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A Message from Our President

As I reflect on my year as MATSOL's President, I think of the many ways I have tried to be a facilitator and advocate for you, the Massachusetts Educators of English Language Learners. I want to thank the members of MATSOL's volunteer Board of Directors for their tireless efforts. Thanks, also, to all of you, who do so much to keep MATSOL flourishing. This has been a challenging year for us in Massachusetts, but the ground is finally clear of snow, and the end of the academic year is in sight. As summer approaches, I hope you will make plans to look after yourself personally and professionally so as to be ready to continue your work next year as a facilitator and advocate for your students.



I hope you were able to come to MATSOL's 2015 Conference on May 6-8 at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Framingham. The conference was very well attended, with almost 600 attendees on Thursday and Friday, and 150 at our pre-conference institutes on Wednesday. Attendees were able to choose from over 90 different presentations on topics ranging from SLIFE to academic language, from music and dance to Prezi, from teaching abroad to the state of K-12 education in Massachusetts. Representatives from 27 companies displayed their textbooks and other educational materials. Our Thursday keynote speaker was Raúl Gonzalez III, an artist and illustrator who told the story of his development as an artist, highlighting the need for children to see themselves and their communities reflected in art and literature, and to be encouraged to become "heroes in their own stories." Our Friday keynote speaker was Dr. Ofelia García, of the City University of New York, who talked about classroom applications of her theory of "translanguaging" — "the leveraging of bilingual students' fluid use of their full linguistics repertoire to make meaning and develop linguistic practices desired in formal school settings." Dr. García described ways in which teachers can encourage students to use their home language productively while engaged in academic tasks, even when the end product is English. We were very proud of our conference and thank all the presenters who shared their expertise, as well as the volunteers and staff members who helped make it a success.

In March I had the honor, along with MATSOL's Executive Director, Helen Solórzano, of representing MATSOL at the TESOL affiliate meetings at TESOL's 2015

Inter-national Convention in Toronto, Canada. We spent the day before the conference in the Affiliate Leaders' Workshop, a meeting of affiliate leaders from around the world that focused on common challenges and problems, and strategies for handling them. We talked a lot about outreach and how to keep our members engaged, and identified the need for professional development, networking opportunities, and advocacy on behalf of our members and their students and families. I also represented MATSOL at the Affiliate Assembly, a requirement for all TESOL affiliates. On Thursday evening we hosted the annual MATSOL@TESOL social, with a turnout of between 40 and 50 members and friends.

**Thanks to all
of you, who
do so much to
keep MATSOL
flourishing.**

There is important advocacy taking place in Massachusetts related to PK-12 ELL educational policies. Please pay attention to two bills that are making their way through various committees on Beacon Hill — “An Act to Establish a State Seal of Biliteracy H.422” and “An Act Relative to Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) H.498.” See page 18 for an update on this legislation.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Currents. In addition to a description of MATSOL's advocacy efforts, a report on the activities of MATSOL's SIGs, and an update on Adult Education in Massachusetts, this issue also contains a remembrance of our first president, Robert Saitz, and articles on the following topics: professional development for EFL teachers; SLIFE students in Brockton; a drama program at the Immigrant Learning Center in Malden; a student teacher's observations in a third-grade classroom in Worcester; and an intercultural activity at Wentworth Institute of Technology. There are reviews of *Enrique's Journey*, by Sonia Nazario; *In It Together*, by Debbie Zacarian and Michael Silverstone; and *The Definitive Book of Body Language*, by Allan and Barbara Pease.

I wish you all a peaceful and rejuvenating summer and hope to see you again in the Fall at our annual Fall MATSOL Social.

Respectfully yours,

Kathy Lobo
MATSOL President



Participants stroll past the display tables of some of the 27 vendors who displayed their wares



Conference attendees pick up their nametags and conference bulletins



MATSOL President Kathy Lobo with our Thursday's keynote speaker, artist Raúl Gonzalez III.

Photos from MATSOL's 2015 Annual Conference



Friday's keynote speaker, Dr. Ofelia García, who spoke about the concept of "translanguaging."



MATSOL's Executive Director, Helen Solárzano, with Jane E. Lopez, an educational civil rights attorney from the Sanghavi Law Firm.



Back row, left to right: David Valade and Joni Magee, both from the MA DESE Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAAA). Front row, left to right: Jennifer Amaya, Department of Early Education and Care; Alexis Glick, MA DESE Students Assessment Services; Barbara Cohen, Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.



Tom Boals, Executive Director of the WIDA Consortium, addresses a concern from an audience member.

MATSOL's Annual Awards

THE FOLLOWING AWARDS WERE ANNOUNCED AT THE 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

MATSOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Theresa Castagnetti

Medford Public Schools

The MATSOL Teacher of the Year Award was established to recognize excellence in the education of English language learners. The teacher selected for the award has demonstrated successful teaching of English language learners, as shown through evidence of best instructional practices and incorporation of students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds within the classroom; long-term commitment to the education of ELLs, with leadership roles at the school, district, and/or state level on behalf of English language learners; mentoring and supporting of new teachers to the field through both informal and formal induction programs; and strong relationships with the community and (for K-12) parents of ELLs.



ANNE DOW AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE AND CREATIVITY

Sara Hamerla

Framingham Public Schools

The Anne Dow Award for Excellence and Creativity is given annually to a professional who has made outstanding efforts that reflect enthusiasm and creative, energetic, independent thinking. This professional displays the ability to take risks, solve problems, support colleagues, and model ethical behavior. Specific criteria vary from year to year, to reflect the many facets of Anne's career and interest. The 2015 award is for fostering a professional, supportive collegial environment for educators of English language learners in today's changing environment.



LINDA SCHULMAN INNOVATION AWARDS

The Linda Shulman Innovation Award grant program supports projects that promote English language learning and embody the spirit of creativity, sensitivity, and community.

RECIPIENT	TITLE OF PROJECT
Alicia Pattison Serafin, Everett	Word Consciousness
Karen Malley, Holyoke	Models of Persistence: English Language Learners Interview Successful Role Models
Dianne Norton, Oak Bluffs	Bridging L1 to L2 Mathematics with Peer Mentors' Video Lesson Giving Newcomers Access to Classroom Content
Gerardo DeLauri, Revere	English Language Learners and the Election Process
Grace Harris, Springfield	Viewing American History through the Eyes of Students with Interrupted Formal Education
Brenda McGinnes & Kathleen Sundstrom, Worcester	Kindle Fires Spark the Flames of Literacy
Daniel Gay, Worcester	Remembrance: Human Rights and Holocaust Awareness for Secondary SLIFE Students

MATSOL Board of Directors Election

THREE NEW MEMBERS WERE ELECTED TO MATSOL'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT MATSOL'S ANNUAL MEETING ON MAY 7, 2015

- Jennifer Lancaster, ELL Program Director, Milford Public Schools
- Melissa Latham Keh, Assistant Professor, Bridgewater State University
- Allison Rainville, ELL Consultant, Applewild School and Self-Employed Editor/Consultant

MATSOL would like to thank our four outgoing Directors – Katherine Earley, Esta Montano, Stephanie Scerra, and Genevra Valvo – for their service on the Board.

Remembering Robert Saitz

MATSOL honors the memory of Robert Leonard Saitz,

the first president of MATSOL and one of the founding members of TESOL, who died on March 12, 2015 at the age of 86.

Saitz was an Emeritus Professor of English at Boston University, having joined the faculty there in 1962. An expert in applied linguistics and TESOL, he published numerous books in our field, including *Ideas in English*, *A Handbook of Gestures*, a series of *Turning Points* workbooks, bilingual texts for teaching English, books and interactive software for children at the pre-literacy and elementary level, and teacher's manuals. He created the BU program that led to an MA in TESOL.



In addition to his work with MATSOL and TESOL, Professor Saitz was active in the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), directed an NDEA Institute in



Professor Saitz and MATSOL president Kathy Earley cut the cake at MATSOL's 40th anniversary party in 2012

English for Speakers of Other Languages, led a Japanese teacher exchange program, and created English language programs for Boston University employees and teacher training programs for local para-professionals. He also founded and directed the Boston Area Seminar for International Students (BASIS), an intensive English program that developed into BU's present day Center for English Language and Orientation Programs (CELOP).

Professor Saitz described the founding of TESOL and MATSOL in an article he wrote for MATSOL Currents vol. 35 (Spring/Summer 2012) (<http://www.matsol.org/history>). As explained in the article, TESOL grew out of a discussion at the April 1963 annual conference of NAFSA, which was followed by a pilot meeting in Washington, D.C. at which NAFSA was joined by representatives from the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE),

the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Speech Association of America (SAA), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). That meeting set up a conference to take place in Tucson, Arizona in May, 1964. About 100 attendees were expected for the conference, but over 700 showed up! Additional conferences followed in San Diego (1965) and New York City (1966). It was at the New York conference that the TESOL organization was formally created, with about 1,000 members. The first official TESOL conference was held in Miami in 1967.

'...despite the differences in our students' ages, education, interests, and motivations, all of our students live in two languages, in two worlds. And it must be our goal to ensure that this experience is an enriching one — to both the students and to all who come in contact with them.'

The rationale for the organization centered on three needs, Saitz explained: (1) the need for a professional organization that would be permanently devoted to the problems of teaching English to speakers of other languages, at all levels, (2) the need for a pedagogical journal to serve the profession, and (3) the need for a register of TESOL specialists that might be helpful to foundations, government agencies, and universities.

The creation of affiliate organizations was encouraged from the beginning, and by 1970 affiliates had been established in New Mexico, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Texas, California, Illinois, Florida, New York, and Washington, D.C. MATSOL officially joined TESOL on Jan. 1, 1973.



Professor Saitz dances with his wife Herlinda at MATSOL's 40th anniversary party

MATSOL's members came from all segments of the educational community — the universities, who were serving increasing numbers of international students; adult education programs, who were dealing with an influx of immigrants (Saitz mentions the Abraham Lincoln School, an adult school in the South End, which, by the early 1960s, had graduated some 200,000 students from its half-day English immersion program); and the public schools, who were responsible for educating the children of these immigrants (Saitz mentions programs in Boston, New Bedford, Fall

River, Lowell, Lawrence, Worcester, and Springfield).

Professor Saitz ends his article with an explanation of why MATSOL is the only TESOL affiliate without an “E” in its acronym. That was due to Sister Frances Georgia, he says, an influential early member who lobbied for bilingual education programs to teach content in the first language while the children were learning English. Sister Frances argued successfully that the organization should retain that idea in its title; that’s how we became the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages (now the Massachusetts Educators of English Language Learners) rather than the Massachusetts Association of *Teachers of English* to Speakers of Other Languages.



Professor Saitz chats with MATSOL Board member Kathy Lobo at MATSOL’s 40th anniversary party

In his first President’s Message (*Currents* vol. 1, Fall 1972), Professor Saitz defined MATSOL as an organization that is “dedicated to the interests, concerns, and problems of people who are struggling to develop new educational models appropriate to life in multicultural communities. We welcome and hope to bring together a wide range of people who have common concerns: teachers who teach content in elementary and secondary bilingual classes; teachers who teach first or second languages in bilingual or ESOL school programs; teachers in community and institutional adult education programs; teachers in colleges who work with both permanent and temporary populations; and administrators, paraprofessionals, and volunteers at all levels. . . [D]espite the differences in our students’ ages, education, interests, and motivations, all of our students live in two languages, in two worlds. And it must be our goal to ensure that this experience is an enriching one — to both the students and to all who come in contact with them.”

We are inspired by Professor Saitz’s life and words; we ask our readers to join us in remembering and honoring this extraordinary man. ©

Submit to MATSOL Publications

MATSOL E-BULLETIN

The MATSOL E-Bulletin is published monthly. It includes short (one-paragraph) notices relevant to ELL/ESOL education in Massachusetts. Submission deadline: the 25th of each month for publication in the first week of the next month. For more details, see www.matsol.org/matsol-e-bulletins.

There's a lot going on in the world of TESOL and ELL education, and we'd like all of it to be reflected in Currents.

MATSOL CURRENTS

There's a lot going on in the world of TESOL and ELL education, and we'd like all of it to be reflected in Currents! We want reviews of books and materials, reports on meetings and events, and articles on everything of interest to MATSOL members: adult education, K-12 education, community outreach, ESL in higher education, educator-preparation programs, professional-development initiatives, Intensive English Institutes, teaching ideas, profiles of and interviews with significant figures, and discussion of issues that our members should be aware of. We'd also love to have stories from students — about their adjustment to life in New England and their experiences learning English in our English-language programs or elsewhere. We welcome articles with scholarly content as well as those that share interesting experiences or give practical advice. If you have something to share, don't hesitate to send it to us at currents@matsol.org. We will work with you to get your article or report into good shape for publication. For more details and a copy of the submission guidelines, see www.matsol.org/matsol-currents or write to the editor, at mary.clark@unh.edu.

What's Happening in MATSOL's Special Interest Groups (SIGs)?

MATSOL's Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are member-led groups formed around common areas of interest. They offer information, support, and a forum for members to come together to work on special projects or advocacy. SIGs are open to current MATSOL members.

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ESL NETWORKING GROUP

The newly formed Community College ESL Networking Group has been meeting regularly and has created a Steering Committee consisting of four community college faculty, each representing one of the four regions of Massachusetts, plus Juanita Brunelle, a member of MATSOL's Executive Committee, who is the MATSOL Liaison to the committee.

THE GOALS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE AS FOLLOWS

- To be a unified voice to respond to issues and concerns about the direction of our community college ESL programs and services;
- To be recognized as the professional body to be consulted with regard to any proposed changes in ESL programs and services;
- To provide support to community college faculty and staff;
- To collect information via an annual survey regarding ESL programs and services in all fifteen community colleges in Massachusetts

Following is a list of the Community College Steering Committee members with their college affiliations, the region they represent, and the colleges for which they serve as contact:

Steering Committee Member	Affiliation	Region	Serves as Contact for:
Darlene Furdock	Middlesex	Northeast	Middlesex Northern Essex North Shore
Eileen Kelley	Holyoke	West	Holyoke Greenfield Berkshire Springfield Tech
Bruce Riley	Cape Cod	Southeast	Cape Cod Bristol
Madhu Sharma	Mt. Wachusett	Central	Mt. Wachusett Quinsigamond Mass Bay
Juanita Brunelle		MATSOL Liaison	Massasoit Roxbury Bunker Hill

This year's survey of community college ESL programs and services has now been completed and was presented at the Community College Workshop at the annual MATSOL Conference.

For further information about the Community College ESL Networking Group, contact Juanita Brunelle, 154alden@gmail.com.

THE MASSACHUSETTS ENGLISH LEARNER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (MELLC)

MELLC was formed in 2007, in response to a need expressed by our state's ELL coordinators and directors for a support system to help with programming for our culturally and linguistically diverse population of students. Membership has now grown to over 100 professionals in the field. MELLC works to promote excellence in the education of ELLs by promoting best practices in the classroom, supporting ELLs and their families, validating our students' cultures and languages, and advocating for an equitable and meaningful education for all students.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF OUR FOCUS TOPICS AND PRESENTERS FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

- **October 17, 2014:** Analyzing data related to the academic and language performance of ELLs (presentations by Ann Feldman, Waltham Public Schools; Bill Guthlein, WJG Associates; and Sarah Jordan, Central District School Assistant Center). Shannon Erwin, State Policy Director for the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), discussed the issue of unaccompanied minors and immigration resources.
- **December 12, 2014:** Understanding WIDA, implementing Model Performance Indicators (MPIs), and advocating for fairness in District Determined Measures (DDMs) administered to English learners (presentations by Lowell Public School teachers and administrators; Ann Feldman, Waltham Public Schools; and Bonnie Baer-Simahk, Fitchburg Public Schools). Dan Wiener from the DESE's assessment office spoke about ACCESS 2.0, PARRC accommodations for ELLs, and the new WIDA Screener. Fernanda Kray, also from DESE, spoke about the new Model ESL Curriculum Project.
- **March 6, 2015:** Using parent questionnaires, ELL behavior guides, and home language supports to focus on English learners with disabilities (presentations by Lauren Harrison and Heidi Baildon, Watertown Public Schools; and Mindy Paolo, Brookline Public Schools). Joni Magee and David Valade, from DESE, gave a presentation about English learners with disabilities and students with interrupted formal education (SLIFE).
- **May 29, 2015:** We plan to focus on WIDA's early learning assessment and standards (just officially adopted by DESE) and engagement strategies for culturally and linguistically diverse families. Some of the presentations are as follows:
 - ELL Family Engagement: The Story of One District's Journey to Supporting ELL Students and Their Families
 - Cultural Competency: Building Family Connections
 - Cultural Institutes: Building a Reciprocal Understanding of Cultures and Languages in Randolph Public Schools

For information about MELLC, contact Ann Feldman, afeldhome@aol.com.

THE LOW INCIDENCE GROUP

THE LOW-INCIDENCE SIG HAS MET THREE TIMES THIS SEMESTER

January 12, 2015: Our guest speakers were Sibel Hughes, ELL Program Quality Assurance Coordinator, and Joni Magee, ELL/Special Education Coordinator, both from the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement (OELAA). Sibel continued the presentation on compliance that she had begun at an earlier meeting, with reference to the *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners* (DESE, 2013) and the *Coordinated Program Review Procedures* (DESE, 2014). Joni Magee gave an overview of the initiatives at OELAAA.

March 9, 2015: The first half of the meeting was devoted to writing student-friendly WIDA writing rubrics, a project that was begun at a previous meeting. The participants worked in small groups, according to grade-spans; this undertaking will be continued in May as well as possibly next year. The second half of the meeting addressed topics posted by the group: reflections on ACCESS testing, MCAS and PARCC accommodations for ELLs, and high school SLIFE students.

April 6, 2015. Our guest speaker was Sibel Hughes, ELL Program Quality Assurance Coordinator, from OELAA. Sibel explained the procedures for identification of ELLs at the preschool level, as described in the *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners* (DESE, 2013). She also highlighted important points in the Civil Rights document (DESE, 2015), and gave a few updates on RETELL for 2015-16.

REFERENCES

DESE (2015) *Coordinated Program Review Procedures School District Information Package: Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements*. Retrieved from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr/instrument/civilrights.pdf>

DESE (2014) *English Language Learners: ELE Program Compliance and CPR Repts: Coordinated Program Review Elements*. Retrieved from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/cpr/?section=elements>

DESE (2013) *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Placement and Reclassification of English Language Learners*. Retrieved from <http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/bitstream/handle/2452/207990/ocn877967293.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

For information about the Low-incidence SIG, contact Rhoda Webb, rwebb@nsboro.k12.ma.us.

THE TEACHER EDUCATION GROUP


The Teacher Educator SIG was formed in February 2015 to provide teacher educators a space within MATSOL to share programs and practice that build the capacity of pre-service teachers to meet the needs of multilingual learners.* Our members, who so far include faculty from UMass Lowell, UMass Boston, Simmons College, Lesley University, and Salem University, recognize that there is substantial work to be done to ensure that all teachers are prepared to teach multilingual learners. While we view the mandated SEI endorsement as an important first step towards this preparation, we know that our pre-service teachers will need a deeper understanding of language acquisition and pedagogy than one course can provide. In order to improve the preparation of all teachers, we are cultivating relationships with groups beyond MATSOL and now have an ex-officio member representing MATSOL on the Massachusetts Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE) board.

We seek the voices of all teacher educators to improve preparation for educators working with multilingual learners. To that end, we held a working session for teacher educators at the MATSOL Conference on May 6, 2015. The session was facilitated by UMass Lowell faculty, Michaela Colombo (SIG Chair) and Patricia Fontaine. The 11 participants worked in two groups to discuss several broad issues: 1) promising practice, 2) concerns, challenges, and advocacy, and 3) ways in which membership in the MATSOL SIG could support their work. Here are some of the highlights of their discussions:

The group identified several promising practices. For example, with a focus on social justice, Brandeis has implemented an ELL club in which students support the English acquisition of Brandeis employees. Brandeis also has established clear connections between its teacher preparation program and its Linguistics Department. UMass Lowell has incorporated a 15-hour service-learning component into its approved SEI endorsement course. Pre-service teachers in this program conduct an afterschool program for middle-school multilingual learners. UMass Dartmouth has implemented a 20-hour practicum with a focus on multilingual learners.

Consistent with MATSOL and the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education (MABE), several working group participants identified Massachusetts' reliance on SEI, a language-restrictive, one-size-fits-all program, as a challenge and a concern. We discussed the importance of gathering research in MA to demonstrate that SEI by itself is insufficient. We also identified challenges in pro-

viding pre-service teachers with an understanding of the strengths and needs of diverse populations of multilingual learners, along with pedagogical expertise to capitalize on the strengths and address the needs of these learners. Several participants highlighted the deeper issues in language teaching that should be part of any teacher preparation program, including relationship building, socio-emotional learning, and the political nature of teaching multilingual learners. While we agreed that it would be useful to infuse pedagogy for multilingual learners throughout all our coursework, this would require ongoing professional development for faculty members, who may view teaching multilingual learners as *just good teaching*. We also identified the importance of placing pre-service teachers in a student teaching (practicum) experience with in-service teachers who have had expertise teaching multilingual learners.

Participants suggested that teacher educators continue to share promising practices and syllabi with one another. We plan to hold meetings in both Eastern and Western Massachusetts in order to involve educators from all across the state. We are in the process of planning a meeting for the third week in August and will post this on the MATSOL website as soon as this is finalized. 

For information about the Teacher Education Group, contact Michaela Colombo, michaela_colombo@uml.edu.

*The term *multilingual learners* is used here in place of *English learners* in order to emphasize the strengths of the students we serve.

Advocacy Update

HELEN SOLÓRZANO, MATSOL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

solorzano@matsol.org



Two pieces of legislation supported by MATSOL and the Language Opportunity Coalition were filed in January in the Massachusetts Legislature:


- An Act to Establish a State Seal of Biliteracy H.422/S.336, filed by Senator Karen Spilka and Representative Kay Khan, recognizes graduates who speak, read and write proficiently in another language in addition to English with a Seal of Bi-literacy on their high school diploma. Passage of this bill promises to encourage language learning and teaching, and will provide evidence to universities and businesses that our students have attained these important 21st century skills.
- An Act relative to Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) (H.498/S.262), filed by Senator Sal DiDomenico and Representative Jeff Sanchez, removes the current Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) mandate and gives school districts the flexibility to choose high-quality, research-based programs that meet the needs of English Language Learners. The LOOK bill also includes the Seal of Biliteracy bill (with the same language as the stand-alone Seal of Biliteracy bill), thereby giving us two opportunities for passage of that bill.

A hearing on the two bills was held by the Joint Committee on Education on April 12. Testimony in favor of the bills was delivered by Helen Solórzano, representing MATSOL, along with at least 15 students, parents, educators, and other advocates, and a number of legislators. Several students spoke eloquently in English and Spanish about the benefits they received from participating in dual language programs. Oth-



er speakers discussed the failure and injustice of restrictive policies regarding the education of a diverse ELL population, and the need to value and build on the language skills of our students. There was no testimony in opposition to the bills.

The Joint Committee on Education has until July 2016 to refer the bills out. (See “How an Idea Becomes a Law”: <https://malegislature.gov/Engage/HowIdeaBecomesLaw>.)

Your active support is needed to make sure these bills are reported out favorably! Please contact your state representative and state senator, and ask them to contact the Committee chairs. For instructions and talking points, see the MATSOL Advocacy page (www.matsol.org/advocacy) and the Language Opportunity Coalition website (www.LanguageOpportunity.org). 

Your active support is needed to make sure these bills are reported out favorably! Please contact your state representative and state senator, and ask them to contact the Committee chairs.

An Update on Adult Education in Massachusetts

LAURIE SHERIDAN

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- The State Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 is moving through the Legislature. The Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE) and its allies requested a budget increase of \$5 million, to reflect increased needs and costs, but Governor Baker proposed funding of only \$30,036,166, a little below the FY'15 level. The House of Representatives budget, released in late April, raised that amount to \$30,431,340, and now, as of May 22, the Senate has voted a further increase, to \$31,224,169, with all 39 voting Senators voting "yes." See the summary chart below:

FY 2016 BUDGET PROCESS FIGURES				
FY 15 Final Budget	MCAE Request	Governor's Budget	House Final	Senate Final
\$30,374,160	\$36,300,000	\$30,036,166	\$30,431,340	\$31,224,160

Because the House and Senate appropriations differ by \$792,820, the figures must be reconciled by a Joint Conference Committee made up of three members from the Senate and three from the House. MCAE has sent out an "action alert" asking its members and allies to contact their legislative representatives and urge their support for the higher Senate figure.


- Late last year, the U.S. Congress finally passed new Federal legislation governing workforce development, including adult basic education. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) replaces the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which had been unchanged since its passage in 1998. WIA Title I governed workforce development, and Title II governed Adult Basic Education in the U.S. The new version merges Titles I and II, effectively placing adult education under workforce development for the first time. Some of WIOA's changes include

- a much stronger emphasis on outcomes, as measured by entry into postsecondary education and/or employment;
- as of now, no indication of increased Federal funding for ABE, despite increasing demands and requirements on programs;
- more state discretion on how WIOA funds may be used, e.g., workforce development vs. adult basic education;
- student educational gains that “count” only if the student passes the high school equivalency test within three years of entry;
- no assurance that ABE programs will be able to continue to serve very low-literacy or low-English-proficient (LEP) students, or those in programs not preparing for college or employment, because continued program funding will apparently depend on quick passage into postsecondary education and/or employment. This is a major concern for MATSOL members, since it is our English language learning constituency that is likely to be most seriously affected.

The implications of WIOA for ABE programs will become clearer once the regulations that govern its implementation have been finalized.

The implications of WIOA for ABE programs will become clearer once the regulations that govern its implementation have been finalized. A draft version of the regulations was released in April, and public comment will be accepted until mid-June.

- Massachusetts ABE students are readying themselves for a new version of high school equivalency testing. The old GED (General Education Development) was replaced last year by the new HiSET system and test. There are many changes in the way the exam is being administered, and in its content (e.g., reading and writing sections focus more on technical writing and logical argument; math is more focused on problem solving and on algebra, geometry, and reading maps; and there is a greater focus on science and scientific thinking). As this is a transitional system, the system may change again and a different, still more rigorous test may be selected in the future. Information about HiSET can be found on the MA Department of Education website at www.doe.mass.edu/ACLS.

- MCAE is partnering with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509 in a joint effort to unionize the ABE field in Massachusetts into a non-traditional union. It is hoped that this effort will result in the ability of professionals in the ABE field to negotiate directly with the state around compensation, benefits, working conditions, and professional development. In order for this to come about, state legislation must be passed authorizing the state to be named as the employer of record for state-funded or partly-state-funded programs. Legislation to this effect was filed with the Massachusetts Legislature by SEIU 509 in January. At present, SEIU organizers are meeting with staff and programs around the state to solicit support for the legislation and commitment to the unionizing effort. 

SLIFE Students at Brockton High School

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In November 2013, I attended a two-day workshop facilitated by Drs. Andrea deCapua, EdD, and Helaine W. Marshall, PhD, in which we explored the needs of students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). Drs. deCapua and Marshall introduced us to their "Mutually Adapted Learning Paradigm®" (MALP), a new pedagogical approach that lets students learn through a 'real-world' paradigm instead of the academic one under which we learned and were trained to teach. I came away from the workshop with the realization that I needed to identify the SLIFE students in my Beginner ESL classes and rethink how I was teaching them.

Previously, in teaching ESL to English language learners (ELLs), I had followed the same paradigm I used to learn foreign languages myself: I provided new vocabulary, helped the students recognize cognates in their own language, and worked toward academic reading in English, all the while assuming that we were "speaking the same language." After all, hadn't my students attended school in their home country? At the SLIFE workshop, however, I became aware of a group of students that I had failed to identify before — those whose formal education had been *interrupted*. In thinking about the approaches I use in my classroom, I realized that my students and I had been speaking different academic languages. While I was a person educated in the U.S., learning academic language from first grade, many of my students had had their minds focused on real-life experiences such as family, market life, fishing, farming or commerce.

I teach at Brockton High School, a large school with a population of 4,200 students, including 536 ELLs. Our largest groups are from Cape Verde and Haiti, though we also have students from many other countries. We have five levels of English classes: Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced and Post-Advanced. As would be expected, our SLIFE students are concentrated at the Literacy and Beginner levels.

When students first enter the Brockton school system, their parents or guardians are required to submit their educational records to the Brockton Public School Office, and those records are used to determine the student's placement in our program. Unfortunately, the records don't always show when the student last went to school. For example, if a 17-year-old student provides documentation that he finished eighth grade, we do not always know if this happened the year before he arrived at our doorstep, or three years prior.

Our Literacy program, which is our lowest level, includes English, Social Science, basic numeracy, and science. The students who are assigned to this level have almost always missed a lot of schooling — at least two years. Their teacher begins by teaching them the sounds of the English letters and then introduces them to the book *Sam and Pat*, a phonics reader specifically designed for older students. By March or April, they are reading paragraphs and are able to answer questions in their own words, though they struggle with questions that are not answerable directly from the text. The teacher uses visuals to teach the English words for foods, clothing, and body parts. The students need a lot of scaffolding and repetition of information from previous lessons, but as they use their new words over and over in different contexts they gradually begin to remember them.

Some of our students understand the importance of academic knowledge and work very hard to become “college ready,” but others struggle with being “so old” and in such a low grade that they toy with the idea of dropping out.

Students remain in the Literacy program for one year before moving into the Beginner class, which I teach. Some students cannot keep pace with the Beginner level and have to repeat that level for a second year. Others learn English quickly and are able to move on the following year, but while they are able to acquire the skills they need for basic reading and writing, they find it hard to keep up with their peers who have had a more consistent academic background. It is an enormous challenge to pull them up to the level of their peers. And I often run into problems that seem to run deeper than language. Teaching critical reasoning — the ultimate goal of academic education — is like pulling teeth. Students who have been well educated in their country already have critical thinking skills that can be translated into their new language, English, but our SLIFE students don't have this experience. Furthermore, we have found that they

need catching up not only in academics, but also in regards to school etiquette and culture. We offer lessons and provide incentives to teach them how to act in a classroom — to raise their hand, listen to the teacher, be prepared with a pen/pencil and notebook, do their homework, stay in their seats, and not shout to other students across the classroom.

In addition, I have begun to ask myself if we have successfully identified all categories of our SLIFE students. For example, we are finding some interruption of formal education among our Cape Verdean students from the island of Fogo, which is known for its volcano (hence the name *Fogo* 'fire'). Many of our students from this region have missed some years of schooling, either because the cost was too high or because their U.S. visa was ready and their parents did not deem it necessary to continue their education in Cape Verde. I recently asked a struggling student how long he went to school in Fogo. With the help of classmates' translations, I eventually learned that he went until 7th grade; however, because of his age, he is with us at the high school in 9th grade. I suspect that there have been other lapses as well, because he is more than two years behind his peers in his academic level.


We are now getting some Quechuan students from the mountainous Cañar region of Ecuador. Although there is mandatory education in Ecuador up to age 12, only those whose families have money are able to continue their education beyond that age. Some of our students are now 15-17 years old, which leads us to wonder what they have been doing during this 5-year gap. Some have gotten married. One of my students, 17 years old, was pregnant when she arrived at our door. She had left a son back in Ecuador with her family when she came here to join her husband. Another of our students got married over the summer and is currently pregnant. Many of our young men miss school so they can work with their relatives on construction jobs.

As I became more aware of the educational background of my students, I began to expand my English lessons, doing less question/answer directly from the text, letting the students create sentences in their own words, and setting up projects where they can demonstrate comprehension without the use of words. In my assessments, I now use more projects, and more quizzes with picture/word boxes. In other words, I am trying to give my students more opportunities to express themselves, while gradually moving them toward the "typical" testing mode with questions that require written answers. For students who miss school because of family obligations or work, I now keep a folder with the work that was missed while the student was absent, and I connect him/her with another

student who has more consistent attendance. This helps keep my students up to pace with the rest of the class.

Some of our students understand the important of academic knowledge and work very hard to become “college ready,” but others struggle with being “so old” and in such a low grade that they toy with the idea of dropping out. In Brockton, we have established a night school called The Edison Academy to meet the needs of our older students who are in 9th or 10th grade. By letting them attend school in the afternoon and evening, we allow them to study with other students who are in the same academic situation while giving them the chance to work during the day.

I do have some success stories. Two years ago two Ecuadorean students entered my class as sophomores. Their silent period lasted throughout the entire school year! They often received Fs on tests, and on homework assignments they either copied directly from Google Translate or cut and pasted from the web. I sought help from a colleague who had spent time in Ecuador, but while his presence helped them with their adjustment to Brockton High, it seemed to do little to help with their comprehension of English. However, when I introduced some projects that used illustrations to demonstrate comprehension, with only a few simple written sentences, I found that they were able to communicate some comprehension. At the end of the year, I recommended that they repeat the Beginner level, but when they came back to school the next year I was astonished to find that they were able to communicate in English both verbally and in writing! Needless to say, I happily recommended that they move into the Intermediate level.

As we learn more about SLIFE students and their needs, and as we begin to collaborate more across the state, we will arrive at more effective ways to help our SLIFE students who have so much to offer as we add the academic piece they need to earn their coveted diplomas. 

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Audrey Mbani teaches English as a Second Language to beginning and intermediate students at Brockton High School in Brockton, MA. She previously taught ESL, Spanish and French in both Boston and Brockton high schools. In the academic year of 2001-2003, she participated in the Fulbright Teacher Exchange, where she taught English to high school students in Dakar, Senegal. She met her husband there and subsequently moved with him to Paris, France, where she taught English in a private high school as well as at the Universities of Sceaux and Dauphine.

Learning English through Theater

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A former pediatrician from Albania works for minimum wage at McDonalds.

An immigrant from China with a severe headache is refused medical assistance because the Chinese translator is only available on Tuesdays. Another immigrant works two jobs, attends school, and sends money home to family left behind thousands of miles away but achingly close to the heart. The immigrant is from Haiti, El Salvador, or elsewhere. He or she is a refugee targeted by a death squad, or an immigrant escaping poverty. These are stories familiar to most ESOL teachers of adult students, and they are the inspiration for the creation of the Immigrant Theater Group.



In my fifth year of teaching ESOL at The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC), I began taking playwriting classes, and it occurred to me that theater could give our students a voice to tell their stories. So in May 2003 I invited students from our ESOL levels 3 and 4 to come together one hour a week outside of class time to share their experiences with the objective of weaving these experiences into a theater performance. About 15 students responded to what they saw as an opportunity to practice conversational skills, but as we began to translate their experiences to theatrical vignettes, they felt emboldened and enriched by the experience and became committed to rehearsing three and four days a week in preparation for our debut performance of "If You Could Hear My Voice" at the Malden Public Library in August. The audience of immigrant students, staff, and community members were moved to laughter and tears as they watched the painful and humorous reality of their own lives enacted in front of them. The success of our first performance generated the courage and enthusiasm to bring our message to wider audiences. Theater speaks to the heart in a way that facts and figures cannot, and where the heart goes, the mind can follow. The empathic connection between audience and actors enables theater to cross cultural and political barriers to promote understanding among diverse groups of people. Since that time, The ILC Immigrant Theater Class has produced three student performances a year for community and school audiences.

The teamwork required to put a play together develops real life communication skills. Exercises for voice projection, pronunciation and clear articulation enhance students' comprehensibility in English. The experience of performing in English in front of a large audience is an exhilarating experience that gives immigrants a much higher level of confidence as English speakers. And sharing their stories with others is a cathartic and empowering process for people who have suffered many losses and overcome difficult obstacles to strive for a better life. As one former student said to me, the Theater Class is a transformational experience.

The creation of a new play may begin with discussion and writing followed by improvisation, or directly from improvisation. We begin with a topic of interest, such as American customs, difficulties communicating in English, or their first jobs in this country. After the topic is introduced through a whole-class discussion, or by using more seasoned students to improvise a situation that illustrates the topic, students form groups of three. The groups are given from 10 to 20 minutes to share personal anecdotes related to the topic, then another five minutes to choose one of these anecdotes to role-play for the other students. During these five minutes, they select which situation to play out and assign roles. They do not script it, for example by deciding what each character will say. If they plan the dialog before they play it, it won't be an improvisation. The improvisational aspect is important. After this, the students are brought back together as an audience and, one-by-one, each group improvises its situation for the other students. This generally results in a lot of lively interaction, laughter and relaxation of inhibitions. Students laugh at themselves and their peers as they verbally navigate through simulated real-life situations within the safety of the Theater Class. The students benefit both as actors and as newcomers, learning how to function as independent agents. These improvisations become the seeds from which scripted scenes and full plays are created.

The ILC's Theater Class serves as a stepping stone between academic ESOL classes and the real world of personal interactions in English.

As we develop a play, most scenes undergo a cycle of rehearsal and revision until we are satisfied with them. For example, we may write a rough script outline based on an improvised scenario that takes place between an immigrant counter worker and a customer at Dunkin' Donuts. As students perform the script, I may add unexpected elements. For example, in the middle of the scene

I might call up a student from the audience and instruct him or her to enter the scene as the manager, a coworker or an impatient customer waiting in line. The original two students have to respond to this new twist without interrupting the flow. This trains the students to respond genuinely to the situation and to the other characters, rather than mechanically.

During improvisations and rehearsals, the students are taught the basics of “stage etiquette,” such as not turning their backs to the audience and not blocking other actors from the view of the audience. I was fortunate to benefit from a volunteer drama coach who taught us many useful exercises that help actors learn how to be “in the situation,” “in character” and “authentic.” To use the Dunkin’ Donuts scenario above, “in character” means you (the actor) are not a student acting out a role; you are a cashier at Dunkin’ Donuts. Actors must create their “characters” and distinguish between themselves (as actors) and their characters (as real people). For example, the student may be single with no children while his or her character may have two children. These are different realities. To be “in the situation” means you are not on a stage, or in a classroom; you are at work, at Dunkin’ Donuts and worried about keeping your job and supporting your children. If you are *in character* and *in the situation*, your actions will be authentic responses to the other characters and to the situation.

In creating the final script, I use as many of the students’ ideas, stories, words, direct quotes and writing as possible, but I add my own touch to keep the dialogs lively, avoid repetition, exposition, and other pitfalls of script writing. When students author a script, I edit it with them the first time only to correct errors. In the second editing, I make adjustments to improve the flow and artistic style and to introduce more colloquial English. This expands the students’ vocabulary and use of American idioms.

The finished play is normally performed in front of the whole school as their final class project. These performances have taken place in our large multi-purpose room at The ILC, at the Malden Public Library, the Malden Senior Community Center, and the Malden Public High School’s auditorium. Productions have also been staged at a variety of community events, including the Ethical Society of Boston, Cotting School (a school for adults with special needs), adult ESOL schools, elementary, middle and high schools, and a number of different community organizations and venues.

The ILC’s Theater Class serves as a stepping stone between academic ESOL

classes and the real world of personal interactions in English. Improvisational activities train students to think on their feet in their new language. As one student reported in the 2005 issue of The ILC Student Newsletter, "Improvisation of real life situations is a very dynamic way to learn. Many times we have felt ashamed to claim our rights; when we needed to speak, we couldn't find the words. With improvisation, we learn what to do in real situations and we improve our confidence to exist as citizens, to reflect and exercise critical thoughts, and to make choices."

In February of 2007, the Theater Class collaborated with the Citizenship Schools program at Salemwood School in Malden. Theater Class students served as mentors to a group of middle school students, helping them to create their own vignettes reflecting the realities of their lives. We asked them, "What is something about your life that you would like your parents or teachers to understand?" Students then used the method described above to develop scenes portraying aspects of their lives (problems, frustrations, needs) that they wanted to communicate to the adults in their world. The work culminated in a performance for


'Today, we have had the opportunity to express the purity of our feelings with no fear of exposing ourselves.'

students, teachers and parents as a part of the Citizenship School's project presentation event. The collaboration was educational for both the American middle school students and the adult English students as they learned more about each other's lives.

After nine years directing both the ILC Theater and the Literacy Program, I turned my full attention to the Literacy Program, and today the Theater Class continues under the very capable directorship of Kathleen McGovern, who came to the ILC with experience in both ESOL instruction and theater program creation.

The value of a Theater Class for immigrant students was best expressed by Maria Ospina, a student in the theater group's premier performance "If You Could Hear My Voice" in August of 2003. With help to express her eloquent thoughts in her new language, she read the following statement to the audience at the conclusion of the performance:

"Today, we have had the opportunity to express the purity of our feelings with no fear of exposing ourselves. From this experience we feel a great happiness, an inner glow of personal joy. It has been a very healing experience to be able to develop such closeness and shar-

ing in a world that pushes people apart. Thank you to the Immigrant Learning Center, our teachers, and our fellow students for your help, patience, and dedication. What you have done will go beyond time and stay in our hearts. With your help, we feel it is possible for other people to understand us. Your help moves us forward toward a better life." 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathleen Klose has taught at the Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) since 1998. In 2003 she founded the ILC Immigrant Theater Group (incorporated in 2004 as the ESOL Theater Class). She worked as both Theater Class teacher and teacher/director of the ILC Literacy Program until 2012, when she retired from the Theater Class to focus on the growing Literacy Program. She is currently Director of the ILC Literacy Program, teaches the Literacy Citizenship Class for students with low literacy, and coordinates the Low-Literacy Sharing Group for teachers of adult, low-literacy English learners in the Greater Boston area.

A Cultural Language Exchange: Empowering Students Cross-Culturally

FAITH LITCHOCK-MORELLATO

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“Professor Morellato, would you like a cup of Arabic coffee?” When I nod “yes,” my student pours *qah-wah/kawa* ‘coffee’ with his left hand from a silver pot with a long spout and instructs me to receive it with my right hand in a small demitasse-like cup without a handle. The hot beverage has the color of honey, and its aroma is an intoxicating mix of cardamom and saffron. I am given a date fruit to balance the slight bitterness of the brew. As I enjoy my treat, the student describes the importance of coffee when hosting a guest in his country. Behind us is the flag of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and a large poster describing its language and culture.



This scene is from the annual Cultural Language Exchange (CLE) at Wentworth Institute of Technology, an event that I created in 2011 to foster a sense of community among our ESL students and to promote cultural awareness on campus. Approximately 50 students from our freshman ESL classes, most of them from the Middle East, China, and South America, participate in this event, which is held yearly during the spring semester.

The assignment is given out about one month before it's due. The students are grouped together by language and charged with creating posters with information about their language (alphabet, pronunciation, and useful phrases) along with a theme of their choice, such as food, traditional dress, or special customs. The size of the groups varies, but 4-6 members is ideal; if there are too few students to make up a group, I sometimes create a heterogeneous one; for example, all the students that speak Romance languages might be grouped together. The students are also asked to prepare some type of “take-away” for attendees as a remembrance of their presentation. Examples include brochures with historical information, or useful phrases, or calligraphy of the participants' names in their language. To assist the students in preparing their presentations, I show them examples of previous students' work, give them a rubric (which is attached as an appendix to this article), and offer a workshop (outside of class)

on presentation skills. Former students are invited to offer tips and speak about their experiences presenting at the CLE. One of the most challenging aspects of the project is obtaining total participation; this can be difficult when engaging in out-of-class group work. When this issue arises, I work with the group to try to make sure that everyone plays an active role.

Two weeks prior to the CLE, the students create a flyer to be posted around campus inviting the community to attend. A class vote is taken on the design, and the selected flyer is put up all over campus. We also send out a mass e-mail to the entire campus community.

Typically, the CLE is held in a lobby of one of the residence halls, attracting passersby as well as those who have made a deliberate decision to attend. On the day of the event, the presenting groups set up tables in a semi-circle with their posters resting on top. They sometimes prepare PowerPoint presentations, as well, though these are not required. And they often bring in samples of traditional food, such as *kabsa* from Saudi Arabia, spring rolls from Vietnam, or pork dumplings from China. Male students from Saudi Arabia may be found wearing


The hot beverage has the color of honey, and its aroma is an intoxicating mix of cardamom and saffron. I am given a date fruit to balance the slight bitterness of the brew.

a white cotton *thawb* 'cloak' with a *shum-agh* of white and red fabric on their heads, while female Saudis wear a black *abaya* 'robe' with matching *hijab* 'veil'. Both male and female Vietnamese students dress in an *áo dài*, which is a garment made of vibrant blue silk, with a large circular pattern and matching hat for males and a coral, black and brown paisley design for females.

Participants are instructed to visit tables and peruse the posters, while the presenters explain their project and field questions. Presenters rotate so that they have the opportunity to learn from their classmates. The room buzzes with excitement as the students eagerly exchange information and ideas. The event lasts about two hours.

Assessment of the students' work focuses on two aspects: the poster and the presentation. As I mentioned earlier, the students are given a rubric, which they must use to evaluate both themselves and their group members. After the event, I meet with each group to provide my own assessment of their presentation.

Anecdotal commentary on end-of-semester evaluations lists the CLE as one of the students' favorite events, allowing them to gain knowledge about their own language and culture and that of their classmates. The project helps students develop critical thinking skills, by requiring them to think deeply about how their first language "works," and cultural awareness, as they learn more about their classmates' cultures. Critical thinking is evidenced during our assessment meetings, with comments such as, "I was able to see connections between my language and English, but usually the differences." In terms of cultural awareness, students over the years have informally expressed their excitement at seeing their classmates speak their home language and teach it to others, and make their culture come alive through photos, music, food, and dress. Finally, the CLE boosts students' self-confidence and cultural pride.

Each year, this event grows in size as former students come back to support their classmates. Faculty and staff from other disciplines have commented that the event "gets better every year"! The community's support and enthusiasm is testament to the students' hard work and the reason why the CLE will continue for years to come. 

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Faith Litchock-Morellato is an Assistant Professor of ESL and Composition at Wentworth Institute of Technology. She is a current member of both MATSOL and TESOL. For the past few years, she has been a presenter at PRITESOL, MAPACA (Mid-Atlantic Popular and American Culture Association), and the Polytechnic Summit, speaking about ESL pedagogy as well as topics in popular culture.

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APPENDIX

ENGL-080 - Prof. Morellato - Group Presentation Rubric					
	Excellent - 25	Good - 20	Needs Work - 15	Unacceptable - 10	Score
Preparedness	Students are completely prepared and have obviously rehearsed. Followed directives of the assignment, which requires everyone to speak for approximately 5 minutes. Very enthusiastic!	Students seem rather prepared but might have needed a couple of more rehearsals; sequence of information is well organized for the most part. Presenters didn't speak for the required amount of time (slightly under or over). Somewhat enthusiastic!	The students are somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking; content is loosely connected—fell very short on time (either over or under). Need more enthusiasm!	Students do not seem at all prepared to present. No apparent logical order of presentation and unclear focus. Presents didn't come close to the amount of time required to present. Lack of enthusiasm!	
Language	Students employ sentences that are grammatically correct with precise language (lacks slang and fillers).	Students employ many sentences that are grammatically correct (few errors) and most language is precise (very little slang and fillers).	Students employ a few sentences that are grammatically correct and some precise language (many sentences contain slang, fillers and vocabulary is limited).	Students' grammar and vocabulary contains numerous errors, which detract from the understanding of the presentation. Almost all sentences contain, slang and fillers. In addition, vocabulary is too simplistic.	
Content	Students' presentation of different aspects of their language is exceptional with a great take away (handout), which teaches attendees not only something about their language but culture too.	Students present content well but with some gaps. Handout lacks comprehensiveness with little detail on both language and culture.	Students present information in a somewhat clear manner, but had severe gaps. Handout either omits language or culture component.	Students present information incoherently. No handout provided.	
Creativity	Poster displays exceptional originality and is incredibly detailed.	Poster displays some apparent originality but lacks some detail.	Poster displays little to no originality and has very little detail.	Poster lacks authenticity and detail.	

Professional Development for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

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English is now a global language which, in the developing world, is perceived as a vehicle for upward mobility and educational opportunity. It is the language of business, technology, science and entertainment; approximately one quarter of the population of the world now speaks English at some level of proficiency (Nero, 2012).



The recognition of English as a global language has had a significant impact on educational programs in a number of countries. Governments and ministries of education in China, Malaysia and Vietnam have mandated English instruction throughout their education systems (Nguyen, Fehring & Warren, 2015; Nunan, 2003; Nunan, 2012). English instruction is being introduced at increasingly younger ages in schools (Nunan, 2001).

While English language instruction has been implemented throughout the world, there is considerable diversity with regard to the design of English as a foreign language (EFL) programs. EFL courses are typically structured as a separate subject, but, increasingly, English is also being employed as the medium of instruction in required content courses (Dearden, 2014). For example, the ministries of education in Malaysia and China have introduced English as the language of instruction for math and science in schools and universities (Nunan, 2003).

Rapid change has brought challenges. English programs have often been instituted with insufficient resources, as has been reported in China (Nunan, 2001) and Vietnam (Nguyen et. al., 2015). I learned of this issue first hand when collaborating with English teachers at a school in northern Thailand where there were no books or written materials available to assist with instruction.

Another challenge to EFL program implementation involves the quality of teach-

er preparation. When Oxford University surveyed EFL educators in fifty-five countries, over eighty percent indicated that there was a dearth of qualified English teachers in their countries (Dearden, 2014). In many cases, teachers assigned to teach EFL classes do not have sufficient English-language proficiency themselves (Hu, 2003; Nguyen et. al., 2015; Nunan, 2003).

An important question for the implementation of effective EFL instruction involves the methodologies selected for instructional programs. Rote learning and grammar-translation have been the preferred methodologies in a number of EFL programs, with a focus on passing qualifying examinations (Hayashi & Cherry, 2004; Hu, 2005; Nguyen et. al., 2015; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004). As a result, students may complete their EFL courses without communicative competence in English.

...English is the language of business, technology, science and entertainment; approximately one quarter of the population of the world now speaks English at some level of proficiency.

Dissatisfaction with the quality of EFL programs has resulted in a number of large-scale teacher training initiatives. For example, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia plans to retrain 65,000 English teachers in primary and secondary schools (*The Rakyat Post*, 2014, May 27). Similarly, ambitious retraining programs for English teachers have been proposed in China (Liao, 2004). Initiatives to strengthen EFL programs have coincided with efforts to improve schools overall in a number of countries, including China and India (Zhao, 2009).


In response to efforts to improve the quality of EFL programs, professional organizations for teachers have organized conferences and provided workshops and courses for English teachers throughout the world. In 2015, for example, Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) has scheduled conferences for EFL teachers in Vietnam, Mexico and India. TESOL also offers online courses for English teachers worldwide. The British Council, in addition to organizing training programs for EFL teachers, provides English courses for students in primary and secondary schools in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) in the U.S. have responded to the need for EFL teacher training in a number of ways. Some MA TESOL programs have been designed to address the needs of both ESL and EFL teachers (Sharifan, 2009). In

addition, IHEs have implemented teacher training programs in targeted countries. For example, Clark University provides courses for EFL teachers at its partner university in China. Southern New Hampshire University offers coursework in its MS-TEFL program at various locations in Vietnam. Columbia University is involved in a partnership with the Ministry of Education of Saudi Arabia to provide teacher education to EFL teachers in that country. And Framingham State University offers overseas MA TESOL programs in a number of different countries.

Professional development for EFL teachers has had its challenges. There have been inconsistencies with respect to adoption of current methodologies such as communicative language teaching (CLT). CLT, with its focus on inquiry, student interaction and critical thinking skills, is considered by many EFL educators to be crucial to the improvement of EFL programs (Hayashi & Cheery, 2004; Liao, 2004; Ming & Jaya, 2011). However, this methodology has encountered resistance in a number of countries, as has been reported in rural areas in China (Hu, 2003). And the effectiveness of CLT may be affected by contextual and sociocultural factors, including learning styles and schooling traditions (Hu, 2003; Sakamoto, 2012). For example, in Japan, cultural traditions emphasizing indirect speech and teacher-dominated classrooms have complicated the utilization of CLT (Saito & Ebsworth, 2004).

Other issues include the quality of professional development programs and the extent to which they address the learning needs of teachers. For example, EFL teachers in Vietnam have expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of their professional development (Vietnam.vn, 2014, July 16), and EFL teachers in Taiwan have reported that the methods that were introduced in their professional development program would not be effective in their school settings (Ming & Jaya, 2011).

Despite these challenges, the imperative for high-quality professional development for EFL teachers will continue. The need for well-qualified teachers of English is expected to grow exponentially in coming years. 

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Rob Stergis has worked in the field of English learner education for 30 years. He has been a teacher of English learners and a director of ELL programs in public school districts in Boston, Lawrence and Watertown and is currently an adjunct faculty member in the School of Education at Boston University. His professional interests include the design and implementation of professional development programs for teachers of ELLs.

Observations by a Pre-Service Teacher During Her Teaching Practicum

ELLEN MARIE CINTOLO

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Following my graduation from Holy Cross College this May, I hope to become an elementary school teacher. This year, as partial fulfillment of the requirements for my Education Minor, I have been observing and working with a group of third graders at the Worcester Arts Magnet Elementary School during their reading class. Because I expect to work with student populations that include English Language Learners (ELLs), I have been focusing primarily on the three language learners in the class and on the Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) strategies the classroom teacher uses to help them with their reading. All three of the ELL students are girls, with Vietnamese, Spanish, and Portuguese as their native languages. Two of the girls are classified as “Level 4,” or “expanding English proficiency” in all language domains, according to the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards. The other student is a “Level 5,” or “bridging” learner. All three ELLs began the school year with a program placement plan for SEI instruction to be implemented in the classroom.

The teacher I observe follows the same process for every English Language Arts lesson, using SEI strategies that incorporate the language domains of reading, listening, and speaking. The repetitive structure is beneficial, particularly for the ELLs, because they know what to expect and how to participate.

The first step in the lesson involves guided reading questions. The teacher may pose the question: “What is the author’s purpose in starting the chapter the way he/she did?” or “How does the setting of this chapter influence the plot?” The students write down these questions in a Bluebook, which the teacher provides at the start of each new reading assignment. The questions often incorporate key terms from the chapter, prompting the students to look for specific evidence from the text. To practice their listening skills, the students must pay attention to the teacher as she walks through the question verbally and explains any vocab-

ulary the students may not understand. As they read through the text, she encourages the students to mark down page numbers with information that relates to the questions. The guided questions benefit ELLs, because even if they do not fully comprehend the question, they can re-read the text to locate key terms and see if they can formulate an answer based on the context.

When the teacher has finished reviewing the guided questions, she begins a class read aloud, in which students read out loud with her. By having the stu-

Because the teacher encourages the students to formulate unique responses to the reading questions, and always offers positive feedback before adding her own suggestions, [the ELLs] are not afraid of sharing their answers aloud.

dents read aloud, the teacher ensures active participation from all the students. In addition, this procedure helps the students with their oral language. The ELLs can speak the words without intimidation, knowing that every other student in the class is also reading along. And even if they cannot read every sentence, they gain valuable practice listening to how the words are pronounced and can pick up on the nuances of the language, such as pausing at commas, or indicating questions with the intonation of the voice.

To end the lesson, the teacher uses an activity called a “share aloud.” When all the students have finished answering their questions independently in their Bluebooks, the teacher asks for at least three volunteers to share their responses with the class. During this sharing period, the teacher offers advice on how the students can make their answers stronger. She pushes them to not only answer the question, but also provide specific details that will elaborate and back up their response. These share-alouds are beneficial for the ELLs because they are able to listen to peer answers and get various viewpoints on the same questions. The ELLs also have the opportunity to share their answers if they wish, making them more comfortable with verbally expressing themselves in class.

All three of the ELLs I have observed are active participants during reading. Because the teacher encourages the students to formulate unique responses to the reading questions, and always offers positive feedback before adding her own suggestions, they are not afraid of sharing their answers aloud. I notice that the teacher’s SEI methods have helped the ELLs with following directions. At the beginning of the year, they struggled with the listening component and often

failed to complete everything the teacher had assigned. But after spending almost a full school year with their teacher, they have grown accustomed to her teaching strategies and understand how to meet her expectations.

Through my observations and coursework, I have learned a lot about differentiating instruction and using SEI strategies for my ELLs. When I begin teaching, I will adopt the teacher's read-aloud strategy and her use of guided reading questions; however I will adapt these techniques to ensure language development for ELLs with varying levels of English proficiency. For example, for the read-aloud, I may adopt a strategy of partner reading, in which students read out loud in small groups and take breaks after each sentence, page, or paragraph to summarize what was just read. I may also use differentiated sentence frames (Donnelly & Roe, 2010) to help my ELLs generate focused answers to the guided reading questions. I hope to create lessons that reinforce effective language development by addressing all four language domains, and I hope to inspire my students by fostering a comfortable environment in which they can express themselves. ©

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ellen Cintolo is 22 years old and graduated from Holy Cross College this May with a major in English and a minor in Education. She has been working with students in the Worcester Public School System for the past four years. Recently, she has been focusing on the English Language Learner population in these schools. She would like to pursue further work and research on ELLs in Massachusetts public schools.

Enrique's Journey

by Sonia Nazario. Random House: 2007.

400 pages. ISBN: 978-0812971781.

REVIEWED BY SASKIA FABRICANT

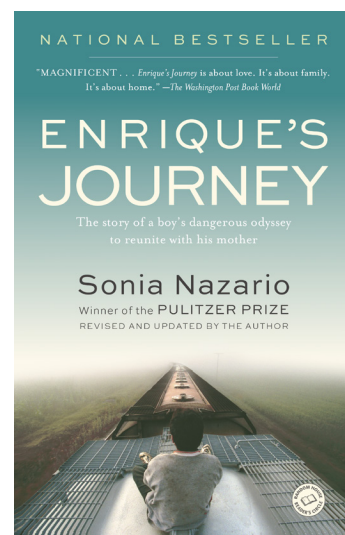
As I was redesigning my ESL 3 curriculum last year, I looked for a high school-level text that would engage students critically and provide them with a perspective on the world.

I had heard of the book *Enrique's Journey* and, upon reading it, realized that this was the book I wanted to teach in my ESL 3 classes. However, the results were even better than I had anticipated; when we finished the book, most of my students proclaimed that this was the most interesting book they had ever read, and many told me it was the first book they had ever finished.

Enrique's Journey traces the life of Enrique, a young Honduran boy whose mother travels to the United States to provide Enrique and his sister a better life. While Enrique's mother promises that she is moving to the United States only temporarily, to make money, she does not return for years, and so Enrique sets out to find her. He travels through Guatemala and Mexico, suffering many setbacks in his journey to the United States. Ultimately, he is reunited with his mother, at which point the book gives us insight into his relationship with his mother whom he has not seen for years.

While this book is long (400 pages), it is engaging, and many of my students read ahead, as they were eager to know what would happen to Enrique. While the book does delve into Enrique's relationships, it is very plot driven, which keeps the book interesting for students. I also found that the students liked this non-fiction text as they became curious about Enrique and his experiences.

Linguistically, the book is challenging but not excessively so. There is a good amount of vocabulary to be taught, but many of the same words repeat throughout the



text so it is easy for students to build vocabulary while reading.

One of this book's strong points is the universality of the themes it covers. While very few of my students have ridden the trains through Mexico or crossed the Río Grande to come here, all of them have left family members behind in their home countries. Most of them have witnessed extreme poverty and violence. Many of them were abandoned by parents who came to the United States to provide their children with a better future. So, many of Enrique's experiences were relevant for my ELLs, and they were able to identify with Enrique.

In addition, I believe this book gave my students a strong understanding of a very important topic: undocumented immigration to the United States. Throughout the unit, there were many ways to connect Enrique's story to the larger narrative of Central American immigration. Nazario explains the context of Enrique's journey in the introduction and introduces other children's stories throughout the text.

...the results were even better than I had anticipated; when we finished the book, most of my students proclaimed that this was the most interesting book they had ever read, and many told me it was the first book they had ever finished.

One great feature about this book is that, in addition to the "adult" version, Nazario has also published a "young adult" version which is better suited to lower reading levels (it is suggested for a middle school level; I imagine it would be appropriate for level 2s and high level 1s). Currently, the adult version has been translated into Spanish; according to the website, the young adult version will be translated into Spanish in July 2015.

To accompany the book, Nazario provides a website (www.enriquesjourney.com) with additional resources (all of which are free!). Here both teachers and students can find great resources to supplement the reading, including updates on Enrique himself and his family as he adjusts to life in the United States. There are multi-media features such as interviews with Enrique while he is in jail in Florida awaiting deportation, and photographs that didn't make it into the book. The website also provides educator resources, including discussion questions and a list of supplemental resources (documentaries, articles, and clips of the theatrical rendition of *Enrique's Journey*). Finally, there is information about Nazario herself, along with interviews she has done and articles she has written.

Teaching this book has been a real pleasure for me this year and I look forward to using it with my classes in the future. **C**

In It Together: How Student, Family and Community Partnerships Advance Engagement and Achievement in Diverse Classrooms

by Debbie Zacarian and Michael Silverstone. Corwin, Thousand Oaks, California, 2015. 167 pages. ISBN 978-1-4833-1677-2.

REVIEWED BY KATHY LOBO

We're in a time of dramatic changes in education, but when it comes to the struggles of Latinos, African Americans, Alaskan Natives and indigenous Americans, English learners, and students living in poverty, little has changed for decades regarding how badly school is going. While new accountability standards and teacher and administrator evaluation systems are challenging for every educator in unprecedented ways, the sheer number of students from these under-represented populations (they are predicted to be the majority population by 2020) should instantly raise our level of alarm (Zacarian, & Silverstone, 1-2).

To meet this challenge, the authors, Debbie Zacarian, an educational consultant, and Michael Silverstone, an elementary K-12 public school educator, advocate for the development of circles of collaboration and partnerships that include students, the families and guardians of the students, the teachers and staff of the schools that serve the students, and members of the broader community in which the students live and go to school.


The book is divided into eight chapters, with the following titles: 1) What It Means to Be "In it Together" in Education, 2) An Involved Classroom Community, 3) Infusing the Assets of Students and Families into Classroom Learning, 4) Preparing for Classroom Community, 5) The Academic Learning Benefits of Being "In it Together", 6) Using Classroom Events to Empower Students and Families, 7) Wid-

ening the Circle Beyond the Classroom: Service Learning, and 8) Using Learning Partnerships in Professional Development: Applying the Ideas.

Each chapter skillfully combines theory and practice. The ideas presented are academic and research based, with citations at the end of each chapter and cross references in the index at the end of the book. Vignettes are used to illustrate the various points that are made. Tips on how to actually put the theory into practice are highlighted in grey text boxes.

This book is practical and can easily be used as a self- or small-group study guide. Interspersed within the text, there are “Reflective Activities” — places to reflect, answer some guiding questions and jot notes. Checklists are provided, along with model letters and frameworks that have been used in real situations to facilitate collaboration and partnerships. The final chapter of the book provides a protocol for how to structure and facilitate a professional book study group, complete with lists and descriptions of facilitators’ tasks.

'...when it comes to the struggles of Latinos, African Americans, Alaskan Natives and indigenous Americans, English learners, and students living in poverty, little has changed for decades regarding how badly school is going.'

I recommend that you read this book and follow the advice it offers on how to form partnerships and collaborative groups and engage further with one another. 

The Definitive Book of Body Language

by Allan and Barbara Pease, Bantam Books, New York, 2006.
368 Pages. ISBN 978-0-553-80472-0.

REVIEWED BY KATHY LOBO

During the winter holidays I found myself at the MIT Coop Bookstore, milling about and browsing books while my houseguests were selecting MIT T-shirts and souvenirs. On a table of books, *The Definitive Book of Body Language* caught my eye, and soon I was hooked. While the percentages can be debated, it is generally believed that body language can account for over 50% of the overall message we convey. Clearly, teachers of language need to pay attention to more than just the spoken word.


As I flipped through the book, I could see right away that the authors do not confine themselves to the body language of the United States or even North America. There is a full chapter about cultural differences, which discusses differences in hand gestures, and how people walk on the sidewalk in a similar fashion to the way they drive (on the left or the right). The authors suggest that, due to American television, people across the world are becoming familiar with the behavioral norms of the United States, but since most Americans do not hold passports to travel, many Americans do not know how their behavior is interpreted in other parts of the world. In a section on nose blowing, called "You Dirty, Disgusting Pig!- Nose Blowing," the authors point to the mutual disgust of people from the East and West at the customs of the other group. Asians often spit or snort to clear their nose and consider our use of a handkerchief to be quite disgusting. (The reason Europeans and other Westerners blow their noses into a handkerchief is attributed to our fear of tuberculosis: Western governments promoted this custom in an

...due to American television, people across the world are becoming familiar with the behavioral norms of the United States, but since most Americans do not hold passports to travel, many Americans do not know how their behavior is interpreted in other parts of the world.

attempt to avoid spreading the disease.) According to the authors, “The Japanese are unimpressed at the English custom of men wearing a handkerchief in their jacket pocket top pocket. This is the equivalent of proudly dangling a roll of toilet paper from the pocket, ready for action.” (p, 117-118)

Some of the chapters in this book are organized by body part: “The Power Is in Your Hands,” “The Magic of Smiles and Laughter,” “Arm Signals,” “Hand and Thumb Gestures,” “Eye Signals,” and “How the Legs Reveal What the Mind Wants to Do.” Other chapters focus on the use of space and power dynamics: “Ownership, Territory and Height Signals,” “Seating Arrangements —Where to Sit and Why,” and “Interviews, Power Plays, and Office Politics.” Want to know more about classroom dynamics and what is happening? You can learn about this in the chapter entitled “Why Teacher’s Pet Sits on the Left”:

Dr. John Kershner of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education studied teachers and recorded where they were looking every thirty seconds for fifteen minutes. He found that teachers almost ignore the pupils on their right. The study showed that teachers looked straight ahead 44 percent of the time, to the left 29 percent of the time and to their right only 17 percent of the time. He also found that pupils who sat on the left performed better in spelling tests than those on the right and those on the left were picked on less than those on the right. (p. 339-340)

This book is fun to read. It is engaging, informative, and at times, humorous. The last chapter in the book, “Putting It All Together,” has a 16-item assessment asking “How Well Can You Read Between The Lines?” If you decide not to read *this* book at least consider learning more about this topic. 

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