# Language Instruction in Cuba

Kim Gerould and Lisa Pred went to Cuba last winter to learn more about education for adults. Here they speak specifically about language programs.

Walk along Havana's streets and among the sights you'll be sure to see are the students and schools everywhere. Former wealthy homes, apartment buildings and army barracks have all become schools since the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Posters, colorful roadside billboards, TV and radio commercials are all part of Cuba's latest campaign to encourage all citizens to study.

Following the successful Battle for the Sixth Grade, mass organizations, the media and the unions have been playing an important role in encouraging workers to continue their education to the ninth grade level.

An important and popular element of adult education is the Worker's Language Program (Idiomas para Trabajadores), in which working people can study any of eight foreign languages. English and Russian are the most popular languages, followed by German, French, Czechoslavakian, Chinese, Italian, and Portuguese. There are ninety of these language schools throughout the island in almost every municipality.

In order to enter the language program, a worker must have completed the ninth grade. The program has been immensely popular. In its earlier years all kinds of people were attending, including university and secondary students

We wondered why language is so popular among the Cubans and why it is seen as a priority. From the vantage point of societal needs, the demand for bilingual people is increasing — to serve the tourism industry and international commerce and to do translating. Studying a foreign language gives a worker the opportunity to advance in his or her job. Equally important, as a MINED (Ministry of Education) official commented, it gives a worker "spiritual satisfaction" to study and know a foreign

# Pastries for Presenters



These delectable goodies were served to presenters at a post-Conference party at Vivian Zamel's house. Many thanks to Dominique's Bakery of Hyde Park for the contribution.

language. People we talked with cited various reasons for studying a foreign language: to advance in their jobs, to be able to get a different job, to be able to read in a foreign language, to communicate with foreign visitors to Cuba, and simply to know another language.

To get an idea of how languages, particularly English, are taught, we spoke with students, language teachers, and language educators in MINED. In addition, we attended some classes. One of us had spent a month studying Spanish as a foreign language in a university level course in Cuba. As a MINED official said, their methodologies and materials are drawn from many sources.

At first sight, their methods seemed rather traditional to us since we were familiar with the innovative, humanistic methods being developed in the US. Some texts are prepared by MINED

while the Alexander method from England (New Concept English, L.G. Alexander) is widely used. Often a dialogue,

(Continued on page 2)

### \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

The MATSOL Board has voted to allot treasury funds to MATSOL members to plan and present professional activities in Massachusetts.

Possible uses for funds are workshops, speakers, panels and films. The Board welcomes additional suggestions. Please send them to:

Paul Krueger
English Language Center
Northeastern University
Boston, MA

The proposal format and criteria will be described in the fall newsletter.

#### MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION FOR TEACHERS OF SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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#### The MATSOL Newsletter

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Professional Development . . . Lorna Porras

This is a quarterly 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:

Mary Christie MATSOL Newsletter 251/6 Grant Street Cambridge, MA 02138 Articles should be typed, doublespaced, set to 40 characters.

# NOTES FROM THE BOARD

The Board is reviewing a draft of standards for ESL programs which the TESOL Committee on Professional Standards is developing. Paul Krueger is Chair of the Sub-committee on Higher Education.

The Board is happy to welcome Donna Lee Kennedy as the new Job Bank Coordinator. Donna is the Director of Student Affairs at Arthur D. Little's Management Education Institute.

You can call her between 9 and 5 at 864-5770, Ext. 3186. If you're leaving a message, mention the Job Bank and a number where you can be reached.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

The MATSOL Fall Conference will be held on Saturday, October 29 at Pine Manor College in Chestnut Hill. The theme will be "The Use of Technology in ESL."

#### FROM THE EDITORS

Congratulations to Rob Gogan on his new position as editor of the Chamberlayne Junior College Alumni Newsletter. We hope to maintain the excellent standards set by Rob in his two years as MATSOL Newsletter editor.

In this issue you will notice two new columns: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOP-MENT and CAREER IDEAS, which we hope will give new perspectives on the possibilities in the ESL field.

We look forward to receiving articles and news items from our readers which reflect the richness and diversity of interests in the MATSOL membership: elementary, secondary, adult, and higher education.

Articles and news items should be typed, double-spaced, set for 40 characters. Please include your name and institutional affiliation as you wish them to appear. Clear black and white photographs are also welcome. The next deadline is October 1.

Mary Christie Rick Smith

# Language Instruction

(Continued from page 1)

a recorded lecture or a reading is presented; work on listening or reading comprehension, spoken and written practice, grammar drills and cultural activities are drawn from that original material.

The readings which are often very advanced are not glossed for vocabulary very well. There is a standardized curriculum in the Worker's Language Program to which the teacher must adhere fairly strictly. Students are tested on a weekly basis on grammar, reading comprehension, vocabulary and oral abilities, and they must pass a final test at the semester's end to receive a diploma. One teacher complained that it was difficult to cover all the required material. She added that this left little time for the teacher to bring in his or her own materials or to have time for free conversation.

In contrast to such apparently traditional methods, one also sees innovative elements in the language program. In the teacher's methodological guide, it says that the methods are based on the "dialectical materialist conception of language, the teaching principles of socialist pedagogy."

One way these ideas are put into practice in the classroom is the weekly "criticism, self-criticism" session, in which the students and teachers systematically evaluate themselves and one another, not only in terms of academic advancement, but also in terms of cooperation and mutual aid.

Particularly impressive is the content of the Cuban-prepared texts. Topics include a speech by Malcolm X, the history of working women and workers in general in the US, stories of Native Americans, ecology, and excerpts from English-speaking Caribbean writers.

Our overall impression of adult education in Cuba was very favorable. We were continually impressed by its importance throughout all levels of Cuban society.

Because of limited resources and pressing developmental needs, Cuban educational planners haven't had the time to develop as much of their own curriculum as they would like. As a result, we found curriculum to be somewhat rigid. Having to cover large amounts of material in a short period limits teacher flexibility and ability to

(Continued on page 5)

# Highlights of Open Doors 1981/82

Every year the Institute of International Education in New York publishes the results of its national survey of foreign students in the United States. They come out in a book entitled "Open Doors". This is the definitive source on the subject. Since it takes so much time to compile all the figures and get them published, the edition about to appear covers the 1981-82 academic year. We won't know what's happening now until next year at this time. In the meantime, here's an advance look at some of the statistics about to appear in the newest "Open-Doors":

Number of foreign students enrolled in U.S. colleges & universities: 326,299

Number of colleges & universities enrolling foreign students: 2,454 Foreign students as a percentage of total U.S. enrollment: 2.6%

Number of foreign students enrolled in intensive English language programs: 32,224

(This includes programs at accredited colleges & universities as well as separate schools such as ALA and ELS.)

Leading Countries of Origin

Iran
Taiwan
Nigeria
Canada
Japan14,020
Venezuela
India
Saudi Arabia10,220
Malaysia 9,420
Hong Kong

#### States with Largest # of Foreign Students

California 51,520
New York 28,222
Texas
Florida
Massachusetts15,446
Illinois
Michigan
Ohio10,806
Pennsylvania10,806
District of Columbia 9,668

#### Foreign Students from OPEC Mations

Mations
Algeria
Ecuador
Gabon
Indonesia 4,070
Iran35,860
Iraq
Kuwait 3,330
Libya 2,900
Nigeria 19,560
Qatar
Saudi Arabia 10,220
United Arab Emirates 880
Venezuela
OPEC TOTAL

% of world total: . . . . . . . 29.2%

Rita Ranucci Pine Manor College

#### Institutions with Largest Number of Foreign Students

Miami-Dade Community Col 4,662
U. of Southern California
Columbia University 3,103
U. of Wisconsin/Madison2,519
Boston University
U. of Texas/Austin
Texas Southern University2,190
U. Of Michigan/Ann Arbor
U. of California/Los Angeles 2,163
Northeastern University2,110

#### Distribution of Foreign Students by Field of Study

Engineering
Business & Management 59,420
Social Sciences
Physical & Life Sciences 24,870
Mathematics & Computer Sciences 22,620
Fine and Applied Arts 15,190
Humanities
Education
Health Sciences
Agriculture
-

# Foreign Students by Continent of Origin

Arrica	41,000 12.5%
Europe	28,990 8.9%
Latin America	55,360 17.0%
Middle East	74,390 22.8%
North America	15,460 4.8%
Oceania	4,000 1.2%
South and East Asia	106,16032.4%

#### Distribution of Foreign Students by Sex

# Distribution of Foreign Students by

Marital Status		
Married . , . ,	67,480	20.7%
Single		

# **Professional** Development

## Teacher Training in Italy

If you are thinking about teaching abroad, one interesting avenue to consider is a Fulbright grant to do teacher training in Italy. Every year since 1978, several Americans have worked as assistant teacher trainers in Italy's Progetto speciale lingue straniere (Special Project for Foreign Languages.)

The purpose of the project is to give public school foreign language teachers exposure to linguistic theory, teaching methods, and curriculum development, which they have not received at Italian universities.

Each year a group of Italian secondary school English teachers is selected to be teacher trainers, and is sent to the U.S. for an intensive summer course in TEFL. (This summer the course is being given at Harvard.)

Then the teachers return to their home districts, where they organize and teach courses for local public school English teachers. Each course lasts 100 hours, and, typically, meets once a week for three hours.

The role of the American Fulbright grantees is to assist the Italian trainers. I worked in the program's second year, 1979-80. I was assigned to work with three courses. While the nature and extent of my involvement depended on the degree of self-confidence and expertise of the trainers, my basic responsibilities were to help plan and teach the

Apparently the nature of the grantees' role has changed since then. Tom Angelo, who has recently returned to Boston after working on the project in its fifth year, reports that now "Fulbrighters" work as consultants to several teams rather than as members of a few teams.

One aspect of the experience that seems not to have changed is the lack of direction and supervision of the Fulbrighters. We were answerable to USICĂ (U.S. International Communications Agency), but had little contact with them. There were eight grantees working on the project when I was there, and not one of us had closely similar ex-

(Continued on page 5)



# Fitting In,

by Margaret Pogemiller Coffey Prentice-Hall, 1983

Teachers asking themselves, "What communication needs do my students have?" and answering that their students need real language for real situations will find Fitting In by Margaret Pogemiller Coffey (Prentice-Hall, 1983) a useful addition to their quiver of pedagogical arrows.

Fitting In is a functional/notional text for learners of English, produced particularly with high-beginning/low-intermediate students in mind. Functions/notions included are: introductions, greetings, invitations, apologies, condolences, gratitude, compliments, requests, warnings, offers, seeking permission, advice...

Clearly and efficiently organized, each chapter moves smoothly from the presentation of the function to modelling, to the practicing of the function, to the using of the function in a fairly unstructured way, to a reviewing of the function.

In the "Practice" and "Using" sections there are several different exercises in which students can practice what they have learned, utilizing a multitude of clever, practical dyad role-play situations. Next, in "Thinking on Your Feet" the student finds an appropriate response to several situations. With the "One Liners" the paired students create conversation about a given conversational line, again using the expressions they have been practicing. As each lesson progresses, language production exercises become increasingly unstructured, but continue to call into play the expressions of the appropriate function.

When I used the material in class, I found students willing and eager to plunge in, and at the end of the lesson, they appreciated 1) that they could do something which they could not do at the beginning, and 2) that the something was communicatively useful.

Fitting In appeals primarily because of the opportunity it gives for maximizing student talk and minimizing teacher talk. It appeals to teachers who like materials which provide for both controlled and uncontrolled language practice. It appeals to students who become well-motivated to learn the language when classroom material is preparing them directly for the varied social contexts in which they know they need to perform outside the classroom. (Note: One special use of the book will be in tutor programs such as the ones at Northeastern University's ELC and Boston University's CELOP.)

Author Margaret Pogemiller Coffey is a graduate of the MAT program at Boston University and is a former tutor and teacher at CELOP. Congratulations to her on producing a useful book, one which reflects her skills as a communicator and as a teacher whose vocation it is to help her students "fit in."

Reviewed by Edgar Sather, Associate Director, ELC, Northeastern University.

## Logo Design Contest

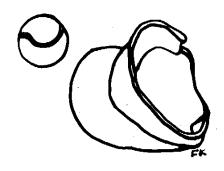
Would you like a free ticket to attend the MATSOL Spring Conference? You could win one.

We need logos for both new columns: Professional Development and Career Ideas. There will be a prize in each category.

Send your designs to Mary Christie before October 1st.

#### **Cross-Cultural Projects**

Selma Myers who will be on an ESL teacher training Fulbright in Lima, Peru from June through October 1983 would like to correspond with anyone interested in Peru or developing crosscultural projects there. You can reach her c/o Commission for Educational Exchange Between the United States and Peru, Maximo Abril 599, Lima, Peru.



Enjoy the summer!

#### **NAFSA Publication**

The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs has a new publication which is of particular interest to MAT-SOL members.

The book, Cross-Cultural Learning in K-12 Schools: Foreign Students as Resources, was developed by the NAFSA K-12 Project under the direction of Linda Reed. It specifically addresses the needs of teachers in K-12 schools. However, there is a great deal of material which is just as useful to teachers at the university level.

In addition to the book, there is a 12-minute audiovisual presentation which shows a number of the activities being performed in schools throughout the country. The A-V presentation is available in slide/tape or filmstrip/tape format.

The book has five main sections plus an index.

The first section, "Long-term, School-wide Activities," discusses international student exchange programs, global education and other matters adding an international dimension to the school curriculum.

The second section, "Short-term, School-wide Activities" deals with student/classroom sharing, field trips, folklore/customs, and current events.

The third, "Classroom Activities," has a number of specific suggestions on how to better use foreign students as educational resources.

The fourth section, "Resource Materials and Organizations," is perhaps the most useful. It is a detailed, current list of organizations which provide materials on ethnic studies, cultural studies by geographical area, and cultural studies by subject: food, roles of men and women, religion.

The final section of the book deals with the evaluation of the activities undertaken by the teacher.

Both the book (\$5) and the audiovisual presentation (\$20) can be ordered by mail from:

Publication Order Desk NAFSA 1860 19th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009

Glenn Dulmage is Director of the English Language Program at the Northfield Mount Hermon School in Northfield, MA. He is also the Secretary-Treasurer of NAFSA's New England Region.

# Teacher Training

(Continued from page 3)

periences — we each defined our roles

in different ways.

While we all wanted more guidance, some of us enjoyed our autonomy. Since I lived in Milan, I was able to work closely with the British Council, who taught me a great deal about language teaching and helped make my year one of great professional growth. (At that time the British Council was quite active in the project, assisting trainers with curriculum and materials development: their role in it is being diminished, unfortunately.)

If you are trying to decide whether to apply for this grant or for any foreign position, it is important to consider the quality of life and the cost of living abroad. Although the latter continues to climb rapidly in Italy, somehow one still finds pleasure in Italian life — although Fulbrighters can't afford all of it they might wish. When I lived there, I received approximately 700,000 lire per month, and managed to get by on that. Four years later, the stipend has risen to only a little more than 800,000 lire. Tom Angelo reports that this amount was barely sufficient to live on. (At this writing, the exchange rate is about 1500 lire to a dollar.) The monthly stipend does not include job-related travel costs, all of which are reimbursed - including round-trip fare to Italy.

Fortunately, the cost of food - in markets, not restaurants — is reasonable. Housing is hard to find, but is still inexpensive by U.S. standards: I paid 100,000 lire for a one-bedroom apartment in Milan in 1979; Tom paid 250,000 in 1982.

If you are interested in information about how to apply for a Fulbright grant, write to the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, 11 Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Those who have received grants have a Master's degree in language teaching and speak a Romance language. Other helpful qualifications include an ability to work without a lot of direction and a tolerance for bureaucratic inefficiency. A love of great architecture, art, food, and wine won't hurt either!

Richard L. Smith teaches at Harvard and in the Wellesley public school system.

# Language Instruction

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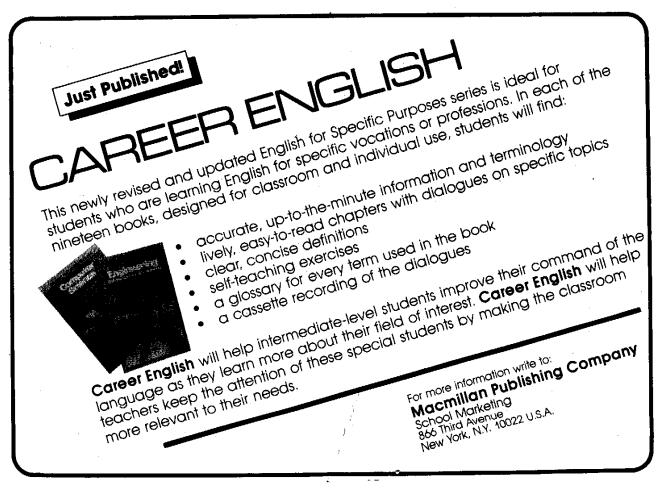
meet individual needs. On the other hand, we found benefits to such standardization of curriculum in that it provides consistency for students and teachers, as well as a sound basis for measuring progress.

Cuban educators are eager to exchange ideas with their colleagues in other parts of the world and have done so with other Latin American countries, as well as Europe.

Unfortunately, Cuba's closest neighbor, the US, with its many innovations in the field of education, has had an economic blockade against Cuba since 1962. It has also limited cultural and scientific exchanges.

It is important for us as educators and as people involved in the international community to make it known that we want to keep the doors of communication open. We have much to learn from the Cuban model of adult education, as they do from ours.

Kim Gerould and Lisa Pred both teach at Newbury Junior College.





# True, True, False

This game works well both as an icebreaker for introductions and as a conversation activity during the semester.

One student writes three statements about him/herself on the board. Two are true; one is false. The other students then ask questions. Their objective is to figure out which statement is false.

The student must try to defend all three as if they were true and so should have some knowledge of the false item.

Five to ten minutes is sufficient for the questioning. Then the class votes.

The teacher should begin with a clear example from his/her life — the more dramatic the better:

I was a stewardess for Pan Am. I worked for US Senator.

I went on a safari in Kenya.

In addition to freely using language to communicate, your students will be having fun learning about each other.

Jane Larson Torras graduated from Tufts University. She teaches at the North American Institute in Barcelona, Spain.

# Bringing Idioms to Life

I have found Essential Idioms in English by Robert J. Dixson (Regents, 1971) to be a useful teaching aid. The book explains the meaning of some 550 frequently used idioms, gives examples, and supplies the learner with plenty of exercises.

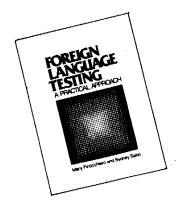
Since the idioms are treated individually and are not connected by content, working with them could become rather a boring chore. The following exercise has helped greatly in maintaining student interest. After every five or six lessons (sixty or seventy-five idiomatic expressions), I have my students make up little sketches or stories in groups of two or three.

I make up the headings beforehand to be sure the assigned chapters contain enough relevant idioms.

We have used such general subjects as AT HOME, ON A TRIP, AT SCHOOL and more specific ones like A FIRE ON MAIN STREET, JACK RAN AWAY FROM HOME, GOING OUT WITH A DATE.

The girls often come up with funny stories. They get involved in writing them, and they enjoy listening to the stories and sketches written by others. The idioms come alive and are remembered better. A quiz after an exercise like this shows better results than one not preceded by the exercise. Both the teacher and students get a great sense of achievement.

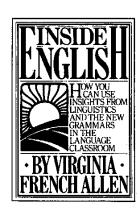
Diethild Harrington has been teaching a group of intermediate to advanced ESL students at Dana Hall, an independent college preparatory school for girls in Wellesley.



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#### Career Ideas

Low pay...A tough job market... Burnout...The need for new challenges...These problems lead many ESL teachers to talk of "getting out of ESL" or "finding a real job." But is it necessary to leave the field entirely?

This new MATSOL column will feature articles by people who are directly applying their ESL training and teaching experience in non-classroom jobs.

#### From ESL Teaching to ESL Editing

How did I get into ESL editing? I've told the story many times casually, and I think it has some value to people in ESL who want to move from teaching into a related field.

I have taught ESL to adults for 2 years before deciding to get formal training. Along with the teaching, I had developed a great curiosity about linguistics and had taken a number of fascinating, if not precisely useful, courses. Does a study of Sanskrit make one a better ESL teacher? Maybe not, but I have a feeling that my diverse scholastic background was attractive to publishers.

My introduction to editing was pure

chance. I saw a sign on a BU bulletin board (during my Master's program) that told of internships at Houghton Mifflin. I confess I had very mixed feelings about paying tuition to BU to be "allowed" to work 2 full days a week for a semester.

But curiosity (an acute problem with me, you see) led me to the publishers. At this point I knew nothing about editing of any description. The course was excellent; exercises and practice exercises preceded hands-on work with material in one's own specialty. I worked on ALFA, the Houghton Mifflin ESL series. During the course I was advised by my Houghton Mifflin boss, "This will never lead to a job, you know; there are no editing jobs out there."

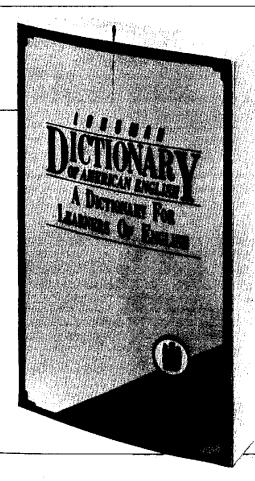
As part of my degree I had written songs for teaching ESL to adults and had sent them to Newbury House and Addison-Wesley. Both publishers then interviewed me, presumably about my song book. Neither took the book, but both talked to me about editing jobs.

I believe it was the combination of strengths that interested them. I had written teaching materials; they had proof in their hands of that. I had finished formal ESL training (MA in TESOL) and had ESL teaching experience. And, (this is a very big and) I had formal training in editing. My feeling is that without this there would have been no job offers. Pubishers cannot train you in "looking at blues, writing art specs, proofing galleys." They haven't the time or manpower.

If you get yourself trained, then you have a real specialty to offer a publisher. Have you taught K-6? 7-12? College? Adult-Ed? Whatever it is, it will be a strong selling point to a publisher who puts out ESL books for that market. Very few ESL editors presently have formal ESL training and teaching experience.

How can you go about getting editraining? I think the Houghton course is now only available undergraduates. There is a well-known course available through Radcliffe, and Northeastern offers a number of publishing courses and may have one in editing procedures. Good luck! I love my work!

Claire Smith is a free-lance editor. She is presently working on an Addison-Wesley project.



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Longman

19 West 44th Street New York, N.Y. 10036

# The

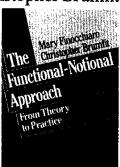
# Functional-Notional Approach

From Theory to Practice Mary Finocchiaro

have.

**Christopher Brumfit** 

This book, an invaluable text for all language teachers, discusses both the theoretical basis of functional-notionalism and its practical classroom application.



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- · characteristics of the approach
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- step-by-step techniques
- · communicative activities
- the role of grammar
- · suggestions for discussion

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