

Twelve Ways to Motivate and Inspire

by Phyllis P. Duryee George Mason University

ESL teachers often ask, sometimes in frustration, "How can I motivate my students?" Giving tests and grades is certainly important, but beyond this, most students will be inspired when they feel in control and secure in their classes, respected by their teachers and their peers, and hopeful about their future academic success. In business good managers know that when employees are treated as valued individuals, they are more highly motivated. By applying some of the rules of good business management to the classroom you can build motivation among your students. Here is a checklist of twelve points for you to consider:

1. Do you set positive, attainable goals with your students and help them work toward those goals? To be effective motivators, these goals must be clear and attainable. Classroom work for which students can see no purpose is ineffective.

2. Are you aware of your students' own goals? By finding out what their academic/life goals are and trying to help them progress toward these goals, classroom work can become more individually meaningful. For example, if Maria relates that she is interested in medicine, encourage her to do reading or independent study in that field. You can help by directing her towards resources which will help in her investigation.

3. Do you let students make their own decisions and reward them for making good choices? For example, project work or independent study can create the context from which decisions can be made. Students then have some authority over their own learning. If

students are empowered with decision making, they will often get better at making decisions.

4. Do you delegate responsibility within the classroom structure and allow students to use skills according to their strengths? For example, you might want to ask students to take attendance, average grades, or lead small group discussions.

5. Do you listen to your students and let them know you are listening? Schedule a time each week for your students to verbalize or write their feelings about their progress/ frustrations in learning English as well as their adjustment to the culture. Students can use a journal or tape recorder to express their feelings. Make sure you respond promptly so they will know that you care about what they have to say.

6. Do you follow through? do you remember the promises you make to students and take appropriate courses of action? If you talk about doing an activity that they have suggested, let them know why it is or isn't going according to plan.

7. Don't change direction in midstream. Your students needs continuity and expect you to remember what you told them to do yesterday. Be consistent and if a change must occur, notify them as soon as possible.

8. Do you build a monitoring system into your lesson plan? do you walk around the classroom when they are working on an activity? Recording errors you have heard or seen in their work

means you can incorporate classroom activities that focus on correcting these errors.

9. Do you give your students lots of opportunities to work in "eye-minded" and "ear-minded" activities? By doing so you can provide for all learning styles, and, at the same time, help students who are weak in one of these styles to overcome that weakness.

10. Do you give criticism gracefully and sparingly, always keeping the integrity of the student in mind? Are you also careful not to make hasty judgements about the capabilities of your students?

11. Do you use rewards? Incentives can be given to small groups, to the entire class, or to an individual.

12. Do you encourage camaraderie and friendship within you class? Helping students over crosscultural barriers by using small group and cooperative teaching techniques promotes sincere friendship.

This checklist of ideas, commonly practiced by most experienced teachers, provides us with a kind, gentle reminder of who we are and what we do.

Adapted from "Dinosaur Brains: Dealing with All Those Impossible People at Work" by Albert J. Bernstein and Sydney Craft Rozen; copyright, 1989.

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This is a regular publication for the members of MATSOL. Subscription costs are included in annual dues. Letters, articles, black and white photos and other contributions are welcome. They may be sent to:

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Articles should be typed and double-spaced. Please include bio-data.

Next deadline, February, 1990

From the President

As this issue of the MATSOL Newsletter goes to press, the Joint Fall Conference with ConnTESOL in Chicopee is approaching. Every year the Fall conference has a theme—LITERACY this year. As in the past, we have selected a theme that reflects a kaleidoscope of issues and perspectives, as well as a fundamental question: how are ESL and Literacy related to each other?

Probably each of us would give a different answer to this question. What is your answer? Do you think of literacy as a subject restricted in ESL to teaching basic reading skills to students who have never read before in any language? Do you think in terms of functional literacy and competency in meeting Adult Performance Levels? Or are you looking at it from a cultural literacy perspective in which all levels of ESL reading, writing, and American culture classes can qualify as literacy learning? Maybe Literacy means cultural politics to you, with goals of political empowerment and social change. Or perhaps you view Literacy as a many-colored work, with definitions shifting to meet the needs and standards of the moment.

The object of the conference this fall will be to explore together the broadest possible range of responses to this question. As you think about your own perspective, here are some definitions of Literacy you may want to consider:

1)The 1962 UNESCO definition: A person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community and whose attainments make it possible for him to continue to use these skills toward his own and the community's development.

2)The 1966 Adult Education Act, reported in *Adult Illiteracy in the United States: A Report to the Ford Foundation*, by Carman St. John Hunter and David Harman: In the United State . . . completion of secondary school has become a kind of benchmark definition of functional literacy . . . The Adult Education Act . . . states as its purpose the establishment of programs of adult public education that will enable all adults to continue their education to at least the level of completion of secondary school.

3)The *Encyclopedia of Education*, as proposed by William Gray, 1956: A person is functionally literate when he has acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enable him to engage effectively in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his cultural group.

4)"Why Should Johnny Read," by Stanley Aronowitz: The real issue for the "functionally" literate is whether they can decode the messages of media culture, counter official interpretations of social economic, and political reality; whether they feel capable of critically evaluating events, or, indeed, of intervening in them. If we understand literacy as the ability of individuals and groups to locate themselves in history, to see themselves as social actors able to debate their collective futures, then the key obstacle to literacy is the sweeping privatization and pessimism that has come to pervade public life.

5)"Introduction" by Henry A. Giroux, to *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, by Paolo Freire and Donaldo Macedo, 1987: As a social construction, literacy not only names experiences considered important to a given society, it also sets off and defines through the concept of illiterate what can be termed the "experience of the other." The concept illiterate in this sense often provides an ideological cover for powerful groups simply to silence the poor, minority, groups, women, or people of color. Consequently, naming illiteracy as part of the definition of what it means to be literate represents an ideological construction informed by particular political interests.

6)*Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs To Know*, by E.D. Hirsch, Jr., 1987: The recently rediscovered insight that literacy is more than a skill is based upon knowledge that all of us unconsciously have about language. We know instinctively that to understand what somebody is saying, we must understand more than the surface meanings of words; we have to understand the context as well. The need for background information applies all the more to reading and writing. To grasp the words on a page we have to know a lot of information that isn't set down on the page. . . . To

(continued on page 7)

TESOL '90



MARCH 6-10, 1990

24th Annual TESOL Convention On Track Into The 90's!

TESOL - 24th Annual Convention Fact Sheet

The 24th Annual Convention of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) will be held at the San Francisco Hilton on Hilton Square in San Francisco, California, from Tuesday, March 6 to Saturday, March 10, 1990.

Convention preregistration materials will be sent to members of TESOL in November, 1989. If you are not a member of TESOL and would like to receive these materials, please advise us as soon as possible so that your name may be added to our list for this early mailing. As preregistration represents a considerable savings and a better chance of getting into the event of your choice, we encourage you to send in your forms before the deadline.

All Aboard!

Preregistration Rates

Members.....	\$90 US
Non-members.....	\$125 US
Students (at least 1/2 time study).....	\$65 US
Non-US-based members.....	\$65 US
Non-US-based non-members.....	\$95 US

Onsite Registration Rates

Members.....	\$110 US
Non-members.....	\$150 US
Students (at least 1/2 time study).....	\$85 US
Daily.....	\$65 US

The 1990 Convention event prices are as follows:

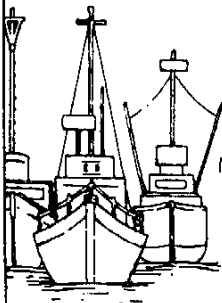
Preconference Symposia.....	\$15 US
Breakfast Seminars.....	\$18 US
Educational Visits.....	\$15 US
TESOL Fun Run/Walk.....	\$10 US
All TESOL Event.....	\$47 US

The San Francisco Hilton is offering discounted room rates which are listed below. Reservation cards will be included with preregistration confirmations.

Singles.....	\$99 US/night
Doubles.....	\$115 US/night
Triple/Quad.....	\$135 US/night

For information about the academic program, contact the TESOL Second Vice President:

Sergio Gaitan, Program Chair
Teachers College, Box 18
525 West 120th Street
New York, New York 10027 USA
(212) 678-3038



For general convention and exhibits information, contact the TESOL Convention Department at:

1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314 USA
(703) 836-0774



ADDENDUM

TESOL'S STANDING RULE ON RESOLUTIONS

for

AFFILIATES AND INTEREST SECTIONS

A. Call for Resolutions

1. The chairs of the Affiliate and Interest Section coordinating Committees shall ensure that a Call for Resolutions is distributed to all Affiliate Presidents and Interest Section Chairs and Newsletter Editors at least five (5) months prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting.
2. The Affiliate Presidents and Interest Section chairs shall ensure that TESOL's Call for Resolutions is published and sent to their respective Affiliate and Interest Section memberships in sufficient time prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting.

B. Origination of Resolutions:

Content resolutions from any Affiliate or Interest Section will originate as follows:

1. The proposed resolution must be signed by the Affiliate President and/or the Affiliate's delegate to the Affiliate Council or by the Interest Section Chair and/or the Interest Section's delegate to the Interest Section Council.
2. The proposed resolution must be received by the Chair of the respective Affiliate or Interest Section Coordinating Committee at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting.
3. Resolutions not received by the deadline will NOT be considered by the Affiliate or Interest Section Councils nor by TESOL's Legislative Assembly.
4. Copies of all resolutions will be sent by the Chairs of the Affiliate or Interest Section Coordinating Committees to the Rules and Resolutions Committee for a preliminary ruling on the germaneness of the resolution(s) to the TESOL Constitution and Bylaws.

- a. Should the Rules and Resolutions

believe that a resolution is in conflict with the TESOL Constitution and Bylaws, this shall be reported by the Chair to the Executive Board which shall render final judgement in the matter before the next Legislative Assembly.

- b. All decisions by the Rules and Resolutions Committee and, if needed, by the Executive Board, shall be reported as soon as possible to the Chairs of the Affiliate and Interest Section Councils.

C. Procedures

Resolutions will be presented and discussed by the respective Affiliate or Interest Section Council at the Annual Meeting of TESOL. A vote will be taken by the council to either adopt or not adopt the proposed resolution.

1. Resolutions will be adopted by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. Each adopted resolution must bear the signature(s) of the Presiding Officer(s) of the Council(s) affirming that the resolution has been duly adopted by the Council(s).
3. Each adopted resolution must be presented to the Rules and Resolutions Committee at Least 24 hours prior to the Legislative Assembly for presentation by the Committee to the Assembly.
4. Each resolution shall be presented and discussed in an Open Meeting of the Rules and Resolutions Committee following the Councils and at least 12 hours prior to the Legislative Assembly.

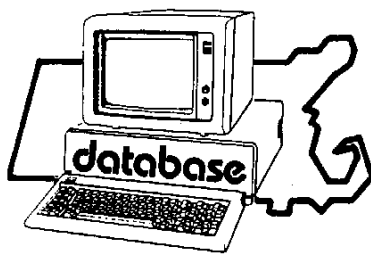
D. Other Provisions

All other provisions in TESOL's Standing Rule on Resolutions, as revised 09-26-87, shall apply and shall be adhered to by all Affiliates and Interest Sections and their respective Councils. Approved by the TESOL Executive Board, September 26, 1987

Call for Content Resolutions at TESOL 1990

For your information, there were no content resolutions submitted by affiliates at the 1989 Convention, although one affiliate submitted a resolution to last year's RRC chair. The affiliate proposed a resolution that dealt with the organization of TESOL, which was passed on to the Long Range Planning and Policy Committee, but was not appropriate for a content resolution. In proposing the resolution, the affiliate also learned that it had to be signed by the affiliate president because the organization did not know who its delegate to the 1989 Affiliate Council meeting in San Antonio, Texas would be at the time that the resolution was submitted. If your affiliate might want to propose a content resolution at the 1990 Convention, you will want to keep some of these things in mind in the coming months. The enclosed guidelines will help you formulate and process germane resolutions, resolutions that will be recognized at the 1990 Affiliate Council meeting in San Francisco, California (March 6-10, 1990.)

Feel free to call or write Susan Bayley, the Director of Field Services at TESOL in Washington about a possible resolution you affiliate might wish to propose at the 1990 Affiliate Council meeting. She might be able to help you and your colleagues strategize a little so that what is submitted will be accepted by the RCC and make it to Affiliate Council meeting.



WRITING

ESL Writer

ESL Writer is a word processing program for MS-DOS computers (due September) and the Apple II (available now) that has been designed for use by ESL students. The program can also provide some checking of spelling and checking of 12 grammatical points. A novel feature is that the teacher is able to use a teacher's disk to configure the students' disks so that the grammar/spelling checker components and other options can be enabled or disabled. In addition, the spelling checker has special options for speakers of Spanish or Asian languages. Published by Scholastic, ESL Writer is available to educators for \$99.95 (Teacher Edition), \$185 (Lab Pack). Contact: Scholastic Software, 1-800-541-5513

ISAAC Offers Free On-Line Information Exchange

Mary Simpson

Are you wondering how to make effective use of the PC lab down the hall? Have you searched unsuccessfully for instructional software? Would you like to communicate with colleagues who are interested in using computers in higher education?

ISAAC can help with questions like these.

ISAAC is the Information system for Advanced Academic Computing. Designed and operated at the University of Washington with funding from IBM, ISAAC is free to faculty, staff, and students at any institutions of higher education. ISAAC is accessible from you PC and modem or via the BITNET or InterNet network.

ISAAC contains extensive databases of academic software for IBM-compatible

computers. Abstracts of over 2800 packages have been compiled on-line from various sources. You can search these sources for either specific software packages or to find more general information about academic computing.

You can also use ISAAC to communicate with colleges and universities. ISAAC contains discussion forums organized by academic discipline. If you want to share information with other educators who are using computers in their French classes, for example, you might post a notice in the Language and Linguistics forum. Over 9000 educators, researchers, and students on more than 1500 campuses are using ISAAC to share information about academic computing. If you would like to join them, return the application below.

Send your completed application to:
ISAAC Applications, ms/FC-06
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195
or via BITNET to isaac@uwaeae.
If you prefer, you can call us at (206) 543-5604

Reprinted from Athelstane Newsletter, Vol 2, #3

THE CAR BUILDER

Optimum Resource, Inc., 1985
System requirements: Apple II
ESOL Level: intermediate and advance,
secondary and adult students
Reviewed by Sabra Sortman, Riverside
High School, El Paso, Texas

THE CAR BUILDER is a simulation program that allows the user to design and road test a car from the inside out. It is not something an ESOL teacher can use to occupy a student who has finished early; nor is it a means of "turning on" to language a youngster who has limited verbal ability. It requires patient effort over a number of hours, providing none of the easy gratification inherent in so much of the so-called educational software currently available. Furthermore, it assumes a basic

understanding of some vocabulary associated with automobiles or at least recognition of the graphics.

The graphics, of course, are a universal language, so while the user may not at first know how to respond to the choices of starting options (chassis, engine or body), whichever he chooses with appear as a line drawing and, if he has his wits about him, he will learn somenew words. His choice will depend on his knowledge of automotive design or his ability to read the user's guide, both unlikely in non-English-dominant students. For this reason, THE CAR BUILDER can become frustrating without readily available teacher input.

This is a minor drawback, however, compared to the range of intellectual activity offered by the program. The student is constantly confronted with a series of options. He must choose from among a number of modifications to each of the automobile's major components and, since each segment can be saved, following the road test, he has an opportunity to make further modifications for the purpose of balancing the dependability, performance and appearance of his car. The only limit to the number of remodifications the student can make is the amount of computer time the teacher will allow.

For the imaginative student, educated in his first language and often understimulated in the secondary ESOL classroom, THE CAR BUILDER is an excellent means of creative expression. The persistent user will be rewarded with a printout of a car of his own design, complete with specifications and road-test data, not to mention the satisfaction of having attempted and completed a complex task in a second language. Hopefully, he will also have acquired some vocabulary to describe his experience.

Reprinted from CALL DIGEST, Vol. 5, No. 3, April 21, 1989

Please send Database articles to Adrienne Saltz, CELOP, Boston, University, 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215.



I Can't Believe It's Margarine

by Guest Columnist
Bob Saitz

Margarine worries me, not so much because of the glycerides and benzoates within, but because it has a syllable-initial g before an a that is pronounced /j/ (/j/ as in jam); in almost all other English words with an initial g preceding and a or an o, the g is pronounced /g/ (/g/ as in goat). Some dictionaries and histories of the margarine trade note that there may be a dialectal difference with more British than American speakers using the /g/. Anglophobes convinced of British eccentricity will murmur, probably in unison, that since the British pronounce goal with a /j/, they use a /g/ in margarine to keep us off balance. American dictionaries will comment that margarine is "occasionally pronounced with a /g/. But on which occasions? By whom? I never do it.

Margarine is reputed to have come, via oleomargarine, from the French margarine, a word derived from margarique, the name of a fatty compound found in certain animal and vegetable fats and oils. The word was mistakenly — I assume without the knowledge of the Academy — applied to the mixture of oil or fat and milk that constitutes margarine in the belief that all fats and oils contain margaric acid. But the French origin doesn't help; it's pronounced /g/ there, not /j/. The OED (first citation, 1873) gives us both pronunciations and characterizes the /j/ pronunciation as "popular." That

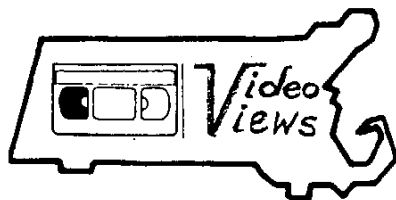
indicates a substratum of /j/ users in England as well. But on what bases was it popularized? Did we diminutivize it in the same way that we created Margery and Margie from Margaret? But we didn't change the front vowel after the g and besides what kind of an intimacy could we develop for a butter substitute (Wisconsin would never allow it)? Did an American producer of margarine popularize the /j/ variant in the fear that a "hard" g might signal a stiff, non-yielding, non-buttery substance? No evidence of that and it still wouldn't explain the origin. A nineteenth century maypole orgy in southwestern England (poles greased with the new butter substitute) with the dancers substituting tricatives for stops? We need research.

Still, for our international students learning English, it's a pretty good prediction that syllable-initial ga, go and gu will be pronounced /g/ (unless they run into a few borrowings such as guava and Guelph where we find /gw/ for gu). We can't help too much with predictions for ge and gi spellings. Most ge spellings in initial position do have the /j/ pronunciation but a number of fairly common words-in origin Anglo-Saxon, Old Norse and a few borrowings-have /g/. TESOLERS can of course present these exceptions in everyday contexts: e.g., Get your gear; the geese are in the geyser again. If we don't hurry, Gertrude will geld the geezer. Gi spellings are

tougher. Large numbers of words will have the /j/ pronunciation but there's a substantial group with /g/ (again many of these are Anglo-Saxon or Old Norse), often very common words. Students will likely have learned give girl and gift so that we're left with: gibbon, giddy, gig, giggle, gild, gill, gimmick, gimp, gingham, gird, girdle, girth, gizzard, and of course the Gipper, the juxtaposition of which into a single sentence can be done easily by any gibbon in gingham who giggles in his gizzard while The strength of the basic go as /j/ correlation can be seen however in contemporary words like dialogize where the syllable-initial /j/ conquers the /g/ that ends the root.

That leaves the gh words (all /g/?) and the gy words. Word-initial gy usually turns up as /j/ but words with the gyneco root, as gynecology, are being recorded with both pronunciations. We may have another margarine on our hands. Linguists speak of words in "fuzzy" categories; they seem more slippery to me. But when I ventured into the depths of words with gy, syllable-initial but not word-initial, all did become fuzzy, actually foggy. I felt fogyish and in an attempt to find patterns with few exceptions I considered syllable-final correspondences: g alone as /g/ (fog) OK? ge as /j/ (sage)? Sorry, I renege.

Editor: Bill Biddle, RRI, East Ryegate, VT 05042



Your Life in Your Hands (Longman)

by Tracey Forrest

YOUR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS is a video-based English language course consisting of two color video cassettes of approximately one hour and 10 minutes each in length with accompanying student books and one teacher's manual. Videocassette 1 and Student Book 1 were designed for a mid-to-high beginning level. Videocassette 2 and Student Book 2 were meant for a high beginning/low intermediate level. The course is aimed at young adult and adult learners of English with some background knowledge who need exposure to conversational language to develop their

listening and speaking skills.

The eight units in Part I and the seven units in Part II each have three components: a SILENT component which consists of an abbreviated version of the unit with musical accompaniment but with no dialogue; a SOUND component which is a complete version of the unit with the language included; and either a PROFILES or FOCUS component. In the PROFILES components, the characters are asked to answer questions about themselves and their situation by an off-screen interviewer. The FOCUS components are not on the video tape;

they are in the Student Book and contain communicative exercises based on language in the lessons. The Videocassettes have a built-in digital clock with numbers corresponding to numbers in the Student Books and Teacher's Manual. Teachers can thus fast forward or rewind to locate a particular portion of the tape quite easily.

The soundless preview focuses students' attention on the visual information first without overloading them with simultaneous language input. This is a good idea, especially for Part I

(continued on back page)



PROMISING PRACTICES

By Priscilla Karant and Maxine Steinhaus

As writing teachers, we sometimes receive grammatically accurate essays from students that we cannot understand at all. Many a teacher is caught asking: "But what is the thesis? Where are your examples?" A good practice in teaching writing is to discuss the problems of following the English thought patterns from the start. Here are some ideas in this subject from Priscilla Karant.

GETTING THE ENGLISH THOUGHT PATTERN

"It's not off the topic!" my Korean student insisted as I was trying to show him how for an American reader he was digressing. Thought patterns differ so greatly from one culture to another that it is difficult for a non-native speaker to switch to the English patterns and to put aside his thought pattern. After a while, my Korean student did understand what I meant, but he was still unhappy: "I don't want to write that way." For him, my suggestions made his writing sound rude and simplistic.

To learn how to communicate using a different thought pattern takes a lot more work than memorizing irregular or past tense verb forms. In fact, students whose grammar is proficient struggle with writing, in part due to this cultural difference. There is a willingness from the student to write a syntactically correct sentence, but sometimes hesitancy to change his thought pattern in writing. These are ways I have approached the problem.

READING—I give students a copy of Robert B. Kaplan's article "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education." Kaplan's diagrams of paragraph development (at right) help make students more conscious of the differences. Afterwards, students diagram their own essays. From this, they learn to spot what examples are off the topic for an American reader.

DISCUSSION—To reinforce how deeply ingrained thought patterns are, students discuss differences in behavior in simple situations. I ask them to write down how they would react in their countries. Here is a situation that works well. You are in a room with friends. You feel cold and want to shut the window. What do you say?

A Japanese student might respond: "Does anyone need a sweater? Are you feeling comfortable?" An American might say: "Would you mind if I shut the window? I'm feeling a bit chilly." Besides enjoying discussing these different approaches, students become more aware of what thought patterns are. They understand how appropriate it would be for an American to change if he/she were living in a different culture.

It is important to emphasize that one thought pattern is not superior to another. Simply, in whatever culture you find yourself in, you are more easily understood if you switch to the thought patterns of this culture. This helps the more resistant student to want to change.

WRITING—Students are told to write down five specific adjectives (not overused ones like "nice" or "kind," etc.) to describe the character of their mother or father. Students read their lists aloud. Together, class members choose the most revealing adjective on each student's list. Then the student must think of two examples to prove the adjective chosen fits his/her parent.

This writing exercise will reveal students' problems in adapting to the pattern. But because of the simplicity of the topic, teachers can easily work with students in sticking to it.

Editor: Jennifer Bixby
90 Hammond St.
Acton, MA 01720

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NYS TESOL Idiom Spring 1989

From the President

(continued from Page 2)

be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world . . . Cultural literacy constitutes the only reliable way of combating the social determinism that now condemns them to remain in the same social and educational condition as their parents.

7) "Bilingual Literacy," Appendix to *Illiterate America*, by Jonathon Kozal, 1985: . . . There is a degree of clumsiness in our divided posture on the question of bilingual studies. For those whose families speak only Spanish, we provide an inconsistent and not terribly successful process of remediation. . . the process is remedial in nature and cannot escape the stigma which is present in all systems of instruction that are built on separate tracks of early learning. For many of the most successful English-speaking students, on the other hand, foreign language study is a sign of excellence, preeminence, and academic promise.

8) Lawrence Literacy Coalition, *A Comprehensive Five Year Literacy Plan for the Lower Merrimack Valley*, by Tomas Kalmar, May, 1988: Whatever "Adult Literacy" may mean elsewhere, in Lawrence it tends to mean "ESL."

Sandra Fotinos

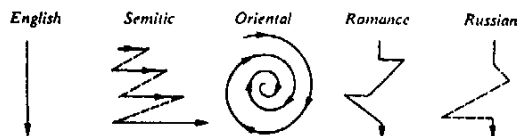


Diagram from Robert B. Kaplan's "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education," *Language Learning* (1966) XVI, 1-2, p.15.

Congratulations to . . .

Carol Houser Pineiro for being Keynote Speaker at the Virginia TESOL Fall Conference in Norfolk.

Your Life in Your Hands

(continued from page 6)

since some of the discourse in these units may be a bit tough going for mid-beginners. Sentences flashed on the screen during the silent viewing seek to disambiguate the visual context as the silent scene progresses. Unfortunately, it does not always work, especially in scenes which are heavily dialogue-dependent.

Vocabulary and structures increase in complexity with each unit, and there seems to be sufficient re-phrasing and re-statement to help with clarification of complex sections. For example, in the first unit of Part I, one of the main characters is deaf, setting the stage for quite a bit of repetition in the opening scene where it is needed.

Throughout, functions are emphasized in the dialogues and structures are emphasized in the FOCUS exercise. Information about the characters is reinforced in the PROFILES sections which provide further practice in listening to spontaneous, candid language expression.

Part II begins with a summary of Part I and can be used independently with a class for which Part I may be too easy.

The Student Book integrates well with the video-taped material, and the Teacher's Manual sets out clear instructions on how to use the material unit-by-unit.

The main characters in YOUR LIFE IN YOUR HANDS are rather lack-luster. The story moves slowly, often at a monotonous pace, and we sometimes find rather stilted scenarios. Nevertheless, the language presented in this course is useful and conversationally relevant; the Student Book exercises provide sufficient practice in building vocabulary, expressing feelings and opinions and acquiring appropriate and grammatical language.

This video course seems to stand somewhere between the realm of language classroom discourse and the real world. Not a bad step forward.

Tracey Forrest teaches ESL and drama in New York and is a doctoral candidate in the linguistic program at the CUNY graduate center.

Editor: Carol Houser Pineiro: Carol has been involved in the use and development of video materials for several years. She is an active member of the new Video Interest section of TESOL and welcomes reviews of ESL-related videos for both the MATSOL Newsletter and the TESOL Video IS Newsletter. They may be sent to CELOP/Boston University, 730 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02115.

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