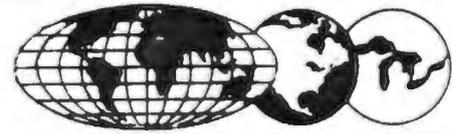


MITESOL Messages

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A publication for Michigan
Teachers of English to
Speakers of Other
Languages

President's Corner

By Maggie Phillips

As I think about the message from The President's Corner, I find myself contemplating the seasonal nature of MITESOL. By August much of the planning for the annual fall conference has begun, the search for candidates to fill the cyclical vacancies on the Executive and Advisory Boards begins, and the Executive Board focuses on long-range planning. So while summer is the season of relative rest and relaxation for teachers, it is also a seminal time for the professional organization that you all support through your membership.

As affiliates go, we in Michigan are small, with approximately 230 members statewide. This means that we can be a fairly intimate group and this, I believe, has contributed to the camaraderie and feelings of kinship expressed by many participants who attend the annual fall conference.

Our size also affects the pool of potential leaders MITESOL is able to draw from each year for

(Cont. on p. 7)

AMERICAN VERSUS JAPANESE EDUCATION

Laura Woodruff, Information Specialist, Detroit Public Schools

It is common to hear that Japanese outperform American students on standardized tests, especially in math and science, and that Japanese students are, on the whole, superior to American students, educationally speaking. Partly due to this comparison, the State of Michigan is lengthening the educational year sequentially, in order to give American students an exposure similar to the Japanese, whose school calendar indicates more time spent in school. The State is also emphasizing achievement on standardized tests, meant to measure specific benchmarks, as evidence of academic progress. Schools that fail to show improvement may be subject to sanctions as severe as reorganization. The expectation is that, the closer American education can come to matching Japanese, the better academically our students will become.

After making three trips to Japan, during which I both visited schools on all levels and taught in a Japanese high school, I believe this effort on our part is doomed to failure. The problem is that our educational systems are inextricably bound with our cultures; no matter how many hours American students spend in school, or how many standardized tests they receive, they will never become like Japanese students because our cultures are entirely different.

(Cont. on p. 8)

MITESOL's Fall Conference

is October 18 and 19 at Oakland Community College's Auburn Hills Campus. Don't miss out on the chance to see Diane Larsen-Freeman, the plenary speaker. Additional information as well as the pre-registration form for the conference is inside this newsletter. Or you can check out MITESOL's website at www.mitesol.org. ✦

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FROM THE EDITOR

As I sit here watching my possessions being loaded up on a truck to be shipped to New Jersey, I have an opportunity to reflect on what was important to me during our time in Michigan. I'd have to say that being a member of MITESOL, and especially being on the Advisory Board, has been a great experience. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some interesting and dynamic people. If you would like to learn more about the value of being a member of this organization, read *MITESOL Membership* on page 11. There are some Board positions open, read *Could this Be You?* on page 3 if you would like to volunteer. It has been an extremely rewarding opportunity for me, and I am confident it will be for you as well.

Shari Weisbaum has been working nonstop on the preparations for the fall conference, so this year, I'm sure, is going to be extraordinary. The esteemed Diane Larsen-Freeman will be the plenary speaker and she will also host an Ask the Author session. Check out pages 4 and 5 for more information about the conference and page 16 to read a short biography of Diane Larsen-Freeman; then mail out the enclosed pre-registration form.

Welcome back to Glenn Deckert who has just returned from a Fulbright in Qatar! Look on p. 12 for a glimpse into their education system in his article entitled *Finding the Positives in all the Differences*. In addition, Laura Wood wrote a comparison between American and Japanese Education on page 1 from her experience teaching secondary school in both places. All of page 9 is devoted to ATECR, MITESOL's sister organization in the Czech Republic. Hopefully, none of them are affected by the flooding going on there right now. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

There are two scholarly articles in this issue. Read more about Christen Pearson's article on *First Language Loss in ESL Children* on page 10; part 2 will be printed in the next issue of MITESOL Messages. If you are interested reading about the perspective of non-native speakers, check out Silvia Pessoa and Fabiana Sacchi's article on page 6.

There are several resources in this newsletter as well. Patricia Mathews, who is enjoying some time teaching in China right now, reviewed *Grammar in Context* on page 13. Jennifer Warren-Craft reviewed *Talk It Over* on page 14. And on page 15, Darcy Christianson wrote about a great resource on the Internet for you to use in your classroom

I want to send my sincere thanks to all who have offered advice and contributed articles. Also, I'd like to thank Sue Glowski, who has mailed out this newsletter to you. I hope I will enjoy being a part of New Jersey TESOL as much as I have MITESOL. Thank you very much! It has been a pleasure working with you!

Diana Phelps-Soysal

The Newsletter Editor reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication to enhance clarity or style. Submissions may also be shortened to fit available space. The author will be consulted in changes are substantial. Potential changes in content will be verified before publication.

Could This Be You?

by Maggie Phillips, MITESOL President

Your organization needs you this year. MITESOL needs your help either to

1. serve on a nominating committee for the upcoming slate and / or
2. serve in one of the " positions to be filled" this coming year.

Serving on the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is appointed by the President and chaired by the Past-President, and is charged with the responsibility of preparing a slate of recommended nominees for each vacant office. The committee will submit the slate for the President's approval before submitting it to be voted on by the membership. Our nominating committee will collaborate via e-mail and complete the slate to be submitted to the President for approval.

If you're available to be on this committee, please contact Maggie Phillips at mphilips21@comcast.net or call (734) 665-3066.

Serving in the Positions to be Filled

The following positions are open. Please read through the descriptions and consider the possibilities. Now that I'm close to completing my cycle on the EC, I can tell you that while MITESOL has expanded my professional perspectives, serving on the EC has expanded my collegial contacts and I have found friendships that I hope to sustain.

President-Elect The President-Elect will serve as a member of the Executive Committee and as chairperson of the Conference Program Committee. The President-Elect automatically succeeds to the Presidency after the completion of one year, and will continue to serve on the Executive Committee in the office of Past-President after the completion of the Presidency year.

Secretary The Secretary serves as a member of the Executive Committee and records minutes of the EC Board bi-monthly meetings and any e-mail motions. The term is two years.

Membership Development Coordinator The Membership Coordinator is responsible for processing membership renewals, maintaining a database of MITESOL members, and for publishing the Membership Directory annually. The term is two years.

Newsletter Editor The Newsletter Editor is responsible for the publication of 'MITESOL Messages' which is published twice a year, usually in February and August. The Editor solicits and edits articles from the Membership at large. The term is two years.

Website Editor The Website Editor maintains and updates information on the MITESOL website as directed by the Executive Committee. The term is two years.

Exhibits Manager The Exhibits Manager is responsible for recruiting publishers for the annual MITESOL fall conference and for acting as liaison and coordinator at the conference. The term is two years. ✱

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Fall Conference—October 18 & 19

The 2002 MITESOL Fall Conference will be held on the Auburn Hills Campus of Oakland Community College in Auburn Hills, Michigan. The theme of this year's event is "The ESL Kaleidoscope: Changing Patterns in Language and Language Teaching." Please plan to attend, and even better, plan to present a session. Put the dates on your calendar now!

An Overview of the Conference

Many plans are not yet complete, so this is only a general guideline. The conference will open Friday evening at about 6:00 PM with a social gathering and light buffet followed by an informative program which will probably last until 9:00 PM or so. As usual, Saturday will feature a continental breakfast, a variety of presentations on all aspects of ESL, publishers' exhibits, lunch, short business meeting and the plenary address. Check our MITESOL Web Site for more details as plans are finalized.

I am excited that Diane Larsen-Freeman will be the featured plenary speaker. She is currently Director of the English Language Institute and a Professor of Education at the University of Michigan. I know many of you are familiar with her work and may be teaching from her books. Many of us were fortunate to hear her speak at the 1995 MITESOL Spring Conference in Haslett. I am happy to welcome her back. Her topic, "Changing Patterns in Language," is certain to offer insight regarding the dynamic system of language and the implications for our teaching when the rules don't seem to match the reality of use. In addition, Diane has agreed to host a "Meet the Author" session where participants will be able to ask questions and discuss a variety of ESL topics with her in a small group setting.

Your Help Is Needed, Please Volunteer

My thanks to Bob Bruhn, Site Committee Chair; Pat Hand, Food Committee Chair; and Kathy Malin, Exhibit Manager for all their work on the conference planning and organization. Thanks also to those of you who have already volunteered to help in numerous other ways. More volunteers will be needed for specific tasks in the next few months, as well as the weekend of the conference. Please call or e-mail me if you are available. It takes a huge number of people to pull together a good conference.

We Need Proposals for Presentations

I have received several proposals already and they look very interesting. We still need a lot more! I've heard members lament that they feel intimidated because they are not "experts" and don't have anything to say that others want to hear. Not true! Our membership includes rank beginners and renowned voices in the field of ESL as well as every level in between. None of us is an expert in every area. Teaching assignments change, and we accept new challenges and then need to gather new and different information and ideas. Since there were no technology sessions last year, I am especially eager to offer some this year. Please share your ideas and experience with your MITESOL colleagues. The more presentations we can offer, the more beneficial this conference will be.

Think about some activities that have worked in your class and present them to folks looking for new ideas. What problems are you facing? Lead a discussion group about those issues. Have you recently researched a topic of interest? Share your findings with interested colleagues. Have you set up a new program? Tell us about it and how you did it. Maybe you've been successful in finding grant money. Can you suggest ways others might access funds? Have you experienced cultural conflicts and resolved them in ways that might help others avoid problems? How are you using technology in your classroom? Many of us struggle with (or are truly fearful of) computers. We would benefit from specific suggestions.

To Submit Presentation Proposals

All MITESOL members should have received the Call for Participation and Presentations flyer. In addition, it is on the MITESOL Web Site. Note that technology proposals need to be received earlier than the other proposals so the college can determine if the necessary equipment and software is available. If you can submit your proposals early, it will help me organize them more efficiently.

Also, note that all presenters must register for the conference.

To Register for the Conference

You may use the form included in this newsletter or access additional forms on the MITESOL Web Site to pre-register for the conference. Your pre-registering will help the committee plan for the appropriate number of rooms, order food and materials, and determine the optimum number of sessions. Pre-registering will save you money! Please register early!

Walk-in registration will be available both Friday evening and Saturday morning, but the availability of lunch cannot be guaranteed. The fee for on-site registration will be \$10.00 higher for each fee category.

More Information

Please check the MITESOL Web Site www.mitesol.org for additional information. Necessary forms for proposal submission and pre-registration will be available there. Program updates will be added as well as maps and hotel information.

Please call (248)-642-6572 or e-mail sjweisba@occ.cc.mi.us if you need additional information or would like to volunteer to help with the conference.

Spread The Word, Invite Your ESL Colleagues

Please tell your colleagues and associates about the Fall Conference. Many interested ESL professionals are missed in our mailings and publicity efforts. I would appreciate your mentioning the conference to anyone you think might be interested. ✱

Submitted by Shari Weisbaum, Conference Chair

The Needs of Nonnative-English-Speaking MATESOL students in the ESL Practicum: How TESOL programs can help them

by Silvia Pessoa and Fabiana Sacchi, Eastern Michigan University

Given the increasing number of nonnative-English-speakers (NNESs) in TESOL programs in the U.S., there has recently been a greater interest on the needs and challenges that they face during their student teaching experience. Because English is not their native language, these teachers tend to experience much anxiety when teaching ESL. In addition, NNES trainee teachers (NNESTTs) usually lack ESL teaching experience and may not know much about American culture, which adds an extra burden to their student teaching experience. Both NNESTTs and their supervising teachers are aware of these challenges and may address them as they arise. However, research indicates that there is not much TESOL programs are doing to address the needs of NNES trainee teachers and better prepare them for their practicum experience (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999, & Kamhi-Stein, 2000).

In order to explore what TESOL programs can do to meet the needs of NNES trainee teachers, we conducted a case study in which NNES TESOL students shared their experiences while doing their practicum and reflected on the training received in their MATESOL program. In addition, the supervising teachers commented on their experiences working with NNESTTs, and what they do and what their TESOL program does to address the needs of NNESTTs.

THE NEEDS OF NNES TESOL STUDENTS

The main challenge addressed by the student teachers was not knowing enough about American culture to be able to inform ESL stu-

dents about different cultural issues. Another challenge was not being very familiar with the American educational system. Even though the participants know about second language acquisition theories, communicative language practices, and student-centered classes, it is still very hard for them to put all this into practice in their own classrooms. In addition, a common challenge reported was their lack of confidence in their language proficiency. This is mainly seen in the way they give directions to the students and explain content. These issues were raised by all of the participants as clear needs in their practicum experience.

Even though the supervising teachers indicated that personality and cultural factors are more important than whether or not the student is a native speaker, they also acknowledged the fact that NNESTTs do have certain needs and challenges. Lack of confidence is seen as one of the biggest challenges for NNESTTs. Another factor that affects their confidence is their fear that ESL students might not respond to them positively because they are NNES teachers. The supervising teachers are also concerned about the language proficiency of some of their NNES student teachers.

As for classroom management challenges, NNESTTs struggle with making the classes more student-centered as seen in their presentation styles and the extensive directions they give. Although this might be a problem for native speaking practicum teachers as well, NNES student teachers have an extra burden because of their language competence and their lack of familiarity with the American educational system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TESOL PROGRAMS

Based on the participants' experiences, we believe that TESOL programs can take many initiatives to better prepare NNESTTs for their practicum experience. First, there needs to be an emphasis of practice over theory. Teaching demonstrations, tutoring, gradual exposure to the ESL classroom, as well as more instruction on lesson and activity planning are essential for NNESTTs to gain more confidence to stand in front of the ESL classroom.

Language competence is a crucial issue for NNESTTs, so the implementation of special language courses would really help them to overcome their low self-confidence. For example, taking language usage courses rather than grammar courses would be very useful for NNES TESOL students since the majority of them have had a great deal of exposure to grammar instruction as EFL students. More importantly, NNESTTs would really benefit from a language course with a focus on the language needed to manage a classroom.

As for cultural awareness, TESOL programs could simply address different issues about American culture in the different courses, and encourage NNES students to integrate themselves in the community and to collaborate with their American classmates on classroom projects. NNES TESOL students could also choose electives in the field of American culture. These initiatives would help NNES to familiarize themselves with the culture where their teaching is taking place.

The Needs of NNS MATESOL *(Cont. from p.6)*

CONCLUSION

Because of the special needs of NNES MATESOL students, the training that they receive is essential to prepare them to teach in an unfamiliar environment, that of the ESL classroom. While native speakers may rely on what they know about the American culture and the American educational system to manage the ESL classroom, NNESTTs have to learn that in order to effectively handle themselves in such a setting. In addition, appropriate classroom language is a key factor for the development of NNESTTs. While NNES TESOL students can work on some of these issues themselves, TESOL programs can also take the initiative to provide NNESs with the appropriate training that they need to succeed in the ESL classroom. The present study calls for further research on what other TESOL programs are doing to meet the needs of NNESs. ✱

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President's Corner *(Cont. from p.1)*

serving on the Executive and Advisory Boards. Although there are no exact figures, I would guess that out of the current membership, a clear 15 to 20 percent have held leadership positions in MITESOL in past years. So while the pool is small, there is still much talent out there waiting to take the plunge. (Sorry, pun intended.) If you have never held an office in MITESOL, please consider doing so at this time in your career. It's not only a wonderful way to make new friends who share your interests but also an opportunity to make a contribution and to see how your organization really works.

MITESOL currently sponsors

one professional development conference a year; selects an Executive Board member to serve as a delegate at the annual TESOL convention and host the Michigan reception; maintains a website, an announcements listing, and a listserv; and publishes a biannual Newsletter and an annual Membership Directory.

The MITESOL executive and advisory boards serve as agents who represent your interests and concerns at local school districts and with the Michigan Department of Education. MITESOL is, in turn, supported by "Big TESOL", the international organization of which we are an affiliate.

In 1975 the founding members of MITESOL described themselves as "ESL educators who were seeking professional exchange, enrichment, and action." As ESL education in the state and in the country becomes ever more challenging and visible, we rely on our combined strength to foster and promote our own visibility as professionals. The responses we make to the roles we take on will not only define us as educators, but will affect the face of English second language teaching in 21st century American society.

As we support you, we thank you for supporting the organization in all its efforts. It's great to have you as a member of MITESOL. ✱

American versus Japanese Education *continued from p. 1*

Japanese students are socialized from birth to become a part of a group and to adopt group objectives and goals as their own. Additionally, they are taught to revere age and rank and to follow directives from those older and of higher status than themselves. Even within the family, the older sibling has authority over the younger and must be addressed by a special name indicating that higher ranking. The Japanese language itself, highly complicated in every respect, has special forms of address according to the status of the speaker and his relationship to the conversational partner. Teachers in Japan, unlike American teachers, enjoy a high social status; to question a teacher or fail to follow a teacher's directive to the best of your ability would be a serious matter likely to damage your reputation and your future life. Your friends might turn away from you, making you a social outcast – the most unthinkable of conditions in Japan. While there are, indeed, rowdy and uncooperative students in Japan, they are sent to special schools and kept apart from the mainstream; eventually, they drop out. These schools are generally staffed with young, just matriculated, male teachers, who leave for better schools at the first opportunity. The ordinary Japanese student, given this cultural focus, becomes extraordinary when compared to a similar American student.

Another misconception is that Japanese students spend more academic time in school

than American students do. While it is true that more days in the year may be classified as school days for Japanese, not every day is devoted to study. There are sports days, festival days, days honoring graduating students, music days, and many similar special events taking one or more days from the calendar. Additionally, every month has a national holiday, during which time as much as a week of school could be missed. There are major vacation breaks, such as a two-week holiday at the end of the official school year in March. During regular school days, not every hour is devoted to study. Each day there are breaks for announcements, long lunchtime breaks, at least an hour for cleaning the building, and many hours for sports activities and clubs. In February, 2000, I spent two full afternoons shoveling the parking lot, with students and other staff, after a major snowstorm. In May classes were suspended for two days while all students and staff received medical checkups. Students do not have every class every day, either, as American students tend to have. If one compared Japanese and American class time, hour by hour, I suspect American students would be ahead. However, if you consider that Japanese students spend many long hours outside of school studying and cramming for tests, sometimes going to private, after-school schools, you might conclude that they probably spend more total hours on study when compared to American

students.

Paradoxically, Japanese educators currently seek to emulate American education. Accused of producing students who memorize well but are incapable of creative or original thinking, Japanese teachers would like to discover how we manage to excel at these qualities. As Americans, we believe in independence. We encourage our children from birth to think for themselves. Small children may choose their outfits; we celebrate first steps, learning to tie shoes, and similar milestones. Children are permitted to have lives of their own, and the successful parent is the one whose child leaves the nest. These are cultural qualities that permeate our schools as well. While we would like all American students to focus academically, as the Japanese do, we cannot require it and have limited punishment for those who do not conform. We admire and reward individual achievement. If you examine the grades of our business, governmental and sports leaders, you will find little correspondence between their academic records and their successful careers. We do not hold this against them.

In short, it is educationally futile and perhaps foolhardy to expect apples from oranges. We might more profitably focus upon what we do well and look for ways to improve in those areas. Any educational designs need to consider cultural factors that will, in any case, be a part of our schools and our students. ✱

Czech It Out!

Dear MITESOL Friends,

In April this year I spent two memorable weeks in the USA as a guest of MITESOL. First I took part in the TESOL Convention in Salt Lake City and then I spent a week in Michigan. For a European, a trip over the ocean is always something special. Mine was even more special thanks to the MITESOL friends who looked after me and enabled me to enjoy so many wonderful experiences.

I met many MITESOL members at the MITESOL reception in Salt Lake and in Michigan the week after the convention. During my stay in Michigan, I visited two high schools and the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at two Michigan Universities. There were always some helpful MITESOLers who kindly drove me to the right place at the right time or allowed me to visit their classes. For a teacher it is always extremely interesting to see colleagues from a foreign country at work. One of the highlights also was dinner at a Chinese restaurant in Ann Arbor. It was very good to know that some MITESOL teachers have cooperated with our Association in the past and are still in contact with our teachers.

The list of people who were very friendly to me and made me feel comfortable and at ease would be quite long. Let me mention at least Sandy Hagman and Maggie Phillips. Sandy was the first person I met when the plane landed in SLC. Even though I was not sure what she looked like (we had not met before), I recognized her immediately because in her hands she had a poster saying "Welcome Marcela - ATECR & MITESOL". Maggie, on the other hand, was the last MITESOLer I saw because after the Executive Board Meeting she drove me to the airport and waved goodbye to me. The time I spent with Sandy before the Convention and with Maggie after the Convention in Ann Arbor will stay in my memory for a very long time. Best wishes to all MITESOL members, Marcela Mala



Sandy Hagman & Marcela Mala



Maggie Phillips & Marcela Mala

ATECR UPDATES

Each year a small portion of the MITESOL annual budget is set aside for our sister affiliate in the Czech Republic [ATECR]. This year we supported them by paying registration fees at TESOL for their president and delegate to the conference, Marcela Mala. Additional funds which were available this year allowed us to partially sponsor her lodging at Wildflower's Bed and Breakfast in Salt Lake.

In years past when ATECR has not sent a delegate to TESOL, the allocated funds have been used to grant small stipends for MITESOL teachers who travel to the Czech Republic to participate as trainers at summer workshops for ATECR teachers.

If MITESOL members would like more information about collaborative opportunities with teachers in the Czech Republic, they can contact the Past-President of MITESOL who acts as the ATECR Liaison. ✕

MITESOL members welcomed ATECR member Michaela Cankova this summer. While her visit was purely for pleasure, Misa managed to observe classes at the WSU-ELI, tour the new offices of the U of M ELI, and meet with various MITESOLers like Sandy Hagman, Susan Eggy, Sara Tipton, Alan Headbloom, Jeannine Lorenger, Mary Lee Field, Janet Scott, and Carolyn Madden. She was able to do some traveling in Michigan (meeting by chance MITESOL president Maggie Philips in line at the Clare rest stop bathroom!) and Ohio before returning to Prague on August 19. Misa is a teacher trainer and translator as well as the co-author, with Simon Gill, of the recently published book *Intercultural Activities* (Oxford University Press), part of the Oxford Basics series. Misa's connection to Michigan began in the mid-90s through MITESOL's partnership with the Czech TESOL affiliate, ATECR, and it continues today both personally and professionally. ✕

Use It or Lose It:

The Confound of First Language Loss in ESL Children, Part 1

Christen M. Pearson, PhD, Grand Valley State University

As educators, we are often concerned when our ESL students seem to be having difficulties, compared to their peers, in second language acquisition (SLA). We find ourselves wondering about the source of the problem: Is there really a problem, or is it normal - just slower - language development affecting only the second language (L2)? Is it an underlying language processing problem which has affected both the first language (L1) and L2? Is it an indicator of lower analytical reasoning ability/cognition? Or is it due to other peripheral issues, such as lack of proper nutrition, lack of sleep, health problems, and such?

A common strategy used to differentiate whether slowness in acquisition is due simply to SLA issues (not really so simple) or to an actual impairment in the ability to process language, which would be evidenced in all language acquisition, is to assess the L1. If the L1 is age-appropriate, one could rule out language impairment as the source of the difficulty. In this case, socio-emotional issues would then need to be explored by the school social worker, followed by the possibility of a *nonverbal* IQ test administered by the school psychologist.

If the L1 is *not* age appropriate, the tendency is to assume that an underlying language processing impairment exists. However, with our ESL students, this may be an inaccurate conclusion. For example, Karen* is an otherwise normal monolingual 8 year old,

with average to above average nonverbal intelligence, who exhibits language abilities at the 5 year old level. A language processing problem would usually be a fairly accurate interpretation of the difficulty. Sung-Eun* also seems to be a normal 8 year old, who scores in the average to above-average range on a nonverbal intelligence test, but who appears to be having significant difficulty in acquiring English when compared to her peers. When tested in her L1, it is noted that her language ability is at the 5 year old level. Does she also have a language processing problem? Maybe not.

When an L2 is introduced, the L1 may cease to develop further (stagnate), or may actually undergo attrition (loss) due to a decrease in the amount of input in the L1. This is a concern because if the L2 is not rapidly progressing and the L1 is simultaneously undergoing attrition, the child may end up "semilingual", with no age-appropriate language proficiency in either language, at least for a period of time. This not only impacts literacy development, but also may have an influence on general cognitive and socio-emotional development, as well as social relations. For example, Sung-Eun (above) started school at age 5. She now spends many hours each day at a school where only English is spoken, spends additional hours after school playing with English-speaking friends, and converses in English with older siblings about school-related subjects and topics at home, along with watching television in English. Her Ko-

rean language use has significantly decreased, being limited to contextualized family activities in the home; it has not progressed to decontextualized situations, nor have literacy skills in the L1 been attempted. Thus, it would not be surprising if language stagnation or attrition had occurred.

A further problem in determining what is occurring in a child having difficulties with L2 acquisition is that the typical progression of language loss in children often has features which correspond to characteristics of certain types of language impairment. This compounds the problem of differentiating whether the problem is due to the introduction of the L2 or to an underlying language processing difficulty.

If a problem is suspected, several options exist. The first is to assess the child's L1 very early on before any loss has occurred. This, however, is confounded by a "wait & see" attitude. If assessments are not undertaken until a significant amount of time has passed, in order to accommodate the possibility of a prolonged silent period, or a shy child, or a slower (albeit normal) learner, this option is not viable. A second option is to ask for a parental assessment of what the child's L1 development was like prior to the introduction of the L2. Studies have shown that many parents are usually fairly accurate in their assessment, either on a "gut" level or by using comparisons to the child's siblings.

A third option is to develop an awareness of the typical features of L1 loss. The teacher can then work in collaboration with the school speech-language pathologist (SLP) to determine where the source of the problem may lie. SLPs often have little or no training in ESL issues; therefore, the ESL specialist's knowledge and input regarding SLA is crucial in determining the type(s) of services which would best meet the needs of the child.

Part 2 of this article will explore specific characteristics of first language loss, including interlingual and intralingual characteristics, along with discourse strategies. Possible scenarios for what is occurring with Sung-Eun will also be presented. In the meantime, an excellent article to read and share with the school SLP is Naomi B. Schiff-Myers' classic entitled "Considering Arrested Language Development and Language Loss in the Assessment of Second Language Learners" which can be found in *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, Volume 23, pages 28-33.

Two other interesting articles involving case studies of young children experiencing L1 loss are: 1) Marjorie Faulstich Orellana's (1994) "Superhuman Forces: Young Children's English Language Acquisition and Spanish Language Loss", a paper presented at the American Educational Research Association (obtainable through EDRS microfiche); and 2) Raquel Anderson's (1999) "First Language Loss: A Case Study of a Bilingual Child's Productive Skills in Her First Language", published

in *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, volume 21, pages 4-16.

A nontechnical account of L1 loss, exploring socio-emotional issues, is Sandra Kouritzin's (1999) "Face[t]s of First Language Loss", published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. An interesting study involving high school aged students is Kenji Hakuta's and Daniel D'Andrea's (1992) paper entitled "Some Properties of Bilingual Maintenance and Loss in Mexican Background High School Students", which can be found in *Applied Linguistics*, volume 13(1), pages 72-99. Additional sources on language attrition follow.

* fictional child

Hyltenstam, K. & Obler, L. (1989). *Bilingualism across the lifespan: Aspects of acquisition, maturity, and loss*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hyltenstam, K. & Viberg, A. (1993). *Progression et regression in language: Sociocultural, neuropsychological et linguistic perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pearson, C. (1997). *Language loss in internationally adopted children*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Special Interest Divisions: Communication Disorders and Sciences in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations, 3(1), 5-8.

Seliger, H. & Vago, R. (1991). *First language attrition*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ✱

MITESOL Membership:

Making connections

by Lisa VonReichbaur,
Membership Coordinator

Summer will soon be drawing to a close, and autumn activities will be in full swing. MITESOL membership includes discounted rates for the MITESOL Fall Conference, which will be held October 18 and 19. The fall conference gives our members an opportunity to share research and ideas with colleagues from around Michigan and beyond. MITESOL members will be kept updated as the fall conference draws near. Also, check out www.mitesol.org for more information.

The fall conference is a great opportunity for people who are interested in the same facets of ESL to get together and create networks of support and communication. You do not have to wait until the fall conference though. Another benefit of MITESOL membership is the ability to keep in touch with other members through our E-List and listserv. Now would be a great time to start putting out messages on the listserv to make contact with people interested in the same area. Ask questions, offer advice, share job announcements, or develop an on-line discussion about hot ESL topics. More than 200 MITESOL members are on the E-list and listserv, so take advantage of this wonderful resource. Make connections with other MITESOL members, and make plans to get together at the fall conference. To post messages on the E-list you can Email Pamela Bogart at pbogart@umich.edu. To post messages on the listserv, send them to mitesollistserv@umich.edu. Enjoy the rest of the summer! ✱

FINDING THE POSITIVES IN ALL THE DIFFERENCES

By Glenn Deckert, PhD, Eastern Michigan University

I have just now finished teaching two English courses for a semester as a visiting Fulbright fellow at Qatar's only university. Qatar (pronounced like "cutter") is a resource-rich emirate that jets out into the Arabian Gulf (or Persian Gulf—depending on where you are standing) and is shaped a lot like Michigan minus one thumb. The local people are a minority outnumbered at about 3 to 1 by foreign workers. That explains why in general men outnumber women in this country by at least 2 to 1. Things are different here. For example, there is virtually no violent crime, outdoor temperatures reached 115 degrees even before the onset of summer, local women are veiled when in public, and every Qatari young person is guaranteed a job for life by the government. There is a negative along with a positive in that last difference, that is, something you can guess about motivation. The educational process at the university is different in other ways too. One could easily catalog and complain about many of these differences, but I find it helpful to think that most of the unwelcome differences have at least one inherent positive as well. Here are a few examples.

In respect to gender, all classes are strictly segregated. There is a "Berlin Wall" of sorts across the campus, and only staff and faculty (of either gender) can pass through freely. So, in class when one is explaining or writing instructions for an assignment, one never has to employ those awkward gender-inclusive expressions like "her/his," or "himself/herself." You are always addressing only "she's" or "he's." It is so much easier.

Class enrollment is very loose the first two or three weeks, and attendance only gradually builds up from a few eager souls to the full regiment. In the early weeks students are moving

about, some sampling classes and deciding to add, drop, switch, or stick with it. So, this gives the instructor ample opportunity to scare off the half-hearted or to experiment with lighter language learning activities that would be considered frivolous and time-wasting later during the buildup to the big examinations.

The libraries, one for women and one for men, are poorly stocked, and there is often more staff at the circulation desks than students in the entire building. However, students have access to the Internet on campus, and most have the same in their homes as well. So, this instructor, in effort to get a step ahead of his students, quickly learned here in Qatar more about useful websites and Internet search engines than he took time to learn in several years back in his own university.

Faculty offices are collective enterprises here. They are the same as the classrooms, simply cleared of the seating and supplied with 6, 8 or more large wooden desks. A dozen or more faculty members may share one such office, and each day the challenge is to find a desk not yet occupied. There is a lot of coming and going as most do their serious class preparations at home. So, one has ample opportunity to meet all one's colleagues in short order. Further, there is no sense of isolation and claustrophobia.

The layout of the adjoined buildings on campus is too complex to reduce to a simple map. The structure consists of an array of octagonal units which are butted together in a large arc and in places it makes one feel one is in a maze. Central octagons feed into classrooms that likewise are octagonal. Different clusters of second floor classrooms are accessible by only a single staircase. So rooms are known by a number for the room and a num-

ber for the staircase. However, room numbers are not contiguous. You move from room 237 to 218 to 265 and so on. I was told of one foreign instructor who missed one or two days of class for getting lost. So, here again is a positive. Language instructors who know about field independence can discover just how much of that quality they have and get a read on their first year students as well.

Then, there is that 115 degrees of oppressive heat in this sun-baked and wind-swept land. Along with the heat is the ubiquitous din and rumble of huge air con units near the ceiling of every classroom. One struggles to pick up the voice (with its imperfect interlanguage) of a back row student. So, the instructor has good grounds for reconfiguring the seating to form one tight circle which revolutionizes the classroom atmosphere. Each student is now out in front and able to see the faces of (if not veiled) all the others. This, in turn, lends itself to much more participation and communicative exchange. And it's an exercise in teamwork getting the chairs back as they were at the beginning of class.

There are other differences too as, for example, in the rigid examination policy. Accordingly, 80% of final grades are based on two big exams which leave little room for ongoing assessment. Disturbing too are the loopholes in the advising system in that most of my students in a required second-year course were already close to graduation. I'm still searching for some of the positives. At the same time, I hope my Qatari students have discovered a few positives in the various changes I felt compelled to introduce to their classes over this past semester. A few have expressed that to me personally. Very rewarding! ✱

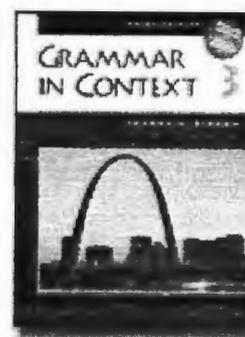
Grammar in Context (3rd ed.)

Sandra N. Elbaum. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2001.

3-book series with supplementary practice books. 400-475 pages each.

Supplementary practice books, 1-3, 143 pages each.

Reviewed by Patricia Mathews, Grand Valley State University



Finding an effective way to teach grammar in the ESL classroom is a challenge for students, teachers and researchers. There are grammar lessons without meaningful context and communicative lessons without supportive grammar lessons. Sandra Elbaum's series, *Grammar in Context*, offers a format in which focus on form can occur in a meaning based environment and so strikes a balance in the search for ways to teach form and meaning.

Sandra Elbaum is an ESL instructor and writer. She has taught ESL at Truman College in Chicago since 1980. This series reflects her years of experience with students learning a new language in a new culture. Lessons are based on short readings about the history and culture of life in the United States. While working with different aspects of the language, students are exposed to geography, civics, holidays and assorted aspects of everyday life such as using an ATM, sports superstars, garage sales, and pets. The lessons include exercises that discuss the student's experience of learning to adapt from one culture to another.

Pre-reading questions help students use previous knowledge to prepare for the context of the reading. Post-reading exercises focus on grammar. Grammar lessons are presented through brief explanations and charts followed by fill-in-the-blank exercises. Students are asked to write questions about the reading and work with dialogues based on the grammar point. Expansion activities include ideas

for working in small groups and Internet activities. Each of the three books has a supplementary exercise book that follows a traditional format: presentation of a lesson followed by practice drills that correspond to the main text.

In their recent research, Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (TESOL Quarterly, Vol. 35, No 3, 2001) discuss grammar and vocabulary as the primary linguistic focus of preemptive focus on form episodes. Preemptive focus on form concerns an actual or a perceived gap in the student's knowledge. Either the teacher or student initiates attention to the problem. The research found that grammar and vocabulary were the most frequent linguistic aspects of preemptive focus on form episodes. Grammar topics mentioned in the research include determiners, prepositions, pronouns, word order, tense, verb morphology auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement, plurals, negation and question formation (424). *Grammar in Context* provides an approach to present these topics of concern to second language learners.

The language level of the series assumes basic academic skills required for reading short passages as well as maps and charts. The texts progress with more complex tenses and aspects of syntax in each volume. Vocabulary is also expanded although the length of the readings remains short, less than one page. Appendices include capitalization rules, a metric conversion chart and glossary of grammatical terms, spelling rules and

spelling-pronunciation guides and maps of the United States and North America. There are illustrations with most of the readings. There are a number of black and white photographs. Each text is identified by a unique highlighting color. The layout of the texts is consistent and appealing. The books can be used for lessons in all four skill areas. Audio versions are available online at <http://eslgrammar.heinle.com/gic/index.html>

The user-friendly format allows flexible use of the books; they offer ideas for mini-lessons, for small groups activities, to supplement skill development for ESL students in mainstream English classes, or as the foundation of an ESL curriculum. The context coordinates well with mainstream middle and high school history, civics and social studies curriculums. Many adult learners will also appreciate this comprehensive approach to grammar.

Grammar in Context offers ESL programs a valuable tool for teaching grammar that is based in Elbaum's classroom experience and supported by current research in second language acquisition. Meaning based ESL programs will find this series a valuable resource for presenting grammar in an active, meaningful format that will enhance the language learning process. ✱

Talk It Over! Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation (2nd ed.)

Kozyrev, Joann Rishel. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 153 pages.

Reviewed by Jennifer Warren-Craft, MITESOL Treasurer

Teachers and administrators are always looking for that one perfect textbook that will meet all the needs of a given class or program. With this title including not only listening, not only speaking, not only pronunciation, but a combination of all three, they may be hopeful that this is one of those textbooks; however, most such books must short one skill in favor of another.

Talk It Over! is the third in a series of books which also includes *Talk It Up!* and *Talk It Through!* It is intended for the high intermediate to advanced classroom, and the text may be purchased with a cassette, a CD, or separately. It contains eight chapters with basic evaluation forms for the speaking activities in each chapter that allow the instructor (or possibly classmates) to rate the speaker on a Likert scale from "needs to improve" to "excellent." There are also simple self-evaluation charts at the end of each chapter on which the students can reflect upon their understanding and/or use of the key points in the chapter.

To some extent, *Talk It Over!* is rooted in content-based instruction. Each of the eight chapters focuses on a different academic field while working on language skills. The topics range from world entertainment to biotechnology, from family to alternative medicine. These subjects are the basis for the listening selections, pronunciation exercises, and speaking activities.

A fairly broad set of exercises and activities is presented in the text. Speaking tasks include group discussions and presenta-

tions and individual presentations, with some asking students to interact with native speakers outside the classroom. Pronunciation exercises focus almost exclusively on supra-segmentals, though some work on the pronunciation of suffixes and word endings is also presented. For listening, there are two selections in



each chapter. Prior to each, the book provides prelistening questions or activities. While listening, comprehension of main ideas and details are a primary focus with some additional activities on inferencing and identifying terms and attitudes. After the listening selections, there are questions and activities intended to expand on the topic. With the second listening selection, note taking skills are presented and practiced, including, but not limited to, listing, "the Cornell Method," outlining, and idea mapping. Exercises and activities vary from chapter to chapter, both in content and in presentation, and may be multiple choice, fill-in-the blank, or open-ended.

There are several positive aspects to *Talk It Over!* It includes some short reading passages and a variety of black-and-white graphics to assist in comprehending the intention of the

chapters and activities. There is also a blend of teacher-led, group-led, and student-led activities and exercises throughout each chapter, the majority, whether receptive or productive, being communicative in nature. Importantly, both planned and unplanned speaking opportunities are provided, moving from less planned in the beginning chapters to more planned in those at the end. The process for preparing and practicing planned speech is also presented. For note taking, the graphics and templates provide clear guidance.

Unfortunately, there are limitations to such an all-encompassing book. Here, pronunciation is the skill which gets shorted. However, in an upper-intermediate to low-advanced classroom, the skills presented may be what are needed. If segmentals were an issue, this book would require supplementation. Then, the evaluation sheets are not removable, nor are they marked as copy-able. It would be helpful if they were either so that content pages need not be removed in order to use the worksheets. A third limitation comes in the presentation of vocabulary, which is minimal. Finally, in the note taking practice, the book follows what seems to be the norm: Students listen and then complete comprehension activities before learning about and practicing a new note taking skill using the previously listened to selection. Perhaps students would be better assisted by learning about a note taking skill and rhetorical cues with separate short selections and then practicing with

(cont. on pg 15)

TESOL INTERNET RESOURCES

By Darcy Christianson, ESL Specialist

Here is a newly developed website full of activities and games (55 to be exact) for ESL teachers of adult learners: www.gao-web/esl.htm. It is designed for ESL teachers who are looking for quick activities and/or games to fill-up class time or prepare for pre or post lesson plans in Listening, Speaking, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar and Writing skills. The activities are organized at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels and are available in time ranges of 10-15 minutes, 20-30 minutes and 30-45 minutes in length. The best part about the website is that not only are all the material on the website free, they are available in handy printable formats. All you need is a printer! (A few activities require pencil, paper, scissors, and/or dice.) Here is an example activity for an intermediate reading class:

Play By The Rules

Purpose: To practice reading through comprehending the rules to a game.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Objectives: reading, speaking, listening

Materials: game, game materials

- 1) Find, print, and/or prepare enough games, rules, and game materials for student groups of 3-4. Use board games, card games, or games from the ESL Internet Resource Website (www.gao-web.com/esl.htm) such as: ABC, Drawing, Watch What You Say, Gerunds, Make a Paragraph, Read/Run.
- 2) Explain to the students that they are going to play a game. First, they must read through the directions of the game to determine how the game is played. Then they should practice their comprehension by actually playing the game.
- 3) Have the students form into groups and provide a game for each group. Allow ample time for each group to read over and comprehend their game.
- 4) After each group understands the rules to their game, stop the activity. For a shorter activity, have groups switch games. For a longer activity, have the groups teach the game they just learned to the class.

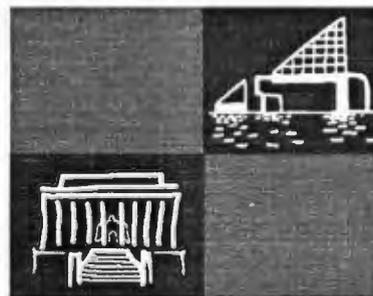
This activity is a fun and interesting way to encourage reading for your adult ESL students. Check out the rest of the activities and games at www.gao-web/esl.htm. With all 55 activities, there is enough to help get you through a whole semester of class time. ✱

Talk It Over (cont. from pg 14)

the first listening of a longer selection, more like in a non-ESL classroom.

Those reservations in mind, this is a solid textbook that will meet the needs of most integrated speaking and listening classrooms, assuming their primary focus is not on pronunciation. There is some integration of skills in each chapter, and students are required to think more than simply repeat. The variety of topics, exercises, and activities combined with the consistent organization of the chapters allow it to be user-friendly without being boring. ✱

TESOL2003



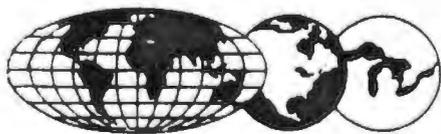
HEARING EVERY VOICE
BALTIMORE ■ MARYLAND ■ USA

MITESOL Fall Conference Plenary Speaker: Diane Larsen-Freeman

Diane Larsen-Freeman (Ph.D. in Linguistics, University of Michigan, 1975) is a Professor of Education and Director, English Language Institute at the University of Michigan. She is also a Distinguished Senior Faculty Fellow at the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. Dr. Larsen-Freeman has been a conference speaker in over 40 countries of the world and has published over 80 articles in her areas of interest: second language acquisition, language teacher education, English linguistics, and language teaching methodology.

Her books include: *Discourse Analysis in Second Language Research* (edited, Newbury House, 1980), *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course* (co-authored with Marianne Celce-Murcia; Newbury House, Heinle & Heinle, 1983; 1999), *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (authored, Oxford University Press, 1986; 2000), *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research* (co-authored with Michael Long, Longman, 1991), *Grammar Dimensions: Form, Meaning, and Use* (Series Director, Heinle & Heinle, 1993; 1997; 2000), and *Teaching Language: From Grammar to Grammaticing* (authored, Heinle & Heinle, 2003).

From 1980-1985, Dr. Larsen-Freeman was Editor of the journal *Language Learning*. In 1997, Dr. Larsen-Freeman was inducted into the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1999, she was selected by *ESL Magazine* as one of "the ESL pioneers." In 2000, she received the lifetime achievement award from Heinle & Heinle Publishers. ★



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