



HAWAI'I TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

THE WORD - VOLUME 15 ISSUE 2

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Practical Workshops for ESL Professionals a Success By: Randi Pearlman, Hawai'i Pacific University

Last year, TransPacific Hawai'i College (TPHC) hosted Practical Workshops for ESL Professionals on November 9, 2005. The evening's two excellent presentations focused on encouraging intercultural sensitivity in the ESL/EFL classroom. Here's a brief look at the workshops:

Dr. Maryna Tsehelska, Fulbright Senior Scholar at Hawai'i Pacific University, presented "Promoting Language Sensitivity in the ESL Classroom." The theme of Dr. Tsehelska's enlightening workshop was promoting the use of inclusive, or politically correct language, in the ESL classroom. To that

The focus of her workshop concerned differences in intercultural communication among ESL/EFL speakers, with respect to body language, discourse patterns, and gender-specific roles.

Dr. McNeil pointed out how unintended misunderstandings can occur when two or more cultures come together and interact in the ESL/EFL classroom, and beyond. An example is the transference of body language from the L1 to the L2. To build awareness on the issue, participants performed a series of funny and strange body language activities, often amid long bouts of laughter. Participants gained a new understanding of the diversity of social interaction in different cultures and the need to identify and practice them in the ESL/EFL classroom.

The outstanding presentations, along with the spacious facilities at TPHC, the delicious dinner catered by *The Greek Corner*, and the delightful offering of an impromptu piano concert by Executive Board Member, Angell Siu, made for a most enjoyable evening. This year's Practical Workshops attracted 45 participants; a fine turn-out for a midweek, mid-semester event. Thank you to all the workshop presenters, attendees, and our hosts at TPHC, for ending 2005 on a cheerful note.



HITESOL President
Yoneko Kanaoka with Dr.
Jan McNeil



Dr. Maryna Tsehelska's presentation

end, Dr. Tsehelska offered workshop participants a number of activities intended to raise our awareness of the issue. During practice tasks participants had an opportunity to identify instances of politically incorrect language and to change them into their politically correct forms. The tasks illuminated the need to avoid using language, especially in the ESL classroom, which causes offense or promotes prejudice regarding gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, physical appearance, and age.

Dr. Jan McNeil, from Transpacific Hawaii College, has taught ESL/EFL, speech, and intercultural communications to college and university students and seasoned professionals in Hawaii, Florida, Tennessee, Mississippi, Singapore, Russia, the Republic of Georgia, France, and Germany and to secondary students in Louisiana and Taiwan.



HITESOL
members
discuss
intercultural
issues



Hawai'i TESOL, the local affiliate of TESOL, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.

For the latest event information, check our website at:

**www.hawaii
tesol.org**

Talk Story, Talk Shop By: Abigail Brown

Once again Hawai'i TESOL started off another year of exciting events with the September 22 **Hawai'i TESOL Social** at McCoy Pavilion. Each year in September the social is a great way for Hawai'i's TESOL professional community to get together in an informal atmosphere to share information about their programs, catch up with colleagues, discuss topics of interest in the field, meet new members, and eat tasty food.

To start, the 114 attendees checked in at the registration desk and enjoyed pupus as they mingled with friends, colleagues and graduate students from a number of programs in TESOL in Hawai'i. This year we had over 40 new members join HITESOL at the social! Attendees also spent the first half hour enjoying the poster session presentations about TESOL programs in Hawai'i including those at HPU, BYUH, KCC, TPHC, NICE (UH) and ICC.



Delicious food was served

This year there was also a presentation from TESOL Ukraine, our sister TESOL affiliate.

A buffet style dinner was served at 6:00 pm while Yoneko Kanaoka, the President of HITESOL, welcomed everyone to the evening's festivities. She also reviewed the calendar of events for HITESOL's 2005-2006 season (see page 12) and introduced the members of the executive board. We were also introduced to Maryna Tsehelska, Chair of the English Language and

Methodology Department from Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, Ukraine. Maryna, a regional coordinator for TESOL Ukraine, is currently on a Fulbright scholarship at HPU. Maryna explained her purposes for coming to Hawai'i and her academic interest in socio-political aspects of language use, especially language change and political correctness.

Perry Christensen, HITESOL webmaster, showed a very entertaining Power-Point presentation of the 2004-05 HITESOL Year in Review, and announcements were made about upcoming events and fundraising efforts by the organization.

Board member Michelle Bell then introduced a mixer activity "Find Someone Who" followed by a small group discussion activity. Members worked in groups to share experiences and insights into how to handle challenging teaching scenarios effectively. (See Michelle Bell's report on the results of these discus-



President Yoneko Kanaoka, gave a welcome speech

sions on page 3 of this issue.)

Finally, the evening closed at 8:30 pm with the travel grant raffle drawing. Lucky winners won exciting prizes from a variety of local stores and restaurants. Proceeds from the raffle go to support the HITESOL Travel grant awards each year.

In short, this year's event continued the tradition of offering fun, food, relaxation, good company, information about HITESOL activities as well as interesting and productive discussion.



Students from BYUH



Members made new friends through ice-breaking games

About the Author:

Abigail Brown has been a member of the board of directors for HITESOL since 2002, serving as Socio-Political Action Chair.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

On behalf of Hawai'i TESOL, we would like to thank the following local businesses for their donations to the Hawai'i TESOL travel grant raffle at the annual social in September 2005. Due in large part to their generosity, we will once again be able to award a Hawai'i TESOL member a \$500 grant to assist with their plans to attend the 2006 TESOL conference in Tampa, Florida. Thank you for your support of the language teaching community in Hawai'i!

- Dave & Buster's
- Blu Water Grill
- The Plantation Café at the Ala Moana Hotel
- Hawaii Opera Theater (HOT)





Participants share experiences and advice

HITESOL Social Brings Teachers Together to Discuss Common Problems By: Michelle Bell

At the HITESOL Social this past September, attendees participated in a "Find Someone Who" activity and discussion.

Modeled after a popular ESL ice-breaker, this activity is designed to get participants to socialize as they try to find people that will answer "yes" to any of the questions on the "Find Someone Who" worksheet. The questions we used represented common problems ESL teachers have (see Figure 1.)

Figure 1.

Find Someone Who...

- ...has many quiet (non-participatory) students in their class.
- ...doesn't like the required textbook for their course.
- ...whose students use their L1 instead of English in the classroom.
- ...doesn't have enough time to prepare materials for their class.
- ...doesn't have time/opportunities for professional development.
- ...has a student who often disrupts the class.
- ...has caught a student cheating or plagiarizing deliberately.
- ...has a conflict with a student's parents.
- ...has experienced difficulties because they are not a NS of English.
- ...struggles to balance the demands of teaching.

After being given time to mingle and find names for each question, participants were asked to form discussion groups. Each group chose one of the problems listed from the "Find Someone Who" handout to discuss and then were asked to brainstorm solutions for it. In the end, a few groups were asked to present their ideas to everyone.

Below is a listing of two of the problems discussed and possible solutions attendees came up with at the Social. We would like to encourage members to develop workshops and conference presentations that address these and other similar issues and will be soliciting articles on these topics for future issues of our newsletter *The Word*.

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Problem: We have students that use their L1 instead of English in the classroom.

Group Suggestions:

- Use reward cards: Give a set amount of reward cards out to all students. Then when a student speaks their L1 in class the teacher or another student can take away one of the reward cards from the speaker. The student with the most reward cards at the end of a designated time will get a reward.
- Reason with students: Point out to them that their English classroom is usually their only chance to use English.
- Separate students who speak the same L1: Make partners with different L1 speakers for activities (if possible.)
- Make a set of class rules or a contract that students develop and sign. This way, students get the chance to decide what the consequences will be if they speak their L1 in class (i.e. they have to bring a treat the next day, do extra homework, prepare a speech).
- Use a self-monitoring technique like a red flag or teddy bear that is passed around class to anyone that speaks their L1 in class. Students have to hold onto it until another person speaks their L1. Then it is passed to that person and so on.
- Create a "safe-zone" at the school where students are allowed to use their L1 and make it clear that outside of the zone English should be used.
- Make a schedule of days when the L1 can be used and when English should be used (i.e. MTWTH- English only; Fri - L1 OK).
- Encourage parents to help students use more English at home.

Problem: We have many quiet (non-participatory) students in our classes.

Group Suggestions:

- Discussion group roles: Group members can have roles for participation (leader, reporter, recorder, and time keeper). Roles can switch next time groups are used.
- Red card/green card: Each student gets a card with one side red and the other side green. When a student gives an answer in class, they flip their card to red. Students still showing a green side need to talk by the end of the class. When all students have red sided cards showing, everyone will have spoken. Cards can then be flipped back to the green side to start again if desired.
- We should understand students' backgrounds better (i.e. Japanese students don't usually speak out.)
- Make smaller groups in class.
- Use pair work first to lower affective filter [Use near-peer role modeling – Tim Murphy (1996)].
- Offer alternatives for participation.
- Let students know ahead of time what you will be asking for when questioning the whole class.
- Ask students to smile at the teacher if they know the answer. (Raising a hand can be face threatening.)
- Base the lesson on students' interests.
- Do hands-on activities that use the senses.
- Assign homework that allows students to prepare something to say the next day in class.
- Use computers for communication: Students type their answers instead of speaking (i.e. blogging, chatting).
- Make students teach something to a small group.

An Interview with a Ukrainian Colleague

By: Sally La Luzerne-Oi, Hawai'i Pacific University

Dr. Maryna Tsehelska is the chairperson of the English Language and Methodology Department at Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine. On August 29, 2005, she arrived in Honolulu along with her husband and two children to begin a nine month Fulbright Research Award. She is being hosted by Hawai'i Pacific University and the College of International Studies in particular. At this half way point in her stay, I asked her to respond to these six questions.

Q1: In a nutshell, what was your research objective in coming here?

My research "Social and Political Aspects of the Language Change in the USA" aims at studying the factors that led to the appearance of politically correct terms and phrases in the 1990's and before, and the nature of these language changes. I wanted to know how important they are, how widely the newly coined words are used and how much they affected the way people speak every day, in the press, on TV, everywhere. Though I'd done preliminary research in Ukraine, it was mostly based on Internet searches and the books I could find. But it was not enough, as living speech always differs from articles, descriptions and guides.

Q2: Have you been able to find the information that you were hoping to find?

Yes, there are good libraries here and, what seems even more important, encountering real life situations changed many ideas I had before coming to Hawai'i. I came to the conclusion that for the purpose of teaching English political correctness, controversies are of little value. But what has a real value is the concept of language sensitivity, when speakers are aware of the biases that exist in the language and try to avoid them not because it is politically correct (or incorrect), but because they want to make communication effective. This concept eliminates negativity and ridicule associated with political correctness in English speaking countries, and becomes a powerful strategy in the acquisition of effective communication strategies.

Q3: What language learning/teaching issues are important to English teachers in Ukraine these days?

After many years of isolation, post-Soviet countries became members of the global English community, and this integration completely changed the idea of how to teach English. Many methods and techniques that teachers of my age, older teachers and even younger teachers of English learned at the universities are outdated now – new textbooks and ideas give Ukrainian educationalists new ideas for teaching English. But we also should not reject all those positive and creative ideas that existed before. We have one great advantage – we know the first language of the students we are teaching. It makes some explanations easier, and translation and comparison are also very important. These seemingly beneficial factors are the causes of our problems – we have to learn what are the most effective ways of balancing first and second languages in the classroom.

Q4: Your life as a researcher in Honolulu must be very different from your life as a chairperson and instructor in Kryvyi Rih. What was a typical day like for you at the Kryvyi Rih Pedagogical University?

I was always very busy combining the duties of a chairperson and ESL instructor. Besides lectures and seminars there are many meetings a chairperson has to attend, a lot of problems to decide and scores of people to talk to. This year in Hawai'i is a chance for me to "stay and stare", to reflect on the ESL teaching practices in Ukraine and to compare them with the ones in the USA.

Q5: When colleagues in Ukraine ask you about your professional experience here, what might you tell them?

Being hosted by the TESOL Program in the College of International Studies at HPU, I have a great opportunity not only to do research, but also to observe classes, talk to colleagues and compare the ways of teaching here and in Ukraine. TESOL people are very supportive and always ready to help. There are a lot of interesting and important ideas I took here and I hope to introduce to my colleagues in Ukraine.



Dr. Tsehelska at the Social in Sept.

Q6: You are a member of TESOL Ukraine, the sister affiliate of Hawai'i TESOL. What ideas or suggestions do you have for future collaboration between the members of these two organizations?

I hope that our partnership will benefit from my stay in Hawai'i and close collaboration with Hawai'i TESOL. Together with Sally La Luzerne-Oi, we published an article in the TESOL-Ukraine Newsletter about the annual events of Hawai'i TESOL and the life of TESOLers. Hawai'i TESOL has a long and fruitful experience of organizing different events, and this experience is of great interest for TESOL-Ukraine. Also, I must add that an important part of every partnership is personal contacts and acquaintances. The more people from the two sister-affiliates know each other, the bigger the outcome of this partnership will be. Unfortunately, it is not so easy to know people personally because Ukraine and Hawai'i are on the opposite sides of the globe, but by exchanging newsletters and email we can overcome impressive distances and see how small the world can be.

Q7: What impressions of Hawai'i will you take back to Ukraine?

Hawai'i became a real paradise for me and my family – here we met wonderful people and got acquainted with unique Hawaiian culture. This culture for me embraces not only history, artifacts and traditions of Hawaiian natives though this is a very important part of Hawai'i. Here also exists a unique cosmopolitan culture, where people of different races and ethnicities peacefully co-exist. This is the culture I wanted to research, and this is a place that will always be in my heart.

Summer Camp in Phoenix City, Hunan, China By: Sallie Lee

During summer 2005, as a representative of the Teach Overseas Foundation (<http://www.freewebs.com/teachingoverseas>), I volunteered to assist in the summer camp in Phoenix City (Feng Huang Chen, in Hunan, China), sponsored by the Education Advancement Fund International (<http://www.yifei.org>), an international non-profit organization that assists in: education exchange, cultural understanding, global education reform, and gender equity. I was immediately assigned the duty as the lead teacher of the volunteers for the camp.

Most of the volunteers had no prior teaching experience although many of them may be quite talented in other areas. There were 19 middle school classes, 16 foreign volunteer teachers, more than a dozen bilingual aides, and three substitute teachers. All except two volunteer teachers were from the United States, mostly college students and about five high school upper grade students. Five of the volunteer teachers were involved in other projects and needed substitutes for some days. There were frequently new volunteers and bilingual aides added while others were leaving. I had to change the schedule on a daily basis. We taught two 45-minute blocks in the morning and two in the afternoon for two weeks.

With the help of Ada Wong, a retired teacher from Hong Kong, we divided the work in two parts: Phonics and Communicative Activities. During the first week, Ada and I stayed up till about midnight every night to prepare the teaching materials. Ada, in particular, spent much time cutting and drawing the activity cards. During the day, we visited all the classes to see that things were going smoothly and to give assistance as needed. Even though I tried to focus on the tasks and avoid personal remarks, I am sure many of the volunteer teachers felt hurt just the same. I may have been too harsh on them. Perhaps more positive strokes could have been more effective and better received.

I demonstrated at least once for each Phonics class using Anita Archer's *Phonics for Reading*, a research-based reading program. This was certainly not enough, and I was not able to

see the expected outcome. The bilingual aides were inexperienced and often stood by one side admiring the foreigners. I had to show them how to listen and watch each child perform making sure that every child was actively participating. (I tried to make sure that the bilingual aides were actively participating as well.)

There were about 65 students in most of the classes. The activities we had planned had problems that were quite challenging with such big classes and limited space. We tried to encourage small group activities, but the noise level was difficult to manage, and it was not easy to monitor student participation. The volunteer teachers seemed to favor whole class choral responses. Whereas students had the most opportunities to participate orally in choral responses, because the class was so big, the students may not have been able to hear themselves. Many of them were not able to respond individually when assessed. The most effective strategy appeared to be having the students work in pairs for independent practice after the whole class had worked together with guided practice.

Although limited in English proficiency, the local teachers were supposed to be in the classroom to help. However, some of them were gone, and most of them just sat in the back to watch. We should have made time to train them in advance so that they could be more helpful.

After school every day, we met with the volunteers to reflect on what they had done and to discuss their lessons for the following day. Concerns were brought up, and we worked together to find solutions. Although the volunteer teachers were inexperienced in teaching, students were fascinated about these foreigners. They were more eager to speak English than before, and there was definitely a very good relationship between the Chinese, students as well as teachers, and the foreign teachers. Among the hustles and bustles, I smiled and said, "I don't mind coming back to do it again."



Getting students to pay attention in class



Students pose for a class photo

About the author:

Sallie Lee (sallielee96819@yahoo.com) is one of the founders of the Teach Overseas Foundation, a mission of which is to help children in deprived areas to go to school. Lee taught EFL in Hong Kong for four years and has been teaching ESL for over 20 years in Hawaii, mostly in the elementary schools.

Aloha from Ashikaga, Japan By: Jean Kirschenmann



Jean Kirschenmann is an Assistant Professor of ESL at Hawai'i Pacific University. She is spending the 2005-2006 academic year working in the Hakuoh University system of schools in Tochigi Prefecture, Japan and has written a column for this issue of "The Word" to let us know more about her experiences abroad.

It seemed like an easy task in September, agreeing to write a column for this issue of *The Word*. I have had many adventures, so there are many stories to tell. However, every paragraph that is written represents many that are not. I worry that I could leave readers with a false picture because my experiences and ability to make sense of them are limited. Nevertheless, I'll try to give a sense of some professional, pedagogical, and institutional issues that I have experienced.

The professional highlight of my time here so far was attending the conferences of the Japan Association of Language Teaching (JALT) and the Korean affiliate of TESOL (KOTESOL) on glorious autumn weekends in October. Both conferences were held in beautiful facilities and attracted a diverse although mostly domestic crowd. The range of topics and quality of discussion were impressive at both conferences. Many of the talks would have fit right in at Hawai'i TESOL. On the other hand, a few uniquely local concerns about employment practices and use of first language in English classes afforded me the opportunity to see a broader picture of language teaching than I can from my work in just two schools. It was also great to meet friends with Hawaii connections, especially former students who are now English teaching professionals.

Everywhere, English language learners and their teachers are scrutinizing the communicative features in the new TOEFL. It will be interesting to see what the washback effect on studying and teaching is after a few years. No doubt, it will vary from place to place. Similarly, in Japan, all eyes are on the new listening component that will appear in the University Entrance Central Examination (Center Test) beginning in 2006. A recent column in JALT's *The Language Teacher* examines potential effects of this change on English language instruction in Japan ranging from no effect at all to a very positive one.

I was glad to see this discussion about listening because when I first met my students four months ago, most of them did not expect spoken English to be comprehensible. I decided that if I didn't do anything else, I would make sure that they heard and read comprehensible English.

In one activity that has worked well, we are using Aesop's fables, many of which are familiar to students here. First, we look at a picture while I tell a very simple version of the story. Then, I retell the story as students try to write it—yes, a sort of dictation. After they listen, I give them a copy of the story, and they follow the steps that you see in Figure 1. Each week, we learn a new story and review our old stories. In the first several weeks, students could not identify, let alone

attend to, time markers, for example. Now, they call out, "That's the past, right?" Better yet, they can tell several of these fables *in their own words*.

For some comprehensible reading, I decided to keep a journal of my experiences here but to write it in a way that would be easy reading for students. I include a picture with each entry and then post it in several places around the school so that anyone can read it (see Figure 2). I hoped that readers would find the text interesting and accessible enough so that when they encounter something new, they can attend to it and learn from it. Gradually more and more teachers and students have begun to read and comment on the journal. Several teachers have specifically commented on the fact that it is a good example of how to make English easy to understand. The example that appears on Page 7 caught the eye of many students because the picture shows Korean actor Bae Yong-Jun, who is hugely popular in Japan where he is called Yon-sama.

Last week, I was thrilled to realize that I can read and understand 75 out of 78 items written in Japanese on the snack shop menu near my house. I'm not sure whether my journal will ever give my students that kind of thrill, but I hope that they will gradually find greater pleasure in their encounters with English.

Jean can be reached at jkirschenmann@hpu.edu

Figure 1. Example of Aesop's Fable

The Crow and the Pitcher

It was a hot summer day. A thirsty crow found a pitcher. There was some water in the pitcher, but he couldn't reach it. He tried and tried, but he couldn't reach the water. Suddenly, he got an idea. He picked up a small stone and dropped it into the water. The water came up just a little bit. He dropped in another tiny stone, and the water came up a little bit more. He dropped in more and more little stones. Little by little, the water rose until finally, he could take a drink.

Lesson: Little by little does the trick.

- Step 1 Look at the picture and listen to the story.
- Step 2 Listen to the story and write it.

- Step 3 Check your dictation and read the story.
- Step 4 Read the story with your classmate.
- Step 5 Fold the paper so that you cannot see the story. Use the clues below. With your classmate, try to tell the story again. It is OK to change the words.

It was a hot...
A thirsty crow...
There was some water...
He tried...
Suddenly...
He picked up...
The water...
Again and again...
Little by little...



Figure 2. Example of Journal Entry

Korea and Japan Jean's journal entry for October 20, 2005

Last week, I took my first trip to Korea. I visited several former students who are now teaching English there. It was fun to talk with them and to hear about their life and work. I saw World Cup Stadium and beautiful ancient palaces. I climbed a small mountain and saw the beauty of autumn from its peak. I took a drive near the border with North Korea and saw many signs of the military there. I noticed several similarities as well as some differences between Korea and Japan. For example, like in Japan, convenience stores, cram schools, and great restaurants are everywhere. In both countries, people feel safe, and the crime rate is low. It was easier to use a credit card, find an internet café, and buy an English newspaper than in Japan. Korean homes have a wonderful system for heating floors in wintertime. On the other hand, even though Seoul is just as crowded as Tokyo, I didn't see compact cars, trucks, and buses like I see in Japan. There were many Japanese tourists in the market places, so shops were selling products from fancy mushrooms to Yon-sama souvenirs. I enjoyed my trip very much, but I am happy to be back in small-town Japan.

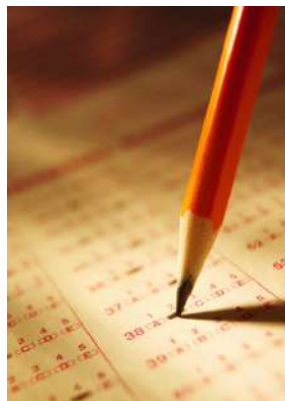


Korean actor Bae Yong-Jun
(known as Yon-sama in Japan)

Issues in High Stakes Testing By: Inés C. Poblet

The debate over the place of high stakes testing in today's American school system is complex and controversial. Ideally, high stakes tests were implemented as a way of safeguarding against students slipping through the cracks of a large educational system. However, this current approach to test-based accountability is uncovering many unintended consequences that must not be overlooked. As a form of assessment, high stakes testing seeks two objectives as its goal: (1) learning important content to internationally accepted standards; and (2) knowing how schools and students rank locally, statewide, and even nationally (Sloane & Kelly, 2003, p.2). The first requires criterion-referenced testing while the second demands norm-referenced testing. These two types of testing are not commonly combined into one single form of assessment, yet high stakes testing claims to do this very thing (Sloane & Kelly, 2003). Each provides a specific kind of evidence through the use of a particular kind of assessment. As a form of assessment, high stakes tests like any other form of assessment are imperfect; hence, the weight and power of high stakes tests in school decision making today should be understood in realistic terms.

One very disquieting issue is the adverse effects that these tests are having on minority students. Statistically, African American and Latino students in the U.S. are the main groups not scoring high enough to earn their high school diploma. A third group of minorities, English language learners, is shown to typically under-perform in these high stakes tests as well. Horn (2003) investigated two state school systems, Massachusetts and North Carolina, for the purpose of analyzing the effects of such testing on minority students. These two states have fully adopted the evaluating system. In the case of Massachusetts, documentation of test results showed an unarguable disparity of scores. A perfect example of this is under the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), a



statewide High stakes test given annually to 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10th grade students where scores show that "while 82% of all White students in the current class of 2003 have met the testing requirements necessary for graduation as of the Fall 2001 retest, only 41% of Hispanics and 48% of African American have met the same goal" (Horn, 2003, p.5). Furthermore, 84% of limited English proficiency students have not yet passed both of these tests (Horn, 2003, p.5). The data from school systems in North Carolina shows that the results of their state wide administered test, known as the Gateway exams, are very similar to those found in Massachusetts. "While 87% of White and 85% of Asian students passed both Gateway exams in 2001, only 62% and 67% of African Americans and Hispanics, respectively, met the same standard (Horn, 2003, p.6).

The disparity of scores between minority students and other groups of students is quite evident, but what is not as clear is what accounts for this large gap to begin with. The statistics of these two school systems bring about a discussion on the effects of socioeconomic background and other such variables/obstacles on student scores and student learning. Casbarro (2005) asks the pertinent question: "Do we really expect schools with a high proportion of English language learners or special education students to perform as well as others? Do we expect the test results of poor urban schools to be comparable with those of schools in affluent suburbs? (p.1-2). The politically correct answer to this question would be in the affirmative. Casbarro (2005) tells us, "politicians say we must have high standards for all students, regardless of their economic background, language or disability" even though statistics show otherwise (p.2). As Casbarro (2005) implies, circumstances outside of the testing situation do indeed impact student scores on high stakes tests the most. In a radio interview with National Public Radio, Mr. Orfield, professor at Harvard University, shares: "these tests are very good at showing where the problems are, and the problems are almost always in very high poverty schools that have very unequal educational opportunities" (Weekend, 2000, p.2). Minority students more than likely attend overcrowded schools in metropolitan areas that are considerably under-

High Stakes Testing (Cont.)

(Continued from page 7)

funded. Parents of these minority students are less educated; their children come to school unfamiliar with the kinds of skills that are tested in the examinations. McNeil of Rice University further explains this point, "A lot of these kids, especially in minority families, are helping raising their brothers and sisters and make their way through complex traffic patterns to school" (Weekend, 2000, p.3). The problem is in the fact that high stakes tests are not sensitive to the cultural and social experiences of students, "these tests don't capture the things they can do (Weekend, 2000, p.3). Such statements lead to the important question: If students are being tested on things that don't actually relate to their daily lives, what do high stakes tests actually test? A possible answer to this question is that students today are being evaluated on how successful they are at taking a specific type of test. Goldberg (2004) says most tests do not measure the range of material any good teacher would teach. Exams from several states all ask the same set of question and never go beyond a certain academic territory" (p.1).

So what can the teacher of ESL/EFL take away from the loaded issue of high stakes testing? Of the positive and negative ramifications on the U.S. education

system one thing is certain, its implementation has brought many to create their own definition of real assessment. Critics of this type of testing are passionate because they want people to know the reality of the situation. As an appropriate conclusion, the president of the Education Testing Service was quoted in admitting that standardized tests, though useful to judge student progress, have turned into a fixation that "misses the larger challenge" (U.S. Department, 1999, p.1). Representing the education of American students, teachers, researchers and representatives of the U.S. school system can look beyond an isolated debate to tackle the larger issue at hand, the quality of education we expect for them today.

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About the Author:

Inés C. Poblet is a M.A. student at HPU studying in the TESL program. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, her research and professional interests concern the effects of culture and society on language and language learners. She looks forward to graduating from the MATESL program this coming May 2006.

Review of WiAOC Conference (2005) By: Dr. J. Perry Christensen

In mid-November, the historic, world premier of the Webheads in Action Online Convergence (WiAOC) 2005, took place over 3 days, November 18 to 20, 2005. Webhead guru, Vance Stevens said that he hopes this is the first of many yet to come. After attending the convergence, I share his sentiments.

There were about 50 scheduled sessions with several big name presenters including Curtis Bonk, David Nunan, Joy Egbert, Dave Sperling, and Randall Davis. I attended about half of them and learned much about the online community and what new online tools are available to teachers. Overall, it made me want to use more technology to complement my traditional teaching tools.

To join the conference, I went to <http://wiaoc.org> and registered. I also uploaded my picture onto Frapper (<http://www.frapp.com/wiaoc2005>) which literally lets you "put your face on the map." Check it out. I'm the only one in Hawaii.



Next, I followed some directions to configure my computer to get it ready for the presentations. For some reason I had to turn off my popup blockers, make sure my cookies were turned on, and adjust my microphone and speaker levels. I

really didn't know how to do much of that, but along every step of the way, I was guided by helpful written instructions. Furthermore, there was always a forum, a live chat, or someone's email from which I could get additional help.

The next step was to print out the schedule and convert all the GMT times and dates to local Hawaiian times and days. This way it would be easier for me to figure out when I needed to be awake and when I could nap.

During the week leading up to the conference, there were several pre-conference sessions, both asynchronous and synchronous. For asynchronous, I participated in Randall Davis'

(Continued on page 9)

WiAOC Conference Review (Cont.)

(Continued from page 8)

online forum which warmed us up for his early morning Saturday presentation. For synchronous, I attended a Web 2.0 Smorgasbord with Nancy White and Elderbob Brannan. This consisted of a live streaming audio and a live chat. Nancy talked about *Folksonomy in Social Communities*. This session alerted me to the new technical vocabulary that was in the field. I generally had no idea what was really going on. Besides the title, Folksonomy, they kept using words like: *tagging*, *flicker*, *JITT (Just in Time Teaching)*, *moodle*, *webinars*, *careo.org*, *merlot.org*, and *del.icio.us*. I thought I was doing well when I had learned what a *blog* was just a few months ago.

Lucky for me most of the presentations were not too technical. When there was an occasional new term, I would simply post my question in the session's chat room and soon someone would answer it.

What I found most interesting about the online convergence was how the sessions were presented. Some were audio streams while others were chat rooms. I also used a free internet phone, Skype, to call in and participate in one session with Elderbob. However, my favorite session format was when there was the multitasking combination of live audio, chatting, whiteboards, and video. This was most evident when the presentation used a program called *Elluminate* (see Figure 1). One part of the Elluminate screen listed the names of all those logged into the session. Another area was for chatting. Then there was a big area for the whiteboard on which the presenter uploaded pictures like in PowerPoint. However, with a whiteboard, participants could also type answers on it so all could see. My favorite part was when presenters would ask where everyone was from. They usually put up a world map, and then we would type our names and sometimes load our pictures on it.

All participation in this conference was through the computer. This meant that wherever I could take my laptop and get an internet signal, I was connected to the convergence. Some sessions I listened to in my office. Others I was sprawled

Figure 1. Screen shot of Elluminate program



out on my living room couch in my pajamas and with my microphone headset on. I remember when Dave Sperling was giving his presentation; I was eating a bowl of Frosted Flakes for breakfast, and nobody knew.

After some of the sessions, I hung around and talked with the presenters using my microphone. I was able to quiz Randall Davis about how he tested his students' listening and speaking abilities, which is something I might not have done in a room filled with people crowding around him. Later, I was able to get to know Vance Stevens some. I

didn't know he went to UH back in the early 80s. We were also able to talk some haole pidgin and share some stink eye using our webcams.

I found the conference to be very low keyed and relaxed. There was a feeling that we were all in this techno chaos together. Many of the presenters were first learning how to present online, and many of the participants were just like me, learning how to get connected to each session.

At the end of the three day convergence, I had made many new online friends. I had learned much about this community of practitioners who gather online to experiment with new ways of using technology in their teaching. I had learned some about blending, which is mixing technology with traditional teaching tools. I was also tired, but invigorated. Furthermore, I was relieved that I didn't have to check out of a hotel, travel to an airport and hop on a plane back to Hawaii. I simply turned off my computer, and I was home, spending the rest of the day with family. I hope to take advantage of more online conferences, which I believe will become more prevalent. This is a great way to bridge the ESL teachers of the world together.

Many of the presentations were recorded and can be accessed through <http://schedule.wiaoc.org>.

About the Author

Perry Christensen is the Hawaii TESOL Webmaster and teaches at BYU-Hawaii. Though not a total webhead, he is interested in practical uses of technology in the classroom.

Book Review

By: Joel Weaver , Director, Intercultural Communications College

Janik, D. *Unlock the Genius Within: Neurobiological Trauma, Teaching and Transformative Learning*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2005. 180 pp. 10 Chapters. 33 refs. Fully-indexed. ISBN 1 57886 291 4. \$33.95.

In this predominantly “No Child Left Behind” era, it’s easy to forget that universal access is only the first step to effective education. What comes next is “unlocking the genius” within these learners.

The second in a series on neurobiological and transformational learning, Dr. Daniel S. Janik’s newest book, *Unlock the Genius Within: Neurobiological Trauma, Teaching and Transformative Learning* contains Dr. Janik’s general theory, tenets and methodology of effective transformative learning. In it, he describes the traumatic roots of traditional teaching, how traditional teaching, while effective, inevitably incurs liabilities, resulting in loss of interest and creativity. Dr. Janik then proceeds to describe the neurobiological foundations of an alternative form of effective *non-traumatic* learning - transformative learning - free of the liabilities of traditional teaching.

Whether in the clinic or classroom, by distance, at home, through tutoring or self-study, Dr. Janik argues for replacing teaching with non-traumatic, curiosity-based, discovery-driven, mentor-assisted, transformative learning. *Unlock the Genius Within* is an accessible read that explains - in conversational manner - the newest ideas on neurobiologically-based, transformative learning

beginning with what’s wrong with education and ending with a call for reader participation in developing and applying transformative learning now.

Dr. Daniel S. Janik, who holds an M.D. in Medicine and a Ph.D. in Linguistics, draws extensively from his own experiences—first as an integrative health physician working with psychological recovery from trauma, and then as an educator and linguist in applying neurobiologically-based transformative learning in clinics, classrooms, tutoring and distance learning venues.

The book features:

- descriptions of classical and contemporary research alongside allusions to popular movies and television programs;
- suggested further readings;
- an extensive index; and
- neurobiological learning internet resources.

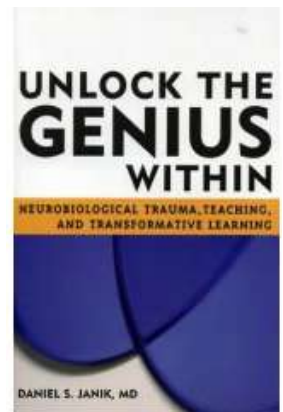
Throughout the book, Janik incorporates humor, wisdom, and anecdotes to draw readers into traditionally incomprehensible concepts and multidisciplinary information that demonstrate various facets of transformational learning. This work will be of interest to all educators including teachers (presecondary, secondary and postsecondary, as well as Eng-

lish and English as a Second Language), administrators, counselors, parents, students, clinicians and researchers.

In my opinion, this work builds on Dr. Janik’s earlier, more technical work, and represents a significant second step towards a single, unified, neurobiologically-based theory and method of effective, nontraumatic learning. The process sometimes appears counterintuitive to a ‘traditional’ teacher, and will probably be initially difficult to implement, but the results I have seen in practice fully justify the temporary discomfort.

“Transformational Learning” appears to reflect an effective, second learning pathway with the power to free learners from the tyranny of teaching, and open the mind to critical thinking.

Applying any form of brain-based learning, especially something as new as neurobiologically-based transformative learning can be a challenge. Even so, the rewards are vast, myriad and tangible. It’s a theory and method worthy of greater application and development for those of us focused on effective learning for all.



What is Hawai'i TESOL?

Hawai'i TESOL is a non-profit educational organization committed to building a community of professionals teaching ESL (English as a Second Language) in the State of Hawai'i.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

THE WORD The newsletter written and edited by Hawai'i TESOL. Articles submitted from members discuss language learning and teaching, practical classroom techniques, and other topics relevant to ESL professionals. The Word is passed out at meetings and is available on our website.

MEETINGS Five times per year, Hawai'i TESOL has meetings open to the entire membership. Each meeting includes time

to meet other ESL professionals and to promote networking.

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT Members of Hawai'i TESOL are responsible for developing programs for the annual Practical Workshops and Conference, and will have the opportunity to give presentations or workshops at these events.

DISCOUNTS Membership in Hawai'i TESOL also provides discounts to the Annual Hawai'i TESOL Conference.

TRAVEL GRANTS Hawai'i TESOL offers travel grants for members to attend our annual conference (from a neighbor island) as well as conferences on the mainland or abroad. For details, visit our website www.hawaiitesol.org.

Hawai'i TESOL Fundraising By: Sally La Luzerne-Oi

For a number of years, Hawai'i TESOL has held raffles at the beginning-of-the-year social and at its conference. Prizes for the raffle have been generously donated by local merchants with proceeds from the raffle going toward travel grants: one to support neighbor island ESL professionals to attend the Hawai'i TESOL conference on O'ahu, and the other to help a Hawai'i TESOL member travel to a TESOL convention outside of Hawai'i. (See the Hawai'i TESOL Web site at www.hawaiitesol.org for information on these grants.)

This year Hawai'i TESOL has undertaken another fundraising endeavor, collecting cartridges, to add to the travel grant funds. This fundraising opportunity is provided by Mr. Ink Plus, located at 670 Auhai St. #A12.



**Printer Ink. Toner and More!
we'll keep you printing**

Not only does Mr. Ink Plus sell inkjet cartridges, laser toner, copier toner, thermal fax ribbons, and dot matrix ribbons at up to 80 percent less than brand name cartridges, but co-owner, Terrence Iwamoto, also pays us \$1.00 for empty cartridges!

In November, we took our first load of cartridges collected by volunteers at the English Language Institute and Second Language Studies department at UH, Trans-Pacific Hawaii College, and Hawai'i Pacific University to Mr. Ink Plus and received a check for \$78 in return. It was a wonderful feeling to know we had added to our funds while also helping save the environment!

We will make one more trip to Mr. Ink Plus in May with empty inkjet cartridges and laser toner cartridges. If you would like to volunteer to collect cartridges at your institution for the May pick up, please contact one of the following members: Randi Perlman at randilynnperlman@yahoo.com, Sally La Luzerne-Oi at slaluzerneoi@hpu.edu, or Yoneko Kanaoka at ykanaoka@transpacific.org.



Article Submission Guidelines: *The Word*

Topics

We welcome any topic which would be of interest to HITESOL members or ESL professionals in Hawaii. We are interested in, for example: recommended internet sites (or a tech type column), book reviews, a grad student's perspective, field trips/learning outside the classroom, reports from members working overseas, content-based teaching ideas, using video and music in the classroom, online teaching, CALL, a "gripes" column, DOE news/concerns, K-12 news, outer island news, applying theory to practice, interview with someone in the field, etc. This list is by no means exhaustive. Please feel free to send any articles about these topics or others that you consider interesting to ESL educators in Hawaii. (You do not have to be a member of HITESOL to submit an article).

Format & Style

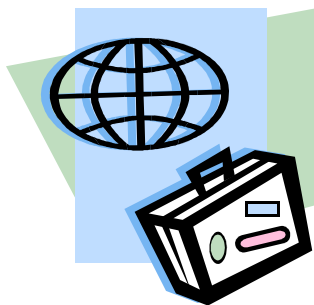
Articles should be no more than 4 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 point, attached as an MS Word document. Accompanying photos or clip art are optional but welcome. Please also include a short biography statement about the author (email address optional). In general, articles are written in a fairly informal, non-scholarly style. Please refer to previous issues of *The Word* to get a sense of the types of articles which appear in the newsletter, or contact the editors with questions.

Submission Deadlines

Please note that the next deadline for submission is Friday, April 28, 2006. Please submit the articles via email to Elise Fader at fadere@byuh.edu.

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

*Elise Fader and Masaki Seo Co-editors,
Michelle Bell layout & design editor of *The Word*.*



Travel Grant Award Winner!

Hawaii TESOL is pleased to announce that Laura Kimoto of Hawaii Community College (Hilo) has been awarded a Hawaii TESOL Travel Grant. She will receive \$500 to travel to the TESOL Convention in Tampa. Congratulations to Laura!



Hawai'i TESOL Upcoming Events

Business Meeting (Thursday, April 6, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.)
Location : Warmer Auditorium, HPU

Language Experience (Monday, May 15, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.)
Location TBA

The annual business meeting serves multiple purposes: to hear reports from members who attended the International TESOL Convention in Tampa, to reflect on Hawai'i TESOL's year of events with reports from the board members, and finally to elect new officers to serve on the board. Have you been thinking about getting more involved in Hawai'i TESOL? This is your opportunity to step up and join the 2006-2007 executive board.

Don't miss our final event of the year – it's always a crowd pleaser! The language experience introduces a lesser-known language through a "mini" lesson by a native or fluent speaker, allowing participants to sample a new language and culture. Audience members have fun attempting an unfamiliar tongue and are reminded what it's like to be the student instead of the teacher. Recent target languages have included Pidgin, Ukrainian, and Indonesian. The target language for 2006? Samoan!

As usual, we'll enjoy dinner and catching up with colleagues at the event. Hope to see you there!

Hawaii TESOL Application/Renewal Form 2006

(Please print legibly)

New Member _____ Renewal _____ (Check One)

Date: _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Email*: _____

(Announcements and reminders will be sent primarily through email)

Work Phone: _____

Alternate Phone: _____

Title / Position: _____

Institution: _____

*Mailing Address if you don't have email:

Membership Dues (Jan 1st to Dec. 31st, 2006)

Regular Membership \$25 _____

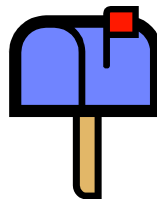
Neighbor Island Membership \$5 _____

Student Membership \$15 _____

Retired Membership \$15 _____

*Contribution _____

Total: _____



Make check payable to Hawai'i TESOL and mail to:

Hawai'i TESOL
TransPacific Hawaii College
5257 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Honolulu, HI 96821
Attn: Nicole Ernst



Disclaimer: TESOL membership does not include affiliate membership, nor does membership in an affiliate grant you TESOL membership.

Questions: Contact *Nicole Ernst* at nicoleernst@TransPacific.org

*HITESOL is a non-profit organization. All contributions are fully tax-deductible.