful economic force. Corporate universities could be the biggest shift in the educational model in decades. The role of English language instruction is yet to be written into these new models, but ESL/EFL professionals must make their presence known and infuse their expertise into this new frontier. It's exhilarating, and after twenty-five years of ESL/EFL teaching and materials writing in both the public and private sectors, I'm as excited about the field as I was when I graduated.

Nina Weinstein has over twenty years of corporate ESL teaching experience and currently teaches at the University of Toyota and Tatung Company of America. ninavan@gte.net

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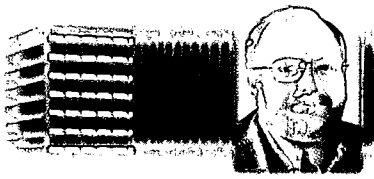

Thomas Nixon's

Employment Focus

The Future of Full-Time, Part II

As you may recall from my column in the last issue of *ESL Magazine*, I conducted an interview about ESL employment with Dr. Adelaide Parsons, International Programs Director at Southeast Missouri State University and an expert in the field of ESL/EFL employment. The following is the conclusion of the interview with Dr. Parsons.

TN: What do you recommend for a successful ESL job search?
AP: Here are seven steps I recommend:

1. Research yourself—know who you are, what motivates you, and what you do successfully.
2. Research the type of work setting you prefer—know what type of organization you want to work for, where you would like to work, and what your salary requirements are.
3. Research employers and talk to current employees.
4. Network with folks who have ties with the desired company or position.
5. Design a résumé that is honest, frank, and refreshing.
6. Brush up on your manners and use them wherever you go!
7. Extend courtesies such as "thank you" letters to those who interview you.

Much of what Dr. Parsons offers above seems like common sense, but as the saying goes, "Common sense ain't so common."

One point that she stresses is to do all those things your parents tried to drill into you. Say "thank you" and "please." Write "thank you" notes. One additional point I would make is to do this with everybody. How often does the office manager end up getting you the job or "nixing" you? We probably don't want to know but more often than one would think. Also, even if you're just dropping off a résumé, go in professional attire.

Another theme of Dr. Parsons' advice is research. Know yourself. Know what makes you happy. Know what potential employers are like. Remember that a successful work relationship is like a successful marriage. Would you marry someone after your first date? You might, but those types of relationships rarely work out. You usually "do your research" by dating for a while to find out if the two of you are a good match. It's the same with potential employers. Make the effort to find out if the two of you are a good match. In many ways, this relationship is no less important. Don't think so? Ever worked for a bad employer?

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teflconnection.com.

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FOUR WAYS TO LISTEN

BY CATHERINE SADOW

Although listening is the primary skill that hearing infants use in learning their first language and although listening is often our first introduction to new languages, for decades in the ESL literature, listening was considered a passive and therefore less important skill. Focus was placed on the three other skills—reading, writing and speaking—while listening was thought of as an enabling skill not worthy of an instructional place of its own.

When I began teaching in the early 1970s in an adult education program, I knew little about "listening" or language laboratories. There was listening in the classroom because there was interaction, but I assumed I was there to teach grammar and that's what I did. Even in 1980 when I began to teach at a university, there were only a few materials in the language lab, and I assigned them to students without much thought about their relevancy.

A New Focus on Listening

I completed a master's program in TESL, but almost nothing had been said about "listening" and "listening materials." But unknown to me in the early 1980s, professionals in the field began to recognize that listening was a very active cognitive skill and that it was possible to help students improve their listening both through interaction in and out of the classroom as well as by designing good materials for them to listen to.

So while I was in my classroom teaching grammar, never bringing a tape recorder into the classroom and sending students off to listen to the few tedious tapes we had in the lab, the British Council was about to publish *The Teaching of Listening Comprehension* (1981) and in the United States Harriet Winitz was about to publish *The Comprehension Approach to Foreign Language Instruction* (1981).

With more research we have learned that understanding is not something that happens only because of what a speaker says. The listener plays a crucial part in the [illegible]s by applying what he knows to what [illegible]rs while trying to understand what the speaker means.

We also know that although the amount and the range of research into first and second language study has grown, the teacher or researcher interested in studying listening has a fundamental problem because it is very difficult to gain direct access to the listening process itself. We frequently don't know what problems the student is experiencing and what skills are being used. We are also aware that confidence and risk-taking play an important role and that fear and over-concern for hearing every word slows students' progress. Factors such as the weather, how tired a student is, or how well a student is feeling can also affect how well students understand what they are listening to.

We know that it is important that second language learners get sufficient training in the more demanding and necessary skill of transactional listening like conversation where the focus of communication is on the exchange of information. Finally, we know that all types of listening skills are valuable and necessary if a learner is to acquire an all-around ability to listen effectively to various input in a range of situations and for a variety of listening purposes.

Listening to Students

After I began teaching in an intensive English program in the early 1980s, I assigned daily journals in which students shared their language-learning experiences, and I began to learn about listening from student testimony. Even students whom I thought were advanced told me (and are still telling me) that they were having trouble because they couldn't understand what was being said. A Chinese teacher wrote:

"Having graduated from university almost fifteen years ago, and having been a teacher for almost fifteen years, I became a student of English when I got off the Boeing 747 of Flight 981 of CAAC and stepped onto land of America in San Francisco. I once taught English grammar, pronunciation and reading. I know my knowledge of English is very limited but I didn't have a clear idea of how limited my knowledge was until I began to live among the English-speaking people in this English-speaking country. I discovered that it was really difficult for me to understand what people said when they talked to me or when I asked them the way...."

I was astonished to discover that even a very advanced student who had been studying English for most of her life and who had taught it, could not understand something as simple as a set of directions. Journal entries such as these began to influence what I did in the classroom.

Authentic Materials with Simple Tasks

Stephen Krashen in his book *Principles and Practices in Second Language Acquisition* (1982) says that authentic language should be used in instruction whenever possible and that a proficiency-oriented classroom should include such materials frequently and effectively in instruction at all levels. Krashen claims that people acquire language that is directed at their current level of competence but which includes some structures that are beyond that level as well.

To accomplish this in my classes, I have had listeners at low-intermediate levels as well as intermediate and advanced levels listen to authentic recorded materials and do simple tasks with them. Although comprehension should almost always be the goal, playing material that students might

not fully understand at their level while doing a simple task gets them used to the sound and the speed of language that is "too fast, too complex" so that they don't tune out when they hear it later. In one task we do, they listen to a five-minute excerpt from a current radio talk show and are asked to simply check off a list of items: names of people or places, products, or call letters. Lower level students enjoy the challenge of this minimal task as they get used to listening to intonation, hesitations and speed. (See sidebar at right.)

Notetaking

It was by accident that I stumbled upon another way to use listening in the classroom. I found a new source of listening material in what I was already using for "reading and conversation." Students read and discussed this background material then worked in groups to solve problems or make choices. I had planned to use one of these as part of a lesson, but when I got to the copier, there was the familiar sign: "Out of Order." I was upset because the material I was about to copy was an integral part of a content-based lesson that I had carefully planned.

So I went into the classroom with no copies for my students, told them to take out a piece of paper and take notes. I used the board once or twice to introduce a word that they might not know. The minute I began to do this, I realized that it was what I should have been doing all along. Students had to listen, take notes and ask for clarification. When they met in groups, there had to be further agreement and negotiation as they compared notes to determine just what problem they were trying to solve before they could even begin to solve it and decide, for example, what budget cuts the school board would make or what programs would get the money.

I have done this notetaking project with every class since. I look at all my materials to see if there is a possibility of presenting them orally for notetaking rather than handing them to students to read. This can be done at all levels and with many materials. Even at this lower level students are learning to listen, take notes and reconstruct the material. These mini lectures can have many goals: grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, content, writing and they can all be listening-based.

Focusing

Attention is central to the process of language acquisition. It is important for students to focus on their second language progress and for us to help them focus. Attention to and awareness of their listening helps them not panic when they can't understand something. We know that it becomes more difficult to assess one's own progress in a language after the exuberant beginning stages, and I have had student [illegible]lent tell me in daily journals that they are making no progress.

One of the things I have students do when they go to the language lab for listening is not only concentrate on the content of the lesson but on why and how they are doing it. I ask them to concentrate on what was positive about it and on what problems they had. I usually give students a choice of assignments so that they can find something that interests them or something that they think is important and then have them fill a form about their assignment. (See sidebar on page 20.)

It is important for students to concentrate on what it is that they can do to improve. Is it the pace that is a deterrent? Is it difficult vocabulary? Knowing which problems they are having gives them some control over the solution. Students who do this are aware that they are not standing still. This helps them focus on their learning.

Just Listening

According to Penny Ur in *Teaching Listening Comprehension* (1984) when the listening material itself is highly interesting or pleasurable, giving the students a task to perform while they listen becomes superfluous or even harmful. We need to reduce the anxiety that many students experience when listening in the second language. A student journal entry describes this feeling:

"Like many of my classmates, I, too, am filled with contradictions and doubts. After I arrived in America, I understood many things which weren't like my hopes in China—so I have some complex-filled feelings. I hope I can study economics as soon as possible but my head is always dizzy. My brother, who is a pharmacist, says I will need an appropriate time to overcome my dizzy feelings. I have never felt this kind of dizzy feeling before. I doubt if I can study continuously...."

When planning our lessons, it is important for us to take into account the "dizzy" feeling some students are experiencing and how fatiguing it can be to listen to and interpret unfamiliar sounds. One kind of listening that I do as often is listening that requires nothing but listening. I try to make it enjoyable since listening in a second language can often result in headaches—it almost always calls for an instant response, some interaction, either a task or an oral response.

Instead, I do all the preliminary explanation and students just relax, listen and try to enjoy the material. For instance, I often use tapes of stand-up comedians. Before students listen to the skit for the first time, I explain as much as I can about the background, the situation, sometimes even the ending and any of the vocabulary that I think might interfere with their listening. I put most of it on a handout in the order that it is heard on the tape and they often take notes while I discuss it. Then I ask them to relax and listen. No comprehension ques-

A Simple Task to Accompany Authentic Listening

Listen Again to *Car Talk*

Check What You Hear

DIRECTIONS: Rewind the tape and listen again to Click and Clack's conversation with Charlie. Following are sentences from the tape in the order that you will hear them. There are also some sentences that are not on the tape. Listen carefully, and when you hear one of the sentences, put a check (✓) beside it.

1. ____ You're on *Car Talk*.
2. ____ Thank you. I'm calling for the first time.
3. ____ I got a brand-new Honda.
4. ____ Accord?
5. ____ Just moved to Chicago.
6. ____ I took it real easy on the car.
7. ____ I didn't go very fast.
8. ____ Go up to the most expensive gas.
9. ____ The problem was...when you get into that mountain air.
10. ____ I was just getting passed by everyone.
11. ____ Despite the fact that it's a brand new car.
12. ____ Could I already have done damage?
13. ____ Thanks for your help.

From On the Air: Listening to Radio Talk, *Sadow and Sather.*

tions follow. There is no task to do or cloze answers to fill in. There may not even be a discussion except for one that may occur when I ask if there are any questions.

For pure listening I also use songs and read very short stories. I replay and reread material at intervals so that students can listen to it again with greater ease. I only know whether or not they've understood it by observation—a smile or a laugh at the right moment.

If this is only one of the many things we do and if there is a multiplicity of other input, then this is exceedingly valuable. In the classroom, where there are frequent moments of anxiety for students, it is comforting for there to be familiar material that students understand or grow to understand and where nothing more is demanded of them than listening, which is demanding in itself. This is appropriate for any age group at any level, even in a test-driven TOEFL preparation class.

At every level and for every age there is appropriate material available. My advice is to look at stories, skits and songs and forget about the comprehension exercises that follow if they already exist. Instead, examine the material carefully and analyze or predict what is in it that students may have difficulty with. Give them everything they need to understand the material with as little interference as possible. They don't have to guess the gist here because it has already been given to them. No risk-taking is involved. Use it as "pure" listening material so they can listen to it (or view it) as a native speaker listens to it. Give no quizzes. Let them get used to the idea that listening in a second language can be pleasurable.

As I have learned by listening to my students, they have great wisdom on learning to listen:

"Almost everyone in the class is thinking about the TOEFL. I said in class that learning English is more important than studying TOEFL. I would like to repeat it once again. Andrea's journal (which had been reprinted in a teacher journal) reflected a question which implies a fear of the test. I'm sure Andrea's listening is going to improve very much but he will improve by watching TV, listening to the radio and speaking to Americans much more than listening to TOEFL tapes. I understand him perfectly. It is very hard when you listen to the radio and you don't know what it is all about. Sometimes you are more worried about what you can or cannot understand than about the program you are with. But there is a moment when you for the first time realize you understand without paying attention to the understanding process. I can assure you that the moment is exciting. Through the weeks you see how you understand is better. It is the moment when your brain doesn't have to translate to your own language. Of course there is the balance between English knowledge and patience. The most important thing is not to be thinking about "I am doing okay" or "I'm failing." I don't have a lot of patience but I finally realized that my worrying was worse for my English. I still have problems with my listening but at least I know that I'm improving every day...."

This journal entry shows dramatically that the student has learned to listen to authentic material with some ease and enjoyment and has become aware of and learned to focus on his progress. It is clear that we can learn about how our students listen and what difficulties they face by listening to them, and we can then respond with listening opportunities that may accelerate their progress.

Catherine Sadow teaches at Northeastern University in Boston and is co-author of three listening texts: Talk Radio *(Addison and Wesley, 1987),* People at Work *(Pro Lingua, 1990), and* On the Air: Listening to Radio Talk *(Cambridge University Press, 1998).*

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A Form for Students to Focus on Their Listening

Name _____

1. In the language lab this week, I listened to the lecture called _____.

2. It was _____very easy for me.
   _____a good level of listening for me (both easy and difficult in places).
   _____difficult but manageable.
   _____much too difficult.

3. I spent _____ (time) doing this lesson.

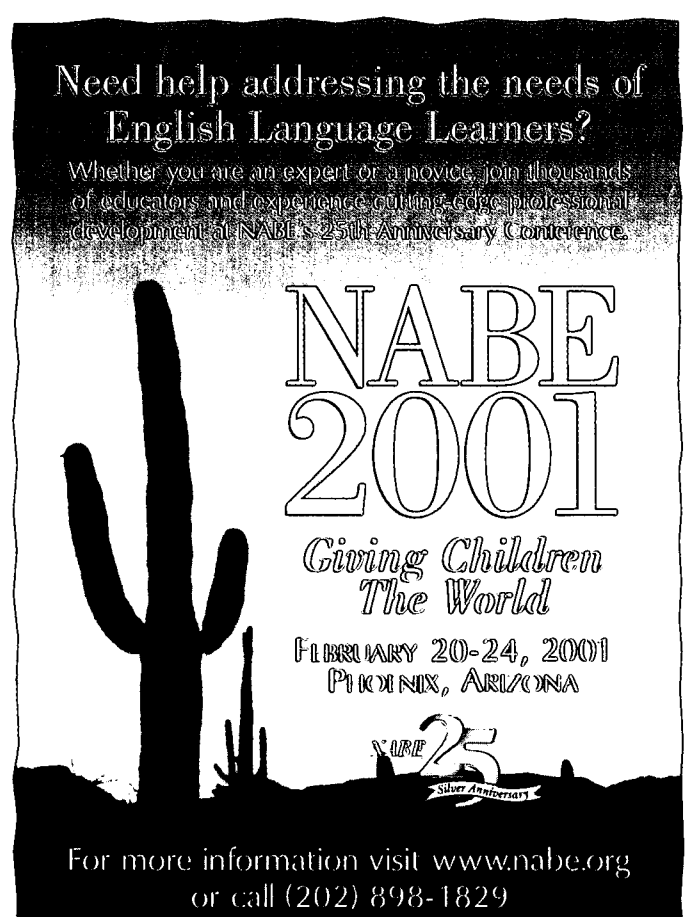
4. I _____ (used the book, didn't use the book).

5. I found it _____ quite interesting.
   _____ alright.
   _____ very boring.

6. I found it _____ useful to do.
   _____ not useful to do.

7. Some things I learned from listening to it (facts, vocabulary, etc.) were:

8. If you couldn't fill this out because you didn't do it, please write here and tell me why you didn't do it:



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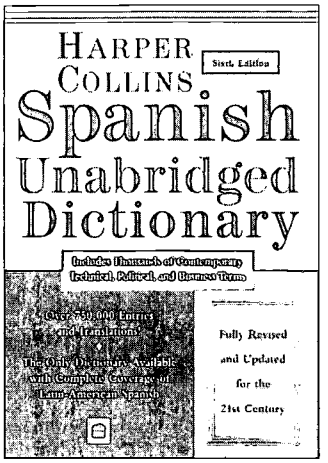

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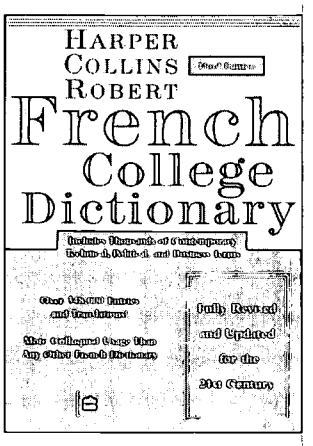

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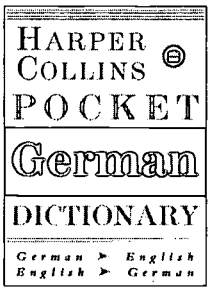

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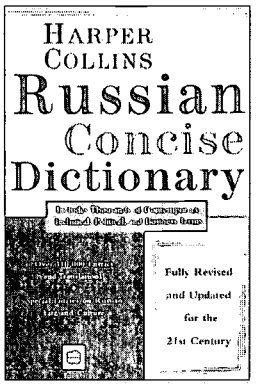

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Elizabeth Hanson-Smith is an educational technology consultant and can be reached at ehansonsmi@yahoo.com

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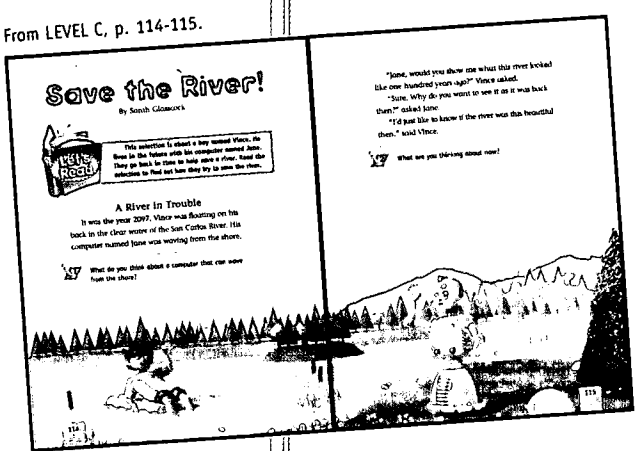

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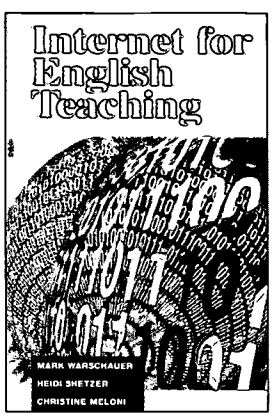
The Internet for Teaching is Alive and Well

Internet for English Teaching
By Mark Warschauer, Heidi Schetzer and Christine Meloni. TESOL, 2000

Internet for English Teaching bills itself as a book both for those who have been "teaching for years and want to read about the latest developments in research, theory and curriculum development" as well as those that "are interested in an introduction to this field." This is a tall order to fill in a slim 178 pages, but to their credit the authors come pretty close to the mark. Even for this dyed-in-the-wool Internet user, the book brought me a number of new perspectives and welcome information on research and Internet services.



Internet for English Teaching is divided into 8 chapters. Chapter 1, "Getting Started," coins a new acronym to summarize the reasons for using the Internet in our classes: ALIVE—Authenticity, Literacy, Interaction, Vitality and Empowerment. They wisely warn, however, that "successful results depend on how the Internet is used." The following chapters go a long way towards steering the reader in the right direction.

Chapter 2, "Resources for Teachers," surveys the mailing lists, online journals, academic associations and sites for online learning. In citing TESL-L, however, the authors missed what this writer considers its most valuable feature—the ability to search the over 40,000 past messages by keyword. This function often yields a quick answer without even having to post a message to the list.

Chapter 3, "Student Communication and Collaboration," discusses both intra-class communication and collaboration with classes at a distance. It begins a discussion of Internet projects that is continued in Chapter 5, "Student Publishing," and Chapter 7, "Putting it all together," and offers a 'th of advice on the do's and don'ts iccessful project management.

Chapter 4, "Student Research," provides all-important information on how to find information and then organize the material found. It admirably addresses the basics of an important but often neglected aspect of searching—teaching students to critically evaluate what they have found.

Chapter 6 on "Distance Education" mentions opportunities for both students and ESL professionals to enrich themselves via distance courses. It also discusses some of the problems involved such as standards and ownership of material.

Chapter 8, "Researching On-Line Language Learning," lays the groundwork for conducting research and is followed by a detailed supplement "How to Make Web Pages," which contains copious references to other information available online.

The book is not without its shortcomings. There seems to be no mention of how the Internet can be mined to provide content material for the traditional classroom, an aspect that has great potential for enriching our classes. There is no index, but there are other useful appendices such as a 15-page bibliography, another ten pages of useful Internet addresses, and a glossary of terms.

Internet for English Teaching suffers from the same problems of all books concerning the Internet. URLs cited in the text need to be typed in. Furthermore, as the authors mention, URLs are prone to change. I hope TESOL will address this problem by providing a regularly updated page on their Web site with links for sites mentioned in each chapter and the appendices so that the resources in this valuable book are easily available to all.

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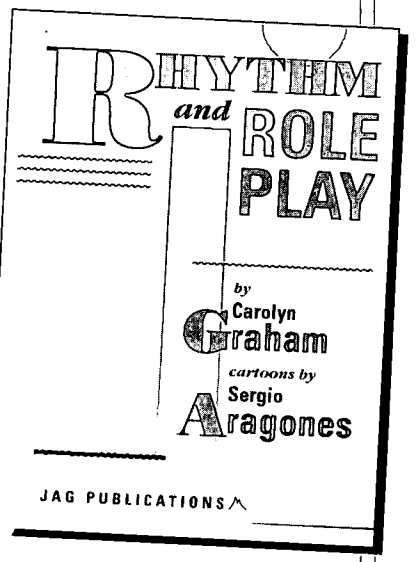

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Hmong Students: A Quarter Century of Progress in the United States

BY JULIE ADLER

The first Hmong refugees arrived in the United States in the mid 1970s. Preliterate farmers from Northern Laos, the Hmong had been recruited by the CIA to fight against the North Vietnamese in Laos. Because any military action in Laos was specifically forbidden in the 1962 Geneva Accords, the CIA had to covertly recruit, train and coordinate the Hmong soldiers. As a result, there were no records of the soldiers' service and no veterans' benefits. When they came to the United States to escape Communist retaliation, they were neither welcomed nor honored but faced resentment and discrimination in their new homeland.

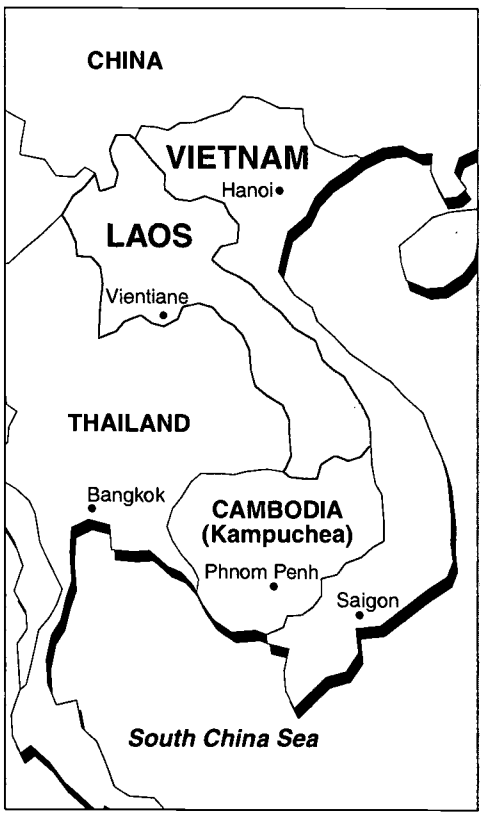
Those first refugees suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and survivor guilt as well as intense culture shock. In the 1970s, many teachers were recruited from other fields to teach survival English to the new arrivals. Most of the Hmong had had no formal schooling and many began by learning to hold a pencil. Their progress was severely impeded by the emotional and psychological trauma of being involuntarily displaced, which was compounded with the grief over loss of homeland and loved ones. The state of the art of ESL was to teach massive amounts of new vocabulary along with basic literacy. The goal, of course, was to make the adults employable as soon as possible.

Hmong in the U.S. Today

Twenty-five years later, there are an estimated 200,000 Hmong in the United States, most of them in Minnesota, Wisconsin and California. Significant Hmong populations are also found in North and South Carolina and Georgia. The first wave of adult refugees are now grandparents; their children, born in Laos or the refugee camps, are now young parents themselves and many are raising bilingual and bicultural children. The K-12 Hmong population consists of these children being raised in two worlds.

ure and Learning Styles

needs of this new generation are very different from those of their parents and grandparents. While unfamiliar with many aspects of traditional Hmong culture, the learning styles of the young generation are still affected by Hmong oral tradition. Individuals from preliterate societies such as Hmong experience learning in informal settings. The learners have a relationship with the "teacher" that is usually familial. Knowledge is passed on orally and through observation. Learning is always cooperative and immediately relevant. "Students" try out their new knowledge or skill by performing a task that is necessary to the family's or village's well-being.



In contrast, the dominant learning styles of individuals from literate, modern societies are usually based on independent initiative and performance and use of the written word as a basis for analysis, which allows the student to use critical thinking skills for problem-solving future educational tasks.

Hmong students come from a culture where learning is concrete, cooperative and a means to a specific end while mainstream students come from a culture where learning is abstract, individual and a means to future learning. Because teachers are trained according to cultural norms, classroom instruction that is relevant to mainstream students can be confusing or disorienting to Hmong students.

Language and Identity Crises

Besides the difference in learning styles that makes classroom instruction less accessible to Hmong students, the Hmong students in our public schools are struggling with language and identity crises. Young Hmong-Americans have a foot in each world and do not fit comfortably in either. Superficially, they are bilingual. However, in actuality, they are not fully proficient in either language. While their first language is Hmong, they are not exposed to the rich language of previous generations because Hmong isn't used exclusively at home. Vocabulary and concepts that do not exist in Hmong are described in English by their bilingual parents; furthermore, students are surrounded by English in the media, their neighborhoods and preschools. At the same time, their parents often do not have a complete and accurate command of the English language, so the English the youngsters learn is not native-like.

When Hmong students start school, their teachers often assume they are fully proficient, but in fact they are proficient only in the lowest levels of English—expressing needs and wants, requesting information and engaging in social exchanges with their peers. Their English proficiency does not necessarily give them access to the school curriculum, which requires a higher level of proficiency. Additionally, the cultural schema that is assumed of the mainstream students and upon which school curricula are based may be completely unknown to Hmong students. For example, familiarity

with folk and fairy tales, foods, music and cultural experiences such as family vacations, pets, and celebrations cannot be assumed.

As the students progress through elementary school, they begin to read to learn, and learning becomes less experiential and more abstract. Often Hmong children are reading below grade level because they had to learn to read in their second rather than their first language. They are often behind in the content areas because they do not have the required background knowledge.

In the upper elementary grades, our educational system stresses critical thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis and evaluation. These are reasonable learning objectives for students from a culture where communication and learning are individual, abstract and negotiable. They are much harder for students who come from a culture where communication and learning are interpersonal, intuitive and concrete. They are also much harder for students whose language proficiency does not include the vocabulary or concepts to allow them to synthesize, analyze and critique.

In middle and high school, when adolescents are typically struggling to establish their more independent and individual place in the world, the identity crisis becomes severe and can have serious educational and social repercussions. Hmong teens typically want to fit in and be part of American mainstream culture. Because of their more traditional parents and cultural values, they cannot fit in in the usual ways. Many parents are not familiar or comfortable with the social life of the average American teen. It is not considered appropriate for girls to go out in the evening or on weekends; boys are under intense pressure to excel academically. The older generation accuses the younger of being lazy and disrespectful, for not being "traditional" and taking on adult responsibility. Many teens rebel and try to be American but often are confronted with discrimination and racism at school and in the community at large. While rejecting their own culture, they are being rejected by the culture they want to identify with. This identity crisis and lack of belonging to a "group" is what causes some Hmong youth to seek a gang affiliation. It is the one place where they can safely "belong" with others who understand them.

Bridging the Academic Gap

Bridging the gap in academic achievement is the first step in addressing the educational and social difficulties of this generation, in helping them "fit in" and feel better about themselves. Recent innovations in programming and instructional approaches appear to be making a difference in this regard. A content-based instructional approach that teaches academic language along with content area material has shown promising results. An inclusive, collaborative approach to teaching also seems to be an efficient delivery system. These innovations came about as a result of recent research by Cummins, and Collier and Thomas.

Cummins originally defined two levels of language proficiency and labeled them Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). He conducted studies that documented the amount of time required for second language students to reach these levels. It takes two to three years for children to be proficient enough to socialize and get their basic needs met, five to seven years to become proficient in academic language—the language of instruction and standardized tests.

Collier and Thomas conducted the first longitudinal study focusing on academic achievement of second language students. Their study showed that Cummins' estimate of five to seven years only holds true over the long term for students who receive first language support. Hmong students who receive no first language support actually take seven to ten years or more to catch up with their peers in standardized English reading tests.

Collier and Thomas, Anna Chamot and J. Michael O'Malley built on the work of Cummins and developed the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). Preliminary reports indicate that this approach, when implemented by trained ESL professionals, can significantly reduce the time it takes for

Paving the Way for Others on the Road to Success

Charles Chou Vue arrived in Eau Claire Wisconsin in 1978—a member of the first extended Hmong family to make Eau Claire their home. His father had been killed by communist soldiers as he tried to protect his village several years earlier. His mother had to devise a scheme to get herself and her seven children out of Laos. It took several years and two attempts, but in 1975 they finally made it across the Mekong river, paying the boat owner a huge sum of money for a very dangerous early morning crossing. After two years in a refugee camp, they came to Eau Claire, where they were sponsored by a local church.

Charles Chou Vue

Charles had had the equivalent of about three years of school; it was frequently disrupted by the war. When he arrived in Eau Claire in April of 1978, he was placed in a sixth grade class and was pulled out several hours a day for ESL. The following fall he started junior high school with little formal education and only a few months' exposure to English. He remembers feeling lonely, scared and very frustrated. He sat through the school day watching, listening and concentrating but understanding very little of the subjects he studied. He had two to three hours of ESL a day and beyond that received tutoring from the school secretary. At the same time, he remembers being afraid that he would forget his own language, so he and his friends would record stories, and religious rituals to preserve their culture and language.

By the end of junior high, Charles felt he could "get by" in English, but it took until the end of high school in 1984 before he felt comfortable communicating in English. By then he was reading at about a fifth grade level.

That summer he entered an academic bridge program at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. Entering freshman who were labeled "at risk" because of poor entry scores attended two academic classes and received tutoring for four weeks. During the fall semester of his freshman year, he took several ESL classes on campus, but by the next semester he was on his own except for tutoring he sought independently.

Charles graduated in 1989 and was one of the first Hmong refugees from Eau Claire to graduate from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. Today, the academic bridge program is called the Commanding English Program and has grown to include summer orientation, adjunct support classes to freshmen requirements, academic advising, tutoring and mentoring. The program accepts 13 to 15 Hmong students every year. It employs several instructors and a full-time advisor who has a master's degree in social work. Charles Chou Vue is now the program advisor of the Commanding English Program, helping students walk the long road to success that he himself walked before.

second language students to catch up with their first language peers.

CALLA uses the students' grade level content curriculum to explore cognitively complex tasks. Teachers explicitly teach learning strategies to help students learn how to learn in the mainstream cultural context. Language and academic content are acquired simultaneously. Oral and written language are given equal importance. Higher level thinking skills are developed gradually as students talk, write and read about the tasks that they explore cooperatively. Learning is experiential and made relevant to students' lives. The approach combines the best practices of teaching with what we know about Hmong students' learning styles.

An Inclusive Approach

A second innovation that has been spreading is more collaborative, inclusive programming. In these "pull in" programs, ESL students stay in the mainstream classroom for most of the day with their ESL teacher who designs lessons for the entire class that will accommodate those with lower-level language skills. This model requires close and continuous collaboration between the ESL and mainstream classroom teacher. The importance of common planning time, team teaching and mutual trust between teachers cannot be understated. The teachers, the mainstream students and the Hmong students all benefit from the collaboration. Socially, the Hmong students are not isolated as much from their peers; they have access to native-speaker role models and more opportunity for interaction. Mainstream first language students view the Hmong students as peers and classmates rather than "those kids down the hall."

Politically, the Hmong students become everyone's students, and adapting instruction to include second language learners becomes everyone's responsibility. This is where teachers must trust each other's expertise and professionalism. In this model, ESL teachers become part of the team responsible for teaching and evaluating all students. They are not just viewed as support staff or resource teachers.

Educationally, all students benefit from having access to more than one teacher. Team teaching allows for more small group instruction and better student-teacher ratios. Finally, a multicultural classroom benefits all students by promoting tolerance and understanding.

Advocates of pull-in programs do point out, however, that it is important for Hmong students to have time away from the mainstream classroom where they feel safe asking questions and experimenting with language. This is when ESL teachers can preteach vocabulary and concepts (in Hmong or with bilingual support) that students will encounter in the mainstream classroom. Preteaching key elements helps avoid the pitfall of using class time to translate lessons or of using ESL teachers to get Hmong students "caught up" after doing poorly on assessment in their mainstream classroom. Preteaching essential vocabulary and concepts enables Hmong students to participate in classroom lessons with their peers, contributes to positive self-esteem, more realistic evaluation, and social acceptance and respect in the mainstream classroom.

Collaborative inclusion and content-area instruction are innovations that are being implemented successfully in K-12 programs in several districts. They are ways that we can adapt our educational system to accommodate our Hmong students while they learn to adapt to our way of teaching and learning.

Tradition and Progress

The Hmong people have a legacy of migration and adaptation. Their history, passed down orally from prehistoric times, tells of waves of migration that started in the Yellow River Valley of China, continued south into North Vietnam, then west into Laos. With each migration, the Hmong have successfully adapted to their new environment while maintaining their cultural identity and heritage.

Their latest migration to the United States has required the same adaptability of the Hmong. They have made great strides educationally, socially and politically since their predecessors first arrived twenty-five years ago. The Hmong community successfully lobbied for legislation that allows Hmong veterans to become citizens without having to pass the English language test. Hmong professionals are entering the fields of education, medicine and business and are represented on city councils and school boards. At the same time, the Hmong cling tenaciously to their traditions. ESL teachers want to help Hmong students feel confident and comfortable negotiating their two worlds: Hmong and American. We can do that by adopting programming that addresses their learning styles, teaching them academic English through content and working more closely with the mainstream classroom teachers to streamline instruction.

Julie Adler, M.A., has taught ESL at all levels since 1985 and taught a university class entitled "Hmong Civilization and Culture." She is the interim TESOL Coordinator at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. She teaches advanced ESL, ESL methods, and supervises student teachers.

Additional Resources

For more information on ESL pedagogy:

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- Thomas, Wayne and Virginia Collier. "School Effectiveness For Language Minority Students." National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, April 1997. *Reprinted with permission by the Bilingual/ESL Education Program Equity Mission Team. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.*

For more information on the history of the Hmong:

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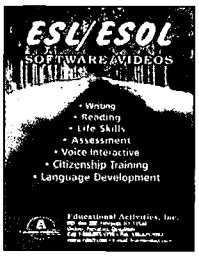

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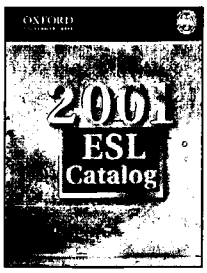

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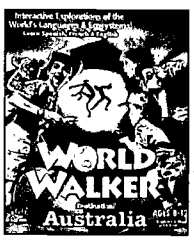

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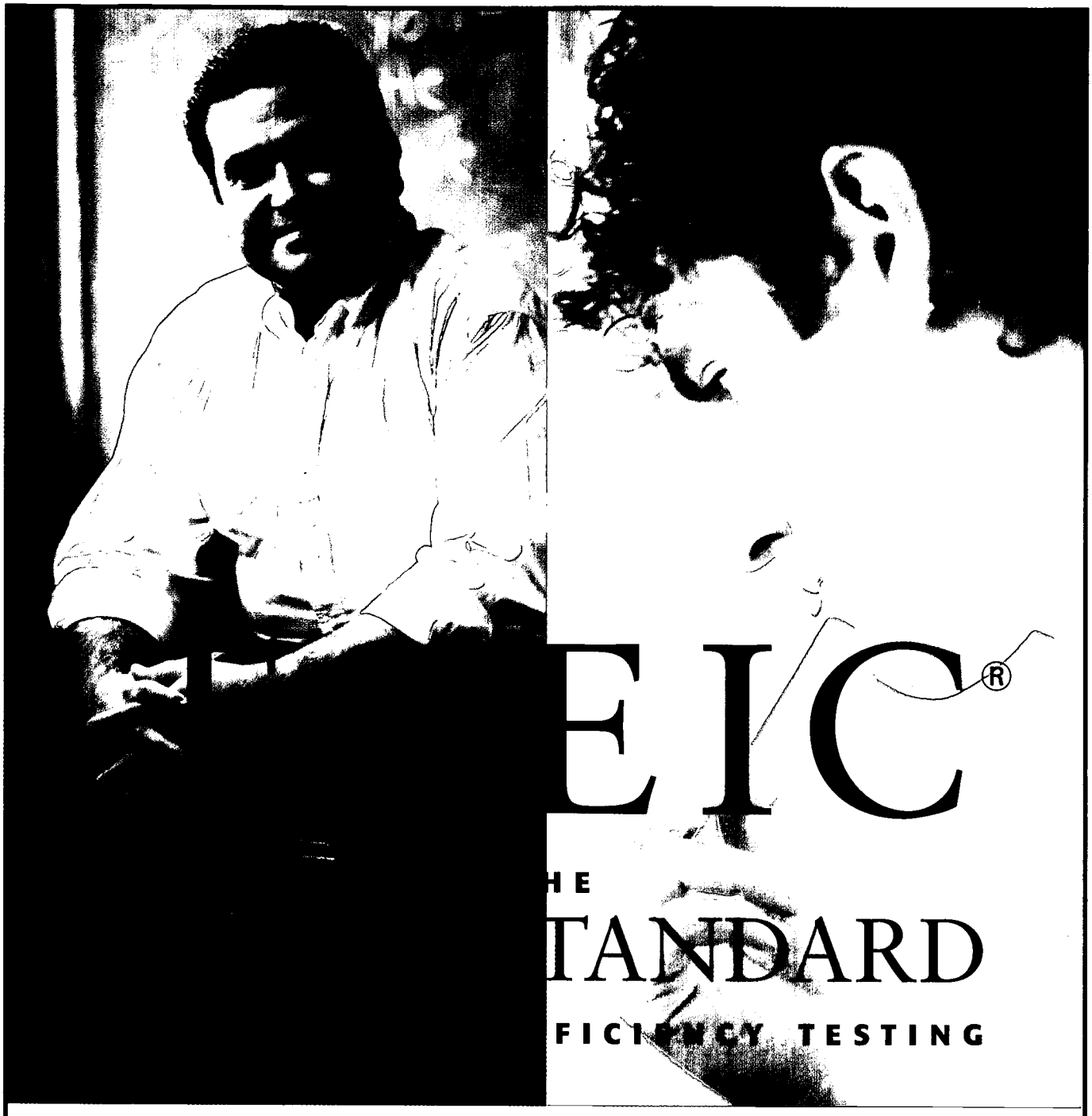

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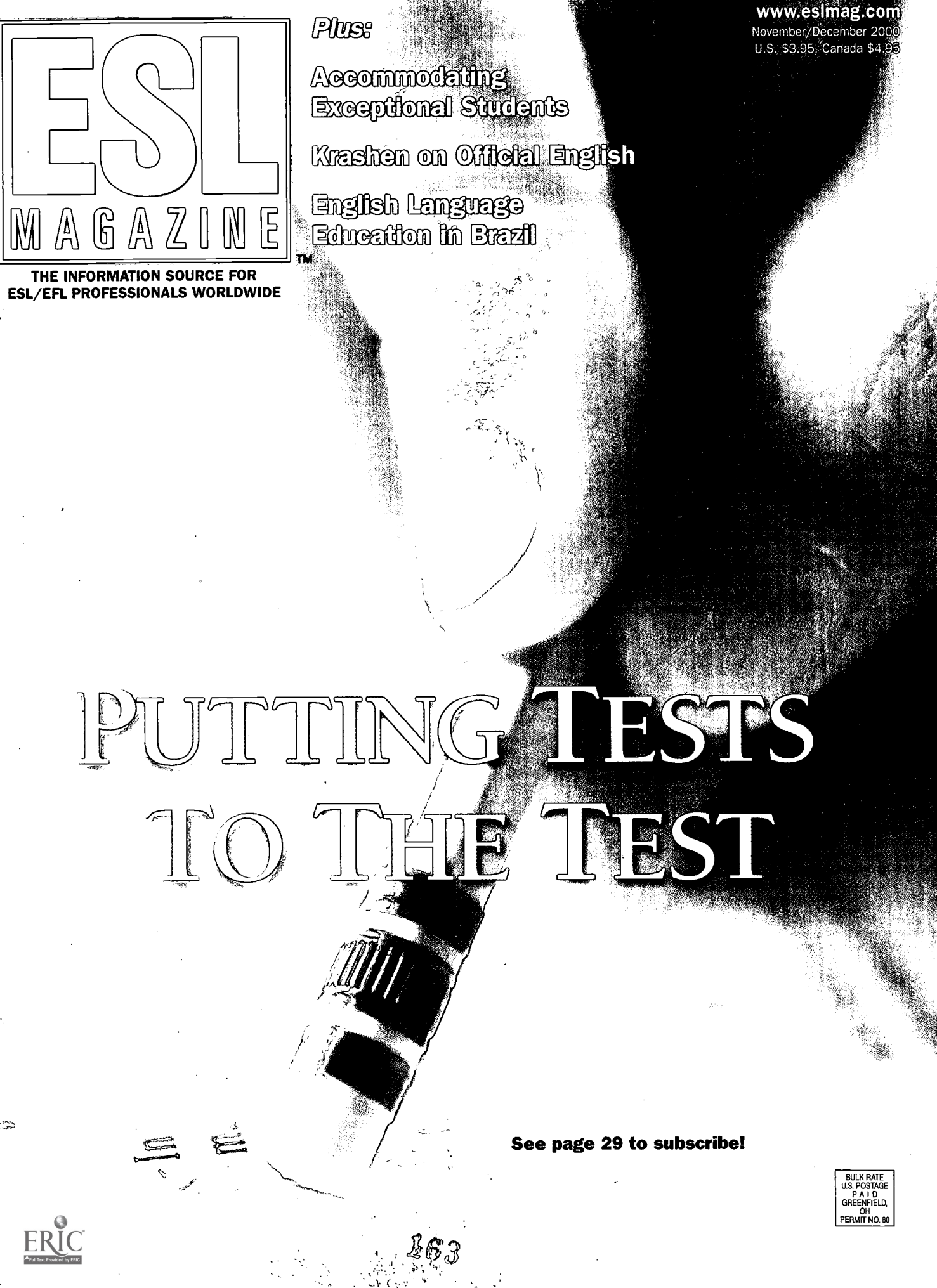

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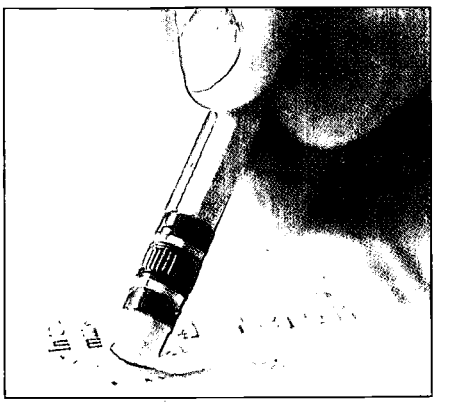

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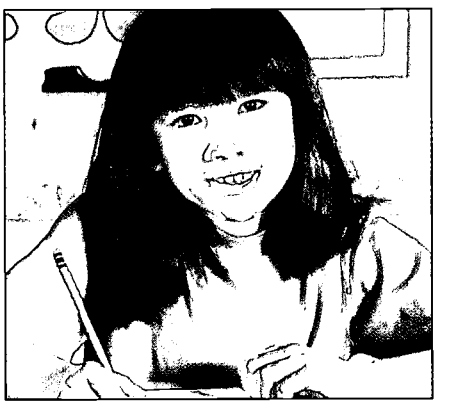

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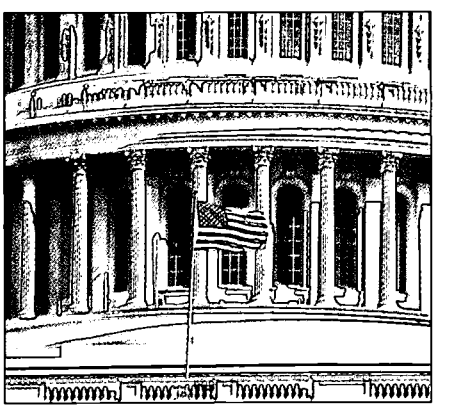

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Who's Reading *ESL Magazine*?

Harry Byerly
Director of Graduate Admissions, Hawaii Pacific University

***ESL Magazine* ONLINE!**
www.eslmag.com
(lots of links)

ERIC

Test Anxiety? Be BRAVE!

Tests feature prominently in the educational arena, and when something is prominent, it is often problematic. There is usually a lot at stake and widely varying opinions to be heard. Stratton Ray clarifies the factors involved in testing and equips teachers with tools to evaluate their own tests and overcome some of their own test anxiety!

A key word in education today is "diversity." For some this is exciting. For others it's overwhelming. Not only is there diversity in students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, but there are different types of intelligence, learning styles and the special needs of exceptional students. How does a teacher try to meet the needs of all of his or her students? Marjorie Hall Haley focuses on the issue of special needs and gives teachers practical ways to help exceptional students succeed in the classroom.

As debate continues on the question of an official language for the United States, Stephen Krashen examines some of the arguments on the issue and makes suggestions on how to build bridges rather than barriers for English language learners who call the United States home.

Francisco Gomes de Matos and Abuêndia Padilha Pinto describe English language education in Brazil and highlight the many different factors that influence what takes place in classroom—government regulations, teacher training, the publishing industry, global media and more. They also highlight the importance of professional cooperation for progress in English language education.

All the best!

Marilyn Rosenthal

Marilyn Rosenthal, Ph.D.
Editorial Director

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The magazine for English as a Second Language professionals.

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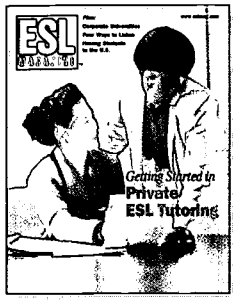


Send letters to eslmagazine@compuserve.com or ESL Magazine, 220 McKendree Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401. Include your name and position or address.

Private Tutoring

▷ I was pleased to see the Association of Education Practitioners and Providers (AEPP) mentioned in the article "Getting Started in Private ESL Tutoring," for we are primarily a networking organization for educators (preschool-adult) who have gone into business for themselves—or are thinking about it! Many of our members have recently expanded their client services to include ESL services, so even if one is not interested in taking the "leap" into his/her own business just yet, there are opportunities to partner with an existing educational service who may be interested in referring clients. I would like to extend an invitation to join our association to any of your readers who may be interested in "hanging out a shingle" or networking with others in the business. Please call or visit our Web site for more information.

—CHRIS YELICH
Executive Director, AEPP
800-252-3280, www.aepp.org

▷ Thanks, Dr. Wurzelbacher, for sharing your expertise as a private ESL tutor. I wish I had read your article 12 years ago! In just 2+ pages you have captured the most important considerations, especially the Readiness Profile, Marketing and Getting Down to Business. And maybe I would not have gotten so burnt out if I had had your wonderful suggestions for avoiding some pitfalls (e.g., cancellations, lateness, and "running from place to place"). Private language tutors around the world should take a look at this article.

—PEGGY SEUFERT
Center for Applied Linguistics
transitioning to MD Dept. of Ed., Adult ESL

▷ Dr. Wurzelbacher's article provided a good view of the many areas private tutors need to consider. I especially liked her thoughts on assessing one's own personal traits and readiness to be a private tutor. It is not for everyone.

—KATHLEEN OLSON
olsonk@gw.franklin.edu

Corporate Universities

▷ Thanks for your very interesting article on corporate universities. It was the first article I read as soon as I got this month's issue! Congratulations, and I'll be looking forward to reading more.

—CECILIA GOMEZ
Foster City, CA

▷ I've just read your article on teaching ESL in corporate universities. GREAT! I've just started a small business. My focus is English for specific purposes. I currently teach a class for pilot trainees to assist them with radio communications. I lived and worked in Sendai Japan for two years and loved going out to teach my business classes weekly. You have just reminded me of that pleasure. In my business plan, I overlooked the possibility of doing that in Canada. I was inspired by your article. Thank you for listing references. I'm excited to check out your books!

—AUDREY PERUN
English Training Consultants
Vancouver, BC

▷ I read your article on corporate universities and thought it was great. We actually deal with the corporate market quite a bit and I agree with your assessment.

—PETER CERVIERI
Distance Learning, Inc.
New York, NY

Four Ways to Listen

▷ Of the four language skills, activities to teach listening often get ignored to allow more time for grammar or vocabulary. Perhaps direct teaching of listening skills is more quickly pushed aside because I assume that students get plenty of natural practice listening. As Ms. Sadow demonstrated in her article through quotes from her students' journal entries, many students feel insecure in the area of listening, much to the surprise of their teachers. The article was a good reminder to me that students gain important skills and confidence through direct listening activities and this practice does indeed make a difference in moving a student along in their overall proficiency.

—KIM YOUNG
North Carolina

Hmong Students

▷ Adler's informative article highlights the key areas of difficulty for an atypical group of Asians, the Hmong, who represent what Walker-Moffat aptly describes as "the other side of the Asian American success story." The specific characteristics of the Hmong learning style are contrasted with mainstream learning patterns. The explanations of two highly promising pedagogical approaches, CALLA and the inclusive collaborative model with the all-important pre-teaching component, demonstrate ways in which the Hmong learners can be gradually introduced to formal education. It is, however, also true that most ESL learners, with the exception of those from highly literate societies with high levels of participation in formal education, can benefit from the implementation of these same models. What is compelling about the Hmong and instructive for those in ESL, is that they lie at the far end of a continuum of learners and serve to present in the most striking manner the same learning issues found along other points on the continuum. This heightens our awareness of less extreme cases of immigrant learners, who nevertheless need to be brought along the continuum in order to succeed in school by mastering the learning paradigm of the mainstream classroom.

We need to be cautious in referring to Hmong learning as "concrete" rather than "abstract." The Hmong are accustomed to abstract thinking as is evident in their proverbs and spirituality. What is really at play here is the contextualization of learning. The problem with the analysis tasks in the learning model in our schools is that as a prerequisite for this analytical activity, the material to be examined is decontextualized. Categorization is a revealing example. In our literate culture, most children begin with Sesame Street, singing, "Which of these is not like the others?" In a traditional Hmong setting, no one would put four things together and ask which one doesn't belong as part of a learning activity, yet our system requires this type of thinking. These activities are not universally natural or necessary for learning, but they are part of formal education in the U.S. For the Hmong, and for others from oral cultures as well, learning activities have always taken place in a cultural context. For this reason Hmong students typically do better on teacher-made tests and classroom-based grading measures than on standardized tests, which rely heavily on multiple choice items not based on material presented in the classroom.

Finally, the importance of the affective domain cannot be underestimated with respect to the Hmong. Even with strong pedagogical models, success for the Hmong ultimately depends upon relationships. It is in the context of these relationships that learners will engage the material. I am reminded of an ESL class in which I handed out a student questionnaire asking what they students liked best about the class. Most of the students referred to areas of content (vocabulary, note-taking skills, verb formation rules), but the Hmong student answered, "that we all work together to help each other learn."

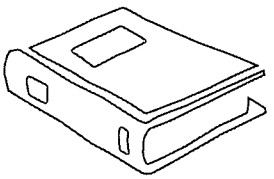
—HELAINE W. MARSHALL, PH.D.
Westchester Community College, NY

ERIC

Satellite Town Meeting on Parent Involvement

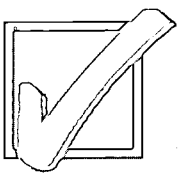
On Tuesday, December 5, at 7:30 p.m. (EST), the U.S. Department of Education and the National Parent-Teachers Association will host a discussion, "Reaching Out to Spanish-Speaking Families: Ensuring Educational Success." The interactive session will highlight best practices for involving Spanish-speaking parents in their children's education. To register and for more information, visit http://registerevent.ed.gov.

Bilingual Phrase Books Include Low-Incidence Languages



The Center for Applied Linguistics Refugee Service Center (CAL/RSC) has recently added an English-Somali phrase book to its collection of thirteen bilingual phrase books. Each book offers useful phrases for newly arrived refugees and other immigrants. Four of the books have cassette versions (*). Phrase books are available in these languages: *Lao, *Vietnamese, *Chinese (Cantonese), *Hmong, Haitian Creole, Farsi, Russian, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Spanish, and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian. Print copies are $5 each. Ordering information is online at http://www.cal.org/rsc/rscpubs.htm#order or call 202-362-0700, x221. For cassettes, call Audio-Forum at 800-243-1234.

Census 2000 Final Response Rates



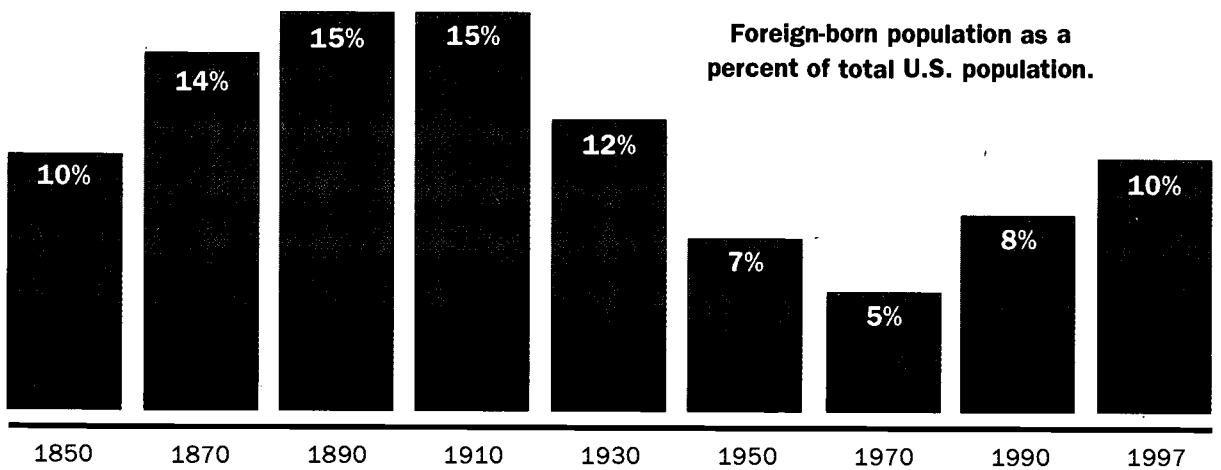
The national 67% Final Response Rate for Census 2000 exceeds the 65% response rate from the 1990 census and far exceeds the 61% response rate expected for the census. More than 24 percent of local communities responded to the Census Bureau's challenge to increase their community's participation rates by at least five percentage points over their 1990 response rate, the '90 Plus Five challenge. The American public reversed a three-census decline in census participation.

New Publication Series: Practitioner Briefs

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) has introduced "Practitioner Briefs," a new series designed specifically for teachers and other educational practitioners. These briefs introduce important classroom practices based on CREDE research. Practitioner Brief #1 "Family Visits Benefit Teachers and Families—and Students Most of All" is based on a study of the academic and social development of rural and urban children of Appalachian descent in Kentucky. The brief provides teachers with guidelines on conducting family visits and using them to improve instruction. Practitioner Brief #1 is available online at www.cal.org/crede/pubs/PracBrief1.htm. Contact crede@cal.org or call 202-362-0700 for free hard copies.

U.S. Foreign-Born Population Surpasses 25 Million

Coming to America: A Census Brief released in August 2000 shows the foreign-born (not U.S. citizens at birth) population of the United States as a percentage of the total U.S. population. In 1997, the total foreign-born population was estimated at 25.8 million, with one-half of the foreign-born population coming from Latin America. The proportion of the U.S. population that was foreign-born reached an estimated 1 in 10 in 1997, the highest proportion since 1930.



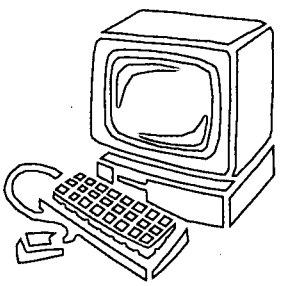
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ERIC

New Web Site Focuses on Rural Schools

A Web site known as Navigating Resources for Rural Schools (http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled) is a new online resource for and about rural schools. Developed by the Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the request of democratic senators from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska, the Web site provides links to data and information on current and changing conditions in education in rural America. Examples include data regarding enrollments; National Assessment of Educational Progress scores; coursetaking, dropouts and transition to college; availability of advanced course offerings and technology; teacher characteristics, class size, discipline and facilities; and support for learning, including parent satisfaction and involvement, community support, and financial support. The Web site also has links to other information resources including relevant Education Department programs, research and promising practices related to rural education. Much of the information is from department-supported regional educational laboratories, the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, and the Distance Learning Resource Network.

New Electronic Placement Bulletin



The association Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is changing the format of its Placement Bulletin to an electronic version, the Placement E-Bulletin (PEB). The PEB will be free to all TESOL members and will be updated frequently. The last hard copy of the Placement Bulletin will be the December 2000 issue. The PEB will be launched on January 1, 2001. For more information, visit http://careers.tesol.org/.

New Location for Bilingual Clearinghouse

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education has moved to offices near The George Washington University campus. The main telephone number and Web address will remain the same, but the new mailing address is NCBE/The George Washington University, 2121 K Street, Suite 260, Washington, DC 20037, tel: 202-467-0867 or 800-321-NCBE, http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu.

Conference Calendar

November

- ☐ 2-5 **Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)**, Shizuoka, Japan. Contact jalt@gol.com.
- ☐ 3-4 **Washington TESOL**, Seattle, WA. Contact 425-788-7593.
- ☐ 3-5 **Egypt TESOL**, Cairo, Egypt. Contact Deena Boarie, cdc@intouch.com.
- ☐ 4 **Maryland TESOL**, Arnold, MD. Contact Elizabeth Holden, 410-767-0631.
- ☐ 9-11 **Colorado TESOL**, Longmont, CO. Contact Larry R. Fisher, 303-938-2584.
- ☐ 10-11 **Minnesota TESOL**, St. Paul, MN. Contact Bonnie Olson, 651-962-5987.
- ☐ 10-12 **Slovak Association of Teachers of English**, Bratislava, Slovakia. Contact andlichova@fphil.uniba.sk.
- ☐ 11 **TESOL Scotland**, Falkirk, Scotland. Contact Carol Irvine, EFL Unit, University of Glasgow, Hetherington Building, Bute Gardens, Glasgow G12 9UP, Scotland, UK.
- ☐ 16-19 **National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)**, Milwaukee, WI. Contact 217-328-3870.
- ☐ 16-19 **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)**. Boston, MA. Contact 914-963-8830.
- ☐ 23-25 **TESL Association of Ontario**, Toronto, Canada. 905-737-8562.

December

- ☐ 1-2 **TESOL Italy**, Assisi, Italy. Contact Rosanna Fiorentino, blasco@rpilo.it.
- ☐ 14-16 **The University of Hong Kong International Language in Education (ILEC)**, Hong Kong, SAR, China. Contact ilec2000@hkucc.hku.hk.
- ☐ 14-16 **International Association for World Englishes (IAWE)**, Portland, Oregon. Contact Kimberley Brown brownk@pdx.edu.
- ☐ 27-30 **Modern Language Association of America**, New York, NY. Contact convention@mla.org.

January 2001

- ☐ 3-7 **Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL)**, Hyderabad, India. Contact congress@ciefl.ernet.in.
- ☐ 4-7 **Linguistic Society of America**, Washington, DC. Contact Margaret Reynolds, 202-835-1714.
- ☐ 31-3 **California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)**, Los Angeles, CA. Contact 213-532-3850.

February

- ☐ 10 **Hawaii TESOL**, Honolulu, HI. Contact 808-377-5402.
- ☐ 15-17 **Bilkent University School of English Language**, Ankara, Turkey. Contact begin-conf@bilkent.edu.tr.
- ☐ 20-24 **National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)**, Phoenix, AZ. Contact 202-898-1829.
- ☐ 21-24 **Language Testing Research Colloquium**, St. Louis, MO. Contact Craig Deville, 319-335-6424.
- ☐ 22-24 **BC TEAL**, Vancouver, Canada. Contact Sarah King, 604-736-6330.
- ☐ 24-27 **American Association of Applied Linguistics**, St. Louis, MO. Contact 612-953-0805.
- ☐ 27-3 **Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)**, St. Louis, MO. Contact 703-836-0774.

March

- ☐ 14-16 **TESOL Arabia**, Dubai, UAE. Contact Sandra Oddy, sandra.oddy@hct.ac.ae.
- ☐ 30-1 **TESOL Spain**, Seville, Spain. Contact Tammi Santana, tammisantana@jazzfree.com.
- ☐ 30-1 **International Linguistics Association**, New York, NY. Contact Johanna J. Woltjer, 212-749-3366.

April

- ☐ 20-22 **California TESOL**, Ontario, CA. Contact Dan Doorn, 626-815-5371.
- ☐ 26 **Saudi Association of Teachers of English (SATE)**, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Contact Sayed Abdel Hamid, sts99@www.com.

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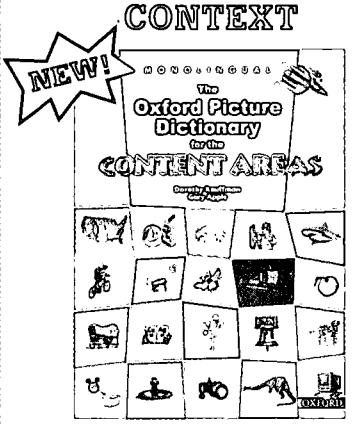
CONTENT THROUGH CONTEXT



The *Dictionary* helps students acquire fluency in English as they develop skills in their academic subjects. It illustrates over 1,500 words drawn from the content areas of social studies, history, science, and math. Use alone or with components.

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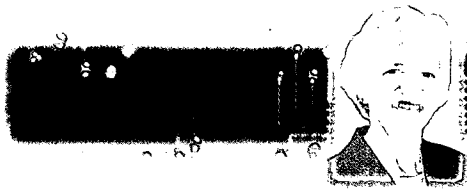


WebQuests—for Adventures in Education

How do you introduce your students to the World Wide Web? How can you guide them to find appropriate sources? How can you create assignments so that students do not waste time? How do you avoid spending hours and hours creating such assignments? Go to the WebQuest Page (edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/ webquest.html) and click!

The idea of a WebQuest was developed by Bernie Dodge with Tom March at San Diego State University in 1995. In his article "Some Thoughts about WebQuests," Dodge defines a WebQuest: "A WebQuest is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet, optionally supplemented with videoconferencing."

Each WebQuest has the following six critical attributes: an introduction, an interesting task, a set of information sources, a description of the process, guidelines and a conclusion. They can be designed within a single discipline or be interdisciplinary; most are group activities and have motivational elements built into them.

Dodge goes on to explain that there are two levels of WebQuests, short term and longer term. The instructional goal of short term WebQuests is acquiring and integrating knowledge and that of longer term WebQuests is extending and refining knowledge.

Dodge's Web site is not only theory and explanation. He offers over 200 actual WebQuests that teachers can use, without adaptation, with their students. He has divided them into five pages: kindergarten-third grade, fourth grade and fifth grade, middle school, high school, and adult/college. Let me give two examples from among this wealth of WebQuests.

"Be A Web Site Sleuth! A WebQuest for Grades 1 and 2"
www.yorkville.k12.il.us/webquests/webqwagner/webqswagner.html
In this activity two children pair up as detectives. Their task is to investigate Web sites about four very popular children's books: *The Magic School Bus*, *Ask the Cat*, *Arthur*, and *Tyrone the Dinosaur*. They are given a chart to fill out with information found at these sites.

"Dispelling the Myth: A Study of Cultures. A WebQuest on Cultural Diversity for Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Graders"
http://coe.west.asu.edu/students/stennille/ST3/webquest.html
In this WebQuest students explore and research cultures and customs of Native American and Hispanic people. They are given Web sites about Hispanic and Native American cultures, and using the information at these sites, they compare and contrast these two groups. They are also asked to keep a daily reflection journal to describe their feelings, impressions, questions and comments as they carry out their research.

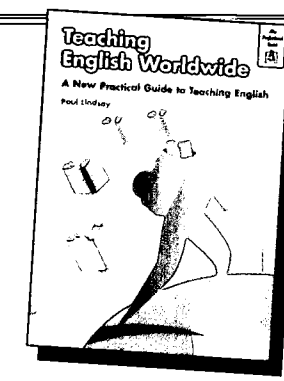
A Gift Economy
The Web frequently reflects a unique environment in which a economy prevails. The WebQuest is an excellent example. Many individuals including teachers, student teachers, media specialists, librarians and others have created these WebQuests, and they offer them to any teacher who wants to use them. You will find a gold mine. Go to Dodge's Web site or go to a search engine such as Yahoo! and type in WebQuests. You will be amazed at what you find!

Acknowledgement
I would like to thank Evangelia Ifantides of the Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia for introducing me to WebQuests. Her enthusiasm for them was infectious!

Christine Meloni is associate professor of EFL at The George Washington University in Washington, DC, and is co-author with Mark Warschauer and Heidi Shetzer of Internet for English Teaching *(TESOL, 2000). She welcomes comments and suggestions from readers and can be reached at cfmeloni@hotmail.com.*

This and all past NetWorthy columns can be found online at http://www.eslmag. com/networthy.html.

Where in the world are you going?



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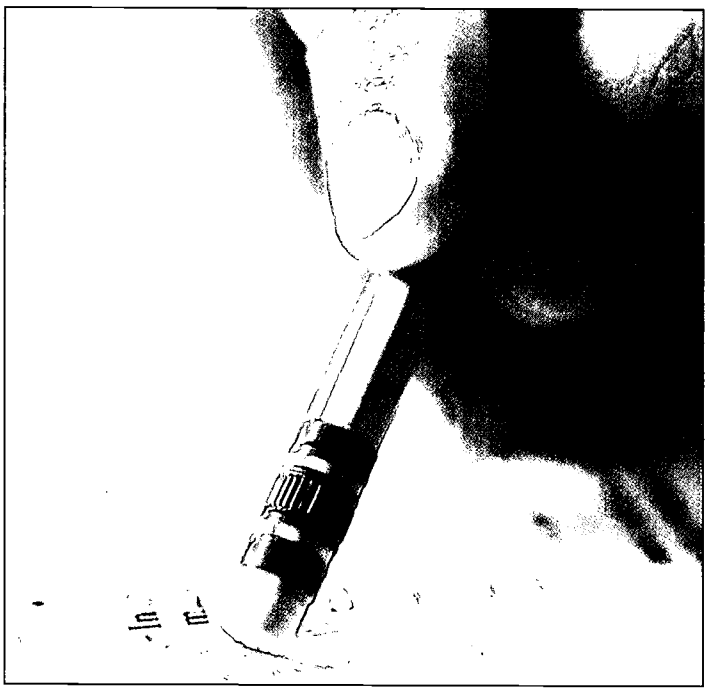
Putting Tests To The Test

BY STRATTON RAY

Tests are usually a big part of a teacher's life. They are part of the ritual of the classroom. Students expect them. Administrators, school boards, and legislators require them. They are important to us in our work; we think about them often and have a lot to say about them.

Frequently, however, we don't trust our instincts. Testing has the trappings of a science and that sometimes intimidates us. But teachers can often spot real problems with a test, problems that need to be addressed. Although testing situations are complicated, they are also simple in a way. There are five—and only five—basic elements that need to be considered with every test. These are represented with the acronym BRAVE, which stands for backwash, reliability, administrative concerns, validity, and ethics. Equipped with an understanding of these elements, teachers are able to examine critically the tests and testing situations that are part of their teaching life and can talk confidently about tests with administrators and "experts" in testing.



Backwash

Backwash is the single great success story of testing. If a test has importance in the lives of students or teachers, the test will drive what happens in the classroom. Although "teaching to the test" tends to be interpreted in a negative way, it can be positive if properly exploited: my daughter's third grade teachers are in a frenzy to get students to write summaries of what they read and to use figurative language effectively. They are teaching to a test, but many people consider this to be positive backwash from a well-designed test. The backwash effect was certainly a major goal of the test designers.

Take a look at our sample vocabulary test on page 11. Suppose we make a certain score on the test a requirement for—what? admission? passing to the next level? a scholarship? mainstreaming? teacher raises? If we make our vocabulary test this important, the odds are good that parents and students will bring pressure on us and our bosses, and students will end up spending class time doing multiple-choice drills on vocabulary in sentences with no context. We may not want this powerful backwash. We may be aghast that teachers will spend valuable class time doing multiple-choice drills. But if the test is important, it will tend to happen.

Knowing that backwash is likely, it may be best to work backwards from what we would like to see happen in the classroom. A test like the sample composition test on page 11 might be the result of such a strategy. It might very well be that we want our students and teachers to spend their class time and homework time writing short narratives about important events in their lives. If so, then we will be happy with the backwash effect of our composition test.

Testing is very successful—for good or ill—at changing what teachers and students do in the classroom, and a wise user of tests will exploit that backwash effect and minimize its negatives.

Reliability

We may now be in love with our composition test. Parents and students are putting pressure on the teachers to give more writing assignments and to spend more class time on writing—a perfect test!

Alas, testing is a balancing act, and we have considered only the first BRAVE element. When we look at the second element, reliability, our shiny composition test loses much of its luster.

Our composition test has its powerful backwash effect because the score on it is important in peoples' lives. A score of, say, 80 means admission or passing or a scholarship or whatever; a score of 50 means failure. Reliability asks the question, "How sure are we that there is really a difference between a score of 80 and a score of 50?" With our composition test, we are not at all sure.

For one thing, someone has to read each composition and come up with a number. Our experience with

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composition tests in general is that it is hard to be precise in scoring. If two people read the same composition, they are very likely to come up with two different numbers. One reader of an examinee's composition will recognize organization that another reader misses. One reader may have a higher tolerance than another for bad grammar when it is balanced by powerful expression. In any case, two raters rating separately will differ some much of the time, and they will differ much some of the time. Training of raters can help with this, but it doesn't seem to get the accuracy of scoring above a certain rather mediocre level. And scoring is just one source of unreliability on our composition test. Think about the effect of topic, for example, when one student may excel because he or she happens to be familiar or just comfortable with the subject.

Compare our vocabulary test. If we use a mechanical scanner to read the dotted a's, b's, c's and d's, the machine will give us the same score over and over again. Even when tests are hand-scored, disagreements about scoring are very rare, and clerical errors produce only insignificant and infrequent variations in score. Our 60-item vocabulary test will be reliable so long as it is carefully written and kept long enough to eliminate such effects as guessing and students' clerical errors.

Administrative Concerns

Our program administrator may not like our composition test and may rather have us use the vocabulary test because of cost. If our composition test is to be at all reliable, we will need to have each composition read twice. Each reading will take perhaps five minutes? So every 100 compositions will require 1000 minutes or about 17 hours of teacher time. With the vocabulary test, on the other hand, if we can borrow the biology department's scanning machine, we will need five seconds per test, so 100 tests will take ten to 15 minutes.

The composition raters will also require several hours of training if their rating is to be at all reliable, and they will need a leader with some expertise to conduct the training. All of this will strike the administrator as costly, and she may want to skip it. ...l lower test reliability.

Validity

If we decide that we can live with our test's backwash on what happens in the classroom, and if we believe that the scores our test generates are reliable—precise enough to be fair and useful—and if our test does not consume so much time or so many resources that it is administratively impractical, then we must still wonder if the test scores really mean what we think they mean—or if they mean anything at all. In other words, does the test really measure what we think it measures.

This is the question of validity, and it is a hall of mirrors: we ask questions about the meaning of our score, but we only raise new questions. Take our composition test. Suppose we are in a university setting. We are trying to decide who needs to take an ESL writing course before taking a mainstream course in freshman composition. We are rather proud of our composition test in this setting: to see if students need a writing course, we get a sample of their writing. How straightforward! But then one of the teachers for freshman composition says, "This isn't at all what we do in freshman composition. We do lots of pre-writing like brainstorming before we get to writing our drafts. We go through multiple drafts; we only edit for grammar and spelling when we get near the end of the process. Your test is nothing like this: your idea of writing is that students should be able to sit down and write a perfect composition off the top of their heads in forty-five minutes. This is almost the opposite of our idea of what writing is."

Hearing this, we feel horrible. What are we to think about our test, and what are we to do? Our colleague has made assertions about the validity of the test that may or may not be true. The idea of "composition" underlying our composition test is somewhat different from the "composition" the teachers believe they are teaching. Does this mean we shouldn't use the test? Is this objection to our test just a quibble or will it make a substantial difference?

We could investigate this, especially if we were willing to learn a bit about statistics. We could compare performance on our composition test with performance in the composition course: do those with high scores on our test do well in the course and

BRAVE: What to Consider in a Test

Backwash—What effect will the test have on what happens in the classroom?

Reliability—How precise are the scores? Does "20" actually mean "somewhere between 15 and 25?"

Administrative concerns—How much will this test cost? How much time will it take? How many rooms will it require?

Validity—Is this test really measuring what ought to be measured?

Ethics—Is this test reliable and valid enough that it is ethical to use it for the decision at hand?

Sample Vocabulary Test

This is a vocabulary test of 60 multiple-choice items, each of which requires the examinee to read a sentence and choose the word that is closest in meaning to the italicized word or phrase, e.g.:

Tom has gotten very *skinny*.
(a) greedy (b) thin
(c) meager (d) tan

The examinee darkens circle a, b, c or d on an answer sheet that is scored by machine.

Sample Composition Test

This is a composition test in which examinees are given 45 minutes to write a composition on the following topic:

Tell about an event that changed your life in a significant way.

Each composition is read by two ESL teachers who assign scores from a rating scale; the examinee's score is the total of the two scores.

those with low scores do badly? We would be very happy if there was a near-perfect relationship, but there won't be. For one among many reasons, our composition test has rather low reliability: its mushy numbers aren't crisp enough to show a near-perfect relationship. That is, we don't really know if a particular student's score is a 5 instead of the 2 he was given, so we aren't sure with individuals if we expect them to do well or badly in the course.

Such studies are never very satisfying. Most of the time, with a reasonable test, the studies indicate some validity, some relationship between the test and what is being tested—but not great enough to give us any certainty.

Ethics

Tests give an illusion of certainty. It is this illusion that has made them so popular politically. They produce numbers, and numbers seem like solid information. But when we look closely at tests and the numbers they produce, the illusion of solidity crumbles. There is no way to be certain that the test is valid, i.e., is really measuring what we want to measure, and the apparent precision of a score like 521 really means (when reliability is considered)"somewhere between 476 and 566 two-thirds of the time; outside that range one-third of the time."

Tests are helpful but uncertain, so the use of tests always has an ethical dimension: "Is it ethical to make a decision of this importance in the face of the amount of uncertainty I have about this test?" Compare a test to a jury trial: will we demand the same degree of accuracy from a jury trial when the consequence is a three-month sentence as we do when the consequence is capital punishment? How much inaccuracy can we tolerate with capital punishment? One mistaken judgment in a million? One in fifty? Individuals in our society differ on this question, and individual teachers will differ on how many mistakes they can tolerate with a high-stakes test.

With language tests, there are a large number of mistaken judgments because of imperfect reliability and problematic validity. Can we tolerate giving a B to a student who deserves an A? Can we tolerate not admitting a student who deserves to be admitted? Or not giving him a scholarship that he deserves? If we can't tolerate these mistakes, we need to look at the BRAVE elements and work on our tests—perhaps improving reliability or moving closer to apparent validity. The BRAVE elements are all we have to work with, and any changes will be in one of these areas.

The other solution to problems with the ethical element is not to test when we don't have to, even with apparently low-stakes tests. The pseudo-scientific mysticism surrounding tests gives them powers that they do not deserve. Students believe in them, especially those who are ready to be discouraged. The world is filled with people who believe they have no talent for language learning, a belief that is often reinforced by thoughtless testing.

Dr. Stratton Ray teaches ESL at Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York. For several years he taught ESL testing at Teachers College, Columbia University and was in charge of the United Nations Language Proficiency Examinations, which are given in six languages at 100 sites worldwide.

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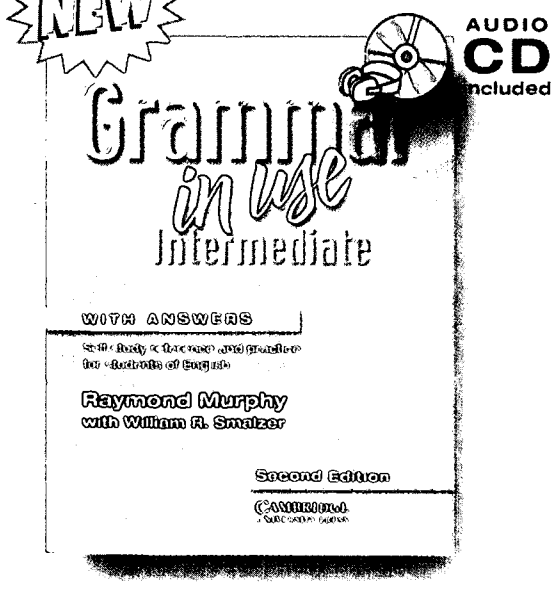

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Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Students: *Refocusing the Lens*

BY MARJORIE HALL HALEY, PH.D.

In teaching graduate-level TESL methods courses at George Mason University and supervising student teachers, I have become more aware that teachers are working with growing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional students. For many teachers, this has presented both challenges and opportunities—frustration and joy. To be successful with these students, teachers often need to "refocus their lens" when looking at and working with culturally and linguistically diverse students in today's classrooms. "Refocusing the lens" implies that teachers can take a closer look at culturally and linguistically diverse learners, get to know them better and feel confident in accommodating these students through a variety of helpful strategies.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Students (CLiDES) is a term defined quite broadly. "Culturally and linguistically diverse" describes persons from a variety of cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds for whom English is not a first language. For the purposes of this article the term "exceptional" will be used for abilities ranging from gifted to physical, emotional or learning disabilities.

There are far too many teachers who do not share or know about their students' cultural or linguistic backgrounds and too few have had the professional preparation to work well with these students with special needs. Teachers working in culturally and linguistically diverse school settings have the challenge of determining whether a specific student behavior is the result of cultural differences or evidence of a learning or behavior problem. Teachers need to be especially sensitive to the possibility that what at first appears to be a learning or behavior problem may actually be a difference in the beliefs or customs of the student.

Identifying Special Needs

e CLiDES students have what are known as language disorders, which can be distinguished from language differences. Language differences are problems that can be traced to cultural differences and/or the student's lack of facility with English. Language disorder refers to an underlying disability that requires special education intervention. Roseberry-McKibbin (1995) provides a check list of sixteen items to be used in identifying a language disorder. According to Roseberry-McKibbin, "Teachers can tell when a culturally and linguistically diverse student might need special education services for a language-learning disability when some of the following behaviors are manifested in comparison to similar peers:

1. Nonverbal aspects of language are culturally inappropriate.
2. Student does not express basic needs adequately.
3. Student rarely initiates verbal interaction with peers.
4. When peers initiate interaction, student responds sporadically/inappropriately.
5. Student replaces speech with gestures, communicates nonverbally when talking would be appropriate and expected.
6. Peers give indications that they have difficulty understanding the student.
7. Student often gives inappropriate responses.
8. Student has difficulty conveying thoughts in an organized, sequential manner that is understandable to listeners.
9. Student shows poor topic maintenance ('skips around').
10. Student has word-finding difficulties that go beyond second language acquisition patterns. ["Word-finding" denotes the student's ability to identify selected word(s) within a text or passage.]
11. Student fails to provide significant information to the listener, leaving the listener confused.
12. Student has difficulty with conversational turn-taking skills (may be too passive or may interrupt inappropriately).
13. Student perseverates (remains too long) on a topic even after the topic has changed.
14. Student fails to ask and answer questions appropriately.
15. Student needs to hear things repeated, even when they are stated simply and comprehensibly.
16. Student often echoes what she or he hears."

There are additional characteristics that teachers are likely to observe and must be prepared to address with some CLiDES students: (a) delay in language production and reception in both the native language and second language, (b) delay in the acquisition of reading skills in both the native and second language, (c) learning problems related to the lack

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of instruction and appropriate transition from the native language to the second language, (d) behavior problems associated with experiences of failure either in regular or special education, (e) increasing number of at-risk and drop out students due to the lack of appropriate instruction in the native and second language, (f) cultural identity problems, and (g) poor self-esteem (Omark & Erickson, 1983).

Many CLiDES students have special needs that are inappropriately identified as learning disabilities or mental retardation. They are frequently taught by teachers with minimal training, if any, in both second language acquisition and special education or gifted education. Most of the special education services for these students takes place in self-contained and resource room classrooms.

Furthermore, a disproportionate number of gifted CLiDES students are unidentified and continue to be underrepresented in educational programs for gifted students. This is not because they are any less talented, but rather their different experiences, values, and beliefs have prevented them from fully demonstrating their abilities through forms of assessment commonly used in traditional gifted education programs.

Identifying CLiDES students is the first step toward helping them achieve their full potential. Teachers then need to draw from a repertoire of teaching strategies that not only reflect and respect various cultures and learning styles but that accommodate students' special needs.

Addressing the Needs of CLiDE Students

To address effectively the needs of many of their CLiDES students, teachers may adopt Roseberry-McKibbon's Dynamic Dozen (1995). These are highly successful teaching learning strategies, i.e., multisensory/multimodal strategies designed to teach all students how to learn.

Strategy 1: Use mnemonic devices to help with memorization—Create and use acronyms and rhythmic activities to help with memorization. An example of a rhythmic activity might be a jazz chant to practice verb endings.

Strategy 2: Use visualization to help students focus—For example, if students are studying weather, the teacher might ask students to close their eyes and visualize the warm sun, a cool breeze, a light rainshower, snowflakes falling on their faces, etc.

Strategy 3: Focus on key words and write them down—Many students will need explicit directions to focus attention so they can write down key words.

Strategy 4: Write down information and instructions in a notebook—This activity facilitates the development of organizational skills and helps the student recall information presented during class.

Strategy 5: Use the alphabet to facilitate word retrieval—If the student cannot retrieve a word, the teacher can ask the student to go through the alphabet in an effort to recall the initial letter in the word.

Strategy 6: Use categorization or grouping to facilitate memory—Discuss categories with students and explain how categories help us to remember information. Students can be taught categories such as animals, foods, etc.

Strategy 7: Use chunking to aide recall of sequences of numbers and other types of information—For example, the instructor can start by asking students to recall a 7-digit sequence. Some students will have difficulty. The instructor should explain that it is easier to remember groups of numbers when we break them into parts.

Strategy 8: Use reauditorization/silent rehearsal—Students are told that when

Classroom Strategies at Work

Teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students these past six years has been an incredible learning experience in world cultures and student needs. Each year brings a new group of pupils who not only have diverse backgrounds but also have different learning styles and special needs that I must take into consideration as I develop meaningful and—most importantly for my class—fun lessons that help prepare my students for eventual entry into grade level classes.

Marjorie Hall Haley and Charmaine Spitler

This year I consulted my "first week activities" folder to find ideas for my classroom-climate building activities. It is important for the students to help me define the classroom—even helping to determine the rules, goals, traditions, and units to be studied so that they feel responsible and take ownership over our learning. My students are reminded that I am a student as much as they are. We all teach each other through the use of our prior experiences that come from the diverse make-up of our class.

One student I have this year is a beginning level ESL student from South America. She is a wonderful, motivated sophomore whose dyslexia requires me to rethink my lessons and include different kinds of activities and scaffolding for use in my classroom. She is in both of my beginning level content classes of science and U. S. history where we do a lot of reading and writing activities. One strategy that really helps has been the use of previewing a section before starting the actual reading. All my students have been taught to come up with questions about the section and prepare for note-taking while reading with use of a T-Chart. This is done on a piece of loose leaf paper that is folded in half lengthwise (hot dog style). The questions are written on the left side with about five spaces between each and the answers the students discover as they read are written on the right. Students like this method of guided reading and note-taking. Even my student with dyslexia feels this makes her reading more focused and motivates her to continue learning.

Charmaine Spitler teaches ESL, grades 9-12, at Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, Virginia.

they hear something (e.g., directions), they are to repeat what they hear, quietly to themselves.

Strategy 9: Create a verbal description—If a student cannot remember a word, encourage the student to describe it. The teacher can ask, "What does it look like? Sound like? Feel like? What shape is it?

Strategy 10: Think of words that mean the same thing—If a student is having difficulty retrieving a word, the teacher might ask, "Can you think of another word that means the same thing?"

Strategy 11: Tape lessons and then listen to the recording—Taping lessons and listening to the recording allows the teacher to go back and listen to students in order to better identify strengths and/or weaknesses and design instruction accordingly.

Strategy 12: Use graphic/visual organizers—Use webs, maps, frameworks, to accommodate those learners who may learn better with a visual representation or may need both auditory and visual instruction.

Additional Tips for Working with CLiDES Students

Given the diversity of students' abilities and exceptionalities, teachers may need as many strategies to draw from as there are students. The following are additional tips for helping CLiDES students.

Gifted Students:

- ☐ Provide opportunities for them to explore their interests.
- ☐ Encourage students to accelerate their progress.
- ☐ Allow students to peer tutor, when appropriate.
- ☐ Expand assignments according to students' needs and interests.

Students with Visual Problems:

- ☐ Provide seating close to the teacher and the blackboard.
- ☐ Summarize main points.
- ☐ Provide a copy of notes.
- ☐ Provide individualized instruction.

Students with Behavior Problems:

- ☐ Reduce and restrict stimuli such as loud music, videos with lots of action, or activities that involve physical activities such as running (classroom games).
- ☐ Define clearly and review frequently classroom expectations, for example, "You must raise your hand." "You must ask to get up and walk around." "You must be in your seat when the bell sounds."
- ☐ Use role playing to allow students to demonstrate their feelings and provide them with behavior management strategies and conflict resolution tools.

Students with Auditory Problems:

- ☐ Provide preferential seating.
- ☐ Provide visuals, pictures, maps, diagrams, etc.
- ☐ Give short, succinct directions.
- ☐ Provide written directions.

Students with Learning Disabilities:

- ☐ Use concrete examples.
- ☐ Restate directions.
- ☐ Break tasks into small, sequential steps.
- ☐ Use small groups or pair work.

The Need for Teacher Preparation

There is a growing number of culturally an linguistically diverse exceptional students in our classrooms today. A paltry number of ESL teacher education programs provide cross-over training in special education and/or gifted education. Teachers may get some training at in-service work sessions, conferences and workshops. However, they often must go back to their classrooms and piece together on their own the elements that will assist them in accommodating CLiDES students.

In the ESL methods course I teach, I try to broaden and enhance teachers' instructional repertoire so that they can better identify and accommodate culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional students. This usually starts with teachers acknowledging that they do not share or know about their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This is followed by a determined commitment to learn as much as possible about their students' special needs in order to work more effectively with them and provide meaningful instructional strategies and assessment. Students are better served when teachers approach the learning environment with adequate and effective preparation and training.

Marjorie Hall Haley, Ph.D., is associate professor of education in the Center for Multilingual/Multicultural Education in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

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Resources for Teachers of CLiDES Students

- **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**
  www.asha.org
- **Council for Exceptional Children**
  www.cec.sped.orgibk/tec-jour.htm
- **Irlen Institute for Perceptual and Learning Disabilities**
  P.O. Box 7175, Long Beach, CA 90807
- **National Information for Handicapped Children & Youth** P.O. Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013
- **Orton Dyslexia Society**
  724 York Road, Baltimore, MD 21204
- **Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)**
  www.askeric.org
- **International Dyslexia Association**
  www.inteerdys.org
- **LD Online**
  www.ldonline.org
- **National Center for Learning Disabilities**
  www.ncld.org

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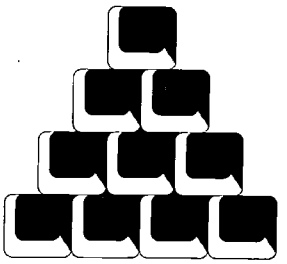

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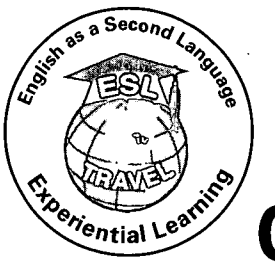

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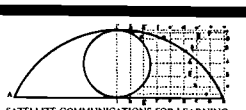

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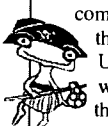

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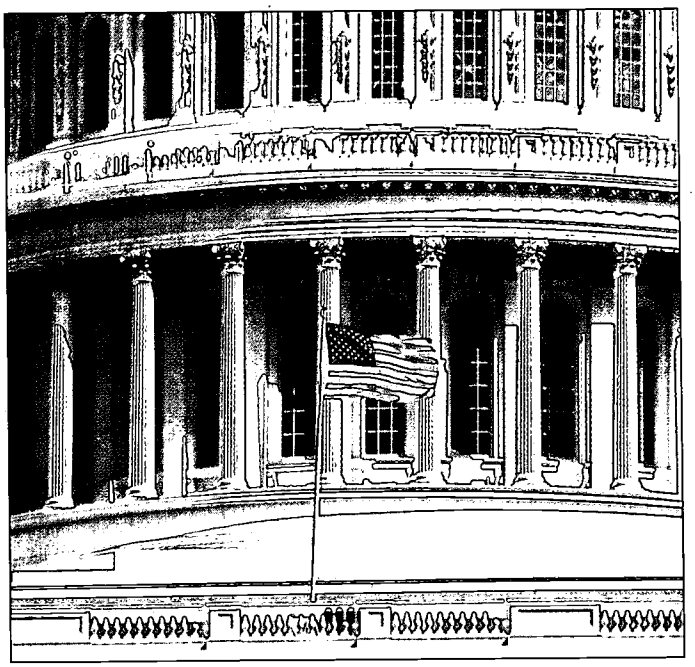
Official English: Bridge or Barrier?

BY STEPHEN KRASHEN

So far, voters in over half of the states in the United States have voted to make English their official language. In addition, U.S. English has announced that it is "working with members of the House of Representatives and Senate to help pass official English legislation in the 106th Congress" (US-English.com).

The motivation to make English the official language of individual states as well as the United States as a whole is to "encourage immigrants to learn English." According to U.S. English, "When immigrants have ac-cess to documents in their first language, when they can vote in their first language and take the driver's test in their first language, there is no need for them to acquire English." This policy, ac-cording to U.S. English, explains in part why immigrants are not acquiring English.

Providing services only in English, it is claimed, provides "a common means of communication" and "promotes unity" and saves money: "The money formerly spent on multilingual services can instead provide immigrants with the assistance they really need—classes to teach them English."



Immigrants are Acquiring English Rapidly and Well

Contrary to the claims of U.S. English, immigrants are acquiring English rapidly. Mexican-Americans are typically accused of not acquiring English, but according to the 1990 Census, only 8.8% of native speakers of Spanish living in the United States said they spoke no English, and 71.5% said they spoke English "well" or "very well." (For discussion, see Krashen and McQuillan, 1995). This is quite impressive and is even more impressive when one considers that these figures le newcomers. Moreover, results for sh speakers are nearly identical to those reported by speakers of Asian and Pacific Island languages.

According to a Rand Corporation report (McCarthy and Valdez, 1985), over 90% of Mexican-Americans born in the United States say they are proficient in English, and among those born in Mexico who are permanent residents of the United States, over 75% said they spoke some English and nearly half said they spoke English well. The Rand researchers concluded that "the transition to English begins almost immediately and proceeds very rapidly."

For Spanish speakers born in the United States, several studies show that children as young as seven and eight show clear signs of English dominance, doing better on English versions of tests of comprehension, grammar and vocabulary than on Spanish versions (Carrow, 1971; Merino, 1983; Mc Connell, 1985).

One does, of course, run into immigrants who don't speak English. The Rand Corporation results suggest that these are usually new arrivals or those who have not been able to find the time or opportunity to acquire English.

Documents in English: Is Tough Love a Good Idea?

A common concern of English-only advocates is the availability of documents in languages other than English. Supplying documents in these languages, they argue, removes an important incentive for acquiring English. It makes things too easy.

There are two flaws in this argument. First, newcomers to the United States have plenty of incentive to acquire English, plenty of desire, and, as shown above, are quite successful in acquiring English. It is unlikely that providing them with essential materials to read in their primary language will destroy this motivation.

Second, providing documents in the primary language actually helps English language development by making the world more comprehensible to newcomers. When immigrants understand more about life in the United States, the English they hear and read is more comprehensible, and they acquire it more rapidly. A voters' guide in the primary language tells new citizens a great deal about the system of government and about current issues, which will make English newspapers and TV much more comprehensible. The same argument goes for allowing other forms of input in the native language. (For discussion of the advantages of Russian language television, see Krashen, 1996, pp. 5-6.)

Crawford (1992) has pointed out that bilingual ballots are neither widespread nor expensive. They are not available in all languages; the right to ballots in the native language applies only to minorities who have been victims of discrimination at the polls (Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans), and strict requirements must be met: the group must represent more than 5% of the local population and have below-average rates of English literacy and voter turnout. Also, one federal survey

ERIC

estimated that bilingual ballots amount to only 7.6% of election expenses (Crawford, 1992, pp. 192-193).

Building Bridges, Not Barriers

If groups calling for English as an official language really want to help immigrants acquire English, I have some suggestions:

1. Join private and charitable organizations in helping make ESL classes available. Several countries provide free language instruction for newcomers. The U.S. government does not. ESL classes often cost money and often have waiting lists. [1]

2. Support libraries. The most powerful means of developing advanced ability in a second language is wide reading; reading improves vocabulary, grammar, writing style, and even spelling. Libraries provide the prerequisite condition for reading: access to books. (For suggestions on how to utilize the library to help English language acquirers, see Krashen, 1998.)

3. Support bilingual education. Supporters of official English laws are usually opposed to bilingual education, but they shouldn't be. Good bilingual programs help English language development in two ways:

First, bilingual programs provide subject matter teaching in the first language, which helps make the English that children hear and read in class more comprehensible. A child who knows math, thanks to a sound foundation in math in the first language, will understand more in a math class taught in English than a child without this foundation. This means better math learning and more English language development.

Second, bilingual programs provide a short cut to English literacy by teaching children to read in their first language. It is easier to learn to read in a language you already understand, and once you can read in one language, this ability transfers rapidly to other languages you acquire, even if the writing systems are very different.

Published research confirms that students in quality bilingual programs acquire English more rapidly than those in all-English programs (Willig, 1985; Greene, 1998). Bilingual education is good for English.

According to U.S. English, English as the official language "encourages immigrants to learn English in order to use government services and participate in the democratic process." I think it will have the opposite effect: it will make life less comprehensible for newcomers and will make it harder to acquire English. Moreover, immigrants are already doing a fine job of acquiring English.

Cartoonist Tom Tomorrow pointed out a few years ago that voting to make English the official language of the United States makes about as much sense as declaring the sun to be our official source of energy. English is already the language of the United States—no law is necessary to confirm this. We need not to erect barriers but to continue to think of ways to help newcomers acquire English.

[1] *U.S. English has provided only token support for adult English literacy. See Crawford (1992), pp. 173-174. This can be confirmed by an examination of the programs described on the U.S. English Web site (http://www.us-english.org/foundation/programs), which include a passenger van, some training material, two scholarships for ESL teachers to obtain graduate training, and "a number of grants" to "local organizations." The amount of money given as grants and scholarships is not mentioned.*

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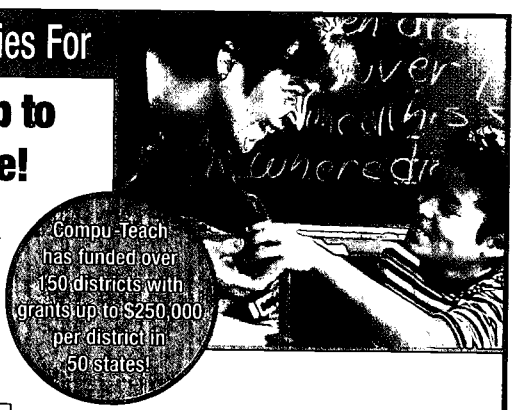

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Professor Lyle Bachman at UCLA was a volunteer during the 1960s. He taught high school English in the Philippines. While it didn't help him get an ESL teaching position upon his return (because he wasn't looking for one), it did help him refocus his academic career. It made the difference between "working with people [or] ...with musty manuscripts." Why did he join the Peace Corps? "Idealism—the three goals [of the Peace Corps]; JFK gone and Shriver [then director] still giving us a link to Camelot."

The three goals of the Peace Corps, to which Bachman refers, are 1) to help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women, 2) to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served, and 3) to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

Mary Barratt was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana where she taught English grammar, reading, or "whatever I decided to teach." Although she doesn't necessarily believe that being a Peace Corps volunteer got her a position twenty-one years ago at Iowa State University, she does acknowledge that the person who hired her had also been a Peace Corps volunteer. Why did she join the Peace Corps? "Because I wanted to go to West Africa to teach."

If you are interested in joining the Peace Corps, the Monterrey Institute for International Studies (www.miis.edu) offers an exceptional program. They offer a combined Peace Corps/M.A. in TESOL program. Allison Rainville, a returnee from Bulgaria, asserts that she would not have been given a position as an intern in the Intensive English Program at the Monterrey Institute if not for her Peace Corps experience. "I am the only faculty member who is also a student; the other students...are all teaching assistants." Why did Rainville go into the Peace Corps? "It was something that I felt would be useful for me in getting a job later."

The minimal qualification to be a teacher is a B.A. or B.S. plus three months of practical experience such as teaching, tutoring, informal teaching with small groups, or community service. A teaching credential or a graduate degree is not required (although it would certainly help in the selection process). Having said that, often volunteers bring more experience to the table. The Peace Corps seeks secondary teachers of English (EFL), math, and science, TEFL teacher trainers, primary education teacher trainers (which may include an focus depending on the assignment.)

The Peace Corps provides lodging and a salary commensurate with the local economy. Part of the philosophy is that a volunteer should live at the level of the people in the host country. For an EFL teacher, there are a number of different possible placements: elementary or secondary schools, universities, or teacher training colleges. Depending on where the volunteer is placed, he or she could be all alone in a rural setting or in a city with fellow volunteers. It is more likely that an EFL volunteer would be in a city.

Upon the volunteers' return to the United States, the Peace Corps pays a stipend of about $6,000 and provides career services. There are many benefits associated with being Peace Corps volunteer, but Allison Rainville adds, "The teaching experience is valuable, but being a Peace Corps volunteer isn't a piece of cake." Being a volunteer is not for the faint of heart. You are often put into very difficult and occasionally dangerous situations and expected to do your best, but it can become the "toughest job you'll ever love!"

Thomas Nixon is editor of the TEFL Connection and can be contacted at editor@teflconnection.com.

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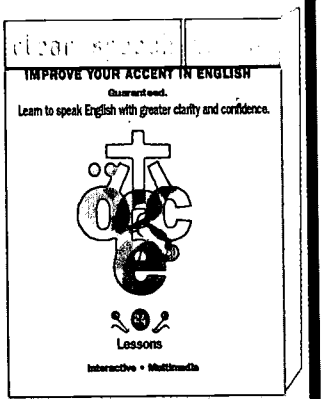

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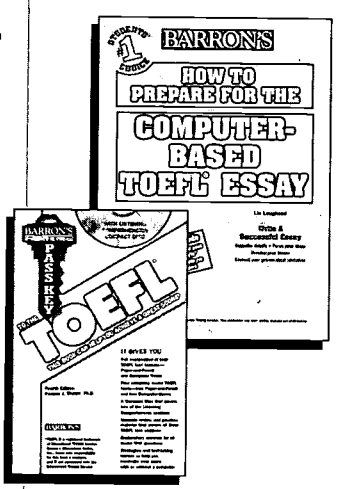

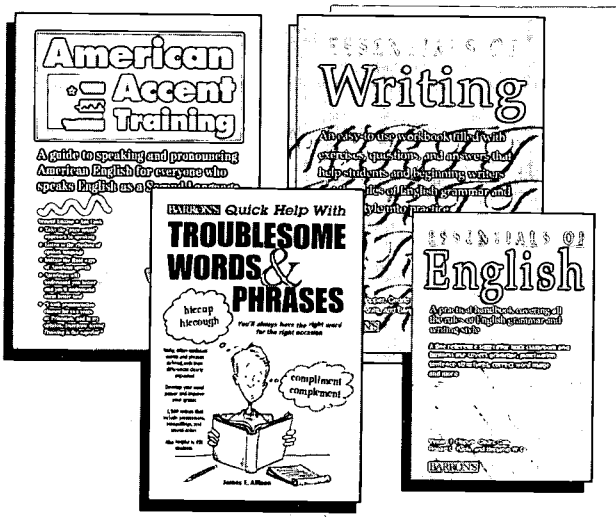

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"State-of-the-Art Word Processing" Is Not An Oxymoron

We hear all the time about cool new English language activities on the Web and cutting-edge language learning technologies that someone has recently developed. In fact, computer-assisted language learning educators are working hard to increase the potential of computing tools for language learning; unfortunately, these innovations are not always understandable or accessible to the typical language teacher. However, most of us do have a word processor that we are familiar with and that provides us with opportunities to develop activities that enhance students' language, thinking, and computing skills. Here are examples of tasks that learners can do with a word processor (based on Microsoft Word).

Learners can:

- Learn a word processing skill to teach a classmate. (See if they can use the electronic help system to learn the skill before you teach it to them.)
- Use the grammar checker and determine in what ways it does not work for speakers of their native language. Develop rules for a non-native English speaker grammar checker.
- Conduct a Web or library search for information and enter it in a table.
- Format a quiz or test.
- Draw a semantic map with the shape function.
- Make a simple cartoon using draw features.
- Type a newsletter using columns.
- Create a survey. Make a numbered or bulleted list of the results of a survey.
- Make a poster of the class rules. Add clip art to make them more comprehensible.
- Create signs in English to put around the class.
- Comment on someone else's essay or story using the "comment" feature.
- Record someone's story using the voice annotation feature. Let the author comment on the reader's tone and expression.
- Send out invitations to the class play using the mail merge function.
- Use different font styles and colors to convey feeling and meaning in a story or essay.
- Develop an activity for classmates.
- Write a poem and use spacing to convey the essence.
- Make an advertisement seeking speaking partners.
- Use the highlight feature to suggest places where a classmate's story might be revised.
- Summarize a reading or story. Use the auto summarize feature to compare the computer's summary to the student's.
- Use WordArt to design a name tag.

There are many more possibilities for great activities supported by word processors. These activities show that that it is still possible to be "state of the art" teachers with "old" technologies.

Joy Egbert teaches ESL and technology at Washington State University and can be reached at jegbert@wsu.edu.

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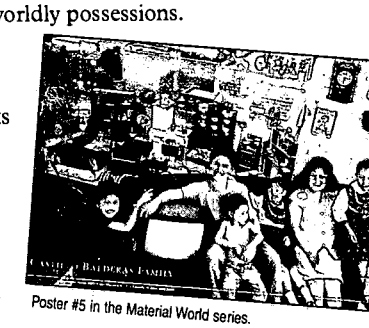
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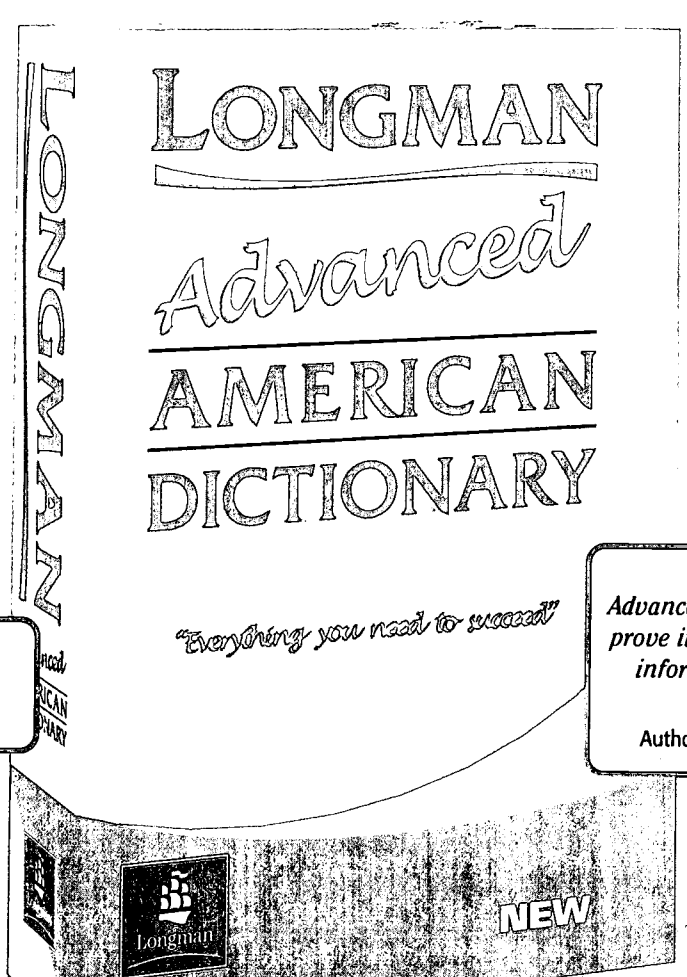

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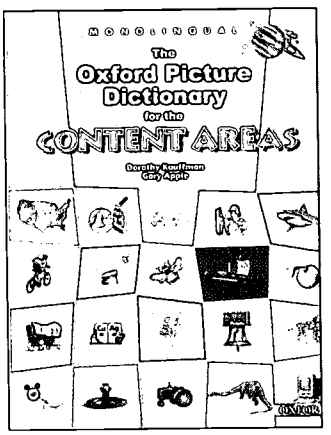
New Dictionary Helps Integrate Content and Language Instruction

The Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas
Oxford University Press, 2000

In my eleven years of experience as an English/Arabic bilingual teacher, I have used a variety of materials, and the *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas* is great. I was first introduced to it at a workshop and felt that this was something I could use for my students in our Summer Support Program. The purpose of the program is to boost the students' language skills and give them a head start for the fall. This summer my class included sixth, seventh and eighth graders at many different ability levels in English, and I had the opportunity to use the *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas* for the first time. We used it as one of two main sources of instructional material in the class.



The *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas* includes science, math, social studies and literature. The complete package consists of a four-color picture dictionary (monolingual and bilingual English/Spanish versions available), a teacher's book, a workbook, transparencies, wall charts, cassettes, and a reproducibles collection bound in four separate books: word and picture cards from the dictionary, reproducible content reading extending the information in the dictionary, content chants written by Carolyn Graham and worksheet activities with art on the content topic.

Although the summer session was short, I was able to use the material to the fullest and keep the students engaged at all times. I am a strong believer in integrating the content in ESL teaching because it helps nts develop knowledge and skills in the content areas so that can participate in mainstream classes. The *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas* package provided the students with an excellent opportunity by exposing them to the content areas in an interesting way. This approach to ESL teaching enhances the students' learning experience and expands their horizons.

The cassettes have three components: 1) listening to vocabulary words and repeating them, 2) listening to a brief expository passage about the subject, and 3) chants including the vocabulary and content. These helped students sharpen their listening skills, practice the vocabulary, and receive reinforcement of the content. Students heard English spoken naturally by different individuals with different voices, both male and female. This is more beneficial to the students than the monotonous voices used in some ESL curricula. It was important for the students to listen to the vocabulary on each topic and have the opportunity to repeat the words. Some of the words were known to the students but many were not. Hearing new words as they looked at them enhanced their learning. Students enjoyed listening to and learning the chants. They tapped their fingers or feet and moved their bodies as they followed the rhythms.

The individual activities were excellent, and they were fun. There were hands-on activities such as moving words on a chart to match pictures in the content areas. The worksheets included exercises in vocabulary, reading comprehension and even mechanics such as punctuation.

Education can be more than tedious drilling. With the *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas*, students enjoyed working together. They were motivated, active, eager to read aloud and work in the workbook and on the worksheets. They really did have fun learning and progressed in their skills thanks to the excellent material and approach to teaching ESL in the dictionary. In the future, I hope it will be expanded to include longer and more challenging reading selections, more challenging workbook exercises and more about grammar and usage. I was glad to have the *Oxford Picture Dictionary for the Content Areas* as a tool for my bilingual summer school class, and I would like to use it again.

Jamil S. Qandah is an Arabic bilingual teacher at Volta School, Chicago Public Schools.

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English Language Education in Brazil: Progress and Partnerships

BY FRANCISCO GOMES DE MATOS AND ABUÊNDIA PADILHA PINTO

A little over 30 years ago in an overview of foreign language teaching in Brazil, Gomes de Matos (1968) characterized English as the predominant foreign language in the curricula of both public and private high schools and in specialized language schools. Although Spanish is an increasingly popular second language, English still holds a position of sustained, diversified preeminence. English language education takes on many forms—from specific programs focused on conversational English or English for professional purposes through more comprehensive educational experiences such as Global Education through English, technology-based professional development in English with the aim of global problem solving.

Although some franchise schools have expanded their services to teach Spanish as well as English, some of the best known English language teaching organizations in Brazil have maintained their commitment to teaching English, sometimes also offering Portuguese as a foreign language to meet demand from recent immigrants, professionals or graduate exchange students. Examples of almost exclusively English language-centered organizations are 1) the Binational Centers (such as the Brazil-USA Cultural Institute in Rio, the Alumni Association and the Brazil-USA Cultural Union, both in São Paulo, the Casa Thomas Jefferson in Brasília, and the Brazil-America Association in Recife) and 2) the English culture schools (such as the Brazilian Society of English Culture in São Paulo and Rio). In short, English remains the most sought-after foreign language in Brazil—in all kinds of language learning contexts, for learners of nearly all ages.

English Language Education in High Schools

In 1996 the Brazilian Ministry of Education made foreign language a requirement in the junior high and high schools, and English is one of the foreign languages offered. In the high schools, English is taught in a variety of ways according to different traditions including grammar-translation and variations thereof to the still fashionable communicatively-oriented approaches. However, a more htened and creative pedagogical ticism is being preached, although not necessarily put into practice. Since the publication in 1998 of the Ministry of Education's guidelines for foreign language teaching, there has been a growing realization by Brazilian teachers that a communicatively-oriented methodology is more effective for teaching in all kinds of school settings, either public or private. The influence of the Ministry's guidelines, though still relatively new, should enhance the quality of English language teaching in Brazil.

University Level English Language Education

At the university level, approaches are quite varied, too, but there seems to be a growing emphasis on the development of competence in reading professional texts. Undergraduate students preparing to teach English are usually given listening, speaking, reading, and writing experiences, but M.A. students in other areas are expected to attain competence as readers of academic texts. Given the influence of the Internet and the potential of technology-based learner autonomy, we expect exciting developments in reader education in English in Brazil. There has been a promising development aimed at university students: the foreign language services of language centers such as the one at state-run University of São Paulo or at the recently established Language and Cultural Center at the Arts and Communication Center, Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife.

English for Specific Purposes

In the late 1970s the demand for courses in English for specific purposes (ESP) in some Brazilian universities and the scarcity of specialized teachers in this area brought about the development of a project on ESP at the Catholic University of São Paulo aimed at teacher training and the production of more effective classroom reading material. Accordingly, the National Center for Research, Resources and Information in Reading (CEPRIL) was established.

At the outset the project focused on academic texts, the organizational structure of texts and reading strategies. As it developed, the project broadened its scope to meet the needs of federal technical schools. According to Holmes (1989), the objectives of the project have been gradually altered as a result of collective experience, insights from specialists and new research findings. The current objectives are to help learners 1) acquire a better comprehension of reading techniques, 2) be aware of their own aptitudes and limitations, and 3) develop their cognitive abilities while carrying out learning tasks.

Such improvement, as pointed out by Celani (1989), was only possible due to the exchange of experience and ideas among groups and to the open discussion of problems at workshops and annual teacher training courses. These have contributed to a deeper reflection by teachers on their classroom approach and their involvement in the production and use of material.

The integration of ESP materials design and teacher training was a salient feature of ESP methodology, especially in the initial phase of the project. Its theoretical approach emphasized the importance of the development and use of reading strategies, thereby narrowing the teaching of grammatical and lexical items to the minimum required for the comprehension of academic texts.

Emphasis on comprehension as a final product, which is typical of the behavioristic approach, was replaced by a concern about the reading process itself; teaching materials were guided by this new perspective. There followed a cognitive approach to reading that emphasized the reader's active construction of meaning. The new cognitive approach gave more attention to the awareness of the learners who took on the direction and activation of their own learning and the construction of the meaning of the text by relating it to previous knowledge and experience. In spite of the importance of such approaches to language teaching, ESP teachers have tended to explain learning as a sociointeractional phenomenon, emphasizing teacher-student and student-student interaction.

ESP teaching in Brazil has undergone a series of changes through the years. In the beginning there was a change of focus from reader comprehension to reader self-control. Initial emphasis on the use of teaching materials reflected an interest in mental processes that would help readers acquire self-control in their comprehension strategies. Attention to reading ability was replaced by a more holistic comprehension of strategies where the teacher, the student, the context, the reading objec-

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tives and the material to be read would exert a stronger influence in reading.

The sociointeractional process, according to Celani and Moita Lopes (1998), involves participants' difficulties and successes in comprehension, negotiation of different perspectives and control of the interaction after which knowledge is built cooperatively. As a result of this conscious learning carried out by the teacher and by the classroom community, students achieve control of their own reading.

Varieties of English

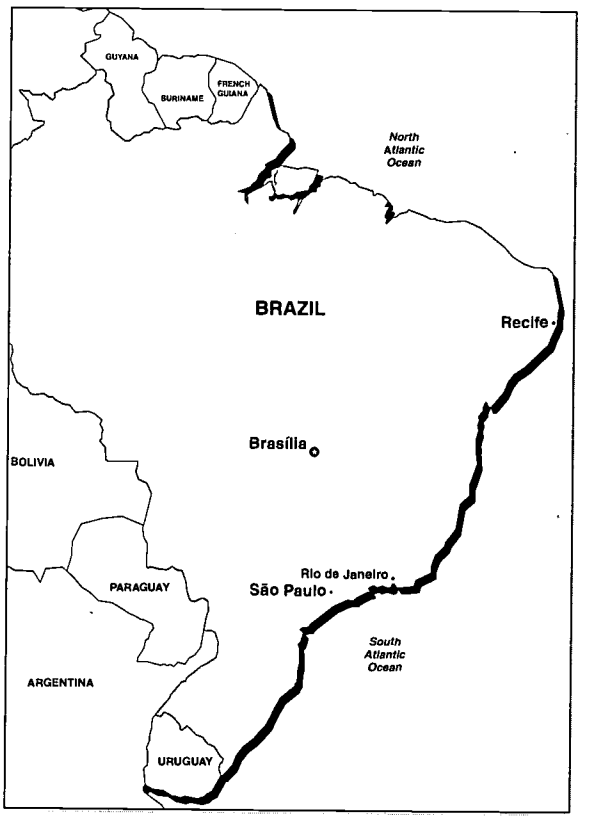
Personal and institutional preferences differ on the issue of which national variety of English (American, British, Canadian, Australian, etc.) to teach in the Brazilian context. If a generalization can be made concerning Brazilian teachers' attitudes toward varieties of English, it is that while there is a preference toward American English over British English—this is particularly true in the case of specialized language schools—there is a growing perception that either variety is a perfectly legitimate choice and that a well-informed awareness of varieties of English is a prerequisite for responsible teachers who want to become knowledgeable about linguistic diversity within the English-using communities worldwide.

In such a spirit, a pioneering article "Learners' Pronunciation Rights" by Gomes de Matos and Celce-Murcia (1998) has drawn attention among Brazilian TESOLers to a hitherto neglected aspect of English language teaching pedagogy. In short, it is advocated that students have the right to choose the variety of English to be learned within the existing possibilities of a school, and teachers have the right to teach English using their own individual variety of the language and to be respected as non-native users of that linguistic system.

Given the spread of worldwide television networks such as CNN and BBC, the potential influence of network English on Brazilian teachers' and students' accents merits comment. Our impression is that the effect of CNN on the pronunciation standards of Brazilian TESOLers is still quite small but may increase considerably as more people tune in and rely upon broadcasts for enhancing professional proficiency in the English language. The senior author of this article (Gomes de Matos) relied on radio—Voice of America and the BBC—as a primary guide to pronunciation in the late 1940s and through the mid 1950s but then gradually turned to TV and audiotapes. Last but not least, the increased viewing of [illegible]on videocassette in Brazil should help improve pronunciation and interaction standards among learners and teachers alike.

Publishers' Influence on the Profession

Publishers and materials distributors are powerful factors influencing English language education, specifically teachers' textbook selection. Major English language teaching publishers from Britain and the United States have their own head offices—sometimes with quite elaborate showrooms—in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, often with smaller offices in other cities. Although no statistics are available on the quantity of promotional literature sent to teachers and English language teaching institutions, the number must be quite large. Along with such marketing tools, some publishers conduct annual workshops for teachers in which key authors are brought from Britain or the United States to promote their works.



Publishers have also contributed to the development of teacher training in Brazil through their cooperation with organizing committees of such annual events as the Brazil TESOL Convention. As a result, the number of book exhibits has been increasing and more guest speakers from English-speaking countries are being brought down to share their expertise with their Brazilian colleagues.

The growing influence of publishers from the anglophone world can also be seen through the publication of textbook series aimed at the Brazilian market, which are written solely or partly by Brazilian authors. Brazilian publishers still have the larger share of the public high school market, and textbook adoption policies are usually inspired by federal, state or city department of education guidelines. Although teachers in such contexts are supposed to have the right to choose their textbooks, such decisions are often influenced by factors beyond their control such as their own professional training as materials evaluators, a vital issue which has been drawing considerable attention, especially in teacher preparations programs. For a Brazilian perspective, see Gomes de Matos (2000) regarding an interdisciplinary approach to textbook evaluation.

Professional Development

Only a relatively small number of Brazilian teachers of English are able to obtain a graduate education in English language teaching or in applied linguistics and English language teaching or related areas. In some Brazilian universities it is possible to get an M.A. or a Ph.D. in English language/literature or in applied linguistics in English language teaching.

More and more teachers are enhancing their professional training through seminars and workshops such as those sponsored by the Brazilian Association of University Teachers of English, Brazil-TESOL and its active regional affiliates, the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language-Brazil (IATEFL-Brazil), and the state associations of teachers such as those in São Paulo, Rio, Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul. Also noteworthy are events sponsored by English language teaching organizations such as the Binational Centers, some of which have featured annual seminars for many years.

The influence of Binational Centers teaching English in Brazil merits full treatment from its early days in the 1940s and 1950s through recent times. An equally important topic awaiting historical treatment is the role played by the now extinct United States Information Service. Its work in English language teaching in Brazil is being carried out by an itinerant, American Embassy-based English language officer. Also, the British Council has diversified its services by offering actual English language instruction, for example, in Recife.

Many Brazilian TESOLers have achieved a very high professional level as can be seen through their publications both in Brazil and abroad and through their participation as invited speakers at international conferences such as the

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annual TESOL International Convention. For an outstanding example of Brazilian professionalism in English language teaching, see the volume honoring Maria Antonieta A. Celani, Brazil's renowned scholar in that domain (Scott & Barbara, 1994).

Conclusion

Much more could be written on English language teaching in Brazil. For an update on the role of English and other foreign languages in Brazil—particularly in the school curriculum—a relevant source is the book by Celani and Moita Lopes (1998). On an important plea for greater diversity in foreign language offerings in Brazil, see "Carta de Pelotas" (the Pelotas Charter), a text which was drafted and proclaimed at the III Brazilian Meeting on a National Policy for Foreign Language Teaching, September 2000.

To keep abreast of developments in English language teaching in Brazil, there are several useful bibliographical sources including the *Braz-TESOL Newsletter, the São Paulo-based New Routes in English Language Teaching* (a journal published by DISAL, a commercial book distributor in Brazil), and the *ESPecialist* (sponsored by the Catholic University of São Paulo's Graduate Program in Language Studies).

Some important topics have not been dealt with here: the impact of technological advances on the quality of Brazilian teacher performance, the influence of the ideas of British and American TESOLers on Brazilian EFL traditions (for example, see Gomes de Matos, 1985), cooperation between American and Brazilian organizations (especially for teacher education) such as that between the School for International Training (SIT) and the Alumni Association in São Paulo and, more recently, between SIT and Brazil-America Association-Recife. Another important topic is opportunities for TESOLers from abroad to teach in Brazil (in private, specialized language schools/organizations such as Binational Centers, or at universities through Fullbright Exchange Programs, etc). Ours is an increasingly Internet-linked profession, so access to specific information on such equally relevant topics is easy to obtain. Interested readers are urged to communicate with their Brazilian colleagues via e-mail.

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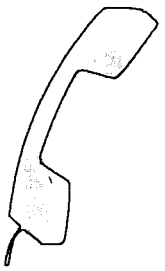

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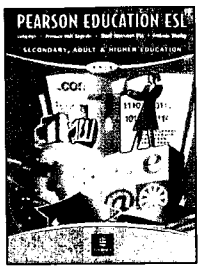

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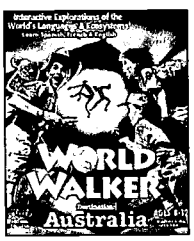

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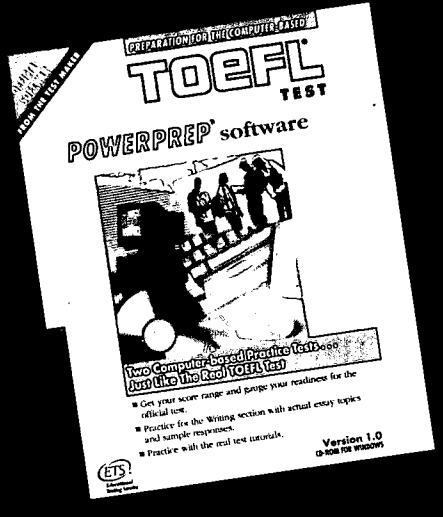

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