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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

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Moving Teachers from Complicity in Bullying to Change

Home Room: An Independent Principal

The Road Taken: Family Remedies Are Just the Cure

Multilingual Momentum: Are You Ready to Teach Abroad?

In-Service: The Write to Be Read

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OUT OF THE BOX

A Place for Teachers in Research


Fair Opportunity for Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL

Both Ends Burning

Three Years after Springing Out of the Box

TESOL Association Caucuses Are about Who We Are

PORTAL

Can Teachers Alter ESOL Students’ Attitudes toward Nonstandard English?

E-Tandem Learning for Language and Culture

Independent Reading and Tutoring Routines That Work

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Tongue-Tied: The Lives of Multilingual Children in Public Education (Otto Santa Ana, ed.)

VOA’s Special English

Cheaters (John Stockwell)

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Getting Ahead

The Amish and Us (Dirk Eitzen)

ASSOCIATION NEWS

TESOL Provides Expertise for Redesign of the U.S. Naturalization Test.
The wonderful team that supports me in producing Essential Teacher is working constantly to improve the publication. With this issue, we are pleased to launch a new design, including the renamed review section, References & Resources (R&R) (formerly Home and Other Pages). Please see the new description for this section at the TESOL Web site. The major change is that the word limit for all reviews has been expanded. Please send your reviews of reference books, textbooks, trade books, CDs, software, and Web sites to the R&R editor.

Staff changes are occurring as well. ET is saying farewell to three section editors. I would like to thank Christine Meloni, Phil Quirke, and Shannon Sauro for their service to Essential Teacher and the TESOL association, and extend a welcome to Vanessa Caceres (References & Resources, caceresvanessa@yahoo.com), Michael Fields (Compleat Links, mfields@hct.ac.ae), and Eileen N. Whelan Ariza (Out of the Box, eariza@fau.edu). They are waiting to read your manuscripts and ideas for articles.

In this convention-month issue, you will find many exciting articles that point the way toward the need for more teacher research and practitioner publication in the profession. Please don’t be afraid to write up your ideas and send them to us.

• Communities of Practice: Judie Haynes (Circle Time) tells teachers how and why they need to work to bullyproof their schools. Through a personal experience, Jim Hughes (Home Room) relates how a thoughtful administrator can engage teachers in a school. Debbie Zacarian (The Road Taken) discovers how family remedies can cure what ails some classrooms. Ke Xu (Multilingual Momentum) offers his advice to teachers wishing to work abroad. Andy Curtis (In-Service) gives teachers a number of reasons they should write about and publish their experiences of teaching and learning. Dorothy Zemach (From A to Z) describes some of the difficulties many ESOL students might find with the process approach to writing.

• Out of the Box: TESOL’s new Language Teacher Research Series is introduced by the series editor, Thomas S. C. Farrell. Eunhee Han offers a different perspective on the challenges and opportunities faced by non-native-English-speaking teachers in the field. Joanne Sellen paints a disturbing picture of teacher burnout. And Phil Quirke reflects on his time as the founding editor of Out of the Box.

• Portal: Heather Carroll explains why ESOL students need to be exposed to international dialects of English. Next, Katrina Willard Hall questions the relevance of the traditional reading list for her students. Junia Braga shares her excitement over integrating technology and language education. And Jim Rubin outlines practical techniques for helping students to start working independently.

• References & Resources: Holly Hansen-Thomas reviews a powerful new book that gives a voice to previously silenced multilingual children in the United States. Ali Fuad Selvi tunes teachers into the benefits of using the Special English site of the Voice of America as supplementary listening material. Lee Altschuler explains how he has used a motion picture about cheating in high schools to stimulate class discussions about numerous social issues. Catharine Hannay introduces teachers to a documentary account of the pressures exerted by modernization upon the Amish people of Pennsylvania.

• Compleat Links: Shoko Yoneyama reveals the shocking situation in Japanese schools surrounding the epidemic of bullying there. Michael Fields interviews the editor of TESOL’s Language Teacher Research Series, Thomas S. C. Farrell, and gets a preview of that series of books. Lucie Moussu introduces members of the TESOL association to the many caucuses they can take part in. Lynnette Crane explains that to many of today’s students plagiarism is not cheating but instead is about getting ahead. In Grammatically Speaking, Richard Firsten answers your grammar questions.

For those of you attending the convention in Seattle this year, please come to the session on getting published in ET. I welcome your participation.
TESOL 2007: Tides of Change

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On March 23, 2007 in Seattle I will become TESOL president. I have one year to give focus to what I think is most important and most pressing in the association. I joined TESOL years ago when I was a graduate student at San Francisco State University. At that time, TESOL helped open up the language teaching profession for me. I read TESOL Quarterly and TESOL Matters from beginning to end. When I could go to the convention, I attended presentations from early morning to late at night. I loved listening to the experts in the profession, but I also loved making new professional friends.

I still read TESOL serial publications and many of the books TESOL publishes, but now I am on e-lists, and the Web site has become an important source of information and contact with what is going on in the profession for me. In addition to learning from TESOL, I love helping TESOL get its message beyond the English teaching community and helping TESOL be an important voice in shaping policy and making language education better for people around the world.

In my statement on the 2006 TESOL ballot, I promised to help TESOL
• be an effective global association while meeting the professional needs of its diverse membership
• stay focused on its mission, values, and vision statements
• fulfill the 2005-2008 Strategic Goals
• remain financially sound
• attract and retain new members
• encourage all members to share their passion for and experience in language education with others in the association

I plan to focus my presidential year on these four strategic areas in order to fulfill promises.

Increase TESOL’s Professional Visibility (Strategic Goal: Policy Promotion for the Profession)

We as TESOL members represent a wide variety of expertise in language education. We are the experts. We develop policy statements, which we then use to help educate the press, the public, governments, and schools on language education issues. TESOL members also represent the association in many ways. In June 2006, a group of TESOL members participated in the first TESOL Advocacy Day, taking our policy messages to the legislators in Washington, DC, USA. In July, TESOL member Keith Buchanan, ESL coordinator for Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia, USA delivered testimony before the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the U.S. House of Representatives on the impact of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act on English language learners. Similarly, TESOL member Susan Valinski, ESOL elementary support instructor for Fairfax County Public Schools, testified on the impact of NCLB before the NCLB Commission, an independent, nonpartisan commission tasked with analyzing the law’s impact and providing recommendations to the U.S. Congress for the law’s reauthorization. We need to continue to be active in this area.

Provide the Best Possible Professional Development (Strategic Goal: Professional Development)

TESOL offers extensive opportunities for professional development, including face-to-face opportunities such as symposia in various countries throughout the world and the yearly convention. The TESOL Web site already has many e-learning seminars and courses, but changing technology allows TESOL to expand these opportunities. At the 2006 TESOL convention, a number of... 

continued on page 48
Bullying begins at an early age. One of my colleagues, a kindergarten teacher, told me that bullies could be identified as early as preschool or kindergarten. According to her, the kindergarten bully excludes classmates from playing with a group, calls others by hurtful names, doesn’t share, and lacks empathy for others.

All students are affected when bullying occurs. The negative classroom environment engendered by bullying has an effect on the bystanders, those children who do nothing when their classmates are bullied. These students feel the fear that bullying causes and learn that not everyone is safe at school.

What can teachers do to help create a harassment-free school setting for all students? In the past, children who bullied others were punished, but punishment did not solve the problem. Today, most schools have bullying prevention programs that provide antibullying training and information. These programs focus on community building rather than on punishment.

My school has developed a program called We Respect All People (W.R.A.P.). W.R.A.P. gives students a common language for talking about bullying. It focuses on helping victims develop more effective coping skills, and it encourages them to get help from adults, to avoid situations where bullying may occur, and to assert themselves. Emphasis is also placed on the role of bystanders, who are encouraged to become part of the solution by standing up for classmates who are bullied and by helping them get away from the immediate situation.

My school district also provides training in child assault prevention to teach students ways to stick up for themselves. Children are taught that they have the right to feel “safe, strong, and free.” Building community is an important part of our bullying prevention campaign.

One English language learner in my class, a newcomer from Turkey named Anól, told me that he had never been bullied. When he entered the school in second grade, his classroom teacher

Students who are racially or linguistically different from those in the mainstream are more likely to have problems with bullies.

“He’s a bully!” complained Hui, an Asian student, during my ESL class. The English language learners in my class were talking about an incident that had occurred on the playground during lunch recess.

“Why do you say that?” I responded.

“He do this to me!” said Hui as he tugged the corner of his eyes up with his fingers. “He do this all the time. He call me ‘Hey, China.’”

“No, my parents say no telling.”

Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social. Verbal bullying includes behaviors such as name calling. Social bullying occurs when a student is excluded or shunned. Hui’s parents would have contacted the school immediately if classmates had physically hurt him. Why were they silent when the persecution was verbal?

In my experience, many parents, including those of English language learners, do not generally recognize the emotional damage that verbal or social bullying can do to children. They seem to feel that this type of bullying is part of growing up. Furthermore, the immigrant victims of bullies are reluctant to draw attention to themselves. They are not only embarrassed to talk about it but are discouraged by other students and even their own parents from telling an adult. Although this is also true of children in the mainstream population, students who are racially or linguistically different from those in the mainstream are more likely to have problems with bullies. They may look different or may have distinctive customs, food, or clothing. They are often victimized because they can’t or won’t tell.

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An Independent Principal

by Jim Hughes

In 1996, when principals could exercise considerable independence in our district, Todd was appointed principal of our school. He, like the staff, saw the school as largely autonomous. We felt free to develop practices appropriate to our context. Unlike many teachers, however, Todd did not regard the school as made up of discrete classrooms. He envisioned it as a community of staff, parents, and students, all supporting one another.

His ideas, such as learner-centered classrooms, active learning, periodic reflection, home visits, and bilingual education, were progressive. This led to conflict because a number of teachers held traditional views. They preferred to fix students in rows rather than adopt a flexible approach and arrange the classroom according to the needs of the lesson, the project, or the children. They mainly lectured, demanded a quiet classroom, perceived worksheets as indispensable, and insisted that immersion was the best way for English learners to acquire a new language.

Todd showed little patience with such teachers. Rose complained that one day he interrupted her teaching, telling her he needed to speak with Enrique.

“I don’t have an Enrique,” she said.

Todd pointed to a boy in the second row.

“Ricky? Nobody calls him Enrique. He didn’t even know you were asking for him.”

“I think,” said Todd, “he knows his real name.”

Rose bristled at what she perceived as Todd’s condescending manner. Todd, in contrast, couldn’t believe she was so insensitive to family culture.

Faculty meetings could be tumultuous. At one of them, Todd asked that I present norms for staff conduct. My first thought was of the classroom agreements my students and I brainstorm at the beginning of each academic year. Although I try to elicit positives, such as be respectful and kind, they invariably come up with nega-

HOME ROOM

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tives, such as no biting. My favorite that year was no spitting on the floor. Instead of citing that one, I said to teachers, “No spitting in each other’s faces,” which made everybody laugh, breaking the tension. “We know how to behave civilly,” I said. “If we forget, let’s agree to forgive one another when the meeting is over.

“All voices are welcome,” I continued. “New teachers have as much to offer as veterans. I’m a no-longer-young, white male, so I’m among those with the least credibility. I have, however, moments of clarity and the occasional good idea. Each of us has an equal voice, whether we are teachers, support staff, or the principal.”

“Todd evaluates us,” said Amy. “If he’s our equal, he’s first among us.”

“How can we be candid if we fear for our reputation or job?” asked Rose.

I hadn’t a good answer, and Todd did not set Amy and Rose at ease. In the end, many traditional teachers could not tolerate leadership that questioned their pedagogy and urged them to embrace progressive practices. Likely, Todd wanted them to transfer, and after his first year they did.

Those who stayed largely shared his views and were inspired by leadership that, within a progressive framework, gave teachers the opportunity to find their own voice and experience the energy of empowerment. For the first time in my then twelve years of experience in elementary education, faculty meetings were not confined to topics such as schoolwide discipline, supplies, and copy machines. They became intellectually alive. We actually started talking about our practice! What was real writing? What was authentic assessment? What was doing social studies?

Meetings also became occasions for creative, collaborative thinking. While exploring the idea of planting a garden, we decided that the project would be a valuable learning experience for students and might entice families who did not ordinarily participate in school events to join in, especially the Mien, with their tradition of farming. Mien parents not only participated; they planted, with our consent, their own adjoining garden as a source of food for their families.

Other ideas emerged, and many were realized. One teacher received a grant that enabled students to design and paint murals on the school’s exterior and interior walls. A counselor taught older students how to be peacekeepers as part of her conflict resolution program. Todd suggested separate meetings with Latino, Mien, and African American parents. “Won’t that cause division?” asked George.

“There’s already division,” retorted Todd. “Separate meetings will give each group’s members a chance to find their voice in a familiar setting. Then we’ll have fuller participation and more real conversation at multiethnic parent meetings.”

Teachers came up with the notion of forming literacy teams, one led by a reading specialist, the other by a special populations teacher, with both groups composed of specially instructed aides. These literacy teams would “invade” classrooms for forty minutes each day to assist teachers’ reading instruction. When Todd and the teachers made the site decision to endorse the idea, we implemented it. It didn’t even occur to us to seek district approval. The following year, for the first time since I had been at the school, students entered my third-grade class reading at or near grade level. Experimentation was in the air, and teachers were playing a large part in it.

We entertained the idea in 1997 of opting out of standardized tests because they didn’t show what our students knew and could do, and of replacing them with student portfolios that would allow for student self-assessment as well as assessment by teachers and parents. How self-governing and powerful we felt!

But the end was drawing near. Already by fall 1998, district administrators were pressuring Todd to improve scores on the tests we had sought to abolish. That spring he announced that he had been reassigned as principal to a large and troubled school. He did not want this promotion. “I haven’t finished my work with you,” he lamented.

Dismayed, I sought out a high-ranking district official. “Todd’s too big a fish for a small, backwater school like yours,” he said. “Besides, the superintendent has big changes in mind. It won’t matter who you have as a principal because all the schools will be the same. Decisions will come from the top. A principal’s job will be to follow orders and enforce them at the local site.”

“You just wait and see.”

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When Mrs. Ortiz taught a unit designed to help beginning-level English students learn how to access emergency medical help in the United States (see “Emergency 911,” Essential Teacher, December 2006), she was surprised to find that many wanted to share the various home remedies that they used to cure medical problems. “Real ginger helps with fatigue,” said Heesun. “If you have a cold in China, people drink ginger water,” responded Hoa Li. Statements like these indicated to Mrs. Ortiz that it might be helpful to extend the Emergency 911 unit by engaging her students’ interest in exploring the home remedies that their families used. She hoped that this activity would enhance their English skills. She began by asking her students if they would be interested in learning about the world’s home remedies. “That would be cool,” responded Heesun. “Yes!” exclaimed Hoa Li. Every one of Mrs. Ortiz’s students was excited by the idea.

The students were from mainland China, Israel, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Each had enrolled in her school nine months earlier, when they had just arrived from their respective countries and had very limited English skills. Mrs. Ortiz had spent the past nine months helping them develop social and academic skills in English. Performing a play, such as the one they had written about emergencies, had greatly piqued their interest in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. She hoped that the home remedy activities that she planned to do would engage them enough to help them work toward expanding their ability to communicate in English.

She began the unit by explaining that home remedies were often created by people who believed that specific foods or herbal combinations would cure a health problem. She gave some examples: some people drink orange juice when they first begin to feel sick because they believe that the vitamin C found in orange juice will prevent a cold from occurring. She also told them that in some cultures, such as Jewish, people drink chicken soup because they believe it has healing properties.

She asked each student to write down some home remedies from their culture. She then prepared her students for a paired discussion about the remedies that they had written down and that they believed were indigenous to their native cultures. She asked the students to listen carefully to their partners and note whether the home remedy was used in their culture or was new to them. She also asked them to make note of any questions that they had about their partner’s remedy.

Within a few minutes, the students were talking in pairs about home remedies from their cultures. Next, she grouped the pairs of students into clusters of six and asked each pair to share the discussion with the cluster. “Speakers should share the home remedies that you have noted, and listeners should take note as to whether the home remedies are used in your home or not,” Mrs. Ortiz instructed. At the end of the first class, Mrs. Ortiz asked each student to interview a family member about the remedy that they had noted during the beginning of class, as well as the ones that were presented during the small-group activity. The task was to ask the family member whether the remedy was indigenous to the culture and whether it had been used by previous generations in the family, and to provide a list of the herbs or foods included in the remedy.

During the next class, the students worked in pairs and shared what they had learned from their family interviews. Taking that information, each pair then shared the findings with the small group. Mrs. Ortiz asked the students to share their family interview information with their group mates as part of the data they were collecting about various world home remedies.

Next was a Web search for information about the students’ home remedies. Many students were successful, and some came up with information about the scientific properties supporting the legitimacy of the remedies.

When Mrs. Ortiz asked her students if they were interested in writing a booklet about what they had learned, they all responded positively. The students brainstormed the booklet’s format and decided to include nine sections. The first would contain a dedication page. Sections two through seven would be devoted to home remedies from China, Israel, Japan, South Korea,
and Taiwan, respectively. Section eight would include a short biography of each student, and section nine would include a list of references that the students had used in their research.

The students each wrote their own dedication statement. Some dedicated the booklet to their family. Others dedicated it “for all sick people.” Mrs. Ortiz wrote the last entry on the dedication page with pride: “To my students who created this booklet.” Her goal had been to expand her students’ English skills. She had achieved this and more by drawing on her student’s interests and exciting them about sharing part of their culture while discovering a bit more of who they are.

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Recently, I have received numerous phone calls and e-mails from friends who have been hired by colleges or schools in China and are ready to take up their new positions. These friends have asked me how they can make their time in China successful and enjoyable at the same time.

My initial response to this question has been my own series of questions for them to consider, which might apply to many teachers who leave their home country to teach: What are your goals for this mission? What do you expect from it? How well are you prepared for it?

I'll start with goals. If you accept a teaching job in China, or another country, you may be driven by different motives:

• to gain a deeper understanding of the country, its people, its culture, and its educational system
• to help teachers and students improve their teaching and study of English
• to get some cross-cultural teaching experience, which will help advance your career in your home country
• to make some extra money to help cover the cost of study or travel to your host country
• to make some friends and build up a network of contacts for some future endeavor

You may have several goals in mind and will no doubt be more successful in achieving some than others. Passionate teachers often find teaching in China both exciting and challenging despite poor working conditions and low salaries. “Kids there are learning machines,” one teacher commented, “a total pleasure to teach.” If your major goal is sightseeing, and teaching is only a means to subsidize your trip, however, I would urge you to reconsider: if this is your motive, you will be unlikely to enjoy your teaching. Walking on the Great Wall is one thing; teaching in a crowded classroom for a year or more is quite another. It’s important to have realistic expectations going in. For all of the media attention on the strength of the Chinese economy, the fact is that China is a poor country. Even in major cities, you may sometimes experience power outages, water shutoffs, lack of air conditioning during blazing summer heat, or broken heaters in the middle of winter.

You should also be prepared for the cultural shock you may experience. You may feel isolated, lonely, and homesick if you are the only foreigner in town. You might also feel frustrated if you come to believe that everything local teachers do is wrong and then try to “set them right.” You can hardly enjoy your stay if this is your goal. What works well in one cultural setting may not work that well in another. Tolerance and vision, I believe, are the two essential qualities for contemporary teachers, but these are best tested on a teaching mission overseas. A good book that may help teachers considering going abroad for work is Snow’s (2006) More Than a Native Speaker, which offers many practical tips.

Teaching in China, or anywhere outside your home country, can be a learning experience regardless of your previous experience. To be a successful teacher, you have to be a successful learner first, since only grateful and eager learners can make sincere attempts at ridding themselves of bias. This is paramount when working abroad, where you need to work with the local teachers to find what works best in a particular setting. Starting out or becoming unwilling, grumpy, or disgruntled will only frustrate you at every turn in your new environment.

Despite the difficulty in achieving goals, many teachers have worked successfully in China and have truly enjoyed their stay. Robert Carling of Lehman College, City University of New York, and Alex McKnight of Monash University are two pioneers

MULTILINGUAL MOMENTUM

Are You Ready to Teach Abroad?

by Ke Xu
who taught in China early on. When
Robert started teaching at Jiangsu
Teachers’ College (now Suzhou
University) in 1979, the Cultural
Revolution had just ended, and the
political situation was still sensitive.
“T was careful in the first months,” he
recalled, “not to make a single mistake
in word or gesture that would make
trouble for my host institution.” His
hard work, personal charm, diplomacy,
and caution made him such a pop-
pular person in school that he was
twice hired back to teach two more
academic years.
“Control of language and behavior.
This was the key to my initial success,”
he remarked. How true. Even now, cer-
tain issues—such as Falun Gong;
human rights; and the independence
of Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, to men-
tion a few—are terribly sensitive topics
in China and should therefore be han-
dled carefully. In China, as in many
other countries, foreign professionals
need to stay away from such contro-
versial matters to avoid trouble with the
authorities.
Apart from the advice given above,
Robert also provides the follow ing tips:
• Use English that is free of collo-
quialisms and slang.
• Learn to appreciate the intelli-
gence and wit of the local people
and discover their sense of humor.
• Be patient, friendly, cheerful,
uncomplaining, impossible to
frustrate, and possessed of a taste
for irony and absurdity.
McKnight’s outstanding perform-
ance at Suzhou University in 1986–87
soon earned him the trust of the univer-
sity administrators. In the third month
of the semester, his wife, who had
accompanied him on the trip, also got a
teaching position. They traveled during
their vacation and took Chinese lessons.

IN-SERVICE

The Write to Be Read

by Andy Curtis

In October 2006, I was invited to the
fourteenth annual Korea TESOL con-
ference in Seoul. This was my fourth
trip to a Korea TESOL conference in
the past eight years, but this time I was
a plenary speaker, which gave the trip
additional meaning and importance for
me. While I was there, I asked
teachers what kinds of professional
development activities they engage in.
I have put this question to thousands of
TESOL professionals in more than
twenty countries over the past fifteen
years, and one of the most common
responses, apart from attending con-
ferences, is “reading.”
This is a reassuring answer from
language educators, and it makes
sense as reading can be carried out
almost anywhere and requires nothing
more than something to read and the
time to read it. However, in Seoul this
response led participants to consider
the relationships between reading for
professional development and writing
for professional development.

This, in turn, raised the question:
What do people do when they write,
and why do they write? “According
to the expressionists, writing is consid-
ered an art which is ‘a creative act in
which the process—the discovery of
the true self—is as important as the
product—the self discovered and
expressed’ (Berlin 1988:484)”
(Worthington 1997). Ten years after
having first read this line, I still find it
to be one of the most clear and concise
answers to that question.
A few years ago, I came up with my
own seven reasons why already-very-
busy TESOL professionals should
write about their experiences of teach-
ing and learning:
• Writing about your own experi-
ence helps you step back from
your thoughts and feelings, and
view them with a little less subjec-
tivity and a little more objectivity.
• Writing about the challenges you
face and how you responded to
them provides a record that you
can consult later to see if you
would handle the same situation
the same way (and, usually, you
would not).
• Writing regularly about your lan-
guage teaching and learning
beliefs and values enables you to
see what changes within you and
what remains the same over time,
and why.
• Writing about your successes
is a form of validation and
celebration.
• Writing about your disappoint-
ments is cathartic and comforting.
• Sharing your writing with your
colleagues develops trust and
mutual understanding and reveals
common concerns.
• Publishing your writing allows
you to give back to the communi-
ties that support you and gives
credibility to the notion of experi-
ential writing as a valid form of

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professional development. (Curtis 2003, 13)

Three years and two dozen publications later, I still find this a persuasive list of reasons to write. What I missed in that article was the relationship between reading, writing, and professional development. Put simply, while relatively few teachers may have the time to write, submit, revise, and resubmit, everyone has time to read. We make time because we are TESOL professionals, and if we cannot produce this kind of professional developmental writing, then we should at least be willing to digest it.

What about reading? Attempts to capture what happens when people read have been recorded for at least a hundred years. For example, in 1908, Gaige published a 400-page volume on Books and Reading. In 1930, Patterson published an even bigger book (500+ pages) on Teaching the Child to Read. In spite of a century or more of this kind of writing about reading, it is still difficult to find a clear and concise definition of what it means to read, even in places where you might expect to find such a definition. For example, the International Reading Association (http://www.reading.org/) has many freely available, clear and concise papers on reading, some of which are relevant to TESOL professionals, such as “Second Language Literacy Instruction: A Position Statement of the International Reading Association” (International Reading Association 2001). The statement contains some important facts and figures, for example: “In the United States between 1986 and 1998 the number of children with limited English ability rose from 1.6 million to 9.9 million” (p. 1), (i.e., a sixfold increase in twelve years).

But even here, there is no definition or description of what happens when people read. One reason for this might be an assumption that everyone knows what people mean when someone says, “I am reading.” However, this seems unlikely. Whatever the reason for this apparently conspicuous absence, let me propose a definition of reading for professional development: understanding your own teaching and learning experiences more fully and more deeply through reading the written accounts of others, or, in the case of diary or journal reading, through (re)reading your own writing.

To return to the relationships between reading and writing, for me, one of the most interesting transformations that occur as a result of writing is the writer having to give meaning using words to feeling and thoughts that might otherwise remain unarticulated. It is, of course, possible to think without writing. However, it is not possible to write without thinking. Considering the relationships between reading for professional development and writing for professional development raises the question: What is the point of publications such as Essential Teacher? The answer appears to be in two perhaps deceptively simple parts: (1) to read and (2) to write.

Reading practitioner publications may be an essential part of a teacher’s professional development. It is certainly something that can be carried out independently, compared with, for example, coaching, mentoring, or team teaching. If teachers come together to share ideas based on what they have read, this may well increase the quantity and quality of collaborative, cooperative professional development. However, creating opportunities and incentives, providing support and encouragement for teachers to write, to publish, and to share may be an equally important professional development activity, enabled by this kind of publication.

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FROM A TO Z

The Process of Learning Process Writing

by Dorothy Zemach

Every writing teacher I’ve ever worked with has taught process writing. However, to English language learners encountering it for the first time, it can seem a sort of cruel joke, if not outright punishment. “We have to do what before we write? My paper’s going to be checked by the person next to me? What does he know? And then I have to write it again?”

It would be hard to pick up a current ESL writing textbook that did not begin with an explanation (and, usually, a justification) of process writing: that is, a method that takes the writer through a series of steps:

• brainstorming, to gather ideas
• organizing, to choose which ideas to use and put them in order
• drafting, to write the complete essay from start to finish

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It would be hard to pick up a current ESL writing textbook that did not begin with an explanation (and, usually, a justification) of process writing;
reviewing, whether by oneself, peers, or the teacher
• editing and revising
• rewriting

Process writing is obviously more time-consuming than simply writing an essay in a single draft and turning it in. But if process writing is so time-consuming and painful for students, why take them through all those steps? Because it results in better writing, and, eventually, better writers. One term, I decided to have students write their reactions in their journals to stages of the writing process they had not encountered before. Their comments show their understanding of the value of the process.

Brainstorming: For this opening stage of the writing process, my classes try discussion, freewriting, listing, and mapping. Brainstorming is usually the most popular part of the process because it’s not very difficult. What I want students to learn, though, is which technique works best for them.

By doing free writing, I can recognize what my English expression is. I can think over it, then other expressions come out. This action is really good because freewriting yield something new that I’ve never thought. In that time, I am happy and feel my skill developing.

Listing is good for me. I have to think a little bit to come up with my idea but I wrote many ideas and this skill made me having less unnecessary stuffs than free writing.

If I make a list or freewriting, I don’t need to think about the structure and connection at first, I can concentrate on writing down my idea. So when I have to write a large amount quickly, those methods are good. But if I have a lot of time, I surely use mapping because I want to make my sentences much better and deeper. I can instantly understand structure and connection of the contents. It also helps us to see the things from a lot of different aspect, both from inside and outside.

Students use different methods to gather more ideas, to generate ideas quickly, and to start making logical connections between those ideas—which leads to the next step.

Organizing: After they have looked over their ideas, crossed out the unworthy ones, and highlighted the useful ones, students prepare an outline.

“Outlining” is very useful for organizing the essay. It really help preventing from being disordered. I write the essential sentence on “Outline” and after that, I just add the detailed sentence on “Outline.” That’s good.

It can be a hard sell at first, but this student came around in the end:

October 20: It is also different between the writing in my language and America. We do not have to write the outline because it wastes a lot of time for the writing in my paper.

November 27: From what I learned this term, the most important thing I learn is the outline because it save a lot of time on the writing and good organization.

Peer editing: I believe that, especially for low-level writers, peer editing has a greater value to the reader than to the writer. I provide readers with a detailed form to fill out, asking them to locate topic sentences, examples of support, strong language, and so on; and I grade the readers, not the writers, on the form. That said, writers benefit from knowing that they can communicate and that their work is appreciated. I do not ask peers to check grammar or spelling; that’s the instructor’s job.

It is so interested to me to read other people’s essay because it is always different from mine. This time, I read Sachiko’s paper and she wrote about nature and nurture. She explains them so logically.

First draft of essay was much easier for me to write than before. We had some steps to finish the paper and when I done this step each by each, I did not need to think about anything just write the essay with brainstorming and outline that I made before.

However, later I read it and show someone to read, I recognized where I should fix.

Here the writer mentions being able to see for herself what she should change, just from having shown her paper to someone else; in fact, one advantage of process writing is precisely that it takes time.

I couldn’t find any mistakes in my papers soon after writing them, but I can find many mistakes now. I don’t exactly know why, but it makes writings better to review papers after taking them away for a while.

If you teach process writing, begin by explaining in advance the nature and purpose of each step. Be clear with yourself as well as your students: Will you require two drafts? Three? Will you mark papers before you give a grade? Will peer edits “count” towards anyone’s final grade? Will you grade process as well as product? How? I don’t think the answers to these questions matter, as long as you know what you’re doing and why, and can articulate it.

If your students keep writing journals, consider having them chart their thoughts at each stage of their first essay; then have them go back and reread their comments before they start their second paper. In this way, you’ll be nurturing thoughtful writers, such as this one:

At the beginning of the class, I think I know what is writing, but I find it is wrong. Writing is not an easy task. From brainstorm to final draft, there is many process you need to pay attention. Through all the journal entries, I learned how to produce a essay, what step I need to do, how can I get the idea. After this term, I have changed my mind. Writing is not a trick, I need to do it seriously.

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Often, language teachers think either that they have nothing to say about their teaching or that what they have to say is of little significance. In my opinion, you as a language teacher have plenty to say that is valuable for colleagues to hear and replicate around the world. A main issue over the years has been how to encourage teachers to articulate their “inner world of choices made in response to the outer world of the teaching context” (Mann 2005, 105) in order to fully account for a knowledge base of TESOL.

One way of gathering detailed accounts about the choices, decisions, beliefs, and classroom practices language teachers make each day is by encouraging teachers to engage in teacher research. Freeman (1998) has suggested that language teacher research is about “seeing what you do in your teaching and how it impacts on your students’ learning” (p. 6). For me, the main focus of Freeman’s comment is “seeing what you do in your teaching,” as this is also the main purpose of reflective practice (Farrell 2004). Burton (1998) has correctly maintained that language teachers must be central in any reflective process on TESOL research.

You Are a Generator of Research Knowledge

This has not always been the case, however, as throughout their careers language teachers have experienced research as something that is conducted on them by others. More often than not, the results of such research never get back to you or the to the institutions that hosted the outside researchers in the first place. If the results are in fact shared, then they are shared in the form of a prescription: you are expected to translate the results into action with the assumption that your practice will automatically improve as a result. Thus, you, the language teacher, have often been seen as a consumer, but not a generator, of research.

Recently, however, Johnson and Golombek (2002) have called for language teachers to be recognized as “legitimate knowers, producers of legitimate knowledge, and as capable of constructing and sustaining their own professional practice over time” (p. 3). This focus firmly places you in the role of generator of research knowledge. The intuitive sense of this role shift should be clear since you are really best suited to carry out research in your own classroom because you are “more insider to [your] settings than researchers whose work lives are elsewhere” (Freeman 1998, 6). In fact, your training uniquely places you in a position to provide data on classroom practice. As an interpreter of such teacher-generated research data, you also become a stakeholder in research results (Burton 1998).
language teacher could have a forum to carry out research of your practice in your own context. When I came up with the idea for this series, I anticipated that contributors would not only deepen their individual understanding of what they do but, more importantly, would be allowed to share their findings with many other language teachers. The series has attempted to cover as many geographic regions as possible, with volumes representing the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Australia/New Zealand. What is distinctive about this series is that these studies document how individual language teachers at all levels of practice systematically reflect on their own practice. This is very different from what has been the standard in language research conducted by outside academics who attempt to interpret other teachers’ practices.

What Is Language Teacher Research?

It is not easy to agree on a definition of what counts for language teacher research in TESOL. Nevertheless, the series uses the term teacher research in the broadest possible sense (and I thank Simon Borg for his insight on this) to “encompass all forms of practitioner inquiry that involve systematic, intentional, and self-critical inquiry about one’s work” (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999, 22) in K–12, higher education, or continuing education classrooms, schools, programs, and other formal educational settings. This definition includes inquiries that others may refer to as action research, practitioner inquiry, teacher inquiry, teacher or teacher educator self-study, and so on, but does not necessarily include reflection or other terms that refer to being thoughtful about one’s educational work in ways that are not systematic or intentional.

What makes the series different from any other TESOL series is that it features only accounts of teachers (at all levels) researching their own practice and not other teachers’ practice. Because the range of topics in language teaching that teacher researchers can focus on is practically unlimited, the chapters are organized around a template to help authors and readers compare across chapters and volumes, by looking at aspects such as the research issue, background literature, procedures, results, and reflection:

• issue: The statement of the issue includes a brief description of the context and the participants. It answers the question, “Why was this issue important to you?” Issues do not have to be framed as problems. I encourage you to identify and express what you see as important to the situated nature of your work, that is, what makes the in Asia, in Europe, in the Americas, in the Middle East, in Australia and New Zealand, or in Africa part of the volume title important. This statement can be embedded in the chapter or treated as a separate statement.

• background literature: This brief review of the literature asks you to write only about the background literature relating to the issue you have researched.

• procedures: You then document the procedures you fashioned or responses you made to the issue. What was the procedure or response taken, why this procedure or response, and where did it come from? How did you implement it? For example, if interviews were used, were they structured or unstructured? What were the questions asked? Give as many details as possible here because other teachers may want to replicate your research in different contexts.

• result: What were the results of the issue you researched? In this section, you discuss the outcomes and results in detail.

• reflection: The final part of the template asks you to give a statement that articulates answers to the question, “So what?” What will you do now and in the future?
OUT OF THE BOX

What I have learned is that second language teachers in all regions of the world are dedicated to reflecting on their practice and sharing their knowledge with other teachers.

What action will you take as a result of your findings? If you have already acted on your findings, what did you do? What have you learned as a result of the whole process? For example, what have you learned about your teaching? What have you learned about doing research? Also, at this point, the issue of the situated nature of the work should be revisited: why you think the issue is specific to your context.

I realize that this template of subheadings is an attempt to impose some order and even a prescription for the presentation of teacher-generated research. This is not my intention as series editor, and I believe that you should systematically research your own practice in whatever way you desire and feel comfortable with. However, the format is designed so that as many language teachers as possible with varied expertise and educational qualifications can pick up a volume from any of the regions covered (the Americas, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Australia/New Zealand) and be able to make comparisons about the issues, background literature, procedures taken, results, and reflections without having to work too hard to find them.

**Building Community among Language Teachers**

Another reason for the Language Teacher Research Series is to celebrate what is being achieved now in English language classrooms each day in different regions of the world as a way of encouraging and developing communities of like-minded language teaching professionals who are willing to share these important experiences. Thus, the series intends to promote within the TESOL community the growth of understanding of English language teaching in local, regional, and international settings.

When you share your experiences with teachers in other contexts, they can compare and contrast what is happening in different classrooms around the world. Of course, the ultimate aim of this series is to encourage an inquiry stance toward language teaching. You as a teacher can play a crucial role in taking responsibility for your own professional development as a generator and a receiver of knowledge about what it means to teach English.

You can play a crucial role in taking responsibility for your own professional development as a generator and a receiver of knowledge about what it means to teach English.

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Fair Opportunity for Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL

by Eunhee Han

Do I, as a nonnative-English-speaking teacher, have the same chance of being hired for a TESOL position as a native-speaking teacher? I know that some nonnative English speakers have not received a fair opportunity, while others have. After my appointment to a teaching position in the United States, my own focus changed. Now, rather than focus on my status as a nonnative-English-speaking teacher, I seek ways to develop my status.

A year ago, Yujong Park weighed in on this matter (see “Will Nonnative-English-Speaking Teachers Ever Get a Fair Chance?”, Essential Teacher, March 2006). That article caused me to feel that I should express the positive side of the issue. Telling my story here is an act springing from the core of my belief system that helps move me toward a narrative of my life. Pagnucci (2004) argued that a narrative is an ideology. Further, a narrative represents an ideological decision which “the philosophic craving for generality is the means whereby chaotic particular knowledge about the world is reduced to manageable proportions” (Egan 1979, 53).

Overcoming Self-Doubt

I was hired as a teaching associate for undergraduate students at a university in the mid-Atlantic United States. It is well known, at least at this school, that the competition for teaching positions among graduate students is strong. On top of that, as a nonnative-English-speaking graduate student from Korea, I felt so challenged by the status of the position that at first I dared not even apply. However, the school has fair selection criteria. In the end, the department hired me—but not because of my native language background or my appearance. They selected me through a process that gave me an equal chance along with native speakers.

Through all of my teaching experiences there, I have never received special attention from the faculty because I was a foreigner. My status as a nonnative-English-speaking teacher was an issue only for me. I do not deny that at times I struggled with students because of my language competence. However, those moments resulted not from problems created by outsiders but from self-created issues that I continually deal with as a nonnative-English-speaking teacher.

In other words, the problems and issues I dealt with do not relate to having a fair opportunity as a candidate for a position. Fortunately, I did not face a struggle to get the selection committee to give me an equal opportunity. My nonnative status was a personal problem that I had to overcome. Some of my colleagues consistently blame any difficulties they encounter in the classroom and potential hiring opportunities on their nonnative speaker status. While some people may see the opportunities I have received as the result of luck, I don’t think that’s the case. They were the result of a constant personal struggle from within to overcome a label by which I was judging myself.

Seeking to Enhance My Status with Native Speakers

Like many other nonnative-English-speaking faculty teaching English to native speakers, I have experienced my share of challenges stemming from the native/nonnative dichotomy. I have become frustrated and depressed, yet have also felt appreciated by students.

The fear I felt before my first university class was palpable. My mentor told me that a majority of the undergraduate students were from rural towns in the state. That meant the students most likely had never attended a class taught by a foreign teacher. In fact, they might never have met a person from Asia before. My mentor encouraged me to realize that my presence in the classroom would be a cross-cultural learning experience for the students. Although my initial fear hindered my understanding of those enlightened words back then, my classroom experience since then has made me realize not only that he was right but that my cross-cultural approach has turned out to be a real teaching asset. I have learned to use my background to my advantage, and this has helped me make my voice distinct and clearly heard in the classroom.

My Asian background is a large part of who I am, and my students and I have to deal with that. When I enter the classroom, I need to be confident that I, as a nonnative-English-speaking instructor, can not only be as effective as U.S. instructors in teaching English courses, I can also offer students things that their other teachers cannot.

In the course that I taught, College Writing and Research Writing, I provided first- and second-year students with material to read and ways for them to express themselves in writing. Many exciting moments arose in class, and the intense student involvement usually took us past the scheduled
end of the class. For instance, while we were debating issues related to animal protection in preparation for writing an argumentation essay, a student raised the issue of the eating of dog meat, which had bothered her for a long time. Having heard that people in East Asia eat dog meat, she at first hesitated to ask my opinion, but through our interaction she and the students realized that information people have about other cultures often reflects only the surface level of cultural issues and practices.

One or two weeks into the semester, some students began to show a greater interest in my culture because almost none of them had any prior knowledge about it. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to share my culture as a discussion topic and then relate the information to other content in my classes. Through my teaching experiences, I have found that many students are curious to learn more about Korea and Korean culture since they are familiar with many Korean manufactured products, such as electronic devices and automobiles. Today, U.S. students are more likely than ever before to have opportunities to meet and work with nonnative English speakers. Young native speakers should be aware that not everyone speaks English as they do. They need exposure to other Englishes so that they can understand the nonnative English speakers they may meet.

My Cultural Background Is a Teaching Asset

I have learned to view my background as an asset that can attract students’ attention and draw them into my teaching. The use of my culture and its cultural products as examples has two merits. First, it increases students’ awareness that others do not always think, act, or do things as they do. Second, it makes my voice not only audible but authentic.

I began to reflect more deeply on my role in a U.S. university with a predominantly white student body. Rather than seeing my position through the lens of a member of a minority group, I considered that, because students at this university lack experience with people born outside the United States, I could try to increase students’ awareness of their own and other cultures. I learned through my interactions with students that some will begin to open up to people who are unfamiliar to them. In writing and discussion, the students shared stories about encounters they had had with people from other countries despite their own hesitation and fear. In their view, these encounters had expanded their views and refined their reactions to other people from outside the United States. In a report that really touched my heart, one student said that she now approached unknown cultures and persons as if she were approaching me.

I now realize the truth in Widdowson’s (1992) position that there is a distinction between the role of a teacher and the role of an informant in the TESOL field. Native speakers no doubt have a more prestigious status as informants of English, but the pedagogic expertise of the teacher still has value. In other words, whether native or nonnative, English teachers must be aware of and must have developed an expertise of pedagogical knowledge. Widdowson claimed,

the instructor’s role is a different matter, and here it is the nonnative speaker who has, on the face of it, more natural advantages. For although native speakers obviously have the more extensive experience as English language users, the nonnative speakers have had experience as English language learners. (p. 338)

I remind myself that I have been educated to be a teacher. I am comfortable in the classroom. I believe that, because of interaction with my students, my content, pedagogical, and curricular knowledge will develop and grow.

Pagnucci (2004) put it well: “If we tell our own stories, preserve them, study them, we can find in our stories some of the answers for which we’re looking” (p. 83). I have discovered a small part of what it is like to be a non-native-English-speaking instructor teaching English to native speakers. By telling my story, I will be able to move forward from being a hesitant nonnative speaker to being a confident teacher. According to Meyer (1996), “Any story we tell or write is framed in some way. A frame is a point of view, perspective, stance, or relationship that is a foundational part of a story” (p. 119). Even though my story is not a definitive answer to be framed, at least I have a lens for understanding, and this lens will guide me as I try to become a better professional.

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A student sat across from me struggling to suppress her tears while she explained that her parents did not have the money to support her for another semester of English study. I felt nothing as I handed her a tissue. I had to face the fact that I had nothing to give.

I was burned out. To have any integrity, I felt I had to get out of the classroom.

**My Path to Burnout**

My burnout developed slowly. I began my career in higher education ESL as any new professional would: eager and enthusiastic. To be as innovative as I could, I spent hours preparing materials, reviewing lesson plans, and keeping up on ideas that would inspire my teaching. I marked every mistake on students’ assignments. I met my students for office hours and patiently explained those mistakes again and again.

I cared for my job and career as people care for their bodies; I exercised by trying new approaches. I increased my flexibility by asking for new assignments. As the years passed, Asia had its crisis, the Twin Towers in New York were attacked, the Iraq war was planned and shots were fired, visas became harder for students to obtain, the threat of SARS appeared in Asia, and cows turned mad. Enrollments in many U.S. ESL programs fell, and teachers faced increased teaching loads with no pay increases. Teaching and program decisions became based more on economic survival and less on good pedagogy or learners’ needs.

At the same time, my personal economy changed. A mortgage and children siphoned my energy away from students who had planned and saved to enter my classroom. I became less patient. I tired of explaining the same grammar points over and over again. I tired of reading students’ attempts at writing and assigned the minimum tasks required. I felt no remorse as I walked into classrooms and coldly returned papers with poor grades and scant remarks about areas that needed improvement. I also secretly resented students showing up for office hours.

When my children were born, I was able to take some time off. I worked part-time, but my enthusiasm for teaching waned. I wanted to do work other than teaching. I took an administrative job and hated it. I spent a year doing instructional design for courses and, surprisingly, realized I missed the contact with students. After another year of rest, I returned to the classroom with some of the verve I had had after graduate school.

But it wasn’t until my children entered school that the enormity of what I had been going through hit me. I looked at them and silently prayed that they would have teachers who cared about them, respected them, and would be honest enough to leave the classroom if they were burned out. The adult ESL learners who go to other countries to further their educational goals are someone’s children, too. I owe those learners the same level of integrity that I expect from my children’s teachers.

**A Shrinking World**

As a result of my burnout, my world outside of work became smaller. Teaching is hard work, and language teaching is especially demanding. I suddenly refused to socialize with individuals who were too shy and quiet or who found it too difficult to carry on a conversation. In my defense, I explained to my husband that my job was to get students to produce language. If native speakers could not do this easily, I had no energy in my free time to socialize with them.

As I learned about teacher burnout, I realized I had displayed the three domains that Maslach (1982) describes in *Burnout: The Cost of Caring*: depersonalization, in which I had distanced myself from my students and colleagues; reduced personal accomplishment, in which I did not value my work with my colleagues; and, finally, emotional exhaustion (Maslach and Schaufeli 1993).

The sad truth is that burnout affects all aspects of teachers’ work and personal lives, not just their direct contact with students. When teachers become emotionally detached from their work and colleagues, their general ability to work with others disintegrates. Their ability to treat others with respect is lessened. I have witnessed intercollegial behavior that
others have labeled unprofessional when, in reality, the teachers were burning out. The symptoms include an unwillingness to do the extra tasks that make programs exceptional, such as celebrating cultural diversity with students; attending field trips; or making the effort to highlight and attend important lectures, films, and events. Without these activities, programs are weakened, the word gets out, and students go elsewhere.

The Causes of Burnout

Burnout is not something teachers want to discuss openly. Many are afraid of being judged by their colleagues. It implies a weakness, a level of emotionality that has no place in the workplace. As Maslach (1982) writes, people tend to blame those who are burned out for their condition. “Something about them as people, some personal flaw, must be the source of their soured altruism—or so we think” (p. 9). Maslach, by contrast, shifts the focus from who has burnout to what is causing burnout.

Managing burnout has much to do with decisions made at administrative levels.

The nature of language teaching might be one cause of burnout in the profession. (See Dorothy Zemach’s “Burnout from Teaching,” Essential Teacher, September 2006.) Language teaching requires great patience. Adult learners may make slow progress that is not easily visible at the end of each day. Once a teacher who left the profession told me he preferred to leave because he was “results oriented.” I smiled because I understood precisely what he was saying. He gained my respect for being honest with himself.

Maslach and Leiter (1997) describe the causes of burnout, each of which can be applied to the teaching of ESL.

Overload Most teachers in any setting feel overloaded, but after the international crises of the 1990s and events at the turn of the twenty-first century, ESL teachers were forced to take on heavier teaching loads to stay employed. With too many contact hours and less preparation time, teachers work longer hours and take more work home.

Lack of Autonomy Teachers have had to accept decisions based on economics and efficiency and made by administrators who have little knowledge of language acquisition or the economies of international students. For language programs to remain intact, class sizes are often increased, and the levels of the courses are often collapsed. This prevents some students from studying language at their placement levels, causing their progress to slow.

Stagnant Salaries Because most public university language programs serve students who are not yet admitted to the university, they are self-supporting and unfunded by central administrations. Raises must be generated by the number of full-time students enrolled or by increases in tuition rates. (See also Dorothy Zemach’s “Not in It for the Money,” Essential Teacher, December 2006.) Neither of these has been easy to achieve since September 11, 2001, because students can find cheaper tuition and obtain visas more easily in other English-speaking countries, such as Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

ESL’s Marginalized Position Inside the university academy, ESL is viewed as remedial work that is to be completed before a student enters a degree-granting program. ESL programs are often housed in the least desirable and most isolated buildings on campuses. Teachers are not often included on universitywide committees that make significant decisions because many work part-time. Unless a department depends on international student enrollment, such committees may ignore the need to internationalize campuses and the changes necessary to draw international scholars if ESL professionals are not represented.

Clash of Values Teachers know that classes should be small, students should be tested and placed into levels appropriate for their abilities, and the curriculum should match students’ needs and interests. However, in the effort to address the issues associated with...
with thinning budgets, programs may not give priority to these values.

**Needed: An Ounce of Administrative Prevention**

Most of what TESOL professionals can do to prevent burnout is instinctual. An abundance of resources are available in a variety of professions to help employees deal with stress and burnout on a personal level. However, managing burnout has much to do with decisions made at administrative levels. Although administrators cannot do much about the effects of the world economy and the political climate on international scholarship, they can do a great deal institutionally to help teachers in ESL programs ride out tough times.

I was lucky enough to work under an administrator who truly wanted to help teachers stay in the profession and was willing to give me leave to recover. I was also encouraged to continue professional development, which gave me the feeling that I was able to accomplish more in my career. Shown in the box below are some of the suggestions that Kyriacou (2001) offers at the institutional level to prevent teacher burnout.

Administrators need to take burnout seriously and to recognize the ways in which policies may be contributing to burnout. I am saddened as I watch talented teachers leave the profession, exhausted not only from the work of teaching, but also from the unending anxiety over enrollment and the insecurity of employment. However, mostly I am saddened for the students who lose the opportunity to learn from them. These students deserve to be taught by ESL instructors whose passion for teaching is rekindled by professional development and who gain professional respect from their institutions.

**How Administrators Can Help Prevent Teacher Burnout**

- Involve teachers in curriculum and instructional planning.
- Provide supportive resources for instructional practice.
- Make job expectations and descriptions clear.
- Keep the lines of communication open between teachers and administrators.
- Encourage teachers' professional identity by supporting professional development.

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**References**


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Three Years after Springing Out of the Box

by Phil Quirke

At the TESOL booth at the association’s 2006 convention, I found myself subject to a barrage of criticism leveled against Essential Teacher, and especially its untraditional, accessible style and glossy appearance. I thoroughly enjoyed defending the right of the wider membership to have its voice heard in Essential Teacher. I am passionate about Essential Teacher being a venue for the innovative work of novice writers and of practitioners whose first language may not be English. The TESOL field is changing, and these writers need a forum to debate their points of view as much as more seasoned writers do.

I would like to thank all the people who came to the booth and shared their comments, both negative and positive. They made me realize the importance of reporting to the readership the fact that Essential Teacher and, specifically, Out of the Box, have successfully addressed the needs of novice writers.

In response to the criticism I have heard, this article details the development of Out of the Box under my stewardship since its inception in 2003. Many teachers have seen their articles published in Out of the Box, while others graciously accepted my critique and ultimate rejection of their work. I sincerely hope contributors will continue writing and submitting their inspirational work to ET and other publications.

A Rich, Untapped Vein

The original concept for Out of the Box was to create a forward-looking, very creative, highly imaginative section. I have tried to make it a place for the type of thoughtful, innovative work that no other publication currently in our field can accommodate. My job as the first editor of this section was to discover articles and authors that could realize this concept.

When I initially sought these forward-looking, creative, and imaginative submissions, I never imagined the quality of the manuscripts I would receive. Editing so many truly innovative articles has reinvigorated my practice and has given me enough ideas to revitalize my classes for at least the next five years.

Out of the Box publishes 16 articles in each volume year. It has succeeded in tapping into a TESOL membership need, as evidenced by the number of submissions. For volume 1, I received 73 articles; for volume 2, 87 articles; and for volume 3, 99 articles.

I have had the pleasure of reading more than 250 manuscripts outlining some of the most exciting work in TESOL today. Of these articles, the number I tried commissioning from colleagues in the field was reduced from 20, when Essential Teacher was first launched, to 1 in the last three issues of volume 3. It has become unnecessary to solicit articles because of the number and quality of unsolicited submissions ET is now receiving.

In the four issues published from December 2005 through September 2006, eleven of the sixteen authors of Out of the Box articles were seeing their work published for the first time. Therefore, Out of the Box is successful in providing a forum for the new voices in TESOL. Teachers who have not previously found a venue to publish their work now have a valuable new publication outlet that provides them with opportunity for empowerment.

Teachers who have not previously found a venue to publish their work now have a valuable new publication outlet that provides them with opportunity for empowerment.
So much creative teaching is being practiced in schools around the world that teachers need to share with one another.
My community college ESOL students in upstate New York expressed negative attitudes concerning the difficulty of understanding not only speakers of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) but also so-called “Spanish people,” southerners, Texans, and fellow ESOL students. They explained that these groups were difficult to understand because they “have their own language,” “talk too fast,” “have thick accents,” and “use a lot of slang.”

Borrowing some lesson ideas from Kubota (2001), who taught high school students about international English varieties, I developed a unit hoping to alter my students’ negative perceptions of ethnic, regional American, and international English varieties. Through this unit, I discovered that the students may have been making a conscious or unconscious choice not to understand some people. This choice has important consequences for their language learning and therefore for their success in school and their careers.

A Step beyond “You Talk Different”

Research indicates that, despite regular exposure to AAVE, ESOL students find it the most difficult English variety to understand (Eisenstein and Verdi 1985). In addition, students appear to judge speakers of AAVE negatively in terms of job status, friendliness, and attractiveness. Though Eisenstein and Verdi did not speculate whether the negative perceptions or the comprehension difficulties came first, they advocate that ESOL teachers help learners become more receptive to AAVE and other nonstandard varieties and become less judgmental of its speakers while maintaining a realistic perception of how the varieties are viewed by wider society.

I introduced students to American language variation and the social issues that surround it through the film American Tongues (Alvarez and Kolker 1987). They also listened to a conversation I recorded of four African American women talking and a segment from the radio program Latino USA that contained some Spanish-accented English. They discussed the conversations through linguistic and cultural lenses and used advertisements to discuss how the media create stereotypes that affect language status. They read theory on World Englishes and reflected on their own English use. Finally, they conducted research in their communities to explore the English use of an individual they thought spoke English differently than they did.

More Awareness, Better Comprehension?

At the beginning and end of the four-lesson unit, students listened to speech samples from IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive (Meier n.d.) and DARE: Dictionary of American Regional English (Cassidy and Hall 2002) and rated the speakers on friendliness, attractiveness, and intelligence (see the box for these and other resources on English varieties). I found that students’ attitudes toward nonstandard ethnic and regional American varieties had improved somewhat after the unit. Most significantly, the class’s collective attitude toward AAVE had improved across all categories. However, their views toward international English varieties, such as Indian English and African English, remained largely static.

Resources for Teaching about Varieties of English


• Latino USA Learning Resources. http://www.latinousa.org/learning/.
English, either remained unchanged or worsened.

When I sought feedback from my students on these results, one student said that, at the beginning of the unit, she had found some speech samples annoying and did not try to understand them, but she also said she was making a greater effort by the end of the unit.

Similarly, another student said that she had given the Indian English speaker a high score before the unit because her speech sounded the clearest. After the unit, though, she listened more to the content and decided the woman was less intelligent than she had first thought. In fact, the students treated the speech samples the same way they thought native English speakers treated them.

Students did skits to demonstrate their difficulties communicating in English. The skits showed that the students blamed native speaker insensitivity for the communication difficulties. In our discussion after the skits, students said that people do not take the time to listen to them and that people are “lazy, mean, and in a bad mood.” The students generally agreed that when native speakers try to understand them, they can, but that many do not try.

Researchers, too, have said that when native speakers and nonnative speakers talk, native speakers hold most of the power to accept or reject communication (Lippi-Green 1997; Norton 2000). But my students’ comments make me question whether at least some communication difficulties stem from the nonnative speaker’s refusal to put forth effort to understand certain native speakers. I believe that knowledge of this possibility coupled with less judgmental perceptions of English varieties might increase the listening comprehension abilities of ESOL students.

Bringing Language Varieties into the Classroom

Since ESOL textbooks focus on samples of standard American speech or British received pronunciation regardless of the name or face of the speaker (Morrison and White 2004), it takes some effort and creativity to obtain samples of nonstandard varieties and additional effort to make them tools for teaching and learning.

Real Conversations

My favorite way to get speech samples is by recording conversations. I recorded myself questioning my graduate school tuition bill at the bursar’s office, two students with Spanish accents complaining about their jobs, and a group of four female African American students talking about card games. When I let people know that I was an English teacher and wanted recordings of real conversations to use in my class, they were always happy to let me record them.

The conversation among the African American girls was particularly useful for two reasons. First, the girls were all students at a private, four-year university in the same city as the community college where I was teaching. Most students who initially argued that they could not understand the conversation because it was “uneducated English” were forced to rethink their reasoning because they generally held the university and its students in high regard. Secondly, when I transcribed the conversation, I found several grammar patterns consistent with AAVE, such as double negatives and absence of the be verb.

The students first listened to the speech sample and answered comprehension questions. Then, in small groups, students read the transcript and discussed the following questions:

- Which groups do you hear speaking this way?
- When and why do people speak this way?
- What grammar rules do you see in these samples?

Time for Reflection

Questions like these give students
time to reflect not only on the language but also on the groups that use it, allowing for active involvement with, as opposed to simple exposure to, the language variety. Active involvement is a key component of successful comprehension (Derwing, Rossiter, and Munro 2002; Smith and Nelson 1985). Throughout the unit, I provided several ways for students to reflect, including journal writing, skits, discussions, and presentations. Here are some of the journal prompts I used:

- Respond to the quotation “AAVE is not accepted by people not because of the language but because of who speaks it.”
- What English dialect do you speak?
- How has your English changed since moving to the United States?

Although many of the students’ journal entries in the beginning of the unit focused on defining good English, a discussion we had about media literacy helped the class begin to recognize that good is a relative term and that language lives in a cultural and political context. I first previewed a radio broadcast about Taco Bell (López and Zul 1999), explaining that it is a popular American fast-food restaurant that sells Mexican-like food such as tacos and burritos and that the restaurant’s advertising campaign featured a Spanish-speaking Chihuahua. After listening to the broadcast, students identified the two opposing views on the campaign. The students noted that some people thought the advertisements were fun because the dog is cute and clever. Others, they said, thought the ad portrayed Mexicans as animals because the dog speaks Spanish, noting language as a clear marker of both identity and status.

Research Interviews

To wrap up the unit, students conducted interviews with people that they thought spoke a different dialect of English than they did. The
first step in the project was for students to write a paragraph identifying such a person in the community and to specify what they found interesting about that person’s language.

Following the media literacy lesson, students participated in a workshop to check their interview questions. First, they interviewed each other on what they did that day, making note of which questions got the most interesting responses. Then, they discussed their prewritten interview questions in pairs to decide if the questions were likely to solicit responses from the speaker and if the responses would be interesting.

After conducting the interviews, the students gave five-minute presentations on what they had learned in relation to topics covered in the unit, such as the English dialects that exist, speakers’ pride in their dialects, the influence of a group’s status on the status of the dialect in mainstream America, and the media’s influence on that status. Most students spoke about another English language learner, usually from a language background different from that of the interviewer. Though some students focused on the relative correctness or sophistication of the person’s English, several focused on the relationship between English learners’ low status in the United States and Americans’ lack of patience when communicating with them. One student gave the example of a graduate student who had little difficulty communicating with other graduate students because they respected him. When he was at work at a local pharmacy, however, customers would often ask to speak with someone else because they couldn’t understand him.

Making Room for Other Varieties

Although I introduced English varieties and sociolinguistic concepts in a self-contained unit, in the future I will incorporate the lessons into several units—not only to allow more time for students to react to what may be new and controversial ideas to them, but also to show that nonstandard dialects are not standard. They are linguistically equal to the standard and are worthy of incorporation into the mainstream curriculum (Fox 2002). This approach may mean that students become more receptive to several varieties; my single-unit approach created receptiveness only to AAVE.

Teachers need to address with students the possibility that they, consciously or otherwise, are choosing not to make an effort to understand some people. This choice has important consequences, especially when the people they choose not to understand are classmates or coworkers. Simply making students aware of their own choices may open their minds and improve their comprehension while increasing their sensitivity.

References


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When I began teaching kindergarten in the mid-1990s, in a U.S. school with a large population of African American and Hispanic children, I eagerly collected books to help me teach topically. Favorite topics included All about Me, Creepy Crawlies, and African Safari, units that allowed me to teach science and social studies as well as basic reading and mathematical skills. I relegated multicultural literature to December, when my class focused on holidays around the world—or, perhaps more accurately, mostly European holidays—and February, which is African American history month in the United States.

As I collected books, I found that my colleagues and I owned and read aloud many of the same ones. These books formed the collections that I later began dubbing the kindergarten “canon” of children’s literature. We cherished the works of Eric Carle; Bill Martin, Jr.; Leo Lionni; and Margaret Wise Brown for their gorgeous illustrations and simple yet rich texts that lent themselves so well to being read aloud and discussed. These award-winning classics, most of them narratives with animals as main characters, were books that my colleagues and I accepted without question as ones that children loved hearing again and again.

As I gained experience, though, I began to question my assumptions about this canon. I realized that if I wanted students to become readers and thinkers, they needed to see themselves in the books that I read aloud (Nodelman 1996).

What’s Wrong with This Picture?

In that early stage of my career, I tried to assess my teaching continually and was proud of myself when I recognized that some units had to change. I realized that the word creepy in the unit title Creepy Crawlies held negative connotations; the word crawlies was inaccurate; and, maybe most importantly, the cutesy title was rather condescending to the students. Furthermore, it did not convey what I wanted the students to learn, which included an appreciation of the value of insects to the world and an understanding of the complex vocabulary associated with the topic.

I soon discovered that the two-week units my colleagues and I had planned were far too short. As we taught our African Safari unit, I felt as if the children and I were in an airplane zipping over the continent, with little time to digest the information. I also found that I communicated unintended stereotypes and misinformation during these brief, touristy units. When we completed African Safari, most of my students unfortunately ended up with the idea that Africa is simply one country with savannahs and wild animals; I had not had time to teach them about the continent’s rainforests, deserts, and other physical features, much less touch on the diversity of the people or the different countries. I certainly had had no time to address any of the political or social issues.

For the next year or two, I expanded the topics into more conceptual units with an overarching theme. Worried that I was perpetuating more misinformation than information, I abandoned the holiday unit. I still read African American stories to the children, usually historical in nature, during February, sprinkling the books between others connected with dental health and the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. However, an epiphany occurred when I noticed the children’s response to a book, Tarpley’s (1998) I Love My Hair!, which a professor had recently shared with me. This book was not part of any course unit. I had chosen to read it because I wondered how the children would receive it.

The book, a beautifully illustrated story of an African American girl learning to appreciate the beauty of her hair and her past, enthralled the children, particularly three African American girls, all of whom wore braids and beads similar to those on the cover illustration. When we finished the book, they immediately grabbed it to reread. I saw them poring over the book, comparing their beads with the protagonist’s and talking about cornrows. “This girl looks just like me,” Jeanetta observed proudly. Later, I noticed several children, most of them African Americans, revisiting the dust-jacket photographs of the African American illustrator, E. B. Lewis. It suddenly occurred to me that, up to that moment, most of the books I had read aloud were the work of white authors and illustrators.

In Search of Relevant Characters

As I watched the students’ responses to I Love My Hair!, which were by far some of the most engaged behaviors I’d witnessed in my years of teaching, I decided to conduct an informal experiment. I visited the library and checked out numerous books with human characters, looking particularly for books with diverse main characters, including Steptoe’s (1997) Creativity, a book about a friendship between an
African American child and a child who arrives from Puerto Rico. When I read these books in class, I was amazed at the depth of the children’s responses. Their comments showed that they were connecting ideas from other texts as well as from their lives. Once again, I watched children, primarily boys this time, huddling around the book _Creativity_. The other books I had selected were similar successes.

As I scanned the several hundred books scattered throughout our classroom, I realized that not only did I have very few books with human characters, but that those that I did have contained primarily white characters. Although the children seemed to enjoy nearly every book I chose to read aloud, I, as a white, middle-class female from the mainstream culture, had greatly underestimated my students’ need to see themselves reflected in books I selected. By focusing on books that dealt with animals or science topics, and superficially including the multicultural genre, I had neglected to ensure that I had other books available, contemporary books that reflected the children and their lives.

At this point, I began to rethink my ideas on what content material I should be teaching. Although teaching science is vital and children love nonfiction, I realized that if I wanted them to become readers and thinkers, my students also needed to see themselves reflected in books (Nodelman 1996). Unfortunately, finding high-quality books in any genre that feature human children, particularly those of color, is not an easy task, even though the student population in the United States is becoming more diverse. In 2003, nearly 40 percent of the 8.7 million children enrolled in preschool and kindergarten were children of color (Shin 2005). Most books with human characters depict white people (Darigan, Tunnell, and Jacobs 2002). In 2004, an estimated 5,000 children’s books were published in the United States (Horning et al. 2005). Of those, only about 4 percent were written or illustrated by people of color. However, by researching multicultural award sites on the Internet and scouring the library, I was able to locate high-quality books that were culturally and ethnically diverse.

**Overhauling My Approach**

Most teachers appreciate the need to expose students to as many ideas as possible as they wrestle with the sometimes overwhelming challenges of addressing curriculum requirements. The pressure I felt drove me to attempt to cover everything, but, sadly, I discovered that I actually covered little very well. In my haste, I neglected to ensure that my students saw themselves as members of our community of learners through the books I chose.

Revamping the topics of study required some work. When revisiting the All about Me unit, for example, I realized the books I used were more about me (white; middle-class; and from a traditional, two-parent, intact family) than about my diverse group of students, who not only came from a variety of family structures, but whose backgrounds included a variety of ethnicities and cultures. Because most children’s books available in the United States are written by white authors and illustrators from the mainstream culture, it can be a challenge to find diverse books. But the challenge is one to which teachers must respond (Horning et al. 2005).

Faced with the pressure of curriculum demands, most of my colleagues found it easier to stick with the planned units, although they did adopt some of the books for general reading aloud. However, with practice, I found it possible to keep to the general framework of the curriculum and standards that
needed to be covered. From this framework, I developed units that were more conceptually based and focused on the students’ interests—which, of course, varied from year to year. During this time, I continued to build my collection of books that featured real children and real lives, finding that these were the impetus of many discussions and connections among the children in the class. I took care to evaluate all the books I made available to the children, analyzing possible stereotypes or antistereotypes and looking for evidence of diversity throughout the genres, including informational books as well as narratives.

The Reading List Sends a Message

Adults, particularly those who work with emergent readers, are both significant others in young children’s lives and gatekeepers of the classroom (Gale and Densmore 2000; Giroux 2000). In fact, the books teachers choose provide students with a picture of the world and the way they fit within that world. If the “representation is persuasive, it will become the world these children believe they live in” (Nodelman 1996, 91). Through the reading materials they select, teachers can implicitly endorse a viewpoint lacking in diversity, unwittingly marginalizing many of the children in their classrooms.

A group of five-year-olds taught me a vital lesson: what teachers choose to keep in their classroom libraries and read aloud is far more significant than many teachers, consumed with meeting the standards, realize. Most teachers value diversity and know that multicultural literature should be an integral part of the classroom curriculum. Perini (2002) affirms this, noting that teachers have an obligation to search out and incorporate multicultural books and non-biased materials that will meet all children’s needs and value all cultures as integral to the education system. However, as teachers in the United States attempt to teach their state’s curriculum, they can inadvertently lose sight of the goal of fostering critical thinkers who will negotiate a global society successfully (Sleeter 2005).

Although teachers may be able to find a great deal of multicultural literature with a little effort, the resources and instructional guides for teaching with that literature are few (Louie 2006). However, that is no excuse for not working to ensure that all children, including children of color and English language learners, see themselves in the books that teachers use for instruction. What messages do teachers send if they limit multicultural books to one month or one unit? When teachers decide to consider the diversity of the students, their families, and their backgrounds in their classroom and then include books that reflect their cultures and interests in their instruction, teachers send a powerful message that they value students as human beings.

The classic children’s literature that fills classroom shelves and closets is still to be treasured and shared. But as educators of children, teachers need to redefine the canon and ensure that they include high-quality, multicultural literature that accurately depicts students and the outside world, even if it means missing an animal book or two.

References


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I first tried my hand at integrating technology into the classroom for the sake of collaborative learning. But I ended up getting hooked on the use of technology in language learning because of the way it helps students to improve their second language skills and develop learning autonomy. Granted, designing a computer-based activity typically entails a little more preparation than most face-to-face activities, but the authentic social and educational opportunities that result are worth the effort. The great strength of one of the activities I tried out, e-tandem learning, is that it offers learners the opportunity to acquire the target language by engaging in activities that are similar to the ones they will experience outside the classroom.

I believe that learning strategies and interaction among students in virtual or brick-and-mortar spaces contribute significantly to the process of developing language skills. Since computer-mediated communication (CMC) can provide students with the opportunity of interacting with speakers of the target language and of learning about their culture in an authentic way over e-mail, I set out to make the best use of it. That’s when I came up with my e-tandem Brazil-USA program.

What Is Tandem Learning?
Tandem learning involves two people meeting regularly to learn each other’s language and culture as well as to exchange additional information (e.g., about their professional life). This collaborative form of learning relies on three main principles:

• **reciprocity**: The success of learning is based on reciprocal dependence and mutual support.
• **bilingualism**: Tandem partners are experts in their own native language and culture, and are able to offer each other relevant and enthusiastic contributions.
• **autonomy**: Each partner is responsible for his or her own learning and decides what, how, and when to learn (Little and Brammerts 1996).

Tandem learning is not meant as a substitute for language courses. On the contrary, language courses can promote tandem learning, and the self-instruction in tandem learning can complement the formal instruction in language courses. Since 1994, eTandem Europa (2005; http://wwwvoslruhr-unibochem.de/etandem/etindex-en.html), a Web site organized by Brammerts Ruhr-Universität Bochum, in Germany, has helped language learners find online e-mail partners for e-tandem learning.

The E-Tandem Brazil-USA Program
Although I could have resorted to the eTandem Web site to gather participants for the project I would eventually develop, I instead sought the support of a Portuguese teacher from a U.S. university who was willing to promote the program among his students. Between us, we had twenty participants, ten from my English language institute in Brazil and ten from his Portuguese course in a department of foreign languages. We paired up the students and assigned them the WebQuest we had designed for them. The exchange of information via e-mail, which lasted four months, then began.

The WebQuest
According to Dodge (1995), a WebQuest is an inquiry-oriented activity in which learners obtain some or all the information they interact with from Internet resources. The purpose behind the WebQuest is to motivate students to develop their thinking skills. March (1998) argues that the strategies of cognitive psychology and constructivism are built into the WebQuest process. Typically, a WebQuest should force students to transform information into a comparison, a hypothesis, and a solution. March (1998) also asserts that in order to engage students in high-
level cognition, WebQuest should use scaffolded tasks, which have been shown to facilitate more advanced thinking. By breaking up tasks into meaningful chunks and asking students to undertake specific subtasks, a WebQuest can walk students through the kind of thinking process that expert learners would typically use.

The WebQuest, based on Dodge’s (1995) model, included these elements:

- an introduction to students on background information about the project
- six tasks for students to engage in (e.g., write a self-introduction; find out about your partner’s country—Brazil or the United States; explore cultural differences and similarities between the two countries; plan a trip to Brazil; plan a trip to the United States; find out about Christmas customs in the United States and Brazil)
- descriptions of the tasks in detail (e.g., read Web sites about places to visit in Brazil; find out your partner’s traveling preferences: places, time of year, budget, and so forth; make suggestions according to your experience and the information found on Web sites)
- information sources in the form of Internet links students can consult to complete the tasks, if needed
- guidelines for each task on how students might organize the information they acquired
- reminders to students of the importance of interacting with their partner at least twice a week and encouragement to participate actively during the program. To bring closure to the quest, students were instructed to extend their experience into other domains.

The students were asked to interact in Portuguese in tasks 1, 3, and 5 and in English in tasks 2, 4, and 6 so as to give all participants the chance to communicate in the target language as well as to respond to their partners’ needs and interests.

Language Learning Strategies

One of the guidelines included in the WebQuest suggested that students read the messages from their partners in Portuguese in tasks 1, 3, and 5 and in English in tasks 2, 4, and 6 so as to give all participants the chance to communicate in the target language as well as to respond to their partners’ needs and interests.

Sample 1

A to C

Now, I would like to ask you three questions about your first e-mail.

1) What’s Snoop Dogg?  
2) Is Greco Romana a kind of fight? Is it not violent?  
3) How does minor mean? Is a second learn option in specialize course?

One great embrace (or hug?) and see you soon (is it correct?).

C to A

First let me answer your questions. Snoop Dogg is a rapper (cantor da musica rap) I tried to say that I do not know him personally but that I live near him.

I was told that Wrestling translates as Greco Romana. Wrestling is a sport which is very similar to Brazilian Jujitsu, except you are not allowed to punch or kick.

Minor is a secondary degree in a specific course where the requirements are not as difficult as a major.

Sample 2

B to L (translated from Portuguese)

[. . .] That is incredible! My grandmother was born in Germany too. I always want to know about it. Yes, we know about Holloween here in Brazil. In fact, we have a Holloween party here too, but it is very different. Here everyone wear black clothes and they go to a party at midnight. So I like to dance, read a lot of books, talk with my friends, watch films. How about you?
partners and look for interesting ideas (personal, professional, or cultural) in their counterparts’ replies that could lead to further communication. The purpose was to enhance students’ use of social language learning strategies, such as asking questions (e.g., for clarification or correction), cooperating with others (in this case, with peers who are proficient users of the new language), and empathizing with others.

Go over the e-mails you have received, find words and expressions that are new to you and some pieces of language that are worth focusing your attention on for future communication. [. . .] look for “hooks” for further discussions, i.e., perhaps a question that you have been asked or a cultural aspect that you might be interested in discussing.

According to Oxford (1992/1993), language learning strategies are specific actions that students (often intentionally) use to improve their process in developing second language skills. The use of these strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, or use of the new language. Thus, strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative competence.

Such strategies can help students build up knowledge and acquire the target language through the exchange of cultural information and the negotiation of meaning. Many instances of the use of social language learning strategies can be found in the samples from my students’ e-mails shown opposite. Strategies such as identifying cultural information, asking for clarification of words and expressions, and exchanging information can serve as gears in the students’ process of developing their language skills and as a rehearsal for face-to-face communication. In sample 1, a Brazilian student asks a few questions of clarification, and his partner replies. In sample 2, the partners identify some cultural hooks and use questions to engage in meaningful communication.

**Authentic Communication**

In e-tandem learning, learners engage in activities—such as Internet research, report writing, and cross-cultural communication—that resemble those they will need to engage in outside the classroom. The textual nature of the e-mail communication allows students to exchange messages from work, home, and school; to read and write their messages at their own pace; and to reflect on them before replying. E-tandem learning projects such as the one described here are one way to integrate the Web into language learning and guide learners toward tasks that help them acquire the target language while designing tasks around an instructional goal.

**References**


Junia de Carvalho Fidelis Braga is a PhD candidate in the applied linguistics program at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, in Brazil, and a full-time teacher at a private language institute.
**Portal**

by Jim Rubin

The gap between a teacher’s expectations and a student’s frame of mind can be formidable, challenging the best-laid plans of any educator. Establishing a routine that engages student interest and directs focus towards learning can go some way to bridging this gap.

In my class, I use strategies that support an independent reading environment in order to free up my time to conduct individual tutoring sessions with students on a rotating basis. I have had experience using these activities in grades 4–12 and have found the effort and preparation involved well worth the effort.

**A Balance of Free Reading and Tutoring**

The philosophy behind these classroom activities is predicated on two assumptions. One is that students should engage in free, voluntary reading, as this contributes to success in every aspect of education (Krashen 2004). Another is that students learn more effectively when teachers give them individual attention because of a stronger personal focus (Friedland and Truscott 2005). If you can achieve the first goal through an established routine in which students independently work on reading skills, you can naturally integrate the second, by focusing on individual tutoring.

I have used two different activities to focus students on independent reading. The first describes a traditional approach, using a wide variety of printed material. The second incorporates supporting the reading material with film, using screenplays as a literary resource. Students engage in both activities independently, leaving me free to work with individual students.

**Individual Independent Reading**

**Lay the Groundwork**

Vocabulary presents a major stumbling block for my students, because many have limited prior reading experience. The dictionary is often presented as the quick solution to these problems, but teachers need to spend instructional time on how to efficiently use this resource. Before the reading activities, I explain clearly how to use the guide words at the top of the page and give the students time to practice this skill. I also provide practice using the pronunciation symbols and show clearly how to sound out words using these guides.

In addition, I teach students how to use worksheets to help learn new words. The worksheets, which encourage organization and learning strategies, include spaces for figuring out words in context, making guesses, writing down the dictionary definition, and using the words in original sentences. I also introduce prefixes, suffixes, and word roots as another good strategy for expanding a limited vocabulary, and there are several good Internet sites that offer creative ways to learn (see, e.g., Vocabulary University, http://www.vocabulary.com/). Another strategy is to have students make up flash cards with the root on one side and the meaning on the other. The cards can be used in a variety of games to reinforce learning.

Before doing the reading activities, I also teach strategies for improving general comprehension skills. For example, I demonstrate think-alouds with short excerpts to teach summarization and work on rephrasing the main idea in short, concise phrases. Next, I provide a worksheet that helps students connect the summaries to the material they are reading. The questions link the reading content to the student’s life: “Have the events in this story ever happened to anyone you know?” “If you were the main character, would you have reacted differently to the problem?”

**Have Students Choose Their Own Reading Material**

I believe in giving students choice in what material to read. To make sure students find something they want to read, I compile a wide variety of materials and make sure they are accessible (Constantino et al. 1997). Comics, magazines, newspapers, poetry, and song lyrics seem to increase student motivation, and books on tape are great resources to consider for this collection. You might consider asking students for contributions and organizing them in such a way that students can find what they want quickly. This resource-building activity is a good way to engage parents, as their contributions often lend an air of cultural diversity to the material and family pride among the students. Books on tape are a great resource to consider for this collection.

In preparation for having students read independently, I have them complete an interest survey to determine reading material that will maintain motivation. Then I help students choose reading material at an appropriate reading level and offer suggestions for reticent students based on the interest survey. Students should have a clear understanding of how this activity will be assessed. To develop a sense of fun and pleasure with independent reading, I don’t include assessments that deal with comprehension and vocabulary work (Krashen 2004), but I do grade participation.

**Working with Film and Screenplays**

While supplying interesting and accessible resources makes reading
more likely, a limited vocabulary will still inhibit independent work. Looking up every fifth word you are reading and trying to assimilate the meaning in the context of a story ensures a slow, tedious pace. One solution is to combine the medium of movies with reading by using screenplays. You can find screenplays online at a variety of Web sites (e.g., Scriptologist.com, http://www.scriptologist.com/); if you download scripts, be sure to observe guidelines for fair use. By organizing this activity to fit within the time span allotted for individual tutoring, it can serve as an independent reading exercise while you focus on one student.

Setting Up
I show films in a DVD or VHS format, operating the equipment from where the individual tutoring takes place. Instructions are provided first in both written and verbal forms with demonstrations, but as my students become accustomed to the routines, they get along fine with written instructions. Before class starts, I cue the video or DVD to the scene for the session and put the machine on pause. I then direct students to my written instructions on the board in order to direct them to the corresponding pages of the script, specify the strategy to be used (see the box), and emphasize the location of the stopping point.

Strategies for Independent Film Watching
- Have students first read the script (silently to themselves) and then follow along with the dialogue while viewing the movie.
- Let a more advanced-level student read the screenplay while the class reads from the script.
- Have students take turns reading the script aloud to each other, each assuming a character.
- Have students watch a short clip of the movie and then watch it again while referring to the script.
- Have the students divide into groups and read the dialogue to each other, with each student representing a character in a scene and one student in charge of reading incidental comments about scene direction.
- Have the students read the script and underline all words they are unsure of. They then watch the movie and try to figure out the meaning, writing definitions from the context in their notes.
- Have the students practice speaking parts by emulating the characters’ voices in the movie. First have them watch the movie, and then have them break into small groups to practice speaking the parts in character.
Individual Tutoring

While the students are absorbed in the reading or film activity, I am free for individual tutoring, providing an opportunity to see strengths and weaknesses of each student (Siedow 2005). I can listen to them read and direct questions concerning comprehension, providing me with a valuable window into how progress is or isn’t being made. I find there’s no better way to encourage the emotional strength necessary for students to take risks required for learning.

Another advantage of individual tutoring relates to gathering intimate information about learning that can be used for parental communication (Mendoza 2003). For example, after discussing a letter by a student that expresses interest in the field of journalism, and showing some enthusiasm towards the idea of traveling and reporting on major news stories, I might inquire further and let family members know how both they and the school can support these aspirations. This immediate feedback to family members can be a valuable asset for establishing outside support and encouragement.

From the Individual to the Group

If you would like to use these reading activities as a lead-in to the content of the main lesson, there are potential links. When using books on tape or movies and screenplays, every student will be experiencing the same content for the reading, leaving the possibility of relating instruction to the context of the material. For example, The Wizard of Oz (Freed and Fleming 1939) could be a jumping-off point to explore feelings of wonder and bewilderment when people from completely different cultures interact for the first time. Also, the famous line “There’s no place like home” provides an example of the use of contractions and the way words can be rearranged to express similar meaning (e.g., No place is like home, Home is like no other place, or Home is special). This take-off on language from the film provides an opportunity for students to learn how to phrase simple statements in different forms, expanding on prior knowledge.

Independent reading and individual tutoring are two of the most valuable activities you can offer in lessons. Making the time and space to offer them on a regular basis is a great way to promote overall literacy and develop strong working relationships with every student.

References


Jim Rubin is an associate professor at Tennessee State University, in the United States, teaching reading and learning strategies and working toward his doctorate in curriculum and instruction.
Perspectives on Community College ESL Series
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This new series brings into practical focus a wide and diverse array of reflective work on ESL education in U.S. community college settings.

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Learning Languages through Technology
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I may not always have enough time to teach a particular language point, but learners always seem to have enough time to forget it. A key reason for this, especially in EFL settings, is that the language is limited to the classroom. I am always looking for good supplementary materials to reinforce my students’ learning. The Special English site of Voice of America (VOA), the international broadcasting service funded by the U.S. government, includes materials that students worldwide can use to practice language skills and better understand American English and the U.S. way of life.

VOA’s Special English Web site is useful in the development of lower level students’ listening abilities because the radio broadcasts archived there provide an ample amount of listening material with a wide range of focus. And perhaps most important,
the material provides exposure to U.S. lifestyles as well as American English.

Three factors make the Special English audio files ideal for English language learners: limited vocabulary, simple-syntax language, and slow rate of speech.

**Limited vocabulary:** VOA Special English programs have a core vocabulary of 1,500 words. Most are simple words that describe objects, actions, or emotions. Some more difficult words are used for reporting world events and describing discoveries in medicine and science. The programs do not use idioms.

**Simple syntax:** Writers for VOA’s Special English use short, simple sentences in the active voice that contain only one idea.

**Learner-friendly speed:** Special English broadcasters read at a slower pace, about two-thirds the speed of standard English. This helps people learning English hear each word clearly. It also helps learners who are fluent English speakers understand complex subjects.

Helpful subsections of the Web site include Our Word Book, with a glossary of lexical items used on the programs; Games with Words, which has games and quizzes categorized on the basis of parts of the language; Wordmaster, which provides learners with authentic listening materials about language-related topics; and Words and Their Stories, devoted to words and terms peculiar to American English and extensively used in everyday language.

Although not intended as a teaching program, the VOA’s Special English site is a powerful tool for teaching English because of the program content and the careful presentation of that content. Using the materials on the site, you can incorporate listening materials and cultural aspects of language and society into lessons with a wide variety of high-quality audio recordings and supplementary materials.

**Cheaters**


*Cheaters* is based on a 1994 incident at a high school in a Chicago working-class neighborhood. The school’s academic decathlon team won the state championship by using a stolen copy of the competition’s questions. The team was eventually stripped of the championship after the cheating was discovered, and the team’s coach, Dr. Plecki (Jeff Daniels), was fired because of his complicity in the deception. The movie features a gritty depiction of a U.S. urban high school that may surprise those students who have unrealistic notions about American life.

This thought-provoking movie offers a variety of viewpoints about its subject matter, leaving it to viewers to decide the correctness of the teacher’s and team members’ actions. *Cheaters* stimulates discussion about many educational and social issues. Besides the obvious issue of academic cheating, the movie raises the general moral issue of cheating to succeed in life. Other issues raised include teacher-student relations, teachers’ responsibilities, academic competition as a motivator, social inequality, inequality between wealthy neighborhood schools and poor neighborhood schools, immigrants in U.S. society, and the accuracy of news media reporting.

For discussion, I recommend distributing a list of ten statements, such as *Cheating was common in my high school, Cheating is sometimes justified,* and *Dr. Plecki is a good teacher.* Next to each statement, students can write *strongly agree, agree, disagree,* or *strongly disagree.* This ensures that students take a stand that they have to defend. Students can also write statements of their own related to the movie to which their classmates react.

To encourage students to consider the movie critically, I recommend using articles about the real-life incident available on the Internet to judge how accurately the movie portrays the events it purports to describe. Students can also do role plays based on the scenes in which the team members and coach discuss the morality of cheating. By rewriting these scenes, students can express their own ideas about how they would resolve the dilemmas the movie presents.

*Lee Altschuler is an instructor with the English Language Institute at Oregon State University, in the United States.*

See also “Plagiarism, Cheating, and Getting Ahead,” http://www.tesol.org/iet/.

Ali Fuad Selvi is a research assistant with Middle East Technical University, in Turkey.
Is the sun setting on the traditional way of life in the U.S. county of Lancaster, Pennsylvania? Tourism appears to be destroying the once-vibrant community. Or is a new day dawning for the Amish of Lancaster County? Tourism provides income so that families can stay in their community and maintain their traditions.

As this award-winning documentary explains, the truth is somewhere in between: “There’s no easy image . . . . Tourism is fueling profound changes.”

*The Amish and Us* incorporates a wide range of interesting and often humorous techniques to give outsiders an insight into Amish life and into the compromises the Amish people have made with the community surrounding them. For example, many of the segment titles have double meanings: “A Good Dressing Down” gives the Amish perspective on the revealing clothing worn by many tourists. “Disturbing Developments” shows the impact of the expansion of suburbanization and the resulting loss of farmland. Another segment describes the aggressiveness of some tourist photographers and explains how upsetting this is for Old Order Amish, whose religious beliefs forbid them from having their pictures taken.

Two of the segments that my students particularly enjoy are the imaginary Amish home shopping channel and “A Field Guide to Local Species,” a mock nature special that compares and contrasts the New and Old Order Amish with similar groups like the Mennonites. It also describes appropriate and inappropriate behavior for the tourists who “migrate here seasonally to feast on hearty Germanic cuisine.”

Filmed in short segments and with a variety of voices, *The Amish and Us* is a wonderful resource for advanced ESOL students. In my classes, it has led to discussions about changes in U.S. society, the impact of tourism in developing countries, and responsible business practices, as well as the attempts of other groups around the world to preserve a traditional way of life.

*Catharine Hannay teaches in the intensive English program of the Center for Language Education and Development at Georgetown University, in the United States.*
Language Teacher Research in Europe
Simon Borg, Editor

This volume describes specific classroom experiences in a European context and extracts a more broadly applicable analysis of how to improve student learning. Some topics include enhancing classroom dynamics, using technology, increasing motivation, and integrating a research focus in teaching.

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Thomas S. C. Farrell, Editor

This volume presents research at all levels of instruction in Asia. Each author describes specific classroom experiences in an Asian context and extracts a more broadly applicable analysis of how to improve student learning.

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TESOL Provides Expertise for Redesign of the U.S. Naturalization Test

For many adult English language learners (ELLs) in the United States, improving their proficiency in English is part of a larger goal: to become a U.S. citizen. For TESOL members working with adult ELLs in the United States, immigration and citizenship issues are familiar territory because these members often serve as advocates for their students who are trying to navigate the sometimes complicated path to U.S. citizenship.

Last year, TESOL was given a unique and unprecedented opportunity to advocate on behalf of adult ELLs in the United States when the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) asked the association to provide its expertise as part of a project to redesign and standardize the U.S. naturalization test.

U.S. law requires that applicants for naturalization (1) demonstrate an understanding of the English language, “including an ability to speak, read, and write words in ordinary usage,” and (2) demonstrate knowledge and understanding of basic U.S. history and the principles and form of U.S. government. Applicants typically demonstrate their English language proficiency in an oral interview, and they are asked up to ten civics questions to demonstrate their understanding of civics. Depending on the USCIS office, testing methods have varied in terms of how the test is prepared and administered, and how the results are collected and evaluated. Even among offices that use the same testing methods, the test formats can also vary.

In 1990, the U.S. Congress created the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform to assess U.S. immigration policy and make recommendations regarding its implementation and effects. When the commission issued its final report in 1997, it recommended, among other actions, that the naturalization testing process be standardized and revised to better determine if applicants have a meaningful knowledge of U.S. history and government and can communicate in English. That same year, the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (now USCIS) began to redesign the testing process. The continuing goal is to develop a more fair and uniform approach to testing, including standard and meaningful test content, standardized testing instruments and protocols, standard scoring, and standard levels of passing.

Since the redesign process was initiated a decade ago, it has undergone several changes and reforms. To get input about the redesign, USCIS informed stakeholder organizations (including TESOL) about the effort and asked for feedback. At that time, TESOL urged USCIS to consider the needs of adult ELLs in the redesign because they would be most likely to take the test.

In 2005, the redesign project was overhauled once again, and TESOL stepped up its advocacy efforts over concern that the redesign may have become politicized. As a result, TESOL and USCIS began a more regular dialogue. A year later, USCIS formally requested input from TESOL on elements of the redesign.

The TESOL Advisory Panel

Using criteria provided by USCIS, the TESOL Executive Committee assembled a panel of members with expertise in adult second language acquisition, second language assessment, citizenship issues, and other related areas. The panel met with USCIS officials to provide expert guidance on specific aspects of the naturalization test, primarily the procedures and criteria for the English language test and the language level of the U.S. history and civics test. The work of the panel was set within certain pre-determined parameters so that it was focused only on elements of language levels and testing procedures.

In the redesign process, USCIS considered multiple perspectives, including views of U.S. history professors and experts, USCIS officers, community-based organizations, and other stakeholder groups. It also reviewed state and local history standards, adult learning standards, citizenship preparation courses, and the current government-authorized textbooks and other sound civics curricula. During this time, USCIS also maintained its outreach to a broad range of stakeholder groups through a series of informational conference calls, which included TESOL members and staff.
TESOL's Ongoing Participation in the Process

In late 2006, USCIS announced its preliminary plans for the redesigned test, including a draft list of civics questions. Although the format of both the English language and U.S. history portions of the test are relatively unchanged, the content has been changed in an effort to make the test more meaningful. (Information on the specific changes is available at http://www.uscis.gov/.)

This year, USCIS will pilot the new test. During the pilot period, USCIS will compile and analyze data, with a goal of fully implementing the new exam in 2008, and the TESOL Advisory Panel will continue to provide expert advice and feedback on the pilot’s implementation and initial results.

To provide additional information about the new naturalization test and prepare adult educators working with citizenship candidates, USCIS representatives will be presenting a series of workshops and a symposium on citizenship at the 2007 TESOL Convention and Exhibit in Seattle, Washington, USA. Registration information for the Symposium on Adult Civics and Citizenship Education in the United States, which will be held on Tuesday, March 20, is available in the 2007 Advance Program.

2007 Online Courses and Seminars

Learn about online professional development opportunities through TESOL, including the Principles and Practices of Online Teaching Certificate Program and TESOL virtual seminars. TESOL virtual seminars focus on key issues in ESL and EFL. Bring together colleagues at your school or organization for a live Webcast (or, when it fits your schedule, use the virtual seminar’s playback feature). Virtual seminar participants can also take part in an online discussion. For more information, e-mail edprograms@tesol.org.

2007 TESOL Academy

The 2007 TESOL Academy will be held at Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, in the United States, June 22–23. The academy will feature six 10-hour workshops. For more information, contact edprograms@tesol.org.

2007 Symposia

TESOL is offering two symposia in 2007. The TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Meeting Our Learners’ Needs will take place July 12 at Universidad Argentina de la Empresa, in Buenos Aires, Argentina; and the TESOL Symposium on English Language Assessment will take place October 26 at Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, in Kyiv, Ukraine.
TESOL 2007 Annual Convention
Seattle, Washington, USA

The 41st Annual TESOL Convention to be held in Seattle, Washington, USA - The Advance Program for the TESOL annual convention was mailed at the end of November 2006, and convention registration and hotel reservations began on December 1. Still need to make your plans to attend in Seattle? The TESOL home page has links to register for the convention and to make your hotel reservations. Just look for the Convention 2007 heading at http://www.tesol.org/.

Do you have questions about your registration? Do you want to confirm that your registration was received? In the United States and Canada, please call Laser Registration at 1-866-999-3032 or fax your information to 866-614-5463. Convention attendees from outside North America should call 514-228-3074 or fax their information to 514-228-3151. Please use the numbers provided here. Faxing your registration forms to the TESOL Central Office in Alexandria, Virginia, USA, will delay your registration.

Visit the TESOL Center during the Seattle Convention - Make the TESOL Center (Booth 700) your first stop during the convention to view new publications, meet authors, and check out the Web site to see upcoming programs and samples of interest section and caucus newsletters. Talk to knowledgeable staff to answer questions and receive information about what TESOL is doing for you. Staff can give you a tour of the Web site and show you how to manage your own profile.

Job MarketPlace - The 2007 Job MarketPlace (JMP) has changed. If you’ve participated in the JMP in the past, expect new and exciting changes this year. Interviews will still be conducted online, but the process of scheduling job interviews and reviewing job openings will be done online only. If you think you’ll want to drop by, and possibly interview, bring a CD or a thumb drive to download your résumé. Computers will be available for this purpose.

Graduate Student Forum - The Graduate Student Forum is a student-run miniconference sponsored by Seattle Pacific University, Bilkent University, and Purdue University. This forum invites graduate students in TESOL teacher preparation programs to present papers, demonstrations, and posters. This forum also allows graduate students to formally participate in the TESOL convention without having to meet the early deadlines for submitting proposals or compete with experienced professionals for time on the convention program. For more information, please visit http://www.tesol.org/.

Doctoral Forum - The Doctoral Forum (formerly the PhD Forum) will be held at the 41st Annual TESOL Convention. TESOL invites doctoral students to participate in this informative event that brings together doctoral students and established TESOL scholars to discuss issues pertinent to the students’ research. This forum enables doctoral students to get feedback about current issues pertaining to their dissertation research from their peers as well as from seasoned ESOL professionals (mentors). This event is an informal gathering where doctoral students can talk casually about their research. For more information, please visit http://www.tesol.org/.
E-List Subscriptions Have New Features

The interest section (IS) and caucus e-lists have new features that enable members to manage their own subscriptions. You can now set and change the preferences for your e-list connections, such as changing the e-mail address and setting subscriptions to digest mode.

For these features to take effect, you will need to edit your member profile on the TESOL Web site. If you are currently subscribed to IS and caucus e-lists, you will need to check “Join Your IS or Caucus E-list” in your member profile to remain on your respective e-lists.

Note: If you did not edit your member profile by May 1, you were automatically unsubscribed from your e-lists, and you will need to resubscribe.

To use these new features, go to http://www.tesol.org/: Interest Sections: Connect with Colleagues. If you have any questions or problems, please e-mail interestsections@tesol.org.

Easy Access to E-Newsletter Subscriptions

New or renewing members are now automatically subscribed to their respective interest section or caucus e-newsletters. To manage e-newsletter subscriptions, simply log on to the TESOL Web site (http://www.tesol.org/), select Edit Profile, and navigate the Communication Options tab. You can opt to receive the e-newsletters for any number of the interest sections and caucuses you belong to.

Results of the Elections for the 2007–08 Board of Directors and Nominating Committee

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Marcia Fisk Ong
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presentations were taped and made available on the Web site. TESOL introduced its online Resource Center during the first quarter of 2007. TESOL also presents six virtual seminars each year. These opportunities allow TESOL members to participate from their homes, schools, and offices. Have you ever participated in a virtual seminar? Perhaps you will decide to register for one in 2007.

Expand TESOL’s Worldwide Services (Strategic Goal: Worldwide Professional Participation)

In the past few years, TESOL has worked especially hard to listen to and serve members in many different parts of the world. The technology mentioned in the last section of this message has made it possible for TESOL members around the world to participate on the Web site and in person at the symposia around the world. On June 12, 2007, there will be a TESOL Symposium in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on teaching English for specific purposes, and on October 26, 2007, there will be a TESOL Symposium in Kiev, Ukraine, on assessment. TESOL President Jun Liu, who works in both the United States and China, has helped TESOL make great strides in this area. TESOL now has more than forty-five affiliates outside North America. If TESOL is to be truly global, it must continue to develop global membership and global services.

Increase TESOL’s Membership Worldwide (Strategic Goal: Organizational Sustainability and Growth)

When TESOL speaks out on important matters, it helps to be able to say that the organization has more than 13,000 members. However, more important than the number of members are the services that TESOL provides; to its members and the satisfaction TESOL members take in interacting with other TESOL members; participating in TESOL’s programs; and using TESOL’s journals, publications, and Web site. TESOL needs to continue to find ways to meet the needs of the diverse world of English language educators. We need to continue the peer-to-peer recruitment program and the e-mail retention program, survey members and prospective members to find out what they want and need in the association, and find other ways to get the message out that TESOL is an important association for those involved in language education.

What is the heart of my presidential focus? Communication and community. We are an electronic community, communicating around the world, but we are also individuals around the world interested in language and education. I have provided my e-mail address. When you have questions or suggestions, please get in touch with me. That way we can both help TESOL grow, and you will help me fulfill the promises I have made to you.

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