



VOLUME 44 NUMBER 2  
FALL 2012

# CATESOL NEWS

## Prop 30 on November Statewide Ballot: What Does It Mean for Schools?

*Note: The purpose of this article is informative. CATESOL wants to provide facts and points of discussion so members can talk about Proposition 30 with their colleagues, family, friends, and neighbors in an informed manner.*

**By Jeff Frost**

*CATESOL Legislative Advocate*

**P**roposition 30, sponsored by California Governor Jerry Brown, will

be on the November statewide ballot. This measure intends to ensure that funding and stability return to our public schools.

To get our state back on track, we must stop cuts to education and public safety. During the past four years alone, California has had to cut more than \$56 billion from education, police and fire protection, health care, and other critical state and local services.

*Continued on page 7*

## An Innovative Legacy: The Tippy Schwabe Grant

**By Ellen Lange**

*CATESOL President-Elect*

**W**hat started out as just the acorn of an idea has, in just six years, grown oaks.

Gwendolyn "Tippy" Schwabe, CATESOL past president (1982-1983), has always recognized the importance of involving TESOL graduate students in the organization. Indeed, when I was her student, she actively engaged

*Continued on page 20*

## Kenton Keinze Sutherland

June 17, 1935-January 1, 2012

**By Kara Rosenberg**

*CATESOL Historian*

**F**ormer CATESOL President Kenton K. Sutherland of Menlo Park died on January 1, 2012. Kent succumbed to complications involved with a strain of *E. coli* contracted while on assignment at the State University of Malang in East Java, Indonesia.

Kenton Sutherland was a founding member of CATESOL. The years 1968 and 1969 saw a passionate band of about 40 ESL professionals from throughout the state meeting and forming a new organization to support the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language in California. Among these advocates were Gloria Jameson, president; Pauline Rowe, vice president; William Upton, liaison; Joyce Ellis, secretary; Alice Michael, treasurer; and Kenton Sutherland.



Sutherland

*Continued on page 19*



**UPWARD BOUND:** Community College Level Coordinator Pat Boquiren (left) and Merari Weber (incoming Part-Time Educators Interest Group coordinator) have entered the doctoral program at USC Rossier School of Education. See Transitions, page 19.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**G**reetings to all! I hope that you've had a great summer. I enjoyed my two short vacations ... to Ohio for my father's 100th birthday and to Las Vegas to see shows by Celine Dion and Taylor Hicks.



Your CATESOL Board of Directors has been busy behind the scenes, planning for fall-semester events. We will all be a little discombobulated in the fall because two of the three regional conferences (Los Angeles and Northern) will move to the spring. The San Diego regional conference will remain in the fall. Be sure to support all local chapter events in the fall! Check the CATESOL website for dates, locations, and registration information. After the annual conference takes place October 24-27, 2013, at the Town and Country Resort in San Diego, we will be back on track with the regional conferences in the spring and the annual conference in the fall.

Remember that your chapter and re-

gional committees welcome your assistance as they plan their events. If you are not sure about whom to contact, email me at [president@catesol.org](mailto:president@catesol.org) and I will point you in the right direction. Whether you have been teaching for 30 years or are still a student, there has never been a better time to volunteer your time to your professional organization. Speaking of volunteering, be sure to "toot your own horn" every time you volunteer, present, or even just attend a CATESOL event by listing your participation on your résumé or CV. As the staff member who does the hiring at our Intensive English Program, I always look for evidence of CATESOL membership/activity when we get an inquiry about teaching here. Surprisingly, it often comes out in an interview that the applicant has indeed attended a CATESOL conference or other event but neglected to list this important professional development on her or his résumé. Your involvement with CATESOL may not get you a job, but it could help get you an interview!

I would like to report that in mid-July and again in mid-August, Adult Level Chair Jayme Adelson-Goldstein, Assistant Level Chair Tonya Cobb, and a group of concerned CATESOL members met online

to discuss what can be done in response to the frighteningly large number of program cuts and closings in adult education and noncredit programs in community colleges. The key concepts that came up in the discussion are: (a) CATESOL needs to join forces with other organizations in advocating for legislation that supports the programs serving our learners and their communities and (b) CATESOL needs to create opportunities to educate Californians about the ways that adult school and noncredit community college programs support their communities. See the Adult Level Update on page 6 in this issue for more information.

Finally, I'd like to give a shout out to the CSULB 2012 TEFL trainees, who received a CATESOL membership with their registration into the program. It is my dream that all students in California and Nevada earning a TESOL/TEFL/TESL or LING certificate/degree join CATESOL. (Please tell them as they will probably not read this!) The investment is minor (the cost of several dinners), but the return may be the start of many professional networking opportunities.

Nina Ito

## CATESOL NEWS

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KAREN BLESKE

## FROM YOUR GM Increasing Access: CATESOL Website Installs "Members Only" Section

**T**he CATESOL website now features a new area for "Members Only." In this area, current members have access to the most recent *CATESOL News* and to *The CATESOL Journal*. Only the current issue of *The CATESOL Journal* is available now, but past issues going back to Volume 10 (1997/1998) are in the process of being added.



Printed and mailed versions of the current issues are available to current members by subscription (subscribe at <http://catesol.org/merchant>). And you can buy printed and mailed issues of back issues of the *Journal* or *Journal* articles online at the CATESOL

*Continued on page 22*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

**I** hope you enjoy this issue of the *CATESOL News*, which is, as always, packed with level, chapter, and interest group news, features, teaching tips, lessons, and excerpts from *Christina no Brasil*. The Inner News continues, and this issue's Lessons section features two more in the series developed by Fiona Memmott with the aim of bridging the gap between immigrant and international students. Everyone else, keep sending in your lesson plans to share!



Artwork should be submitted as jpeg files. The ideal length for articles is about 800 words, and shorter is fine. The deadline for the Winter issue is December 1, 2012, and all your submissions are greatly appreciated.

Karen Bleske



# CONFERENCES

## Regional Conference Brings Energizing Speaker to San Diego

By Courtney Leckey

*"I am a person who doesn't stay the complete time with keynote speakers. If I see he (Michael Jones) is speaking, I make a point of attending."*

—Mary Murphy-Claggett, Sweetwater Adult Education

As the ESL departments of Southwestern College and Sweetwater Adult School prepare for October's San Diego Regional CATESOL Conference, the anticipation for this year's keynote speaker is mounting.

The speaker will be Dr. Michael Jones, the division chief of Training, Testing, and Education for the USCIS Office of Citizenship. Dr. Jones has a diverse background that includes teaching, administering adult education programs, working as state supervisor for English as a Second Language and Institutionalized Adults, and serving as regional supervisor for the Ohio Department of Education before moving on to the federal government, where he served as branch chief of Innovation and Improvement within the Division of Adult Education and Literacy (2000-2004) for the U.S. Department of Education in addition to his current position. Dr. Jones holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Modern Languages, a Master of Arts degree in Human Behavior, postgraduate work in TESOL/Applied Linguistics, and a PhD in International Affairs, specializing in Immigrant Education and Integration.

However, if you ask those who have heard him speak before, his résumé alone might not necessarily clue you in to what a dynamic and inspiring speaker Dr. Jones is. At every meeting of the planning committee, someone familiar with Dr. Jones's speaking prowess is sure to bubble over with excitement about his upcoming address at Southwestern College this fall.

According to Mary Murphy-Claggett, who has seen Dr. Jones speak three times so far, "His passion for education and what he is speaking about is contagious. His information is useful, knowledgeable as well as entertaining. He has a relaxed presence about him which makes you totally comfortable."


Dr. Jones's speech will address the conference theme: *Improvise, Adapt, and Overcome: Quality Education in Times of Change*. Conference participants will also enjoy a wide variety of workshops, special sessions, poster sessions, and publisher exhibitions to inspire and enrich their teaching. If you are interested in presenting, please submit your proposal by Sunday, September 9, at <https://sites.google.com/site/sandiegoregionalcatesol2012/conference-proposal>.

We hope you'll join us at the Southwestern College campus in Chula Vista from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, October 20, to enjoy a memorable plenary speech and many thought-provoking and energizing sessions. Conference preregistration is \$35 for CATESOL members, \$45 for nonmembers, and \$20 for instructors from Mexico and students. On-site registration is \$45 for members, \$55 for nonmembers, and \$30 for instructors from Mexico and students. For more information and to register, visit <https://sites.google.com/site/sandiegoregionalcatesol2012/home>.

*Time to start thinking about...*

# CATESOL 2013

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## LA Regional Moves to Spring

The LA Regional Conference will be held in late spring of 2013, in consideration of the Annual CATESOL Conference's moving to the fall of 2013. The date and place of the conference will be announced as soon as the negotiations are finished. In the meantime, please support your local chapter and other CATESOL events. We look forward to seeing you in the spring!

—Kimberley Sumner

LA Regional Conference Board Liaison

## CATESOL "Share" Makes Its Debut

The first CATESOL Share (formerly Local Talk) was held on July 20 at CSU, Long Beach. The theme of the share was "Our Favorite Things." For the first 45 minutes, participants walked around the room and wrote their answers to questions posed on 30 large sheets ("What is your favorite ... warm-up? way to put students into groups? game to play on the board? ESL website? color to use to correct papers? song to use in class? photocopiable resource book? oral error correction technique? And so on.). For the second half of the share, participants were able to discuss some of their answers in depth. The great thing about having all answers written down is that no one needed to take notes. After the event, all participants received an email with all the great ideas typed onto one document. Check the monthly e-blasts for upcoming "Favorite Things" Shares in your neck of the woods!

—Nina Ito, CATESOL President

## Closing the Communication Gap Between Undergrads, International Faculty

*Editor's Note: Dan Villarreal is the recipient of the 2012 Graduate Student Research Contest Award, presented at CATESOL 2012 in Oakland. His award-winning article will appear in the next issue of The CATESOL Journal, which will be published in early 2013. What follows here is an article about the research behind his winning article.*

**By Dan Villarreal**

*Graduate Student Research Award Winner*

*These people are geniuses, but I don't understand them. It's a lose-lose situation.*

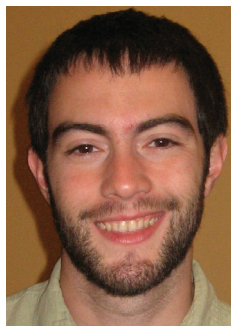
*Most of the lectures, I have no idea what's going on.*

As an undergraduate mathematics major, I was no stranger to hearing comments such as the above regarding the accents of math professors. Of course, TESOL professionals have been grappling with this issue, which Kathi Bailey first labeled the “foreign TA problem,” for the last 30 years. My experience, however, informed me that we still had a way to go toward solving it, so I conducted research in hopes of finding out what was behind the problem and thus how to strengthen our efforts against it.

Ever since the influx of foreign graduate students began in the 1970s and '80s, students have been complaining about their accents. Universities have responded in a variety of ways, usually through some sort of linguistic/cultural TA training and/or a screening test such as TOEFL. The assumption underlying this paradigm is that if we eliminate TAs' accents—a linguistically dubious premise to begin with—we eliminate the “foreign TA problem.”

A 1992 study by Donald Rubin, however, questions that assumption. He found that students who were convinced that an instructor was Asian understood much less of her lecture than students who were convinced that an instructor was Caucasian—even though both groups were listening to the same, non-foreign-accented audio! What Rubin's study suggested to me was that the “foreign TA problem” was in reality a *communication gap between undergraduates and international faculty*,

consisting both of *accent misunderstanding* and *accent bias*. While past efforts to close the gap have focused only on eliminating accent misunderstanding (and thus have put all of the burden for the gap on international TAs), they have neglected the other side of the communication gap: the *accent bias* created by students alone. In my research, therefore, I switched the focus to undergraduates and how they contribute to the gap.



Villarreal

The first part of my research piloted a mini-training program designed to improve students' comprehension of international faculty. This training program addressed both sides of the gap, first addressing accent bias by presenting standard linguistic ideology about accents and arguing for empathy toward international faculty, and then addressing accent misunderstanding by explaining six features of a particular professor's accent. In the end, the training students tested no better than two control groups, but they did indicate a greater acceptance of positive accent ideology, a small but important step against accent bias.

I also held a number of discussion sessions to explore the communication gap and training program from undergraduates' perspective. I found that undergraduates had a variety of experiences with the gap; to some, it was a minor annoyance, to others, a nonissue, and to a few, a crucial factor in changing their academic plans. Students also reported negative cognitive effects stemming from the experience of an international professor, making them inattentive or unable to keep up with the lecture. While some students reported that they grew accustomed to professors' accents after a while, others did not quite make it so far.

These discussion sessions were important in that they helped me uncover the social processes by which the gap was made a social reality among undergraduates. The sorts of comments at the top of this article play a crucial role in this bias socialization, as they help students internalize an asso-

ciation between a professor's accent and poor teaching quality. These low expectations create a mental barrier (per Rubin's study) that inhibits students' ability to understand their professor. This deteriorated understanding naturally impairs academic performance, and the frustration that follows prompts undergraduates to complain to friends about their professor. When undergraduates then discover that their peers have experienced similar difficulties, their bias is not only confirmed but validated as a socially acceptable point of view; accent bias thus spreads until it is a social axiom of undergraduate life.

So what can we do to close the communication gap? My research suggests that we must complement training programs for international faculty with those for undergraduates. While TA-training programs are many, a great need remains for programs large and small to encourage undergraduates to open their ears to their professors; it is here that TESOL professionals can really lend their expertise. Such programs could take the form of a session during new-student orientations, an online resource that undergraduates could access at any time, or even an academic course. (In fact, we're implementing a new introductory-level course to this very end here at UC, Davis; I hope to report on it soon.) Moreover, such programs must break the cycle of bias socialization that contributes so powerfully to the gap if they are to be effective.

But these sorts of programs take time and professional resources to establish, and TESOL professionals may wonder what can be done in the meantime. My recommendation here is simple: Encourage international faculty to express openness about their accents, even soliciting feedback from students. According to my participants, an open, collaborative attitude from faculty significantly cuts the tension surrounding the gap; indeed, greater metacommunication is a useful goal for *all* faculty, international or no.

In the end, there is likely to be no one-size-fits-all solution to the gap, but one thing that all solutions will have in common is attention to both faculty and students' contributions to the communication gap. Only through effort from both parties will we have a hope of closing it.

# ADULT LEVEL

## Addressing the Challenges That Face California's Adult Education

By Jayme Adelson-Goldstein

*Adult Level Chair*

For the past three years, California adult schools have experienced (and continue to experience) a frighteningly large number of program cuts and closings.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, budget slashing also menaces noncredit programs in community colleges across the state.<sup>2</sup> This dire situation threatens the future of all adult learners and our adult ESL learners in particular.

In June, the Adult Level chair and assistant chair invited present and past members of the CATESOL Board to a virtual meeting with the intention of brainstorming ways to address the daunting challenges to adult education. Invitees also made recommendations of other CATESOL members who could contribute to the discussion. The following CATESOL members agreed to meet online in July, and several met again in August.

Vittoria G. Abbate, assistant director, Mt. Diablo Adult Education

Jayme Adelson-Goldstein, Adult Level chair

Jack Bailey, past Adult Level chair, CDE Field Partnership Team

Gretchen Bitterlin, SDCCD coordinator

Pat Boquiren, Community College Level chair

Anthony Burik, Bay Area Chapter coordinator

Tonya Cobb, assistant Adult Level chair

Cynthia Eagleton, instructor, San Mateo Adult School; blogger,

*Adult Education Matters*

Bette Empol, Advocacy chair

Bob Harper, principal, Campbell Adult and Community

Education, CDE Field Partnership Team

Tommie Martinez, Chapter Council chair

Regina Massich, Orange County Chapter chair

Kara Rosenberg, historian, principal, Palo Alto Adult School

Margaret Teske, past president

One of the key concepts that came up several times in preliminary email conversations and later in the online discussions was the need to look at ways to build coalition between CATESOL and other "forces" in California working to save adult ed. This coalition will help us coordinate our advocacy efforts and also ensure that our voice is added to the chorus of educators, community advocates, and learners who are working to convince the governor, legislators, and the electorate of the value of adult education programs in both K-12 and community college settings. Vittoria Abbate suggested that as one path to building this coalition, the CATESOL Board develop memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between our organization and others. The Adult Level leadership will present this idea at the board meeting in September.

It was also clear that we need to create opportunities to educate Californians about the ways that adult school and noncredit community college programs support their communities. Jack Bailey pointed out that members of the public who are not involved in adult education classes do not take our programs seriously. Our membership, at all levels, needs to speak up about the essential role adult education plays in:

- Success of K-12 learners whose parents attend ESL classes;

- The reduction in health-care costs to the community thanks to health-literacy instruction; and
- The creation of a more informed, literate workforce available for community businesses.

Another very important role that CATESOL members can play in working to save adult education is talking to friends, neighbors, and coworkers about Proposition 30, the governor's tax initiative. Please see Jeff Frost's article on page 1 for a set of talking points about this initiative. Without the funds this initiative will generate, there will be even less money for programs in 2013 and beyond.

In the months ahead, watch the Adult Level e-list for announcements about initiative-discussion opportunities and please share your ideas for ways to help the public make the connection between the success of their communities and the success of our learners by writing to [adult\\_level@catesol.org](mailto:adult_level@catesol.org). You may also be interested in looking at the following websites for inspiration:

Adult Education Matters

[adulthoodeducationmatters.blogspot.com](http://adulthoodeducationmatters.blogspot.com)

Allies: The Alliance for Language Learners' Integration, Empowerment and Success

[www.allies4esl.org/home/resources](http://www.allies4esl.org/home/resources)

California Council for Adult Education

[www.ccaestate.org](http://www.ccaestate.org)

California Adult Education Administrators' Association

[www.caeaa.org](http://www.caeaa.org)

Community College Consortium of Immigrant Education

<http://cccie.org>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>See the OTAN Wiki <http://adulthoodbudgetcuts.wikispaces.com> for information on adult school cuts and closures.

<sup>2</sup>For recent information on budget cuts for community colleges see <http://nbclatino.com/2012/07/18/california-community-colleges-face-more-budget-cuts>.

### CATESOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Prop 30

*Continued from page 1*

For K-14 schools, there have been \$20 billion in cuts. This is a critical juncture for our schools. Some facts can help clarify the urgency involved in getting our state back on track:

- California is now dead last in the country in ratio of teachers to students.
- California is 46th in the country in K-12 spending per student.
- California is last in the ratio of counselors, librarians, and nurses to students.

As a result of the cuts of the last four years and of those being proposed in the 2012-2013 budget should the taxes not pass, what will occur is larger class sizes, fewer guidance counselors and librarians, and the further elimination of adult education programs—to name only a few. Such cuts mean that California students will find it harder to receive the necessary support to meet their education needs and prepare them for employment and career opportunities.

The California Schools and Safety Protection Act (Proposition 30) is an initiative that does the following:

1. Temporarily raises the income tax on high earners and asks the wealthiest Californians to pay up to 3 percent more on their income taxes for seven years;
2. Provides that families making below \$500,000 a year will pay no additional income taxes; and
3. Raises the sales tax a quarter of 1 percent for four years—to a level still lower than it was less than a year ago.

All of the revenue increases in Proposition 30 are temporary and will end in seven years. This is designed to interact with the growth of the California economy and is designed to restore education funding and bring California back into fiscal balance moving forward. Additionally, the revenues from Proposition 30 will pay down the state's wall of debt and restore budget cuts that have been made to schools.

Passage of Proposition 30 would prevent \$5-6 billion in cuts to public schools next year, cuts that have been built into the 2012-2013 state budget and that would be "triggered" in January 2013 should the measure not pass. Specifically, K-14 schools would face \$6.1 billion in automatic cuts without the initiative—cuts that will have an immediate impact with additional program cuts, reductions in staff, and as much as a 15-day reduction in the school year. For higher education, the cuts include a \$500 million reduction in funding to the UC and CSU systems.

Public education is the future of our state. Quality education has always been one of the keys to the economic vitality of California. Passage of Proposition 30 will bring balance to the state's budget and enable more funding to be restored to our public schools. This initiative deserves the attention of every CATESOL member.

## SECONDARY LEVEL

### Revised Standards, a Framework, the Common Core: What's in Store for Grade 7-12 Teachers

**By Jeff Mattison**

*Secondary Level Chair*

This summer has seen progress in some California Department of Education (CDE) activities that will affect, and, one hopes, improve, ELD instruction in the state: revision of the ELD standards, revision of the ELD/ELA framework, and more preparations to transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2014.

On July 10, the CDE hosted a WebEx online conference call to present the draft version of the ELD standards. The last time they were revised was in 1998, and since then the field of TESOL has learned more about sociocultural theory in language learning to incorporate new features into the standards. Instead of separating them by the traditional four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), the new standards will be organized by modality: collaborative, interpretive, and productive to reflect that communicative skills never work in isolation. An aim of the revision was to make them more accessible for content teachers to differentiate for the needs of all their students. As one conference call contributor said, "These standards are for every teacher [who] has an EL student in [his or her] classroom." Public comment on the draft standards closed on August 6. Next, the draft will be reviewed by a panel of experts, and then finally proposed to the state Board of Education at its September meeting. The final standards should be published in November 2012.

This summer I participated in one of several focus groups comprising educators and administrators to give public comment on what should be included in the next revision of the ELA/ELD framework. As teachers of Secondary Level English learners, we have a lot of best practices to contribute to such a document that can benefit all English teachers. The next step in the

revision process is getting down to the details. The CDE is accepting applications from individuals who would like to be involved in the actual drafting of the new framework document. It will take the public comment feedback and the notes from the focus group sessions and incorporate them into the revision. If this is something that you would like to be involved in, go to [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp) to download an application.

Finally, the transition toward the Common Core State Standards is marching on. As the CDE facilitator of a WebEx on the ELD standards revision put it, "If you're not scared by the Common Core Standards, you're not paying attention. You can't expect the performance of the students to increase without increasing the teacher's capacity of skills, too." By now most educators are at least aware that the Common Core Standards are coming, but they may not be familiar with what exactly the new standards are and how teachers will have to modify their current instructional practices to target the new standards. The CDE has a website ([www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/ccssplm.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/ccssplm.asp)) where it is posting professional-development modules to help teachers with the transition.

I think we should be pursuing our own professional development in our local schools and certainly as the CATESOL organization, too. The general public and the school community's awareness of the Common Core Standards also needs to be improved. What can we do to help our students' parents and the community stakeholders to understand the CCSS before they may see a momentary dip in test scores as students, teachers, and administrators work to meet the more rigorous and critical-thinking features of these 21st-century standards of education?

Please write me at [jsmattison@gmail.com](mailto:jsmattison@gmail.com) with your ideas about this article and any resources and requests for future articles.

## Course Packet as a Primary Text: Benefits and Challenges

By Anthony Halderman

“Many instructors are starting to use their course packet as a primary text,” said a full-time bookstore representative at Cuesta College. “Wow, this might be something I might be interested in,” I thought. My impetus for inquiring into this topic commenced.

I conducted 22 interviews with faculty and staff who are creating and supporting course packets as a primary text. I gleaned critical issues from my discussions. A course packet as a primary text offers both benefits and challenges.

Several benefits have inspired faculty to create their own course packets to substitute for the traditional textbooks. We can customize material that fits nicely within the period of our term. Many of us have experienced not using a whole text during our term. Terms can range from 6 to 18 weeks.

Many faculty have commented that texts don’t always neatly adhere to course curriculum. Personalized course packets can more closely adhere to course objectives. We can personalize the exercises and activities to better suit our own teaching styles. By doing so, we can develop greater insight into our course curriculum and class objectives.

One of the more obvious reasons that course packets benefit students is the reduced cost. Traditional textbook costs continue to increase and a course packet printed through your college costs far less. Pending the copyright information you use, the number of pages, color or black-and-white, and type of binding and lamination, your course packet could cost \$8-20.

Perhaps the secret sauce lies in the opportunities for semesterly revisions, modifications, and updates. In most cases, if not all cases, faculty will naturally take the opportunity to revise their material every semester, quarter, or term. Providing the “best” material for our students inherently exists in our job description. One highly accomplished colleague posits that customized course packets benefit the college, the faculty, and students.

However, challenges exist also. One of the most obvious and pressing issues rests in copyright. Copyright infringement must attract our utmost attention. Creating a course packet used as a primary text that can sustain a whole term requires much planning and time. Several options exist to help avoid this problem. Cuesta College’s Textbook Affordability Committee helps faculty with some of these issues. Perhaps your college has a similar committee and can guide you through the process.

Another challenge is complying with course curriculum and student learning outcomes. While planning and organizing your course packet, you need to make sure your material complies as much as possible. “Too much” creativity, imagination, and innovation might not meet classroom curriculum requirements. College courses that transfer into a four-year university also require substantial reading material. Providing such course compliance and substantial reading material in your course packet can prove challenging. Oversight of course packets can also pose a challenge. Deans, division chairs, program directors, and colleagues might look a bit unfavorably upon not using traditional textbooks.

Another great challenge lies in preparation time. Course packets as a primary text require much front-load time. Getting it all together before the term begins needs much planning and preparation. However, as time progresses the time necessary to prepare a course packet drastically tapers off. As your course packet becomes more established, the modifications, updates, and revisions will consume less time.

The opportunity for instructors to use course packets as a primary text has never been greater. Course packets can offer themselves as a valid option to traditional textbooks because of increasing textbook costs, developments in desktop publishing, and pioneering of fellow colleagues willing to share and collaborate on material.

*Anthony Halderman teaches ESL at Cuesta College and freshman composition at Cal Poly University.*

## Textbook Activities; Making Them Real

By Priscilla Caraveo  
IEP Level Assistant Chair

When choosing an appropriate textbook for a course, a teacher must consider a variety of factors. One of those factors is the types of production activities the textbook offers to allow students to practice the language. Many times we find various oral, writing, and listening activities that aim to get students to use the target structures in the chapter. The purpose and goal of the exercises are apparent, but my question is: Do these activities really help the students improve their English language proficiency?

Let’s examine a couple of typical noun clause exercises that you might find in an ESL textbook. Both of these oral production activities aim to get the students to use noun clauses in their responses. In the first activity, one student asks the textbook question to a partner, and the partner is supposed to respond using “I wonder” and a noun clause. If done according to the directions, the first activity would sound something like this:

Student A: “Where is Jack?”

Student B: “I wonder where Jack is.”

Student A: “Does he work here?”

Student B: “I wonder if he works here.”

This next activity asks the student to embed a noun clause into a question using “Do you know.” Then the student’s partner is to respond to the question. If done according to the directions, the second activity would sound something like this:

Student A: “Do you know who the 28th president of the United States was?”

Student B: “No, I don’t know who the 28th president of the United States was.”

Student A: “Do you know how many rivers there are in the world?”

Student B: “No, I don’t know how many rivers there are in the world.”

I understand the importance of having students practice putting the subject before

*Continued on page 21*



# Plagiarism and the Creative Mind

By Cassandra Giesen

Plagiarism is often a difficult, confusing concept for ESL learners to grasp. One reason for such confusion is that many cultures view “knowledge” from a very different perspective. In collectivist societies—including countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East—cultural emphasis is placed on the well-being of the entire group. Knowledge is viewed as belonging to all of society. In contrast, individualism is a dominant American cultural value. As such, our value system places great emphasis on an individual’s intellectual knowledge and ownership. Because individual ideas and words are often regarded as intellectual property, failure to give credit to another individual for his thoughts, ideas, or words is taboo in American culture.

***Imagine:  
How Creativity Works***  
Jonah Lehrer  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt,  
Boston, 2012

In August 2012, two highly respected American literary writers were involved in plagiarism scandals. Fareed Zakaria, author, journalist, and described by *Esquire* magazine as “the most influential foreign policy advisor of his generation,” was suspended from his position as a columnist for *Time* magazine for plagiarism. Jonah Lehrer was the next high-profile writer to fall from grace. A 31-year-old former Rhodes scholar and hugely successful science writer, Lehrer publicly admitted to fabricating quotes from Bob Dylan in his recent book, *Imagine: How Creativity Works*. The book’s publisher, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, immediately withdrew the book from publication despite the fact that *Imagine* had soared to the top of the *New York Times* Best Seller list. Lehrer was fired from his prestigious position as a science writer for *The New Yorker* and his speaking engagements were cancelled en masse.

*Imagine* first caught my attention because of its emphasis on some of the most current brain-based scientific research about the mind and creative thought. Lehrer’s critical mistake was using quotes he fabricated from Dylan, the well-known American songwriter, musician, and performer. But there can be no denying that *Imagine* was an engaging and well-researched book that provided valuable insight into the many factors that influence creative thought. Teachers, including those who work with ESL learners, can benefit from the extensive research-study results that Jonah Lehrer gathered to explain how creative thought arises in the human brain.

For years scientists have struggled to understand the ideal circumstances and the perfect environment for fostering creative insight. Are there methods we can develop to increase the likelihood of creating a novel idea, inventing a new product, or even discovering a solution to an existing problem? Surprisingly, recent research demonstrates that imagination is not a single talent nor an intellectual gift. Rather, it is the end result of various mental processes that need to occur before an “insight experience” can arise in the mind. To begin to understand the mental process of achieving insight, one needs to realize that a problem or challenge must first exist. Interestingly, it is the emotion of frustration that

actually fuels the brain to examine a problem from a new and different perspective.

A quiet, relaxed state of mind, according to the research findings in Lehrer’s book, is the ideal environment for creative thought. When our minds are relaxed and at ease, we are more likely to direct our attention inward. The best time of the day for creative insight is during our first waking hour, when the brain is “unwound and disorganized” and the mind is still half asleep. Daydreaming, too, is ideal for the creation of ideas. While daydreaming, the brain is busy assessing remote associations and hidden relationships that allow us to solve problems and create new ideas. The ability to pay attention to our daydreams is yet another crucial component of creative thought. The inventor of Post-it notes was daydreaming when he devised the idea of a bookmark that could stick to a page.

Our moods affect our ability to think creatively. When we are happy and in a relaxed state of mind we are more open to different ideas and solutions, no matter how odd or unconventional. Trying to force the creative process, however, is rarely productive. A narrowly focused mind cannot pay attention to the fleeting, subconscious connections in the brain. Many ESL teachers are already keenly aware that a stress-free learning environment is ideal because it reduces student anxiety and increases learning. Enhanced creative thought, it is now revealed, is an additional benefit of a relaxed and engaging learning environment.

Jonah Lehrer presented compelling evidence that “because our thoughts are shackled by the familiar,” changing our environment is crucial for new insight. Travel is especially important. By immersing oneself in a new and unfamiliar environment, we are forced to think differently, to become an “outsider.” The benefit of being an outsider is that it allows one to break with regular habits and therefore create new mental connections. An uninhibited, open imagination allows for more creative thought and mental freedom. Who knew that nonnative English speakers could be such a potent source of creativity?

Persistence is yet another crucial ingredient for creativity. Very rarely, Lehrer reminds us, is an idea the final result. It takes grit and determination to take an idea and turn it into a finished product. As Lehrer notes, “People need to be reminded that creativity is a verb, a very time consuming verb.” In fact, the ability to stick to a problem until it is conquered is one of the most defining characteristics of creativity. Equally important is the ability to accept failure. It is such a crucial component that without failure we would not be required to keep working to fix a problem.

Communicating with others and sharing knowledge is a powerful tool for producing insight. People with different levels of talent, representing different disciplines, are far more likely to offer a valid solution to a problem than a homogenous group of similarly talented individuals. Why? Because those with different backgrounds view the world through different lenses. Outsiders are far more capable of seeing the potential of unrelated ideas and understanding how to merge those ideas and concepts into something concrete. Social networks involving people of diverse backgrounds and views are a vital source of new concepts and ideas.

*Continued on page 19*

## Providing Feedback to Written Assignments: An Audio Method

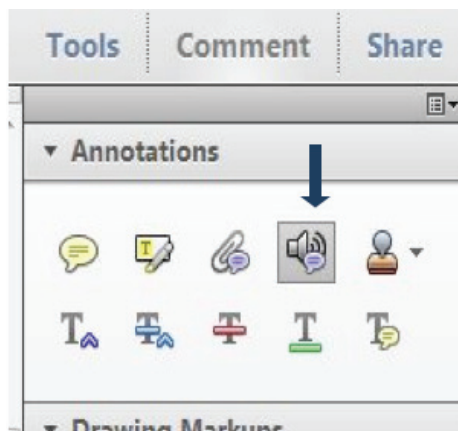
By Kristen Young

Assistant Nevada Representative

When there is a stack of written homework on your desk that needs grading, do you reach for the red pen and start writing corrections, suggestions, or editing symbols by hand? Certainly, that is an effective method for providing feedback to students. Unfortunately, by the time you are done grading, your hand is tired and three hours may have gone by, especially if you write some lengthy comments (like me). What if there were a faster method that could still give the students the same helpful feedback, but speed up the grading process and prevent blisters on your thumb? I have been exploring some options that use technology (so far with a PC only) to make grading essays more efficient, yet just as effective. Here, I will describe one new method that I have found to be very helpful.

“Sound Clips” in *Adobe Acrobat X Pro* can save time by enabling the professor to relay suggestions and comments verbally instead of writing them in the margins of the student’s paper. (The process is somewhat similar to using Wimba Voice in Angel.) This is how it works. First, the students provide me with an electronic copy of their rough drafts of an essay in PDF format through email attachments or in an Assignment Drop Box in Angel. The software the students use to create the PDF document—*Adobe Acrobat Reader*—is free and available in any CSN computer lab. Upon receiving their rough draft, I open the PDF file in *Adobe Acrobat X Pro*. As I review the student’s work, wherever I used to handwrite a question or comment, now I insert that same feedback as a “Sound Clip.”

The process is very simple. I click on the Comment menu and select the “Record Audio” button by clicking on it. Then I move the cursor near the text I would like to comment on and right click. A “Sound Recorder” box opens and I click on the red record button. I speak my feedback to the student into a microphone attached to my PC (I use a webcam without video). I speak just as I would if the student were in my office discussing his/her paper. For ESL students, I repeat some words and say things



Comment Annotations options in *Adobe Acrobat X Pro*—Select “speaker” symbol

twice to make sure they can understand me. My average comment lasts about 45 seconds. I use these Sound Clips to describe a recommended change to a sentence, paragraph, or general organization of the essay although it is possible to record anything you wish to say. I click on the stop button when I am finished with the comment. If I am happy with my comment, I click OK and a speaker symbol like this appears on the student’s paper in the location I had selected. You can repeat this process and save the document as you go. At any time, you can cancel a recording if you make a mistake, delete a recording you had already completed and placed on the paper, and even move the speaker symbol to a new location and the Sound Clip you had recorded moves with it. Once I have finished recording all of the recommendations and corrections, the completed PDF file is not too big. With an average of 6-10 audio comments, the completed documents rarely exceed 2MB.

Finally, I return the newly annotated PDF file to the student. After downloading the file, the student can double-click on each speaker symbol and listen to my recorded messages as many times as he or she likes. The student only needs to have the free *Adobe Acrobat Reader* to listen to the comments.

What do the students think? So far, I have only anecdotal evidence, which has been very positive. The students appreciate 1) having their essay returned back to

them sooner, 2) not having to try to interpret what my handwritten notes say, and 3) the fact that audio comments are often longer and provide better examples and advice when compared to a brief handwritten comment.

There have been some technical glitches. At first, some of the students were opening the attachment in my email message by choosing “Open as a Web Page” or “Open Only” (depends on the student’s email system). In order for the Sound Clips to work properly, the student needs to “Download” or “Save” the PDF file that I return to them. Now I include that fact in my instructions. Also, I was told that MAC users could not open the audio clips at all, but I believe that could have been resolved if the student had downloaded the latest free version of Adobe Reader for Macintosh.

**Note:** Even if the student gave you a hard copy of his or her essay, you can still create a mostly blank PDF document of your own and make use of the Sound Clips. Just make sure to say where the comment applies in the student’s hard copy paper when you record each audio clip. (Or you could scan the student’s paper and save that as a PDF file so you can add the audio comments to the actual paper, but scanning yourself is a lot of extra work.)

If anyone else is interested in trying this method—or is already using it or something similar—and would like to assess its effectiveness for our students, please contact me at [kristen.young@csn.edu](mailto:kristen.young@csn.edu). For further reading on some research that has been conducted on audio feedback, I recommend Curtis, R., Ice, P., Phillips, P., & Wells, J. (2007). Using asynchronous audio feedback to enhance teaching presence and students’ sense of community. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 11(2), 3+

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*Kristen Young is an instructor of English as a Second Language at the College of Southern Nevada.*

## Classmate Interview: Discovering Similarities, Celebrating Differences

By Fiona Memmott

### INTRODUCTION

*Because of recent budget cuts, ESL programs have begun recruiting international students who can afford to pay considerably higher tuition rates than their immigrant classmates, which eases the financial burden that these restricted budgets have placed on many educational programs. However, many administrators and educators have become aware of increasing tension between international and immigrant students as well as intracultural issues. It appears a chasm has developed that is due to multiple contributing factors. For example, international students mostly come from wealthy backgrounds, have led sheltered lives, possess more free time, and are dealing with culture shock and homesickness. On the other hand, immigrants tend to come from more modest backgrounds, have less free time because they often work and have families to attend to, and have adapted to American culture. With the increase of students from Asian and Middle Eastern countries, a teacher needs to serve as a model by studying the culture of the country that students come from so that he or she begins to understand the complex elements of the students' culture that have shaped their view of the world. The teacher then needs to interpret experiences through the students' lens and act in a supportive manner that is emphatic toward culturally different others until they learn to adapt to this culture. I have developed a series of lessons for teachers to implement in their classrooms that are designed to:*

1. Create cultural self-awareness;
2. Understand how it affects their worldview;
3. Develop knowledge of other cultural worldview frameworks;
4. Increase understanding and empathy of culturally or socially different others;
5. Develop skills to negotiate a shared understanding; and
6. Become more open to other multiple cultural perspectives.

*Editor's Note: This is the second in the series of lessons "Building Bridges Between Immigrant, International Students." The third lesson in the series begins on page 13.*

### Lesson 2 of 7

### RATIONALE

This is an opportunity to break the ice the first week of class by having students interview each other—asking questions about their country of origin, family, free time, favorite music, and so on. Through the process of interviewing they will discover common interests despite coming from diverse backgrounds and interesting facts about each other. It also provides practice in listening, speaking, writing, vocabulary development, and using certain grammatical structures for a "real world" activity. This activity can be repeated several times during the first few weeks of class depending upon time and the size of the class. A Venn diagram (or a compare-and-contrast graphic organizer) is used to record similarities and differences and for a postactivity reflection upon the impact it has had on classroom relations and learning.

### PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Students will need to know present and possibly future tense and how to use a Venn diagram. For more advanced classes, student can use conjunctions to combine sentences describing a similarity and difference (i.e., We both like to travel but I like to travel to my home country and Maria likes to travel to new places.). Also, students will need to have some knowledge of how to formulate questions but if it's a low-level class they will be working in groups for this activity so they can collaborate on how to formulate questions that may not be grammatically correct, but it should not interfere with meaning.

### GOAL

Students interview each other using a questionnaire and record similarities and differences on a Venn diagram.

### CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

- Learn information about their classmate's background, lifestyle, and interests.
- Identify similarities and differences in their responses.

### LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

- Ask information questions using a questionnaire.
- Comprehend the meaning of the questions.
- Answer questions orally using complete sentences.
- Ask clarification questions if necessary.
- Write responses to questions on worksheet provided.
- Write similarities and differences between responses provided on Venn diagram.
- Write compound sentences summarizing main similarities and differences using conjunctions.
- Use present tense correctly in writing and orally.

### Key Vocabulary

live, have, like, work (at, for), chatting on the Internet, spending time with friends, play video games/sports, watch TV, cook, clean, study, take care of children, husband, wife, sons, daughters, apartment, house, Venn diagram, similarities, differences, compare, miss, both, Wh-words, and so on

### MATERIALS

- Dictionary
- Venn diagram on butcher paper for teacher demonstration
- Butcher paper for each pair to draw Venn diagram
- Copies of "Classmate Interview" questions worksheet
- Five Wh-question words and their meanings (depending upon the level of the classroom)
- List or semantic map of key vocabulary for responding to questions

### PROCEDURES

#### Warm-Up/Lead-In

- Explain to students that today we are going to spend time getting to know each other. The more we know about each other, the more comfortable we feel, the better we understand each other, and the more we will realize how much we have in common. To begin, the students can ask the teacher questions by forming groups and brainstorming a list of questions. Explain to students questions that are



# SPECIAL SECTION: Lessons

## Classmate Interview

not appropriate to ask in US culture, such as age, salary, and so on.

- Give them four to five minutes to record as many questions as they can think of. Assign roles such as timekeeper, recorder, speaker, and grammarian. Each group is permitted to ask one or two questions from its list. Elicit from students a list of Wh-question words to assist with formulation of questions. Circulate to monitor and answer any questions regarding grammar, vocabulary, and so on.
- When all the groups have finished asking their questions, ask them what similarities and differences they discovered between themselves and the teacher. Invite students to post the rest of their questions online and you will respond to them later. Now that they know the teacher better, it is time for them to get to know their classmates.

### Pair Work

- Assign students to work in pairs, assuring that students from diverse backgrounds work together to promote cross-cultural understanding.
- Distribute the “Classmate Interview” worksheet with questions and a space provided for responses. Provide clear directions on how to use the form and elicit definitions for any unfamiliar vocabulary. Conduct a comprehension check before proceeding with the activity by asking volunteers to repeat the directions for the activity and answering questions.
- Circulate during pair work in a nonintrusive manner and provide assistance when necessary.
- Display a large Venn diagram on butcher paper and model how to use it to record information.
- Distribute butcher paper to each pair and have them record similarities and differences between their responses on butcher paper to be displayed on the classroom wall.
- When students have completed the activity, have each pair walk around the room and discover the similarities and differences between their classmates. Students should note interesting observations, such as something many students have in common regardless of their background but also any differences that exist in the classroom, and interesting facts they have learned about a classmate.

### Post-Activity Discussion and Reflection

- When students have conducted their gallery walk, have them return to their chairs and discuss in groups their observations. They can form compound sentences using conjunctions to orally present to the class their findings.
- After students have shared with the whole class, lead students into a discussion about how differences can contribute different perspectives, life experiences, and knowledge that will enrich classroom discussions and learning.

### Extension Activity

Students can post on a discussion board or learning journal their thoughts about the activity, such as what they enjoyed about it, what surprised them, and what impact will it have on the class.

*Fiona Memmott, who formerly taught at the City University of New York Language Immersion Program, teaches at California State University, San Bernardino in the Intensive English Program.*

## Classmate Interview Worksheet

**Step 1:** Interview a classmate by asking these questions. Record his or her answers in the space provided. Then, your classmate repeats the same procedure.

Questions	Answers
1. What is your name?	
2. What country are you from?	
3. How many brothers and sisters do you have?	
4. Are you married/single/engaged/in a relationship?	
5. Are you in the US alone or with family?	
6. Do you live alone or with other people (e.g. family, host family, friends, etc.)	
7. Do you have any children? If yes, how many?	
8. How many years/months are you in the US?	
9. How many classes are you taking this semester?	
10. Do you work? If yes, how many hours a week?	
11. How much free time do you have outside of school?	
12. What do you do in your free time?	
13. What type of music do you listen to?	
14. What is your favorite TV program?	
15. Why are you learning English?	
16. What do you miss about your home country?	
17. What do you like about the US?	

**Step 2:** Compare your answers with your classmate's answers. Put a check mark (✓) next to any similar answers that you and your partner gave.

**Step 3:** Look at the Venn diagram that the teacher has displayed on the wall. It has two circles that overlap or intersect. Write one partner's name above one circle and another classmate's name above the other circle.

**Step 4:** Write things that you and your partner have in common (similarities) in the center space of the diagram. You can begin each sentence with the pronoun “We.”

**Step 5:** Write things that you and your partner do not have in common (differences) in the circle under your names. Use the pronoun “he” or “she.”

**Step 6:** Tape the Venn diagram on the wall of the classroom. Walk around the room and learn more about your classmates.

## Class Diversity Survey: Discovering Similarities, Celebrating Differences

By Fiona Memmott

### RATIONALE

This is another ice-breaker opportunity as students need to conduct a class survey that involves interviewing every member of the classroom. The questions have been worded to draw attention to the diversity that exists in the classroom as a means of promoting cultural awareness and respect. Other questions relate more to similarities and differences in their daily lives, especially the immigrant and international student experience, which could help break down cultural and socioeconomic status barriers as they learn about each other's struggles. However, they also share a common goal, which is to pursue a better life for themselves and their families, and if they collaborate they will have a greater chance of succeeding. Since the results are displayed on a graph that provides a broad representation of the classroom, it will be a very informative and enlightening experience for students.

### GOAL

Students ask each member of the classroom an assigned question and record his or her response; they display the results of the response on a bar graph.

### CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

- Gather information about their classmates' backgrounds, lifestyles, and interests.
- Identify similarities and differences in their responses.
- Categorize responses and display information in graph format (either drawn or using Excel or Google Docs)

### LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to (SWBAT):

- Ask each member of the classroom their survey question.
- Explain meaning of question if respondent does not comprehend.
- Accurately record respondent's answer to the question.
- Create categories for representing data.
- Write observations and questions about information on the graph.

### Key Vocabulary

graph, data, bar, axis, categories, survey, spreadsheet, respondents, and so on

## Lesson 3 of 7

### MATERIALS

- Survey questions (cut out one question for each student or pair of students)
- Copies of response form
- Copies of graph paper or Google Docs spreadsheets
- Example of completed graph

### PROCEDURES

#### Warm-Up/Lead-In

- Ask students if they have ever been asked to take part in a survey. What type of survey was it? What was the purpose of the survey? (Have some examples on hand for students who are unfamiliar with surveys or the meaning of the word.) Explain that today we are going to conduct a class survey in order to get to know our classmates, practice asking and responding to questions, and to learn important information about the class as a whole, which will give us a big picture or aerial view of our class.
- Cut out and assign a different question from the "Class Survey" worksheet to each student. Explain that each student will receive a different question and is responsible for asking each member of the classroom the same question. Explain any unfamiliar vocabulary and give students the opportunity to check their comprehension of their question with a partner or by asking the teacher.
- Next, distribute the "Survey Response" form and explain that after they ask their question they need to record the respondent's name and response on the form provided. (Note: It is not necessary to write complete sentences in the response column of the form.)
- If necessary, model the activity for the students by circulating through the classroom and interviewing some students and filling in the response form. Ask volunteers to explain the directions of the activity to assess comprehension.
- Students ask each member of the class their question and fill in the response form as instructed. Circulate to monitor comprehension and answer any questions. (Be sure that students

know how many students are in the class before they begin so they know when they have completed the task.)

- After the survey is completed, instruct students to return to their desks and distribute a blank grid in which they will graphically display information. For this activity, either provide sufficient modeling on how to identify categories and transfer information from the form onto a graph. Then, have students work in pairs and take turns helping each other develop their graph.
- Circulate during pair work in a nonintrusive manner and provide assistance when necessary.
- When students have completed their graph they can tape it on the wall around the classroom or re-create it using Microsoft Excel or Google Docs data collection spreadsheets during computer lab.
- In addition, each pair should generate questions that students need to answer about their data: Questions will vary according to the survey question but here are some examples:
  - o What is the most common language spoken in the classroom?
  - o What is the least common language spoken in the classroom?
  - o If one language dominates, how does that affect the speakers and nonspeakers of that language?
  - o How can we use the data from this survey to promote a positive atmosphere in our classroom?
- The teacher can create a quiz from all the questions using a Google Docs feature that creates and scores quizzes, but open-response questions will have to be discussed in class or students can leave comments on each graph. A link can be provided so that students can access the spreadsheet that contains all the graphs.

### Extension Activity

Working in groups, students discuss different challenges that the class may face and how differences can be viewed as strengths; they can use the insight gained from the data to develop strategies to overcome potential hurdles and promote a positive classroom atmosphere in which students are mutually supportive of one another.

## Class Diversity Survey: Discovering Similarities, Celebrating Differences

1. Do you live in a dormitory, a house, apartment, or other?
2. Are you married, single, or in a relationship?
3. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
4. What is your native language?
5. Do you have children? If yes, how many?
6. Did you study English before arriving in the US? For how long?
7. Do you have a job? If yes, how many hours a week do you work?
8. What is your age?
9. What country are you originally from?
10. What other countries have you lived in (not including the US or your native country)?
11. Have you visited other countries (not including the US)?
12. What other languages do you speak (not including English and your native language)?
13. Is this your first semester in the program? Second semester? Third semester?
14. Do you live alone? With your parents? With your boyfriend/girlfriend? With your husband/wife? With kids only? With a roommate or friend? With a host family?
15. How long have you lived in the US?
16. Did you move to the US alone, with your parents, husband/wife, children, a friend, or with another family member?
17. What time do you normally get up during the week?
18. How do you come to school—bike, walk, bus, train, or car?
19. Why are you studying English?
20. How long does it take you to get to school?
21. Do you speak English at your job, at home, or in any other place outside of school?
22. In your home country, how many hours a day did you spend in school?
23. How much time do you spend every week watching TV, playing video games, chatting with friends, surfing the Internet, and so on?
24. How many hours of sleep do you get?

**Directions:** Ask each person in the class the same question. Write his or her name in the first column and the answer or response in the second column. You do not need to write complete sentences.

Name	Response
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

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## Happy Teachers: Being Present, Looking Deep

*Editor's Note: Long-time ESL teacher, life coach, and marriage family therapist Lynn Francis is interested in the inner life of the teacher. She writes, "Because the tools of our trade—methods, techniques, theories, activities—are so well covered at workshops, in-services, and conferences, I felt there was a need to address other aspects of the teacher that are not covered."*

**By Lynn Francis, MA, MS**

*Stop. Breathe. Smile.*

These words appeared at the top of the schedule for the Meditation and Education Retreat I attended in April with two other educators from my workplace, Nancy Johansen and Ann Marie Holzknicht. In every aspect of this experiential retreat we were invited to simply be aware, notice, and be present with our experience. We were invited to be mindful and notice what was happening within, from a place of compassion. It would be interesting to see how this relates to being an educator.

*I have arrived. I am home.*



Lynn Francis

I already feel welcome. Driving into Deer Park offers the first glimpse of what is to come. Trees, hills, surrounded by nature, we pass the Clarity Hamlet (for women). Walking up the hill, I find a spot for my tent and Nancy wanders past the Big Hall and Solidity Hamlet (for men) to her dorm room. We have some free time to settle in and explore before dinner.

During our first meal together, with little direction, we ate in silence, being present with the food we were eating—remembering what it took for this food to have arrived at the table—growing with water and sunshine, transportation, preparation. We slowed down and put down our forks after every bite. The awareness of a habit of rushing or hurrying arose for me as I slowed down my actions. I was in the process of being present with what was in front of me while habit energies continued.

After dinner, we walked mindfully to the Big Hall. I focused my attention on each step, noticing how comfortable my shoes were, feeling the openness of nature around me, attempting to let go of thoughts that arose. Before the orientation for the weekend we sang inspirational little songs, as we did each time that we convened.

*Happiness is here and now. I have dropped my worries.  
Nowhere to go, nothing to do, no longer in hurry.  
Happiness is here and now. I have dropped my worries.  
Somewhere to go, something to do, but I don't need to hurry.*

After the orientation, we remained in silence for the rest of the evening. I made my way back to my tent while others proceeded to their dorm rooms. Seventy dollars for the entire weekend seemed a small price to pay for this experience, gathering with other teachers, professors, administrators, and students, practicing being mindful and present to our experiences.

The next day, wake-up was at 5:30 and we gathered for walking meditation to the Big Hall for a sitting meditation. After

breakfast we were divided into groups for working meditation. I think the picture is starting to become clear about the weekend. Everything was a meditation. Everything was about being present with what we are doing. If we were washing dishes, be present with washing dishes. If we were walking, be present with walking.

And why would we do that and how does that help us as educators?



There is a plethora of energy at the workplace, from people, from activities, from our workload—a culture of “hurry up,” “do.” This can, on a continuum, be motivational and inspirational or results in stress, anxiety, and dis-ease. When I become lost in these energies instead of present in my own experience, in my own body, self-aware, I lose vitality. I lose my own sense of being. When I can stay present with my own experience, I have choices. I can be more present with my students and colleagues. We have the seeds of negative and positive in us. Which ones will we nurture and provide the nourishing space to grow? If we want peace and stability in our world we need to be that ourselves. The idea “Happy teachers can heal the world” was supported by this experience. Deer Park provided a holding environment to be very present. They practice this, they live this, they walk their talk. I myself am a work in progress.

*Stop and slow down.*

The weekend also included talks, discussions, nature walks, and a time for total relaxation in the Big Hall. The place, Deer Park Monastery in Escondido, provides a living example of people who practice living in peace and harmony. The monastery offers different themed weekends and those who attend include Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Buddhists, and more. They are Hispanic, Chinese, Korean, Thai, African American, Native American, and Vietnamese, to name a few.

*Looking deeply and smiling.*

This was at the bottom of the retreat schedule. Uncomplicated, simple, profound ... and very relevant to educators.

*Lynn Francis is a part-time instructor for San Diego Community College Continuing Education. She has been a teacher/trainer for 30 years. She also has a private practice as a life coach and licensed marriage family therapist. She especially enjoys working with teachers and welcomes readers' questions or ideas for topics for Inner News. Readers can reach her at [lfrcanci@sdccd.edu](mailto:lfrcanci@sdccd.edu).*

# The Pronunciation Doctor Is In! A Conversation With Marsha Chan

**M**arsha Chan is professor of ESL at Mission College in Santa Clara. She has conducted professional-development workshops on teaching pronunciation and using technology in education since 1984. She spoke with Janet Scoll Johnson after leading a workshop, “Promoting Clearer Pronunciation: Problems and Solutions,” for the Northern California Pronunciation Specialists (NorCAPS) organization in May.



Marsha Chan of Mission College in Santa Clara specializes in teaching pronunciation and using technology in education.

Janet Scoll Johnson: Why the pronunciation doctor? Did your parents want you to go to medical school?

Marsha Chan: Well, I think at one point my mother did, but not for very long, because I’ve always been interested in speaking and language. I developed a passion for teaching pronunciation and seeing that as a really important aspect of being able to communicate orally, and being able to assess what students need to change their pronunciation. Three years ago I did a presentation where I said, “The pronunciation doctor will do a session.”

JSJ: The workshop at Mt. Diablo Adult School, where you wore a white coat with your name on it and handed out tongue depressors and little mirrors?

MC: Yes, that one. It was huge. So I did it at another conference, and people said it was very apt. And I thought, “Why not?” We do a lot of role-playing, don’t we?

JSJ: Where did you grow up?

MC: I was born in San Francisco, raised in Berkeley. I double-majored in French and art at Stanford.

JSJ: What did you want to be when you were growing up?

MC: I don’t remember when I decided I would become a teacher. In the days before ESL, there weren’t any classes for English language learners, and I gravitated toward helping people do language things. There was a Russian kid in my chemistry class who was just thrown into the school system at age 16, and I remember patiently trying to repeat the main concepts in a slow and clear way to him. I was also interested in languages myself, going abroad to study, learning French, Italian, and Spanish, and then later Cantonese and Mandarin, and a bit of Vietnamese.

JSJ: What was your first job?

MC: I became a teacher right out of college. I was going to do a master’s in Art Education, but I decided to teach abroad, so I went to Hong Kong and taught English.

JSJ: And teaching pronunciation, when did that happen?

MC: In the late ’70s and ’80s, I was doing things on pronunciation and creating a lot of my own lessons. I had multilevel classes, so I would videotape myself and have some students watch while I worked with others, and then we’d switch. Other teachers said, “Hey, I like your materials; can I use them?” and I started to believe I had expertise in this area. So I read everything I could and listened to all the experts.

**The concept of breathing is rarely brought up, but it’s important, because the breath carries your voice. If you’re teaching a higher-level listening/speaking class, your students don’t want a little mousy voice. They have to be able to use those muscles from the diaphragm all the way up. When you look at the speaking range, there’s pronunciation at this end and public speaking at the other end. And the breath is an important part of it.**

JSJ: In *Teaching Pronunciation*, Marianne Celce-Murcia quotes L. G. Kelly’s observation that pronunciation is the “Cinderella area” of language teaching.

MC: I think that’s true, because it doesn’t have the same support. They certainly didn’t teach pronunciation when I went to graduate school. Some people coming out of graduate school now tell me they might get one class in teaching pronunciation. Or maybe only phonetics, not teaching.

JSJ: And that’s if the Speech Pathology majors haven’t taken all the spaces in the Phonetics class.

MC: True, because there’s a struggle over who this belongs to. It’s so much easier to hold on to things like reading, vocabulary, writing, grammar, because you can see them. Speaking you can’t see. And we’re trained throughout our school careers to do things with the written word. So it’s not obvious what we do this with this secret stuff that’s in the air, and unless you have specific training in it, or you train yourself like I did, it’s hard to get into this field.

JSJ: Are you a fan of minimal pair drills? Many texts use antiquated expressions like “The blacksmith *hits/heats* the horseshoe.” Isn’t it distracting for students to practice without knowing word meanings?

MC: Minimal pairs have a place, and they help highlight a person’s listening skills. But if students don’t know the meanings, and they’re not contemporary words in our environment, then they’re not very useful. My game, *Look in the Lake*, is based on minimal pairs. But I embed everything in utterances, interactions: You have questions and answers, questions for asking whose turn it is, asking and answering confirmation questions. The minimal pair part of it is ... minimal.

JSJ: What are your thoughts on teaching the phonetic alphabet?

MC: There are a lot of phonetic alphabets, and that’s a problem. I use one in my book, but I don’t hammer students with it; to me, it’s just a tool. *The American Heritage Dictionary* uses the letters of the alphabet, so students don’t have to learn a whole new system.

*Continued on page 18*

# Planning for the Next Bay Area Event

By Anthony Burik

*Bay Area Chapter Coordinator*

At the end of each Bay Area Chapter event, we hand out an evaluation form or direct people to an online survey and ask for feedback on a number of event-related topics. For our last event in May, one of the evaluation-form inquiries was “Topics I would like to see covered at a future Bay Area Chapter event.” We received a variety of ideas from participants: organizing community support for adult ed programs, multilevel topics, academic language, how to use online resources in instruction, teaching listening and speaking, pronunciation, job-search strategies, and others. The response seems to point to a larger truth: Our members have a lot of ideas worth exploring that could form the basis for any number of chapter events.

The challenge for a chapter such as ours, however, is how to get more of these ideas and input from more of our members. Our members are spread out across five Bay Area counties, working at all levels (K through adult) in a variety of academic and nonacademic organizations. We’re all busy with work, school, and family obligations. In terms of the lines of communication, some of us are more active with email and social media than others, so we tend to hear more often from certain segments of our membership than from others. Chapter membership varies from month to month as we gain and lose members. Therefore, many factors affect the gathering of ideas from members.

When we do get ideas from members (through our evaluation forms, for example), what do we do with this information? How do we know how many other members are interested in the same

ideas? Are some ideas level specific, or are they broad enough in scope to appeal to a variety of levels? How do we know if any of these ideas have legs and can be developed into a full professional-development event? Would we be able to find a dynamic speaker or a group of presenters who could instruct our membership on a particular topic? Obviously, getting the ideas is not enough; the process is more multilayered.

At our last board meeting, we discussed three ideas for a future chapter event. As a way to engage our membership in the planning process, we solicited feedback from chapter members on these ideas to gauge their level of interest and determine how likely they would be to participate in some capacity (as a participant or presenter) if the chapter organized an event based on one of the ideas. We were pleasantly surprised at the number of people who took the time to respond and offer their thoughts. This is extremely helpful information to share with all of the board members as we move ahead and bring an event to life. It makes us feel as if we are trying to be responsive to members’ professional-development needs.

Although we see this as a good first step, there is still a question of how we might begin the planning process from the ground up, working with members’ input from the start. Perhaps there is a way to create a long-term dialogue with chapter members during which we can solicit and discuss their ideas for future events. Are there tools out there (possibly technology based) that can help us work toward this? We would love to hear from other chapters or other CATESOL members—your ideas!—on how we might achieve this. Contact us at [catesolbayarea@gmail.com](mailto:catesolbayarea@gmail.com) or through our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/CATESOLBayArea](http://www.facebook.com/CATESOLBayArea). See you at the next Bay Area Chapter event, and keep sending us ideas!

## Mark Your Calendars: OC Fall Workshop to Focus on Dynamic Student Interaction

By Carol Bander

*Publicity Co-Chair*

*Orange County Chapter*

If you want to engage your classroom in activities that will have your students interacting and communicating nonstop, remember to mark on your calendar: Kevin Keating’s presentation “Communicative Activities for Promoting Dynamic Student Interaction,” 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, September 29, 2012, at California State University, Fullerton in the Titan Student Union. The event is jointly sponsored by CATESOL Orange County Chapter and the TESOL Club of CSU Fullerton.

A frequent CATESOL Pre-Conference Institute presenter, Kevin Keating works in International Programs at the University of California, Irvine, in the Intensive English Program and also in the TEFL Certificate Program. Additionally, he is an associate faculty member at Saddleback College,

where this writer has seen him in action. Before these appointments, Kevin taught at the University of Arizona, where he was honored as the 2004 AZTESOL Educator of the Year, and in 2005 was the recipient of a University of Arizona College of Humanities Distinguished Teaching Award. He has conducted numerous workshops nationally and internationally.

The nominal registration fee for CATESOL members is \$35 (\$45 for non-members), which includes a continental breakfast and a vast array of publishers’ exhibits. Lunch is available for a nominal fee for those who preregister. Come mingle and socialize with former and future friends and colleagues and visit the publishers’ exhibits in a 45-minute morning break. For more information, read the longer article in the spring issue of *CATESOL News*, visit the CATESOL website at [www.catesol.org](http://www.catesol.org), or contact either Regina Massich, chapter coordinator, at [reginamassich@verizon.net](mailto:reginamassich@verizon.net)

or (562) 424-4380, or Catherine Whitsett, registration chair, at [mizzwhit@juno.com](mailto:mizzwhit@juno.com) or (714) 292-8728, or follow us at [facebook.com/CATESOLOrangeCountyChapter](http://facebook.com/CATESOLOrangeCountyChapter).

*Carol Bander is professor ESL and German at Saddleback College and a past president of CATESOL.*

## Capital Area Report

The Capital Area CATESOL chapter has been quiet this summer, but we are gearing up for an active fall 2012. Our first chapter meeting will be in September, and we are planning our fall workshop for late October. We have not finalized the date or the speaker, but we will soon. More information will follow.

—James Strode

*Capital Area Chapter Coordinator*



# INTEREST GROUPS

## Check Out the Updated Part-Time Educators Website

By Barbara Luther  
PTE-IG Coordinator

The Part-Time Educators Interest Group website, which contains useful information to keep part-timers abreast of developments affecting their employment, has been updated. Visit the site at <https://sites.google.com/site/catesolpteig> to see the latest developments in filing for and receiving unemployment benefits. In addition, articles from past issues of *CATESOL News* have been uploaded.

### Unemployment Benefits

Recently, a part-time instructor told me she wasn't eligible to collect benefits at the end of the summer session because she had been given a fall teaching assignment. Being given a future assignment is not a contract, and there is "no reasonable assurance" of continued employment. If you teach in California, be sure to file for unemployment as soon as your current assign-

Join the CATESOL Part-Time Educators Listserv to ask questions and share your experiences. Go to the PTE-IG website and click on the "Listserv" tab for instructions.

ment ends. Click on the "Unemployment (EDD)" tab on the website for both background and practical information on filing and receiving unemployment benefits. If you haven't filed recently, there are some changes you need to be aware of both in the information required to file and receiving benefits with the new Bank of America debit card.

### Making the 67 Percent Rule Work

Click on the tab "Articles" for the article that appeared in the Spring issue of the *CATESOL News*. Many part-time educators have been denied the opportunity to teach as short-term substitutes or participate in paid "ancillary activities" because of their

district's fear that allowing those who are already teaching 67 percent of a full-time faculty workload will force the district to reclassify them from temporary to permanent. This is not what the law states, but it is a commonly misunderstood part of the California Education Code.

What can part-time educators do to ensure that administrators have an accurate understanding of this law? One option is to check with your district's or school's faculty association to see if the leadership understands the law and educate your leaders if they do not. Use the article, which was researched with CATESOL's legislative advocate, to do so. Specific sections of the California Education Code are cited. Then urge your faculty association leadership to take up the matter with the administration.

*Barbara Luther is associate faculty at Irvine Valley College and teaches part-time at Santa Ana College School of Continuing Education.*

## Pronunciation

*Continued from page 10*

JSJ: Do your lessons include breathing techniques?

MC: The concept of breathing is rarely brought up, but it's important, because the breath carries your voice. If you're teaching a higher-level listening/speaking class, your students don't want a little mousy voice. They have to be able to use those muscles from the diaphragm all the way up. When you look at the speaking range, there's pronunciation at this end and public speaking at the other end. And the breath is an important part of it.

JSJ: What do you do when students are too shy to open their mouths?

MC: I just goof around, do silly, stupid things. People are shy at the very beginning; then they start to open up. In my class, it's required to be goofy and silly, and that way you lose those inhibitions. How you sound is based a lot on your personality and how you feel about yourself and project yourself. In spoken language, that's something to be aware of. Not everyone can be outgoing, so I say, "That's good. That's good. A little bit louder." Often other students will encourage their shy classmates and give them kudos for speaking up more.

JSJ: Especially if you build community.

MC: Building community is so important. I have students trade

partners often, and we do lots of mixers so students talk to different kinds of accents. Some students complain and say, "I only want to listen to the teacher," and I say no, because out in the real world, do you talk to people who speak as clearly as I do? No. So you better learn the important parts: What are the focal words? Those are the ones you want to emphasize. And what are you trying to listen for? You have to build off that.

JSJ: How do you get your students to practice outside of class?

MC: I tell them, if you want to make changing your pronunciation a priority, here's how you can develop those skills. You have to decide if you want to make the time to do that. They love the videos. If they have a smartphone, they can watch on their phone as well.

JSJ: Are you working on any new projects now?

MC: Yes, I'm taking time off next semester to work on a book on English for students of child development with my coauthors, Marianne Brems and Juliane Rosner. This will be a sequel to our *English for Child Care*.

You can visit Marsha Chan's website, [www.sunburstmedia.com](http://www.sunburstmedia.com), to see a list of her publications and access her free learning materials. She has posted more than 900 YouTube videos at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0vQqN6tqSw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0vQqN6tqSw).

*Janet Scoll Johnson teaches adult ESL in Richmond and is a communication coach at Get Your English On.*

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land, Eddie Hanson, Kenneth Croft, and Patricia Cabrera acting as advisors. Kent chaired CATESOL's constitution committee. In 1973, Kent became the first editor of CATESOL's *Occasional Papers*, now known as *The CATESOL Journal*. Kenton went on to serve as the organization's 10th president from 1978 to 1979.

Kent began his teaching career at College of the Desert in Palm Desert. He attended Stanford University, studying Linguistics, and was PhD (ABD) in 1976. At the time of CATESOL's founding, he was on the faculty at the City College of San Francisco. In early 1972 he started teaching at Cañada College. As a linguist, his classroom emphasis was on using music, via melody and rhythm, to encourage language learning. He attracted students and colleagues around the world with his exuberant and entertaining personality.

Kent was a mentor to many. Lynn Savage recalls that he introduced her to publishers and to Jim Alatis, the first executive secretary of TESOL. "I viewed Kent as a real mover and shaker as well as a mentor! He worked right up to the last." Messages posted on Kent's Facebook tribute site describe him as both compassionate and worldly, a mentor to many.

A lifelong learner and teacher, Kent loved dancing, theater, literature, music, cinema, camping, people, and pets. Family and travel were his greatest loves. In retirement he continued to work, visiting more than 60 countries during his lifetime and adding China, Iraq, and Indonesia as his last three assignments.

Kenton Sutherland is survived by his wife, Sheila, five sons, and a daughter.

## Patricia Boquiren, Merari Weber Enter USC Doctoral Program

**By Barbara Luther**  
*PTE-IG Coordinator*

**L**ongtime CATESOL members Patricia Boquiren and Merari Weber began their doctoral studies at University of Southern California Rossier School of Education on July 21, 2012. The program, Doctor of Education with a concentration in Teacher Education in Multicultural Studies (TEMS), is well suited to the teaching of English as a Second Language and will enhance their already strong teaching skills.

### CATESOL Involvement

I first met Pat and Merari in December 2007 when both served on the 2009 Annual Conference Committee in Pasadena as site cochairs. From the beginning, I was impressed with their commitment to making the conference a success. As months went by, I was further impressed and appreciative of their initiative and organization skills. They followed through on every aspect of their site responsibilities with dedication and creativity, mentoring the coordinators who reported to them in the process. As conference chair, I had complete confidence that all aspects of site would run smoothly. They later served as volunteer co-coordinators for the 2011 Annual Conference in Long Beach, where they did their usual fine job. Before that, both served as Los Angeles Regional Conference liaisons, from 2002 to 2004.

Pat is now the Community College Level chair on the CATESOL Board of Directors, and Merari is coordinator-elect of the Part-Time Educators Interest Group.

They have also been presenters at LA Regional Conferences.

### ESL Teaching Career Highlights

Pat and Merari taught at various sites in Los Angeles Unified School District's noncredit adult ESL program from 1997 until June 2012. Both have served as MA TESOL Program mentor teachers at California State University, Los Angeles for more than 10 years. Pat has been teaching in the ESL credit program at Glendale Community College since 2007. She was also a teacher trainer in LAUSD's Central Office for three years. Merari has been teaching in Glendale Community College's credit ESL program since 2000 and will begin teaching in Chaffey College's credit ESL program this fall.

### Moving Forward

Merari has identified transitioning students from ESL to academic and vocational programs as her primary research interest. Pat is exploring the possibilities of the program before making a decision.

As their strong credentials and personal qualities suggest, both will be an asset to USC's Rossier School of Education and to the larger ESL community and CATESOL for many years to come. Please join me in wishing them success as they embark on this new chapter in their lives as ESL teachers.

*Barbara Luther is associate faculty at Irvine Valley College and teaches part-time at Santa Ana College School of Continuing Education.*

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## Book Review: *Imagine*

*Continued from page 9*

When one applies Lehrer's research findings to an ESL classroom environment, it becomes apparent how important and productive collaborative work assignments are for learners of different cultural backgrounds

Our most important ideas often result from seemingly idle, random conversations, according to Lehrer. Tellingly, recent studies have shown that the highest-performing employees are those who "consistently engage in the most interactions." Pixar, the award-winning computer animation film studio that has won numerous Academy Awards, was one of the first corporations to grasp the value of group interaction and collaboration. Pixar actively encourages employees to interact during work and after

work, even if that means congregating at a local bar. Pixar was one of the first companies to realize that creative productivity results from a socially engaged workforce. These study results bolster the idea that promoting and encouraging group interaction in an ESL classroom results in more active learning and the potential for greater creative output.

Author Jonah Lehrer's swift descent from a the position of highly successful science writer to literary pariah is a cautionary tale about the dangers of plagiarism. Fareed Zakaria's suspension from *Time* magazine is also a crucial reminder of the importance of giving credit to other writers whose words, ideas, or concepts we borrow. It is sad that the impressive scientific findings that Lehrer compiled for his book *Imagine* will no longer be shared with readers eager to understand the mystery of how our creative thoughts converge and fuel our needs to dream, create, and discover.

# EDUCATION FOUNDATION

## Grant

*Continued from  
page 1*

us in CATESOL, setting up car pools to regional conferences and holding postconference share potlucks at her house after state and national conferences. She knew full well we were too afraid to attempt it by ourselves.

Tippy's professional home from 1966 to 1998 was UC Davis, where she single-handedly pioneered the ESL Program. In her retirement—and now based in Haverford, Pennsylvania—she wanted to “support the scope, extent and impact of this important state-level professional organization.” Her specific goal was to set up a legacy so that students in the MA and PhD programs in the Linguistics Department at UC Davis could, as part of their professional training, become active CATESOL members.

In November 2008, Janet Lane, UC Davis lecturer and also a Tippy protégé, and I commenced writing the Tippy Schwabe Grant, to be inaugurated with the incoming class of Fall 2009. Under Tippy's guidance as catalyst, creator, and funder, we determined that the grant should fund up to 10 TESOL graduate students for two years, paying their CATESOL membership plus registration for both Northern Regionals and one state conference registration. Grantees were encouraged to participate by either presenting or volunteering at a state or regional conference.

To date, the grant has funded three cohorts of six to eight students: 2009-2011, 2010-2012, and 2012-2014. It has further expanded to include graduate students from the School of Education.

A particular highlight was the Northern Regional at UC Davis on November 5, 2011. Members from all three cohorts helped make this conference a reality by participating as committee chairs (program, AV, signs, evaluations, registration, hospitality, and panels); panel moderators



These students were the 2010-2012 cohort of Tippy Schwabe grantees. This picture was taken just before they donned their caps and gowns and received their master's degrees in June of this year. They are (left to right) Daniel Moglen, Whitney Whitener, Dennis Mahler, Jeff Lee, Chi-Yuan Hsieh Huang, and Kate Caslin.

(two), presenters (five), and volunteers (seven).

Sample comments from recipients attest that Tippy's generosity has already enhanced their graduate student experience:

*The grant has contributed in making the MA TESOL program at UC Davis dynamic through these opportunities to share, learn, and network with TESOL professionals in the field. I can proudly say that my experiences with CATESOL have solidified my academic and professional interests as a budding teacher and researcher in the TESOL field.*—Daniel Moglen

*The classes I took were really wonderful, but I was able to get a much more holistic view of the TESOL field through my participation in CATESOL. It would never have even crossed my mind to go to either of the conferences put on by CATESOL my first year as a graduate student were it not for the Tippy Schwabe grant that enabled me to do so.*—Whitney Whitener

*Without the Tippy Schwabe Grant, I would have been either financially unable or disinterested in interacting with CATESOL to the extent I have. For me, the grant was the gateway which led to further exploration.*—Dennis Mahler

*I am really grateful for the grant; otherwise, it would be quite expensive for students to [attend] the conference on their*

*Continued on page 22*

## President's Update

The CATESOL Education Foundation continues to look for funding to carry out its mission. We still are working on implementing the Hollywood Classroom Learning Project, an ESL/ELD program based on some of Hollywood's most famous movies, and other potential projects.

Ellen Lange, the Education Foundation's vice president, reports (see page 1) on the success of the Tippy Schwabe Grant, one of our earliest and most successful projects to date. Keep us in mind when you are considering making a donation to a deserving nonprofit organization. The CATESOL Education Foundation affords CATESOL members an opportunity to donate to an arm of CATESOL that helps it carry on its mission: funding Sunday workshops at the annual conferences, providing professional development to prospective ESL/ELD teachers, and many other projects.

You can find information about the Education Foundation on the website at [www.catesol.org](http://www.catesol.org). Information on donating to the organization is also found there. We welcome all donations to help us meet our mission, which is to provide educational opportunities to teachers of English learners and to inform the general public about strengths and needs of these students.

Keep our Education Foundation in mind when you are deciding where to make a tax-deductible donation. Your charitable donation will help improve the state of our profession and help you know that you have made a difference in others' lives.

—Dan Fichtner  
Education Foundation president

### **CATESOL** Education Foundation

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# IEP Level: Making Textbook Activities Real

*Continued from page 8*

the verb in a noun clause, but what teachers need to remember is that for students to truly become proficient in a language, they have to practice that language in as many authentic, real-life contexts as possible. Who is Jack, and why are we talking about him? Do my students really care about the 28th U.S. president or the number of rivers in the world? Probably not. These activities get students to use the target grammatical structure but in a very contrived way. It is unlikely that they would ever ask these questions or talk about these things in real life. So why have them do it in class?

Gilmore (2007) states that most textbook language fails to represent the language used in real life, and most ESL textbooks fail to provide appropriate or realistic models of the English language. Thus, by using the contrived activities exactly as they are written in a textbook, teachers may not be effectively meeting the linguistic needs of their students.

Since this contrivance is evident in many textbook activities, what can we do as teachers? Throw our textbooks out? The answer is no. There *are* ways to take a typical textbook activity and make the language more authentic. Authentic language conveys real messages from real people (Gilmore, 2007). To do this, teachers can have their students incorporate real questions and real language into their textbook activities. Students should talk about people they actually know and care about and topics that interest them. Incorporating real language will not only add interest and motivation, but it will also stimulate further discussion—authentic discussion.

Let's go back to the example activities above. If you put students into groups of three and have them do the same noun clause activities with real questions, the first one might sound more like this:

Student A: *"Does Kaori (student in the group) have a boyfriend?"*

Student B: *"I don't know if she has a boyfriend. Do you?"*

Student C (Kaori): *"Yes, I do."*

Student A: *"Really? Who is he? ..."*

If you put the students into partners and have them do the second noun clause activity with real questions, it could sound more like this:

Student A: *"Do you know what this head scarf I'm wearing is called?"*

Student B: *"No, I don't know what it's called."*

Student A: *"It's called a hijab. Do you know why I wear it?"*

Student B: *"No, I don't know why you wear it. Why do you?"*

Student A: *"Well, it's a part of my religion. Muslim women want to be evaluated by their intelligence and abilities, not by their appearance or sexuality."*

Student B: *"Wow, I never knew that. That's interesting."*

These activities are done in the same way as the textbook activities, but because the students are asking questions that they actually want to know the answers to, they are able to learn from each other and about each other. They then become much more

engaged in the activities, and the language becomes less robotic and more natural. Because they are interested in the conversations, new questions emerge and conversations become real. Real language stimulates further discussion than the textbook activities allow, and students are no longer confined to a certain group of vocabulary terms and phrases. They are allowed to be spontaneous with the language and are ultimately more motivated to participate.

Students can add real questions to most oral production activities used in ESL textbooks. When practicing the present perfect, a textbook might have the student ask this question: *"Have you ever eaten a hamburger?"* The partner might respond, *"Yes, I have."* That's typically the end of it, so they move on to the next question. Why not do the same activity, but have the student ask a question that they really want to know the answer to? For example, a student could ask, *"Have you ever eaten at that new Italian restaurant across the street from campus?"* Then the partner might say, *"No, I haven't, but I heard it's great. We should go for lunch."* And the conversation will most likely be extended before they ask the next question, and that should be encouraged.

Real language can also be incorporated into written activities. For example, I have seen many textbook activities that have a generic list of problems or situations, and the students have to write a sentence giving advice. That's perfectly fine, but what if the students can't relate to the problems given? A great idea is to have students write down real-life problems that they are actually experiencing, and then have them pass their paper to a partner. The partner can then write down sentences giving advice about those problems. The students then get their paper back with some real advice to their real problems, and the students have successfully practiced writing advice as the textbook activity asked.

What about listening activities? Many textbooks come with CDs and DVDs with different dialogues and stories told by people hired to read and record them, but they never really sound quite right. That's because it's not authentic language. The rate of speech might be slow and awkward, the people reading might sound overly enthusiastic, and the language might not sound natural at all. I recommend bringing in real videos and recordings for the students to watch and listen to. Teachers could bring in a real newscast and have the students listen and discuss events that are actually happening in the world. Teachers could also bring in speeches that were given by politicians, celebrities, or other public figures and discuss or answer questions about what was said. Teachers can even record their friends, family, or colleagues telling stories and talking about actual experiences that they have had and use those for listening practice using the target structures from the textbook.

The goal of most ESL courses is to help students gain different levels of communicative competence, and in order to do this, it is essential that teachers incorporate as much authentic language into their lessons as possible. Practicing the language in real, genuine ways will give students better opportunities to develop the skills they need to truly become proficient English speakers.

## Reference

Gilmore, Alex. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 40, 97-118.

# Tippy Schwabe Grant

*Continued from page 20*

own. It's a great experience to attend the conferences. I learned more about different levels and aspects about teaching English by attending the CATESOL conferences. I also got great experience from being a volunteer to help the exhibitors set up their exhibition.—Chi-Yuan Hsieh Huang

Such grants can be made through the CATESOL Education Foundation and thus avoid university departmental administrative costs. But the success of such a grant is not automatic. It requires careful coordination with the faculty and department of the chosen institution and a point person (in this case, myself) to mentor the graduate students.

At my first regional at USF I wanted a presenter's ribbon. Many presenter and conference committee ribbons later, I can truly say that implementing this grant has earned me my best—albeit invisible—ribbon yet.

As I said to Tippy over lunch after the Oakland conference, “As you know, I am indebted to you for my start in the ESL business, which turned out to be the perfect career for me. The best way I can give back is to serve CATESOL and the profession.”

*Note: The CATESOL Education Foundation hopes this pioneer project will serve as a model for other individuals and institutions interested in promoting professional growth and development for ESL teachers.*

## From Your GM

*Continued from page 3*

Marketplace at <http://catesol.org/merchant>. Back issues of the *CATESOL News* are available without restrictions at <http://catesol.org/newsletter.html>.

A temporary username and password were sent by email on August 2, 2012, to those members who receive the electronic *CATESOL Monthly News*, a short informational update sent to those members who allow us to send them occasional informational email. You can request your logon information by clicking on the Members Only button on the left side of the home page at <http://catesol.org> and then selecting “Forgot your username or password?”

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# CHRISTINA NO BRASIL

## Former Student Rep Blogs on Fulbright Program

*Editor's Note: Christina Lorimer, former student representative to the CATESOL BOD, is spending a year in Brazil working in the Fulbright Program. Here is an excerpt from her blog chronicling the experience. Visit <http://christinanobrasil.squarespace.com/> blog for the full story, and more excerpts about her adventure will appear in future issues.*

### Xingu

There is never a good reason not to go out when you live alone in a new country and have been watching reruns of *Smash* for more than two hours. The only acceptable excuses have to do with safety, illness, or extreme weather conditions. I don't mean dressing up to go wait in the long lines of Vila Dionísio or Valley Pub (let's actually hope going out never means that). I mean literally going *out* of your *predio* and walking around, looking, listening, smiling, learning.

You can forget how beautiful an experience going out in a new city is if you haven't done it in a while. You can forget the gracious locals who don't give you directions to the bus stop but rather take your hand and walk you there. You can forget the hourlong conversation with the cashier who is also a music historian. You can forget how much you learn about a culture by sitting and watching 30 teenagers interact with each other on a field trip.

So you gotta go out!

This weekend I finally got out to Cine Eldorado, an independent movie theater four blocks from my apartment. All my RP friends are out of town or busy because of the holiday weekend (Dia das Mães), so after I gave virtual *beijos* to my mom's face on Skype, I talked myself into going to see a film. This was a good idea.

I saw *Xingu*.

*Xingu* (pronounced "shing-goo") is a Brazilian film set in the 1940s about the brothers Villas-Bôas, three men



Christina Lorimer

who participated in westward expansion and earned notoriety as advocates of the Xingu peoples, indigenous peoples of Brazil living near the Xingu River.

The brothers' most notable act of advocacy is the creation of O Parque Indígena do Xingu, the Xingu National Park, a federally protected area for the Xingu peoples in the state of Mato Grosso, Brasil. Today, Xingu people represent 15 tribes and all four of Brazil's indigenous language groups.

The film had a *Motorcycle Diaries* feel with the voice-over narration, on-screen captions of time and place, male-only protagonists, and unbelievable cinematography, although most anywhere you shoot your camera in the Amazon will leave you and your audience breathless. It got mixed reviews, but most Brazilians I've talked to have left the theater impressed.

I left the theater aesthetically impressed but ethically conflicted. The intention of the film seemed to not only be to share the story of the founding of Brazil's Xingu National Park, but also to add humanity to the Brazilian government's expansionist policies. Media portrayal of indigenous peoples has a long history of criticism, and I unfortunately found traces of almost all of the common critiques in this film. I wonder how *Xingu* stacks up against other movies featuring indigenous peoples of Brasil.

I doubt it's a coincidence that the film came out at a time when the livelihood of the Xingu National Park and its peoples is being threatened by the deforestation of the Amazon. I have a lot to learn and am hoping that my fellow Fulbrighters living in the surrounding regions will school me on this issue next time we meet. Until then, I'll be reading articles about the subject, and I hope you will too.

