MATSOL NEWSLETTER
Massachusetts Association Of Teachers Of English To Speakers Of Other Languages

VOL. 19, NO. 1 SUMMER/FALL 1992

# Empowering Students Through Popular Songs

***Bethel Charkoudian***

Have you ever found yourself avoiding your teenager's room, covering your ears as you passed by in order to drown out the loud music blaring from behind the closed door? That's a mistake if you're an ESL teacher. Knowing and teaching songs that students have heard, will hear, or are likely to hear in the popular culture is one way to give them quick entrance into the mainstream—to empower them to be independent rather than teacher-dependent learners. They can learn how to listen to and understand what is piped into McDonald's, to be conversant with the major ideas of a song, or even to learn the "trick" messages that most adult English speakers never get because they never really listen. The lessons taught in your classroom through popular songs will be reinforced every time your students hear the songs outside the classroom.

**What works**

1. Soft rock. A good choice for beginners in their second year. Incidentally, the first songs that my Guatemalan foster child was able to understand were "Lady in Red" and "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" by Roberta Flack. These songs have achieved the status of soft rock classics.
2. Country and Western songs. The words and concepts are usually easy to understand.

*Continued on page 5*

Illustration by Bob MacLean

INSIDE

From the President 2
MATSOL '92 Spring Conference 3
Report on Friday Plenary Address 4
Report on Saturday Plenary Address 4
MATSOL Grant Recipient Reports
A Smorgasbord of Colloquia 9
Multimedia Technology 10
Global Issues in ESL 11
Employment Issues Committee Update 12
MATSOL Legal Support Fund 13
Guide for Book Reviewers 14
A Response to James Paul Gee's Plenary Address 16
"Let's Talk About Sex" 17
*Video Views:*
Making Mini-Movies 18
*Teaching Ideas:*
Group Problems 20
*Recreational Grammar:*
Borrowers and Lenders 21
*Database:* Groupwise 22

# Oral Storytelling: From "Scheherezade" to "Cam and Tam"

***Barbara Nealon and Brenda Sloane***

The annual International Holiday Festival at Lowell High School was a month away, and our ESL classes had been asked to perform in front of a large segment of the school. But how? What could we do to motivate our ESL students to take a chance and participate willingly?

We devised the following comprehensive one-month storytelling unit not only in response to the Festival demands but also in an attempt to provide two diverse classes with more practice in pronunciation, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Both classes, one high beginning and the other intermediate, had a mix of Southeast Asian, Indian, Hispanic, and Portuguese students.

*Continued on page 6*

MASSACHUSETTS
ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS
OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF
OTHER LANGUAGES

**Executive Board, 1992-93**
PRESIDENT
Roberta Steinberg
Mount Ida College
VICE-PRESIDENT
Marlyn Katz Levenson
Shaloh House/Suffolk University
SECRETARY
Helaine Block
Williams School, Chelsea
TREASURER
Robert Maguire
Boston University
NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Suzanne Koons
MIT/Harvard University Extension
PAST PRESIDENT
Kathryn Riley
Roxbury Community College
REPRESENTATIVES
*Adult*
Diane Terry
JVS-ESL, Hebrew College
*Elementary Secondary*
Linda Schulman
Needham Public Schools
*Higher Education*
Eileen Prince
Northeastern University
*General*
Michael Jane Buss
Univ. of Massachusetts, Boston
*Western Area*
Nancy Keyes
Mt. Holyoke College
JOB BANK
Amy Worth

THE MATSOL NEWSLETTER
*Editors:* Ruth Spack, Suzanne Koons
*Publisher Liaison:* Susan Donio
*Recreational Grammar:* Robert Saitz
*Database:* Karen Price

The *MATSOL Newsletter* is published three times a year. It is available through membership in MATSOL. Articles, reviews, letters, and other contributions are welcome. A writer's request for final approval is honored whenever possible. Send material to:
Suzanne Koons
60 Wadsworth St. #20E
Cambridge, MA 02142
Articles should be typed and double-spaced. Please include bio-data and phone number.

Next Deadline:
October 15, 1992

# *From The President*

I am delighted to be writing this first letter to you as President of MATSOL for 1992-1993. I want to use this space to suggest ways in which you can participate in the coming year and help us make our organization more responsive to your needs.

1. The Fall Conference will be held October 31 (yes, you may come in costume) at Bentley College, Waltham.
2. The Spring Conference will be held April 2-3, 1993 at Northeastern University. If you would like to work on this conference, please call Marlyn Katz Levenson at (617) 277-9604.
3. Welcome to our new *Newsletter* editor, Suzanne Koons. If you want to write an article for the *MATSOL Newsletter*, please call Suzanne at (617) 225-2788. And thanks to Ruth Spack for her generous assistance in making the transition as smooth as possible.
4. If anyone is interested in being nominated to work on TESOL's Standing Committees on Sociopolitical Concerns or Professional Standards, please contact me at (617) 232-9022.
5. Thank you to all who attended and evaluated the Spring '92 Conference. I appreciate all of your praise and suggestions. Many of your ideas will be incorporated into the two upcoming conferences this year. In summation, with a "1" being the highest and a "5" being the lowest, your weighted responses to the items on the evaluation were as follows: Pre-registration Materials, 1.4; Ease of Registration, 1.13; Overall Quality of Presentations, 1.61; Publishers' Exhibits, 1.68; Lunch, 2.06; Social Hours, 1.32; Location, 1.28.

I look forward to the coming year and being able to meet with many more of you.

***Robby Steinberg***

FALL 1992

**NYS TESOL**
Dates: October 16-18, 1992
Place: New York City
Contact: Tess Ferree
(212) 854-3584

**BU Conference on Language Development**
Dates: October 23-25, 1992
Place: Boston University
Contact: Conference Office
(617) 353-3085

**NCTE New England**
Dates: October 29-31, 1992
Place: Farmington Marriott Hotel, Connecticut
Contact: Barbara Laurain
(203) 561-2281

**MATSOL Fall Conference**
Date: October 31, 1992
Place: Bentley College
Contact: Linda Schulman
(617) 237-1763

**NNETESOL Fall Conference**
Date: November 14, 1992
Place: New Hampshire College
Contact: Diane Dugan
(603) 668-2211 x3386

**Modern Language Association**
Dates: December 27-30, 1992
Place: New York City
Contact: MLA
(212) 614-6370

*Typesetting:* Bartleby Scriveners *Printing:* Sir Speedy, Brookline

# *MATSOL'92 Spring Conference Report*

On Friday, March 20 and Saturday, March 21 Mount Ida College hosted the highest-grossing MATSOL conference ever held, chaired by Robby Steinberg. This feat was accomplished in large part due to the tireless efforts of Eileen Prince and Catherine Sadow, the publisher liaisons, and of Dianne Ruggiero, the MATSOL Treasurer.

Over thirty-five publishers exhibited their materials to the nearly 400 attendees who read through a beautifully designed conference brochure to choose among 46 sessions to attend, delighted in the expertise of the plenary speakers, Karen Price and Jim Gee, signed up for the Job Bank, and fraternized at the daily social hours.

Special features included workplace and adult literacy colloquia, a review of standards for ESL professionals, a view of the hiring process, as well as highly acclaimed presentations on dictation, video, songs, testing, the writing process, and story-telling.

***Photos by John Dreyer***

## We're Gonna Sweep You Off Your Feet!

We're looking forward to seeing you at the
MATSOL '92 FALL CONFERENCE
Saturday, October 31
Bentley College, Waltham
Plenary Speaker: Leslie Beebe

# Reports on MATSOL '92 Spring Conference Speakers

*Summary of Karen Price's Friday Plenary Talk:*
## "Statistical Evaluations: Who Counts?"
*Sterling Giles*

Dr. Karen Price of Harvard University has been analyzing data collected from her university's required end-of-term standardized course evaluations for over 10 years. At the MATSOL '92 Spring Conference, she shared some tentative (her emphasis) conclusions drawn from her program's data, illustrating that asking the right questions can be useful for program design. However, more important than her conclusion were her caveats: data should be analyzed and their results interpreted with an understanding of the limitations of quantitative analysis. To consider quantitative information as objective fact is dangerous when assessing the quality of programs, courses, and teachers. Many factors can affect the meaningful uses of such data, among them the questions asked of respondents, course type, questions asked of the data (which might say more about the researcher than about the program), variables one chooses to control for (our assumptions), proficiency level, and the age, gender, goals, and nationality of respondents.

Harvard's evaluations employ a 5-point Likert rating scale. The data yield class-average indexes of student perception of factors such as progress, class size, placement level, amount of work, etc. Over time Dr. Price has sometimes noticed trends in these indexes of student satisfaction which contradicted data gathered in less quantitative ways. In an attempt to reconcile these seeming contradictions, she looked not only at the class-average indexes but also at the larger picture in which the student responses occurred. In determining how best to interpret her data, she looked in several directions for larger patterns.

### Respondents count

Nationality emerges as one indicator of student satisfaction. Different cultural groups each have a consistent tendency to use the 5-point Likert rating scale in significantly different ways. As the percentages of each group in her program changed, indexes of satisfaction changed accordingly, not necessarily because the degree of satisfaction was changing, but because a different group was expressing itself in a different way. The specific facts of this case are not generally applicable because these rating tendencies may be program-specific, yet this scenario does point out the need to look at our respondents carefully when asking questions of evaluation data. In other words, the re- spondents count.

Another factor which consistently seems to affect student perceptions of factors such as participation, class quality, etc. is the cultural mix of the class. Regardless of their cultural group, Harvard ESL students report that they have a better learning experience and a more effective teacher in more culturally heterogeneous classes.

Having identified nationality and cultural mix as meaningful variables, Dr. Price knows that other factors, both known and unknown, may affect the interpretation of the data. To use student program evaluations as a basis for promotion or salary decisions at this point would be primitive and ineffective. If they were to develop an art of model building akin to econometrics in its complexity, then maybe administrators could, in good conscience, use class-average indexes to make personnel decisions. Maybe. But for the moment we should continue to ask questions of the data which would help administrators and instructors see the limitations of the process, and perhaps even provide information which could lead to meaningful program changes.

*Sterling Giles teaches at Roxbury Community College and Harvard University Extension.*

---

*Summary of James Paul Gee's Saturday Plenary Talk:*
## "The Implications of Sausage for the Teaching of English"
*Ruth Spack*

Summarizing a talk that calls into question the meaning of words is a daunting task. My own understanding of what I heard is shaped by my everyday *way of seeing*, by the meaning of Professor James Paul Gee's words relative to other words in the *word-system* as a whole, by the *context* within which the talk was given, by the *negotiation* of meaning between Gee as speaker and Spack as listener, by our individual *takes on the world*, and by the *dialogic meaning* that has emerged from my discussions of the talk with other listeners. The meaning of Professor Gee's talk will be "uncovered, discovered, changed" by my writing about it and by your reading what I write. I summarize in full knowledge of Professor Gee's argument that "no translation is ever completely accurate and no communication is ever completely successful."

Taking us on an intellectual roller coaster ride, Professor Gee, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Southern California, described "reality" as a "giant mass of malleable dough" which we humans cut and reshape in a great many ways. Our use of language, our "ways of wording," are essentially tools for cutting and shaping. How a given culture shapes the dough is "completely arbitrary." Professor Gee compared two languages, Korean and English, to help us feel this arbitrariness. For example, one word in

*Continued on page 7*

## *Popular Songs* *Continued from page 1*

3. Songs that are being played often, that students are likely to have heard, that are likely to win awards, or have won awards, or are from popular movies, sung by famous stars.
4. Songs in which the singer is not simply one of the instruments but rather the solo instrument (arrangements in which the voice is featured in the foreground of the music).
5. Songs that have repeated choruses. Teach students to listen for and sing along with the chorus. The chorus of a song can be the initial focus for students, as students will hear the chorus sung many times during the playing of the song and can readily internalize the words and later, upon reflection, the main idea of the song; that is, the students should be assured that they do not have to understand every word of the song to understand the song.
6. Songs that the students want to listen to, want to understand.

**A few suggestions**

1. Recommend that your students listen to the soft rock radio stations (Magic 106.7, WJMX; Boston 105.7, WVBF). Especially at night, these stations play slow, romantic songs, the lyrics of which are easy to understand.
2. Ask students to bring in songs by their favorite recording stars and let them present the songs in class. Lively discussions may follow, such as the time one of my students (who usually spoke hesitantly in class) brought in an album by Guns and Roses, my least favorite group because of its flagrant abuse of women both in its song lyrics and on its album covers. However, my student defended Guns and Roses as a musical group and played us a romantic ballad the group had written; we as a class deciphered the words together. The students left class clutching the words as if they had a prize in their hands that they did not want to lose.
3. Be creative. Use songs in the classroom for fun, for listening, to introduce or reinforce grammatical structures, to discuss imagery and metaphor, to begin teaching poetry, to teach pronunciation, vocabulary, idioms, to initiate a cross-cultural discussion. Employ pre-vocabulary discussions; elicit students' knowledge of the subject before beginning—let them tell each other whatever they know about the artist or the piece of music, or the popular lore surrounding the artist or the music. For post-discussion or simply post-enjoyment: sing the song together, dance to the song. (Once, I feared for my job when a young man, upon hearing the voice of Michael Bolton, came out of another ESL class into my classroom and danced me up and down the hallowed halls of the conservatory!)

**A few technical recommendations**

1. Copy the song at least three times on the tape you will be using in the classroom so as to avoid wasting time searching for the song on the album.
2. Use the pause button (NOT the stop button) to avoid losing any of the song.
3. Play the music loudly, the way students like to hear it.

**Some benefits**

1. The idiomatic expressions which are often the titles of popular songs, as well as the clearly sung and oft-repeated first lines, can quickly and easily be mastered by the students.
2. The party atmosphere produced by popular music in the classroom lowers the students' affective filter, and lo and behold, students are so intent on understanding the words of the songs, they forget their anxieties.

After all is said and done, you and your students will have become closer and happier having shared an experience in English that was not simply another exercise, and you will have empowered your students by having given them an easy, fun way to improve their English every day—WITHOUT YOU!

*This article is based on a presentation given at the MATSOL '92 Spring Conference. Bethel Charkoudian teaches at the New England Conservatory, Bunker Hill Community College, and in the Boston Public Schools.*

---

# *Oral Storytelling* *Continued from page 1*

### Learning and storytelling

First we established a rapport between these two quite disparate classes with some basic getting-to-know-you activities and discussed various media, such as words, pictures, and music used to express stories. Then two students presented oral reports based on library research on the composer Rimsky-Korsakov and the Arabian folktale "Scheherezade." Once the students understood the story of Scheherezade, we played the actual music and asked them to decipher the voices of King Shahirar and Scheherezade. They were easily able to differentiate the roles based on the sounds of the instruments. Finally, we asked them to listen to the first story theme and guess what it was about. This presented the students with a problem they could not solve, but we were determined not to give them the answer. Only when, by accident, they drew lines to accompany the rhythm of the music, were they able to discern the movement of the high sea—the background of the first story.

**Our ESL classes had been asked to perform in front of a large segment of the school. But how? What could we do to motivate our ESL students to take a chance and participate willingly?**

The students then divided into cooperative learning groups of four, two from each class. A Vietnamese student who had been having repeated problems with the pronunciation of regular past tense verbs was assigned to read aloud the story "Sinbad the Sailor" (*Classic Fairy Tales*). After many practice sessions before school, during lunch, and after school, he succeeded in reading the first story told by Scheherezade. He stopped at three different points to do prediction activities. The reporters in each group compiled a list of possible outcomes on the blackboard and, as the story progressed, the students listened and decided which prediction, if any, was correct.

### Reading and presenting published stories

The next phase of the oral storytelling project involved using *Story Cards: The Tales of Nasreddin Hodja* (Prolingua Associates). The stories are graded for difficulty according to vocabulary and length. After perusing the stories spread out on the classroom floor, the students chose an appropriate one, looked up new words, practiced with a partner, and finally presented it to the class orally, without notes. Having discussed the basic components of oral presentations, such as pronunciation, eye contact, proper speed, gestures, and facial expressions, all students filled out an evaluation form including comments and peer grading.

### Discussing a video

The video of the original 1939 version of *The Wizard of Oz* was the catalyst for the two classes' participation in class discussions, paired work, and cooperative learning groups, using a variety of activities in the students' "Wizard packets." These included comprehension and true-false questions, predictions, sentence completions, cloze song exercises, quotation identifications, a crossword puzzle, and a summary.

### Writing their own stories

Finally, the students were assigned to write their own stories. Any kind was accepted—their own made-up story, a story told by someone else from their country, a story found in a book and retold, or a personal history. After partners read first drafts to each other for comments, we had a conference with each student to establish clarity and to discuss presentation of ideas. The final draft was typed on a word processor as part of the ESL computer class. Then the students practiced their stories and presented them to the class.

### Selecting the winners

Each class voted on the two best story presentations. In the high beginning class, the winners were the Vietnamese version of "Cinderella," "Cam and Tam," and a personal story about a Vietnamese beggar. In the intermediate class, a personal history by a Vietnamese senior and an Indian folktale won prizes. These four winners practiced at every free moment until they were finally ready to present at the Festival. Inner strength, self-control, and hours of practice overcame feelings of fear and panic and enabled our four ESL students to perform in front of 500 peers. At the conclusion of the Festival, the students in the two classes chose the "grand story teller," who was presented with a dictionary. In addition, all the students received a booklet of all their original oral stories.

At the conclusion of this lengthy project, we—the students and teachers—felt a tremendous feeling of satisfaction, both educationally and personally. Most importantly, the students became more sensitive to each others' cultures through their stories, and a powerful bond of camaraderie developed based on hours of practice and hard work.

*This article is based on a presentation given at the MATSOL '92 Spring Conference. Barbara Nealon and Brenda Sloane teach at Lowell High School.*

## *"Implications of Sausage"* *Continued from page 4*

Korean, *kkita*, needs a number of different wordings in English: *put in, put on, put together*. In this case, Korean sees a similarity where English sees a difference. Neither way of shaping the dough is right or wrong; each is arbitrary, although each serves the purposes of the given culture. Similarly, the way a culture defines intelligence is dependent on how that culture shapes the dough. Western-style schooling and "literacy" (our "higher order thinking" and "logical thought") are not necessarily "right" or even "intelligent" in the context of other cultures.

Professor Gee asked us to consider red wheelbarrows and white chickens (from a poem by William Carlos Williams), hammers and oranges, dollars and cents, *amo* and love, Popes and bachelors—and sausages. With each new example, he challenged our understanding of the meaning of a word, showing us various ways in which meaning is uncovered, discovered, and changed.

The idea of "sausage" was perhaps the most gruesome and yet paradoxically engaging example. Quoting from lawyer Patricia Williams' book *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*, Professor Gee examined the meaning of *sausage*. In her prosecution of a sausage manufacturer for selling impure products, Williams challenges the manufacturer's definition of *sausage* as "pig meat and lots of impurities." Williams asks whether everything that comes out the end of a sausage-making machine is sausage: If we "throw in a few small rodents of questionable pedigree and a teddy bear and a chicken," do we still produce sausage? Professor Gee asked, "What are the sources that authorize and legitimize the meaning of the word?" His answer: Meaning involves system, context, and negotiation—all of which are limited by community values. Meanings, then, are "ultimately rooted in communities. Meanings are, and are the basis of, *common*wealth." If there is little consensus around values, however, the danger exists that meaning will be determined by the "authority of raw power" (in this case, sausage manufacturers) rather than by consumers.

*Ruth Spack teaches at Tufts University.*

*[Editors' note*: A response to Professor Gee's talk can be found on page 16.]

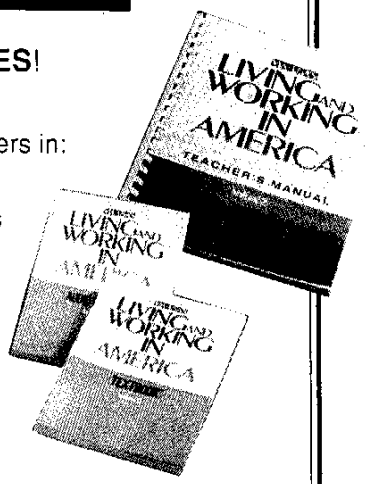

**Shatter** LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL BARRIERS!

LIVING AND WORKING IN AMERICA

ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES!

This 3-volume video/audio program for non-native speakers of English prepares learners in:

- ✔ effective verbal communication
- ✔ American business and social practices
- ✔ common management procedures
- ✔ understanding American values



Each volume includes:

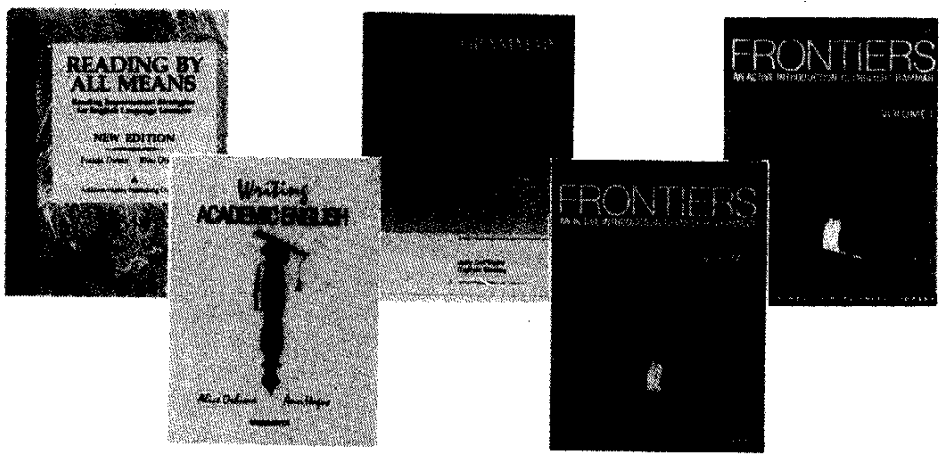
· VIDEO SCENES · AUDIO TAPES
· TEXTBOOK · TEACHER'S MANUAL

*Call today for a demo video!*

**VIA PRESS, INC.**
400 E. Evergreen Blvd., Suite 314 · Vancouver, WA 98660
TEL: (206) 696-0900; (800) 944-8421 · FAX: (206) 696-9604

# Making a World of Difference...

For more information, contact our Northeast ESL specialist:
**Madeline Franco-Defaria (201) 420-7036**




Addison-Wesley Longman
ESL Publishing Group

10 Bank Street, White Plains, NY 10606-1951
914-993-5000 • Fax 914-997-8115
To place order: **1-800-447-2226**

# 1991 MATSOL Travel Grant Reports

*In 1991, nine MATSOL members were awarded Travel Grants to attend TESOL '92 in Vancouver, B.C. As part of the grant package, each recipient was asked to write a report on the convention. Three of those reports are included in this issue of the Newsletter.*

## A Smorgasbord of Colloquia

*Judith (Jodi) Templer*

At the 1992 TESOL Convention, I found the longer all-morning or all-afternoon colloquia to be the most enlightening. I was able to hear several authors, researchers, and teachers talk on a single topic in the field of ESL, bringing me up to date on new methods and ideas. In addition to letting me catch up on new trends, it was exciting to finally see the faces of the authors of all those texts that I have enjoyed using over the years.

### Pronunciation

One colloquium, "Perspectives on Pronunciation Learning and Teaching," was chaired by Joan Morley and included teachers who pulled together several techniques for diagnosing and improving stress, intonation, melody, and rhythm in students' speech. Each speaker reiterated the notion that teaching pronunciation has long over-emphasized the teaching of segmental features (vowels and consonants) while often overlooking the suprasegmentals, which have the greatest effect on intelligibility. Judy Gilbert, the author of *Clear Speech*, wonderfully illustrated how stress and melody carry meaning—with the use of a kazoo.

### Content-based instruction

Another helpful colloquium, "Content-based Instruction: Procedures for Implementing an Adjunct Model," explored the topic of sheltered and adjunct ESL/content courses at the college level. As ESL students enter the mainstream college classes, more institutions are looking into sheltered or adjunct courses to smooth the transition. There seem to be many variations, ranging from a sheltered course in which the content subject matter is taught to a segregated ESL class to a full credit-bearing ESL course run in tandem with the mainstream content course where ESL students are integrated with native speakers. Many questions were raised, such as: What determines student readiness for such a course? What type of courses are best suited for the adjunct model? How much credit is given to the adjunct course? How will the ESL teacher and content instructor work together and how will their work loads change? Two models were offered for consideration. Donna Brinton, from the University of California at Los Angeles, explained the summer program at UCLA in which EFL students attend a six-week summer program to prepare for the fall college classes. Another model, presented by Melanie Reid from Capilano College in British Columbia, linked English Composition and ESL Writing in response to the growing number of immigrants who were having trouble passing the English department's composition requirement. Clearly, each institution needs to examine its own needs and goals in order to design a model best suited to its population.

### The language laboratory

Two additional workshops brought me into the computer age of CAI or CALL and video in the language laboratory: "Newcomers' Orientation to Computer-Assisted Language Learning" and "Language Labs in the '90s: Issues and Options." Here I witnessed firsthand the "techie" zeal of the CALL Interest Section. After an introduction by Claire Bradin from the University of Colorado, who explained the benefits of computer-assisted learning, workshop participants were able to try out different programs on IBMs, Amigas, Macs, and Apples scattered around the room. Since my college has just purchased an elaborate language lab, these workshops helped me realize that in order to be useful, a lab must be thoughtfully integrated into the ESL curriculum and not left as a fancy extra only for recreational purposes. Many speakers warned of expensive equipment sitting idle and going to waste because budget funding had not been allocated for teacher training, appropriate curriculum development, or a lab technician position.

### The writing classroom

The last colloquium I attended, "In the Writing Classroom: An Interactive Colloquium," was a lively session in which MATSOL's own Vivian Zamel joined Ann Raimes and others in a discussion of how teachers battle various types of constraints in academic writing in a college setting. At issue were personal voice versus formulaic responses in compositions, consumption of knowledge as opposed to construction of knowledge, and portfolio evaluations versus single-essay exams. It was truly an interactive colloquium, as questions and comments were taken from the audience. Despite the serious questions discussed, the atmosphere re-

*Continued on page 10*

## *Travel Grant Reports* *Continued from page 9*

mained light and at times humorous. The most interesting contribution was Bob Land's (University of California at Irvine) presentation, in which he shared a survey he had conducted of his college faculty's conception of what constitutes good writing. ESL teachers, teaching assistants, general faculty, and English department composition teachers were asked to rank good writing in terms of grammatical and semantic correctness, expressive view, representation of reality, and effective use of rhetoric. Land found that while ESL teachers listed correctness as being the most important feature of good writing, teaching assistants considered expression of ideas most important, the general faculty considered reporting the facts most essential, and composition teachers valued the use of rhetoric. In addition, each department had its own criteria for evaluating writing, which of course makes the ESL teacher's job of preparing students for college writing that much more complicated.

After these morning and afternoon colloquia, I managed to attend many shorter sessions, browse the publishers' exhibits, view the hundreds of posters, and listen to a few of the plenary speakers. There was such an enormous variety of choices, as I look back over the conference book, I realize I could easily have filled another two weeks with equally stimulating events! I was happy to have been able to participate with the help of a MATSOL Travel Grant and look forward to future opportunities.

*Jodi Templer teaches at Northern Essex Community College.*

---

## TESOL MS-DOS CDTV CD-ROM CD-I DTP CDDA LCD PAL ISDN CIF FSFM DMA: Multimedia Technology in Language Learning

*Veronica McCormack*

I would like to thank MATSOL for the encouragement and support given me through a generous Travel Grant to TESOL '92 in Vancouver. While at the convention, I decided to focus on the applications of technology in language learning. My motive was to better understand the potential of the multimedia language learning lab (Tandberg system with IBM computers) recently installed at Roxbury Community College. Multimedia combines a host of communications elements—still and moving pictures, sound, text, and graphics. Each of these elements has its own language which is still foreign to many of us. Based on numerous presentations, publishers' exhibits, and the CALL Hospitality Lab, the following is a tour through the world of multimedia.

*Compact Disc Digital Audio (CD DA)* is known better as CD and has largely supplanted the vinyl record and tape format; used only for music.

*Compact Disc + Graphics (CD+G)* is a CD with visual information that can be displayed on a TV screen when connected to a CD player that has the CD+G feature. It allows you, for example, to hear a song, view the lyrics, see a picture of the musician, and read a musician's biography.

*Compact Disc-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM)* is the compact disc format for storing large quantities of digital data in various forms. You have to have a computer and a CD-ROM drive to play it, but stand-alone versions are on the way.

*Compact Disc-Interactive (CD-I).* The "Imagination Machine" (Phillips) is a multimedia platform for containing and combining text, still and moving pictures, and sound on one disk with up to 72 minutes of full-screen full-motion (FSFM).

*Compact Disc-Read Only Memory Extended Architecture (CD-ROM XA)* is the "bridge" between CD-ROM and CD-I; it puts images, graphics, and sounds on a CD-ROM disc and allows for synchronizing a text display with an audio output. CD-ROM XA added to a PC with a Video Graphics Adaptor (VGA) and a CD-ROM drive can convert a PC into a multimedia system ("fairly cheaply" they say!).

*Commodore Dynamic Total Vision (CDTV)* is an Amiga 500 computer and CD-ROM drive rolled into a box that resembles a video cassette recorder (VCR) and plugs into a TV set. A CDTV disc can store text (up to 250,000 pages), speech quality sound (up to 14 hours), graphics, and quarter-screen motion video (digitized). In a California high school, social studies students are using this system to write the course text. (I believe this is also known as Desktop Video).

*Computer Interface (CIF)* is the network system that enables the transfer to and collection of data from all or individual student computers.

*Laser Barcode.* Pioneer is marketing a software package for laser disc players called "LD Bar'n Coder." The user can select frames from the video and then program and print a barcode. A laser remote controller and the barcode allow you to instantly retrieve the desired frame. Publishers are now providing barcodes to accompany existing texts.

*Liquid Crystal Display Projector (LCD)* is an overhead projector which, when linked with a computer, allows you to focus attention on some aspect of writing or grammar in a whole class activity.

*Modems* are devices that connect the individual computer, via a telephone line, to educational networks around the country and by satellite around the world. Lessons can be planned that allow the students to tap into the many communicative exchanges now available over phone lines.

*Video Digitizers* capture images from a video camera or VCR and convert them to numbers that the computer uses to draw pictures for desktop publishing, desktop video, slide shows, or databases.

*Continued on page 11*

## *Travel Grant Reports* *Continued from page 10*

*Desktop Publishing Software* gives the user the ability to wordprocess and edit, to format into columns, to create graphics, or pull them in from related programs—giving the appearance of almost professional typesetting.

The bad news is the incompatibility of format. A CDTV player can't play a CD-I disc; a CD-I unit can't read a CDTV title, for example.

The good news is that Motion Picture Experts Group (MPEG) is currently establishing an international standard. This will enable developers to produce video for use across multimedia delivery platforms. The goal is multimedia—multiplatform, multilingual, multicultural.

*Veronica McCormack teaches at Roxbury Community College and Harvard University Summer School.*

### Global Issues in ESL

*Janet Kaplan*

I feel very fortunate to have received a MATSOL Travel Grant to attend this year's TESOL convention in Vancouver; it was just what I needed. I was beginning to develop the four-year "itch"; however, a full-blown case was prevented by some wonderfully creative and productive sessions at TESOL and a few brisk walks around a beautiful west-coast city.

The most valuable workshops I attended were those concerning global issues in ESL. One was a half-day pre-symposium session entitled "Peace Education: A Human Rights Perspective," presented by Jan Peterson and Lorna Gentry. The morning was devoted to exploring some materials and approaches. One tool I was impressed with was an artistic Amnesty International video demonstrating the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Because it is animated and has very few words, I look forward to using it even with my lower level students.

The presenters provided much information on Amnesty International and ways to incorporate letter-writing and case studies into the ESL classroom. In addition, they made available to the participants bundles of materials they had received from Amnesty, as well as from the United Nations and other organizations.

An added bonus in this session was the opportunity to meet other teachers with global interests. One such person was Kip Cates, from Tottori University in Japan, who has started The Global Issues in Language Education Network. Because the world is getting smaller and more interdependent, Kip and many others feel there is a need for our students to think of themselves as world citizens. Global education, therefore, includes teaching about world problems, providing some tools and skills to solve them, and suggesting attitudes and actions which may help to better the world.

The following list is part of a brainstorm participants produced when asked what global education entailed: war rhetoric ("scuds" vs. "patriots"), the environment, materialism, Japan-bashing, and nationalism (problems); conflict-resolution, critical thinking, cooperative problem solving (skills); multiculturalism, empathy, and religious tolerance (attitudes/actions). As ESL teachers, we have the perfect opportunity to work toward peaceful cooperation and intercultural understanding.

As a result of the pre-symposium, other sessions, and "networking," I came back to Boston with new ideas for topics, a new perspective on my teaching, and a better understanding of the breadth of the profession. I thank MATSOL (as well as Showa) for helping me attend this conference and continue my professional development.

*Janet Kaplan teaches at Showa Women's Institute.*

## *Congratulations to...*

**Margaret Hawkins**
University of Massachusetts/Amherst,
who received an
Albert H. Marckwardt
Travel Grant
to the TESOL '92 Convention.

# Employment Issues Committee: Update

*Karl Smith*

This column, which usually lets the general membership know what is happening with the Employment Issues Committee (EIC), will be a little different today. There will be two parts: the first part will be strictly business; the second part I guarantee will provide you with some thrills and chills. Stick with me through the business part, and I promise the thrills and chills will come later.

As we enter the fall term, many of you may reflect back on the previous school year to see what you did as a teacher and reflect on your successes. We in the EIC are doing the same.

### Legal Support

The EIC has gradually developed into two entities. We have, on one hand, the Legal Support Fund Sub-Committee which you can call on to get help in case of a pressing legal issue concerning your employer (see page 13). If you have a problem with an employer and you want to talk to a lawyer, simply contact any member of the Legal Support Sub-Committee.

### Standards

A second sub-committee has concerned itself primarily with the development of professional standards and with the dissemination of information concerning unions at MATSOL conferences. In April we finalized standards for higher education and adult education, and we will present them to the MATSOL Executive Board.

Needless to say, we hope the standards will be adopted and eventually implemented. By implementation, we mean that the standards could be applied to make your present or future employer aware that ESL teachers are trained professionals that deserve a certain amount of pay and respect. Also we hope the standards can provide a guideline the next time you try to assess a potential employer in ESL.

### ESL Outrages

I think this last point provides a fairly smooth transition to the thrills and chills alluded to earlier. I plan to devote part of this column to something I call "ESL Outrages." I want to put in print some of the abuses and outrageous work conditions foisted upon us by some of our employers. The stories will be real and reflect the problems we face at our workplaces. Sometimes I think too many people in our profession are complacent and don't see how issues brought up by the EIC concern them. But through ESL Outrages I hope people will see that work conditions are horrid for many of us and that there is a need to demand quality and respect from our employers.

My point is not to embarrass my fellow employees or any institutions; therefore, names of schools, institutions and teachers will be left out.

A large private institution had to cut costs and announced that it would be forced to lay off personnel in several departments. Two teachers in the ESL department were among those laid off. In lieu of their full-time positions, the teachers were offered teaching positions in the same department teaching the same students, the same number of contact hours and the same responsibilities, but they were now called "part-timers." Essentially, they were given the opportunity to do the same work for less pay and no benefits. The teachers were told that they should consider themselves lucky since laid off personnel from other departments didn't have the option to continue working "part-time."

**Essentially, they [the ESL teachers] were given the opportunity to do the same work for less pay and no benefits.**

An ESL teacher was offered a teaching job in a summer program at a local institution. Contracts were signed and agreements made. A week or so later an administrator found out the summer enrollment was not what was originally expected, so the teacher was told that there was no need for his services and that he should forget working there despite the contract. (To be fair, at press time the institution may have resolved the issue with the teacher.)

A high-level administrator was asked to meet with some of the ESL teachers at an institution of higher education in greater Boston. The teachers wanted to discuss certain concerns and proposals they had for their ESL program. The administrator said he understood their concerns. The basis of his sympathy: the administrator's young son had travelled in Asia and had made money playing music on the street and teaching English. Therefore, this administrator thought he knew something about the ESL profession, and he implied that any native speaker could teach English. This administrator has had no further contact with the teachers of the ESL department.

I hope you will take the opportunity to send me your anecdotes for ESL Outrages. I have heard of lots of incidents and it's time to share them in our best forum: the *MATSOL Newsletter*. If you would like to contribute to ESL Outrages contact me, Karl Smith, at 30 Worthington St., Apt. #3, Boston, MA 02120, or call me at (617) 734-8587. You can also find out the time and place of our next EIC meeting and speak with me there.

# MATSOL Legal Support Fund

## Application Procedure

### Description

The MATSOL Executive Board has approved an Employment Issues Committee (EIC) proposal to provide a legal support fund to be used exclusively by MATSOL members who are involved in legal disputes with their employers.

The purpose of the Fund is to enable MATSOL members to consult a lawyer in order to determine if their problem with their employer is actionable.

### Procedure

The applicant contacts an EIC member (see list below) who then forwards a one-page application form to be completed by the applicant and arranges a committee meeting with the applicant. A quorum of three members constitutes the committee for the purposes of this process.

Using the completed application form, the committee interviews the applicant to determine the following:

- a brief description of the situation requiring legal assistance;
- a brief history of the applicant's relationship with the institution.

The committee then asks:

- if the applicant has discussed the issue with the employer;
- if the applicant belongs to any other professional organizations that might provide assistance;
- what the desired outcome is.

After the interview with the applicant, the committee discusses the issue and decides whether or not the applicant should receive the legal funds; a total of $1,000 has been allocated, and it is estimated that this might assist four to five applicants.

### Confidentiality

The identity of the applicant will be known only by the members of the EIC and the MATSOL President and Treasurer.

### Referral list

The EIC has contacted several law firms that have labor lawyers who are committed to employees' issues. Their rates range from free (for unemployed or low paid teachers) to anywhere from $90 to $165 an hour. The EIC urges anyone with a grievance to use free consultation to see if the case is actionable, but it may take up to three "billable" hours to make such a determination.

The MATSOL Legal Support Fund is intended to be used for at least a part of this initial consultation. The applicant may have to pay legal fees after the initial consultation. If you are interested in contacting one of the labor lawyers directly, you can obtain names and numbers from any EIC member.

---

**Employment Issues Committee (EIC) Members**

David Coltin (617) 720-2603 • Susan Donio (617) 734-8587
Margo Downey (617) 296-8348 • Agnes Farkas (617) 964-0464
Rebecca Pomerantz (617) 265-7479 • Karl Smith (617) 232-8664
Fred Turner (617) 787-0183

## Need More Information About MATSOL? Want to Volunteer?

### Just Call (617) . . .

**New Initiatives, General Information:** Robby Steinberg, MATSOL President, 232-9022
**Employment Issues:** Karl Smith, 734-8587, Rebecca Pomerantz, 265-7479
**Teacher Research:** Kathy Riley, 524-4224
**Low-Incidence:** Linda Schulman, 237-1763
**Job Bank:** Amy Worth, 969-2437
**Spring Conference 1993:** Marlyn Katz Levenson, 277-9604
**Newsletter:** Suzanne Koons, 225-2788
**Nominating:** Kathy Riley, 524-4224

*MATSOL Newsletter*

# Guide for Book Reviewers

*Ruth Spack*

The *MATSOL Newsletter* invites reviews of recently published books that are related to the teaching of English. Such reviews can help MATSOL members find useful materials and discover ideas for their own classrooms or language programs. We are especially interested in relatively new textbooks (published since 1989) and in thought-provoking texts relevant to language teaching or learning.

You may follow these suggestions for "Shaping a Book Review," but they are not meant to impose a rigid format on your writing.

**Shaping a book review**

1. At the top of the review, please include: Title. Author. Date of publication. Publisher. Number of pages. Ancillary materials (e.g., instructor's manual, student workbooks, tapes). ISBN number.
2. The following suggestions divide the review into four parts, but you do not have to follow this order or to include every item listed. You may want to include items not listed here.

*First part:*

- Provide background information that helps place the book in context (e.g., the general area the book addresses; other books that address this general area; and/or earlier books by the same author).
- Describe the book by genre (e.g., textbook; instructor's guide; research study; anthology; autobiography).
- Define the intended audience (e.g., intermediate level ESL students; ESL or EFL teachers; program administrators; general readers).
- Restate the book's goal (usually stated in Preface) and/or explain the author's ideology or vision.
- Provide an overall evaluation (your general reaction).

*Second part:*

- Summarize the contents of the book, providing specific examples.
- Discuss the book's strengths.
- Discuss the book's weaknesses.

*Third part* (select among the following):

- Discuss how well the book has achieved its goal.
- Examine the possibilities suggested by the book.
- Argue with specific points.
- Discuss ideas or issues the book has ignored.
- Explore a personal teaching or learning experience related to the subject matter of the book.

*Final part:*

- Tie together the issues raised in the review.
- Make a final statement of evaluation.

Please send completed reviews (350 to 1,000 words) to:

Suzanne Koons
60 Wadsworth Street #20E
Cambridge, MA 02142


**NOTE TO ADVERTISERS**

**For rates and information, contact:**

**Susan Donio**
**30 Worthington Street #3**
**Boston, MA 02120**
**(617) 734-8587**



**Save The Date!**

**MATSOL WINTER SOCIAL**

Friday, February 5, 1993

4-8 p.m.

Ticknor Lounge, Boylston Hall

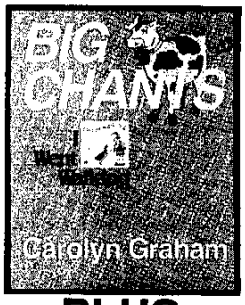
Harvard University

# BIG NEWS

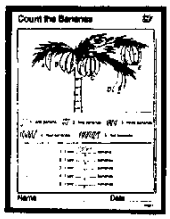
## FROM HBJ•ESL FOR K-6

# BIG CHANTS™

**The BIG CHANTS PACKAGE: I WENT WALKING is a stand-alone language acquisition package to make Big Books more accessible to LEP students and develop their love of language and literature.**




**PLUS**




**Communicative, multi-level, delightful, picture-based activities**

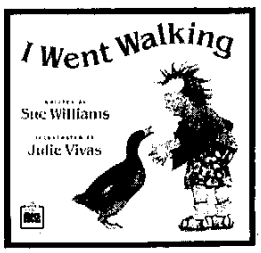
**PLUS**

**Step-by-step suggestions for using Big Books and all the components in the package**

**PLUS**

**A dynamic, lively audio cassette of chants recorded by Ms. Graham and a group of young children**

**TO extend, expand and enhance the language presented in the companion Big Book, I WENT WALKING**




HBJ•ESL

Orlando, Florida 32887
Phone: 1-800-7-HBJ-ESL • Fax: 407-352-3395

BIG CHANTS is a trademark of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

# A Response to James Paul Gee's Plenary Address at the MATSOL '92 Spring Conference

*Kevin King*

Gee's talk, "The Implications of Sausage for the Teaching of English," was insightful and intelligent. He is dealing with how words mean and with the meaning of meaning. The overall thesis of his work in progress — from which the talk was taken — is that words "mean" through *systems* (what is a dollar outside of a monetary system?), *context*, *negotiation*, and *takes on the world*. The ideas of "system" and "negotiation" are very similar to Hilary Putnam's notion of "the division of linguistic labor." And Gee rightly points out that many people get "marginalized" in the process. Here, as in previous work, Gee draws attention to the political dimension of linguistic processes.

On the issue of *negotiating meaning*, we were taken on an excursion of humorous examples: 1) a dialogue on "relationships" [how did we survive without this word?]; 2) African farmers "flunking" a standard analogy involving farm tools, since in their culture "shovel" is inseparable from "sand"; 3) Patricia Williams' "sausage" controversy.

The last of these is most intriguing. The question is, briefly, whether or not whatever comes out of a sausage machine is of necessity *sausage*. If we throw in a teddy bear, is what comes out still sausage?

The point that Williams raises — "participation in the creation of reality" — harkens back to Nietzsche's contention of a hundred years ago that there are no facts but only interpretations. Although well-trod, this terrain is fascinating, and Gee's explication of it is cogent, but some aspects of it are troublesome: to wit, the Thomistic tone of Gee's refrain that "there is the dough (of reality), then there is the interpretation, or shaping, of the dough; there is sausage, and there is the meaning of sausage; there is thinking, and what thinking is going to mean."

But for words of a seemingly high level of abstraction, like "bachelor," the difficulty of imagining what a bachelor *is* behind the contingent social attribution of meaning is readily apparent.

And where is this primordial dough? How do we know it apart from attributing meaning to it? Although Gee claims that the *meaning* of words is negotiable, there is some *is* which precedes *meaning*. This is a hard ball of dough to swallow. When queried on what sorts of things might exist in some sense prior to their socially derived meanings, Gee responded that the human soul was one. But once God enters the picture, *Mama, butta la pasta*. We can go home, intellectually speaking. The table is set. The Fat Lady is warming up. Red has lit his cigar.

If we admit "soul," where do we stop? How about angels? How about a knish? Having watched PBS recently, we all know that "love" does not exist in some languages, i.e., the love train don't stop there; and the *soul* train don't stop here. In retrospect, Gee's answer to my query should have been "everything." Once the floodgates open, how are we to be selective? Bachelors, unicorns, sausages, and relationships follow — especially our relationships to words.

Lastly, we have the notion of "takes on the world." These are "images or models of simplified worlds." This is remarkably similar to Putnam's notion of "stereotypes."

Gallons of ink have been spilled over the word "bachelor", an archetype in the debate over analycity, which was at full steam in the '60s and which you will be spared. At any rate, Gee uses the word to explain his notion of *takes*. "A bachelor is an unmarried man" — so the song goes. Now is the Pope a bachelor? No, says Gee, who is in respected company on this. Gee points out that the idea violates our consensual "take on the world." But I can't help wondering why we should get all lathered up about this. Should we be surprised that the Pope is *not* a bachelor? Categorical (A) propositions are not convertible: e.g., "All cats are mammals" does not imply that all mammals are cats. Similarly, "All bachelors are unmarried men" does not imply that all unmarried men are bachelors. So the fact that the Pope is unmarried yet not a bachelor does not violate logical principles, which are paramount in our takes on the world.

**Here, as in previous work, Gee draws attention to the political dimension of linguistic processes.**

This last observation is just a Sunday's musing, and I am sure that Gee has more to say on the significance of "takes," and I hope that we will hear it in a future talk.

*Kevin King teaches in the graduate ESL program at Brandeis University and at Harvard University Extension.*

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK

to former MATSOLer *Cheryl Rivkin* who, following her recent marriage, will move to Chicago.

# Let's Talk About Sex

# Salt 'n Pepa

*In response to and support of the TESOL Resolution for AIDS Education, adopted on March 5, 1992, the song below is submitted for classroom use. "Let's Talk About Sex" is available as a single cassette.* ***Transcribed and submitted by Veronica McCormack.***

**Be it resolved by the legislative assembly of TESOL that** 1) TESOL promote AIDS prevention instruction aimed at ESOL students, their parents, and other adolescents and adults, particularly in communities with high concentrations of people with AIDS; 2) TESOL promote the integration of this instruction into the ESOL curriculum; and 3) TESOL collaborate with other organizations and agencies to advance these goals.

Let's talk about sex, baby
Let's talk about you and me
Let's talk about all the good things
And the bad things that may be
Let's talk about sex

Yeah, let's talk about AIDS
Go on!
To the unconcerned and uninformed
If you think you can't get it, you're wrong
Don't dismiss this or blacklist the topic
'Cause that ain't gonna stop it

Now if you go about it right
You just might save your life
Don't be uptight
Come join the fight

We'll tell you how you can get it
And how you won't
All of the do's and all of the don't's

I got some news for you so listen, please
It's not a black, white or gay disease

Are you ready, pet?
Yeah, I'm set
All right, then come on, Pet

So if you do come up HIV positive or have AIDS
We just want you to know there are treatments
The earlier detected, the better off you'll be
Now you get checked
Every year, gee!

You don't get AIDS from kissing and touching
Mosquito bites, hugging, or telephones
You get it from sex or a dirty drug needle
Anal or oral, now people

Women can give it to men and men mostly to women
The facts are simple, right and exact
Once you get it there's no turning back for you

There ain't a cure
So you gotta be sure
Protect yourself or don't have sex anymore

Mothers might give it to their babies through the womb
or through birth, don't be an ass and assume

AIDS ain't got no smell or taste
It don't care about your race
You see a nice kind face, you think you're safe
I'm sorry, that's just not the case

There's no debate, conversate with your mate
Don't wait until it's too late
Take it easy

Let's talk about sex, baby
Let's talk about you and me
Let's talk about all the good things
And the bad things that may be
Let's talk about sex

Ladies, all the ladies, louder now, help me out
Come on all the ladies
Let's practice safe sex

You know what else will stop the spread of AIDS?
If everybody would stop cheating and messing around
And just stay with one person
And wear condoms

Let's talk about sex, baby
Let's talk about you and me
Let's talk about all the good things
And the bad things that may be
Let's talk about sex

# Making Mini-Movies: A Sure Way to Student Involvement!

*Lynn Bonesteel*

Are you looking for a project that will motivate your students to be totally involved in your class? Does a project that requires your students to interact with each other both orally and in writing, and which encourages them to be accurate in their work, appeal to you? Do you have access to a video camera, a TV monitor, and a room to videotape in?

If you answered *yes* to the questions above, you should try making mini-movies with your class. Even if you've never touched a video camera before (I hadn't the first time I attempted this project), I assure you that with good organizational skills you can pull this off. The list of steps might look a bit daunting at first, and the project does require an energetic teacher, but if you set it up carefully, the students will do much of the work. You provide the organizational framework for the project, your students will provide the creativity, and the project itself will provide the motivation. I guarantee that both you and your students will be delighted with the results.

Before you get started, however, here are a couple of cautionary notes:

1) It's preferable not to attempt this project at the very beginning of the semester. Wait until your class has developed some rapport and group identity.
2) It's preferable to attempt the project with a class that has an average to above-average sense of responsibility and rapport. The project will strengthen and enhance but not necessarily create rapport.
3) At the beginning of the project, it's best to give the students a typed, weekly production schedule with clearly outlined goals and time limits for both in-class and out-of-class work. Then make sure that they stay on schedule!

### Basic steps to follow

**Time required:** approximately 15-20 hours of class time, plus homework. I usually spread the project over a period of three weeks, devoting about 5 hours a week to it.

**Movie length:** 5-15 minutes.

**Step 1: Formation of groups.** There are two ways to go about this.

A) The whole class makes one movie.
*Pros*: Lots of people to shoulder the work
*Cons*: No element of surprise; it's possible for some students to do relatively little work
B) Two to three groups — each group makes its own movie.
*Pros*: Element of surprise because the movies are kept a secret until the final viewing; smaller groups mean each student must participate more actively
*Cons:* Requires more organization; riskier because responsibility is spread among fewer people

**Step 2: Development of basic plot** (approximately 2 hours of class time). Students often have difficulty beginning the script. I have experimented with two ways of getting them started.

A) *Using functional language.* Over the first half of the semester, I teach functional language (apologies, leavetaking, etc.). When it comes time to make the movies, I ask students to select a genre (horror, comedy, etc.). Then I tell them to use a certain number of the functions in their movies, in whatever order they wish.
B) *Drama improvisation.* After explaining the general idea of the movie project, I write four categories on the blackboard: **Characters, Places, Objects,** and **Emotions.** The students brainstorm and when they have at least ten items for each category, a secretary in the class writes them down. Then, I number the items in each category and have each movie group come up to my desk and choose, at random, a number from one to ten for each category. The corresponding items for each category become the raw material that group will have to work with for their movie. I tell them that they will have to incorporate all of it into their movie somehow, in a way that makes sense.

Once each group has the raw material for its movie by using method A or B above, the students then do a couple of brainstorming sessions to put together a rough plot synopsis. Then everyone in the group goes home, writes a synopsis, and during the next session the best one is chosen and handed in to me, and I check it for feasibility and logic. I give a copy of the final synopsis to each group member.

**Step 3: Choice of director and assignment of roles** (approximately 30 minutes). The group elects a director whose duties include general organizing, keeping everyone on schedule, leading rehearsals, communicating with me, and possibly having a speaking role as well.

**Step 4: Script writing** (approximately 4 hours of class time, spread out over several classes, and approximately 2 hours of homework). This is perhaps the most difficult part

*Continued on page 19*

## *Making Mini-Movies* *Continued from page 18*

of the project. First, the director assigns a piece of the synopsis (usually one scene) to each person in the group to write out at home. Students then photo copy their pieces of the script and in class they read each other's scenes, make any necessary changes, and check transitions from scene to scene. The edited script is then handed in to me for correction. After all corrections have been made, the final script is typed by someone in the group, and I make a copy for each person in the group.

**Step 5: Rehearsal** (approximately 3 hours of class time, plus a variable number of rehearsals out of class, without the teacher). When I have more than one group, I use two or more adjacent classrooms since students need to spread out and make some noise. During rehearsals, I circulate and serve as a language resource but do not lead the rehearsal. If the students make an audio tape of a rehearsal, I can listen in order to give them feedback on pronunciation.

**Step 6: Prop, scenery, and costume preparation** (approximately 30 minutes of planning time in class. All other work is done outside of class). I make up a form that students can fill in for each scene, on which they write down what is needed for each scene and who is responsible for bringing or making it. This **must** be written down, or it will be forgotten.

**Step 7: Practice videotaping and subsequent script revision** (approximately 3 hours of class time, depending on how many groups you have). About one week before the final taping is scheduled, the class does a practice run. I tape as much as I can but leave time for playback since the purpose of the practice session is for the students to get feedback on how they look and sound on camera. During this time, I iron out any camera problems, visualize how each scene will be shot, correct any pronunciation difficulties, and get the students used to turning their bodies toward the camera and speaking clearly. I either do the actual camera work myself (it's very easy to learn the basics) or have an interested student do it.

**Step 8: Continued rehearsals and preparation** (done mostly out of class, without the teacher present). After the practice taping, students have a clearer idea of problematic moments in their movies and have a chance to fix them.

**Step 9: Final taping** (about 2 hours for each 20 minutes of actual video time). I make sure everyone knows what he/she is to bring to the taping. In the taping room, I block the floor with masking tape so that the actors know that if they cross the tape, they're off camera. I try to do only one take per scene and impress upon the students that the video need not (and will not!) be perfect.

**Step 10: Video viewing and presentation of awards.** We've done it! We've actually made a movie! The showing of the video is an event and we enjoy the fruits of our labor! We have a party, vote on best actor, and give a prize to the winner.

*This article is based on a presentation given at the MATSOL '92 Spring Conference. Lynn Bonesteel teaches at the Center for English Language and Orientation Programs at Boston University. She wishes to thank Margo Miller, Shelley Fishman, and Carol Piñeiro, and all of CELOP, for sharing some of the ideas contained in this article.*

## MATSOL JOB BANK

The MATSOL Job Bank serves as a clearinghouse for directors of ESL and Bilingual programs who are seeking professional staff and for MATSOL members who are looking for full-time or part-time employment.

Directors looking for staff may send or call in pertinent information to the Job Bank Coordinator.

MATSOL members who are looking for jobs can send six self-addressed stamped envelopes to the Job Bank Coordinator to receive monthly listings of current job openings.

MATSOL members who wish to be considered for Job Bank openings (including last minute and substitute openings) may send a resumé to the Coordinator indicating at what times they are available and what type of assignment interests them. Directors who need staff immediately will be given the names and phone numbers of individuals who are available.

For further information about the Job Bank, write or call the Job Bank Coordinator: Amy Worth, 31 Fox Hill Road, Newton Centre, MA 02159. (617) 969-2437.

# Group Problems

*Stephen Sadow*

These small group activities are appropriate for intermediate-level students. In each case, allow about twenty-five minutes for the entire activity.

Present the problem as dramatically as you can. During the discussion period, you may want to act as a "walking dictionary." If the students in a group seem to be having difficulty, you may want to give a suggestion or two, but you should not join the discussion. When the groups have completed their deliberations, the secretaries report to the entire class. Correct only those errors that interfere with communication. (Bring an old and ambiguous object such as a strange figurine or part of an old tool. If you can't find an object, a drawing or photo will do.)

**An ancient problem**

The Museum of Antiquities of this city has just received a mysterious package. It obviously came from very far away; it probably was sent by one of the many archeologists or explorers who are taking part in the various research projects sponsored by the museum. However, the label is completely illegible. When the package was opened, the artifact (pictured here) was found.

Divide up into groups of four to six experts. Choose a secretary to take notes. Later, you will have a chance to explain the objects to your classmates.

**Guide for the perplexed**

The managers of Studentlife, Inc., a company that produces pens, writing paper, erasers, and other things used by students, has decided to enter another type of business. It intends to put together a catalogue filled with "perfect gifts for students." Knowing that students, in general, have little money to spend, the executives are not planning to send the catalogues to them but rather to their relatives (including any rich uncles they may have) and to other acquaintances who have the tendency to be generous and who have the money to be so.

However, a problem exists. Studentlife, Inc. has always sold the same products. Its managers do not know anything at all about the taste and preferences of today's students. Neither are they familiar with the products and services which interest young people. Therefore, Studentlife, Inc. is asking that you, experts in what students like, make up a list of what ought to be included in the catalogue. They would like to offer a mix of expensive and inexpensive things. They prefer unusual things. It is important that the pages of the catalogue be filled with unforgettable gifts.

Divide into groups of four to six experts. Choose a secretary. Compose a list of articles and services to be included in the catalogue. They can come from many sources. Then choose your favorites so that Studentlife, Inc. can highlight them. Later, you will have the opportunity to describe the catalogue to your classmates.

*Stephen Sadow teaches in the Department of Modern Languages at Northeastern University.*

TEACHERS' TOUR OF RUSSIA

Sponsored by the Organization for American Soviet Exchanges, Inc. (OASES) *

April 15-26, 1993
$2195.00

• Visit Moscow, Suzdal, and St. Petersburg
• Meet Russian teachers and their students

**For more information contact**
Cynthia Dickstein
324D Harvard St.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 864-7717

* OASES is a private, non-profit organization.

SAVE THE DATE!

*MATSOL*
FALL CONFERENCE

October 31, 1992

Bentley College
Waltham

# Borrowers and Lenders

*Robert Saitz*

Adjectives are both borrowers and lenders. They borrow their existence primarily from nouns and verbs: even such common adjectives as *happy*, from Old Norse *happ*, meaning "luck" (hence *haphazard* and *hapless*) and *old* from Indo-European *al*, meaning to grow or nourish (too much of it and there you are). They lend themselves primarily to the adverb class, as in *careful* and *carefully*, but of course they take advantage of the English penchant for multiple use and turn up as nouns (*The homeless*) and verbs (*Pretty it up*).

Of special interest are the adjective forms which look like adjectives but are constrained syntactically and carry adverbial meanings. Two of these are the non-inherent adjectives and the intensives. The non-inherents are often described as adjectives that do not characterize the noun directly; they also usually have inherent counterparts. Thus in *an old friend* the adjective *old* does not refer to an inherent advanced age in the friend but to a period of time passed. In *She is a hard worker*, the adjective *hard* refers to the manner in which she works, not an inherent problem of calcification. Sometimes the existence of the same form for both inherent and non-inherent may lead to ambiguity: *Nancy's a beautiful skater*. The intensives are forms like *real, perfect, sheer, big, utter*. These too are forms that seem abstracts of phrases, often adverbial. In *He's a real dope*, real seems derived from the disjunct *really* (as *true* from *truly* in *She's a true genius*). In *My iguana's a big eater, big* suggests "in large quantities." For *utter* we know its origin in out-er, "farther out." Thus in *his utter stupidity* his stupidity reaches way out, or as some still say, "far out." Characteristic of both the non-inherents and the intensives is that they occur as attributives, not predicatives. When these forms do occur in the predicate, they assume their normal meanings: *My iguana is big*. We should note that the English use of the non-inherent and intensive meanings for common adjective forms can create cross-language confusions. In English we may say "I have a new baby brother" (non-inherent, "recently arrived") and that triggers a new as opposed to old association in the mind of the non-English speaker who wonders what kind of a society he or she has blundered into where one can acquire a baby that hasn't been used yet; are the used ones any cheaper?

A particularly rich source of adjectives are the participle forms of verbs. Words like *interested* and *surprised* retain their participle form yet function like full adjectives — occur in attributive and predicative positions, take *very* and may be compared. We're often not aware of their origins, for many of them, when they occur in the attributive position, lose their participle marker, especially if there is an existing noun or verb with a similar form. We have *a cube steak, skim milk, the combine team championship, a reserve parking ticket, advance placement*, etc. Our lack of awareness of relationships may be epitomized by a sign in the window of a local restaurant advertising its FRY DOE (not a meat product).

Other adjective forms that do not seem to be acting normally are those that appear to be crossing into adverb-land. The adjective-adverb border has been monitored by traditional grammarians who are especially sensitive to words without an -ly suffix filling an adverbial slot. A major bane of such monitors concerns words that carry a meaning of "manner" after a dynamic verb as in *He buys books cheap*. We have learned in school that an adverb goes in that final slot and that the adverb form of *cheap* is *cheaply* so that usage is non-U and will usually draw a negative reaction. We have to note that in popular language we are seeing more and more public examples of it: The official warning sign for underground construction, with red line and all, says DIG SAFE; the supermarkets advertise EAT HEALTHY; the miners publish their

**The non-English speaker . . . wonders what kind of a society he or she has blundered into where one can acquire a baby that hasn't been used yet.**

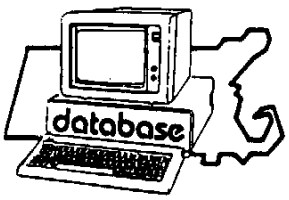
motto, "You die quick or you die slow." Learners of course should be told that in educated circles these are no-nos.

But there are cases where the validity of such sanctions is doubtful. The first case involves adjective forms occurring in adverb slots where it is clear that they are not adverbs. In *Keep your body low* and *Open your mouth wide, low* and *wide* don't indicate a manner of action; they are like predicate adjectives following a missing *to be*- "open your mouth so that it ends up with a wide space, so that it is wide." A second case concerns floating adjectives which just happen to have wandered into adverbial slots as in *They listened impassive; The humanist lurches indifferent into tomorrow* and of course *Do not go gentle into that good night*.

Factors that may be contributing to a diminution in the use of the *-ly* forms include (1) the existence of a number of standard monosyllabic adverbs whose form is identical to their adjective counterparts: *fast, early, late, hard* (some now accept *slow* in this class), (2) the popularity of frozen phrases such as *He spoke loud and clear, They run nice and easy*, and (3) morphological simplification, or let the syntax do the work!

Finally, we might mention the adverbs that lose their form in modifying slots in pre-nominal phrases and thus look like their adjective counterparts. In bakeries we find *fresh baked bread* and in some places *high paid jobs*. So business as usual in the word world, much borrowing and lending, and less the pity — remember what happened to Polonius.

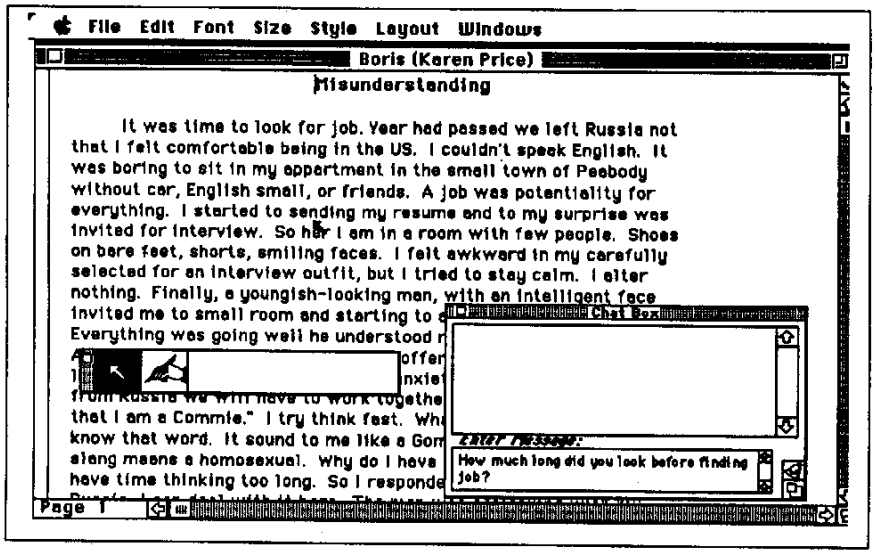
*Robert Saitz teaches at Boston University.*




# Groupware

*Karen Price*

For many years, the purpose and goal of computer-assisted instruction was to individualize instruction, enabling learners to work simultaneously on different linguistic problems at their own pace. Much of the ESL software of the '70s and '80s was, therefore, out of step with the methodology of the times, supporting instead the decontextualized, behaviorist approach of the 1940's. Little of that early ESL software reflected the communicative and notional/functional approaches embraced in those years by so many language teachers.




Ironically, however, teachers using computers as a tool to individualize instruction often noticed that students tended to cluster around the computers even when hardware and software was not in short supply. Recent developments of groupware actually support the peer review and collaboration inherent in some current methodologies by enabling computer users to work together and giving them tools for on-line discussion and interaction.

ASPECTS@ is an excellent groupware[1] program for the Macintosh. Initially created to facilitate business conferences for individuals working at separate locations who want to share their notes and computer screen(s) in real time, groupware can also be used to support the pedagogical objectives of ESL instructors interested in cooperative learning and group work. ASPECTS@ is also an excellent tool for composition instructors who want to find new ways to use the computer lab with their composition classes.

ASPECTS@ permits up to 16 computer users at a time to work together or in groups on a given document since they can all see and type on the same screen. One student can immediately see what another student in the group has typed. A "Chat Box" window can be opened which lets students read and write notes to each other as they work on the document. For oral discussions, each user can select a distinctive icon/cursor with which to highlight or point to portions of the document under discussion.

The instructor determines the level of interaction desired for a given writing activity. For example, "free for all" brainstorming sessions allow everyone to edit all at the same time. Or, the instructor can set up writing activities in which there is only one editor at a time with everyone taking turns in the order requested. Or, the level of mediation can be set to just one moderator/editor who can take back control, preventing others from typing to the screen, at any time.

ASPECTS@ lets users import files and documents from almost any Macintosh writing, drawing, or painting software into a session. This is particularly helpful for instructors who want to begin a class by starting groups of students out with different input — first-line starters, prepared "mad-lib" texts, students' previous journal entries, or different pictures. Students can work alone or in groups on portions of the document. Then, when everyone wants to work together again, the instructor can "link views," pulling up precisely the same portion of the document onto each person's screen.

ASPECTS@ runs well on a Mac Plus or any later model which is networked or connected by modem. The users need only be familiar with the basic use of the mouse, selection of commands from the pull-down menu, and dialog boxes. It is available from Aspects Software, 800 North Taylor Street, Suite 204, Arlington, VA 22203 (1-800-476-8781).

*Karen Price is Associate Director of the English as a Second Language program at Harvard University.*

1 Groupware is software that takes advantage of networked, or modem-linked, computers. Many of the machines in computer labs are networked, or connected, even though each machine is usually used by itself. Modem-linked computers are those connected, for example, by phone lines to let users share files or databases.

# MATSOL EXECUTIVE BOARD

## *CALL FOR NOMINATIONS*

The positions of Vice-President, Secretary, Adult Education Representative, and Elementary/Secondary Representative on the MATSOL Executive Board will become vacant in the Spring of 1993. The positions are briefly described below. If you wish to have someone considered for the nomination, or if you wish to nominate yourself, please forward the name and biographical data to:

Kathryn Riley
MATSOL Past President
15 Harris Avenue
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Each of the members of the Executive Board is expected to attend monthly meetings and to help with ongoing projects of the Board.

In addition, some of the specific duties are as follows:

**The Vice-President** is responsible for the Spring Conference, assumes the presidency upon completion of this term, and remains on the Board during the year following the presidency. This is a three-year commitment.

**The Secretary** takes notes at each meeting and mails them to the Board before the next meeting and is given a computer from MATSOL in order to keep the membership list current and print out mailing lists whenever needed. This is a two-year commitment.

**The Representatives** serve as co-chairs of the Fall Conference, help recruit workshop leaders for the Spring Conference, and represent their respective constituencies. These are two-year terms.

---

# *MATSOL*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Last Name First Name

Mailing Address Street

City State ZIP

Phone (Home) (Work)

Affiliation (Employer/Institution)

Dues for one year: $8.00 full-time student ____ $15.00 full-time professional ____

Special Interest Group: Elementary, Secondary, Higher Ed, Adult (Circle 1 or 2)

*Make check payable to MATSOL. Your cancelled check is your receipt. Send this form and your check to:*

Robert Maguire, MATSOL Treasurer, 82 Temple Avenue, Winthrop, MA 02152

# CAMBRIDGE
## UNIVERSITY PRESS

### Basic Grammar in Use

NEW

Reference and Practice for Students of English

***Raymond Murphy***

*Basic Grammar in Use* is the long-awaited sequel to the immensely popular *Grammar in Use*. Designed for high-beginner to low-intermediate learners of English, this text presents basic grammatical structures in an easy-to-understand format. The explanations are precise, clear, and simple and give students exactly the kind of support they need.

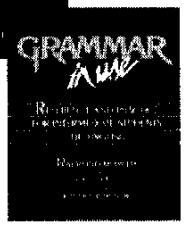
- All of the examples and exercises use natural, uncontrived language.
- Contains appendices that deal with phrasal verbs, spelling, and irregular verbs.
- May be used as a class text, for self-study, or as a reference guide.
- A separate answer key is available.

### Grammar in Use

Reference and Practice for Intermediate Students of English

***Raymond Murphy***

A unique combination of reference grammar and practice book: in each of the 124 units the left-hand page offers clear explanations with examples and the right-hand page gives exercises to check understanding.




- Covers the major problems intermediate students encounter.
- Detailed index and list of contents so students can easily find the grammar points they need.
- Suitable for students preparing for TOEFL.

*For your free examination copy, please write to:*
ESL/EFL Marketing,
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211
Call toll-free 800-872-7423. MasterCard/VISA accepted.



**Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages**

English Language Center
Northeastern University
360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOSTON, MA
PERMIT NO. 57641


MATSOL