

Treading Water: The IPrA Conference *Marilyn Fontana*

The decision to attend the International Pragmatics Conference was one way to see Budapest. It was also a way to see what goes on in an obscure branch of linguistics, my knowledge of which was limited to Grice's cooperative principle: don't say too much, be honest, be relevant, be clear. The current home base of IPrA (pronounced I-pra or E-pra) is Belgium, and the association meets biennially at locations around the world. Its membership stands at around 1200 people from six continents, about half from Europe, hardy souls all, committed to the investigation of why we say what we say and what we really mean when we say it.

From July 9 - 14, approximately 1000 registrants lodged at various hotels around Budapest and met at the Technical University, a 19th century bulwark on the "Pest" bank of the Danube. The building began life as a museum of Egyptology,

according to a bronze marker that missed the proletarian purge of Communism, a block-long stone and turreted behemoth. Plenaries were held in a lecture theater of the type seen in period movies: 620 fold-down oak seats and stationary oak writing tops in a skylit amphitheater descending to the speaker's stage. It was clear during the opening plenary that I would be able to breathe in this environment only by tilting my head back, floating gently on the surface, keeping my ears open and my mouth closed. For five days, concurrent topics ran an hour and a half in various classrooms until 7:00 p.m. in the evening. Panels of three or four presenters read papers related to a topic, but not necessarily related to one another. Introductions were succinct and audience participation was limited to a nominal question period reserved for the end of the presentation, time permitting.

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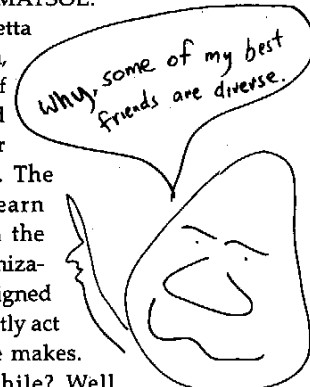
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How Can You Expand Your Diversity Repertoires in The Classroom? *Rob Vitello*

One way is to carve time out of your crammed schedule to attend a four-session mini-course on Diversity put together by a team from the SABES Office (System of Adult Basic Education Support) and sponsored by MATSOL.

This course, based on work done by Loretta Williams of the Racial Justice Connection, Inc. and called Media Portrayals of Diversity: Reality or Mythology, was held recently at Northeastern University over four mornings in September-October. The premise for the series: we can all learn additional ways to respect and affirm the growing diversity in our classroom, organizations and communities. The series is designed to expand the ways that we can competently act to respect the difference that difference makes.

Why is this mini-course so worthwhile? Well according to one participant, "You don't realize how much baggage each of us, both learner and teacher, brings into the classroom. It is a process not only to accept diversity but to embrace it and promote it," notes



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MATSOL Currents

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Letter From The Editor

As we muddle further into the Third Millennium, the issue of standards gains prominence. Language-teaching circles have for years been agitated by the question of "standard English." In politics there's now, for some reason, a strong push for uniform voting standards. And locally, the MCAS controversy, at bottom a question of standardizing graduation requirements, is getting white-hot.

This issue of *Currents* reflects the rising concern in several articles. MATSOL president Johan Uvin in his letter relates the organization's growing involvement in the development of education policy. A view from the trenches is that of Catharine Carney, MATSOL's low-incidence representative and a high-school ESL teacher. And we feature a review of ex-president Paula Merchant's published contribution to the development of standards for ELL's in Massachusetts.

Do we really want all this sameness? For that's what "standards" are intended to provide, whether of education, language or law. The common ambivalence is voiced in Rob Vitello's account of the MATSOL's recent seminar on diversity. ESL teachers might feel complacent on the subject — if we didn't like diversity, why else would we teach ESL? Rob beckons us to look deeper.

A sense of that sheer pleasure some of us take in different cultures is expressed in our other lead article, Marilyn Fontana's report on a Pragmatics conference in Hungary. It also calls us back to the rich diversity of linguistics. My graduate classes only touched on Pragmatics, and I'm not sure I could define it, but I liked it. In the daily racket of teaching, may we never lose our intellectual hunger to understand language.

Beyond these, we have our usual Book Reviews, reports on conferences, and two uncommonly good entries in the series on "How I Got into ESL," by Linda Butler and Sterling Giles.

I write this introduction with a pang, since it will be my last as editor of *Currents*. My three years on the MATSOL Board have been just what I expected — broadening, stimulating and exhausting. There's no set term for editor, but three years is about average. It's hard work, but whenever I felt sorry for myself, I was humbled to think how much more some other Board members put into the organization. Moreover, one reason for my quitting is a happy one — I was kicked upstairs at my school, and made ESL Coordinator. The extra duties make it impossible to continue.

I'm glad to say that my successor looks very promising. Julia Stakhnevich came here from Russia to do a Ph.D. in TESOL at Ole Miss. She then married a blues musician and moved to Bridgewater State to head their ESL program. Genial, vivacious and sharp as a tack, she's at a point in her career when the networking and publication opportunities of the job are very attractive. I hope to stay on as a columnist. Thanks to Board members and readers for three years of patience, encouragement and good fellowship.

Tom Griffith



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www.MATSOL.org

From The President

Making and Managing Change and Opportunity

The year 2000 has been filled with challenges and opportunities for you. In preK-12, you have had to work hard, often with little guidance, to implement content standards with English language learners, and to prepare students for the MCAS test. You have told us that in many circumstances your students were not proficient enough yet to participate meaningfully in MCAS and that the test has preceded the conditions necessary to provide an equal educational opportunity for English Language Learners in the context of standards-based reform. Simultaneously you are facing accountability demands in your classrooms, schools and districts through evaluation and review procedures, based on criteria which are not yet fully refined or understood. While you have voiced frustration with this lack of clarity, you have indicated the value of accountability for English language learners (ELLs), and the desire to ensure that your students — who have historically been excluded from accountability programs for achievement — are included in an appropriate way. You have said that you want to see the performance of ELLs at the center of Ed Reform discussions, and that proposed changes in legislation benefit rather than harm our students. In sum, challenges and opportunities galore.

In Adult and Workplace ESOL, you have had to face increased accountability pressures that came with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The expected introduction of voluntary teacher certification and teacher testing has forced you to revisit your views on qualifications, working conditions, and compensation levels.

In higher education, too, you are asked to be more responsible for your actions than you were in prior years. Some programs are giving you only one to two semesters to upgrade the language skills of your students to a level that will ensure meaningful participation in rigorous academic work.

The list goes on. Irrespective of where you teach, you are asked to do a better job often without additional funding or support. The year 2000 has been a year of transformation for you.

The year 2000 has also been a year of transformation for MATSOL. MATSOL had to do a better job at meeting your professional development needs in this changing policy en-

vironment. Therefore, we began the process of strengthening MATSOL's capacity to better serve you and assist you in managing the changes that have come your way. *MATSOL Forward*, our long-term strategic plan, has guided us in this work and progress towards many of the goals in the plan has been encouraging.

Managing change, however, is not enough. We need to make change, as well. We cannot let our work be defined only by legislation and policies that have been created by others who may or may not have a solid understanding of the issues involved. We need to play a more active role. We need to speak in a stronger voice.

My colleagues on the Board of Directors and I have worked with many of you through focus groups and committees to strengthen our voice and the outcomes of these efforts have given us confidence we are moving the right direction. Responsiveness to MATSOL's input on the design of a teacher certification system for adult basic education teachers (including adult and workplace ESOL teachers), its review of proposed changes in bilingual education legislation, its assessment of the feasibility of passing MCAS as the sole high school graduation requirement, its contributions to the national action agenda for adult literacy, and the draft employment standards crafted by the MCAE/MATSOL committee are almost textbook examples of the difference we can make.

These efforts, however, will be insufficient if we want to meet the challenges and maximize the opportunities that this era of transformation has presented. We need to expand our base of support. To do so, the Board recently launched a fundraising campaign called *Friends of MATSOL* and a membership drive called *Be One, Make One*.

I am asking you to participate in both by asking others to either make a financial investment in MATSOL through *Friends of MATSOL* or by making at least one new MATSOL member. Either of these initiatives will not require more than five minutes of your time. The worst outcome can be that people say "no." Your investment will be more than worthwhile. My colleagues on the Board of Directors and I have made your professional development needs and the achievement of your students our top two priorities.

Johan Uvin

"We cannot let our work be defined only by legislation and policies that have been created by others who may or may not have a solid understanding of the issues involved. We need to play a more active role. We need to speak in a stronger voice."

Treading Water: The IPrA Conference Continued from page 1

At the 11:30 coffee break on a marble horse-shoe balcony overlooking the mammoth ground floor central atrium, we drank coffee or tea served in cups and saucers, juice or water in glass stemware and warm fruit-filled pastries. Below, attendees jostled their way among the posters, 75 different topics every day, studying mini-theses such as "Czech in the Vietnamese Community" and "A Contrastive Morphogrammatic Study of Italian and English Diminutives in Technical Terminology". Next to the poster section were a half dozen publisher displays, the lead one being John Benjamins (Amsterdam), as well as St. Jerome (UK), Cambridge University Press and Eurospan Group (London). The cacophony of clinking china, glassware and intense conversations bounced around the hall, up and down the staircases and back again.

English was the lingua franca among scholars from Hong Kong, India, Spain, Italy, Japan, Poland, Germany, Russia, and the host country, Hungary. A few presentations or posters were delivered in French, the former, but still gasping, international language of academia and diplomacy. Topics ranged from the use of minimal responses in Finnish to the cognitive spatial relationships of pronouns among two- and three-year olds. There were the occasional hand-out and frequent use of overheads showing statistical results in charts and graphs. Often, speakers sacrificed articulation for speed in order to get to their point, which was usually that more research is needed. I selected topics from the program, marched the grand marble stairs to second and third floor classrooms, took a place in the rear, passed a few words with professors from Turkey or Singapore, felt the hot breeze blow through open windows, and waited for something, anything related to the field of ESOL. But this wasn't the place for anecdotes and new, improved methodologies; it was the place to disseminate the findings of serious scientific research into the nature of the language we use. What, I wondered, does all this have to do with communication? After sitting through several sessions, some impressions coalesced.

This group of impassioned multilinguals is a core of scholars whose work, purely descriptive, is the anchor that plunges to a murky bottom. These are some of the people

for whom all the discrete pieces of language hold the same exquisite beauty and logic that an algebraic formulae hold for mathematicians. But the anchor raises silt, moves, resettles and raises more silt, as language usage evolves. So the field of research possibilities is limitless, keeping researchers sifting, as we practitioners babble happily on the surface, giving little thought to the mystery of the babble.

The second observation I made is that since we spend a lifetime learning, we learn best when our minds are engaged in a topic, and our students are no different. If our thoughts wander because a speaker uses sloppy enunciation, mumbles, or reads at us, we can be sure that same thing happens to our students, only sooner.

If a speaker engages the audience by moving, gesturing, projecting clearly, and employing humor, we can bet our students will be similarly engaged. When stretching and restlessness signal the time for break or lunch, and a speaker insists on making two or three more "critical" points, the importance evaporates. Likewise for our students.

Scholars don't necessarily make good teachers, and vice-versa, but one thing stood out at this conference that was humbling and encouraging. The depth of English language acquisition, as the second, or third, or fourth language of the IPrA members was astounding. Bilingualism, as we generally use the term, pales in the face of true multilingualism, in which a native speaker of Korean, for example, has mastered not only the syntax

and vocabulary of English, but also can write and present a scholarly topic in English, using the hundreds of terms particular to the field of pragmatics, and then communicate information to someone whose native language is Hindi. So deep and integrated is English among the members that a misstep, such as "would found" is glaring, and the attempt to make "outlook" plural by saying "lookouts" draws chuckles from native English speakers. But how many native-English speaking graduate students could find an equivalent for "outlooks" or "lookouts" in Polish while defending their position under harsh criticism by a revered Viennese professor, beard and all? How many would try?

So, although I'm still not sure about the difference be-

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Learn More About IPrA

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Expanding Your Diversity Repertoire Continued from page 1

Marjorie Soriano, a long-time MATSOL member.

This course offers an opportunity to take a critical look at popular media portrayal as well as allowing participants to explore their own issues in a supportive environment.



What does it mean that we have so many sports teams named for Native Americans, like the Atlanta Braves whose fans do the tomahawk chop in the stands? Or how prevalent is racist material on the Web? A more probing question is what is the real impact of "white privilege" in our daily dealings? There is enough guided discussion time to find some answers, in the way instructors Allison Simmons, Madeleine Costa and Ann Miranda lead the series. You keep a journal as part of the class activities, which allows one to see progress and change in his/her own thinking and understanding. Every participant comes away with a diversity action plan for personal growth, and growth as classroom and community leaders. And for

those who need PDP's, MATSOL is looking to develop follow-on assessment activities based on over a dozen workable multi-cultural competencies that are provided, for instance, "ability to openly discuss myths and realities of racism." In the end, though, the whole effort serves to re-energize you. As Evelyn Galamb put it, "It's hard not to become complacent sometimes. This course gives you a boost and the confidence to raise your voice and address situations that need addressing."

The support is also there for developing and accessing activities and lessons to use in the classroom with a wealth of excellent resources, including guides and material from the Southern Law Poverty Center such as *Teaching Tolerance*. Addressing diversity issues both in the classroom and in the field of Adult Education and ESOL instruction has been a rallying call for MATSOL. The *MATSOL Forward* multi-year strategic plan includes several key goals related to making measurable progress at a time when tolerance needs to be in greater supply. MATSOL has created a Standing Committee on Diversity with one aim - to encourage diversity in the participation and leadership of MATSOL. If you would like more information on these efforts or the Diversity mini-course, including how to bring it to your organization; check the MATSOL Webpage or contact Rob Vitello, MATSOL Workplace Education SIG Representative at 617-727-8158 ext. 1242

Rob Vitello is MATSOL's Workplace Editor



MATSOLwest Mini-Conference "ESOL and Learning Disabilities"

While we received no full report of last fall's conference in Western Massachusetts, we hope this bulletin gives some of its flavor. Ed.

In collaboration with: YALD (Young Adult with Learning Disability) Team SABES Western Region, Friday, November 3, 2000 at Holyoke Community College. Attended by 36 participants and two publishers (Alta and McGraw-Hill)

Morning workshop

"Does my ESOL Learner Have Learning Disabilities?"

Presenters: Dianne Shewcraft and Tricia Farley-Bouvier from the Western Mass. Young Adult with Learning Disability (YALD) team

An interactive opportunity for ESOL practitioners to discover strategies for screening and teaching the suspect LD student. Characteristics of LD, specific screening tools, teaching strategies, and developing a learner's plan was the main focuses of the workshop. Each participant of this workshop received a copy of the ESOL manual which is the foundation of the workshop.

Afternoon workshop

"Software, Materials, and Techniques for Students with Learning Disabilities"

Presenters: Susan Frishberg and Janie Duncan, the Director of ESL services and Chair of the World Language Department of Landmark College in Putney, Vermont.

MATSOL Wins Contract to Develop ESOL Course for Beginning Teachers

MATSOL recently secured a contract from the Massachusetts Department of Education to develop a course that will introduce new adult ESOL teachers to the teaching of ESOL.

This course is part of an effort to create training opportunities within adult ESOL that will help teachers who are interested in voluntary Adult Basic Education Teacher Certification meet certification eligibility requirements.

SIG session

Fran Fortino from UMASS Amherst shared the updates on issues of working conditions in the ESOL field.

Luncheon session

MATSOL President, Johan Uvin dialogued with participants

Special thanks to:

Dr. Ken White, Bill Arcand, George Kahout and Adrienne Moris (SABESwest)

Steering Committee:

Kit Carpenter (Greenfield Community College), Pam Green (Springfield Technical Community College), Sarah Atchley (Berkshire Community College), Patricia A. Metzger (Wilbraham Public School), Julie Winberg (Holyoke Public School), and Marilyn Font

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Teacher Research

Quantifying Progress in an ESL Writing Class

Rick Lizotte

In this column in the last issue of *MATSOL Currents*, Jean Chandler presented three quantitative methods commonly used in educational research. The last method she discussed — that of t-tests — was one used to compare two groups of students or more generally two sets of data to see if the differences between them arose by chance. In this article I would like to show how this method can be used to quantify progress in an ESL writing class.

About ten years ago, the ESL faculty at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill/Lawrence realized that the population of our high intermediate fourth-level reading, writing, and grammar classes was changing. Up to that time our students had been predominantly older recent or long-time immigrants who had begun to learn English as adults. In both their speech and their writing, they were not fluent in English. They made almost as many mistakes in vocabulary usage as they made in grammar or mechanics. The new population, on the other hand, was younger and much more fluent in speech. They came to us from the local high schools and had been in the United States for five years or more, having begun to learn English as children. They had a native-like intuitive knowledge of English tense usage and much of the colloquial grammar, but they had to improve their reading levels and the accuracy of their writing. The writing errors of this primarily Hispanic population typically consisted of dropping the -s and -ed endings of nouns and verbs, and of getting spelling, punctuation, and parallelism wrong.

When these students entered the college in the fall semester and were placed in our 12-hour grammar classes, their intuitive knowledge of colloquial grammar made them feel that they were wasting their time, and many otherwise gifted students would simply not do the work, created problems in the classroom, and got Ds and Fs or withdrew from the course. As the main intake counselor for such students in the spring and summer, I began to place them in our fourth-level reading and writing courses but not in the grammar class. They could clearly see they needed improvement in reading and writing skills, and the pattern of their knowledge and errors in writing made it likely that they could get the grammar instruction they needed for error correction in the writing course itself.

Over several semesters, I developed a sequence of combined process writing and only-what-you-need-to-know grammar and mechanics instruction for these students,

whom we came to call developmental bilinguals. We began to put such students together in a section that would focus on their need for grammar and lack of need for vocabulary instruction. The grammar instruction consisted of a step-by-step sequencing of knowledge leading from instruction in parts of speech and the subject-verb-object structure of the English clause to knowledge of the difference between dependent and independent clauses, and finally to simple rules for punctuation based on this difference. It also contained instruction in rules of thumb for accurate writing and self-correction.

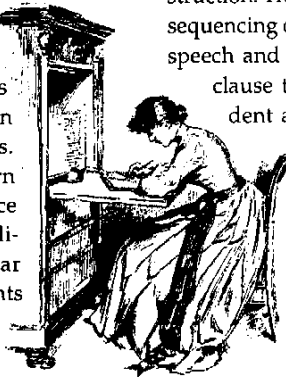
Students were tested in both the grammar and process writing sequences with four grammar quizzes and four composition exams. The composition exams were two hours long and mirrored the length and writing tasks of the exams that led native speakers from our Basic Writing course to our English Composition I courses. Our students were writing descriptions, narrations, and opinion essays similar to those required in the Basic Writing course, using personal experience rather than research to provide examples.

I began to see progress in the writing ability of the developmental students using this plan of instruction. Students were encouraged by a clear and quantitatively-based grading process to increase the amount of detail in their writing while lowering their error rate. This progress was evidenced both in the quantity and quality of their actual writing and in the fact that about half of them overall were successful in getting into the Basic Writing and sometimes the English Composition I classes after just one semester of ESL. However, as I began to present at MATSOL and TESOL conferences on the plan, it was clear that I needed data and quantitative analysis to show the effectiveness of the method.

Over three semesters now I have collected data on 55 students comparing their improvement from the first to the last composition tests in the amount of detail written (measured by a simple count of words, since my fluent bilingual students almost never pad their compositions with repetition) and in the overall error rate (measured by counting errors of all types and calculating the rate of error per hundred words).

I have found that my students have averaged a 20% increase from roughly 400 to 500 words in the length of their compositions while at the same time decreasing their error rate 18% from 11.3 to 9.3 errors per 100 words. The t-test measure described in the previous Teacher Research column yields p-values of .0001 both for the improvement in amount

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How I Got into ESL

Linda Butler

Did you grow up always wanting to be an ESL teacher? I certainly didn't. For one thing, I was almost 30 before I even heard the term "ESL" and learned what the letters stood for. For another, despite my lifelong interest in languages, teaching one never appealed to me in any way, shape, or form. None of my French teachers, from fourth grade through college, ever seemed to be having a particularly good time, and I most definitely did not see myself in their shoes.

But in 1979 I was in Florence, Italy, on a visit to a friend and wanting to stay, I needed to find work. Unfortunately, there weren't a lot of possibilities for an American. There was baby-sitting, which I did for a summer, and I was lucky enough to have nice kids, a villa with a pool, and the chance to learn Italian, but the hours were long and the pay was low. Then there was modeling for art classes. As a former art major, I had a clear idea of what that would entail, and there was not much to recommend it. Chilly work. Not a steady income. By comparison, teaching English began to look—well, not *good* exactly, but worth a try.

Through a friend I got an interview with the head of the Florence branch of a program for teaching English to children. She enrolled me in their Training Program: a few hours with a teacher from Milan who showed our group how to

run an ancient tape recorder and a film strip projector. The film strips featured some English children, very Dick-and-Jane style, and their dog, Spot. ("Spotty! Bring me my slippers! Silly Spotty. Those aren't my slippers. Those are my shoes." Shall I go on? Those dialogues are deeply engraved in my brain.)

So I plunged into teaching a small after-school class, and soon took on twice-a-week assignments in elementary school classrooms. I'd make my rounds, lugging my projector and tape recorder, buoyed by the children's enthusiasm and startled to find that teaching English was actually fun after all. I found myself fascinated by how my students learned and thoroughly caught up in planning games and activities for them.

Two years later I left the job with regret and returned to the U.S. thinking my teaching days were over. Everyone in the U.S. already spoke English, right? A chance encounter with a school administrator opened my eyes to the possibilities of teaching ESL, and within a few weeks I was starting graduate work in TESOL at BU. Now—eighteen years later—I write ESL teaching materials for a living. How did I get into writing? Well, that's another story.

Linda Butler lives in western Mass. where she writes and edits ESL materials. Her latest book is Grammar Links 1 (Houghton Mifflin)

How I Got into ESOL

Sterling Giles

I was one of those undergrads who changed universities and majors, took time off to "find myself," returned part time, and did two consecutive years abroad in different countries, all of which means that I finally got a B.A. at the age of 30, having had a very meaningful though inefficient learning experience. The seeds of my being an ESOL teacher lie back in the first year of my undergraduate education.

As a freshman at BU I took an elective literature course on Hesse, Mann, and Kafka (in English). Germany literally hadn't existed in my high school cultural upbringing, and I was amazed by this wonderful literature. I decided to read it in the original, thanks to Professor Ackermann's inspiration, so I started studying German. A short summer language program in Germany showed me how quickly I could learn *in situ*, and how large the task really was, so I eventually found a way to spend more time studying in Germany, ultimately tacking on a year in France as well. I loved being

abroad, meeting people from different parts of the world, and I loved the deeper understanding of language which contrastive analysis allows. I also fell in love, which is the real reason I'm a teacher today.

At the beginning of my year in Germany I took up with Dino, a rather dashing young German fellow who provided the bedrock of my education in Freiburg. (Actually his name is Oswald, but he picked up the moniker Dino in Italy. He too is devoted to languages and works today in German, French, English, Spanish, and Italian.) We lived together in one small dorm room and were quite happy in an impoverished way. The affair continued between Paris and Freiburg, then between Boston and Freiburg. When I returned to U.Mass/Boston for my senior year I worked in the Office of International Exchange, which heightened my awareness of and interest in other cultures. Everything pointed to a life abroad, but my only immediate goal was to fly to Germany

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SIMPLIFY! SIMPLIFY!

Catherine Carney

I teach ESOL in a public high school that houses grades eight through twelve. One of my students' goals is passing the MCAS. My district has taken measures to prepare students for this test; several MCAS review classes have been scheduled during the school year for tenth grade students who did not pass the test in eighth grade. With the recent release of MCAS scores, department heads have initiated the obligatory MCAS panic throughout the school and new review courses are being planned after school hours to bring our students up to par. I view

this as a band-aid approach to a larger problem. The MCAS was designed to measure students' proficiency of the Massachusetts English Language Arts/History/Math/Science and Technology Standards. In essence they are not just standards, but goals for the students that should be addressed in their content classrooms and not a review class. While resisting teaching to the test, I remain focused on those standards in my classroom and present them at the beginning of each year in an effort to clarify and demystify both the standards and the MCAS.

Introduction of the Massachusetts English Language Arts (MELA) and TESOL Standards

A lesson for intermediate to advanced ESOL students in grades eight through twelve.

Teacher Objective:

To clarify expectations of the class for students and gauge what prior knowledge each student brings to the group to share and build on.

Student Goal:

To rewrite the MELA and TESOL Standards in "readable" English that students can both understand and explain.

Class time:

2 – 3 class periods (2 – 3 hours)

Materials:

- A copy of the 28 Massachusetts English Language Arts Standards
- A copy of the nine TESOL Goals and Standards
- A three-column organizer offers a column for the original standards (with the standards printed in their appropriate order), a column for student generated "Examples of the Standards in Action," and a column for the student-generated rewritten "Readable Standards".
- An overhead transparency of the above three-column organizer
- Writing utensils

Procedure:

(Follow this procedure for both sets of Standards):

Step 1:

Students listen to the teacher read through the Standards list. Students should identify both phrases that they understand and new vocabulary.

Step 2:

Pass out the three-column organizer to the students.

Step 3:

The second reading of the Standards begins. Students should take turns reading the Standards in order on the sheet. After each standard is read, the teacher will answer any questions and elicit student interpretation of the standard. As a group the students should fill in the "Examples of the Standards in Action" while the teacher records the examples on the overhead transparency.

Step 4:

Homework. The students should try to rewrite the standards for home work and be ready to share their work with the class.

Step 5:

As a class the students should share and negotiate their rewritten standards while the teacher records on the overhead the Class Rewritten Standard.

Step 6:

The teacher should print and reproduce the rewritten *Readable Standards* for the students and the classroom. They can be used as points of reference throughout the year.

Assessment

Daily assessment of comprehension of the standards can be done orally when students identify which standards the class is working on during any given lesson.

Students can create a collage that represents a designated number of standards (between 10 – 15 for the MELA, and possibly all 9 of the TESOL Standards). The class and teacher can determine the limits and expectations to include in the collage and record the ideas to create a rubric for grading.

Continued on page 10

English Language Arts (MELA) and TESOL Standards *Continued from page 9*

The number of the standard should stand next to a visual representation of that "Standard in Action". Each student can present and explain their collage to the class. A class-generated grading rubric can be used to assess the collages.

TESOL Standards Addressed

- 2.1 To use English to achieve academically in all content areas; use English to interact in the classroom.
- 2.2 To use English to achieve academically in all content areas; use English to obtain, process, construct and apply academic knowledge.
- 2.3 To use English to achieve academically in all content areas; use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

MELA Standards Addressed

[a few possibilities]

1. Use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.
8. Decode accurately and understand new words encountered in their reading materials drawing on a variety of strategies as needed, and then use these words accurately in speaking and writing.

9. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.

Tag-along lesson ideas

I have also created student-generated vocabulary lists from confusing words in the original standards to use for our first vocabulary lesson of the year.

Reflections

I have found that the class is surprised when they brainstorm the "Examples of Standards in Action" column and that they know and use many of the standards every day. I have also asked them in their daily journals how they can suggest we can improve our understanding and use of the standards in an effort to connect classroom practice with larger goals. I have been surprised and impressed with the connections they make.

I transcribed the Readable Standards onto magnetized two-foot-long cards. Each day I feature the two or three that should be the focus of the days lesson on the blackboard.

Feel free to contact Catherine Carney (ccarney@dedham.mec.edu) with any feedback or questions about the lesson .

How I Got into ESOL *Continued from page 8*

to see Dino the day after graduation. So I returned to Freiburg for four months after getting my B.A. in German and French. Now we started to think about next steps, and at this point my original plans to get a Ph.D. in German literature started making less sense. Where, how, and would I ever get a job in Germany? I was also having second thoughts about it after having written a senior honors thesis. Did I really want to spend my life with my nose buried in some dusty tomes? Did I want to enjoy literature in my life, or make it into a job? A change of plan was decided upon: I would return to the US for a master's in ESOL, with which I could return to Germany for a life of meaningful employment. It seemed both practical and rewarding. I came home and began studying ESOL at BU. I was enjoying the program and getting free tuition by working in a Latin American econometric research center where everyone spoke Spanish around me all day.

Dino visited me, I visited him, but the long-distance thing was wearing thin; we'd been cohabiting intermittently for 4.5 years. After I'd been back in Boston for a little over a year we decided to give up on the relationship and get on

with our separate lives, which really had come to be centered where each of us was living. It was a bittersweet parting, but it made sense at the time. So, the goal of an ESOL degree to make a life in Germany possible was suddenly gone, and I was in the middle of the ESOL program. I asked myself why I should finish it, but quickly realized that I liked the idea of teaching in and of itself, so I stuck with it. In the meantime, while studying part time, I got an administrative job at BU's ESOL program and found myself very settled in that world. When I graduated with an Ed.M. I didn't go right out and teach, as I was enjoying the administrative job. But eventually I left that to teach, spent a few years juggling part-time jobs, and was fortunate to get a full-time job at Roxbury Community College eight years ago. I've been there ever since. Dino and I remain friends, having visited in New York and London, spent time with each other's new partners, and are now regular gossip buddies over e-mail.

I decided to teach in order to love, but in the end I found that I love to teach. Nothing went according to *my* plan, but it all worked out very well. No regrets.

MEET ILI

Ed. Note – Occasionally Currents will profile one of its institutional members, just so we can keep up better with the local ESL scene.

Our mission is to promote inter-cultural understanding through the acquisition of communicative language skills and cross-cultural awareness.

The International Language Institute of Massachusetts (ILI) is a private, non-profit language school located in Northampton, Massachusetts. The school offers a small international intensive English program as well as free part-time English classes and services for immigrants and refugees. It also provides the language program at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, delivers various state and federally-funded programs, and teaches world languages including Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. ILI has been operating since 1984 and is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training. ILI is affiliated with Partners for Community (PFC), a management services organi-

zation delivering human services to individuals and families across Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire.

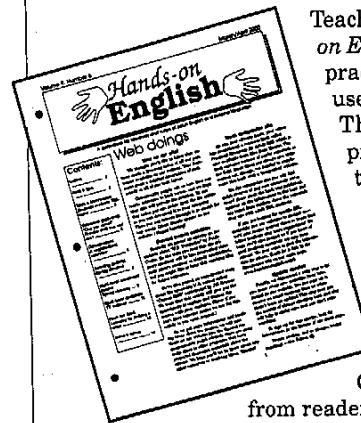
ILI is committed to, and well-known for, excellence in the language classroom. Our philosophy of teaching is learner-centered and participatory. Through simulations, class interviews, dialogues prepared from real-life situations, and discussions and games, the language is made real and immediately usable outside the classroom. We provide students with individual support. The staff is available for personal support, in addition to academic and cultural counseling. In our Self-Access Center, students can use state-of-the-art computers (with Internet access), and video and audio equipment.



Review A Book for MATSOL Currents

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

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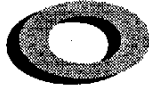
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Dreams of Freedom

A Report on Boston's New Museum of Immigration

Tom Griffith

 One pleasant surprise in the recent election was how little attention was paid to the issue of immigration. It was the dog that didn't bark. This was a change from the mid-nineties, when a reaction seemed to be forming against the latest, and greatest, surge of immigration in American history. (One in ten Americans is now foreign-born, highest percentage ever.) In the past, high rates of immigration led to the rise of the Know-Nothings in the 1850's, and the Exclusion Acts and closed doors of the 1920's.

Has America finally reached a consensus, that continuous but controlled immigration is a positive force? Maybe, maybe not. Around the world, tribalism seems on the rise — an unexpected consequence of the end of the Cold War. With no clash of ideologies, we can go back to comfortable old ethnic antagonisms. And as globalization speeds up the intermingling of peoples, even for the sake of cheap labor, those tensions grow worse. Xenophobia lurks beneath the surface everywhere, and occasionally breaks out into violence. But if America is ever to realize its motto of *E pluribus unum*, it will be owing in part to such efforts as Boston's newest museum, Dreams of Freedom.

I went to visit it on a brisk fall day during a field trip to, appropriately enough, the Freedom Trail. The museum was launched last summer by the venerable International Institute of Boston. Since 1924 they have been providing services to immigrants — legal aid, English and literacy classes, job counseling, etc. Now the Institute has relocated from Commonwealth Avenue to the site of Benjamin Franklin's birthplace on Milk Street, just across from Old South Meeting House.

It's a challenge to make an interesting museum about immigration. Some aspects of the subject are colorful, others dry as dust. Dreams of Freedom goes at it with creativity, zest and a shrewd use of technology. Instead of an entrance ticket, visitors are given a "passport" which can be stamped at different stations. Then they can read displays on immigration to Boston. (Did you know it was the second-largest port of entry,

after New York? I didn't.) Or they can hear first-person accounts from little holographic people who speak from glass globes — an Irish laborer bemoaning the "coffin ships" that crossed the North Atlantic, an Italian matron, an African slave.

And it makes the immigrant experience up-to-date — there's a mock-up of an airplane, by which more recent arrivals have come. To illustrate the naturalization process, two rappers leap around on a TV monitor singing some imperfect rhymes — "What's the Declaration of Inde-PEN-dence? Can you say the Pledge of AI-LEG-iance?"

Xenophobia lurks beneath the surface everywhere . . . if America is ever to realize its motto of *E pluribus unum*, it will be owing in part to such efforts as Boston's newest museum, Dreams of Freedom.

There are more traditional displays of sample items brought by immigrants, like those at the splendid Lowell National Park exhibit. The old trunks full of heirlooms raise the question, what of your old life would bring into your new? One room is set aside for religious objects, showing the growing diversity of faiths in America.

The reputed best exhibit of all is a 30-minute film recounting immigration to Boston, narrated by Ben Franklin and complete with strobe lights and stage fog. Unfortunately it wasn't working the day I came, but the press releases all rave about it.

I assume all ESL teachers have some interest in immigration. My own most fulfilling jobs have been the worst paid, as I prepared modern immigrants for employment in Lynn and Salem. The process whereby America becomes "the nation of all nations, the race of all races," in Walt Whitman's phrase, is a deeply moving one, and a glimmer of hope for a divisive world. I recommend the museum for class visits, not least for its location at the vibrant heart of old Boston.

ZIP Code Alert

If your zip code has changed, PLEASE e-mail Jackie McCabe, Membership Secretary. All she needs is your name and new zip code. E-mail address: jrmcca@bellatlantic.net

Integrating The ESL Standards into Classroom Practice Grades 6 – 8

Suzanne Irujo, Editor

If you are a middle school teacher looking for ways to tackle both language and content this book is a must have. Just one of a series of four tailored to different grade levels (pre-K – 2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12), the book is designed to help teachers use the TESOL Standards. Each volume contains six easily adaptable units that address a range of grade and proficiency levels and model how to adapt any lesson for English language learners.

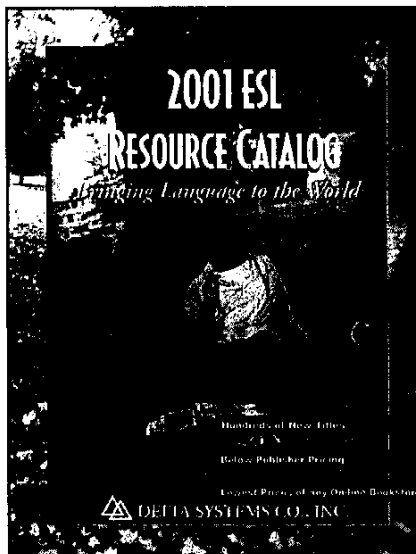
One of the most helpful and interesting features of the book is a series of "margin notes." The notes record the observations of the teacher/authors when the lessons were performed in class and provide advice for teachers working with students at different language levels. The text contains samples of student work and detailed accounts of the standards addressed including sample descriptors and progress

indicators specifically suited for the lesson.

The lessons are written by teachers and this particular volume features "Investigating How Much: Linear, Volume, and Mass Measurement" a unit co-written by MATSOL Past President Paula Merchant and her colleague Louise Young, a science teacher from Dedham Middle School. This science and math focused lesson is used as both an introduction and icebreaker when the student arrive in September and rounds out the variety of content covered in the text which ranges from a social sciences lesson on the Middle Ages to an independent research lesson examining earthworms and their role in the interdependence of living things.

The complete series of *Integrating the ESL Standards into Classroom Practice* is published by TESOL. You can access the TESOL website through a link at www.matsol.org.

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MATSOL AUTHORS

Reading About Writing

Sarah Dietrich

Interested in doing some reading about writing? For years, if you wanted to learn about theories and models of reading, you could turn to *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, a tome of over 1270 pages, now in its fourth edition. But until recently, no similar reference existed for models and theories describing writing. In May 2000, the International Reading Association released *Perspectives on writing: Research, theory and practice*. Edited by James Squire and Roselmina Indrisano (Boston University) the book offers a comprehensive introduction to current writing theory. This volume also provides a reference for readers who are interested in gaining a historical perspective of writing

research. In the Appendix entitled "Recommended Reading" Sarah Dietrich and Margaret Harrington offer synopses of books and articles which have been key to the development of this field. Like most books on theories and models of reading and writing, this volume reflects a monolingual perspective of literacy. Teachers of students who speak two languages or more will have to build on and adapt these theories to the world in which they work. Still this book provides ESOL and Bilingual teachers some insight and frameworks to better understand the processes they observe in their students. If you'd like to do some reading about writing, this would be a good place to start.

Over the Transom

Currents has recently received the following books from Cambridge University Press: a new *Dictionary of American English* with CD ROM which incorporates several useful features, such as authentic examples taken from a corpus, a limited defining vocabulary, guidewords for words with multiple meanings, lots of material on idioms and phrasal verbs, and in index of idioms to make them easy to find. The teacher training series has added *Mentor Courses: A resource book for trainer-trainers*. The Lan-

guage Education series brings us new books on vocabulary, reading, extensive reading, and *Language Teaching Awareness: A Guide to Exploring Beliefs and Practices*. There are two new Handbooks for Language Teachers on the topics of spelling and teaching adults, while the Applied Linguistics series offers *Network-based Language Teaching: Concepts and Practice*.

If you are interested in writing a review of any of these texts, contact Sterling Giles at (617) 421-9134, sterlg@aol.com. You can earn PDP's for writing published reviews.

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REVIEWS



A Handbook for Language Program Administrators

Edited by Mary Ann Christison and Frederika L. Stoller. Alta Book Center Publishers, 1997. 347 pages. ISBN 1-882483-62-6.

Language Program Evaluation: Theory and Practice

by Brian K. Lynch. Cambridge University Press, 1996. 194 pages. ISBN 0-521-48438-3.

Reviewed by Brett M. Rhyne

When are administrators who run English language programs going to realize there is a direct relationship between the quality of education (academics) and a program's ability to attract students and make money (economics)? Judging by these two texts, no time soon.

Let's start with Brian Lynch's book, *Language Program Evaluation*. In this scholarly work, Lynch, a professor and administrator at the University of Melbourne, posits a "context-adaptive model", a "flexible, adaptable heuristic" with which to evaluate the academic efficacy of an ESL program. Much of the book lays out the debate between positivist and naturalist positions on evaluation. In this context, positivist language program evaluation primarily implies measurement over time, especially the tracking of test scores, while naturalist evaluation primarily implies ethnography, what anthropologist Clifford Geertz called "thick description," and views the program evaluator as a "social anthropologist." Not surprisingly, Lynch advocates a combination of both approaches.

As a method of evaluation, it's as good as any and perhaps better than most. That his model is flexible and adaptive to many contexts is good. Unfortunately, he spends far more time outlining the theory behind his model than he does describing the model itself, and his examples of practical applications of the model are scarce. He is deeply, perhaps too deeply, concerned with ontology (the nature of what there is to know) and epistemology (how we know what we know). He argues for a naturalist ontology (the world is subjective) and a positivist epistemology (but we can study it objectively). It seems to me, though, that he's got it backwards. Of course the world exists outside our perception of it (positivist ontology); but we can only study it subjectively (naturalist epistemology). Maybe both Lynch and I have it wrong; perhaps the most reasonable approach is that taken

by sociologist and teacher educator Hugh Mehan, who maintains that both the world and our ability to study it are "inter-subjective."

Despite the flaws in his approach, Lynch acknowledges the economic side: his notion of "stakeholders" or "clients" includes funders, institutions, and so on. Not so for Mary Ann Christison and Frederika Stoller's volume, *A Handbook for Language Program Administrators*. This book is for, by and about managers of English language programs set in higher education; it is not relevant to others, including those in the workplace or community. Ironically, despite its academic origins, most of the contributions in this volume are shamelessly and disturbingly proprietary in their approach, and ignore the educational altogether.

I suppose I'm committing a truism when I point out that a text about administration, by definition, is administrative and not critical. The scholarly veneer of most of these essays, endnotes, tables, suggested readings, indices and discussion questions galore does not make up for their lack of critical content. This book is management science. As a colleague of mine once pointed out, any discipline that has to use 'science' in its name is no science.

In truth, the two best entries aren't about management at all: Robert Kaplan's history of intensive English programs, wherein he lays out the notion of the "cash cow" and prioritizes economic issues before educational ones; and David Eskey's treatise on professionalization, a discussion that manages to be at the same time both academic while lacking theory and managerial while lacking concreteness. To his credit, he clearly points out that "most U.S. universities simply have no coherent policy regarding international students besides welcoming the increased tuition income that these students represent," and describes quite painfully the woeful working and wage situations of most ESL instructors.

Continued on page 16

Language Program Book Reviews Continued from page 15

Kaplan and Eskey lead off the volume, and humanist readers might consider stopping right there. The balance of the essays present a spectrum of models of educational management ranging from hierarchical (administrative control of resources) to participatory (shared control of resources). Of course, any author's position on the spectrum is determined by how many resources they believe should be shared with faculty. At which end do most contributors lie? To paraphrase Gore Vidal, this book is a collection of conservative management texts with two right-wing perspectives.

The vast majority of entries describe the variety of tasks performed by language program administrators. These roles include leader, catalyst for change and innovation, intercultural manager, strategic planner, decision maker, negotiator, promoter, organizer and visionary. The most honest, if jargon ridden, entry comes from Sarah Klinghammer, who unabashedly describes ESL programs' market orientation and their need to "create a strong niche in the market." The most contradictory comes from Alexandra Rowe Henry, who advocates "shared decision making" as the way for "empowerment [of] language program personnel," while at the same time noting that "rarely is negotiation necessary within language programs," and that "a language program administrator will opt to make an independent decision because there is simply not enough time to bring key personnel together to consider the full range of issues at hand." In other words, necessity is the mother of exclusion.

Later in her essay, Ms. Henry reveals her true position, as well as that of most of the contributors to this volume, when she describes a "third proactive managerial strategy", one in which an administrator "prepares to meet future program needs by creating a pool of available temporary faculty to pull in should enrollment meet expectations. The same planning would be necessary for enrollment decline or budget cutbacks." Read: faculty members are expendable resources. Charles Mickleson echoes this position in his piece when he suggests that if "the language program employs part-time faculty who would like to have additional work, grants are a natural way to increase their income. Such increases, however, can lead to unrealistic faculty expectations. Increased salaries, extra travel money, and equipment upgrades, which begin as bonuses brought in by grant activity, can quickly be assumed to be a standard part of faculty benefits. Clear and regularly repeated explanations of revenue sources and their transitory nature will help alleviate unrealistic expectations." Like, having a job next semester.

At the moderate end of the spectrum is Elizabeth Soppelsa's essay on the empowerment of faculty through "consultive management" and "participatory decision mak-

ing." Her point that faculty's "most obvious incentive is financial" is well taken; but she quickly retreats from this liberal position to the more moderate "[h]igher rank, heightened status, and recognition by one's peers are powerful incentives for most people." Sadly, the most right-wing entries are also the most accurate in terms of portraying actual management of language programs. Conservatives, it seems, see things as they really are. John Staczek, a management professor, in his essay on program budgets, bluntly declares "most often the language program is expected to be self-sufficient financially," "the successful language program has become a source of revenue for other offices in its institutional setting," and "its income is established on a *cost-for-services basis*" [italics his]. How true.

Finally, some attention must be given to Michael Witbeck and Deborah Healey's geeky chapter on technology in ESL programs. As is often the case with the technologically oriented - that is to say, those least concerned with faculty issued- they present the introduction of video and computer technologies into ESL instruction as a *fait accompli*, bragging about how language instruction has been "redefined" and how "new definitions of language instruction and language programs must evolve." A teacher is now a "facilitator, guiding students to the proper tools and resources for learning," and they try to soothe teachers' fears by maintaining there is "no substitute for committed, long-term employees who are comfortable with technology or who can be trained to become so." How comforting. They follow this dehumanization of the learning process with the disingenuous setting up and bashing of a most egregious straw man: "[H]aving 2 hours of individual instruction on the computer is probably better than choral recitation in a 'devil take the hindmost' class of 50." Their assumptions about teaching methods and class size make me wonder if either has ever been inside a classroom, or if the editors even bothered to read this offensive entry.

Both texts fall short of what is really needed, an integrated approach to language program evaluation, one that incorporates both academic and economic interests. Lynch's multiple insights into educational evaluation would certainly be a helpful part of such an effort; too bad the same can't be said for Christison and Stoller's book. Such a holistic approach would go a long way toward bridging the gap between teachers and administrators.

Brett M. Rhyne teaches composition at Northeastern University's English Language Center. He received his doctorate in Communication from the University of California, San Diego; his dissertation is entitled Efficiency, Empowerment, Control: Quality Management in Contemporary American Academia. He can be reached at his ceramic art website, www.Tile-A-Vision.com.

Scheherazade's Sisters: Trickster Heroines and Their Stories in World Literature

by Marilyn Jurich. Greenwood Press, 1998. 291 pages. ISBN 0-313-29724-X.

Reviewed by Eileen Feldman

Scheherazade's Sisters is a collection of analyses of folktales and other cultural sources in which the heroine triumphs through cunning and courage over evil and injustice. Written by Dr. Marilyn Jurich, Associate Professor of English at Suffolk University (and, it should be said, a friendly associate of this reviewer), it is a serious scholarly work intended for adults interested in literature, folklore, or feminism. It also serves as an interesting source of classroom materials for the ESOL practitioner. The introduction defines the genre of *trickstardom* by briefly retelling the Arabian Nights story of the woman who saved her own and every other maiden's life by enchanting her predator-husband with a series of captivating stories that she ended only after he had redeemed himself by retracting her death sentence. Jurich then asks how else *Scheherazade* could have placated a tyrant, by bribery, reasoning, begging? Or was her trick the only way for someone powerless to succeed? That question should motivate teachers to explore issues of cleverness and demonstrate to students that knowledge is power. What a profound notion for classroom engagement! How mind-expanding for young people!

Much of this humorous, light-hearted literature can be brought into classrooms; this book provides background to help us do that. Each succeeding chapter discusses a category of *trickstar* and summarizes representative tales from many lands and ages. For example, The Rescuer, The Pursuer, and The Empowered each has her own *modus operandi*. Most of our students know folk tales in their own cultures which have similar elements, so students come to appreciate cultural similarities and differences. Also, through clever folk heroes teachers can indirectly help students realize more about themselves and their options in confronting adversity. Each chapter has extensive footnotes on traditional mythological, Biblical, historical, and regional figures, and events surrounding the tales.

Following the chapters, additional literary resources have been arranged with synthesis and further research in mind. The Overview of Tales is divided into discrete classifications, from misogynists to redeemers to crime solvers. Related tales within each group are identified by page reference, trick used, and country of origin (from Albania to Yemen). Next comes the 12-page Bibliography, inviting folklorists to explore sources in historical and literary scholarship; this also includes anthologies of the stories themselves. Finally, the more economical Index functions at a glance as to archetype, national origin, and name of character.

Trickstar literature can lead teachers to access vocabulary describing character, or to spin off discussion and activities involving plot patterns of each genre, dramatization, illustration, storytelling to peers and youngsters, computer text-graphics projects, guided research into historical and/or regional trickstars, narratives used in a composition supporting a moral argument, or analysis of cultural values.

The book offers only plot synopses. Without fully fleshed-out stories, the task of finding the actual tales is a mixed blessing for the teacher. The bad news is having to track down full-text renditions of the tales that are classroom appropriate for each ability level. Many of the references in the Bibliography are to collections meant for folklorists, inappropriate or even unavailable for classroom purchase. Maybe graded, ready-made anthologies of two- or three-page stories are needed to accompany this book. The good news: perusing the many resources suggested in the Bibliography provides teachers hours of entertainment and personal reflection.

Eileen Feldman teaches at Bunker Hill Community College and Suffolk University.

Quantifying Progress in an ESL Writing Class Continued from page 7

of detail and for the improvement in error rate, in both cases an improvement which was highly significant statistically.

In general, progress in error correction and amount of detail correlates with all-around performance in doing the grammar exercises and written assignments that prepare students for the tests. The results achieved by the students in my writing class seem to belie the contention of John Truscott (1996)

that grammar correction is not only ineffective but harmful when the goal is accurate, fluent writing. Truscott, J. (June 1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46, 2, 327-369.

Rick Lizotte teaches ESL and coaches faculty in the uses of technology and interactive teaching and learning at Northern Essex Community College.

The Big Picture: Idioms as Metaphors

by Kevin King. Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1999. 193 pages. ISBN 0-395-91712-3.

Reviewed by Patricia Brennecke

Kevin King has written an idioms book for grown-ups. Thankfully, the book contains no stilted dialogues with speakers saying things like, "Come on, Jan. Spill the beans. Who are you going to the prom with?" or "Give me a break, Bill. You know you'd give your eye teeth to go out with Susie." Instead, the book is organized around some of the common metaphors of English — life as a game, argument as a battle, knowledge as a path — with clear explanations and useful practice exercises. The 209 idioms contained in the book are divided into 15 chapters, each dealing with one of these metaphors. For example, the notion that life is a game is divided into two chapters, one containing idioms from card games (to ace, to bluff, etc.), the other containing idioms from baseball (to play hardball, to be a hit, etc.).

Each chapter begins with a brief explanation of the underlying metaphor and suggests a warm-up exercise to get the students thinking. For example, the opening chapter, which deals with the notion of ideas as food, asks students to think about ways food is used metaphorically in their own languages. A selection of useful idioms follows, each accompanied by a brief explanation of the idiom and its semantic derivation, with an example of the idiom used in a sentence. A humorous black and white sketch further illustrates the concept. Each chapter also contains a variety of exercises with which to practice: cloze readings, conversation questions, creative dialogues, sentence completion, and other activities.

The book's strength lies in the author's approach to the idioms as products of core metaphors. There is a logic to the presentation which will be appealing to adult learners — especially those interested in how language reflects culture. Furthermore, the black and white illustrations are not juvenile; rather they resemble political cartoons. Some of the activities are better than others. I find some of the cloze exercises a little forced, but I like the sentence completion activi-

ties, which give students a chance to use the idiom in a context that makes sense to them. I also like many of the conversation questions, which encourage students to use the idioms in meaningful ways. "Is there a black sheep in your family?" or "Have you ever been chewed out in public?" are questions adults will not feel silly answering, and they elicit responses that reflect how the idioms are actually used in everyday speech.

I recommend *The Big Picture* to anyone who is looking for an idioms book that will appeal to adults not planning on going to proms, asking Susie out, or having to borrow the car from Dad.

I used this book at MIT in a class of graduate students and it worked well. I could pick and choose which activities I wanted to use; because the chapters are not sequential, I was able to jump around in the book according to the needs of the class. This was particularly useful in a class which was organized around the thematic chapters of the reading text. For example, when we read the chapter on American business practices, we used the chapters in *The Big Picture* that dealt with idioms used in the discussion of money.

I recommend *The Big Picture* to anyone who is looking for an idioms book that will appeal to adults not planning on going to proms, asking Susie out, or having to borrow the car from Dad. It will be a useful text in any upper-intermediate or advanced ESL class.

Patricia Brennecke is a Lecturer in the Foreign Languages and Literatures/ESL Section at MIT.

The IPrA Conference Continued from page 4

tween anaphor discourse and anaphor resolution, in any language, I'm sure of this: we as ESOL teachers have to be energized, talk less and be clearer when we do speak, expect more of ourselves and of our charges, and support bilingualism at every opportunity.

Budapest, by the way, is magnificent, its prepossessing 19th century architecture a bit blackened and numbed by 35 years of Socialist theory gone to dust, but singing its glory nevertheless. Its Danube passes under bridges that have connected the two parts of the city for centuries, and its people

are kind and reserved. A waiter, who spoke seemingly fluent English and welcomed the opportunity to practice, knew only too well the difference between BICS and CALP. "I speak only surface," he said. That's where we are — on the surface, on the choppy, fickle waters of language usage and production. We're right up there with the misprint on the menu: MEAN DISHES. Maybe it's not a misprint at all. Maybe it's just a matter of interpretation, a reaction to tourist abuse, passive-aggression, or maybe just the paprika.

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