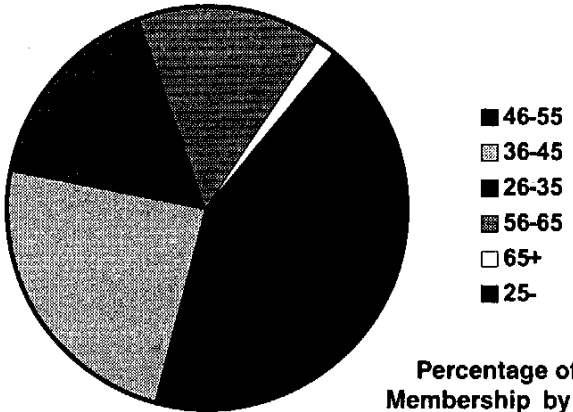


The Membership Speaks: Survey Results

by M. T. Cevallos (for the Survey Committee)

We are very pleased with our first-ever membership survey: 43% of our membership responded—an impressive number! Following are the questionnaire results; please remember these figures are based on the percentage of respondents.



Percentage of Membership by Age

Membership Data & Education Age

Almost half of our members (45.4%) joined between 1993–1998, or during the last five years.

The second largest group (21.4%) joined between 1988–1992, making them MATSOL members anywhere between 5–10 years. Those who have been part of MATSOL between 16–20 years (15.8%) make up the third largest group; they joined between 1978–1982. Those who have been members between 11–16 years (12.8%) joined between 1982–1987.

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“I Need to Know It Now” or Diary of A Frustrated Language Student

by Meg Young

Dateline: October, 1969

As ESL teachers, the majority of us agree that by making our instruction meaningful to our students’ immediate needs, we will have taken the first giant step towards helping them acquire English proficiency. On a day-to-day basis, we must ask ourselves only one question. How will this lesson help my students meet their needs today? Immediacy of need will ensure that the lesson will stick.

Nothing could illustrate this idea better than an experience I had more than 25 years ago. In 1969, armed with what I perceived as a formidable knowledge of German, (I had had six years of ALM German in high school and college), I set off for Europe on the ubiquitous Junior year abroad. Six years of a language! Hadn’t I excelled in both high school and college, memorizing those dialogues, ripping through substitution drills and mastering advanced grammatical structures? Hadn’t I even read some rather imposing literature in the target language? Proving, once again, that old adage that “pride goeth before a fall,” I was quickly humbled when we reached our destination, Vienna, Austria. Why couldn’t I understand these

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MATSOL Currents

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From the President

As the new president of MATSOL, I would first like to thank Bea Mikulecky for her hard work and dedication to MATSOL during her tenure as vice-president and president. Her leadership in planning last spring's conference and running the board of directors these past six months have helped MATSOL continue to be the strong organization that it is.

It is my hope that I can bring a certain degree of vision and long-range planning to MATSOL, to help guide this organization into the new millennium. I have noted a few areas in which the board can better serve the membership, and a few other areas in which MATSOL can break new ground and serve to be a true leader. MATSOL has the ability, thanks to the interest and support of its members, to shape policy and embark on new projects that will reinforce our position in the local community as well as send the message that MATSOL is a solid, professional organization, well-attuned to the needs of its members and those issues that affect them.

I plan to work closely with the current board of directors to look carefully at where MATSOL has been in the past and where it needs to go in the future. I am impressed at the amount of dedication and energy that this board has, and feel confident that we will reach any goal that we set. I would like to ask for your input as well. The results of our recent membership survey, which you can read about on page 1, have shown us that our members are indeed interested in MATSOL. This, to me, is a fantastic start, since the worst enemy of any organization is apathy, and it is clear that MATSOL members are not apathetic! I welcome your comments and opinions as to where you feel MATSOL should be in the next few years.

It is my wish that all of you enjoy a very healthy and prosperous new year, and that you, too, can reach the goals that each of you set for yourselves. Here's to a great 1999!

Diane Eagle

From the Editor

Happy holidays, in faith that this issue reaches you by the year-end deadline. Aren't you glad to be rid of 1998? Squalid on the national level, chaotic on the international level, but certainly eventful. Our profession was touched in ways that are reflected in this issue.

First, the Asian economic crisis rippled round the globe and cut into enrollment of foreign students at local colleges. The situation is improving now, but it pointed up how demand for English is tied to the global market. Two recipients of MATSOL grants to attend TESOL 98 discuss possible responses. Pam Couch reports on distance learning, and Adrienne Saltz on business English, comparing academic approaches with the techniques of corporate training.

Second, the issue of immigration surfaced amidst new controversy over bilingual education. In June, California voted basically to abolish it. Such a move seems unlikely in Massachusetts. We're less impacted by immigration

Continued on page 20

Bea Mikulecky

Our grateful appreciation to Bea Mikulecky, who served as Vice-President from March 1997-1998, and President from March-October 1998. Bea organized the Spring Conference and contributed many hours to the able leadership of our organization. We wish her a future filled with many rewards.

Diary *Continued from page 1*

German speakers? Why couldn't they understand me? Why couldn't I utter even one simple sentence that had until so recently flowed off my tongue? None of what I had learned seemed to be a part of what was happening all around me in this foreign environment.

Meantime, I was making some progress in adjusting to the culture of my new home. One of the pure delights of Vienna is the Staatsoper or National Opera House. My fellow students and I had quickly mastered the technique of buying a standing room ticket for about 25 Austrian schillings (about \$1.00 at the time), attaching our scarves to the standing room railing, running out to eat at our favorite cafe, and then returning to claim our place and stand through the performance. One evening I was enthralled to stand for three hours to watch the legendary Rudolf Nureyev dance. Perhaps my cultural background got the better of me but out came the camera. What could one little picture hurt? Besides, they were all finished; they were just bowing. I snapped away. Almost immediately an imposing gentleman in policemanlike uniform was at my side requesting that I follow him. In silence we rode up three floors in a small elevator to the bowels of the Staatsoper where the director or some equally powerful personage questioned me as to the content of the pictures etc. etc. I felt as if I had come up against a socio-cultural and linguistic brick wall. The questions and accusations were flying fast and thick when it suddenly dawned on me that I might be in fairly serious trouble here. Would they put someone in jail in Austria for taking flash pictures at the opera? The situation taught me two things instantaneously. First, never assume things will be the same for you as they have been in the past or elsewhere. The second was to put the German that was already at my disposal together into some meaningful output. Words, phrases and even sentences of surprisingly good syntax came pouring out of my mouth to try to explain that I had seen no notices that photography was not allowed, that I had taken only one picture and that, after all, I had only taken it during the final bows (a word I did not know at the time so had to illustrate). They frowned, ex-

changed some uncomplimentary comments about stupid American students who hadn't received proper upbringing, and let me go. Whew! With knees trembling and face flushed with embarrassment, I departed. It wasn't long, however, until I was recounting my exploits to my friends and feeling

I have acquired a strong sense of how important it is to provide meaning and purpose for our students now. Whenever possible, assignments should be authentic because we are all more willing to take risks when the questions are real.

euphoric about my German speaking ability. It also wasn't long until my hesitation was gone and my acquisition of German was proceeding at breakneck speed.

Twenty-nine years later, I can reflect on that incident from a safe perspective. In addition to having a rather blurry long distance snapshot of Rudolf Nureyev somewhere in my collection of photos, I have acquired a strong sense of how important it is to provide meaning and purpose for our students now. Whenever possible, assignments should be authentic because we are all more willing to take risks when the questions are real. Children learn their first language by using it to solve problems and get what they want. If we can furnish the tools that they require to accomplish those goals, the impact of the lessons will triple. Soon, they too will have stories to tell about how they met the big, bad, scary "language monster" and stared him down with skills they learned that day in ESL class.

After teaching English in Germany, Meg Young taught adults in Quincy, Cambridge and Somerville. For the last seven years she has taught ESL in the Braintree schools.

ZIP Code Alert

If your zip code has changed, PLEASE e-mail or call Joan Frutkoff, Membership Secretary. All she needs is your name and new zip code. If you do call and get her in person, she'll be more than happy to chat with you.

W: (617) 667-4065

jmfrutkoff@worldnet.att.net

Fall PDO: The Massachusetts Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework

by Joan Frutkoff

Editor's Note — As an experiment this year, MATSOL skipped the usual Fall Conference and offered instead a series of smaller, more targeted gatherings. These were PDOs, or Professional Development Opportunities. While space and deadline limitations prevent us from covering them all, here is a report on one.

One of the Fall PDOs, The Massachusetts Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework, was held at Johnson & Wales University in Providence RI.

The day started with an excellent continental breakfast — first things first — at a venue which proved to be very successful — an old, beautifully rehabbed building with the session rooms all on the same floor and easily accessible.

After an initial introduction, welcome and workshop overview, the participants — and the presenters, all of whom were working members of the Curriculum Frameworks group as well as practising teachers — were asked to reflect on a lesson in terms of what the goal of the lesson had been and what the students had learned.

We were then introduced briefly to the components of the Curriculum Framework — Strands and Standards — and immediately began hands-on work doing a jigsaw activity. Five different groups each worked on one of the five Framework Strands — Language Structure and Mechanics; Navigating Systems; Oral and Written Communication; Intercultural Knowledge and Skills; and Developing Strategies and Resources for Learning. Each group worked with one of the

Each group worked with one of the presenters and because the groups were small and the presenter was explaining and guiding us through the worksheet, we were able to get a good initial overview of the strand.

presenters and because the groups were small and the presenter was explaining and guiding us through the worksheet, we were able to get a good initial overview of the strand.

In the second part of the jigsaw activity, we moved into different groups and to “teach” our strand. There was lots of good discussion in the groups — questions and clarifications — and by the end of the activity we had a good idea of all five strands. It was a wonderful way to introduce the participants to the framework and have us actually work with, rather than

be lectured about, the strands and standards.

We were then asked to revisit our own teaching samples and see which, if any, of the strands it had addressed. This activity was expanded when all participants were asked to check off on newsprint to what extent we included the strands in our own teaching.

We all felt energized by the workshop and left with a sense of how we could examine our teaching and our curriculum development with the Frameworks as a basis.

The session concluded with a brief description of the next steps in the Frameworks process, including the dissemination of the Frameworks.

It was a truly excellent workshop. Three hours enabled us to examine the topic in some depth, and some participants said they could have continued in the afternoon. Working closely and hearing from the Practitioner Working Group Members was extremely valuable as they were able to provide inside information about the hows, whys and wherefores when we had questions. We also had the opportunity to meet and talk to colleagues working in programs in Rhode Island and learn that Newport is not all mansions, yachting and tennis — there are welfare mothers and people needing ESOL services in Newport.

We all felt energized by the workshop and left with a sense of how we could examine our teaching and our curriculum development with the Frameworks as a basis.

WRITE FOR

MATSOL Currents

CONTACT THE EDITOR

MATSOL Receives Grant for Innovative Professional Development Partnership

by Johan Uvin

MATSOL, in collaboration with six school districts (Dedham, Natick, Needham, Norwood, Westwood, and Watertown), the Center for Applied Linguistics, and the Center for Teacher Education, Training, and Research at the School for International Training received a \$48,500 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education (MDOE) for its proposal submitted in response to the MDOE's request for proposals for innovative programs advancing student learning. MATSOL's proposal was one of six funded applications.

MATSOL's application was the highest-ranking application submitted in this statewide competition. MATSOL proposed an innovative professional development model to improve achievement of English language learners in low-incidence districts.

The model combines teacher and administrator

training with parental involvement and parent education to improve the performance of English language learners on the MCAS tests and the standards embedded in the Curriculum Frameworks. District teams will be established to develop action plans to better support English language learners. 150 district team members along with 300 parents will be trained through a series of leadership academies in a variety of topics including standards-based curriculum development for the teachers of ESL learners in K-12 and program and curriculum design for teachers, administrators, and teacher trainers interested in using the Adult ESOL curriculum Frameworks in designing education programs for parents of English language learners.

MATSOL will coordinate the partnership and will generate funds for replicating the project in an additional five districts next school year. For further infor-

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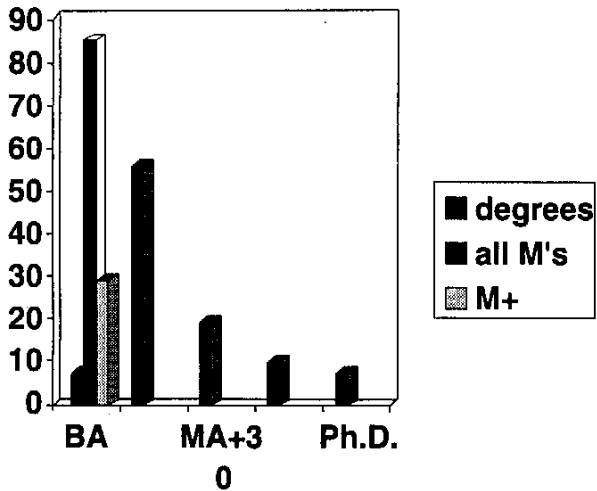
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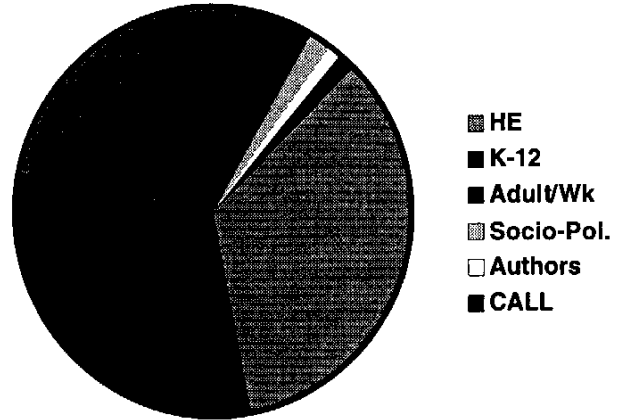
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Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2751 USA
Telephone 703-836-0774 • Fax 703-836-7864
E-mail conv@tesol.edu • <http://www.tesol.edu/>

Education



Total of Master's & Master's+ 84.8%

Most respondents identified with three main interest groups (SIGs); this is how the numbers were spread:

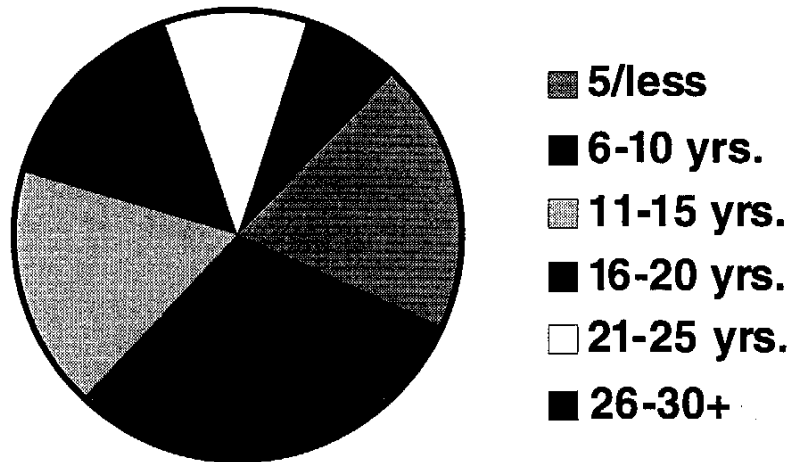


Of those who responded, 39.5% identified with low-incidence SIGs. It is interesting to compare the above figures to those of the workplace, both workplace 1 and 2, on the next page.

Who Are We?

Our Experience & the Workplace

As the chart below shows, most respondents are clearly experienced; of those polled, 63% have 6-20 years of ESOL teaching. About 34.2% work in programs where certification is required. Those polled are distributed as follows:

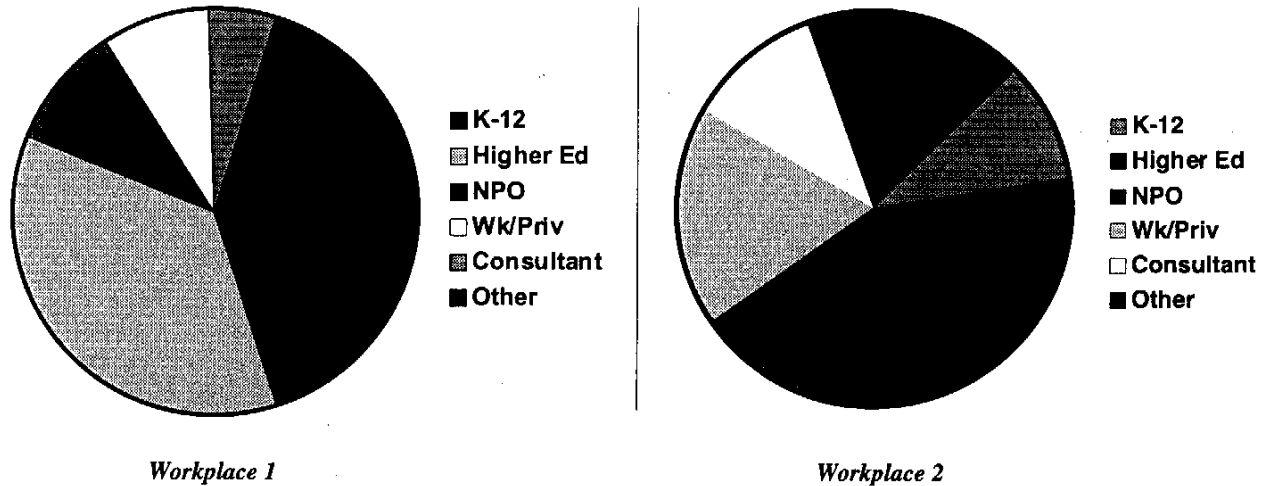


Continued on page 8

When we look generally at where we work, we come up with the following:

K-12: 31.5% Higher Ed: 34.5% NPOs/CBOs 34.2%

When the workplace is further defined, these are our results:



**Given its numbers, especially in W2, Other needs to be refined further.*

The Internet & MABE

A whopping 90.4% of our members have access to the Internet, either at home or at school. When asked whether a MATSOL/MABE partnership should exist, 52.2% agreed, 19.1% did not and a significant 30.7% were not sure. *Currents* might be the forum to provide more information — pro and

con — so that we can all reach an informed decision.

A great majority (82%) are aware of legal issues surrounding the teaching and learning of ESOL. Around 20% would be interested in health insurance if it were offered by MATSOL, but almost 33% were undecided.

Our Participation & Preferences

90.7% attend Conferences
28.1% attend PDOs

46% preferred Conferences
29.5 “ PDOs
20.5 wanted BOTH

48.4% have applied for grants
50.6% have not

Continued on page 8

Report Cards

MATSOL's		SIG Reps'	
Serves members' needs	50.2%	Serves members' needs	20.8%
Does not do above	19.1%	Does not do above	6.7%
Unsure	30.7%	Unsure	72.5%
Addresses SIG issues	28.5%		
Does not do above	20.0%		
Not sure	51.5		

Evaluation

	Conferences	SIG Reps	PDOs	Svcs/Grants
Unsatisfactory	6.1%	16.4%	19.7%	15.6%
Satisfactory	30.2%	45.9%	49.2%	57.8%
Very Good	43.4%	27.1%	23.5%	16.5%
Excellent	20.3%	10.6%	7.6%	10.1%

Services:	Currents	Bulletin	*Web Page	*Job Bank	*ESL Directory
Unsatisfactory	5.6%	8.8%	12.2%	15.5%	7.6%
Satisfactory	30.8%	35.9%	53.0%	31.8%	21.2%
Very Good	42.9%	43.5%	30.3%	35.1%	33.7%
Excellent	20.7%	11.8%	4.5%	17.6%	37.5%

*Valuable	*Use it	*On-line
35.0% Yes	45.9% Yes	61.8% Yes
3.4% No	50.0% No	14.2% No
61.6% NS	4.1% NS	24.0% NS

What challenges do we face?

- Lack of attention to Educational Reform initiatives and goals for ESOL, population / curriculum, assessment, MCAS, re-certification, creating opportunity to learn (class size)
- Guidance in how to integrate computer skills
- Support in addressing the needs of our peers who teach content areas and do not know how to work with English-language learners
- Employment conditions / part-time, pay/compensation, prep time, benefits
- Lack of compliance with the law
- Instability of funding and lack of job security
- Training in providing support services to meet students' needs beyond language / INS, health care
- Addressing teaching and learning issues / learning disabilities, management of multilevel classes
- Lack of diversity amongst teaching staff

Members Tell Board What to Do

- Unionize
- Broaden constituency: teachers and others
- Publish suggested working conditions
- Make Job Bank a useful employer tool
- Improve SIG advocacy/representation
- Make PD offerings more meaningful and responsive
- Move beyond identification towards true problem-solving and necessary political action
- Communicate and disseminate more information to funding institutions, legislators and policy makers

Board's Response

- Increase responsiveness of services as they relate to membership needs: Job Bank PDOs Grants
- Connect with members: Inform members more often about what we do and our field in general
- Strengthen the link between SIGS and members: Address employment issues
- Make services more user-friendly: Put ESOL Directory and Job Bank on-line
- Develop partnerships: MABE, Mass English Plus, unions
- Develop new services:
 - Systematic PDO based on challenges: develop PD plan
 - Explore health insurance option for members who want it
 - Legislative/lobbying capacity

Next Steps

1. Validate/Identify challenges
2. Read through answers to open-ended questions
3. Begin *MATSOL Forward* strategic planning process and present it to members at the Spring Conference for feedback
4. Track progress via new survey
5. Evaluate means of communication with members to improve them

M. T. Cevallos, Chelsea H.S., is General Representative on the MATSOL board.

Language Rights

What Is MATSOL's Position Regarding Bilingual Education?

by Johan Uvin

In response to the debate on the effectiveness of bilingual education and requests from MATSOL members and organizations concerned with the need of speakers of other languages, the MATSOL executive board articulated its position by adopting and endorsing the TESOL Language Policy in the spring of 1998. Since then, the executive board has followed the debate carefully, offered professional develop-

ment opportunities on the matter to ensure its membership is well-informed about existing research, policies, and effective practices in bilingual education, and most recently decided to begin the development of partnerships with the MABE, the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education, and other public and private organizations concerned with the needs and rights of English language learners and their families.

MATSOL Resolution on Language Rights

Adopted from the TESOL Resolution on Language Rights, by the MATSOL board, on April 27, 1998

Whereas MATSOL is an organization which promotes programs that provide speakers of other languages the opportunity to learn English; and

Whereas MATSOL supports the study of other languages for native English speakers; and

Whereas in recognition of the right of all individuals to preserve and foster their linguistic and cultural origins, MATSOL also supports learners of English maintaining their native tongues during and after their learning of English; and

Whereas these rights have been affirmed by such international organizations as UNESCO and the European Economic Community and in such international treaties as the Helsinki Accord; and

Whereas several states within the United States of America have enacted, and other states and the United States Congress are considering, legislative measures that could be used to deny these basic language rights; and

Whereas considerable resources being spent to implement English-only policies in the United States of America could be allocated more effectively for language instruction, including English as a second language, at all educational levels and within all educational settings;

Therefore Be It Resolved that MATSOL support measures that protect the right of all individuals to preserve and foster their linguistic and cultural origins;

Be It Further Resolved that MATSOL oppose all measures declaring English the official language of the United States of America or of any legally constituted part thereof; and

Finally Be It Resolved that MATSOL circulate this resolution to its membership, sister affiliates, to other professional organizations and to appropriate public officials, especially those who are promoting policies counter to the principles established in this resolution.

We in MATSOL strongly believe that this resolution reaffirms the highest ideals and traditions of our profession as teachers to speakers of other languages—namely, that all individuals have the opportunity to acquire proficiency in English while maintaining their own language and culture.

Beyond the Debate: A Focus on Quality Education

by Ester J. de Jong

California's Proposition 227 has stirred up yet another debate between opponents and proponents of bilingual education. Much of this debate has been dominated by program evaluation studies that compare the bilingual programs to English-only programs. These evaluation studies define language minority education as compensatory programs with a limited set of outcomes for its students. In this article, I will argue that it is time to move beyond the "pro-con debate"; and to stop excluding the education of bilingual students from questions of high expectations and program quality.

Expected Outcomes

Program evaluation studies have typically used English proficiency tests as the outcome measure for comparing bilingual and English-only programs (de Jong, 1993). This limited definition of the outcome of language minority education is problematic for two reasons. First, it accepts that the education of bilingual students can be reduced to the teaching of English. Second, it does not consider bilingualism as a potential outcome for language minority education. Compare the expected outcome above to current educational reform efforts.

Educators emphasize the need for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and advanced literacy skills, including the use of technology. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks refer to the challenge that schools have to "promote a high level of academic rigor and provide sound opportunities for all students to learn." National and state standards clearly outline that such "academic rigor" applies to math, science and technology, social studies (including history, geography, economics, and civics and government), and language arts. This comprehensive scope of current education reform must also apply to bilingual

children. To limit the outcomes of their education to language learning implies watering down academic expectations and placing bilingual students at a disadvantage from the beginning of their schooling. Any approach to language minority education has to demonstrate how it will provide bilingual students with equal access to a comprehensive curriculum with high expectations for academic achievement as well as for language development outcomes. Both sets of outcomes must be an integral part of any definition of language minority education.

The definition of outcomes is also specifically limited to learning English and does not accept bilingualism as a potential outcome of language minority education. This rejection of bilingualism stands in contrast to other trends. For example, Massachusetts has made proficiency in a foreign language a requirement for high school graduation. Also, business and industry have repeatedly indicated their need for multilingual employees as they try to compete in the global economy. It seems, then, that bilingualism is a valuable asset and can lead to high-paying jobs. Paradoxically, opponents of bilingual education recognize the value of bilingualism for native English speakers and enthusiastically support second language programs for these students. Yet, the same people oppose programs that allow students already fluent in a language other than English to capitalize on their linguistic and cultural resources and become bilingual. This double standard cannot be maintained, especially given the developments above. Bilingualism and biculturalism should be seen as a resource and a potential outcome for all students and should not be interpreted as a privilege for native English-speaking students only.

Continued on page 12

Policy Statement of the MATSOL Board on African American Vernacular English

Adopted by the MATSOL Board on April 27, 1998

The MATSOL Board is committed to strengthening the effective teaching and learning of English around the world. Its mission is to develop professional expertise and to foster effective communication in diverse settings while respecting individuals' language rights.

In accordance with its Policy on Language Carities, MATSOL affirms that the variety of English known as African American Vernacular English, Black English, Ebonics, and sometimes by other names, has been shown through research to be a rule-governed linguistic system, with its own lexical, phonological, syntactic, and discourse patterns and, thus, deserves pedagogical recognition. The

MATSOL board notes that effective educational programs recognize and value the linguistic systems that children bring to school. These programs use these linguistic systems as an aid and resource to facilitate the acquisition of Standard American English. Research and experience have shown that children learn best if teachers respect the home language and use it as a bridge to teaching the language of the school and wider society. Likewise, if the children's cultural and social backgrounds are valued, their self-respect and self-confidence are affirmed and new learning is facilitated, MATSOL this advocates that teacher education include instruction in linguistics and in developing partnerships between the home and the school.

Bilingual Education Debate *Continued from page 11*

Issues of Quality

The debate on bilingual education has focused so much on the issue of language choice (bilingual versus English-only) that it has ignored the issue of quality. Program evaluation studies have paid little attention to the conditions under which a particular program is implemented. In contrast, research on effective schools clearly illustrates that the outcomes of language minority education depend on the school and community context in which it takes place (e.g. Mace-Matluck, 1990; Lucas, Henze & Donato, 1990). Carter & Chatfield (1986) speculate that "high-quality bilingual programs within *effective schools* are essential to the academic success of economically disadvantaged language-minority children (p.201)."

The truth of the matter is that if a program is implemented in an ineffective school with poorly trained teachers, with deficient resources, and with a limited curriculum, it will have poor results, regardless of whether they are a bilingual or an English-only program. Such substandard programs should not be accepted for bilingual students. Program outcomes need to be placed in the context of school/community-based and program-based variables that positively and negatively affect the quality of language minority education. Such variables include teacher characteristics, quality of the curriculum and instruction, and the program's integration into the school environment. Careful analysis of these variables can, in turn, directly inform school and classroom practices.

Conclusion

The debate between proponents and opponents of bilingual education has been dominated by a narrowly defined notion of language minority education in terms of language learning

and language choice. Consequently, the debate has neglected the question whether different programs offer bilingual students a good education. What is needed is a definition of language minority education that focuses on academic, language as well as sociocultural outcomes and that considers issues of quality of instruction, of teachers, of curriculum and of the whole school environment. Policy makers and educators need to move beyond the pro-con debate and start defining and evaluating language minority education in terms of providing access to quality schooling. As Brisk concludes, "[b]ilingual students have not only the potential but also the right to be prepared to meet the challenges of modern society."

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The Future of Bilingual Education in Massachusetts Lessons from California

by Rosalie Pedalino Porter

The thirty-year experiment called "bilingual education," teaching children in their primary language while they are learning English, is seriously challenged across the country. Educators are divided into two major and seemingly irreconcilable factions: traditional supporters of the status quo, i.e., bilingual schooling for limited-English proficient children (essentially for Spanish speakers); and the innovators calling for early immersion programs in English. The crucial decision on which path to follow will determine the future quality of schooling for the 45,000 English language learners in Massachusetts public schools.

Following the first national Bilingual Education Act (1968), Transitional Bilingual Education (Chapter 71-A) was enacted by the Massachusetts legislature in 1971 and similar

laws were soon passed in a dozen other states. The 1970s and '80s saw the establishment of bilingual programs, the settlement of several court cases in favor of native language instruction, and the publication of the first studies on the effectiveness of this teaching strategy. Disappointing results of bilingual programs prompted a search for viable alternatives that began in the 1980s and grew more widespread in this decade. In practical terms, bilingual programs have not consistently demonstrated their superiority to other teaching approaches for improving the English language learning and academic achievement of limited-English students.

California, with 1.4 million immigrant and native-born limited-English students, serves as an example of how the

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Lessons from California Continued from page 10

bilingual education drama may play out in other states. In 1976 California first mandated native language instruction programs. By 1987 the legislature allowed the bilingual education law to expire. Nevertheless, the State Department of Education continued to impose the bilingual requirement on all school districts with limited-English students, allowing only a few districts to provide "alternative" English immersion teaching.

Not until 1992 did California publish any evaluation of the outcomes of bilingual schooling and this first report, *Meeting the Challenge of Language Diversity*, found no evidence for the benefits of native language instruction. The report concluded that "California public schools do not have valid and ongoing assessments of performance for students with limited proficiency in English. Therefore, the state and the public cannot hold schools accountable for LEP students achieving high levels of performance." (author's emphasis) This is an astounding statement — if the schools are not responsible for demonstrating student progress, then who is?

For ten years the California legislature attempted to enact a law to reinforce the right to program choice and the requirement for accountability of LEP student progress. Bilingual educators and ethnic advocacy groups routinely opposed and defeated these bills. During this period, any school district trying to initiate an English language program faced strong obstructionist tactics by the State Department of Education. The few that persisted—Westminster, Magnolia, Savanna, Orange — were forced to go to court to win a right that was already theirs under existing state and federal law.

The "English for the Children" campaign that won 61% of the vote on June 2nd and now requires English immersion instruction grew out of a dozen years of frustration with unacceptably high dropout rates for Latino students, little evidence of academic success for English language learners after 6 or 7 years of native language instruction, and the inability of the legislature or the state education bureaucracy to open the school doors to innovation and improvement.

Massachusetts has paralleled the California experience in failing to collect student performance data over the past 27 years to demonstrate good or bad results of TBE programs. Every effort to change the TBE law to allow local school districts a choice of programs and to add strong accountability has been rebuffed. Even now, with the state's massive investment in education reform since 1993, one hardly dares open a public discussion of the urgent need for improving the schooling of limited-English students.

One example of resistance to accountability is the reading test administered to 3rd graders across the state in April 1997 and 1998. In 1997 there were 3254 3rd grade students who had started school as English language learners. Of the 3rd grade student population at large, 99% took the reading test; of the students classified as "Special Education," 92% took the test; of the LEP students only 58% were tested. Lest

one imagine that there was honest misunderstanding in the first year this test was administered, the 1998 participation rates are even more appalling. In 1998, the number of 3rd graders who started school in the LEP category had increased to 4582. While 98% of SPED students took the reading test, only 42% of the LEP students participated. When I investigated further, I discovered that 3259 (71%) of this year's LEP 3rd graders had been in Massachusetts public schools since 1st grade or earlier.

Without flexibility in local program choice and the participation of English language learners in the assessment process, the opportunities for intelligent changes and improvements are stunted.

How can we account for such a high percentage of students left out of a state test that is officially described thus? "Virtually all 3rd grade students are expected to participate in the testing program, since full participation is necessary to measure the achievement of all students in order to serve them effectively?" There is a loophole in the wording of the state testing guidelines that is being exploited to the extent that one district excused 97% of its students from the reading test. Without a base line measure of student performance in the most essential skill — reading — adequate measures cannot be taken to improve the schooling of these students.

Will Massachusetts be the last place in the country to retain its rigid, one-size-fits-all, bilingual program mandate? Without flexibility in local program choice and the participation of English language learners in the assessment process, the opportunities for intelligent changes and improvements are stunted. The time for spirited public discussion is now, and the Education Reform initiative must finally take serious account of the needs of English language learners.

Rosalie Pedalino Porter, Ed.D., Director of the Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development (READ) in Amherst, has been a Spanish Bilingual Teacher in the Springfield Public Schools, Coordinator of Bilingual/ESL Programs for the Newton Public Schools, and served on the MATSOL Executive Board, 1987-89. Currently she serves as a consultant in program development and evaluation and is editor of the scholarly journal, READ Perspectives.

How I Got into ESL

by Joan Frutkoff

Like a number of other ESL teachers, I got into the field because I was.... a French teacher. In the mid-sixties, in Johannesburg, South Africa, a high school French and English teacher (with a BA and teacher's diploma in French and English — not ESL) was the obvious choice to teach not only a foreign language but foreigners as well.

My first ESL class — in my first year of teaching — was a small group of 8th grade Portuguese immigrants to South Africa. Without any background in ESL but with my grounding in foreign language teaching, I sailed into the class, queen of substitution drills — and was that an exciting way to teach and learn compared to the grammar/translation method I had suffered through in high school. Had I known then what I know now and how totally unprepared and unqualified I was to teach ESL, I would probably never have agreed to teach the class.

One year later, I emigrated from South Africa to Israel where I taught EFL for 3 years to adults and in a high school. I spoke English, I had a degree to teach English and French, so again, I was “qualified” to teach ESL. But there were enough problems (not the focus of this short piece) to make me leave teaching for the next 15 years.

1981 saw yet another immigration in my life, this time to the USA. After 2 non-teaching jobs, and my 40s fast approaching, the teacher in me surfaced loud and strong. I realized that ESL teaching had to have changed since the late Sixties (getting older and wiser has its advantages) and I applied to and was accepted for the Masters program in ESL at UMASS/Boston.

I was fortunate to return to a field I had gotten into by default but which has become both a vocation and a passion.

How I Got into ESL

by Johan Uvin

At first I thought that answering this question would be straightforward. Soon, however, I realized that describing how I entered the world of ESOL was a little bit more complicated. In fact, I have never gotten into ESL. I started out at age ten by learning FSL (French as a Second Language). At age fourteen like all my classmates in the Jesuit secondary school I attended in Aalst, Belgium I began learning EFL (English as a Foreign Language) or ETL (English as a Third Language) to be more exact. I loved it.

After high school, I went on to teacher training college and majored in teaching Dutch, History, and EFL. After nine years of teaching in vocational education and adult basic education (including DSL or Dutch as a Second Language), my interest in understanding the teaching implications of second language acquisition research grew. I looked for programs that met my needs in the UK and US and picked the School for International Trainings (SIT) Masters of Arts in TESOL (MAT) Program as the program that appeared to best match my learning needs and style at that point in my career.

My first experience teaching ESOL was facilitated by SIT's MAT internship requirement. I spent one of the colder winters I can recollect in New York City teaching undergraduate students and health care attendants at LaGuardia Community College. After graduating I began teaching (very) part-time in the evening program of the Huntington Avenue YMCA in Boston. While teaching at the Y, I learned about a substitute teaching position in a refugee program in Chinatown and soon thereafter became the Lead Teacher for the South Cove Manor Nursing Home Workplace Education Program operated by the Chinese American Civic Association (CACA).

I stayed with CACA for quite some time, taught ESOL to garment workers, and gradually assumed less teaching and more curriculum and program development responsibilities for the agency. Subsequently, I moved into administrative positions with UNICEF Sierra Leone, the Massachusetts Department of Education, and the Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning and Malden Mills Industries. So, how did I get into ESOL? As a learner, I guess.

On The Road to Massachusetts, via Morocco

by Diane Eagle

I'm afraid the manner in which I entered this profession wasn't funny or exciting or even very unusual. I started out as a Peace Corps volunteer, as many in this field do.

I spent four years at the University of Illinois, majoring in French linguistics. It didn't really occur to me that, in spite of how very exciting and academically stimulating *I* found

this major, it would be difficult for me to find a job with a BA in French linguistics. It didn't matter though, because I had known since high school that I would be a Peace Corps volunteer after I graduated college, ever since a guest speaker had come to our French class to talk to us about his Peace

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On the Road to Massachusetts, via Morocco Continued from page 14

Corps experiences. As a restless teenager growing up in a farming village of 500 people, I longed for the day that I could make my getaway, and something as exotic-sounding as the Peace Corps was tailor-made for a dreamer like myself.

I always joke that what else could I have done after college, with a BA in French, other than join the Peace Corps! But I very often wonder what I would be doing today if I had not had my Peace Corps experience, since that introduced me to ESL. It's so amazing to me how certain experiences are so life-altering, and that they happen almost imperceptibly.

I am accepted to the Peace Corps, and the letter says that I will be a TEFL volunteer. Hmmmmmm... what's THAT? Well, it all starts soon enough— how to teach English using

the audio-lingual approach, how to convey verb tenses and grammatical points using only body language, how to create single-, double- and triple-slot substitution drills, how to explain the difference between the simple past and the present perfect with stick figures— and my life is forever changed.

Today I find myself the director of the American Language Academy in Boston, Massachusetts and the president of the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Sometimes I have to pinch myself. I am, after all, a country bumpkin from a town of 500 people in the heart of Illinois. Thanks to ESL, however, I have lived almost 7 years of my life in 4 foreign countries, and have had experiences that most people only dream about. I guess dreams really do come true.

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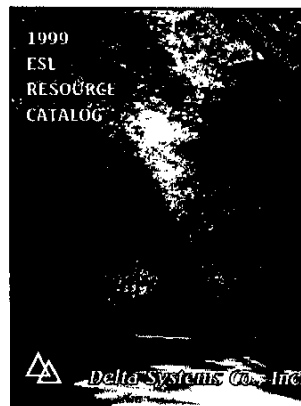
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MATSOL Works with the ESL Standards and Assessment Project on Professional Development

by Deborah J. Short

(reprinted from *TESOL Matters*)

This year should be a stimulating one for teachers of English language learners in low-incidence districts in Massachusetts thanks to a new opportunity created by MATSOL. MATSOL, the Massachusetts Association of Teachers to Students of Other Languages, was awarded a professional development grant to work with these teachers from the state Department of Education under the Innovative Programs Advancing Student Learning program. English language learners (ELLs) in Massachusetts, as in many other states in the U.S., are expected to meet high educational standards and demonstrate their knowledge through state tests in multiple content areas. Often though, the ESOL teachers and the content teachers need additional guidance in providing standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment to these students. Low incidence ESOL programs, in particular, have additional challenges of limited resources and a scarcity of program models.

Often, transitional bilingual education, native language development, or native language support are not legally required given a limited number of speakers of the same non-English language. Yet, the number of these districts is growing in Massachusetts and throughout the U.S.

Through this new project, however, ESOL teachers in Massachusetts will increase their awareness of TESOL's ESL Standards and explore ways to align the ESL standards with state content area standards. In this way, teachers will take into account and promote the ELLs language learning in their curricula, instructional practice, and assessments. To accomplish the project, "Improving Achievement of English Language Learners in Low Incidence Districts," MATSOL members have invited the ESL Standards and Assessment Project team, based at the Center for Applied Linguistics, and teacher trainers from the School for International Training to work with them. Members of the ESL Standards and Assessment team will help MATSOL plan and deliver three, ongoing, professional development academies to teams of ESOL teachers, content teachers, and parents from the low incidence districts of Dedham, Norwood, Watertown, Needham, Natick, and Westwood.

A major goal of the project is to help teachers implement standards-based curricula and instruction. In one academy ESOL teachers will focus on aligning the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts to the ESL Standards and then designing standards-based units of instruction. They will also examine ways to develop appro-

priate classroom assessments and to gather achievement data systematically in order to evaluate the students' progress towards meeting the standards. In another academy, the MATSOL and TESOL standards team will work with content area teachers to adjust their instruction and assessment prac-

This project will build the capacity of low-incidence school districts to support ELLs in their pursuit of academic excellence.

tices so that ELLs in their classes can achieve academically in the specific subject areas. Some overlapping sessions in these two academies will allow ESOL and content teachers to share their expertise and establish strategies for further collaboration in their districts.

A second important goal of this project is to help districts develop a portfolio process so they can assess how well ELLs are learning and, using that data, modify programs and instruction to improve student performance. A component of this portfolio process will be regular assessment of the districts' ability to meet TESOL's Standards of Access for Quality Educational Experiences (known as TESOL's Access Brochure) for these students.

Another activity planned in the project is the delivery of workshops for parents and adult ESOL educators, using the new Massachusetts Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework to design, implement, and evaluate ESOL service for parents. In addition, dissemination of the training curricula and a training of trainers institute will take place so the academies can be replicated in five new low-incidence districts next year.

This project will build the capacity of low-incidence school districts to support ELLs in their pursuit of academic excellence. It will implement a model that can be replicated elsewhere, partnering a TESOL affiliate with research and teacher training institutions to implement standards-based educational practices for teachers of English language learners. For more information, contact Paula Merchant, Professional Development Coordinator for MATSOL at merchant@MassEd.net.

Software and ESL

by John DeSzendeffy

Our ESL program just got a bunch of computers and we're wondering what kind of software we should get. Could you recommend some?

I get this question from teachers and administrators in other programs about as often as I hear "Why doesn't the printer work?" in my labs. The answer to the latter is usually simple: It's not turned on. The former takes a bit more work, and my first task in addressing it is to qualify my approach. As forthcoming as I'd like to be with a handy list, I cannot responsibly answer this question without first knowing the full context in which the software is to be used. Otherwise, I would be assuming that a generic set of tools be used to achieve whatever result is possible with them.

Software makes the lab

No. It doesn't. The single most important component determining success in a computer lab—as with any classroom—is teacher preparation. It's not the software or the speed of the network or the efficiency of the operating system or the lab coordinator or anything else more than the degree to which a teacher is trained and ready to confidently and competently use activities in the labs that support learning objectives. I don't know a CALL (computer-assisted language learning) lab director who doesn't preach this.

The more software titles the better

Again, no. In my experience, the 80/20 rule applies to CALL: 80% of computer users utilize 20% of any particular program. They focus on quantity over quality—that is, how many programs they have, not how well any one may be able to satisfy their needs. Consider this example: How much do you really know about the navigational features of the Web browser? Or, how many users know how to use their trusted word processor to number pages, insert headers or footers, add annotations, create an index or glossary, place and arrange objects such as graphics, tables or spreadsheets, use or create styles, format columns, etc.? Most importantly, how many of these features do most users *need* but not use because they never bothered to learn? Have I mentioned that exploiting a *few* titles costs less than buying many?

Where do I find ESL software?

Though the floodgates have yet to open on a gush of useful, effective ESL software, there's enough for most users. The Web is an excellent place to look for software simply because any title worth its bytes has a Web site. Start with the cheap stuff: CELIA (the Computer Enhanced Language Instruction Archive) at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, makes available for downloading ESL and FL shareware and freeware for Macs and PCs. Programs are categorized by language and

then by use (reading, grammar, etc.). It's at:
www.latrobe.edu.au/www/education/celia/celia.html

If you're not used to evaluating software yourself, see what others use and for what purposes. "Connections for Computer Assisted English Language Learning," compiled by Richard Chantrill, provides access to ESL software reviews:
www.cltr.uq.oz.au:8000/~richardc/reviews.html

What titles should I get?

We return to the question that I stated at the beginning would require a bit of work to answer—context:

1. What *platform* are you using? The platform is the operating system, such as Macintosh, Windows, DOS, UNIX, LINUX, etc. The *version* used is also important to know. For example, software that runs on Windows 95 or 98 might not run on version 3.11.

2. What's your *hardware configuration*? Software has varying requirements for the computers on which it runs. Hardware requirements, usually listed in the product description, might specify minimum installed RAM, processor speed, hard drive size, FPU (floating point unit), CD-ROM drive, MPEG card, a network connection, etc.

3. Are your computers networked? Do they utilize a *server* (in a local client-server environment)? Some large, high capacity servers can serve, or "run," applications for multiple *clients* (other computers on the network). Sometimes an entire CD can be copied to a network data server and run by many clients on the network who do not have the physical CD. Though this arrangement can offer greater speed and flexibility, it's costly and requires technical set up and administration. Running individual CDs on computers is easier.

4. Who are your students? We have to consider their age, language and computer proficiency, and their specific language needs. The lower the language and computer proficiency of students, the simpler a program must be.

5. How much computer experience do your teachers have? Do they have access to training, or are they comfortable learning on their own? How steep a learning curve would they be comfortable with? Don't choose software for which you can't provide or obtain training for teachers.

6. How much specific experience do your teachers have in a CALL environment? Remember that teaching in a computer lab differs significantly from teaching in more traditional

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Software and ESL *Continued from page 16*

environments. Many programs now offer teachers release time for CALL training, preparation, or materials development.

7. What are the specific learning objectives for your students? Although many programs can be considered multi-skill in their use, some, especially content programs, do emphasize some skills over others, and address specific interests and language levels.

For another discussion on this topic, see "A Place to Start in Selecting Software," an article published in the *CAELL Journal* (8:1, Winter 1997/98) by Deborah Healey, Oregon State University, and Norman Johnson, Lane Community College. It's also available on-line at:
osu.orst.edu/~healey/dj_software_selection.html

Recommendations

Without answers to the above questions, I can't recommend any titles. I can, nonetheless, offer a short list of possibilities from which to choose in accordance with the environment of their use.

Focus on Grammar, Exceller Software (www.exceller.com, exceller@aol.com, 607-257-5634). This interactive series, based on the texts of the same name, consists of four levels: Basic, Intermediate, High-Intermediate, and Advanced. Each level contains a significant amount of practice material in the grammar areas offered, with activities such as "Recognizing" and "Discovering" the grammar and reinforcement exercises involving reading, listening, and writing. (Mac/Win, CD, networkable on fast networks.)

Pronunciation Power, English Computerized Learning (www.englishlearning.com, info@englishlearning.com). This interactive program presents 52 phonemes aimed at intermediate to advanced English learners (though we have used it with all levels at CELOP). Students can study the production of models, hear example sounds in initial, medial, and final positions, discriminate minimal pairs, and record and compare their own pronunciation. Although it offers a wave display of sounds for students to graphically compare their recordings with the model, I haven't found this feature to be particularly practical or useful. (Mac/Win, CD, not networkable.)

NewReader, Hyperbole Software (John McVicker: mcvicker@ohiou.edu, 740-594-4609). NewReader, a HyperCard-based program, reads texts you make available to

it and applies ready-made vocabulary and grammar activities, including cloze, grammar search, jumbles of sentences or paragraphs, timed reading, etc. It's easy to use, students find it a fun way to read, and it's proven to be one of our most popular programs in the MLL. (Mac only, floppy disk.) For Windows, John McVicker suggests Text Tangles by Vance Stevens (E-mail: vstevens@emirates.net.ae).

ClarisWorks (now called AppleWorks), FileMaker, Inc. (formerly Claris) (www.filemaker.com, clariscr@aol.com, 800-325-2747). Every lab needs a good *suite* of programs. This well integrated package allows you to easily create text, drawing, paint, spreadsheet, and database documents. It's a terrific value and far less complicated to use than, for example, Microsoft Works or Office. And cheaper. (Mac/Win, CD, networkable.)

Hollywood, Theatrix (www.theatrix.com, 800-795-8749). In this authoring environment students choose characters, voices, sets, and movements for a play, then write the script. It's a fun and open-ended writing activity for all levels, one best done in pairs. See sample plays at the Web site. (Mac/Win, CD, networkable.)

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing, Mindscape (www.mavisbeacon.com, 415-897-9900). This typing tutor offers a game-like interface and builds skills essential to anyone who will spend much time on a computer. (Mac/Win.) Encyclopedias: **Encarta** (Microsoft, www.microsoft.com),

Compton's (The Learning Company, www.learningco.com, 800-227-5609), **Grolier** (gi.grolier.com, custserv@grolier.com). If your school doesn't subscribe to an on-line encyclopedia, such as Encyclopedia Britannica at Boston University, then you need the CDs. With indexed audio, text, and graphic content, they're excellent for research projects. (Mac/Win, CD.)

Longman Dictionary, Exceller Software (see above). Similarly, if your school doesn't subscribe to an on-line dictionary, such as the OED or Merriam Webster's that Boston University subscribes to, then you need these CDs as well. (Mac/Win, CD.)

*John de Szendeffy is the Coordinator fo the Multimedia Language Lqb at CELOP. E-mail: johndesz@bu.edu
Lab Web site: www.bu.edu/celop/MLL*

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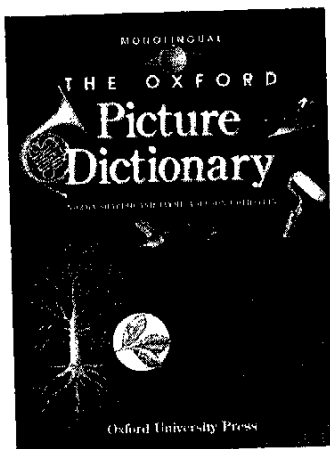
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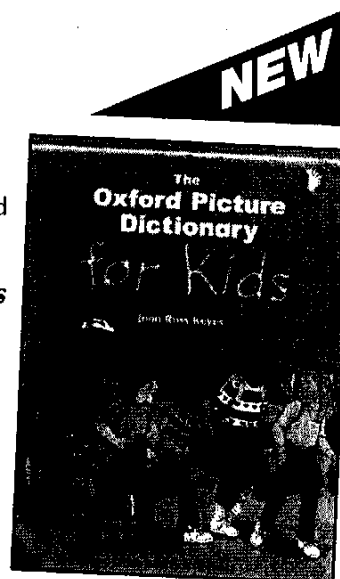
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Wish Matrix

by Richard Greenblatt

This past summer, while talking about wishes with an adult conversation class, I stumbled into a seldom-used corner of English grammar. It's the use of "wish" in the present, past and future with the verb "to be." In presenting the wish and its result, I came up with an illustration that the students easily understood. It helped them to quickly and correctly use the language. I call it the Wish

Matrix (a catchy name, I admit.)

Unlike the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd conditionals (which represent the unreal as well as the real), the time when the wish is made, be it present, past or future, does not affect the grammar of the result of the wish. They are independent grammatical entities. I found this an interesting fact, because usually grammar changes, depending on the tense of the first clause.

Wish Matrix

I wish →→→→→→→→

to be rich. (present/future change at time of wish)
(that) I were rich. (present time at the time of wish)

I wished →→→→→→→→

(that) I had been rich. (past change at the time of wish)
(that) I will be rich. (future change at the time of wish)

I will/am going to wish →→

Follow up activities can include 1) reviewing with the contractions, 2) the story of the "stonecutter who wishes he were the king" (present, past or present/future tenses), and 3) the story "Sylvester and Magic Pebble" by William Steig (Simon and Schuster) which uses active and stative verbs with "wish" and the conditional tenses.

ESL is the day job for Richard Greenblatt, a professional jazz musician (percussion). He's used music and rhythm to teach speaking skills, in New York City, Barcelona, Spain, and currently at Showa Boston.

From The Editor Continued from page 2

(about 4% language minority in schools, as opposed to 20% in California). And our programs, one suspects, are better run. Still, there is fresh concern about how best to meet the needs of Limited English Proficient students, or LEP's. (What tone-deaf bureaucrat comes up with these acronyms? This one always makes me think of lepers.

TESOL has mounted a strong defense of current legislation; the MATSOL board approved its Statement on Language Policy, introduced here by Johan Uvin. At a more substantive level, we asked two experts for contrasting views on the future of bilingual education in Massachusetts — long-time critic Rosalie Porter, and Framingham administrator Ester de Jong.

Third, education in the state remains roiled by implementation of the 1993 Reform Act. Carol Short reports on the work of devising new standards and tools of assessment for ESL in the public schools. And we note a grant by the state DOE, through which MATSOL will be directly involved in reform.

So much for news — what about us? Our lead story gives the results of the survey of MATSOL membership done last May. I found it fascinating. There's a narcissistic thrill in seeing yourself profiled, but it also gave helpful indications on how the organization can better serve its members. For example, funeral benefits? One fact to come out was just how old we're getting. We're overwhelmingly female, we're

shockingly well-educated, and we're mostly middle-aged. How did this happen?

The picture is fleshed out a bit in a new regular feature — How I Got into ESL. Three board members start the ball rolling, but I earnestly invite any reader to contribute. The idea is that whether or not the ESL profession brings riches and prestige, it certainly gives us stories to tell. What's yours, in 300 words or less?

And while you're writing your background, write a check to pay your dues. A paradox: in a year of extraordinary and dynamic activity for the board, our membership has dropped sharply. It's down from around 1000 to 600. We can't figure why, but I ask that you not only pay up yourself — please collar at least one co-worker and shame them into doing likewise. Lots of schools will reimburse, if you just request it.

Last, a fond farewell to Bea Mikulecky. She organized the spring conference as Vice-President, and served as President till October. Running this board is virtually a full-time job, but then Bea got another one — coordinating ESL at North Shore Community College in Lynn. Her replacement, Diane Eagle, brings much energy, administrative savvy and Midwesternheartiness to the position.

Tom Griffith

Your Dollars at Work: MATSOL Grant Reports

by Sterling Giles

This was the second year since MATSOL reinstated grants for its members. The criteria for eligibility and stipulations were defined by the Board. The President then appointed a committee of five, mostly past recipients, to review and vote on the applications. I chaired this committee, which consisted also of John Antonellis, John de Szendeffy, Amelia Onorato, and Ruth Weinstein. Thanks are due for all their hard work. As a group, we represented K-12, adult, workplace, intensive, and higher-ed areas of the field. In late April '98 the applicants for MATSOL Grants were informed of the results of the selection process.

Four travel grants were awarded to Pamela Couche, Carol Pineiro, Adrienne Saltz, and Elaine Wilson, who by now will have attended conferences including TESOL, English Teachers of Israel, and Diversity, Learning, and Institutional Change. (One of the grantees later declined the award, having since gotten institutional support.) There was only one proposal for a research grant, but it was felt that the project would not benefit the membership, so no research grants were awarded this year.

The newest grant category, Professional Development Opportunity (PDO), really got off the ground this year. PDOs were developed so that members could share substantial areas of expertise in sessions longer than those possible at conferences, and for members to have more opportunities

throughout the year to earn professional development points (PDPs). This year we were able to award six grants for PDOs. The grantees are Carol Allen & Melinda Lee, Diane Dimascio Cinar, Marcia Puryear, Marlyn Katz Levenson, Catherine Carney and Carol Baum. Members of the Board are working with these people to produce each session. The sessions take place on weekends, weekdays, evenings and in one case, on an ongoing basis; in this way PDOs offer more flexibility than conferences. The PDOs are a wonderful way to get people involved and making things happen in a more focused and project-oriented way than Board membership; here we see members helping members while helping themselves.

By the time you read this you will already have learned about the PDOs through a series of registration mailings. Suffice it to say that the range of topics is wide and intriguing. Each of the recipients will follow up with a short report in *MATSOL Currents*, so we still have that to look forward to. (Carol Allen's report on Computerized TOEFL already appeared in Vol. 24, #2, and in this issue.

Congratulations to everyone who participated by reading grants, applying, traveling to bring back expertise, and for sharing that knowledge in a variety of ways. Keep your eyes open for the next application deadline, which will be announced in this magazine.

From Starbucksland: A Report on TESOL 1998

by Pamela Couch

The 1998 TESOL Conference in Seattle, Washington marked the fifteenth anniversary of the first CALL sessions at TESOL. This year, in addition to a wide spectrum of presentations on CALL classroom activities and materials, there were a number of sessions looking at the role of technology in ESL/EFL teacher education. One interesting example was "Teaching a TESOL Methods Course Online," presented by Linda Baker of UCLA.

This presentation described an online course offered as part of UCLA Extension's TESOL Certificate Program. The course includes traditional teacher-training activities, such as discussing TESOL methods, developing lesson plans, making classroom observations, and critiquing materials. However, instead of meeting on campus, the students and the instructor meet in a virtual classroom, communicating via a groupware system called Convene.

The basic set-up of this online course is similar to that of an "on-ground" course. For example, the instructor might assign a textbook reading and provide a list of questions. The students then log on to discuss these questions with each other in small groups that the instructor has previously created.

Since student discussion is the linchpin of the course, the instructor's goal is to design activities that promote interaction.

To facilitate communication, the instructor creates a folder for each topic and assignment, as well as a personal mailbox for each student. When students work in groups, they go to a "meeting" by creating a new folder and adding their own ideas and responses to ideas from other group members. Because Convene is an asynchronous system, messages are stored on a central server, allowing participants to make contributions at their own convenience. This is important in that most of the students are working adults who live in various parts of the country and have very different schedules. All of the folders except for the personal folders are shared and accessible to everyone. This gives the online classroom the flavor of a workshop, with more collaboration than competition.

An online course has both advantages and disadvantages. One obvious advantage is that participants don't need to commute to class and can "attend" at any time, fitting the infossessions around their work schedules. The course also

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Report on TESOL 1998 *Continued from page 21*

encourages equal participation by all students and may be especially beneficial for students who are ordinarily reticent in a traditional classroom. On the other hand, the lack of face-to-face interaction may make it difficult for some students to adjust to the virtual classroom. The course is also more time-consuming than a traditional course because students are required to participate five days out of seven to keep the momentum going.

Despite these drawbacks, Ms. Baker believes that the course is a viable alternative to a traditional TESOL methods course. Readers who wish to know more about this and other on-line courses offered through UCLA Extension should visit the web site at www.OnlineLearning.net.

Pamela Couch is a Senior Lecturer at the Center for English Language and Orientation Programs at Boston University

From TESOL '98: Down to Business

by Adrienne Saltz

Like its sister intensive ESL programs, CELOP is facing enrollment dips due to the economic crisis in Asia. For this reason, it is ratcheting up its marketing and recruiting efforts. In addition, while CELOP has traditionally offered a heavily academic curriculum to pre-university ESL students, it is beginning to offer English for Specific Purposes courses for corporate clients, both on- and off-site. To learn more about what others in the field are doing, I attended several sessions on the design and delivery of special programs in general, and corporate language training in specific, at TESOL 98 in Seattle.

One type of special program CELOP is investigating is the on-site corporate ESL training program for employees. I attended Ethel Swartley's workshop, "Language of Business Training Design," whose purpose was to show novices in this area of ESP how to "walk the walk and talk the talk" of the corporate world. Swartley, of Drexel University, began with the premise that using training terminology was key to getting one's proposals accepted by corporations. After doing a business-academic vocabulary matching exercise with attendees, she talked about the differences in philosophy and approach in business training and traditional academic settings. While admitting to some overgeneralizing, Swartley pointed out that training aims at fulfilling the trainees' current or imminent need for practical skills, but academic "classroom teaching" often focuses on theory or application of theory in future situations. Another difference is that companies fund employee language training and measure its success if trainees perform learned tasks successfully, while students in most academic programs are self-funded and evaluation is based on tests, grades, or successful completion of academic tasks.

Swartley then walked attendees through the five phases of the Instructional Systems Development (ISD) Model: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Most interesting to me was an exercise in writing

measurable performance objectives or "learning outcomes." Of course, these evoked memories of ESL methods courses long ago, but again, the language was new; for example, a "measurable learning outcome" includes identification of the learner, an action verb, minimum standards for successful demonstration of the new skill, and special conditions for assessment.

In true corporate form, she reminded her audience that a successful business trainer must be prepared to show clients a return on their investment.

Finally, Swartley presented evaluation questions which course developers and trainers ask throughout the training, from the planning stages through and past a program's implementation. In true corporate form, she reminded her audience that a successful business trainer must be prepared to show clients a return on their investment. She encouraged ESL professionals to get involved in corporate training associations such as the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) and the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), as all three groups have much to offer and learn from each other.

Adrienne Saltz is a teacher and administrator at CELOP Boston University.



Using Holistic Writing Ratings in Research

by Jean Chandler

Holistic ratings are generally considered to be one of the most valid measures of writing quality. They are the kind of ratings of overall writing quality (that is, of both content and mechanics) that are used by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for its Test of Written English (TWE) and for the essay part of the new computerized Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). They are also widely used for state assessments and for placement of students in courses at universities and colleges. Under certain conditions, they can be used in research as a measure of improvement in writing by individuals or classes.

In order to use holistic ratings as a measure of improvement in writing over time (not less than a semester, preferably longer), all the papers to be compared must be not only the same type of writing but on the same topic or one of equivalent difficulty. For example, all could be letters to the editor about any community or school issue if you wanted a measure of persuasive writing. Or all could be autobiographical writing if you are interested in a rating of narrative and/or descriptive ability. Of course if the topic is too narrow and the student is writing more or less the same essay twice, the practice effect would interfere with the results. On the other hand, if the student is summarizing or analyzing a reading passage, one passage might be harder than the other, also making the results of the holistic ratings misleading. Therefore, either the topic must be general enough for the same topic to be used twice without generating the same piece of writing, or the topics must be carefully tested and found to generate the same quality of writing from the same person. The reason for this is that all papers to be compared must be placed in the same rating pool, and writing is only rated relative to the other papers in the pool.

This points up a major disadvantage of holistic ratings: They are not standardized, but rather relative to the other papers rated at the same time by the same raters. That is also why it is possible to use them to judge improvement in a particular student's writing over time provided that the student's papers are all in the same rating pool. In addition to being the same type of writing on a topic of the same difficulty, the papers must be written under the same conditions—for example, during a 50-minute class. It's easy to see why papers written outside of class, untimed and with access to a dictionary and other help, cannot be compared with those written in class under different conditions.

Although holistic ratings have always been seen as among the most valid indicators of writing quality, the problem has been with their reliability. In order to increase the interrater reliability, the raters must be carefully trained

together. The number of points on the rating scale can vary from one rating pool to another. Often a six-point scale is used (as is the case with ETS ratings of the TWE and the TOEFL), but it could be 4 or 8 as well. It's better to use an even number of points, so that one rating will not be squarely in the middle. The fewer the number of rating points, the easier it is to achieve interrater reliability, but the harder it is to see improvement in a student's writing.

Before the rating session is held, all of the papers should be typed with no identification of author and numbered in some way. It should not be obvious from the numbering system, which are the pre-test papers and which are the post-test papers or which ones are written by the same student. Of course, the trainer must keep such a record. Before training raters, the trainer must choose anchor papers on the same topic and by the same type of students as those to be rated. Anchor papers are representative examples of the quality of writing at each of the rating points. In other words, if the papers are to be rated from 1 to 6, several papers which are judged by the trainer to represent the best rating (6), the worst rating (1), and each rating in between, must be selected to use in training the raters.

Each rating session must be preceded by a training session to familiarize raters with the type and range of papers to be rated, and to assure, as much as possible, comparable understandings of the criteria to be applied. (For an example of a scoring guide, see *TOEFL Test of Written English Guide*, 3rd ed. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1992, p. 23.) This is true even if raters are experienced in holistic rating in general. To promote interrater reliability, ideally the raters should be similar to each other, for example, in all being experienced ESL teachers who teach at the level of the papers being rated and who do not have extremely different foci in judging writing.

In the training session, which usually takes about an hour depending on how long the papers are and how many points there are on the rating scale, raters independently rate the anchor papers and discuss why they gave the ratings they gave. It is important that no rater focuses exclusively on one aspect of the writing; rather all raters are to give an overall rating based on a quick read of a paper. I generally present anchor papers to which I would give the best and the worst ratings together first; I tell the raters that this is the range of quality in the pool; then I give them papers in the middle, one by one, asking them after each reading to judge first whether that paper belongs in the top half or the bottom half, and then

Continued on page 24

Teacher Research *Continued from page 23*

whether it is better or worse than the previous paper in that half of the rating scale. I follow this method until the raters have discussed at least two papers at each point of the rating scale, and maybe more than two papers at each rating in the middle where judgments are more difficult to make.

After the training, comes the rating session itself. At least two raters should independently rate each of the papers in the pool. If the two ratings are more than one point apart, then the paper should be read by a third rater. In every case, the rating given to each paper will be an average of the ratings given by raters independently. To determine improvement, for example, from the beginning to the end of the year, the average rating of a student's paper written at the beginning of the year will then be compared with the average rating of the same student's paper written at the end of the year.

In my experience, holistic ratings are not likely to yield significantly different average ratings for most students over one semester unless the writing task was very new to the student at the beginning. For example, holistic ratings of the quality of my advanced students' autobiographical writing showed no significant difference over one semester even

though there was a statistically significant reduction in errors on their papers at the end of the semester of an average of 2 errors per 100 words, or 25 per average paper. However, a brand new immigrant taking ESL would likely show improvement in holistic ratings over just one semester, or a more advanced student might do so on a task, for example, analysis of a poem, that he or she had not experienced before and was practicing on during the semester.

Jean Chandler, in addition to her position as Teacher Research Editor for Currents, teaches ESL at The New England Conservatory of Music.

Correction

In the last issue of *MATSOL Currents* (Vol. 24, No. 2), on page 12, the sentence at the end of the third paragraph of the "Teacher Research" article should have read: "To receive grades of A, the group receiving content-focused comments had to write twice as much as the other groups."

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How Not to Get Your Point Across

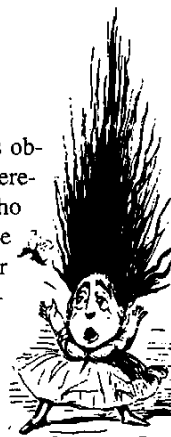
by Joe Pettigrew

Here's a memo that someone sent me. It was written by an ESL program director at a Massachusetts institution of higher learning to her faculty. After the announcement of the opening meeting for the semester and some other information, she writes:

As I have pointed out in my letter to this term's ... students, ours is an academically oriented, adult-education institution: I underscore this for all instructors once more, and draw your additional attention to the fact that we are officially charged to use innovative methodologies in all our classes. Over the past five years we have involved instructors in the formulation of the guidelines and taken great care to explain them to all interviewees, and although we have always received tacit or overt acceptance of these guidelines in the context of hiring, each semester we have observed classes departing from these guidelines in ways which [this program] does not support. For example, if the guidelines were being followed, [this program's] classes would never demean adult students by assigning skits or gyrations to inauthentic lyrics, or parade an instructor's superior fluency via monologic teacher-fronted harangues, enervating choral recitation, or esoteric linguistic theorization, for we have no goals or tasks that suggest that these are appropriate. Similarly, the end-of-term expense reports would not identify the instructors who resorted to copious copying of non-assigned texts which pleased them personally, nor would student and bookstore complaints that required texts went unused pinpoint those instructors who denigrated and defied the terms of their engagement in [this program]. Inasmuch as fall 1998 [program] syllabi will be posted on the world-wide-web, instructors will be required to fashion courses of study that are fully in keeping with the course descriptions published in the Official Register as well as the [program's] Instructional Guidelines. These syllabi will be vetted by the appropriate instructional coordinators prior to their posting, and will naturally be subject to the abovementioned criteria. . . .

It is my hope that the desire for personal popularity on the part of individual instructors will cease to outweigh the presentation of a cohesive, coherent program of the quality and rigor that [this program's] location in this institution demands, and I look for-

ward to us collectively attaining this objective in the Fall 1998 semester. I therefore seriously invite all instructors who feel that they cannot work within the [program's] guidelines to apprise our Staff Assistant of this before the orientation meeting date; likewise, I invite any instructors who have questions about any of the guidelines to bring these to the meeting so that we can clarify these problems and assign instructional responsibilities only to those persons who are prepared to fulfill them with due care and honesty.



I actually agree with some of what this director is saying. I have seen individual teachers use questionable methodology and ignore perfectly good textbooks so they could copy a small forest's worth of their own (usually copyright-infringing) materials. I've seen a few who seemed to be in love with the sound of their own voice.

However, some of what this director deems inappropriate could, depending on how it is done, be pedagogically valid. "Skits" - or roleplays - can be appropriate if done correctly. Some pop songs have "authentic" lyrics that can teach aspects of language or culture. I also wonder what she means by "innovative methodologies." A "skit" or a song might be innovative to some, but apparently not here. But even in the areas where I think the director has a point, I find her tone - to use one of her words - enervating.

Will people reading this think "I'd better be careful how I construct my class"? I doubt it. I think the real message is the deep contempt the author has for the teachers, whom she or her assistants chose, and the field of ESL in general. She writes that she looks forward to "collectively attaining" the objectives of the program. How many people are going to be inspired to work with this administration after reading this memo?

Talking with current and former employees at this institution, you get the impression that the bad feeling goes both ways. It's a shame. The negative feeling that something like this engenders just bounces back on the sender, who in turn will no doubt have more bad feelings towards the faculty, creating still more negative reaction, ad infinitum. Maybe the administrative equivalent of couples counseling is in order.

Joseph Pettigrew, Center for English Language and Orientation Programs (CELOP), Boston University. jpettig@bu.edu.

REVIEWS



Business Across Cultures: Effective Communication Strategies. Laura English and Sarah Lynn. Addison-Wesley, 1995. 181 pages. ISBN 0-201-82532-5.

Reviewed by Patricia Brennecke

Laura English and Sarah Lynn's *Business Across Cultures* is a useful book for intermediate ESL classes focusing on cross-cultural awareness, especially in a business context. The authors have designed the book so that students need no previous business background to use it; there is enough lead-in and pre-reading vocabulary that any student can handle the discussions. The book can be used either as a main text in a business class or as a cross-cultural supplement in a general ESL class. The authors suggest that enough cultural information is included for the text to be used in a monocultural classroom as well. I cannot comment on the

latter, but I do feel that this text would be very useful in an intermediate ESL class with a good cross-cultural mix. Though the vocabulary range and sentence complexity are clearly aimed at an intermediate audience, it does not "talk down" to

All in all, I recommend this text as a useful supplement in a general ESL class whose students are interested in business. I also see it as the main text for an ESP or elective class in business.

the students, and the student-centered activities offer enough variety that the text might be appropriate at higher levels too.

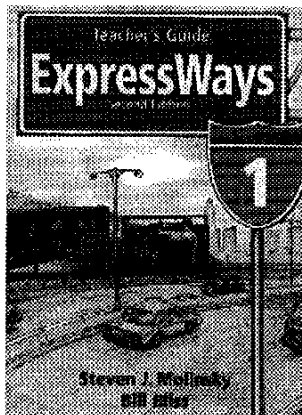
Continued on page 27



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Business Across Cultures *Continued from page 26*

The book is divided into 10 units. The first deals with the notion of cultural stereotypes and expectations. Subsequent units take up individual areas where cross-cultural misunderstandings may occur: making introductions, decision-making, negotiating, entertaining colleagues, and so on. Each unit begins with a case study, followed by discussion activities and vocabulary-building exercises that exploit the individual cases well. There is usually an information gap, values clarification, and/or other activity aimed at developing critical thinking skills. Each unit also includes suggestions for writing tasks or cooperative projects: developing a time management plan, devising an advertising strategy for a certain product, planning a hospitality agenda for a group of visiting business people, etc. The cases are based on actual events or have evolved from thorough research of cultural factors; none of them seems hokey or artificial. Indeed the book has a rather serious tone which I very much like. Intermediate business texts are often aimed either at adolescents or at adults without much formal education. This is an exception: I can see using it without embarrassment with an audience of sophisticated adult learners, as well as with less mature students.

The authors succeed in providing enough variety so that

the units are not predictable or boring. Since the text is content-based, it is up to the teacher to assess whatever grammatical/lexical considerations s/he might want to address before beginning a unit; there is a fair vocabulary load which goes un glossed and unexplained. However, as I say, this is also one of the book's strengths: it does not seem juvenile or patronizing. The one criticism I have of this text is its look: the cartoon-like drawings that introduce each chapter seem superfluous and don't lend themselves to much discussion. I would have preferred black and white photographs, or drawing with less of a Flintstones look.

All in all, I recommend this text as a useful supplement in a general ESL class whose students are interested in business. I also see it as the main text for an ESP or elective class in business. The activities in the book are structured enough so that an inexperienced teacher would not have difficulty using it, and the content and variety are such that any teacher could get a lot of mileage out of it.

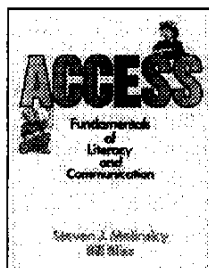
*Patricia Brennecke is a Lecturer in the Foreign Languages and Literatures/ESL Section at MIT.
pbrennec@mit.edu*



PRENTICE HALL REGENTS *"Setting the Standard"*

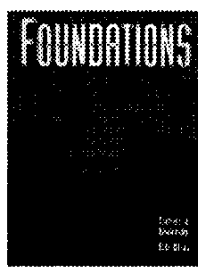
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REVIEWS



New Ways in Content-Based Instruction. Donna M. Brinton and Peter Master, editors. TESOL, Inc., 1997. 302 pages. ISBN 0-939791-67-6.

Reviewed by Veronica L. Gouvea

This teacher's resource book supports instruction in the area of content-based instruction, which is here defined widely as including theme-based L2 courses, sheltered content-area courses, and paired or adjunct arrangements in which language and content courses are co-taught. Contributions have been submitted by and are intended for practitioners from K-12 teachers to university professors. Teacher-trainers and administrators will also find it a good resource for training and curricular development. The book offers a variety of activities in which content encourages language acquisition. In addition to reaching this goal, Brinton and Master enable the reader to imagine him/herself in a classroom where CBI is the approach, and to get a sense of just how accessible this approach is.

The book opens with a brief, insightful introduction. Here the editors give a general background to the field of CBI, an overview of the book, and selected references. (More references are given by the individual contributors.) There are five parts or categories divided according to the type of activity in which the learner engages. These include Information Management, Critical Thinking, Hands-On Activities (and games), Data Gathering, and Text Analysis and Construction. There are more than 75 activities to choose from, submitted by nearly as many professionals working in diverse types of schools and programs around the world. Each activity has, in the margin, information pertaining to the level, instructional goals, preparation and class time needed, and resources required. The activity is described with step-by-

step procedures. This is followed by Caveats and Options, which contains additional tips, and References and Further Reading. Many, though not all, have an appendix with additional information. Each contribution closes with a brief bio of the contributor; it's interesting to see from where they all hail, and to know how to reach them. (Alas, no e-mail addresses!)

In the back of the book is a very neatly outlined (6 page) index to activities which includes author, activity title, part (not the page, which means some searching), focus, topic, skills and level. I found this to be a very important feature and probably a good place to start when first picking up the book. Looking quickly through the focuses and topics gives the reader a closer look at the book's contents. This index is also useful if one is interested in a specific theme, such as societal problems or environmental education.

The main drawback with the book is in finding the activities. In choosing one from the index, which doesn't give the page, you have to jump back to the user's guide, find the part and author's name given alphabetically, then note the page. It would be a lot easier to list the pages in the index. Also, I found only 7 activities for young learners, so it may not appeal as much to K-12 instructors, unless all those listed for "any level" truly are.

To give an example of the activities, "Environmental Facts Around the World" is for any level and aims to teach reading about and listening to environmental issues and sorting information into categories. Class time: 35-45 minutes. Prep time: 20 minutes. Resources: inflatable globe, world environmental statistical information, index cards, blank paper. Having already learned specialized vocabulary, students focus on speaking and listening, memorizing data, reviewing and classifying data. The 12 steps given include identifying countries associated with specific problems and

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Review A Book for *MATSOL Currents*

Currents receives so many new books for review purposes that it's impossible to review them all. Here are a few of the titles that have arrived recently. If you are interested in writing a review of one, call Sterling Giles at (617) 421-9134.

English Extra is a brightly illustrated beginning multiskills program. The well known *Conversation Book* from Carver and Fotinos has appeared in a heftier,

revised third edition, both books 1 and 2. Our own Robert Saitz and Francine Stieglitz have produced *Workout in English*, a reader-workbook for high-beginner to low-intermediate levels. There are three new titles in The Michigan State University Textbook Series of Theme-based Content Instruction for ESL/EFL. Working from beginning to advanced levels, there's *Earthbound*, a geography text, *Under the Lens*, which looks at American media, and *Taking Center Stage*, about drama in the US.

Content-Based Instruction *Continued from page 28*

writing them on different index cards, grouping students, and handing out cards. Students throw the globe, citing a country and its problem, after which they write down all the facts they remember, compare lists, and present findings.

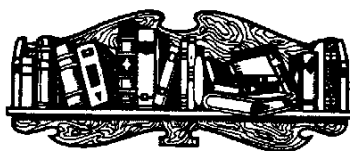
Brinton, one of the editors and contributors, is well known in the area of CBI, with publications dating back to 1989, when CBI first appeared on the scene. Content-based instruction is a growing enterprise. With people like Donna Brinton guiding us, there's no reason we all can't join her and the other professionals lighting the way. Brinton and Master have pulled together an enormous collection of work from some creative professionals in our field. The result is a practical, inspirational resource for ESOL teachers at any level who are ready to take risks and present new material in content-based instruction.

Also worth noting are two other new books by Brinton. *The Content-Based Classroom*, *Perspectives on Integrating*

Language and Content (edited by Brinton with Marguerite Ann Snow, 1997, Longman) is an anthology that provides information on how to apply the CBI approach to language instruction. Although more theoretical than *New Ways*, some activities are included. *Insights 1: A Content-based Approach to Academic Preparation* (1997, Longman) is a high-intermediate to advanced student textbook complete with videotapes of real university lectures. The content areas presented here are Folklore, Science, History, and Anthropology. (Incidentally, this has one of the best covers I've seen on an ESOL text.)

Veronica Gouvea is Professor of ESOL at Roxbury Community College. Active in CBI and curriculum development, she has taught English for Aviation and Surveying Early Childhood Education. On sabbatical for the Spring '98 semester, she visited CBI classes here and abroad. vgouvea@aol.com

REVIEWS



A World of Fiction: Twenty Timeless Short Stories.
Sybil Marcus. Addison-Wesley, 1995. 284 pages. ISBN 0-201-82520-1.

Reviewed by Daniel Smolens

Sybil Marcus teaches in the English Language Program at the University of California, Berkeley. She has chosen 20 short stories from modern English literatures to create a course for "advanced" ESL students. My guess is that most of Marcus' students are in a college humanities or social science program, or in a bridge program. One of her sound main assumptions is that good writers challenge and motivate us to use our language resources to "probe for the multilayered meanings" which are found in their stories. I would add that one of the keys to successful language learning is exercising the need to make one's own voice heard, and each of these writers has a distinctive voice which can serve as a model to students.

Each story is preceded by a brief biography of the author. Each is numbered at 5-line intervals for easy reference, has a generous list of word and phrase definitions at the bottom of each page to minimize the interruptions of dictionary use, and is followed first by excellent comprehension, discussion, grammar, and writing exercises. Students are asked to follow a first reading by asking questions and expressing their visceral reactions to plot, characters, and any special qualities of the writing. The exercises elicit active use of new expressions. The second part of each chapter requires a second

reading of the story, which is followed by oral exploration of themes and styles. Students are often asked to compare and contrast values and lifestyles in a story with those in the various cultures from which the students have come. A third part reinforces understanding and use of grammar constructs, such as Faulkner's distinctive use of subordinate clauses. However, some grammar exercises (such as past and past progressive tenses as found in a text) seem superfluous for students who are supposed to be able to grasp language such as "...her face...like a mask or a flag, with that bafflement of furious repudiation of truth in her eyes." (Minnie Cooper in Faulkner's "Dry September") A fourth part consists of activities such as writing a critical appreciation, writing additional dialogue for a part of the story, describing from a student's own experience or imagination a scene that is similar to one in the story, and engaging in a debate on a theme from the story.

The stories increase in length and in complexity of theme and language, and are grouped into four (sometimes overlapping) categories: Husbands, Wives, and Lovers; Parent and Child; Loneliness and Alienation; Social Change and Injustice. They also vary in quality, and teachers will likely choose those they most admire. The Joyce, Faulkner, and Gordimer stories are among the best. Teachers will also choose among the wide variety of exercises and present their own points of view in addition to eliciting those of the students. For example, in an exercise for "The Boarding House" students are asked to channel their thoughts into inferring and identify-

Continued on page 30

REVIEWS



Making It Happen: Interaction in the Second Language Classroom, Second Edition. Patricia A. Richard-Amato. Longman Addison-Wesley Publishing Group, 1996. 480 pages. ISBN 0-201-42018-X.

Reviewed by Will Van Dorp

As I skimmed this book, I recalled many conversations of recent years on such topics as learning styles, Total Physical Response, reading as an interactive process, a kayak circumnavigation of Cape Horn, the value, if any, of teaching grammar, cooperative learning, role play, an ESL curriculum other than our own that might serve as a model in a program proposal - everything that comes up in discussions with fellow professionals. Of those topics, all but one is addressed in this book.

Making it Happen is a revised, enhanced version of the original 1988 teacher education text. The book examines a generation of research insights about the classroom as a language acquisition environment. It discusses interactive activities, methods, and programs that promote acquisition. And a section of the book is devoted to selected readings by Chomsky, Ellis, Vygotsky, and Cummins.

Interaction, as Richard-Amato defines it in the preface, refers to a transactional process in which "the entities doing the interacting are affected and often changed by the contact and the total social situation surrounding it." In other words, when students "play only passive or superficial roles" there's no interaction. The classroom where interaction happens is not just preparation for the real world; it is the real world. Richard-Amato intends the book to be a teacher resource which "bridges the gap between the theoretical and the practical."

On one side of the gap there are a daunting 25 pages of references. Yet, the book is readable, accessible even to the

relative newcomer to the field. Thoughtful organization of the chapters certainly helps in this respect. For example, the chapter Ways to Promote Literacy Development is 30 pages long, divided into the following sections: Language Experience Approach, Literature Based Curriculum, Writing Workshops, and Advanced Academic Reading and Writing. One of those sections, Language Experience Approach (LEA), is divided into Advantages of LEA and Possible Limitations of LEA.

Making It Happen is a reference text. There's no need to read it in a linear manner; keep it in your school bag and read bits while waiting for class, proctoring a test, or trying to get to sleep. Ending each chapter is a list of readings and reference materials for significant further reading on a given topic. These suggestions aid in deepening one's reading and understanding. In the list at the end of the chapter entitled The Affective Domain, Richard-Amato recommends a book which I now consider a must-read: *Multicultural Education: Theory and Practice*, by J Banks.

Although I'm not really involved in teacher education, this book will serve me in several important ways: 1) it's a reference to consult before I teach a course or use an approach that's new to me. It's a shortcut to finding who's written what in which book or periodical; 2) it's a source of ideas for curriculum development, a process that should be constant. On this matter, I'd like to mention chapters 17 and 18, which describe a dozen or so different types of ESL and FL programs in North and South America. Oh, by the way, there was nothing in this ambitious book about Cape Horn, but it is a useful resource in the career-long process of professional development.

Will Van Dorp has taught in various African and Middle-eastern countries. He currently directs Bradford College's CIRLS program. He hasn't yet circumnavigated Cape Horn. e-mail: wvandorp@bradford.edu.

A World of Fiction *Continued from page 29*

ing examples of humor and irony. From my point of view, there is an absence of humor in the story. Any irony lies in the contrast between what the characters profess and the self interest on which they act, but this is subsumed under what is essentially a realistic sense of depiction (stronger than irony) of the human condition. This, of course, demonstrates a point which Marcus makes: that there is no absolute right or wrong in point of view, that there is room for multiple interpretations. A final section of the book offers a glossary with examples of elements that come from the literary palette of a fine writer: metaphor,

symbolism, atmosphere, epiphany, ellipsis, irony, etc.

Most of *A World of Fiction* would serve as an excellent college literature course for native speakers of English. In the context of ESL, "advanced" varies from one ESL program to another. My feeling is that "advanced" students in many ESL programs would find this worthwhile literature course too difficult.

Daniel Smolens was over 70 when he earned his master's degree in ESL. He now teaches at Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly in Brighton and Roxbury Community College.

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