

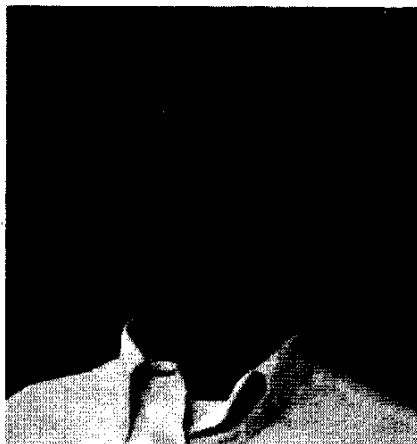
NEWSLETTER

Massachusetts Association Of Teachers Of English To Speakers Of Other Languages
SPRING 1987

VOL. 15, NO. 3

A QUESTION OF CREDIT

Recently, Paul Kreuger and Eileen Prince-Nam of Northeastern's English Language Center, conducted a comprehensive survey of colleges and universities in the Boston area, to see how these schools handle the question of credit for ESL courses. Although Mr. Kreuger and Ms. Prince-Nam have not concluded their study, which is bound to make some valuable recommendations on the issue, a cursory glance at their preliminary findings, and at other recent studies of the question nationwide, makes one fact abundantly clear: the situation is chaotic. There are almost as many solutions to the problem of assigning credit to ESL courses as there are schools offering such courses.



Richard Blakely

In looking over these so-called solutions, one senses that many of them were arrived at quickly, in a haphazard fashion, almost by accident. Also, all too often they raise more problems than they solve. At one school a student receives full credit for courses which another school does not consider "academic" enough. A number of institutions consider all ESL courses remedial, as if the students who were forced to take them without credit, even though they are sometimes fully matriculated and paying full tuition, were actually not well enough prepared to enter college. (At the same institution their American classmates, who know only one language, receive full credit for beginning to study another.) Many schools, sympathizing with students' needs to show sponsoring foreign governments or financial aid offices that they are taking a full load, say that these courses do indeed bear credit but that particular kind

of credit does not count towards graduation nor help them move towards their degree in any way. Now you see it, now you don't. An even more baffling problem arises when a school assigns full credit for one ESL course, half credit for another, and no credit for a third, even though all three courses cost the same, share the same goal (mastery of English) and are just as demanding for both student and instructor. But perhaps the most distressing problem, for our profession and for our organization, is that the instructors of these non-credit courses usually receive little or no credit for them, even though they are just as dedicated, resourceful, energetic and in many cases as professionally qualified as their tenured colleagues in their departments.

There is no evidence these problems are going to go away. As the student-age population of native English speakers in the United States continues to decline, colleges and universities are going to depend more and more on foreign students and non-native nationals to take up the slack in enrollments, at both the graduate and the

undergraduate level. Maybe it's time we as a professional organization set up guidelines and established an official policy on the subject, so as to help college administrators solve this problem in the future in ways that will be more consistent, logical and fair. Of course this should be done on the national level, but the state associations could make some preliminary recommendations. Perhaps MATSOL could start the ball rolling.

In trying to decide on the most important, fundamental recommendation we could make, the following comes to mind. To some this may sound utopian and radical, even rash, but others will agree it is time to take our fate in our own hands and state the obvious:

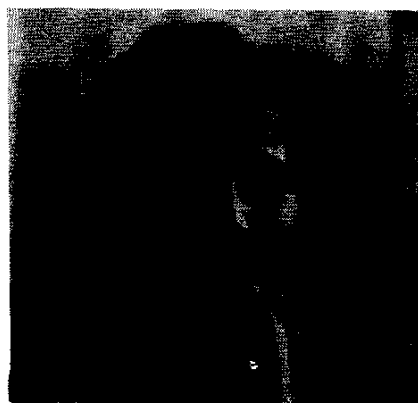
All ESL courses offered by a college or university to fully matriculated students should bear full credit.

In the face of such a simple, logical assertion, one may wonder what all the fuss is about. In fact what is the problem? Is it that non-native speakers are unprepared to
(continued on page 10)

Spring Conference Plenary Speaker

Mary Hines, one of the featured plenary speakers at the MATSOL Spring Conference, spoke on "Principles of Teaching and Learning Second Languages That Transcend Methodologies." In her talk she made specific reference to classroom principles and explored pedagogical principles that have remained constant amidst the recent rapid changes in trends in teaching methodologies.

A graduate of Girls Latin in Boston and



Mary Hines

Boston College, with Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, Ms. Hines received her doctorate from Teachers College at Columbia University. She has been a Fulbright Lecturer in Yugoslavia and has taught in such varied places as Egypt, Kenya, Iceland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Thailand, and Poland.

A writer and lecturer, Ms. Hines is also a designer of self-instructional video materials and founded Hines Video Design. She was the American adviser for the Hensen International Television EFL project entitled *English with the Muppets*. In addition, she was the EFL consultant for the *English Language Teaching by Broadcast* project for USIA and traveled as a member of research teams to Colombia, Brazil, Germany, Togo, Senegal, and Tunisia to determine acceptable content and appropriate TV audiences.

Ms. Hines has been a frequent presenter at TESOL and TESOL-affiliate conferences and is the author of *Skits in ESL* (Regents) as well as numerous articles. She has also served on the Editorial Staff and Advisory Board of the *TESOL Newsletter*. This is only a partial listing of her many contributions to the field.

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NEWSLETTER**

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This is a regular publication for the members of MATSOL. Subscription costs are included in annual dues. Letters, articles, black and white photos and other contributions are welcome. They may be sent to:

Mark Stepner
American Language Academy
Babson College
Wellesley, MA 02157

Articles should be typed and double-spaced. Please include bio-data.

Next deadline: July 15, 1987

FROM THE PRESIDENT

My first task as President is a very happy one: to report on the TESOL Conference in Miami Beach where I served as Affiliate Liaison. MATSOL and its members were very much in evidence — presenting sessions, attending workshops, going on educational visits, volunteering at Registration, exchanging ideas in informal settings.

An innovation this year at TESOL was the offering of Affiliate Workshops on a variety of topics dealing with organization. They were open to all affiliate members. Those of us who attended were able to share ideas that MATSOL had developed as well as learn from the experience of the other affiliates. MATSOL continues to be one of the larger and more active affiliates, widely respected for its accomplishments. One item of business involved participat-

ing in the Affiliate Council Meeting. At this meeting, two resolutions — one on language rights, the other on granting credit for ESL in institutions of higher education — were approved by the delegates. Later in the week, these resolutions were approved by the general membership at the TESOL Legislative Assembly. (Ed. Note: The resolution on granting credit appears on p. 10).

The 1987-88 MATSOL Executive Board has already met, and we've begun plans for the year's events. There will be many opportunities for your involvement: at conferences, lectures and socials. MATSOL is the strongest when the most people are involved, so we're eager to hear from you about what you would like to see happening in your organization.

Mary Christie

Video Interest Group

The formation of a *Video Interest Group* within TESOL and the affiliates was discussed at the Convention in Miami. If you are a member of TESOL and are interested in joining this SIG, please send your name, address, phone number and place of employment to Carol Pineiro, CELOP/B.U., 730 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. If you have been involved in video projects or use video in the classroom and would like to pool resources or information, please contact Carol at 353-4872 or 375-5150.



Regional Coordinators

MATSOL is happy to have the following members serving as Regional Coordinators this year:

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Michelle Edelsberg
36 Albright Rd.
Sterling, MA 01564
422-8765

NORTH

Judy Nadreau
28 Bedford St.
Haverhill, MA 01830
373-1064

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Juanita Brunelle
154 Alden St.
Whitman, MA 02382
447-4535

WEST

Lyn Froning
935 Bay Rd.
Amherst, MA 01002
256-8994

The coordinators will be planning activities over the course of the year. They would also like to hear your ideas about what you would like to see going on in your region.

Program Administrators SIG

A *Program Administrators Special Interest Group* was started at the MATSOL Spring Conference. If you are interested in joining to discuss problems, policies and the potential of your program, please contact Margot Valdivia at CELOP, Boston University at 353-4870.

THANK YOU

Five Board members have just completed their terms of office: Judy DeFilippo, President; Jennifer Bixby, Secretary; Carol Houser Pineiro, Newsletter Editor; Cindy Gimbert, Adult Rep; Suzanne Irujo, El/Sec Rep. We extend a special thank you to them all for the time, energy, and caring that they put into the organization.

Free Job Listings in *Opportunity Bulletin*

The *ESL Opportunity Bulletin*, issued bimonthly by the TESOL Central Office, publishes notices of jobs, teachers exchanges and grants at no cost to employers.

Employers should submit notices on a standard form available from the TESOL Central Office as announcements in other formats may be subject to editing for length.

The *Bulletin* is circulated to all subscribers to the Employment Information Service (\$7 per year for members in the U.S.A., Canada and Mexico and \$9.50 for members residing elsewhere; \$15 for non-members in the U.S.A., Canada and Mexico and \$17.50 for non-members residing elsewhere).

For more information about either service mentioned above, please write to: Employment Information Service, TESOL, 1118 22nd Street, N.W. (#205), Washington, D.C. 20037, U.S.A.



Integrating Reading & Listening

by Steve Brown, University of Pittsburgh, ELL, Japan Program

Reading and listening are generally grouped together as receptive skills. They are receptive, but certainly not passive skills; both combine input with prior knowledge to give shape to our experiences. Beyond surface similarities, they are seldom discussed together and are hardly ever linked in the classroom. Yet, each has something to offer the other. Below are two activity frameworks that illustrate the integration of the two.

Main Ideas and Facts

Prepare copies of a short newspaper article that will interest your students. If the article is long, use only the first few paragraphs, where the important information is concentrated. One of my classes was united by its interest in baseball, so we read sports stories. Business people might want to read economic news.

Ask if anyone has read about the events, either in English or in their native language(s). This step involves the students, gets them thinking about their task, and offers a chance to preview vocabulary.

Either in class or as homework, have the students read the clipping and underline

main ideas and important facts. In class, play a tape of the radio news report of the same story. The students' task is to circle or otherwise note the facts that are reported both in the newspaper and in the radio broadcast. Likely to be circled are the answers to "wh" questions: names, places and times, as well as one or two important facts. Play the tape again. This time, ask if there is any information found in the radio report that is not found in the article. Since the additional information is likely to include names of people and places that students cannot spell and do not need to know, accept general answers like, "They said another name."

In the case of the baseball-loving class cited above, one-paragraph summaries of American baseball games were contrasted with sports reports from Armed Forces Radio.

Specific Information

Clozes are often used for listening practice. As used by some teachers, they are often attempts to test the ability to read, listen, and write more or less simultaneously. It is always helpful to have the students lis-

ten with pencils down and fill in the information after listening.

It is certainly helpful to know some of the information, to have a context, before hearing the tape. Again, newspaper articles are useful. Give the students a lightly clozed article (two or three items missing per paragraph). It is probably a more realistic task to cloze the sort of information students would really write down in a note-taking situation: names, dates, places, etc. They should read the article and note the information they need. Then, they should listen to a tape of the radio version of the events that contains the answers to the clozes. This is a holistic approach to cloze, one in which the students have to think about meaning rather than simply follow along in a text.

Conclusion

Though most often taught separately, reading and listening can supplement each other by giving students two perspectives on a single event. More information, properly controlled, can only lead to greater understanding.

(continued on page 5)

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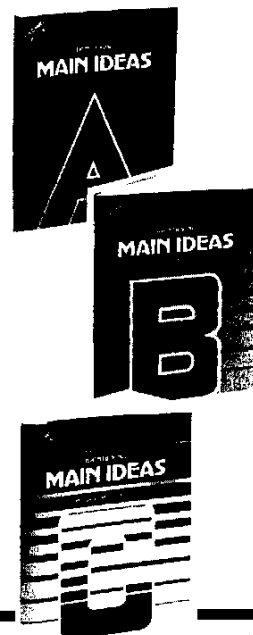
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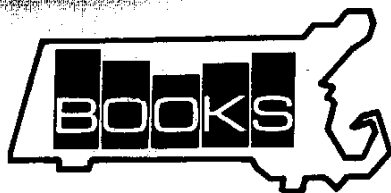
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BUILD IT UP: AN ADVANCED COURSE IN ESL/EFL READING COMPREHENSION

By Adina Levine, Brenda Oded, and Stella Statman. 1985. Collier MacMillan.
ESL Department, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022 (x, 243 pp., \$14.95).

Reviewed by Hui-Xiang Feng

The focus of *Build It Up* is clearly defined in its subtitle *An Advanced Course in ESL/EFL Reading Comprehension*. As such, the book is excellently compiled and will undoubtedly render good service to those who look for more than survival English. It gives good guidance in working towards comprehension in advanced reading by following three levels successively: the word, the sentence, and the article as a whole.

It is, of course, out of the question to speak about comprehension without discussing vocabulary. But it is still quite probable for one with even a good command of vocabulary to encounter unfamiliar words. One of the most practical and useful suggestions presented in the book is how to "deduce the meaning of words by using

structural and contextual clues," or simply how to make the most out of your given vocabulary. Non-native speakers of English have the habit of consulting the dictionary every time they come across an unfamiliar word. However, after acquiring this new technique, they will find on many occasions that their reliance on the dictionary for every new word is superfluous and that much precious time and effort can be saved.

The book abounds with both structural and contextual examples showing how this goal is reached. A few are cited here:

- a) a *polysyllabic word*: If you know "poly-" means "many" and "syllabic" means "of a syllable," then you know that a *polysyllabic word* means "a word of many syllables";
- b) *decentralize*: If you know "de-" means

"reverse action" and "-ize" makes a word into a verb, naturally you know what is meant by *decentralize*; c) testing a *frail-looking chair* by touching it before we sit down. Here it is unnecessary to look up the word *frail* in the dictionary because it is clear contextually — we will *not* test a strong-looking chair before sitting down.

At the sentence level, the book lays emphasis on the connecting words or markers in a reading. By means of the markers, a simple sentence can be developed to a high degree of structural and semantic complexity. The book tries to help learners to master and manipulate these markers and thus be able to decipher the sentence in all its ramifications.

Non-native speakers are prone to scrutinize every word in an article when they read, which is both time-consuming and exhausting. Being aware of this tendency, the author gives the learner very useful tools for comprehending the article as a whole — scanning and skimming. Concise explanations are followed by ample exercises for the learner to master the technique.

In conclusion, I would say that *Build It Up* is an excellent book for increasing reading comprehension.

Hui-Xiang Feng is currently an ESL graduate student at the University of Mass./Boston. He majored in English at a university in China, where he received his B.A., and worked as a high school English teacher for five years before coming to the U.S. in September of 1986.

A TESOL PROFESSIONAL ANTHOLOGY: (Listening, Speaking, and Reading)

by Carol Cargill, ed. 1987. Voluntad Publishers, Inc.,
4255 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood (Chicago), Illinois 60646-1975 (104 pp., \$12.95)

Reviewed by Haiping Zhou, University of Massachusetts at Boston

"What can I do to help my students to develop their listening, speaking and reading skills?" This is probably a question all ESL teachers ask themselves and which constantly leads them to search for the information. *A TESOL Professional Anthology: Listening, Speaking, and Reading* provides this information and helps teachers to gain insight into these areas. The book is a collection of articles written by several experienced ESL professionals who are interested in sharing their knowledge with others in these areas. It is divided into two units. Unit One deals with listening and speaking skills; Unit Two deals with reading skills.

In Unit One, four articles are included, with each one focusing on a particular area. In the first article, written by Jacob Cafilish, a detailed description is given of how an inductive approach can be used in teaching phonetics and how this approach can make the learning of phonetics, a potentially dry subject, amusing and instructive. Charles W. Kreider, who wrote the second article, provides evidence for ESL teachers that there is a great deal of regularity in stress patterns in English. ESL teachers should assist students in being aware of this regularity so that they can speak with good pronunciation. The third article is especially helpful for ESL teachers who teach in a situation where there is no full equipment-based language lab. Ann Morris, the author of this article, devises a decentralized language lab program in which students can learn listening and speaking as well as

they could in an equipment-based lab. With her rich teaching experience and knowledge of the ESL field, she offers a number of strategies and a good list of materials that teachers can use in this program. The last article in this unit, written by Carol Cargill, describes English slur patterns and shows how these patterns can affect the foreign student's understanding of native speakers.

Unit Two, which focuses on reading, also comprises four articles. The first one, by Edwina Haffman and Sharon Kossack, describes the role of listening, speaking and vocabulary building in the development of reading skills and shows how they can be taught to facilitate the acquisition of reading skills. The merits of the second article, by Lus Parede Lono, are found in its exploration of particular problems foreign students may have in reading comprehension; it also provides specific techniques to deal with these problems. Robert Yanez, the author of the third article, divides reading skills into three kinds: pre-reading, comprehension and response skills. Then, according to the different purposes underlying these three kinds, he offers a number of teaching techniques. In the last article of this book, Katherine Caissie discusses the role of vocabulary in developing reading skills and emphasizes that teachers must use a systematic, recognizable approach to help students to increase their vocabulary.

The particular strength of this book is that it approaches the teaching of listening, speaking and reading with a good under-

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CALL FOR PARTICIPATION TESOL '88

Inquiries regarding the Call for Participation for TESOL '88 in Chicago should be directed to the following address:

TESOL Central Office
1118 22nd St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Forms for prospective presentations can be obtained from the same address. Proposals need to be formulated in abstract form on the "Call for Participation" forms. The deadline for TESOL '88 proposals is July 1. Completed forms should be sent to Joy Reid, the Convention Chair, at TESOL Central. Phone inquiries may be made via this number: (202) 635-4569.



RECREATIONAL LEXICOGRAPHY

Charmaine Beepot, DeForest Borders, Tanya Scheherazade Ganz, Yu Hu, Duck Soon Kwak, and Saskia Maria Suite-Hardt are, or until recently were, all registered students at a local university. Paul Dickson, in *A Collector's Compendium of Rare and Unusual, Bold and Beautiful, Odd and Whimsical Names*, lists the following additional bona fide names: Silence Bellows, Minnie Minor Botts, and Birdie Tinkle. People attending the Toronto TESOL Convention probably met Birdline Gonzell when they paid for their lunches. Mme. Wastable lives on the rue de Chaligny in Paris. And Kandy Trees once sought employment in the same place where I work.

When an inanimate thing, such as a newly discovered planet or sub-atomic particle, gets named after its discoverer, or after its discoverer's whim, there's little ground for complaint; but when a child grows into conscious awareness that his or her name carries a secret weight, an expectation of future behaviors, or perhaps an unseen vulnerability, then that young person may one day look back at the parents with pain and anger. My own family name, by virtue of its common rhyme partners, cost me some exquisite discomfort when I was around six. I empathize with Kimball Lester Peed, a local university student. Yet Peed and I were happily not afflicted with first names that intensified our anguish, as happened to the miserable Birdie Tinkle.

But names can carry personally neutral, yet intellectually stimulating loads. "Silence Bellows" is a magnificent example of oxymoron. Who does not remember a face whose mute fixity spoke more, in a moment of surprise or crisis, than any words or inarticulate noises could convey? There is a quiet delight in picturing woodland edges as one savors "DeForest Borders." A beepot, whatever that word may conjure up for you, gains a certain elegance by its association with "Charmaine." John or Mary Beepot just doesn't belong in the same milieu. And Tanya Scheherazade Ganz is a connected litany of evocations. Ganz is Germanic and means "all" or "entire" (*all seven veils?*); and "Tanya," in this context, calls to my mind a series of ads for suntan oil and acres of healthy skin.

Nicknames, especially of public figures, are different if only because they are either chosen by (or with the consent of) the bearer, or are chosen because they identify some notable characteristic of the bearer. Satchel Paige. Satchmo (satchel mouth) Armstrong. Jake Ragin' Bull LaMotta. Tricky Dick Nixon. Wilt the Stilt. Refrigerator. And Sweetness.

Ordinarily, when we hear speech or read

text, the preponderance of our consciousness is focused on the progression of the discourse. In looking at names, however, we may be more likely to stop and take delight in the evocative power of one word rubbing against another. John Soh Bible. Vaughan Joel Buffalo. Pearl Jade Gong. Or these people, all tied to each other by the calendar: Michael Guttentag, Joshua Dienstag, Mark Edwin Freitag, and Kim Sonnabend. The music of names is another source of delight if we will give in completely and undistractedly to their sounds: Christopher Klots, O. Joseph Jett, Ruth Ora Tova Maurice, Joel Corneal Kuipers. All of these are real people, by the way, as are Guy Mohundus LaCrosby, Mary Ellen Muchmore, Barry James Nalebuff, Vadim Nikitine, N. Forrest Shoaf, Dermot Smurfit, and Willibrordus Vonk.

Another category of word play comes to us from the forming of collective nouns in the pattern, NOUN OF NOUNS. We grew up with these terms: a pride of lions, a swarm of bees, a host of angels, a school of fish. A *school* of fish? The others are more or less self-explanatory, but not school. In 1968 James Lipton published *An Exaltation of Larks* (New York, Grossman Publishers) and resolved a number of the mysteries regarding such terms as "a school of fish" and "a dule of doves" (comes from French *deuil*, mourning). He recognizes (on page 6) six categories of these "Nouns of assemblage," including:

1. Onomatopoeia: for example, a murmuration of starlings, a gaggle of geese
2. Characteristic: a leap of leopards, a skulk of foxes (This, Lipton points out, is by far the largest category.)
3. Appearance: a knot of toads, a bouquet of pheasants
4. Habitat: a shoal of bass, a nest of rabbits
5. Comment (pro or con, reflecting the observer's point of view): a richness of martens, a cowardice of curs
6. Error (resulting from an incorrect transcription by a scribe or printer, and faithfully preserved in the corrupted form by subsequent compilers): a school of fish, originally "shoal."

Into which of Lipton's categories would you fit each of the following terms found in his book?

- a slate of candidates
- a brood of hens
- a plague of locusts
- a hover of trout
- a drove of cattle
- a piddle of yuppies
- a trip of hippies
- a flush of plumbers
- a wince of dentists

- a shower of meteorologists
- an indifference of waiters
- a frost of dowagers
- a mass of priests
- an unction of undertakers
- a stand of flamingoes
- a brood of chessplayers
- a hoard of misers
- a mess of officers
- an ambush of widows

Into which category would you fit these terms, suggested by MATSOL colleagues?

- a combination of safecrackers
- a network of fishermen
- a pride of yuppies
- a /ren/ of monarchs
- a caution of porcupines

And, with apologies to anyone offended by the topic, I offer the following, with attributions, on the subject of prostitutes:

- a smelting of ores (Lipton)
 - a herd of whorses (JY)
 - a troop of horses (with variants, from several sources)
 - a mews of cathouses (Lipton)
- and, from Martin Tropp, with variants in Lipton:

A group of professors, each from a different academic discipline, crossed paths with a group of prostitutes.

"A jam of tarts," said the home economist. "A flourish of strumpets," countered the musicologist.

"A volume of Trollope's," offered the 19th century lit. person.

But a lowly instructor of freshmen writing concluded the discussion. "An anthology of prose," she said.

Gregg Singer launched this one: a flight of stewardesses. Gregg has retired from the space occupied by this column, and we will miss his grammatical musings.

Words, by themselves, or in juxtaposition with one another, can delight. How we form them, how they acquire meanings from one another and from us, how they behave in puns, in ads, in poems, in our textbooks . . . all this is the stuff of this column for a while. I hope you'll write to share with me and with our MATSOL colleagues the lexical delights and curiosities that have furrowed your brows or brightened your days.

Bill Biddle
24 Dover Road
Wellesley, MA 02181

TEACHING IDEAS

(continued from page 3)

Steve Brown is an Instructor in the University of Pittsburgh English Language Institute's Japan Program in Tokyo. He is a co-author of *English Firsthand Plus* (Lateral Communications, forthcoming). Reprinted from *TESL Reporter*, October, 1986.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SPRING ME? GIVE A WORKSHOP?

by Helaine Block

Whew! It's over! I actually did it! That wasn't so bad. . . kind of fun, really.

These were my thoughts as I packed up my things after giving my first MATSOL presentation. The April workshop had been well received, and I was glad that I'd decided to do it.

The decision had not come easily, though. I'd been "toying" with the idea of presenting for several months because I had some ideas and experiences that I really wanted to share with other elementary ESL teachers. But I also had my doubts. Would the audience be interested in what I had to offer? Would they disagree with my educational philosophy? Would they walk out? Fall asleep? Something worse?

As it turned out, I needn't have worried. All those who attended seemed to be dedicated and enthusiastic professionals eager for new ideas and for the opportunity to express their own. The desire to learn from each other was evident. It was a wonderful experience.

Afterward, several of the participants approached me to discuss the workshop and also to ask why there weren't more elementary presenters at the Conference. I had to laugh because last spring I had asked the very same question and the response had surprised me. I was informed that MATSOL relies primarily on the participation of its members (not on recruitment, as I had thought) for its Conference agenda, and that the absence of elementary representatives was simply due to a shortage of willing volunteers.

This information sparked my initial impulse to do a presentation and I began to consider which of the activities I'd used

with my students had proven the most successful and how they reflected current research and theory in second language learning in children.

In all honesty, however, I must admit that the final impetus to submit a presentation proposal did not come entirely from within. I received considerable encouragement and support from Jane Yedlin and Suzanne Irujo, Resource Specialists at the New England Multifunctional Resource Center for Language and Culture in Education in Providence, who were (and are) more than willing to provide feedback to teachers.

I submitted this article with the hope that it would encourage other elementary ESL teachers to do future presentations at MATSOL. There are mini- (15-minute) workshops as well as one- and two-hour time-slots available.

The call for proposals for the Fall Conference will be issued soon. Why not volunteer to "share the fruits" of your efforts, talents, and creativity? Your colleagues are eagerly awaiting your contribution!

Helaine Block is an ESL teacher at Shurtleff School in Chelsea.

RECIPE FOR A WORKSHOP

by Linda Schulman

It was really rather painless.

When Charlotte Seeley called and asked me to present at the MATSOL conference, I wanted to respond with an uncontested "no." After all, did I want to spend the night before writing notes and the next day anxiously waiting my turn? No, I did not.

But Char is very persuasive. "It's only fifteen minutes," she pleaded. "Just show the photographs that were hanging in your classroom." She was referring to some pictures of my students demonstrating various idioms. Reluctantly, I conceded.

My preparation consisted of grabbing the pictures and bringing them with me to the conference. The presentation itself was more like a workshop. I discussed and showed the photos, and we all shared in a

give-and-take about ways to capitalize on the idea and expand its use.

My fifteen-minute contribution required no preparation and little anxiety. On the other hand, I received all the recognition of being a "presenter," as well as lots of valuable feedback.

If you have any new approach to the teaching of ESL, offer to present it at the fifteen-minute workshops. We all need "hands-on" classroom ideas, in addition to more theoretical approaches. As a presenter, you'll find it to be fun, rewarding — and painless.

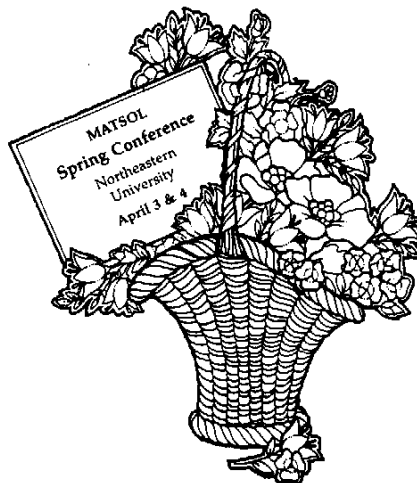
Linda Schulman is an ESL specialist in the Needham Public Schools at the elementary and high school levels.

HELP!! CALL FOR PAPERS

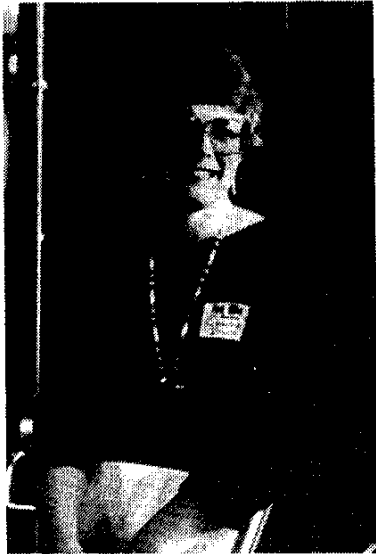
On the Spring Conference Evaluation Form, MATSOL members made specific requests for sessions on these topics at future conferences. If you have been working in any of these areas and would like to share your expertise, we'd love to hear from you.

1. More elementary and middle-school presentations
2. Cross-cultural issues
3. Learning styles
4. Theory of L2 acquisition
5. Computers and computer software
6. Stress and intonation

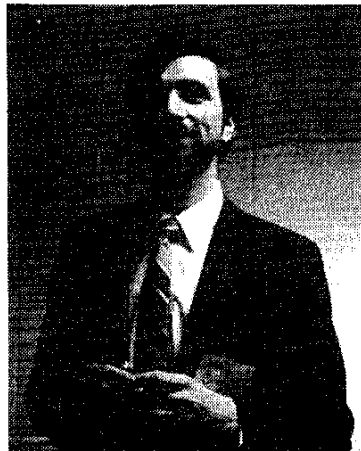
7. Verb tenses
8. Beginning ESL
9. Workplace ESL
10. Literacy
11. Methods for teaching English to Japanese and other Asians
12. Content area ESL
13. Integrating topics with grammar
14. Someone from NAFSA to give us an overview as to the characteristics of the population we in Higher Ed. are dealing with
15. More of the same. MATSOL Conferences just keep getting better and better.

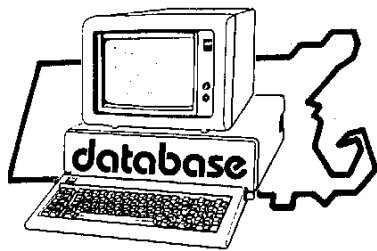


IG CONFERENCE



1987





TEACHING ESL STUDENTS WRITING USING WORD PROCESSING

by Andrea Herrmann, University of Arkansas

The advantages of word processing are well-known: revising and editing, catching ideas as they flow, playing with language, and professional-looking final manuscripts. In the enthusiastic rush to use this new technology in schools, however, advocates may gloss over the difficulties encountered by students who are attempting to use the computer as a writing tool.

Teaching writing on computers is still exploratory and experimental. Because of the computer's newness and complexity, it demands of the teacher new sensitivities to what is happening in the classroom or writing lab. For both teacher and student, the computer can be simultaneously frustrating and exhilarating, demanding yet rewarding. As a teacher who has used word processing with both native and non-native speakers, I would like to share my experiences — positive and negative.

Some Students Overwhelmed

Using a word processor to write may initially be more difficult and stressful because it necessitates new technical skills which may overload and overwhelm some students. Learning which keys to push and how to get out of trouble when the wrong keys have been pushed interferes with the writing process. The ease in writing comes only *after* a certain level of competence with the equipment and the program.

Some students deal much less well with frustration than others, and learning to word process is frequently a frustrating experience, even when the program is supposedly easy to learn. After ten hours of word processing instruction, my ESL students were asked to open a file called "Fun," write their name and two silly sentences, save the file, then print it out. Since I had reviewed all of the procedures with them, I did not anticipate serious difficulties. However, the amount of stress one student was feeling is evident from her response:

I don't know how to operate the computer. I am so scared. I know this is not funny at all. But some people might be thinking it is funny because it is so easy. They are doing so well, but I can't. Oh, my God what am I doing? I suppose to write down a funny thing. I guess there is nothing in my mind except computer. I feel sorry myself.

The Learning Process Varies Greatly

Some ESL students learn to word process with a minimum of discomfort, quickly becoming zealous converts. They seem to acquire an interactive flexibility almost instinctively, learning what they need to

know as they go along. They use the available resources to assist them: the teacher, lab assistant, other students, directions on the screen, class handouts or the program's manual.

Others, however, have a much more difficult time. Students have heard, just as we have, about the computer's marvelous powers. Many believe that their future depends upon success with this machine. While this knowledge can motivate some to succeed, it can intimidate others.

Another cause of student anxiety is that using the computer emphasizes students' problem solving strategies (or lack of them) and makes their learning process highly transparent — as exposed as their writing, shimmering on their computer screens.

Students need to be willing to admit they need help; yet in every class I notice a few who are unable to. These few often sit for long periods of time incapable of functioning effectively. Some worry about looking foolish or making mistakes. Others compare themselves unfavorably to their classmates, becoming distressed by what they perceive as others' easy successes. In some cases, frustration turns into avoidance behavior, including not coming to class regularly. All these reactions have taught me to watch monitors and body language for signs of trouble and to ask students frequently if they need help.

Risk-Taking and Active Learning

Learning how to word process is like learning to ride a bike. The user balances a multitude of interrelated, subtly coordinated, mental and physical activities requiring trial and a certain degree of error. While a teacher may assist in the process, the learner must do most of the job herself. Some aspects of the process may be presented in discreet steps to be followed in a linear way; for the most part, however, word processing is a recursive and interactive activity and cannot be taught in a step-by-step fashion. The teacher may try to create a supportive environment and get students off to a good start, but they must take the risks and be willing to play an active role. The writing teacher becomes something of a coach, reassuring students that they cannot break the machine and that there is no such thing as a mistake — that errors are to learn by.

A Host of Concerns

The teacher juggles a host of concerns. There are the technical problems as well as worries about how to integrate the writing process. Too much emphasis on writing in the early stages when students are coping

with the technology is ill-advised. Yet the goal is to teach language and writing, not word processing per se. The dilemma is how to balance instructional concerns with the teaching of word processing until the student has achieved a minimum level of competency.

The teacher must deal with students who are wildly enthusiastic about using computers, along with those who are very negative. Some students believe that time spent learning how to word process is time lost to language learning. Two ESL students had the following polar comments to make about their experiences:

In this class I feel comfortable with myself because I improve my writing and speaking with a foreign language.

Learning how to use computers was very hard for me because I don't like them and I don't think they are useful as a method to learn English . . . A person who is learning English is supposed to practice English, not on a computer. (a male student)

Does the Student's Writing Improve?

The bottom line in using word processing, of course, is "Does the student's writing improve?" This is not a simple question to answer. When students make progress, much more than just the computer is involved. The classroom strategies, the learning environment, as well as the student's background, motivation and effort, are just a few elements that enter into success or failure. Clearly, some students become highly engaged when word processing is used. They gain new sensitivity to the flexibility of language and become willing, even eager, to write. They appear more receptive to feedback concerning the need to revise and edit since this no longer entails a great deal of extra work. Because the context for writing may become more social and collaborative with the word processor, students' writing skills (as well as their oral ones) may benefit from the suggestions made by their peers as well as by the teacher. Yet, for others — as I have shown — learning to use the computer as a writing tool is not a positive experience.

Little Known about the Process

I try to resist making the assumption that *my* writing process should be the students'. Since little is known about teaching writing with word processing, the temptation to impose one's own method is strong. Teachers whose mastery of word processing may still be rudimentary sometimes tell

(continued on page 11)



EXPLORATIONS: AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH TO READING

by Alison Rice and Susan Stempleski, 1988. Collier Macmillan.
Order from ESL Department, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022 (117 pp., \$9.50)

Reviewed by Eileen Prince-Nam, *Northeastern University*

Be forewarned! If you are looking for a highly critical or "balanced" review, read no farther. And, I would like to admit my bias up front: Alison Rice is a former colleague of mine from New York, and Susan Stempleski (past MATSOL president) gave such a dynamic plenary at the spring conference that I was favorably disposed to any book that they might write before even looking at it. However, the main reason that this will be an overwhelmingly favorable review is that *Explorations* fully deserves one. With its publication, there is finally a truly interesting yet linguistically appropriate reading text for high-elementary and low-intermediate ESL readers.

Let's begin with the initial visual impact of the book. There are pictures — both photographs and drawings — in every unit. There are also different typefaces that vary in size, boldness and style; but all are large enough not to cause difficulty for people beginning to read in a second language. The book is printed in black, white, gray and probably three different shades of sky blue. These are just enough colors to provide visual variety and signaling while not confusing the reader and detracting from the main purpose of the text (to be read). All in all, it is visually pleasant and informative without being flashy.

Good formatting, of course, is not enough. Teachers and students may be initially drawn to a visually attractive book, but it must have good content to survive the test of actual use. *Explorations* treats topics that will be of interest to learners from high school (perhaps even seventh grade) on up and to students in adult education as well as purely academic programs. (This fits in nicely with my own philosophy that although the ultimate goals of learners in different types of programs may be different, their goal of learning ESL is surprisingly similar.) My favorite topics are found in Chapters 2 ("A Talking Gorilla"; "An Interview with Dr. Patterson"), 4 ("A Day in the Life of Kotaro Nohmura"; "Doing Business with the Japanese: Some Dos and Don'ts"), 6 ("The Language of Gestures"; "Interpreting Gestures") and 10 ("Have a Good Cry"; "Ask Aggie"). You and your students will doubtless find your own, but I hope that my list has shown the surprisingly sophisticated level of the topics dealt with in this text. The various readings, by the way, were simplified as to language but retain their original formats. They include magazine articles, a map, an interview, a recipe, advice columns, travel ads, fact sheets and letters. As is true in the real world of reading, most are written in

the fairly objective third person, but a few are written in the more subjective first person.

Schema theory is central to the authors' philosophy of how reading should be taught, and this is reflected in their text. Each unit begins with one or more pictures, and the first language activity generally asks students to work with a partner or group to answer questions about the picture(s). It's all there visually, so no prior knowledge of the topic is usually necessary. (A picture is worth a thousand words.) Unit 5 ("Modern Fathers Have Pleasures and Problems"), from which I will take examples, illustrates this well, beginning with four photographs of fathers with their children. Learners begin immediately to develop some ideas about what they will be reading. ("Talk about the fathers and children in the pictures. Write down any vocabulary words that are new for you." "What is each father doing?") This activity is followed by others which call on students to share their prior knowledge of the topic ("Together, make a list of the things a man should do to be a good father.") and, in some cases, to predict what the reading selection will be about. ("The next article is 'Modern Fathers Have Pleasures and Problems.' Check the things you think this article will talk about.")

These pre-reading activities, which provide and activate the learners' knowledge of the topic, are followed by a reading selection. This selection is followed by various reading skills exercises. These drills include predicting, finding the main idea, scanning, skimming, sequencing, organizing facts and making inferences. Although there are sufficient exercises for each skill throughout the text, the authors have made a point of not slavishly committing themselves to a particular sequence of exercises in every unit. The exercises are different in each unit so that students and teachers will not be bored or forced to go through exercises that are inappropriate to a particular selection. Also found in every unit — but not in the same place — are various kinds of comprehension exercises, vocabulary work, some kind of further reading, and discussion and/or simple writing tasks to do with a partner. By the time the students finish a unit, they will bring their knowledge to bear on related topics in the future. They will also quite likely have developed critical skills which will stand them in good stead in their future learning, whether this be academic or "real world."

I promised you a rave review of *Explorations*, and I believe I have provided one. Let me briefly mention two items that

some may perceive as flaws. The book contains only ten units. (All good things must come to an end.) This makes it ideal for programs on a quarter system such as ours; teachers on a semester schedule may initially want more units. However, the "extra" time can be fruitfully used for testing and for letting students try their skills on readings on related topics or on more difficult readings on the same topics. The opportunities for easy supplementation are great. And for classes in programs where reading is taught only two or three periods a week, two weeks can easily be spent on each unit. I can even foresee the text being used for an academic year in less intensive programs.

The other minor drawback for some is that the text contains an answer key. Teachers wishing to see how well students do on the exercises may dislike this, but the publishers have almost solved this by perforating these pages so that they can be removed and collected. The only minor problem is that the first page of the answer key is on the back of the last page of Unit 10, so this one page would have to remain (unless the teacher wanted to save it and return it at the appropriate time). However, some theories of aesthetics maintain that minor flaws make an object all the more beautiful. And, if this one page is the only real problem with *Explorations*, then . . .

Eileen Prince-Nam is currently Associate Director of the English Language Center, Northeastern University.

BOOK REVIEW

(continued from page 4)

standing of the student's cultural problems. However, it also has its weaknesses. The most obvious one is that some of the articles only tell ESL teachers to be aware of some unique problems that foreign students may have in English but don't extend their discussion into the application stage. Thus, they leave teachers to decide what they can do to cope with these problems. Another weakness observed in this book is that students' learning styles are not fully considered while a specific teaching technique is devised. Despite its weaknesses, this book is still a valuable source for ESL teachers because it provides a lot of useful information teachers are looking for.

Haiping Zhou is from East China Normal University. She is now studying for an M.A. in ESL at U/Mass, Boston.

Please send book reviews for the next issue to Pamela Dill, CELOP, Boston University, 730 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215 before July 15, 1987.

A QUESTION OF CREDIT

(continued from page 1)

function capably as full-time students in an American university, or that the university is unprepared to provide those students with the linguistic training many of them so badly need *throughout their college careers*, and to make that training an essential and continuing part of their education? Administrators will argue that to get a degree, a student must earn a predetermined number of credits in various disciplines. To allow a student to take six courses in ESL allows him or her to take six less courses in other departments and will reduce the normally wide breadth of a liberal education. Of course such an argument may conceal a certain degree of bad faith. ("We accepted these foreign students in the expectation that they would keep up enrollments in Introduction to Philosophy and Elements of Psychology — too bad if it takes them twice as long to read the textbooks and they are ensured of getting a low grade on their papers.") But it also betrays an ignorance of what is learned in an ESL course and grossly underestimates the overwhelming importance of language, no matter what field of specialization a student chooses. A non-native speaker who gets a BS in engineering but who is still unable to write a resume or understand an interviewer's questions limps away from graduation with only part of a degree. Anyone who has spent time in a foreign country knows the language of that country cannot be mastered in a semester-long course — or two, or three — despite years of preparation at home. That person also knows how absolutely essential it is to know the language, and know it well, if one is to understand the culture and interact successfully within it. In the case of our non-native students who are offered, at best, two credit-bearing courses to improve their English language skills during their years at college, the solution is simple: recognize them as the special students they are — a valuable resource group whose diverse educational and cultural backgrounds could potentially make an inestimable and lasting contribution to the intellectual life of any college campus. What would Paris be today, without the tens of thousands of foreign scholars who went there to study in the Middle Ages? As special students, non-native speakers should qualify for certain special considerations, such as the opportunity to take courses in ESL as long as they need them, and to receive full credit for those courses, credit which will count towards their degrees. Granted, this might require making slight modifications in the overall degree requirements of that particular group, or in the case of graduate students, building into their programs the linguistic training they will need to function as T.A.'s or write dissertations, but such modifications would only be in keeping with the philosophical and ethical commitment any university should have made as

soon as it enrolled its first non-native speaker of English as a full-time student.

This is just a proposal, no more. It is meant to stimulate debate, and will probably need editing and revision. Some people may want it to be more comprehensive, and others, more specific. But while we are debating the issue and the stand we should take on it — should, in fact, have taken years ago — it might also be good to consider a few other proposals which are corollary to the first:

A. Let's have no more bogus credit. This absurd practice must be as demoralizing as it is hypocritical. A school that assigns credit to certain courses only for purposes of financial aid is saying, in effect, those courses have no real value in a student's college education and therefore the college should not be offering them. Let them look at those courses more closely, comparing them to similar-level courses in foreign languages, and assign credit where credit is due.

B. Under no circumstances should a college-level ESL course be called "remedial," because of the negative connotations the word has come to imply. Remedial courses give students a second chance to learn something they should have learned the first time. When applied to non-native speakers of English, the concept is paternalistic, demeaning and discriminatory. ESL is not what students at the University of California once called "bone-head English" (and perhaps still do).

ESL students are not disabled or deprived. They are learning at a fantastic rate, often against enormous odds, and deserve fairer treatment and proper recognition.

C. All ESL courses offered by a college or university should bear the same amount of credit, regardless of content or level. The practice of assigning credit only to advanced writing courses, because they are more "academic" or have more "academic components," may be linked to the idea that writing is a superior activity, the most "noble" of the four skills. Current research in foreign language acquisition is helping to dispel that myth, showing that all the language skills are much more closely related than previously assumed, and that of the four, listening comprehension may in fact be the most crucial in learning a foreign language.

At any rate, comparison to similar courses in foreign languages may again be helpful here. A survey of french literature that stresses reading and writing may require a different kind of preparation and classroom activity than French 4. But both courses demand an equal amount of work by both student and instructor, and naturally receive the same amount of credit.

D. For many of the reasons cited above, all instructors of ESL in a college or university should be accepted as members of the full-time faculty, not as second-class citizens. The situation of the majority of college-level ESL teachers today is anal-

(continued on page 11)

Resolution on Granting Credit for ESL in Institutions of Higher Education

Passed at the Legislative Assembly at TESOL '87/Miami: April 24, 1987

Whereas large numbers of English as a second language (ESL) students have been accepted into institutions of higher education in English speaking countries, and Whereas these students are generally required to take ESL courses as a part of their academic program because they have demonstrated need for additional learning opportunities to be able to do successful competitive work with native speakers of English, and

Whereas the material studied in these ESL courses demands the highest level of second language proficiency, including: knowledge of contrasting phonetic, syntactic, semantic, and rhetorical information (studies that do *not* equate with remediating first language skills), and

Whereas these students deserve to earn academic credit for their study of English as a second language just as native English speaking students earn credit for their study of a second language and for courses in linguistic analysis, and

Whereas receiving credit for ESL is likely to increase student motivation and performance in these courses, and

Whereas these students may be required to take a minimum number of credits in order to be considered full time students, but cannot reasonably be expected to take a full academic load in addition to their ESL courses,

Therefore be it resolved that International TESOL recommends to institutions of higher education that they grant credit to ESL students for their study of English as a second language, and

Be it further resolved that International TESOL make this resolution known to its members through publication in its newsletter, and

Be it further resolved that International TESOL send copies of this resolution to appropriate academic officers, administrators, and faculty in institutions of higher education upon the request of TESOL members.

CONGRATULATIONS TO . . .

Carol Pineiro, on her trip to Turkey, for USA.

Pam Dill, Ruth Pierson, and Ellen Rios on their weddings.

Jacquie Lo Conte on the birth of her daughter.

Rachel Goodman, on her election to the Brookline Town Meeting.

Bob Saitz, on cleaning up his study (submitted by the Saitz household).

Herlinda Ch. Saitz, on getting her Ph.D. in Spanish — language and literatures — from Boston University.

Mark Stepner, on appearing on WGBH-Radio on Morning Pro Musica with the Zamir Chorale of Boston.

Margot Validivia, on the purchase of her condominium.

Paul Abraham, on completing a year at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Lorna Porras and Peter Johnson, on the birth of their son Peter.

Rosalie Porter, on her Radcliffe Bunting Institute Fellowship for 1987-88.

The following people who presented at TESOL '87 in Miami, work or study in Massachusetts or elsewhere in New England, and are past, current, or potential members of MATSOL:

Elsa Auerbach
Bill Bliss

Samuel C. Cleland
Rebecca M. Dauer

Mary Doolin
Anne Dow

Joyce Lancaster
Diane Larsen-Freeman

Somchai Latthitham
Caroline Linse

Carolyn Duffy
Donald Freeman

Thomas J. Garza
Suzanne Irujo

Michael Jerald
John Kopec

Susan Maguire
Kathleen Mahnke

Judith Matsunobu
Loren McGrail

Beatrice Mickulecky
Candace Mitchell

Steven Molinsky
Carol Pineiro

Karen Price
Wilga M. Rivers

Robert Saitz
Kathleen Sands-

Boehmer
Alex Silverman

Gregg Singer
Ruth Spack

Janet Speigeli
Podnecky

Polly Ulichny
Susan Vik

Jerri Willet
Jane Yedlin

Vivian Zamel
Jane Zion Brauer

A QUESTION OF CREDIT

(continued from page 10)

ogous to the plight of hordes of part-timers in foreign language and freshman writing programs throughout the country. Despite excellent professional qualifications and years of teaching experience, they are often exploited, overworked and grossly underpaid, sometimes having to work at two or three different schools to make ends meet. Assigning full credit to all ESL courses may help improve this situation, but we must close our ranks and be prepared to wage this battle on many fronts. Taking a firm and united stand on this issue of college credit for ESL will help us convince administrators of the strength of our convictions and the legitimacy of our demands.

Richard Blakely has a Ph.D. from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and is currently teaching Writing and ESL, for credit, at the University of Rhode Island.

DATABASE

(continued from page 8)

their students that the computer should be Used only for revisions, since that is the way they use it, or that printouts of a piece in progress should be made regularly. However, many students learn to compose directly on the computer, with or without help of notes, and some rarely make printouts until they feel their writing is finished.

One of our major concerns as ESL teachers should be to modify our methods based on what students say and do. There is still much more for us to learn from our students about the process of teaching writing with computers. One thing is sure, however: word processors change, and I believe enrich, the ESL class.

Andrea Herrmann teaches composition to ESL students and native speakers in the English Department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She has recently completed a dissertation "Using the Computer as a Writing Tool: Ethnography of a High School Writing Class," at Teachers College, Columbia University. Reprinted from TESOL Newsletter, Supplement No. 3, CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning, Feb., 1986.

Please send articles on computer assisted language learning (CALL) for the next issue to Adrian Saltz, CELOP, Boston University, 730 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215 before July 15, 1987.

MISSING . . .

These items vanished at the MATSOL Spring Conference (at Northeastern University):

2 videos - one by Jim Cummins and one by Steve Krashen. Call Suzanne Irujo at 275-0489 if you have any information as to their whereabouts.

A gray, lined raincoat, size 14, with a hood. In its place someone left a size 8 raincoat. Any information or questions regarding this raincoat can be addressed to Christine Esperson at 1-563-7052.



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INFORMATION FROM:

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Please join MATSOL or renew your membership by completing this form:

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