VOL. 11, NO. 3

SPRING, 1983

In Contact with Abraham and Mackey

Daphne Mackey and Paul Abraham are two of our more visible MATSOL members having presented at several local and national conferences, as well as co-authoring Contact USA. an intermediate reader published by Prentice-Hall in 1982. Coincidentally, their backgrounds are quite similar. Daphne and Paul both have degrees in French and Spanish and Master's Degrees in TESOL from Boston University. They have both been on the faculty of the Center for English Language and Orientation Programs at Boston University, where Daphne still teaches. Paul has recently accepted the position of Director of the English Language Institute at Bradford College. They were interviewed recently by Linda Darman of Chamberlayne Junior College as part of our continuing series of interviews with local authors.

IN: You two have worked together for some time now. How did this partnership come about and what is the

West Coast Notes

Chuck Richards, a former MATSOL member, is now teaching ESL near Seattle.

How far is Boston from a land of smoking volcanoes, Vietnamese New Year festivals, rain forests, and community garden plots for the Hmong? Well, six hours if your Boeing 767 lands you in Seattle.

But even a native son, returning after eight years of ESL in Roxbury and Cambridge, is awed by the contrasts.

Any ESL teacher from Boston, however, can recognize certain universals. Initial job offers are for part-time work at scattered campuses, with no benefits and no job security.

By the end of the prosperous 1960s, thirteen community colleges had been built in the Seattle-Tacoma area. One suburban campus offers as many as twenty sections of ESL, but there are no plans to create any full-time faculty slots in the foreseeable future.

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history of your work together?

DM: We started working together when we were asked to do the Japanese summer program sponsored by the Council for International Education (CIEE).

PA: We had to do everything — find the teachers, develop some of the curriculum. The focus of the program was learning about the United States.

DM: We worked so well together that at the end of that summer program we wanted to begin a new project together. So we decided to do a presentation on listening and conversation skills. It was called "The Missing Link in Conversation."

PA: What was ironic was that both of us had been working on different aspects of it in our classes. Daphne was working primarily on listening and attending skills and I was doing a lot of work with rejoinders and correct responses. Then we put them together and made a schema so that people could really teach it

(Continued on page 4)

In Memory of Domini McCarthy

It is with deepest regret that we inform the MATSOL membership of the death of Domini McCarthy. She and Gregg Singer came to the Boston area two years ago to teach at Harvard, and remained as important members of the staff there and at Boston University. Domini and Gregg have been a gifted team of colleagues and friends in the Boston ESL community. We are desolated by the death of so bright, warm, and vibrantly lively a friend. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Gregg and to their daughter Claire.

The MATSOL Board

Remember the Job Bank!

Have you considered the MATSOL Job Bank recently? At this time of fiscal austerity and declining enrollments, it is important to consider all possible leads in seeking employment in the ESL field. It is for this reason that old MATSOL members may need to be reminded, and new members may need to be told, that the Job Bank, located in the English Language Center at Northeastern University, serves as a clearinghouse for program directors seeking teachers, as well as for teachers looking for positions.

Directors looking for teachers are asked to phone in details concerning the type of position(s) available, hours, salary, and requirements. MATSOL members who are seeking jobs can then call the Job Bank, in the person of Louise Mayerson, to find out the location of any jobs available and the name of the person to contact. A monthly listing of positions available can be obtained by stopping in at the English Language Center in Room 206 of the YMCA at Northeastern University, or by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope to the Job Bank Coordinator, Steve Famiglietti.

Recent listings have included information concerning positions at the American Language Academy in Southborough, the Cushing Academy Summer School in Ashburnham, and overseas positions in Venezuela and Saudi Arabia, among others.

The Job Bank is also presently involved in updating and revising the Massachusetts ESL Directory. The cooperation of program directors in responding to phone calls and letters requesting verification will help ensure that the directory will continue to be an up-to-date resource for all MATSOL members.

Steve Famiglietti Northeastern University

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION FOR TEACHERS OF SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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MATSOL Newsletter 251/2 Grant St. Cambridge, MA 02138

Articles should be typed. double-spaced, with a margin of 40 spaces.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Donna Lee Kennedy has joined READAK Educational Services of Acton, MA as a program consultant. READAK provides a full service developmental reading and study skills program to private schools.

Margaret Stannick was recently in town for a visit. She's still enjoying her work at the American College in Paris.

MATSOL FLOTSAM

This sign was observed during the recent trucker's strike.

"83"

SHUT DOWN "TAXE'S TO HIGH" "COMPENSATION TO LOW"

And we're trying to teach our students to spell like Americans?

Barbara Swartz Northeastern University

New Program at Lesley

A new program at Lesley College Graduate School, Division of Education and Special Education, offers, for educators and other professionals, certification or a Master's degree in Bilingual/Bicultural Special Needs. This 15-month program includes two intensive summers on the Lesley College campus, and an academic year of independent study and supervised practical experience in the student's home setting.

The Intercultural Limited Residency Program is especially for those interested in serving students and families who are linguistically, culturally, and/or dialectically diverse, and have special needs. Some scholarships and loans are available. For information write or call: Dina Comnenou, Program Director, Bilingual/Bicultural Special Needs, Lesley College Graduate School, 29 Everett Street, Cambridge, Ma. 02238, 617-868-9600, extension 140.

Lesley College Graduate School admits students of any race, creed, color, age, sex, handicap, and national or ethnic origin.

Refugee Totals

Estimated Indochinese Cumulative State Totals from 1975 to August 1982*

	mulative	Cu	mulative
State St	ate Total	State St	ate Total
Alabama	2,725	Nevada	2,437
Alaska	473	New Hampshire	472
Arizona	4,725	New Jersey	5,598
Arkansas	2,827	New Mexico	3,265
California	204,282	New York	19,550
Colorado	9,737	North Carolina	5,029
Connecticut	5,741	North Dakota	771
Delaware	314	Ohio	8,296
District of Columbia	2,724	Oklahoma	7,912
Florida	11,053	Oregon	17,820
Georgia	7,706	Pennsylvania	23,346
Hawaii	6,649	Rhode Island	3,752
Idaho	1,354	South Carolina	2,362
Illinois	23,198	South Dakota	965
Indiana	4,224	Tennessee	3,859
lowa	8,826	Texas	56,299
Kansas	8,585	Utah	7,722
Kentucky	2,537	Vermont	329
Louisiana	13,705	Virginia	18,081
Maine	1,112	Washington	28,590
Maryland	6,538	West Virginia	542
Massachusetts	12,960	Wisconsin	. 10,205
Michigan	9,809	Wyoming	433
Minnesota	. 24,450	Guam	328
Mississippi	1,720	Puerto Rico	25
Missouri	5,953	Virgin Islands	16
Montana	1,078	Other Territories	6
Nebraska	2,300	TOTAL	614,686

^{*}Adjusted for secondary migration through September 30, 1981 Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement

West Coast Notes (Continued from page 1)

The Joy of NAFSA— Another Perspective on TESL

In these times of economic cutbacks and ESL enrollment doldrums, it may be a consolation to ESL teachers to learn more about the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA). There are several professional interest groups in NAFSA: a) ATESL (Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language); b) CAFSS (Council of Advisers to Foreign Students and Scholars); c) ADSEC (Admissions Section); d) COMSEC (Community Section); e) SECUSSA (Section on US Students Abroad; f) TFWI (Task Force on Women International).

As stated in a NAFSA brochure, the organization's principal goal is "the most effective operation of international educational interchange in an effort to assure maximum benefits for individuals, institutions, and society."

Included among the potential benefits are professional training, up-to-date information concerning developments in international education and relevant political trends, announcements about activities related to this manifold field, a channel for expressing opinions on policies that may affect it, and the camaraderie that comes with sharing ideas with colleagues from different disciplines providing services to foreign students.

Indeed, for those of us in TESL who are concerned not only with the linguistic facility of our students, but also with their having as positive an experience as possible while in the US, NAFSA is a valuable resource.

At the MATSOL Spring Conference, I will be participating in a panel on NAFSA. It will be an excellent opportunity for you to find out about NAFSA's publications, audio-visual materials, consulting services and conferences.

For further information, you can contact me at:

American Language Academy
Babson College
Wellesley, MA 02157
(617) 237-0320
Mark Stepner
NAFSA Region XI ATESL Representative

Mass transit to the suburbs is negligible, so the Boston teacher accustomed to the relative dependability of the Green Line faces a commute of 50 miles or more a day on the freeways if trying to cover two different contracts.

Most four year universities are converting to autonomous language schools that pay an average of \$10,000 an academic year for 15 hours of work per week.

Those with a secondary teaching credential can apply for teaching positions with salaries ranging from \$15,000 to \$28,000.

Once I was hired by an outer suburban high school, I could relax and apply myself to the luxury of daily, full-time work. The ambience is casual. The faculty wear jeans and plaid wool shirts; they freely carry coffee cups to class.

A commuting faculty member can't stay late for department meetings, so one makes friends on the run, between classes. My first car pool discussed mostly videotape recorders and sailing techniques. Boats per capita in Puget Sound challenge Boston's North Shore. Politics is joked about at our 25 minute lunches, but the range of views is more restricted than at an urban Boston campus.

I had the joy of being completely free to design my own program for the Newcomer Center at Kent-Meridian High School, given the state guidelines defining ESL as transitional toward vocational training or a high school diploma. All Southeast Asian refugees between 16 and 21 years old can enroll.

Last year we all arrived, 18 students and the teacher, six weeks into the semester. In addition to a classroom, we were given use of the gym. So I taught ESL P.E. and ESL Math, as well as Conversation, Reading and Writing. On the average, one new student entered every two weeks; one student left every three weeks. Planeloads seemed to arrive at Sea-Tac Airport monthly.

Federal policy this year seems quite different. Four new faces arrived the first day in September, and none has come since then.

The mobility rate has always been high. Less than half the students I had last year still live in the town of Kent. Many give one day's notice before they leave for meat-packing jobs in Iowa, job hunting in California or just to live with a distant relative in Utah or Chicago.

The school provides an amazing number of support services to help piece together a program. Federal money provides for a translator who speaks five languages. Title I aides come in to offer small-group or individual attention. But student abilities are so varied that we always need more small groups.

For many students, adjusting to a suburban school district is initially very difficult. Some young women arrived from the forests of Cambodia; they had never attended school before. One young man writes poems on the blackboard and talks of suicide. One girl talks of working with her sisters and parents in the countryside for six years, sometimes for six hours a day. Then her words break off, and she stops speaking.

Another boy wears ski sweaters and comes into my classroom before school to discuss dating "chicks". A different fellow sports a leather jacket and signs his name "Joe Cool".

(Continued on page 6)

Teach in Thailand or Korea this summer

Applications are now being accepted for the ITM-AMERICAN GATEWAY PROGRAM summer English teams in either Thailand or Korea. The Thailand Team teaches a workshop in English for Special Purposes in Bangkok for Thai businessmen, hoteliers, and university students. The Korean Team teaches a workshop in English for university students. Applicants for either team should have or be pursuing a graduate degree in ESL/EFL, English, or Linguistics.

Thailand Team participants leave the U.S. on June 10th and return on August 2, 1983. Korean Team participants leave the U.S. on June 27th and return to the U.S. on August 21, 1983. Teachers pay for their own air fare, but all other expenses within either country are paid for with the exception of a ten-day field trip at the end of the teaching schedule. Team members may be accompanied by family, relatives, or friends.

Send for further information and an application blank to:

Dr. Daniel Edward Behmer, Director ITM-AMERICAN GATEWAY PROGRAM P.O. Box 02340 Detroit, Micigan 48202 (313) 872-1460



Contact USA

by Daphne Mackey and Paul Abraham (Prentice-Hall, 1982)

When asked about the original motivation for writing *Contact USA*, Daphne Mackey and Paul Abraham's immediate and unanimous reply was "to create relevant reading material on a high-beginning/low-intermediate level." One would be hard-pressed to say that they hadn't achieved their goal. At last, a relatively low-level reader brimming with sensible, useful, stimulating material! As Abraham puts it, "Everyone who teaches knows what students are interested in. It's obvious. They ask you the same questions semester after semester."

Contact USA attempts to answer many of these questions. The readings deal with such popular and informative topics as contemporary American society, food in America, immigrants, retirement, racial issues, the energy crisis, and the role of women in the United States. There is no difficulty in holding the interest of the students — nor in getting them involved in lively discussions. The speaking activities provided in the text are themselves stimulating and varied (discussion questions, sentence completion, roleplays, ordering of priorities, etc.).

"Relevant" is also a term which can be applied to the vocabulary in Contact. The vocabulary items are useful and abundant; the book is replete with vocabulary exercises. Two essential techniques are employed: repetition and variation of context. Let it be known that "the cardinal rule of the book is NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED"! Being acutely aware of the tediousness of reading with a textbook in one hand and a dictionary in the other, the authors have gone to great lengths to surround the difficult vocabulary with contextual clues and definitions. It has been reassuring to hear from students that they, in fact, are able to read the material with success, unencumbered by dictionaries.

Each of the fourteen chapters consists of a 1-2 page reading with accompanying "main idea" and scanning activities, follow-up comprehension and vocabulary exercises, a shorter timed reading with a timed comprehension exercise, work on word forms, and speaking and writing activities which pull together all the material as well as encourage the use of the vocabulary emphasized in the chapter. Where the main reading introduces and gives the details of the general topic, the timed reading focuses on an individual case or conflict within the issue at hand. Each chapter is equipped with an answer key to the exercises, for use at home, thus freeing up class time for discussion on the topic and further contextualized vocabulary work. Five review vocabulary tests, each testing the vocabulary in three chapters, appear at the back of the book.

The chapters in *Contact* are carefully graded, gradually guiding students from familiar territory to more challenging content, sentence structure, and vocabulary. The material is challenging without being overwhelming — so often the pitfall of ESL readers on a given level.

The illustrations on the opening page of each chapter are at once amusing and informative. Each one contains a wealth of small clues in the continuing process of unveiling the American culture to the readers.

Anyone who has attempted to teach word forms knows the difficulty associated with it. The exercises move from the passive recognition of first two then three word forms to eventual active production.

With the help of the exercises in which the students are asked to identify the "main idea" in each paragraph, as well as the speaking activities which draw the students' attention to the main issues and involve them in sharing their own opinions, one can draw the students away from the all too prevalent and disruptive reading habit of focusing on the word or sentence level.

Contact thus concentrates its efforts on achieving what are no doubt the three major goals in the reading class: creating an interest in reading; enabling students to comprehend what they read, elicit main ideas and discuss them; and the teaching of vocabulary.

Linda Darman Chamberlayne Junior College (Continued from page 1)

IN: What was your original motivation for writing Contact USA?

DM: Using it in the class.

PA: We were both teaching at the same level and there wasn't any reading material at that level that we were happy with. Then we started thinking about writing a book — writing a little bit, trying things out, thinking about what we wanted to do, thinking about what themes interested students, thinking of goals.

DM: There wasn't really anything else at that level, so since we had to do materials development for our classes anyway, we thought we might as well do it in a form that could eventually be published.

IN: What is your philosophy on reading in the ESL class? In other words, what determined what your book would be? What were your main goals?

PA: Our biggest concern was to try to find issues that meant something to the students. We were really interested in something that would grab the students and also move into the conversational skill — something that would prove viable for discussions.

DM: Relevance was a primary determinant of what we used.

PA: I think it just comes from teaching. Everybody who teaches knows what students are interested in. It's obvious. They ask you the same questions semester after semester.

DM: Something else is that teachers often isolate reading quite a bit. They just think of it as time spent reading. But reading, especially at that level, is so much more. It really is vocabulary development. With our book for example, some people just do the reading and don't do any of the speaking activities. When we first wrote the book we had a listening component, too, with interviews. The idea was that the students would learn the vocabulary in the context of the theme or topic and then use it in speaking, in making decisions, in problem-solving activities, roleplays, etc. We even did a lot of pronunication work as part of our class work with the book.

IN: So you prefer to see reading less isolated. You would like to see all the skills integrated more, in the materials and in the class.

DM: Right.

IN: What suggestions would you have for teachers using your book?

PA: Primarily, after the first or second lesson, to have the students do most of

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

the lesson at home. And go over the vocabulary elements in class. Use the class time for amplification of the issues and speaking activities — really test the students more in their speaking ability using the vocabulary in the conversational aspects of the book rather than constantly going over exercises. The timed reading should also be done in class with someone overseeing and making sure they do it in 3 or 4 minutes.

DM: We put the answer keys in the book because we felt that both the teacher's time and the students' time were better spent not doing correcting.

IN: What kind of feedback have you had on the book?

PM: I think the nicest feedback we've had is from our students. Of course, we're glad that the teachers enjoy it, but if the students enjoy it...that's our real purpose in doing it — to make reading an interesting part of their curriculum and get them excited about reading.

IN: I assume you tested the material in your classes as you developed it. What kind of changes did you find it necessary to make as a result? Were you surprised by any of the responses?

PA: At times we'd try a particular topic and feel that it just wasn't quite right. So we'd test many different ap-

proaches until we felt comfortable. Also trying to keep it on a level that was simple enough for them, trying to control the vocabulary as much as possible — that was difficult.

DM: I think our major changes came after Prentice-Hall sent it out to the reviewers. They field-tested it. I think that process is a wonderful process, because you can't possibly see your own materials as they really are. We got great feedback from people using it, really good suggestions.

IN: What are you working on now? DM: A low level listening and speaking book.

PA: Lower than Contact.

DM: With lots of illustrations to demonstrate meaning.

IN: What is the organization of it?

PA: It's functional. Just simple interac-

ions.

IN: You seem to work well together. You have similar goals and approaches to your work. What is your method of working together?

DM: We're real task people. We have to have a certain task and a goal and a deadline. So we regularly set up deadlines. We assign different units and then have meetings where we go over everything.

PA: We usually each work on a

chapter and then we exchange.

DM: I think it's really helpful to have another person to work with. It forces

you to be self-disciplined.

PA: That's the advice I give to people when they ask me. They say, "I'm trying to do a book. How shall I approach it?" I tell them to work with someone. It's so much more pleasant. It's so much easier. To work in a vacuum and sit by yourself — that's not my way of working, anyway.

DM: The feedback and new ideas you get from exchanging ideas is wonderful. It keeps you on top of things.

IN: Do you have any idea what your next project might be?

PA: Maybe something with ESP. We'd like to do another book, that is, after the listening/speaking book.

DM: We might write another reader. We've thought a lot about writing a lower level reader — something that's meaningful and useful.

IN: What kind of ESL material would you like to see developed more? What do you think there is a need for?

DM/PA: LOW-LEVEL READERS!

DM: One of the greatest needs is for low-level readers. Of course, the question is, Can you do reading comprehension for low-level students? That's really a challenge.



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Understanding Asian Students

The International Student Office of Pine Manor College sponsored two workshops for faculty and staff on Understanding Asian Students.

The first workshop was on cultural awareness, expectations of education, perceptions of failure, tradition and "face." It was presented by Dr. Daniel Lam, a Cambodian who is director of the Mental Health Center in Boston's Chinatown.

The second workshop was presented by Dr. Jennie Yee a clinical psychologist on Dr. Lam's staff. She spoke on health needs, both physical and mental, of Asian students.

One point both speakers brought out was that, if an Asian student fails at anything, it brings great dishonor and loss of face to the student and his/her whole family. This can extend to such a small matter as answering a question wrong in class. Therefore, it follows that Asians very seldom volunteer to say anything in class because they are so afraid of being wrong.

To add to this, it is not customary in most Asian countries to volunteer; students wait until the teacher calls on them. There is the further difficulty of communicating in English when in class.

When all these are put together, it is quite clear why our Asian students are so quiet in class.

A second point made was that it is not socially acceptable to have any psychological difficulties in most Asian societies. It would be shameful to see a counselor or psychologist or to admit to a mental health problem. An Asian would not discuss these things with any authority figure, like a teacher, for fear of losing face. The usual resource would be a family member. If a person is far away from home, she may rely a lot on friends.

Also, a psychological problem might show up as psychosomatic ailment due to the stress of not feeling free to get other help.

There is a danger in urging our students to become ultra-Americanized while they are here. They come here to learn our ways, but when they return home they may find it difficult to readapt to their own cultures. They may always feel like misfits. This can happen particularly in- cultures where the woman is supposed to be quiet and dependent. An independent, US educated woman may find it very difficult to fit back into the mold.

Rita Ramucci Pine Manor College West Coast Notes (Continued from page 3)

The administration and staff have consistently given me good strokes for the program. Some teachers, candidly, hope the students never make it into their classes. But most spend considerable time giving extra help. Entering our fourth semester, most of the 55 ESL Indochinese students are "mainstreamed" at least five hours a day.

As my ESL sections are collapsed, I'm beginning to pick up courses in history and government. Next year is likely to be the last for separate ESL classes in this suburban high school. Then I may go elsewhere.

It's mid-February now, and some of the blooms on the cherry trees outside the window are opening up in the warm rain. Mt. Rainier is coming out for the third time today as the rain lets up. And on my desk is my application to come back for another summer of teaching in Boston.

Chuck Richards Kent-Meridian High School

Oliva

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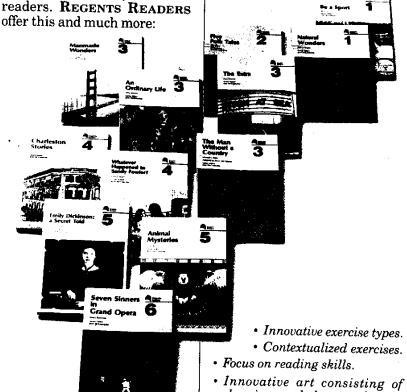
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