MATSOL CURRENTS

Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

VOL. 20, NO. 3 SUMMER 1994

Awareness Day First-Prize Essays "What ESL Means to Me"

Junior High: Jason Zhang

I get excited as I notice that the first class-period is almost over. "Social studies is next," I say to myself. I will do a presentation on my country, China, in that class. I am a little nervous, but I am more confident, for that I know my English is good enough to handle this. I enter the room and sit as usual. Then, after the students sit down, I walk up to the front of the room calmly. I take a deep breath and start: "I did my research on China, my own country." I speak clearly. For thirty-five minutes, I explain every detail and add my experiences to it. The teacher and students all seem amazed and attracted to my presentation. I smile from the bottom of my heart when I observe their faces. "Well, that's all. Does anyone have any question?" I ask. "I do!" "I do!" "How come . . ." Almost all the students raise their hands eagerly. I answer each of them with my fluent English. The students seem satisfied, they applause warmly to me. I watch this scene, and am very proud of myself. I can't help to recall the terrible presentation that I did

Continued on page 6

INSIDE

Fall Conference Call for Papers inside this issue.

If you didn't get the call for papers mailed in May, please update your membership.

How Much Do You Know About Asian Cultural Values?

Jean Chandler and her students

Did you know that ✓ in Japan and Korea means incorrect? Did you know that to write someone's name in red, especially on an envelope, in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan means that you will never see that person again (Koreans say it reminds them of death)? Did you know that calling a teacher simply "Teacher" is a most polite form of address in these five countries; in fact, it is impolite in China, Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan to call a teacher simply by his or her name.

If we judge others' behavior based on our own cultural values, it is no wonder

Continued on page 8

From the President

What a success our first statewide ESL Awareness Day was! In response to your requests, MATSOL will publish the winning essays in time for the fall conference at Simmons College in November.

Member enthusiasm has also prompted the Board to encourage and support (a) events for Special Interest Groups, (b) a revitalized MATSOL WEST organization beginning with the May get-together, and (c) continued efforts towards addressing the employment issues of all our membership.

Since Baltimore TESOL, I have been exchanging ideas with the presidents of our fellow TESOL affiliates in the Northeast and discussing the possibilities for increased collaboration among Northern New England TESOL, Connecticut TESOL, and MATSOL. It is our hope that a regional conference joining all our strengths will result sometime in 1996 and that we can begin a tradition of co-sponsoring such a conference periodically.

I hope to hear from many of you over the coming year. Let me know what you are thinking and how you think MATSOL is doing. Send in your MATSOL Needs Assessment, give me a call at (617) 625-1335, or volunteer to join us on a particular project. I'm looking forward to working with you!

Betty Stone

From the Editors

It is our goal and pleasure to provide a quality publication with informative and entertaining articles of interest to such a broad membership. To that end, this issue of *MATSOL Currents*, the new title for the newsletter chosen by the members at the Spring Conference, offers something for everyone.

We include the four first-place ESL Awareness Day student essays and the first-place poster. If you were unable to attend the Spring Conference, don't miss the excellent plenary address summaries; many articles in this issue follow up on conference presentations. In addition, there are two new columns and several pieces of interest to public school teachers.

We want *MATSOL Currents* to accurately reflect your concerns, so if you have any suggestions, please contact us. If you would like to help in the publication of this newsletter (writing an article, proofreading, etc.), please don't hesitate to let us know.

Suzanne Koons (smkoons@mit.edu)
Alison Howe (ahowe@husc4.harvard.edu)

The MATSOL Board bids farewell to:

ROBBY STEINBERG, Past President, BOB MAGUIRE, Treasurer
EILEEN PRINCE, Higher Ed. Rep., MICHAEL BUSS, General Rep.

and welcome to:

ESTHER IWANAGA, Vice President, GRACE ROONEY, Treasurer
JEFF DIIUGLIO, Higher Ed. Rep., RUTH ANN WEINSTEIN, General Rep.

Massachusetts ESL Awareness Day Report

Marlyn Katz Levenson

April 6 was officially proclaimed Massachusetts ESL Awareness Day by Governor Weld. What a wonderful, exciting experience the day was—we hope it will become an annual event. The response was overwhelmingly positive. We had over 700 essays and 200 posters from 55 cities! What a thrill to go into a library or public building and to see our poster or hear from friends outside the profession that they had seen the poster.

The success was due to the ingenuity and hard work of members of the ESL Awareness Day Committee and the MATSOL Board. **Judy DeFilippo**, the co-chair, was always looking at both the big and small picture with intelligence, practicality, grace, and creativity. The ESL Awareness Day Committee and the members of the MATSOL Board, all very busy people, brainstormed and then implemented their ideas. To single out a few: **Roberta Adams** made contact (on the phone and in writing) with over 75 bookstores in Massachusetts and did pickup and delivery at our mailbox. **H. Shippen Goodhue** also wrote zillions of letters and made follow-up telephone calls. **Roberta Steinberg** was our "Poster Girl," responsible for our wonderful poster, from contacting the artist to getting it printed and delivered. **Catherine Sadow**, publicity chair (with husband Jerry's help and support) sent publicity mailings to the media along with follow-up calls. **Josephine Vonarburg** spent endless hours researching, assembling data, and producing the fact sheet, as well as typing the announcements of the winners, etc. **Alison Howe** worked on acquiring prizes as did **Ruth Ann Weinstein. Marjorie Soriano** gave unstintingly of her time and energy to organize her team for judging the unbelievable volume of essays. Special thanks to the **ESL instructors of the English Language Center at Northeastern University** who judged the poster contest and aided in the essay contest as well.

Thanks also to our major prize donors, **Prentice Hall Regents** and **Heinle & Heinle,** as well as to the other donors whose generosity made our prizes possible: Scott Foresman, Barnes & Noble, Houghton Mifflin, Buck-A-Book, Globe Corner Bookstores, Harvard Coop, Lauriat's, Valley Books, Waterstone's, and Modern Curriculum Press.

The rewards for our efforts are both concrete and intangible. We have the proclamation of Governor Weld, the fact sheet, this year's poster, and the first-prize poster by a sixth grader from Poland, **Aleksandra Ola**

Continued on the next page

The Governor's Proclamation

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

A Proclamation

By His Excellency

GOVERNOR WILLIAM F. WELD

1994

WHEREAS: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is a home to people of diverse ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds who have come seeking a higher quality of life for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS: In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, there is a growing number of immigrant and refugee families needing English to contribute their full potential to society; and

WHEREAS: The productive potential of many of these residents of the Commonwealth is enhanced by their enrollment in English as a Second Language courses in public schools, adult education programs, and community colleges, all of which serve over 80,000 such students; and

WHEREAS: English as a Second Language programs at universities and colleges in the Commonwealth attract international students who also serve as resources for American students in furthering their understanding of global and cultural issues; and

WHEREAS: English as a Second Language professionals in the Commonwealth, represented by the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (MATSOL), are dedicated to providing high-quality instruction to all seeking better ability in English as a Second Language;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM F. WELD, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim April 6th, 1994 as

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AWARENESS DAY IN MASSACHUSETTS

and urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this twenty-seventh day of January, in the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-four, and in the year of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and eighteenth.

By His Excellency the Governor

WILLIAM F. WELD

MICHAEL J. CONNOLLY
Secretary of the Commonwealth

GOD SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

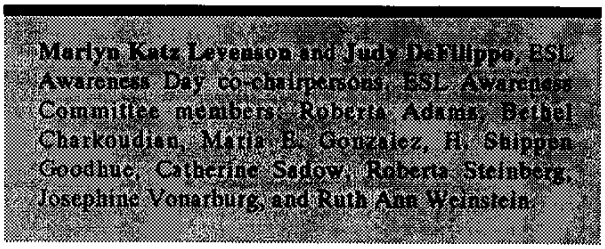
Massachusetts ESL Awareness Day *Continued from page 3*

Kordowska, which we will use for our next ESL Awareness Day poster (see p. 7 in this issue). We have over 700 essays and over 200 posters. I was interviewed on WSSH 99.5 FM radio by disk jockey **Jordan Rich**, who read some of the essays on the air July 4. Articles about our contest and winners appeared in a variety of newspapers. TV Channel 7 featured ESL Awareness Day. Cambridge City Hall hung a huge "ESL Awareness Day" banner. Many schools had activities to celebrate the day with international fairs and other events. For example, Bristol Community College's ESL Program held a ceremony to honor three of its successful graduates. **Please let us know how you celebrated.**

Those of us who were at the plenary session on Saturday, April 9, will never forget watching the winners with their proud families and teachers as they received their certificates and prizes and saw their essays and posters on display with their prize-winning ribbons.

We are now considering what to do with the essays and posters. Ideas include publishing them and displaying them in banks and malls. If you have any suggestions, please let us know. I hope the public is now more aware of our students, their language/cultural needs, and how we ESL professionals guide them into full participation in American life, academically, socially, and in the workplace. Thank you to everyone who participated.

Marlyn Katz Levenson teaches at Harvard University Extension.



Interested in serving on the

ESL Awareness Day Committee

for next year?

Call MATSOL at (617) 576-9865.

Make a note of
MATSOL's new address:

P.O. Box 391887
Cambridge, MA 02139-0008

(617) 576-9865

Calendar of Events

SLRF
Dates: Oct. 6–9
Place: McGill University
Montreal, Canada
Contact: McGill University
Department of Linguistics
(515) 294-7819

NETWORK '94
Dates: Oct. 26 and 27
Place: Marlborough, MA
Contact: Cynthia Weinstein
(508) 588-6264 or
MCAE (800) 339-2498

MATSOL Fall Conference
Date: Nov. 5
Place: Simmons College
Contact: Maria E. Gonzalez (617) 983-0732
or Bethel Charkoudian (617) 965-5639

NNETESOL
Date: Nov. 19
Place: New Hampshire College
Contact: Burt Weyand
Univ. of Southern Maine

MLA
Dates: Dec. 27–30
Place: New York, NY
Contact: MLA
(212) 614-6370

Congratulations to the MATSOL ESL Awareness Day Contest Winners

POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

First Prize
Aleksandra Ola Kordowska
Melrose Middle School
Teacher: Elinor Klasky

Second Prize
Kirivan Chhoeun, Panny Oeur, Longdy Eang, David Kry, Kara Or, Alexander Sam, Hemsomaly Vch
Attleboro Public Schools
Teacher: Ethel A. Caldeira

Third Prize
Tou Yang
Reingold Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. Lo

Fourth Prize
Llyen-My Pham
Whittemore Elementary School
Teacher: Ms. Fitzgerald

ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

JUNIOR HIGH
First Prize
Jason Zhang
Malden Middle School
Teacher: Eileen Kraus

Second Prize
Mee Kyi Tung
East Middle School
Teacher: Mrs. Young

Third Prize
James You
Weston Middle School
Teacher: Debbie Wheelwright

Fourth Prize
Daisy Ortiz
Hobbs Middle School
Teacher: Mrs. Trotta

HIGH SCHOOL
First Prize
Joyce Ho
Braintree High School
Teacher: Noreen Sullivan

Second Prize
Wonil Seo
Acton-Boxboro Regional High School
Teacher: Mrs. Hull

Third Prize
Mai Thi Tran
Brighton High School
Teacher: Ruth Ann Weinstein

Fourth Prize
Ling Ye
Newton South High School
Teacher: Mary Doolin

ADULT EDUCATION
First Prize
Viera Krnan
Mount Wachusett Community College
Teacher: Corrine Brown Emge

Second Prize
Silvio Coelho
Nypro Institute
Teacher: Jeanette Hoessel

Awards ceremony at Spring Conference

HIGHER EDUCATION
First Prize
Tuong-Pham
Bunker Hill Community College
Teacher: Alan Shute

Second Prize
Yang Shang Hung
University of Massachusetts/Boston
Teacher: Ann Jenkins

Third Prize
Daniel Samper Ospina
Boston University
Teacher: Ann Chebbo

Fourth Prize
Valentina Gavrilenkova
Nefesh Institute/Aquinas College
Teacher: Judy Kahalas

Third Prize
Jasmina Dervisevic-Ramic
Harvard Extension
Teacher: Christine Root

Fourth Prize
Sui Chi Szeto
Quincy School Community College
Teacher: Suping Zhang

Winners were awarded cash prizes or gift certificates from Prentice Hall, Heinle & Heinle, Waterstone's, Globe Corner Bookstore, Lauriat's, B. Dalton, and the Harvard Coop.

on the same topic last year.

At that time, I had only came to America for two months. When I heard that my class would learn about China, I excitedly asked the teacher for the task to explain it to my classmates. I was willing as I am today to share my culture with the others. But because of my poor English, I messed it up . . .

Since then, I studied English very hard. Now, a year has passed, and I feel my improvement as I got my small success today, I am very happy.

Language is, a bridge to the treasury of knowledge; a key to humans' psyches. And that's what learning English means to me.

Jason Zhang studies at Malden Middle School.

Higher Education: Tuong-Pham

I knew that English was very important to everybody living in the USA, but I didn't think it was really essential to an old man of 70s like me until I came here in 1992.

In fact, I had to confront the language problem right in my first week in Boston when some neighbors came to say greetings to me. I couldn't say anything but smile awkwardly . . . How embarrassed and ashamed I felt at that time! A few weeks later, I suffered an isolated and stressed mood when I couldn't any contact with the world around me because of my poor English. I couldn't understand what people said on TV or what they wrote in books and newspapers. I usually felt so scared of meeting some American who come to ask me something; whenever I had to be alone even indor or outdor.

I wished that I could have gone back to my country at once.

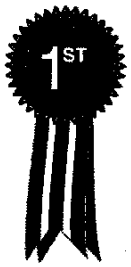
Fortunately, my children have encouraged and helped me to overcome this language barrier. They taught me, how to write, to speak, and also bought me books and tapes. Moreover they asked their American friends to practice me speaking and listening English.

Gradually, my English improved better. Now I feel life is more enjoyable to me: I can read books, watch TV and chat confidently with neighbors. Besides I can taste the joy of travel, when visiting the historic sites and beautiful landscapes of New England. Furthermore, I can help my grand-children understand their lesson and do their homeworks.

So far, I have encouraged my relatives, my friends to learn and improve their English by telling them the necessity of learning English as well as the experience that I have obtained from that field.

"The more English we learn, the better life we can get" is the simple sentence we should use as a main factor pushing us to learn ESL.

Tuong-Pham studies at Bunker Hill Community College.



Adult Education: Viera Krnan

When I was young, the main reason I wanted to learn English was because it was cool. I was born in Slovakia, exactly in the center of Europe. During my school years I tried to learn a little bit of German, because it was the business language in Europe. Then I switched to French, because it was fancy. As you can see, I didn't have the right attitude towards languages. There's an old Slovak saying: "The number of languages you know the number of human beings you are." However, I didn't feel it would help me behind the iron curtain.

Earlier, I had only heard English in songs from a forbidden Austrian station that was always tuned in on my radio. My favorite program was the Top Ten with Casey Caisson. English in those songs was so smooth, elegant, good sounding, simply put: cool. It impressed me so much. I was dreaming of having fluent English conversations with imaginary people. During that time I knew how to count to ten and on good days I would manage to say, "How are you?" You should see me now! In May it will be six years since my arrrival in the US. I'm still not as fluent as in my old dreams. But the reasons why I learn this language have "slightly" changed. I struggle to keep up with my two kids, who are among the best in their English classes. After the stage of learning English to just

Continued on the next page

First-Prize Essays *Continued from page 6*

survive, new and exciting worlds opened up in front of me. Every day I learn new things about the people, culture, history, and the natural beauty of this country. I really can read famous books in original, untranslated form, and I can understand thoughts and feelings of people, who would be total strangers to me without English. . . . the more I know, the more I become attached . . . And, that is really, really cool!

Viera Krnan studies at Mt. Wachusett Community College in the B.E.S.T. Program.

High School: Joyce Ho

"If only English were not my second language. . ."

Three years ago, I hated myself for not speaking better English. Unable to either express myself or understand others, I felt lonesome and stupid.

"I can always learn," I comforted myself. Yet, my improvement seemed to be unproportional to my effort. I felt that I was wasting my time. I even thought that I would never be fluent in English no matter how hard I try.

Today, of course I see how my hard work has rewarded me. Indeed, I realize that I've learned far more than English.

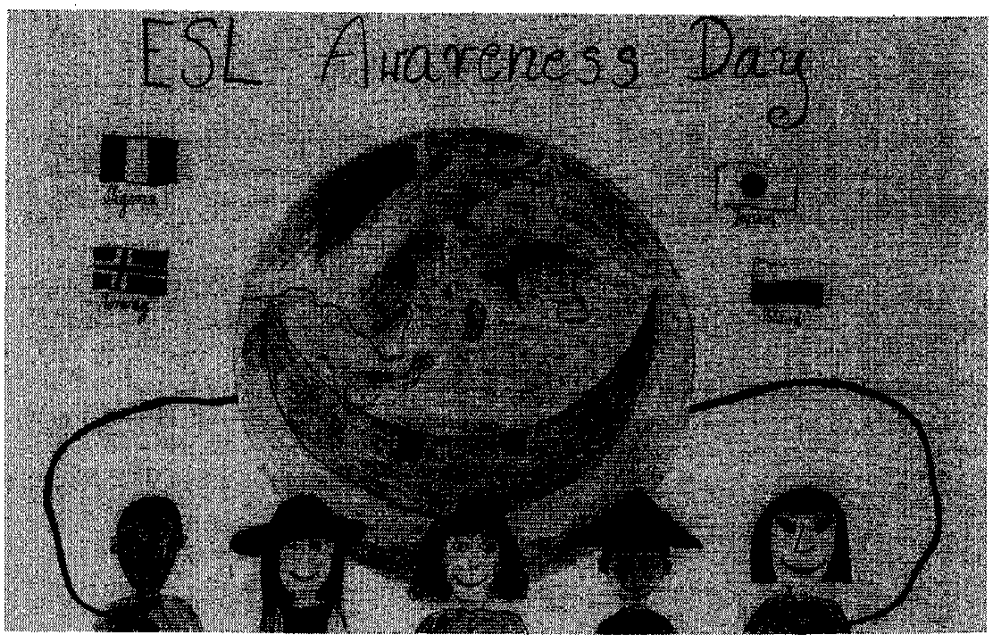
Now, not only can I speak intelligible English, I can grasp others' ideas readily with my sharpened observational skills. I do not misunderstand or misinterrupt others' words anymore. I have also found the key for learning a language—practice. This year I manage to take Spanish in school as my third language. I have become a much more outgoing person as well, after forcing myself to practice English with "strangers" as well. Many of those "strangers" are my best friends now. My confidence has grown along with my English skills.

Learning English has taught me a lot. I am no longer sorry that English is not my native tongue. Indeed, I appreciate all the experience I got through learning English. Without such almost painful yet meaningful experiences, I would not be the person I am today. I have learn far more than English. After all, I've learned how to face challenge and strengthen myself.

Joyce Ho studies at Braintree High School.

[Editors' note: The essays are printed in their original form.]

Look for a full collection of all the award-winning student essays on sale (at cost) at the Fall Conference.



First-prize poster winner: Aleksandra Ola Kordowska (Melrose Middle School)

How Much Do You Know *Continued from page 1*

there are sometimes misunderstandings between Asians and Americans because of cultural differences. So even though overgeneralizing is a danger, some generalizations might sensitize us.

For an American, it might be difficult to ascertain how an Asian really feels. For example, in Japan it is impolite to say "no" directly; instead, one hesitates. On the other hand, even when a Japanese person wants to accept an invitation, it is polite to protest that it is too much trouble for the host(ess) so that the host(ess) can insist on how much (s)he desires the company of the invitee before the invitation is finally accepted. Asians do not consider it unfriendly not to greet people they don't know well. Moreover, it's also not unfriendly not to greet someone they know who is at a distance from them, as Asians are not used to yelling their greetings. Some public expressions of affection, such as handholding with the opposite sex, might offend older people, and Asians generally are not used to as much touching as is often the norm in America. It's rude to touch people's heads in Thailand.

Giving gifts is very important in Asia but it is also essential to know what not to give. While a clock is the most common gift for birthdays, weddings or other occasions in Indonesia, clocks are not appropriate gifts in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan because the words "to give a clock" mean the same as "to send you to the grave." Similarly, one shouldn't take a potted plant to someone in the hospital. Chrysanthemums are associated with funerals in China, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea; for that reason, one should not give white flowers at other times in China or Hong Kong or wear something white in one's hair in Korea. In Taiwan, an umbrella would be an inappropriate gift for newlyweds because the word for umbrella means also "to separate."

The exact title or level of formality to use is a very important aspect of learning many languages. One must show proper respect to one's elders in Asia, for example, by using certain honorific terms and by bowing.

Table manners are another area of some cultural differences. It is perfectly polite to put one's bowl to one's mouth to drink soup or near one's mouth to shovel rice in with one's chopsticks in China, Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan. Eating with one's hands is common in Indonesia, and some people even say it increases the appetite. And burping is not a matter of embarrassment in Indonesia.

What is considered impolite, on the other hand, in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan is eating or drinking in class, putting one's arms on the table or one's feet on a chair. Socializing in one's bedroom might not be considered appropriate by some. (What does that say about the use of a NEC dorm room?) And of course one commonly removes one's shoes when entering a house in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, or Taiwan.

Continued on the next page

Writing Collaboratively with Students

This essay "How Much Do You Know about Asian Cultural Values?" was written collaboratively with 60 of my ESL students, who were from the Asian countries mentioned. It was published in a monthly in-house newsletter at the New England Conservatory of Music in the hope of raising the awareness of American students, faculty, and staff about the cultural values and learning styles of the Asian students, who comprise about one third of the student body.

Besides this main purpose, the collaboration had many benefits for my students and me. From this experience, I learned more about the differences between the various Asian countries that my students come from. They were empowered by being the expert informants about their culture and by publishing a piece for a wider-than-usual audience of peers and teachers. They also practiced speaking and writing English in the process.

They experienced the writing process of feedback and revision, but this time the tables were turned: I drafted, they critiqued, and I revised. After nine years of experience listening to Asian students tell about their culture and reading their writing about cultural differences, I knew some areas of difference to ask them more about. So whenever we had a few minutes at the end of a lesson, I would question them in greater detail. Near the end of the semester, I wrote a draft of the article, gave it to all my students to critique, and revised it twice in accordance with their comments. They got to see that stating things carefully and accurately was important to me and that doing so entailed numerous drafts with substantial revisions.

Jean Chandler teaches at New England Conservatory of Music.

How Much Do You Know *Continued from page 8*

Proper classroom behavior in Asia tends to emphasize listening, memorizing, and reciting; students are less often encouraged to question, analyze, and argue. This is just one of the arenas in which it is clear that there is more emphasis on group harmony in Asia than on individuality. At least until university, there is usually a right and wrong answer to the questions teachers ask. Even then, in Korea students are evaluated on the basis of multiple-choice examinations rather than essays, and university students in all these countries except Hong Kong and Indonesia are not assigned papers or as much homework throughout the semester as here. When academic papers are written, the expression of ideas in them is not organized in the same way as in America. Rather than writing in paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details, Asians tend to write in a more recursive style and use proverbs more.

Students in most Asian countries must take examinations to get admitted not just to universities but also to public high schools and to private junior high schools (and in Japan even sometimes to kindergartens and elementary schools). Entrance exams are given only once or twice a year, and the pressure to pass is intense. But once admitted to a university, generally a student's life is relatively carefree in Asia as compared to the U.S. Whereas an Asian student in high school doesn't have much time for extracurricular activities because of going to school as many as 7-10 hours a day, five and a half days a week, students in university usually have more time for their social lives. (Indonesia is different from the other countries we have mentioned and more like the United States in that there are many extracurricular activities in high schools and that it is usually hard to graduate from university.)

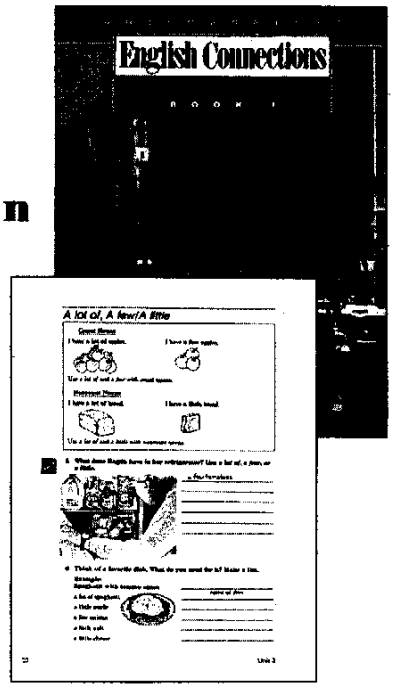
Having so many students from different countries here at NEC gives us all a rich opportunity to get to know people with cultural values different from our own. This in turn helps us think more critically about our own values as well as learn about those of other cultures.

[Editors' note: The essay is printed in its original form.]

NEW from Contemporary Books

ENGLISH CONNECTIONS

Grammar for Communication



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Confident communication is the goal of this practical ESL series! Based on the communicative language theories of consultant Diane Larsen-Freeman, lessons move beyond the ordinary focus on grammatical forms to help students communicate accurately and appropriately in everyday contexts: at work, shopping, in the classroom, in leisure activities, and at home.

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MATSOL '94 Spring Conference

Summary of Catherine Sadow's Plenary Address

"Four Ways to Listen"

Jane Boggs Sloan

"I had planned to use an interactive reading and conversation textbook as part of a lesson, but when I got to the Xerox machine, there was a not-unfamiliar sign: OUT OF ORDER."

That is the reason Catherine Sadow, a former president of MATSOL and a teacher at the English Language Center at Northeastern University and in the English Department at Boston University, walked empty-handed, but as innovative and resourceful as ever, into her classroom and told the students to take out their notebooks. She then read the text to the students who listened, took notes, asked for clarification, and then in groups had to agree and negotiate as they compared their notes before they even began the discussion based on the reading.

Catherine Sadow

Listening for notetaking

Since that day Sadow has looked at all materials to see if there is the possibility of presenting them orally for notetaking rather than for reading. By transforming reading material into lecture material, she helps her students develop the very necessary skills of learning to listen, reduce, and transcode information. And as a conference participant remarked sotto voce, "She is also saving trees."

Sadow advocates notetaking at all levels. To show how teachers of beginning-level students can transform reading material into lecture material, she used a reading (about people living in an apartment building) from *Line By Line* (Molinsky and Bliss, Prentice Hall Regents). Each student has a simple grid drawing of the apartment building with the apartments numbered, and as the teacher reads about the people in each apartment, the students listen and write notes in the appropriate "apartment."

Authentic listening for beginners

Currently Sadow and Edgar Sather are working on au-

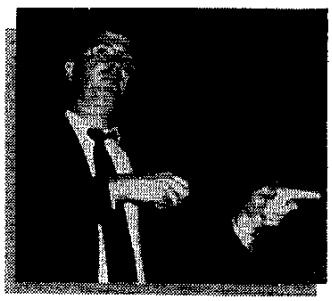
Continued on the next page

Summary of Stephen M. Nover's Plenary Address

"Are You Guilty of Audism?"

Joan LeMarbre

In his thoughtful and thought-provoking plenary address delivered in American Sign Language (ASL), Stephen Nover illuminated for us the essence of the controversy over what constitutes effective teaching and learning in deaf education. Nover defined ***audism*** as an attitude reflecting institutionalized prejudices and biases that perpetuate discrimination based on the idea that auditory and speech competency are superior to ASL. This attitude perceives hearing and speech as the developmental norm for humans while signing development is considered deficient. The first pervasive evidence of audism occurred in 1880 at the Second International Congress (of educators of the deaf) in Milan, Italy. It was at this event that the Congress adopted a motion promoting an ***English-only*** or ***oral-only*** language policy, thus defending ***the incontestable superiority of speech over sign***. It is worth noting that of the 164 delegates in attendance, only one was deaf.



Stephen Nover

Nover went on to identify three ***language orientations*** or perceptions which influence language policy de-

Continued on page 12

Summary of Catherine Sadow's Plenary Address *Continued from page 10*

thentic material similar to that in their book *Talk Radio,* and they are testing the listening material on students at low levels because they believe that learners at all levels should learn to cope with authentic material. Introducing authentic audio and/or video material early gets students used to the sound of speech that is "too fast" and "too real." Students at lower levels can perform simple tasks such as checking off the names of people, places, products or numbers that they hear.

Sadow shared with the audience the journal entries of two advanced students who knew all the grammar, read academic material with ease and wrote competently but who tuned out when listening to fast, real language. Sadly, one of the students gave up and returned to her country. Sadow believes that it is valuable to have students listen to and "grapple with a very little bit" of real-world English early in their language-learning experience. Perhaps that advanced student who gave up would have survived if she had been helped to understand just a little bit at a time.

Focused listening

Sadow noted: "I believe that it is important for students to focus on what is happening with their language and that it is important for us to help them focus." To help students concentrate on what it is that they can do to improve their listening, Sadow gave concrete suggestions on ways teachers can help students focus not only on the lesson but also on why and how they are doing it.

When her students go to the language laboratory, for example, they have a choice of assignments so that they can find something they think is important or interesting. One assignment involves two or more students and the teacher. A student listens to a laboratory tape so that he/she can recommend or not recommend it to a fellow student. The student listens to the tape and then records his/her review of the tape. Another student listens to the review and either records a response on the reviewer's tape or fills out a form about the review. The teacher listens to the reviewer's taped response and then records comments on the tape. The students listen to the teacher's response for yet more listening practice.

Pleasure listening

"We are also aware that confidence and risk-taking play an important role, and that fear and over-concern for hearing every word slow down the progress that the student should be making." And for this reason, the final type of listening Sadow mentioned requires nothing but listening—listening to songs, short stories, comedy skits, or replays of material previously used in class. Listening for pleasure. No comprehension questions. No cloze exercises. No tasks. No quizzes. No student confessing, "Teacher, I hate this, but I know it's good for me." Sadow says that before students listen to the audio or video material, the teacher should give them the information they will need to know in order to understand it. Then they should be allowed to listen or view it as a native speaker does.

Sadow says that although it is impossible to gain direct access to the listening process itself, listening is a very active cognitive skill. It is possible and worthwhile for teachers to provide students of all ages and at all stages of their language learning the opportunities to listen to "real English."

Jane Sloan teaches at Roxbury Community College.

Student Journal Entry from Sadow's Classes

Almost everyone in class is thinking about the TOEFL. I said in class that learning English is much more than studying TOEFL. I would like to repeat it once again. Andrea's journal reflected a question in which is imply a fear to this test. I'm sure Andrea's listening is going to improve very much during this quarter, but he will improving watching TV, listening radio and speaking with Americans much more than listening TOEFL tapes.

I understand him perfectly. It is very hard when you listen the radio and you don't know what it is all about. Sometimes you are more worried about what you can or cannot understand than about the program, the movie or the show you are with. But there is a moment when you, for the first time, realize you understand without paying attention to the understanding process. I can assure that moment is exciting. Through the weeks you see how you understand is better. It is the moment in which your brain doesn't need to translate to your own language. Of course, that is a balance between English knowledge and patience. The most important thing is not to be thinking about "I am doing OK" or "I'm failing." The important thing is to listen thinking in what the others are saying and nothing else. I don't have a lot of patience but I finally realized that my worrying was worse for my English.

I still have problems with my listening but, at least, now I know I'm improving everyday. TOEFL and other test are the listening unreal. Talk show are the real test. One advice for everyone. Less time with books and more with radio and TV. Although, of course, nothing is better than spending a lot of time with English speakers.

Alfonso

Summary of Stephen Nover's Plenary Address *Continued from page 10*

velopment and have a profound impact on deaf education:

- ***Language-as-Problem***: language differences are seen as determinants of social, economic and educational disadvantage; minority languages and their communities are devalued

- ***Language-as-Right:*** a reaction against the problem; expression in one's community language is construed as a natural, human, moral and legal right

- ***Language-as-Resource***: language differences, including languages, language varieties and their corresponding communities, are seen as a resource.

In Nover's exploration of the use of language in deaf education, he chronicled the emergence and influence of these language orientations. Although a ***Bilingual (ASL/English) Communication Approach*** flourished from 1817 to 1880, the ***Oral (English-only) Communication Approach*** dominated from 1880 to 1970. During this time, ASL went into hiding (yet continued to flourish within the Deaf* community). This was perhaps the darkest period in the history of deaf education. Signed languages and deaf teachers of the deaf were replaced by spoken languages and hearing teachers; children in residential Schools for the Deaf were punished if caught signing; and the Language-as-Problem orientation ruled. Alexander Graham Bell was a staunch oral-only proponent and used his influence as an inventor to sway hearing educators of the deaf to adopt an ASL-as-Problem orientation.

The ***Total Communication and Simultaneous Communication Approach*** took hold in 1970 and is still very much in practice today. It is a confusing and unnatural approach, designed to promote every means of communication available, including sign language, in the education of the deaf; yet in practice, spoken English and sign systems or manual languages—not sign language—dominate. Although intended as an alternative to oral-only deaf education policy, this approach is a reinforcement of the ASL-as-Problem orientation. Nover made a brief mention of the ***Mainstreaming*** movement (using interpreters) which began in 1975 and continues today. While there is no research to support the effectiveness of mainstreaming, accounts abound which tell of the frustrations, alienation from peers, and lack of progress experienced by mainstreamed deaf students.

In 1990, the ***Bilingual (ASL/English) Communication Approach*** came full circle and has been gaining strength and recognition. There is an increase of the Deaf voice within literature and a growing pool of qualitative research that overwhelmingly supports the use of a bilingual approach in promoting real learning for deaf students. This approach embodies the more immediate ASL-as-Right orientation and as a long term, on-going strategy, an ASL-as-Resource orientation.

Modeling one of the many rich aspects of Deaf culture, Nover ended his presentation with a poignant and true story about 40-year-old Joe and Terry, his 38-year-old sister. Joe, who is hearing, lives in Colorado Springs while Terry, who is deaf, lives in Boston with her three hearing children, all fluent in ASL. Joe and his wife had a baby who was deaf, something Terry was unaware of for some time. When she eventually learned of her brother's deaf child, she began to barrage him with literature about sign language and ASL while the child's grandparents advocated for the child's enrollment in an oral school. For vacation, Terry took her children to visit Joe and his family. When they arrived, Terry was surprised to see Joe greeting her using basic ASL. During the visit Joe and Terry would stay up late into the night talking, in ASL. When it was time to leave, during an emotional good-bye, Joe told Terry that although she had been his sister all of these years, this was the first time he had known her as a human being.

Nover also shared with us a sign posted at Central Middle School in Columbus, Indiana which reads:

> If Deaf children are perceived as "flawed hearing" children, the chances of learning English and achieving harmonious relationships with hearing people are slim. If Deaf children are perceived as a non-English speaking minority, the mastery of English as a second language and positive relationships with hearing people will follow.

** The use of capitalized "Deaf " in these cases indicates a community of people who are not disabled and who have in common a cultural identity with their language, ASL, at its core.*

Joan LeMarbre is an ESL program specialist for the Department of Education.

Congratulations to the winners of the

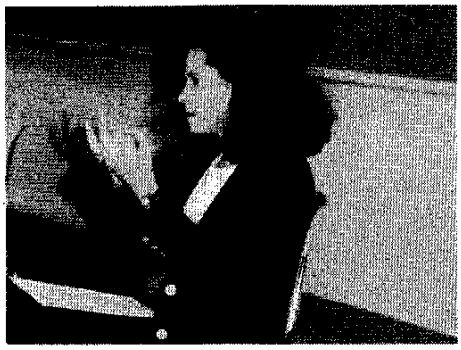
MATSOL Teacher Research Grants

Virginia Zanger & Kathy Riley

Committee:

Jacklyn Clayton (chair), Suzanne Irujo, Elsa Auerbach

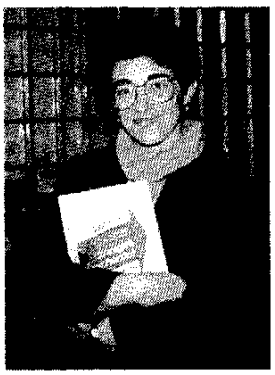
MATSOL '94 Spring Conference



Brenda Schertz: Addressing ASL awareness

Marjorie Soriano: Pointing out prize papers

Summarizing certification



Susan Donio: Embracing ESL

On April 8 and 9, participants attended a plethora of presentations at Roxbury Community College. 56 sessions were offered on a range of topics. New features this year were swap shops, ASL interpretation of sessions, and awards to poster and essay contest winners.

We were honored to have two excellent plenary speakers, Cathy Sadow and Stephen Nover. Both speakers met with audience members afterwards for further discussion.

The conference's success was thanks to the tireless efforts of: Betty Stone, Conference Chair; Bob Maguire, Treasurer; Sterling Giles, Publishers' Liaison; and Manju Hertzig, On-Site Coordinator.

Ruth Spack: Presenting a poetry project

Sharing stories

Marlyn Katz Levenson: Resting and relaxing

Concentrating on computer compositions

Teacher Research Group Report

At the Spring Conference, several members of the MATSOL Research Group presented their work in progress. Following a brief introduction from **Kathy Riley** of Roxbury Community College, **Pat Ellis** from the American Language Academy at Babson College served as moderator for the panel that included Erin O'Brien, tutor and graduate student at the University of Massachusetts/Boston; Jean Chandler, professor at the New England Conservatory of Music; Meg English, graduate student and former tutor at the University of Massachusetts/Boston; and Jane Tchaicha, director of the Bentley College Modern Language Center.

Erin O'Brien talked about her research that focuses on composing processes by ESL learners in the individual tutoring context, part of a long-term effort to document and understand the various writing habits that these learners display in a college setting. She presented some of her data from three one-hour sessions with a student from UMass/Boston about "writer's block." She explained how, with the use of think-aloud protocols, both tutor and student can get a blueprint of the student writer's composing process. She emphasized that this blueprint can provide a holistic view of the specific moment at which the writing process is halted. She added that the records of the tutorials can prompt tutor and student writer to work together in developing alternative approaches that bypass problem areas. As a tutor at UMass/Boston's Reading, Writing, and Study Skills Center, Erin has been able to observe how students have benefited from this approach; her next step, she says, is to investigate how the insights obtained from one-on-one tutorials might be applied to the classroom setting.

Jean Chandler described the research design of the study for which she won a MATSOL Teacher Research grant in 1993. She used an experimental design to answer her question, "What is the best way for a teacher to give written response to grammar and usage errors in student text?" Jean gave four different kinds of feedback (correction, underlining, marginal description, and marginal description with underlining) to each student on four chapters of autobiographical writing, with four different groups of students receiving the treatment in different order. She then explained that her analyses would include examining: 1) the percentage of errors students were able to correct on each chapter; 2) the percentage of errors they made in the next chapter; 3) student responses to questionnaires about each treatment; 4) the time it took students to make the corrections and the teacher to give the feedback; and 5) the teacher's judgment about the strength and limitations of each method. Jean urged the audience to do research in their own classrooms both in order to answer their own questions about teaching their students and in order to pool their data with other teachers for the advancement of knowledge in the field.

Meg English described her thesis research that specifically looks at a problem she observed while working at UMass/Boston, that is, the difficulty some ESL students have in making the transition from the ESL classroom to the content classroom. Her investigation has included interviewing faculty, students, and administrators, reading extensively on English for academic purposes, and examining alternative programs at two other universities. Based on her initial findings, she has made a proposal for a transitional tutor program for ESL tutors only. Meg cautions, however, that this proposal may only be a stop-gap solution, yet a necessary one, until such time as a more comprehensive solution is presented.

Teacher Research group: Kathy Riley, Erin O'Brien, Jean Chandler, Jane Tchaicha, Rick Lizotte. Not pictured: Pat Ellis, Meg English.

The panel concluded with a short call to get involved in teacher research from **Jane Tchaicha**. She recommended that ESL teachers collaborate on studies, make an active effort to present and share their findings, and seek out possible funding and publishing sources. In that way, the future and reputation of ESL as a profession will develop.

The Teacher Research Group held its final meeting on June 11. Plans for the fall were discussed (details in the upcoming issue). If you are interested in joining the group, contact Kathy Riley at (617) 524-4224 to add your name to the mailing list.

MATSOL

Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Fall 1994 Conference
Saturday, November 5, 1994
Simmons College
Boston, Massachusetts

Call for Presenters

Name _____

Work Phone (_____)_____ Home Phone (_____)_____

Institutional Affiliation _____

Position/Title _____

Brief Biography (50 words or fewer, exactly as you would like it to appear in the program)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mailing Address_____

_____

Title of Presentation (as you would like it to appear in the program)

_____

Short descriptions appear in registration materials. Please describe your presentation in one sentence. (25-word maximum) _____

_____

List any other presenters who will conduct this session with you, including affiliation(s) and phone number(s):

_____

_____

For sessions with more than one presenter, please attach a brief biography for each.

Please note:

- ***As a presenter, your registration fee will be waived.***
- ***Presenters will be notified of acceptance of their proposal by September 15.***

SEE NEXT PAGE

Subject Category (Check the one which most applies)

____ Assessment/Testing
____ Content-based instruction
____ Curriculum/Materials development
____ Writing/Composition
____ Workplace/Business English
____ Speaking/Pronunciation/Listening
____ Reading/Literacy
____ Sociopolitical Concerns
____ Technology in Education
____ Other (please specify): _____

Type of Presentation

____ Demonstration ____ Workshop ____ Rap Session ____ Panel ____ Paper
____ Mini-Presentation ____ Publisher's Demonstration

Time Required ____ 15 minutes ____ 50 minutes ____ 1 hour

Intended Audience

____ Pre-School ____ Elementary ____ Secondary ____ College/University
____ Adult Education ____Vocational/Workplace ____ General
____ Other (Please specify):

Title _____

Abstract (200-word maximum) _____

_____

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Equipment

____ Overhead Projector ____ VCR/Monitor (VHS) ____ Chalkboard ____ Slide Projector/Screen
____ Cassette Tape Recorder ____Bulletin Board ____ Computer [Mac ( ) / IBM ( )]
____ Other (Please specify): _____

Maximum Audience Size

____ 15 ____ 30 ____ No limit ____ Other (Please specify.) _____

Send application by July 31, 1994 to:
Maria E. Gonzalez
Adult Literacy Resource Institute
989 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

ATTENTION: PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

As most public school teachers should already know, ESL teachers, including those formerly considered "grandfathered," will soon be required to have certification in order to teach in the public schools. As of October 1, 1994, ESL teachers will have to demonstrate competence in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in order to teach. Teachers will have two, or maybe three, years to obtain certification.

Teachers should have already received from their superintendents packets explaining the certification. MATSOL also sent a notice to "grandfathered" ESL teachers (April 25, 1994) outlining the steps required for certification. If you did not receive a copy, leave a message for MATSOL at (617) 576-9865.

If you are concerned about certification, consider assembling a portfolio, including a detailed vita and college transcripts, to determine your strengths and weaknesses. Obtain a list of the competencies required by the Department of Education (such as competence in a second language) and evaluate your situation. What have you done, what can you do, and what do you still need to do?

If you conclude that you need further coursework to meet the competency requirements, find out if your school district is offering free courses that would fulfill the certification requirements. If you are interested in enrolling in a teacher education certification program, below is a list of the only accredited schools in Massachusetts offering ESL certification. Be sure to check with the DOE before enrolling in any course to ensure that it fulfills the competency requirement that you are lacking. For further information, call the Massachusetts DOE office (617) 388-3380 or your union representative.

Boston University
School of Education
605 Commonwealth Ave.
Boston, MA 02215
Contact: Suzanne Irujo (MA + certification)
(617) 353-6294
Steve Molinsky or Marnie Murphy (MA)
(617) 353-3233

Eastern Nazarene College
Graduate Studies
23 East Elm Ave.
Quincy, MA 02170
Contact: Robert Kern (certification or MA)
(617) 773-6350 ext. 387

Elms College
Education Dept.
291 Springfield St.
Chicopee, MA 01013
Contact: Mary Janeczek (certification or MA)
(413) 594-2761

Simmons College
Master of Arts in Teaching ESL Program
300 The Fenway
Boston, MA 02115
Contact: Jenifer Burckett-Picker (certification or MA)
(617) 521-2239

University of Massachusetts
Cultural Diversity and Curriculum Reform
Furcolo Hall
School of Education
Amherst, MA 01002
Contact: Jerri Willett (certification, MA, or PhD)
(413) 545-3675

University of Massachusetts
Bilingual/ESL Studies
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
Contact: Donaldo Macedo (certification or MA)
(617) 287-5767

The EIC Survey of Higher Education Programs

Joseph Pettigrew

At the Spring MATSOL Conference, the Higher Education Section of the Employment Issues Committee (EIC) reported on a survey conducted in the Fall of 1993 of 13 ESL programs at institutions of higher education.

All teachers in these programs were asked to fill out a questionnaire on contracts and job security, hours and responsibilities, salary and benefits, the ratio of full-time to part-time teachers, and the qualifications of teachers at their workplaces. The survey was basically MATSOL's Higher Education Employment Standards in question form. We got a good response for a survey of this type, although it varied quite a bit from one workplace to another.

Below is a chart listing the names of the institutions we surveyed, followed by the total number of teachers there, and that number broken down by full-time and part-time positions. The three columns on the right are the number of completed surveys that were returned to us, the percentage of all faculty who responded, and the percentage of respondents by full-time and part-time.

There are just under 100 full-time jobs among these 13 institutions, which include most of the major programs in the greater Boston area and north of the city. A third of the full-time jobs are at one institution, Boston University's Center for English Language and Orientation Programs (CELOP). In fact, CELOP has more full-time jobs than all of the state schools surveyed put together and these include some very large programs. Among the private programs, about 1 out of every 3 jobs is full time (66 out of 196). Among the state schools, it's 1 out of 6 (31 out of 195).

There's another striking difference between private and state programs. Only one private institution had *less* than a 50% response rate, while only one state institution had *greater* than a 50% response rate. Perhaps related to this was a surprising lack of awareness among teachers of their own working conditions. When asked if the number of full-time teachers was 75% of the entire faculty, many people said they didn't know. This response was more common in state programs, including some programs where only 15% of the faculty was full time!

Just looking at the statistics for full and part time, the situation is rather discouraging. This confirms what most of us already suspected. The percentage of full-time jobs in the greater Boston area is small, but there is lots of part-time work. If you know someone who is considering entering the field, you might show him/her the chart. I wouldn't tell someone not to become an ESL teacher, but I would definitely make sure he/she was going into the field with open eyes.

The responses for each program were distributed at the EIC's presentation at the last MATSOL Conference. If you'd like to see the results, you could ask if anyone at your workplace went to the presentation. If not, write me at CELOP/Boston University, 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215 and I'll send you a copy.

Joe Pettigrew teaches at Boston University.
email: jpettigr@acs.bu.edu

Faculty Survey of ESL Employment Conditions at Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 1993

PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS	Total faculty*	FT/PT faculty*	Number of returns	% of total faculty	% of FT/PT
Bentley College	11	2/9	9	82%	100%/78%
Boston University/CELOP	94	37/57	55	59%	68%/53%
Bradford College	5	4/1	4	80%	75%/100%
Harvard University	34	0/34	25	74%	---/74%
Massachusetts Insititute of Technology	4	2/2	3	75%	50%/100%
Northeastern University	19	7/12	15	79%	71%/83%
Showa Women's Institute	29	14/15	14	48%	64%/33%
STATE INSTITUTIONS					
Bunker Hill Community College	48	10/38	16	33%	30%/34%
Middlesex Community College	13	4/9	8	62%	100%/44%
North Shore Community College	24	3/21	6	25%	67%/19%
Northern Essex Community College	36	6/30	13	36%	33%/37%
Roxbury Community College	64	8/56	30	47%	63%/45%
University of Massachusetts (Boston)	10	0/10	0	0%	---/0%

* Based on the best information available (revised 4/94)

ESL Outrages

Outrage: A Profile in Pettiness

Joseph Pettigrew

At a community college in Boston last semester, there were at least 50 part-time faculty in the ESL department. This in itself is an outrage, but it pales in comparison to what follows.

A teacher who had been working at the college for four years found herself being shifted from the Department of Continuing Education (basically, the night school) to the Day School for funding purposes. When this happened, she lost the seniority she had established in DCE. She also found that instead of teaching nine hours per week as she had been doing, she could now teach only five or seven, the division of hours in the Day School. The teacher taught in the morning before and after this switch, and the types of students she taught remained the same as well. The change in status was purely administrative.

This teacher wrote a letter to the head of the program. In the letter, which was signed by several other part-time teachers, she questioned the division of hours in the Day School. The college believed the 5 and 7 division of hours was pedagogically sound, but, the teacher pointed out, this deprived the part-time teachers of much-needed income. This was also happening at a time when program enrollment was growing. More teachers were being hired, yet for administrative reasons, some teachers' hours were in effect being cut back. This teacher also pointed out that even though part-timers taught the vast majority of ESL classes, they were not being consulted about many things which concerned them directly. She suggested another possible division of classes that would be both pedagogically sound and allow part-timers to teach nine hours per week.

(I should point out that the tone of her letter was quite reasonable and not challenging or hostile. She merely stated the facts and asked that part-timers be consulted in the future.)

At the end of the term when assignments were normally given out for the following semester, this teacher received no information about her future employment prospects. She tried to contact the head of the ESL program several times but was always told he wasn't available. Requests for him to call her went unanswered. Finally, a few days before the new term was to begin, the teacher succeeded in getting hold of the administrator and asked him what was happening. His response to her: "I didn't give you any classes. I didn't think you wanted any since you complained so much." After four years of teaching at this community college, she was not given any further assignments.

It's difficult to know what to say to this administrator. But I'd like to ask him a few questions: Do you think what you did was justifiable? Would you want to be treated this way? Do you really appreciate the impact your behavior has on the lives of other people in your department?

I'd also like to say something to the full-time faculty at this community college and to all full-time teachers, for that matter. Almost all of us have suffered through part-time employment: stringing several jobs together to make a living, running from one workplace to the next, hoping we stay healthy because none of our three or more jobs provides health insurance. We may not be able to do a lot for our part-time colleagues, but let's start by remembering that they are our colleagues. They are professionals, and many have academic credentials at least as good as our own. It is part-time teachers who do the majority of teaching at most ESL programs in Massachusetts.

As teachers, we can't give the part-timers in our programs full-time jobs, but we can speak up for them and lobby our administrators for more equitable treatment. Do they have a fair, written system for determining rehiring? Are they consulted on issues which concern them? Yes, it's hard to keep track of a constantly changing group of people, but have you tried? If you don't have even these basic rights yourself, start asking for them, but always

Continued on page 21

MATSOL

LEGAL SUPPORT FUND

If you have a problem with an employer and would like to speak with a lawyer, contact a member of the Legal Support Sub-Committee of the EIC:

David Coltin (617) 720-2603
Margo Downey (617) 296-8348
Agnes Farkas (617) 964-0464
Rebecca Pomerantz (617) 265-7479

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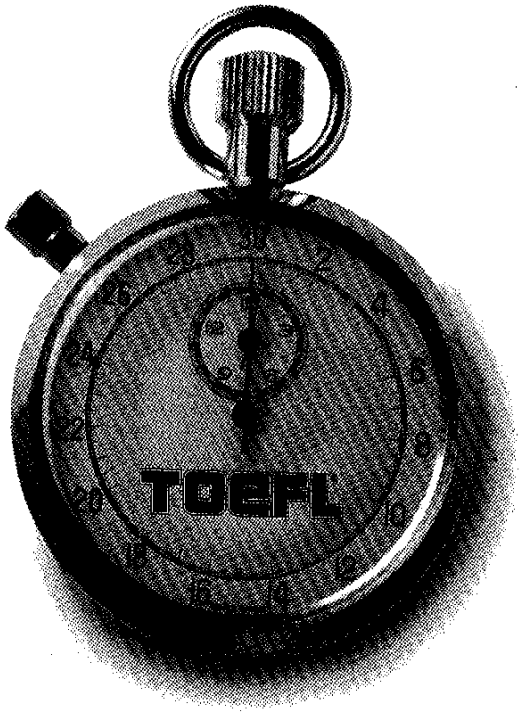

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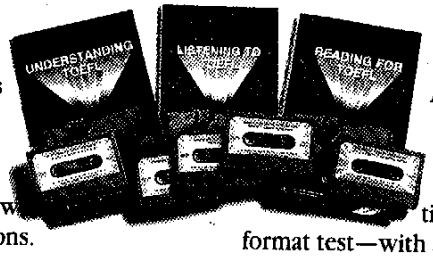

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Outrage *Continued from page 19*

remember to include the part-time teachers in whatever you try to get for yourselves.

To the part-timers at this school and elsewhere: It's time to get organized. The obvious first step is to get to know your colleagues. This is difficult in a lot of places, but you can start by asking for a faculty list from your administrators. If they can't be bothered, you could try to assemble one yourself. The second lesson from this is to band together when you have a complaint. That doesn't mean you go storming the director's office in a mob, but there is strength in numbers. It's difficult to dismiss a complaint as coming from one lone malcontent if one third of the faculty is doing the talking.

In the community colleges, there is a union which represents part-time faculty. I worked in a community college before and after the union came in, and the difference in pay was remarkable. However, many of our other issues don't seem to be getting addressed because there are very few ESL teachers active in the union, considering what a large percentage we are of all the adjunct faculty in the state system.

If you think unionizing is not for you, think again. It is the union which has taken up this teacher's cause, along with others in the community college system, and is fighting for her rights.

Joe Pettigrew teaches at Boston University.
email: jpettigr@acs.bu.edu

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: Paula Merchant, 152 Rockland St., Canton, MA 02021 (617) 575-1032.

Past Perfect Active Voices

The following MATSOL past presidents were honored at the Spring Conference:

1972–73	Robert Saitz	*1986–87*	Judy DeFilippo
1979–80	Caroline Banks	*1987–88*	Mary Christie
1980–81	Edgar Sather	*1988–89*	Suzanne Irujo
1981–82	Steve Molinsky	*1990–91*	Cathy Sadow
1982–83	Vivian Zamel	*1991–92*	Kathy Riley
1983–84	Paul Krueger	*1992–93*	Robby Steinberg
1984–85	Jacklyn Clayton	*1993–94*	Marlyn Katz Levenson
1985–86	Paul Abraham		

In Support of

Adult Education Employment Standards

Franklin Soults

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

We, the undersigned leaders in the adult education and adult ESL fields in Massachusetts, are proud to lend our support to the teachers who make our programs successful by pledging, wherever possible, to implement the employment standards adopted in August 1993 by the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education and the standards adopted in September 1992 by MATSOL.

Over 140 ESL and ABE teachers, administrators, and counselors from throughout the Boston area recently signed the Statement of Support for the MCAE/MATSOL Adult Education Employment Standards (please see the Winter '94 issue of the *MATSOL Newsletter* for the full text of the standards). The signatures were collected by members of Adult Educators Interested in Organizing a Union (AEIOU) at the various schools in which we teach and at the recent MATSOL Spring Conference.

Though the Standards were approved in 1992 by the elected board of MATSOL, the Statement of Support was circulated to gather the commitment of individual MATSOL members and others toward implementing the Standards wherever possible. In effect, the people who signed are acknowledging publicly what we believe most in the field of adult education would admit privately: the conditions under which we now labor too often do not provide us with fair remuneration for our skills and dedication. By stepping forward, these educators make an important first move toward rectifying this inequity. (Not all of those who signed the statement work in adult education, but we welcome the support of colleagues in related fields as well.) For a complete list of signers, see ALRI's *all write news*, Vol. 10, No. 6.

As is stated in the introduction to the Adult Education Employment Standards, its provisions are put forward as general guidelines. We recognize that even schools with the best intentions might not be able to meet some of them, especially given the budgetary limitations that are an ever-present constraint on our field. But we also believe the Standards outline the minimal conditions necessary to earn a reasonable livelihood and work in a decent environment.

We encourage adult education teachers and counselors who didn't have a chance to sign the statement to present their administrators with the Standards and to start a frank dialogue about implementing as many of the provisions as possible. We welcome anyone interested in making changes in their school or in the adult education field to contact AEIOU (unionizing is only one option we are exploring). For more information, please call me at (617) 522-4999 or Rebecca Pomerantz at (617) 265-7479.

Franklin Soults teaches at Community Learning Center.

Letters to the Editors

I attended the conference on Saturday, April 9th. . . . I am so glad I attended. It was wonderful! . . . I was very impressed with the professionalism and enthusiasm of the MATSOL members, Board of Directors and workshop presenters. . . . Not only did I meet some great people, I also made some very useful contacts, purchased several textbooks and got a number of ideas for teaching. . . . If I were not planning to move, I would be proud to become a member.

Lisa Clough

I enjoyed giving my presentation for your wonderful teachers in Massachusetts. They were delightful to work with!

Gertrude Moskowitz
(plenary speaker, Fall '93 Conference)

I wanted to let you know that I received your newsletter, and I was a big copy cat . . . I patterned my second page after your newsletter's. I really liked the way it was set up. . . . I really enjoyed reading "ESL Outrages." It's really incredible how administrators use an economic justification for treating teachers like second-class citizens. It never enters their minds that the fear and resulting low morale they create among faculty actually have a negative impact on students and therefore on enrollment and budgets.

Jane Chisholm, Editor, *Georgia TESOL Newsletter*

Congratulations on a smart-looking publication!

Tom Scovel, Professor
San Francisco State University

Teacher Resource Grab Bag

For a free education resource catalog describing videos and texts available on topics of interest to teachers of children, write: McDonald's Education Resource Center, ADS, 3620 Swenson Ave., P.O. Box 8002, St. Charles, IL 60174.

• Free newsletter from National Geographic Society, Geography Education Program, 17th and M Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

• Free anthology available: *The Massachusetts Academy for Teachers Reflective Anthology*, a collection of writings, each of which tells the stories of teachers' lives. Contact the Mass. Field Center for Teaching and Learning (617) 287-7660.

• NorthEast Coalition of Educational Leaders provides Job Bank listings to members monthly, including names of members who agree to help job applicants network and obtain information about jobs. Contact Margaret McGrath (617) 246-6421.

• The Museum of Science rents science curriculum kits. Call (800) 888-3820.

• The Children's Museum rents kits which include activities and supplies, books, films, and models. Call (617) 426-6500, Ext. 231. For group visits, call (617) 426-2800, Ext. 307.

• The Computer Museum offers an activities packet. Contact (617) 426-2800, Ext. 307. To arrange group visits, call (617) 426-2800, Ext. 334.

• The Tsongas Industrial History Center and the Lowell National Historical Park offer programs about industrial history. Contact the TIHC, Boott Mills, Foot of John St., Lowell, MA 01852.

• The Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington offers free school programs. Contact (617) 861-6559.

Grants

• National Foundation for the Improvement of Education awards seed money to teachers to design and implement programs to keep at-risk students from dropping out of school. Grant winners receive $2000-5000 and technical assistance. Contact NFIE, DPP, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

• The Frost Foundation will fund projects that create student learning centers or teacher training programs, establish student scholarships, or focus on dropout prevention, bilingual education, after-school enrichment, or similar topics. Deadline Dec. 1. Contact Theodore Kauss, Frost Foundation, Cherry Creek Plaza II, Suite 205, 650 South Cherry St., Denver, CO 80222.

• Association of Teacher Educators' annual competition for the Distinguished Dissertation in Teacher Education award to promote exemplary doctoral-level research that substantially contributes to the improvement of teacher education. Contact Timothy J. Sullivan, University of Central Florida, College of Education, Orlando, FL 32816.

• McGraw-Hill Publishing Company offers three $25,000 grants for significant contributions toward improving education. Contact The Harold W. McGraw Jr. Prize in Education, McGraw-Hill, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

[Thanks to the Massachusetts Field Center for Teaching and Learning for contributing many of these entries.]

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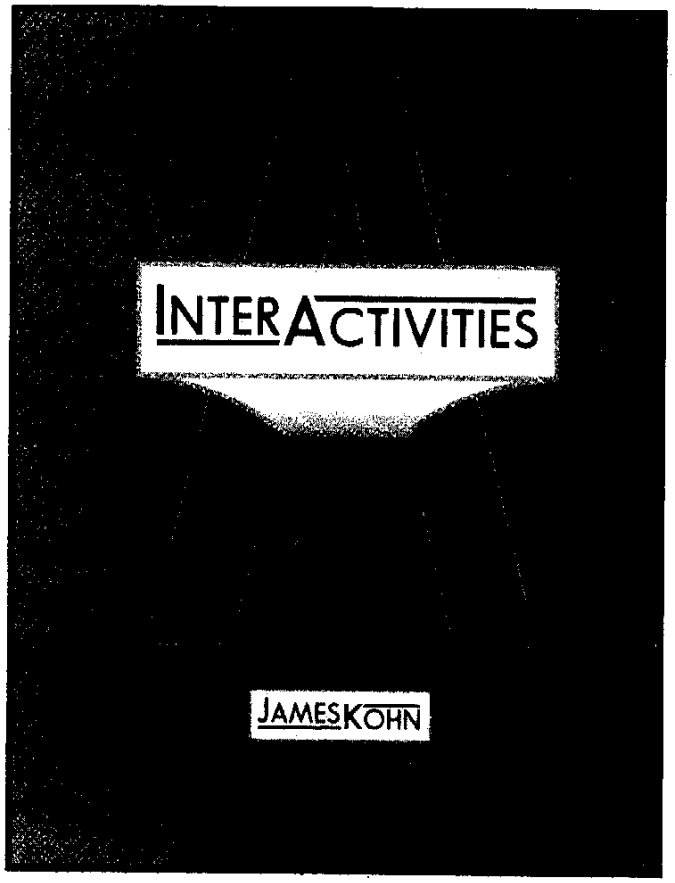

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TIP OF THE TONGUE

Maybe This Time . . .

Tom Griffith

MATSOL Currents is pleased to introduce this new column. Watch for Tom's humorous and insightful perspectives on language and learning.

What can a language teacher learn by studying a new language? Lots, and not just vocabulary. A little more than a year ago, I started work at Showa Boston. A branch of Showa Women's University in Tokyo, it offers a semester of English to Japanese students, and Japanese classes to Americans. Since the latter are subsidized for staff (and excellent), I jumped right in.

To start a new language is like romance, all excitement and great expectations. I know the feeling well, from a lifetime of promiscuous dabbling—in French, Greek, German, Hausa, Spanish, Russian, Khmer. With each beginning, there's a rush, a mad hope of success; you want to belt out with Liza Minelli, "Maybe this time . . . maybe this time . . . I'll . . . get fluent."

Yet we teachers know the cruel truth, that to really learn another language takes a long time. The magazine ads promise, "Learn to speak like a diplomat in six weeks." Isn't it more like six years? Thus, I began Japanese with high enthusiasm as well as a sense of futility. Yet it never hurts to get a smattering of your students' language since it helps you understand their mistakes.

What follows are some points of pedagogy which the experience brought to mind. Nothing very new, yet as Samuel Johnson said, "Men stand more in need of reminding than of informing." They apply mostly to beginning levels, but may have relevance to upper levels.

1) Use target language only

"English Only" raises hackles in some quarters, yet in our case, i.e., teachers and administrators learning Japanese, immersion seemed the ticket. Of course at first, our teachers had to translate and explain a lot until we got launched. But that was a trap since we were linguistically oriented; we could jabber all day about fine points of grammar. The less they explained, the better I liked it. This was true even when I felt lost, for just having the sounds of Japanese wash over me left some trace in the subconscious.

2) Be visual

Teaching at advanced levels, it is easy to forget how primarily visual we all are. I noticed this when we did adjectives, which in Japanese are horrendous. I would try to memorize them, using some mnemonic trick of association (ex: *hima* means free, and Hima was the name of a Nigerian colleague of mine in 1973 who laughed freely). But the words would still slip away. Then the teacher flashed cartoon cards of little people acting "free" or "bored" or "busy." It made all the difference getting a visual referent.

Likewise, when she showed the video version of a

Continued on the next page

A Class in Conversation

Stephanie Goldstein

"My stories are all asleep," one young man says. Should I wake them, I think, by telling them another story? "I . . . in refugee camp," the one from Vietnam says. "I was too," says the young one from Iraq. What kind of story can I tell them? Should I try to use the power of the story? Will a story help to heal? "I wake up crying," the man from Vietnam says. "I never cry," the boy from Iraq looks up at me and smiles. He is handsome like my son. Back in Iraq he could have hated Jews. Back "in Iraq, I was a hard worker. I got up at 4:00, I tired, I almost died." I find myself telling them a story about coming to America—the different cultures—how Americans hug and kiss in public—how the culture they come from is different. The students laugh and speak to each other in English. I find myself looking into their eyes and wounds. I talk about different rules—I talk about the complications of American culture. "I walk on the street . . . I hold a man's hand . . . why do they laugh?" Everyone laughs. He is a man lost in a mixed-up culture. He is a boy lost in another country. He could be my son and I am afraid. I could be the next one lost in another country.

Stephanie Goldstein teaches at Roxbury Community College.

Maybe This Time . . . *Continued from page 25*

written dialogue, it began to register. The video revolution is marvelous for language learning, yet many of us still labor with a pro-print bias. But it's not through print that babies acquire their first language. As they say, show don't tell.

3) Repeat, repeat, repeat

As a novice instructor, I always staked out too much new stuff for a lesson, then failed to review it systematically. It left students stimulated but muddled. Now I attempt less and review more, and I appreciated that in our Japanese class. We did it in bits, then on a massive scale: after a year we finished the textbook and asked to learn the writing system. The teacher thought about it, then simply had us start the book all over, this time reading the dialogues not in *romaji* (Roman letters) but *hirigana* and *katakana.* It served that purpose, but it was also a revelation how useful it was to go over the same lessons. Stuff that had made a very shallow impression now sank deeper; the internal logic of Japanese grew apparent.

Incidentally, studying the writing system also sheds light on a major historical question, i.e. why the Japanese are so smart. The system is so hard that a kind of survival of the fittest must have occurred over the centuries, with the less intelligent suffering mental breakdowns and dying of frustration.

4) Exploit the text

This may sound retrograde, when some people decry using a text at all. It's true that texts can come to dominate instruction and drive it in an artificial direction, yet as a learner I clung to ours like a life preserver. It was quite good, with functional sorts of dialogues, clear grammar explanations, cultural notes, a glossary, quizzes, etc. If anything, I wish we'd used it more in class. There were opportunities for partner work we didn't take. Or we'd go off on a tangent, learning vocabulary that we wrote in a notebook and never heard again. The point is that languages have certain basic facts to them, which are contained in elementary texts. Master those, and you've got plenty.

5) Push

Our teachers were very up-to-date in theory, yet rather traditionalist in outlook. I liked it. One facet of Japanese education now much in the news is the sheer effort made by students. The teachers push. Robert Fulghum, speaking at the last TESOL conference, noted that when adults recall

their favorite teacher, it was rarely the nice guy; it was usually the demanding one that drew more out of students than they thought they were capable of.

We got a vivid demonstration of this during a winter break. With students absent, we had more time for Japanese and suggested two classes a week instead of one. This coincided with our assault on the writing system. The class went into overdrive, the teacher rejoicing at our seriousness and inundating us with homework. We blanched, we grumbled, we declared it too much, but we did it. When the new semester began, we had to ease up; yet those weeks were exhilarating, one of the happiest learning experiences I've had.

Students can do more, much more, than we think. I sometimes figure teaching is about 90% assigning. Assignments must be meaningful, of course, and ideally, creative. Yet the more work we pull out of students, the more they like it. As for my pursuit of Japanese, it remains ardent. I think, maybe this time . . .

Tom Griffith teaches at Showa Institute.

Answers to "Test Your Punmanship" (p. 35)

Quiz #1

a) banned band
b) plain plane
c) new gnu
d) sweet suite

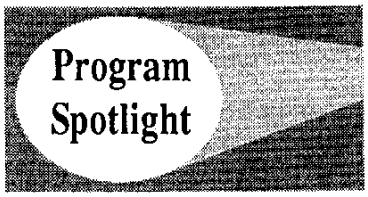
Quiz #2

a) they just become overdue and lose their circulation
b) they just grade away and lose their class
c) they just lose a lot in translation
d) they just lose their verb and slip into a comma

Quiz #3

a) deliberated
b) declassified, detested, and degraded
c) denoted and decomposed
d) disoriented

Defining an Academic Communication Skills Curriculum



Susan Seefelt Lesieutre

The following is a discussion of a curriculum developed at the Intensive English Institute (the IEI) at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, from 1992–1993. This curriculum was developed for the oral communication course offered to students at the basic and low-intermediate levels.

The IEI at the university prepares international students for academic work at an American college or university. The students have TOEFL scores ranging from the 300s (Basic level) to 600 (Academic Advanced). These students have not yet been accepted to an academic program. The IEI runs on 15-week semesters. Students study four hours of English a day: one hour each of reading, listening/speaking, structure, and, depending on their level, one hour of composition or oral communication.

The Oral Communication (OC) component is a recent addition to the IEI curriculum. It was formed to provide instruction for students in basic oral communication skills. Initially, teachers in OC compiled various pair and group speaking activities, including dialogues, information gaps, puzzles, games, discussions, and role plays. There was, however, no formal curriculum to guide the teachers methodologically—no guiding principles for determining the goals of the class or the use of the available activities. As the leader of the OC component, I was given the task of creating such a curriculum.

Some initial major concerns were: how to address the different needs in the two levels (basic and low-intermediate); how to address the two issues of accuracy and fluency; how to keep topics and activities in line with the academic goals of the IEI (not survival English); and finally, how to keep the course content distinct from the listening/speaking course which focuses on formal presentation and academic note-taking skills.

Course objectives

At the beginning of Spring semester, 1992, I outlined some objectives for the course, building on what Ann Salzmann, the Program Coordinator for the IEI, and IEI teaching assistants had begun. They included:

- Supply the students with conversation strategies and associated non-verbal aspects of communication that can be taken outside of the classroom and used in authentic communication situations. Cover various topics of an academic nature and critical language functions.

- Aid in building the students' strategic competence through activities which force the students to rely on their knowledge of the language and their ability to create with the language.

- Provide the students with numerous task-based activities of an academic nature (information gap, problem-solving, project work, etc.), whereby they gain confidence in obtaining/sharing information and ideas and thus bridge the gap from working on discrete points of language to interacting and using the language in freer situations. Structure the activities and organization of the class in such a way as to provide optimal time for productive talking in a non-threatening atmosphere. Work towards fluency.

The role of the teacher should be as facilitator or guide, providing a range of useful items and authentic situations in which students can use those items. The students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and for the activities and projects undertaken throughout the semester.

The curriculum which I devised with the above objectives in mind took the following shape: topics, functions, short-term projects, and long-term projects.

The aim of this curriculum was to provide the students with both practice in discrete language points or functions of the language and to give them the opportunity for more open communication which was required to complete the projects.

Syllabus and short-term projects

To further define the curriculum, I wrote a handbook for the teaching assistants. In the handbook I require teaching assistants to develop a syllabus. First, they were to determine topics, such as travel, the environment, and gender roles, to cover during the semester. Various language functions that complimented the topics were selected, for example, giving personal information, asking questions, giving directions, and conversation strategies (such as greetings, small talk, closings, and goodbyes). These language functions were presented and recycled during the first half of the semester to provide students with discrete points of language to be learned, much as a grammar course does.

Continued on the next page

Communication Skills Curriculum *Continued from page 27*

After considerable practice, students worked on short-term projects which were videotaped. Activities included building a conversation with a partner, interviews, and other short presentations. These projects served to bridge the more discrete language practice and the more open-ended communication that was to come in the long-term project during the second half of the semester.

The role of the teacher should be that of . . . a facilitator or guide. The students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning.

Long-term projects

Long-term projects, lasting several weeks took the form of group projects, which students worked on for several weeks. They collaborated on a series of tasks that evolved into a presentation that was ultimately videotaped. The goal was to allow for meaningful communication within the framework of completing these tasks. One of the most successful projects was the commercials project, used in the beginning level class.

Students working on the advertisement project first viewed taped TV commercials and then analyzed them, identifying the product being sold, the target audience, the message and values, and the language being used. Then in groups they had to do the following: create an original product, determine the target audience, and write a slogan. Then came the discussion of the script, ample time to practice their script, and the creation of a sample of their product. One day was set aside for the videotaping and functioned as a workshop; while some groups were being videotaped, other groups were fine-tuning their commercials in another corner of the room. Afterwards the commercials were viewed and analyzed in the same way the professional TV commercials had been earlier. This project could last up to three weeks, depending on how much class time the teacher chose to spend on it.

Directions for development

This curriculum is new, and although it has addressed some of the challenges mentioned earlier, it leaves one unanswered. Although every effort was made to distinguish between the different skills students should have upon completion of each of the two levels, a formal distinction between the two skills still needs to be made. However, the issues of accuracy and fluency have been addressed by focusing on discrete language functions earlier in the semester and project work or collaborative work in the latter half of the semester. Topics were academic and timely, and the activities students were given reflected the types of tasks that students will encounter in a university class. The course rarely strayed into the purview of the listening/speaking course.

As far as student progress is concerned, there has been a noticeable increase in risk-taking, especially among those students who are typically quiet and interact very little. This was noted not only in the oral communication classes but in the other classes students were taking as well. Thus, the curriculum has addressed some of the issues identified initially but needs further development in order to address all the particular concerns that exist in developing a curriculum for a specific skills course.

Susan Seefelt Lesieutre teaches at Harvard Extension.
e-mail: leisel@power.mit.edu

WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE ? . . .

MICHAEL ARSENAULT
GWEN BINDAS
JUDY BOYLE
ROBERT DI PASQUALE
GRACE ELLIS
JEANNE HUBER
MIRIAM KURLAND
KARINA MERTZMAN
SANDRA POWELL
KIRSTEN SHANKS
CATHERINE SOFIO

If you know the addresses for these members, please call Betty Gulesian at (617) 891-6884.

On The Road Again

Carolyn Fidelman

One of my students in an advanced ESL conversation course, a German engineer working in Boston, complained that he was completely baffled by American radio. Not only did the announcers speak at lightning speed, but they used words and phrases that made no sense at all to him. This student and several others listened to the radio every morning on the way to work. Every time the standard morning program got to the traffic report, the students would perk up, hoping to find out how they might circumvent the horrible Boston traffic. Unfortunately, "Joe Green [a Boston radio traffic reporter] and the WBZ 'copter" was completely inaccessible to them. The following transcription of a typical 60-second traffic report makes it abundantly clear why:

> Deb, 128 Southbound we have a left lane collision down by Route 93 in the Woburn area, helping to keep traffic right back to Main Street in Lynnfield. The earlier collision we had on 128 South by the Lynnfield has been cleared away. 93 and Route 3 Southbound still plugged up near 495. 128 Northbound slow going by 24, Route 95. Again by Great Plain Avenue we're back in the brakes again from Route 16 right up to the 128 toll plazas back to the second overpass, continues slow right down to Interchange 17 in the Newton area. Back in the brakes by the Allston tolls, and we're slowing down again on the Mass Pike Eastbound by the Expressway downtown. Furnace Brook Parkway all the way into the city. Coming inbound on Morrissey Boulevard at the Neponset River Bridge—there very slow at the traffic lights. We have a very serious accident along Mass. Ave. in Lexington, halfway between the center and Route 128, so watch out for a delay there, too. Tobin Bridge back to Chelsea. 93 back to Medford. Sumner is onto the McClellan Highway and no relief at all yet down on the alternate routes of Rutherford Avenue and the McGrath/O'Brien Highway or Route 99.

One feature that immediately stands out on hearing this report is the way in which the speech rate immediately increases from the regular announcer to the traffic reporter. The report immediately preceding came in at 186 words per minute, which is within the range deemed an average rate of speech. The traffic report measures 246 wpm, which is well above the 220 wpm judged to be fast. Added to this is the decrease in sound quality as the broadcast moves from the studio to the helicopter.

Using the taped material, I set out to help demystify the traffic report for my students and give them some coping skills. With a map of the metropolitan area and a recording of one of the by now infamous "BZ 'copter" reports, we listened and tried to segment the monologue into its constituent parts. What does the previous announcer do to lead in to the Joe Green segment? What are the standard locations reported day after day? What words do the students

predict they will hear in a traffic report? Does Joe actually use those words or something more technical or more colloquial? How many different words are used to say "traffic jam" or "breakdown"?

Teachers can give the students a transcription of the taped material with some words blanked out. The completions can be done individually or in small groups. The teacher can tape a few more of these reports so that the students can see just how repetitive the format and vocabulary actually are. Emphasis must be placed on familiarity with place names and their local pronunciation. Students can be reassured by the fact that native speakers have difficulty in understanding when they are not familiar with the context.

Once my students got used to it, they felt a sense of mastery over this dauntingly rapid speech. One of the students actually got quite good at imitating Joe Green's peculiar radio voice and entertained the class with his own version of the radio report. And who knows, maybe they also started arriving at work on time!

Carolyn Fidelman teaches at Northeastern University.
e-mail: cgf@world.std.com

TEACHING IDEAS

Activities You Can Use in Class Tomorrow

Stephen Sadow

To the teacher:

These small group activities are appropriate for intermediate- to advanced-level students. Allow about thirty 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.

Story Time

Heraclautus, wiseman, entertainer, and teller of myths in the faraway country of Grekia, has run out of tales. After so many stories about Zeus and Hera, Apollo and Diana, he simply cannot think of anything more to add. That wouldn't be so bad except for the fact that Heraclautus is under contract to produce four new myths a year—one for each season. Having heard that all of you know a great deal about myths and how they are made, Heraclautus urgently requests that you help him out. He asks that you invent a new myth. You may use traditional Greek characters or make up your own. Remember that in myths gods act like humans. The mythical stories contain messages and morals that teach us about human life.

A Day in the Country

It has recently been announced that Nature Day will be a new state holiday. Since it is a brand new holiday, no one knows how to celebrate it yet. With a group of your classmates, invent ways to celebrate Nature Day in your community. Try to get everyone involved.

Stephen Sadow teaches at Northeastern University.
e-mail: sadow@lynx.neu.edu

BOOK REVIEW

A Communicative Grammar

Sterling Giles

Interactions Access: A Communicative Grammar. Patricia K. Werner, John P. Nelson, and Marilynn Spaventa. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993. 275 pages. Instructor's Manual. (text: 0-07-069548-2; manual: 0-07-026959-9)

This textbook for beginning adult students is one of three in the *Interactions Access* program: *A Communicative Grammar, A Reading/Writing Book,* and *A Listening/Speaking Book.* The three are designed to be used concurrently, but nothing in them compels use of more than one book. This review addresses only *A Communicative Grammar.* Many teachers are familiar with McGraw Hill's *Interactions* and *Mosaic* series; the *Interactions Access* program is a related series for a lower level.

The authors believe that students must have opportunities for "meaningful interaction" and "active participation" (Instructor's Manual, 1). The book integrates descriptive grammar, individual exercises, and pair/group activities. Each unit is based on a lesson plan format that includes ". . . presentation, practice, application, and review." Reading, writing, listening and speaking are addressed throughout. The book's goal is to get students to use English; with proper instructional guidance, it will succeed admirably.

Chapter organization

There are ten chapters, each containing four parts. Each chapter revolves around a topic such as "Neighborhoods, Cities, and Towns" or "Friends and Family." Each part introduces at least one new point of grammar. Chapters 5 and 10 are devoted to systematic review, though recycling takes place more discreetly throughout the book.

Continued on the next page

A Communicative Grammar *Continued from page 30*

Each unit begins with a short reading (dialogue, exposition, description, narration) with multiple examples of the relevant grammar point(s). The readings are genuine whole language situations involving topics (health care, food) and related functions (requests, list making), followed by comprehension questions. Illustrations aid comprehension. Occasionally a structure appears, such as passive voice, which is never explained, but such occurrences are rare and a small price to pay for the engaging nature of these content-based introductory passages.

After introducing the grammar this way, the book gives analysis, examples, and minimal yet clear explanation, all set apart in a box which provides a visual clue to help students use the book as a reference grammar. These focused grammar boxes alternate with exercises and activities. The explanations are simple but never artificially simplified. For example, the book forgoes a complicated discussion of the uses of *some* and *any* in questions, yet examples of each are given. The rules are kept as simple as possible, while nuances tend to be framed as matters of usage. Thus, those students who won't master everything will at least master the most essential elements, and no one is scared away by daunting grammar explanations.

Exercise types

Probably what matters most are the exercises and activities, which proceed from more to less structured and include fill in the blanks; sentence completion, transformation and combination; true/false; sentence-generation based on a model; questions and answers; information gaps; and tightly modeled and open role plays. Illustrations often provide a context. Narration and description activities are based first on photos and situations in the book, then open out into the world at large and into the students' personal worlds.

The first exercises in each part involve the specific language of the introductory passage. Later exercises rely on the situation from the passage with less tightly modeled language, then related aspects of the general topic are introduced, and finally students are asked to discuss the topic as it applies to them. At the end of this process, the target form may no longer be the conscious focus, but it has become necessary. Some students will focus on the grammar explanations, some on a general understanding of the passage, others on the sample sentences. There's something for every learning style. In a given exercise, individual sentences often exist in meaningful relation to one another. The activities are open-ended discussion suggestions, but they make good writing assignments as well. Some of them require extensive modeling since a description such as "Imagine you are going . . ." in a role play situation is difficult for students at this level, but then this is the bugaboo of books at this level anyway.

While the Teacher's Manual does not contain step-by-step instructions, the directions for activities in the text are always clear to the native speaker, so they are not missed. The manual contains a brief statement of method and intent, an answer key, and a 50-point grammar test which can be given as a pre- and post-test.

I found it easy to expand on a given exercise, leaving the world of the book to discuss the topic at hand as it applied to my students' lives.

Overall evaluation

My students have received this book warmly, largely because its language is real and relevant. The grammar in the readings is controlled, but not contrived. My colleague Stefanie Mattfeld likes the book because "you can move in and out of it." Indeed, I found it easy to expand on a given exercise, leaving the world of the book to discuss the topic at hand as it applied to my students' lives, all the while wrestling with the target form. That is, after all, the very definition of a "communicative grammar."

Sterling Giles teaches at Roxbury Community College.

NUMBER OF NEWSLETTERS MAILED

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Teaching Interview Skills Using a Camcorder

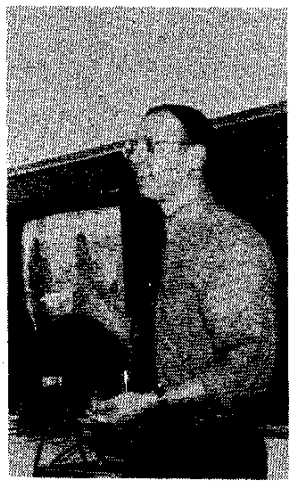
John Antonellis

TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

MATSOL Currents welcomes submissions to this column describing uses of technology in the classroom or innovative approaches involving technology.

Successful interviewing remains one of the largest obstacles faced by students as they prepare to enter the job market. The following is a description of a learner-centered class project which not only teaches interview skills through cooperative learning strategies but also creates useful video material produced by and for your target population.

Since I began teaching work orientation classes in the refugee program at the International Institute of Boston, I've been looking for commercial video material which I could use that demonstrates appropriate and inappropriate interview behavior. The clips we had on hand were too brief with too much voice-over and too much teaching. What I wanted was some raw footage from which students could pick out the appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Having access to a video camera this past winter, I decided to make my own training video, turning a 15-hour work orientation course into a class video project. The 12 participants were intermediate-level English speakers from Vietnam and Ethiopia. Most had completed high school.



John Antonellis
The Interview Project

If you've ever been filmed before and had the opportunity to witness yourself making errors, I'm sure you'll recognize the value of videotaping—a picture IS worth 1000 words. While the students at first seemed intimidated, once they became actors, their perspective changed. They weren't just learning interview skills but were assuming responsibility for a project, which was very empowering. Having students model bad as well as good interviews helped make the project fun and really succeeded in lowering the affective filter.

Guidelines

Richard Goldberg provides some very good guidelines for producing video projects in the Spring '93 issue of the *MATSOL Newsletter*. The projects can be as in-depth or brief as you and your students decide. Ours was very fast-paced, not only including good and bad interviews but also a practice interview with a native English speaker and a job site visit. We were able to accomplish so much in such a short time because we did not script the models, and I did not demand grammatical correctness. Students also came to the program with some knowledge of interview behavior from previous work orientation classes.

We videotaped every day, and this was important not only because it gave the participants lots of practice, visual feedback and familiarity with the camera, but also because it gave me a chance to get used to filming and learn from my mistakes. I picked up our borrowed camera only one day before the project began. I spent enough time with it to figure out very basic mechanics, but did most of my learning in the classroom. You may have a video expert in your class who can take charge of the filming, but I found that my being tied up with the camera encouraged cooperative learning—it kept me from interfering.

Choosing a realistic job context

Choosing a realistic job context for the interviews tied all of the activities together. We chose a local bakery which was hiring a number of our students. The three job openings of Packer, Baker-Mixer, and Personnel Assistant not only allowed them to focus their questions and answers toward a specific position but also allowed them to choose a job appropriate to their skill level. After the model good and bad interviews were completed, the same job context was applied towards their practice interviews with the native English speaker as well as to the site visit, where they were able to get a look at the jobs they had "applied" for.

Choosing roles

When I began this project I was fairly "product oriented" and this had implications for many of the decisions I made. Although the students took ownership of the project, the idea was teacher-, not student-generated. I basically assigned the role of interviewer to the best speakers in the group. My gut reaction was to have the remaining stronger speakers model the good interviews and let the weaker speakers play the role of "bad" applicant. But hardly any of my students wanted to model the good interviews, so at this point I allowed them to self select. This turned out to be a really smart move, not only in terms of project ownership, but also because it saved me from making a very serious

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LANGUAGE LORE

What the ?

Robert Saitz

We all accept the omnipresence and inevitability of grammar. That's what makes languages run. Without it we have only words. But we rarely question why we have what we have or where it came from. Why does French have gender? Why does Russian have inflections? How come Chinese has tones? Why does English have articles?

These questions are likely to be asked by ESL instructors when they see their students having difficulty with some structure of grammar and realize that that particular structure adds little to communication. Some things just seem not only unnecessary but clearly redundant. Why do English speakers have to put an *-s* on *book* in the phrase *seven books*? Doesn't seven tell us there's more than one? When we tell a student he/she has to put an *-s* there, we must feel a little uncomfortable—it begins to sound like a rule for rule's sake. And of course that's what a lot of grammar is: patterns that have generalized from a specific need to apply to a whole class, relevant or not.

Definite articles

The development of the Old English demonstrative into the current English article is a case in point. Our Asian students (among others) might well lament that they were born too late when we tell them that Old English did not require an article before nouns. In Old English the definite articles had just begun their transformation from being demonstratives to definite articles, and the indefinite articles were developing from the word *one*. Here is a ninth-century text of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Anno 449:

(1) Her Martianus and Valentunus onfengon reice and **At this time Martinus and Valentineus took over the kingdom**
(2) ricsodon seofon winter. And on hiera dagum Hengest **and reigned seven winters. And in their days Hengest**
(3) and Horsa, fram Wrytgeorne, gelthode, Bretta cyninge, **and Horsa, invited by Vortigern, the British King,**

Continued on the next page

Teaching Interview Skills *Continued from page 32*

error. Forcing low-level students to model bad interviews would make them vulnerable to criticism and could reinforce low self esteem. In fact, one student who chose to show how not to interview was embarrassed by even his intentional mistakes. A fair amount of self-confidence and security is needed to model bad interviewing techniques.

Viewing the videos

We evaluated trial videotapings together. If it was supposed to be a good model, "What was good?", "How could it be better?" If it was a bad model, there was a lot of praise for the mistakes, "What could make it even worse?"

I think students were quite pleased with their overall performance in the model interviews. It was clear that they had improved a great deal with both verbal and nonverbal behavior, not to mention their level of self-confidence. I've already used these models successfully with two subsequent groups of students. Even low-level beginner students who enter our program with no native literacy and little, if any, education enjoy watching these clips and pulling out the appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

Since I was also able to videotape the native speaker interviews, I actually ended up with two products from this project. The second product has also been useful in addressing the gap which often exists between what students learn in prevocational ESL classes and what is actually required in an interview. I was very surprised to find that virtually all of the students felt that the interviewer had been able to understand them regardless of whether or not there had been effective communication. In one clip the interviewer spends about five minutes rephrasing the same question, trying to identify the speaker's basic skills/past responsibilities, to which the student responds in varied and consistently unintelligible speech. Watching the clip makes it clear why the student was unaware of his lack of communication. To each of his answers the interviewer does what most of us do when we can't understand and don't want to make someone nervous—he nods and says "uh huh" and rephrases the question. Material like this is an invaluable teaching tool, so try it out!

This article is based on a presentation given at the MATSOL '94 Spring Conference. John Antonellis teaches at the International Institute of Boston.

WORD PLAY

Double takes: Puns

Suzanne M. Koons

"A pun is the lowest form of wit."
John Dennis
"Of puns it has been said that those most dislike who are least able to utter them."
Edgar Allan Poe

From the George Burns collection

Letter writer: Dear George, We're a young married couple considering starting a family. How far apart do you think children should be spaced?"
George: "About five miles."

George: I haven't got a cent. I'm a pauper.
Gracie: You're a what?
George: I'm a pauper.
Gracie: Oh, congratulations. Boy or girl?
George: I really don't know.
Gracie: Well, you better find out. Your brother will want to know if he's an uncle or an aunt.

George: Gracie, where did these flowers come from?
Gracie: Well, George, you told me when I went to visit Marie to take her flowers . . . I did.

[Thanks to Robert Saitz for contributing the George Burns quotes.]

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What the? *Continued from page 33*

(4) gesohton Bretene on thaem stede the is genemned
came to Britain at the place that is called
(5) Ypwinesfleot, aerest Brettum to fultume, ac hie
Ebbsfleet, at first as a help to the British, but they
(6) eft on hie fuhton.
afterwards fought against them.

We note that in line (1), Old English did not use *the* before "kingdom"; line (2) indicates that plural *s* was not universal; line (3) has "British king" with no article needed; line (4) has the demonstrative form *thaem* which could be "that" or already on its way to be just "the"; line (5) again needs no article before "British."

In the 12th and 13th centuries, texts show that the article was still not used as widely as it is today, but in the 14th century we begin to see familiar patterns. In Robert of Mannying of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne* we find:

That one was *a* good clerk
He turned many onto *the* faith.
Eutycyus was *the* clerk.
That taught *the* people about God's work.

The demonstrative form has become the general specifier that we use today.

Reflexive *-self*

Another form that has generalized, more recently than the articles, is the reflexive *-self*. In Old and Middle English, the *-self* suffix was an intensive, not a reflexive. That is, it was used to reinforce the personal pronoun, for example, *mi soelf ich gon atstonden uppen ane wolden* ("Myself, I took a defensive position in the forest."). It's clear that it can't be a reflexive there.

For the reflexive meaning (people affecting themselves), Old and Middle English used just the personal pronoun: *summe putten hem to the plow* ("some set themselves to plowing" or *ete we and fede us* ("let us eat and feed ourselves"); *hem* and *us* are the personal pronouns. The use of the personal pronouns in reflexive contexts can still be found in "Now I lay me down to sleep" and a variant of it in "I'm gonna get me a big pizza."

The use of the *-self* suffix as a generalized reflexive doesn't happen until the sixteenth century, but the grammatical generalization is what's interesting. It is useful to have *-self* as a third person reflexive; it can tell us the referent and distinguish between reference to the subject and reference to another person ("He paid himself/him"). But why do we need it for the first or second persons? Whether it's "I hurt *me*" or "*mysef,*" there's no chance of ambiguity. Linguists characterize it as an extension by analogy. But what caused it to analogize? A fad? An underlying desire to have things neat—an inborn seeking of rules? A teacher's idiosyncrasy?

Whatever the causes, the result is that we have two powerful grammatical rules (the definite article and the reflexive) for the use of forms that we often do not need. Whether I like it or not, I have to see *myself* in *the* mirror.

Robert Saitz teaches at Boston University.

Double takes: Puns *Continued from page 34*

Test your punmanship!

(Adapted from R. Lederer's *Get Thee to a Punnery*, Dell Publishing, 1988)

QUIZ #1

Use the clues to create a phrase consisting of two homophones.
Example: tiresome pig —> boar bore
a) forbidden music group —>
b) unadorned airliner —>
c) recently acquired antelope —>
d) sugary collection of rooms —>

QUIZ #2
Example: Old principals never die—>they just lose their faculties.
a) Old librarians never die—>
b) Old teachers never die —>
c) Old interpreters never die —>
d) Old grammarians never die —>

QUIZ #3

If clergymen are defrocked and lawyers are debarred . . .
Example: Dog catchers are —> debarked. Baseball players are —> debased.
a) Feminists are —>
b) Teachers are —>
c) Songwriters are —>
d) Scholars of Asia are —>

Answers on page 26

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