



HAWAI'I TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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Hawai'i TESOL, the local affiliate of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.), is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a community of professionals teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the state of Hawai'i.

For the latest information about HITESOL events throughout the year, please check our website:

www.hawaiitesol.org

Project-based Learning for an Upper-intermediate Writing Class By Roger Drury

Use of project-based lessons can be an especially effective way to teach language learners. In project-based learning (PBL), students draw from their own interests, experience and abilities to accomplish a task, learning as they proceed. PBL also calls for interaction with the broader world outside the classroom, an important part of language learning. In addition, a typical PBL project is interdisciplinary; the development of the project calls for students to use a range of skills and types of knowledge.

I've been using PBL in my intermediate level writing classes for several years. As part of a typical project, the writing class researches, writes, designs and constructs a web site about several local restaurants. Although I've done such projects many times, I remain surprised each time at how easy it is for me to administer such a project,



how incredibly motivating it is for students, and how much students learn by working on it.

Planning and Teaching

Before the class starts a project, I plan the project's pedagogical objectives and schedule. My upper-intermediate IEP writing classes at the Georgia Tech Language Institute have about 15 students from a range of nationalities. Classes meet five days per week for eight weeks. In a typical writing course, I need to teach paragraph- and then essay-writing, and I need to cover certain rhetorical structures like chronological narration, description, cause-and-effect, and comparison-and-contrast. Given these conditions and objectives, I design a typical restaurant project so that each student has to do writing that will meet these course requirements.

After ensuring that the project meets the curricular requirements, I plan the schedule. In my eight-week session, I follow a schedule that is typical for a writing class with an appropriate amount of time for each assignment. For each restaurant on our web site, I pair the students early in the session and give them a couple of weeks to make their restaurant visit. While they are making these visits, I create the main landing page

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Hawai'i TESOL Holds 2006 Business Meeting By Yoneko Kanaoka

On Thursday, April 6, a small but dedicated group of Hawai'i TESOL officers and members met at Warner Auditorium on the HPU campus for the annual business meeting. Attendees enjoyed a delicious dinner of spicy Malaysian curry from Green Door Café, and spent the first hour of the event socializing and catching up with each other. The high-spirited atmosphere was enhanced by the "virtual" presence of Perry Christensen, Jeff Mehring, and Jean Kirschenmann, who teleconferenced into the event from Laie, the Big Island, and Japan, respectively.

When the initial excitement (and a few technological glitches) settled down, the business portion of the meeting got underway. Yoneko Kanaoka began with a look back at Hawai'i TESOL's first three events of the year: the annual social in September, the practical workshops in November, and the conference in Febru-



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Hawai'i TESOL Holds 2006 Business Meeting (cont.)



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ary. Mark James spoke in more detail about the success of the 2006 conference, which garnered the highest turnout in Hawai'i TESOL's history (270 attendees) along with positive feedback on conference evaluation forms. Reports from the membership secretary and treasurer showed the organization holding steady at 150 paid members, and our finances in good shape as we close the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

Two special reports concluded the business discussion. First, webmaster Perry Christensen talked about his experiences attending the Webheads in Action Online Conference. With the assistance of Masaki Seo, Perry demonstrated some of the teleconferencing capabilities available to ESL teachers online, both for classroom instruction and for professional development. Hawai'i TESOL can certainly make use of some of these resources to involve its neighbor island and international members more effectively, as evidenced at the business meeting itself.

Finally, Hawai'i TESOL member Donna Prather reported about her experiences at the 2006 TESOL Convention in Tampa, Florida. Due to time constraints, Donna focused on only one of the many presentations she attended, an evaluation by ETS of the First Six Months of the New TOEFL Test. In their report, ETS covered the four parts of the iBT test (Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing) and highlighted how the current test design differs from previous TOEFL formats. Donna distributed handouts to all attendees detailing the new scoring rubrics, useful information for all of us around the state as our institutions begin the transition to iBT.



At the end of the business meeting, elections were held for the 2006-2007 Hawai'i TESOL executive board. We are very pleased to welcome Randi Perlman as our new President. Congratulations Randi! Other new board members include Jeff Mehring (Treasurer) and Florian Rouch (SocioPolitical Action Chair). Welcome, Jeff and Florian, and *mahalo* to all continuing board members (see complete listing on page 12). We thank all of you for your outstanding service to the organization and to the TESOL community in Hawai'i.



Hawai'i TESOL will finish the year with our final event on May 15: the Language Experience, featuring the Samoan language. Have a wonderful summer, everyone, and see you at the opening social in September!

Hawai'i TESOL 2006 By Mark James

Although "dreams" of holding this year's annual conference in Vegas never materialized (much to Yoneko's relief!), holding the conference at Kapi'olani Community College was a great success. A BIG mahalo goes to Shawn Ford, who was this year's Associate Chair, and on-site "go-to" guy. Miraculously, all the technology worked, and the ice cream machine never ran out!

This year saw new records set. Over 250 people attended, and the number of proposals this year far outnumbered the number of slots on the program. The Program Committee agreed that this was the first time their job was so painful—having to look over and evaluate the various proposals (by their own colleagues) knowing that not all, though worthy, could be accepted.

Financially, the conference continues to be profitable. Though the costs for lunch, snacks, and the program booklet, etc have grown with increased attendance, the costs have been cushioned by the efforts of many who help in copying, folding, stapling, stuffing, running to Costco, and so on. We are lucky also that we are able to find locations that do not charge us an arm and a leg for their facilities. We were very grateful to the Administration of KCC this year for their generosity.

Academically, there was healthy variety and solid quality throughout the day's sessions, sand-

wiched by two excellent plenaries by Dr. Lourdes Ortega (UH-Manoa) and Dr. Neil Anderson (BYU-Provo). We were also pleased to have on the program the first Hawaii DOE "ESLL Teacher of the Year" awardee, Ms. Diane Murakami, from Queen Kaahumanu Elementary School. We hope that each year's awardee will be a part of future conferences. Publishers were there in greater numbers, as were poster presenters.

Thanks again to the work of Sally LaLuzerne-Oi and Amanda Peeni, we saw another successful Student Poster Session—a feature that we hope will continue to grow and develop into a standard attraction at future conferences. We hope our "future colleagues" in Hawaii's TESOL teacher education programs find poster sessions one of the best ways to jump into the professional arena, and make connections.

At the end of the day, raffle and door prizes amply rewarded many who stayed the afternoon. A big mahalo to all of you who contributed to the raffle and to the local vendors and publishers who offered prizes. Finally, many thanks to all of you who came out to take part in this successful event. See you next year!

About the Author:

Mark James is Associate Professor in the Department of English Language Teaching and Learning at BYU-Hawaii. He served for the past two years as Chair of the Hawaii TESOL's annual conference.

Pictures from the Hawai'i TESOL 2006



On behalf of Hawai'i TESOL, we would like to thank the following local businesses for their donations to the Hawaii TESOL Travel Grant Raffle at the annual conference in February. Thank you for your support of the language teaching community in Hawaii.

- Big City Diner
- Kona Brewing Company
- Paul Brown
- Great Harvest Bread Company
- Big Island Candies

Publishers and Publications

- Yevshan Publishing (the largest Ukrainian publisher in North America)
- ESL Magazine
- English Teaching Professional
- Modern English Teacher
- TESL Reporter



Reflecting on an Academic Year in Hawai'i

By Maryna Tsehelska



We all like to note that time flies, and it does pass with a speed of a jet when you do what you enjoy and the environment is friendly and supportive. This happened to me in Hawai'i – time flew like an Aloha Airlines plane, and soon I'll have to say good-bye to people who did so much for me here and places that brought so much joy.

The academic year that I've spent as Fulbright Scholar at Hawai'i Pacific University was very productive – it gave me an opportunity to gather material for research, to get acquainted with HITESOL members and take part in HITESOL events, to learn more about the MATESL program at HPU, and, last but not least – to experience Hawai'i, which is a unique spiritual and cultural place. This short article is my first attempt to sum up the Hawai'i impressions and reflect on the academic year in paradise that was noted by many blessings and endeavors.

I consider myself really fortunate to be affiliated with HPU and the MATESL program. This program is very close to what I do in Ukraine at Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, which also has a Masters program for EFL teachers. It was interesting to compare the programs' objectives, core and elective courses and capstones. Observing classes at HPU I noticed how carefully future educators are trained: they are constantly involved in discussions about teaching; there are a lot of opportunities to share the experience for those who have it and to get advice for those who are only planning to step on the educator's path.

The TESL programs at HPU emphasize classroom pedagogy, and care is taken to connect theory to practice. I found it very useful that in the methods classes students do micro-teaching and develop teaching units. Students in the English Phonology and Teaching Pronunciation class work with ESL students to help them improve their pronunciation. A lot of what I saw at HPU can be introduced in the Ukraine.

Also, I'm really happy that there was an opportunity to combine the research grant with the involvement in Hawai'i TESOL events. Being an active member of TESOL-Ukraine, I was always interested in ways of improving the work of affiliation, and Hawai'i-TESOL is a good example for its sister-affiliate. As HITESOL has a much longer experience, we can model our activities by yours. With Sally LaLuzerne-Oi, a liaison between two organizations, we wrote an article for the TESOL-Ukraine newsletter describing HITESOL events, and on coming home I plan to make a presentation about our sister-affiliate at the

TESOL-Ukraine annual conference.

Another important moment for me was participation in HITESOL events. It was interesting to observe how people work, and how much TESOL members do for the organization. I admired the support of people, their willingness to learn something new and to share ideas.

It was also a time to think about the future of this partnership, that unites two countries from the opposite sides of the globe. How can we make it beneficial for the members of both affiliates? The most important aspect is people, as only the people you meet represent to you the country and make it real, not just a spot on the world map. Now, when I've met and talked to so many people from Hawai'i TESOL, I'll try to do my best to help with partnership activities.

The third blessing was Hawai'i. I came here with a project that aimed to research political correctness from a critical point of view and point out the strategies that can be used in teaching EFL students. After observing this truly multicultural place, I ended up with the studying of the non-biased language strategies that help promote understanding between people in a diverse society.

Hawai'i is a uniquely spiritual place, which people quickly fall in love with. Reflecting on living here, I understood that there were some moments that showed how much I love Hawai'i – big sorrow when because of the rains all tourists vanished and no one was taking pictures in front of Kamehameha the Great statue, and when the beaches were deserted after the sewage spill. And sudden joy when the sun beams brought tourists back in front of the statue again. It was like a signal – everything will be OK!

This article is a good chance to thank all the people who I got acquainted with here and who will always be in my heart: to Sally LaLuzerne-Oi – the best host and adviser one can wish for, to Yoneko Kanaoka, Jennifer Wharton and Randy Perlman, who truly represent the vibrant spirit of the organization, and to all the people whom I met here. Special thanks goes to Elise Fader, who asked me to write about the impressions and made me begin summing up what was done in Hawai'i.

With the world getting smaller and the means of transportation getting faster, my dream will be to meet people from Hawai'i at the TESOL conference in Ukraine, on the other side of the globe. I hope one day it will come true.

About the Author:

Dr. Maryna Tsehelska is the Chair of the English Language and Methodology Department at Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University, Ukraine. She is also a Senior Fulbright Scholar 2005/2006 affiliated with the MATESL Program at Hawai'i Pacific University.

About Our Sister Affiliate:

TESOL Ukraine was formed in June 1995 and received International Affiliate status in October 1996. The membership includes over 500 educators involved in secondary and higher education. The organization sponsors many regional conferences as well as the annual national conference which takes place in January. Members of TESOL Ukraine receive four TESOL Ukraine Newsletters annually. More information about our sister affiliate can be found at <http://www.tesol-ukraine.org.ua>

Being an EFL High School and Kindergarten Teacher in Fukushima, Japan

By Tomonori Ono

As a fresh, 23-year-old student who had just completed my undergraduate studies in Australia, I came back to Japan wishing to teach English. I got a job straight away at a private high school and kindergarten in Fukushima, where I discovered that being half-Japanese meant being 'Japanese'. I came to realize that since most of my education was done abroad, I had in effect, lost touch with Japanese society somewhat. Several aspects of Japanese culture were so unfamiliar that I had to learn them, such as the term "*dokyusei*" which means peers who are equal in every sense of the word. The term meant that it was sometimes not only necessary, but desirable to lower my performance or ability so that it fit in with the group. As a first-year teacher, it meant going out and socializing with the other first-year teachers, irrespective of my personal habits or dislikes. In Japan, those who have entered a class or institution in the same year have a mutual obligation to support and help each other in every situation. Therefore, the teachers closest to me were always the same teachers that had also just begun teaching. More importantly, the term also defined how my students interacted with each other, their behavior, way of thinking and in some cases, academic performance. It was something that I needed to always be aware of when evaluating my students. Fortunately, knowledge of the Japanese language and my own experiences as a former student at high school reunions helped me put a value on the attachment of peers. I also learned that it was important to keep in mind that education knows no boundaries, and that the EFL teacher is a teacher first and an EFL instructor second. This was regarded as the norm by my fellow teachers at both high school and kindergarten.

My duties as an EFL kindergarten teacher consisted of teaching five classes, each with about 20-24 children. The classes were separated by age ranging from 3 to 5 years old and were represented by a different animal and color. Each child within the class was given his/her own unique name tag identified by a personal animal or object. The logic behind this was that children learned to associate things better visually, and it provided for a friendlier learning atmosphere. My lessons were based on songs, activities and games under the approval of the homeroom teacher. One important aspect that all the homeroom teachers were in agreement on was the need for using the same song to start and finish my lessons so the children knew when class began and ended. I found the work hard, having to put long hours from 7:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., but also very enjoyable as the children bonded with me after a while. Teaching duties aside, I was expected to supervise the children during field trips, events and assist the homeroom teachers at all times. There were also daily meetings with the homeroom teachers to make lesson plans, and some of the work on the weekends was unpaid. However, knowing that all my effort was for the children's benefit helped me pull through, and I remember being impressed by the selflessness and dedication of the homeroom teachers. I realized that irrespective of nationality, children are the same the world over, and Japanese kindergartens are no different from American kindergartens. Within the Japanese education

system, kindergartens are the most free and flexible learning environments, comparable to Western education.

As an EFL high school teacher, my duties consisted of teaching the English immersion component of the curricula for grade 10 to 12. The program was different in that only four students of each grade were chosen to undergo the course, which included an overseas study period at a school in California. The classes were divided by grade, with instruction hours varying according to grade level. I taught three classes per week for grade 10, six for grade 11 and four for grade 12. Due in part to the student's increased exposure to English both abroad and in class, I noticed that their academic performance in English was above the national average. Two of my grade 11 students had passed the Eiken2 tests targeted for grade 12 by the Ministry of Education. Although the small class size could have been a contributing factor, I believe that the student's own motivation and the time spent abroad mainly contributed to their success.

As a junior teacher at the school, I had to adapt to the Japanese work ethic of working late. That meant NEVER being the first one to leave after work, having to wait for the senior teachers to leave first since the education system is highly hierarchical. It also meant that I had to show up to work the next day before they arrived. As a result, my working hours were longer than what was stated on the contract. Typically, I would arrive to work at 7:50 a.m. and leave at 7:00 p.m. Still, this was what my "*dokyusei*" colleagues were doing too, so I did not feel too discouraged. What I found most difficult was that Christmas was not a public holiday in Japan, and it happened to be the period of entrance exams for junior high students wishing to enter the school. Consequently, I ended up marking papers during the festivities. I think that our group of teachers did not finish correcting till 11:30 p.m. All I remember afterwards was being very tired. Nevertheless, I really enjoy teaching and I hope that other EFL teachers feel the same way about it too. Teachers all around the world, irrespective of field, have something in common.

About the Author:

Tomonori Ono, MA TESL at HPU. Australian/Japanese, languages: English/French/Japanese. BA with Distinction at CQU, AUS. Majors: Japanese language and world history. Dean's letter. Membership into the Golden Key International Honour Society. I have been educated with a multicultural background, grades K-5 in Japan, 6-12 in Belgium and graduated from Central Queensland University in Australia. I have taught for a year at a private Japanese high school and kindergarten. I am interested in promoting intercultural understanding, and I really enjoy teaching.

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Project-based Learning... (cont.)

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for the class, and the students begin writing biographical (narrative) paragraphs. By the time they move to the other assignments, they have visited the restaurants and can use that information in their writing. They base their descriptive, cause-and-effect, and comparison/contrast writing on information from their restaurant visit.

In addition to organizing the visits, the only other scheduling consideration for my project is that I reserve a day toward the end of the session to show students how to create a simple web page. I accomplish this task in a simple, two-stage process. First, as a homework assignment, they have to create a folder for their restaurant; they will later save all their web pages and photos into this folder. After this stage, I use a class period to show the students how to do a web page. I can usually accomplish this task in twenty minutes, but I give students the entire period so they can work on some of their pages. Students do most of their web site construction as homework after this class of instruction.

Publishing the Web Site

My technology work in this course peaks with the class on how to create web pages; publishing the site is relatively easy. While this process will vary according to how each school has organized its web space for faculty, in my case, I simply take the students' folders, each folder containing all the files for a particular restaurant, and I put them on our Internet drive. After these folders are on

the Internet, I create a link from the class landing page to each of the restaurant folders. If the students have done their work correctly, the site will work perfectly; if not, the students troubleshoot to find the problems.

My Role in the Web Site Work

PBL is a student-centered undertaking, so I remain very hands-off as the students work on their web pages. In my conduct of the course, my focus is steadfastly on the student writing and not on how the students' web pages look after they've done their writing. I offer students a couple of standard design tips on one of the handouts, but these principles are broad, and I by no means enforce or urge them. I publish student pages in the condition they give them to me, whether the pages have good design or not.

I also limit my technical assistance. As a language teacher, I'm definitely no technical expert, and I don't want the students to think of me as their technical consultant. The few elements of web page construction that we use are very simple; if students want to try more complicated elements, I certainly allow that, but I make it clear that the student is totally responsible for such work. Likewise, if there are problems with their web site, I do not fix the problems myself. I tell the student that a link doesn't work or a photo doesn't appear, and I have the students fix their own pages.

I also do not compel students to finish their web pages. Because this is a writing class, my goal is for the students to

have learned to write by completing their assignments. That said, I find that most students finish their web pages and, in fact, often pressure me to hurry with their final essay corrections so they can put their last essay on their web site.

Conclusion

I have found that using a PBL approach in this writing class has been very effective. From a teaching perspective, I had to learn some basic elements of making web pages in order to guide the students, but the result of that relatively small investment of my time has been a huge improvement in student motivation and learning. The PBL approach to teaching is not limited to technology-based projects and certainly warrants attention in the teaching of any type of class.

Useful links

Sample web projects from my upper-intermediate writing classes

<http://web.li.gatech.edu/~rdrury/500/writing/index.html>

Links to sites about PBL and my handouts for web page construction:

<http://web.li.gatech.edu/~rdrury/teacher/pbl.html>

Free web site hosting (for teachers without access at school)

<http://www.tripod.lycos.com/>

About the Author:

Roger Drury teaches in the IEP of Georgia Tech in Atlanta. He has also taught in France and Colombia, the latter as a Fulbright Scholar. He develops ESP courses with a CALL emphasis.

Reflections on the TESOL Convention in Tampa, Florida

By Shawn Ford



In March of this year I had the fortune to attend the annual TESOL Convention and Exhibition in Tampa, Florida. This was my second TESOL attendance. Being one of only a few Hawaii TESOL members who made it to the national convention this year, I was invited to contribute a reflection to *The Word* about my experience. Other than a few outstanding sessions on community college ESL programs and on generation one-point-five issues that I attended, I made a few observations about the national TESOL convention that might make your next visit possible or make your next visit more productive.

To begin with, when crafting your presentation proposal, seriously consider the interest section that you want to submit to. The most popular sections,

such as *ESL in Higher Education, Research, and CALL*, receive hundreds of submissions, but are allotted only a set number of presentation slots. On the other hand, sections such as *Program Administration, Materials Writers, and Refugee Concerns* are given a smaller number of slots but receive far fewer submissions than the more popular sections. Considering its appropriateness to the interest section and its perceived contribution to the convention, your chances of being accepted might be greater if you submit your proposal to one of the less-popular sections.

Also be aware that TESOL has a new presentation format called the *report*, which first became an option for the TESOL 2006 convention. The report session format is a 20-minute slot; two slots are combined to fit the standard 45-minute

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Reflections on the TESOL Convention... (cont.)

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paper session. Reports are reserved for summaries of research in progress or for topics that wouldn't fill entire 45-minute slots. Each interest section is given a set number of report sessions throughout the convention time period. The effect of the report is that each interest section has more presentation possibilities. When completing your proposal form, you might want to consider selecting the report as a second choice, in addition to the regular paper session option, if you're looking for the typical presentation experience.

Your hotel accommodation is yet another thing to consider when initially planning your conference trip. You might want to consider booking a room at the convention hotel or at one of the TESOL contracted hotels within the immediate vicinity of the convention site. Benefits of these options include cost and location. In Tampa, by the time my roommate and I booked a room, the only hotels available were near the airport, 10 miles from the convention site. Not only was the room more expensive than those at the hotels closer to the convention site, but I had to take TESOL buses to and from the convention and taxis on a few occasions when returning to my room late at night. I wound up paying much more than I would have if I had booked a room at a hotel closer to the convention site.

Be advised that the convention hotel usually sells out within several hours after online booking for the convention opens on the TESOL web site, so if you want to stay in the convention hotel, you should note the opening date and time and set aside a few hours for booking. Even the TESOL contracted hotels within the immediate vicinity of the convention site sell out within a day or two at max, so you should still try to make your reservations as soon as online booking opens. The main drawback here is that you may not have received your presentation notification by the time online booking opens; however, you might want to consider the possibility of transferring your booking to a colleague if your presentation is not accepted, or just attend the convention anyway as a wonderful professional development opportunity.

Once you're at the TESOL convention, you're going to want to plan your time as

wisely as possible so as to maximize your experience. At the Tampa convention I made an effort to attend as many early morning and evening *discussion group* sessions as possible. As with any other session format, the value of the session is largely determined by the presenters and the actual content. I attended one session that was interesting and informative, but I attended several more that were a complete waste of my time. These wasted sessions seemed to me to have been misrepresented in the convention catalog, and the presenters didn't do a good job of "discussing" their topic with the audience; the presenters clearly had their own agendas with information to convey, similar to regular presentation sessions, although in informal, roundtable settings. After TESOL, I asked a knowledgeable friend about his take on discussion group sessions, and he informed me that these sessions are put together by session chairs usually by asking their friends because people do not put in proposals for discussion groups. Consequently, discussion group sessions aren't necessarily peer reviewed and aren't necessarily of the highest standard. My advice to you is to choose wisely when deciding whether or not you're going to attend these discussion group sessions.

On the first day of the Tampa TESOL convention, there were a number of poster sessions that looked interesting, so I planned to spend my lunch hour checking out posters. About fifteen minutes before the session start time, a large mass of a hundred or so convention attendees had gathered by the entrance to the poster session area. I didn't think about it much at the time, but once the poster session area was opened, the crowd of attendees rushed in like a pack of crazed shoppers at a day-after-Thanksgiving sale. I noticed that a majority of the crowd moved quickly from poster to poster, collecting handouts from the 30-or-so presenters without even stopping to look at the posters. A few minutes later, I overheard a presenter tell an attendee that he had brought 100 handouts but was already out. This was the case for all of the presentations. Presenters were offering to send their handouts to the remaining attendees by e-mail instead. After an-

other 15-20 minutes, the crowd had thinned out to only a few dozen attendees, with another 40 minutes left for the session. However, I was so dazed by the process at that point that I didn't want to hang out any longer, so I decided to leave. Then I realized what had happened: All of these attendees weren't even interested in the poster session presentations; they were just after the ideas that they could get from the handouts. A few days later I attended another poster session but arrived thirty minutes after it had started. There was almost no crowd, I took my time, I talked to presenters, and I gained some good, solid ideas about reading and vocabulary.

A final consideration for planning your time at the national TESOL convention is to plan your itinerary around interest section topics, for example, higher education, or reading, or listening. If you plan your time around interest sections, then you'll maximize the possibility of getting information that you're looking for.

Regarding interest sections, there may be a change in the near future that will be of interest to some of you. There is talk among higher education interest section members who are affiliated with community colleges to split off and form a new, separate interest section. The justification being given by some members is that community colleges and other four-year colleges and universities have very different populations, needs, and demands, and, therefore, that community college members would be better informed by TESOL if there is a community college interest section.

I encourage everyone who has the time and the means to attend a national TESOL convention. It's a wonderful experience. I hope you find some of these ideas helpful to your future conference planning, and I hope to see some of you at TESOL 2007 in Seattle.

About the Author:

Shawn Ford teaches in the ESOL program at Kapi'olani Community College. His courses include an online section of freshman comp, a web-based multi-media journal for intensive college-prep-level courses (go to <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~sford/alternatv/archives.html>), and a freshman comp/linguistics learning community on the theme of "interlanguage". His current projects include co-developing an EFL/ESL teaching certificate program at KCC and researching "reading- and writing-to-learn".

Sentence Diagramming as a Method of Teaching Grammar and Sentence Structure in an ESL Context

By Larry Rhodes

For a good many years now, the usefulness of sentence diagramming as a method of teaching grammar to native speakers has been largely dismissed by the English teaching establishment. English teachers often claim that the method has little or no impact on the way native speakers think about or understand the grammar of their language. Typically, detractors maintain that students already have an implicit (if flawed) understanding of grammar, and that efforts to give explicit expression to that understanding are irrelevant, unnecessary, or useless.

Regardless of the supposed merits of this position, such arguments cannot be applied to adults learning English in an ESL context. I teach English grammar at a local language school where a majority of the students are Japanese. My students often ask questions regarding the relationships between various words or groups of words in a sentence. Generally speaking (and with important exceptions), these students were not high achievers in junior high and high school, and they typically disliked English grammar when they were studying it. When they ask questions about sentence structure, they rarely express themselves by making reference to appropriate grammatical terminology. Although their questions often concern modification, they do not actually use that term.

(They may not even know what the word “modification” means.) Instead, they often use earthier Japanese expressions, such as “*sasu*” or “*kakaru*”—very informal words, which convey a meaning similar to “modify,” but which lack any academic airs.

The fact that my students are so very earnest in questioning me about modification and sentence structure suggests that they have a genuine need for explicit understanding—the kind of understanding that comes from consciously and deliberately struggling with the abstract nature of grammar. While most of my students are unable to give sophisticated expression to their questions through the use of proper grammatical terminology, they, nevertheless, continually demonstrate that their struggles with English grammar have led them to ask the right kinds of questions about it. This confirms in my mind that a carefully detailed study of grammar is, indeed, important in mastering a foreign language; that an adult simply cannot learn a new language without, at least, some reference to already “learned” grammar concepts (i.e., the grammar and structures of one’s own native language) and that instruction methods which de-emphasize the importance of grammar are unrealistic.

Students who have learned to ask the right kinds of questions about grammar are, in fact, on a well-trodden path toward success in learning, and they are not likely to respond

optimally to teaching methods which *only* stress so-called “natural” learning because, quite frankly, there is little which can be said to be natural about it. The fact is that all beginning students think primarily in their own native language. Grown adults do not merely think ideas; they think ideas *in actual words*. At some level, therefore, as beginning students attempt to use English, they are aware that whenever they want to say “A” in their language, they must say “B” in English.” This thinking process is, in short, nothing more or less than the very definition of grammar translation itself.

Unlike native speakers, adult learners have no implicit understanding of the grammar of the new language they are attempting to learn and must somehow develop an explicit understanding of unfamiliar grammar concepts before they can hope to internalize them. But how can students make sense of a grammar which bears little obvious resemblance to that of their own native language—the only grammar for which they have an intuitive understanding? At some level, most efforts directed towards grammar-oriented language learning require students to analyze the grammar patterns of their own language and compare them with those of the language under study. This requires that students be cognizant of the peculiar features of their own language for the first time, perhaps, in

their lives. While the process is, admittedly, difficult in the beginning, identification of the parts of speech and their functions in sentences (both of the student’s native language and the language under study), eventually provides the means by which to analyze and understand the structures of the new language.

One of the reasons that students have trouble with grammar-oriented approaches to foreign language learning is that they often lack an explicit understanding of the grammar of their own language. Because grammar translation is by nature formulaic, bad input necessarily leads to bad output. Of course, all people have an implicit understanding of the grammar of their own language, but grammar-oriented approaches to foreign language learning require students to develop an explicit understanding prior to tack-

ling the grammar of a second language. I have often observed my students looking up unfamiliar grammar terms in their dictionaries and scribbling them down in the margins of their grammar textbooks. But upon close investigation, I typically find that they rarely understand the meanings of these grammar terms—even after having found equivalent terms in their own language. Looking them up in the dictionary, therefore, fails to shed any light on the meaning of the words. As a result, students do not really understand the explanations in their grammar textbooks. Some means must be found to give real meaning to grammar terminology. While games and mock conversations and role play and various other attempts



Sentence Diagramming... (cont.)

at intuitive learning approaches are admirable, they are generally insufficient to provide students with the means by which to translate and understand the meaning of the grammar explanations in their textbooks.

I have found that sentence diagramming can be a useful tool for students learning English as a second language because:

Diagrams allow students to “see” the way the words in a sentence relate to one another. The diagram is, therefore, a kind of visual aid and works well for students who are visual learners.

Diagrams help students develop an explicit understanding of grammar components and structures that may not exist in their own language.

Diagrams allow students to tackle complex sentences that would, perhaps, be more difficult to translate and fully understand without a structured approach. (For this reason, diagrams seem to be particularly useful in translation.)

Diagrams force students to internalize grammar concepts and, consequently, to master grammar terminology. This allows them to read the explanations in their English language grammar textbooks with a deeper level of understanding.

Diagrams provide students a unique way to demonstrate that they do, indeed, have a correct understanding of various grammar concepts. It is often possible to guess the correct answers on homework exercises, quizzes, and tests. It is not possible to diagram a complicated sentence correctly merely by guessing. A correctly diagrammed sentence is essentially a proof of accurate understanding.

Limitations:

Diagrams are of little value in helping students master the fine points of English grammar. Their greatest value is in helping students grasp the basics of structure. (Diagrams are of no value, for instance, in helping students learn whether a particular verb takes a gerund or an infinitive. On the other hand, diagrams can be helpful in showing students when they can drop relative pronouns or when commas are required in a sentence.)

When the native language of the student is structurally similar to English, diagrams are less valuable than when the structure of the student’s language is wildly dissimilar to English. The practice of diagramming does, however, force students to use English grammar terminology, and an accurate understanding of the terminology is always helpful in reading and understanding the explanations in the grammar textbooks.

Diagrams are of less value to students who are not visual learners and/or students who have particular difficulty struggling with the abstract nature of grammar analysis. This, however, is not necessarily the fault of diagramming itself as an approach to teaching gram-

mar. Many students seem to have difficulty understanding grammar concepts regardless of the specific approach utilized. (Example: “Teacher, I just don’t understand what it means here where it says in the book that “a direct object is a thing which directly receives the action of a verb.” The textbook says that, in the sentence “The man ate some cake,” “cake” is the direct object, but that doesn’t make sense, does it? Didn’t the man *receive* the cake? How could the cake receive anything?”)

I have found that by using sentence diagramming as a means of analyzing English grammar, most of my students have developed an explicit understanding of both English and Japanese grammar, as well. This phenomenon is no more apparent than when I hear my students claim to have learned something “new” about their own language while struggling with English grammar. Many times I have heard students say, “I’ve learned more about Japanese while trying to learn English here in America than I learned when I was a student back in Japan.” The claim suggests that these students are, in fact, at some level, whether consciously so or not, making reference to already implicitly “learned” grammar concepts—concepts which they are only now learning to identify explicitly in their own native language. Their struggle is successful whenever they can make the claim that they have learned something new about their own language because what they have actually developed is an explicit understanding of their own language, making a greater understanding of English grammar possible.

Note: The purpose of this article is only to make an argument on behalf of using traditional sentence diagrams as a means of teaching English grammar and structure in an ESL context; not to explain the actual use of such diagrams. Anyone interested in learning how to use sentence diagrams can find a plethora of useful information by conducting a web search using the key words “sentence diagramming.”

About the Author:

Larry Rhodes teaches grammar and translation courses at Academia Language School. He also teaches political science at Wayland Baptist and Hawaii Pacific universities. Larry Rhodes was employed by the Japanese Ministry of Education and later worked as a reporter for Shin’etsu Broadcasting Company. In 1998, he was granted an audience with the Emperor and Empress of Japan to discuss the results of his research on education and youth employment in Japan. rhodesln@hotmail.com



Position Statement on Adolescent English Language Learners in Adult ESL Programs in the United States

As the population of English language learners continues to grow dramatically in the United States, so does the population of English language learners in U.S. public schools. In recent years the population of adolescent English language learners has grown steadily not only in secondary schools, but in many adult education programs as well. The increased use of high-stakes testing in high schools, such as exit exams, now required by many states, has led to increased pressure regarding academic achievement for all secondary students. As a result, many adolescent English language learners, especially those who have limited or no formal education, are choosing, are encouraged, or are forced to turn to adult education programs to improve their English language proficiency and complete their education.



Adolescent English language learners are a broad and diverse group with many different needs. They may be newly arrived immigrants, or first- or second-generation children of immigrants (sometimes referred to as generation 1.5.) Some may have a solid educational background, while others may have had interrupted or even no formal schooling. Of those with interrupted or no formal schooling, many lack literacy skills in their native language, making it more difficult to develop academic proficiency in English. Compounding the challenges for these students in particular are cultural and social adjustments they often face as they meet the demands of U.S. high schools.

Federal law mandates that students cannot be discriminated against on the basis of national origin and that districts must take the necessary steps to provide an appropriate education for English language learners. Adult education programs are not typically designed to meet the specific academic needs of adolescents, and therefore it is inappropriate for schools to direct adolescent English language learners toward such programs to complete their education. TESOL strongly opposes efforts to encourage the early withdrawal of adolescent English language learners from high school in order to boost the academic ratings and test scores at the high school level.

To address the needs of the growing adolescent English language learner population, many communities have estab-

lished a variety of secondary education programs. These programs, such as transitional ESOL high schools, newcomer programs, or English language summer programs, focus on providing intensive English instruction in order to accelerate English language development and aid students in earning their high school diplomas. Some programs also offer unique features such as flexible schedules in order to meet the needs of older students. Families must be provided with several options and must be allowed to decide what best meets their needs.

TESOL supports the development and implementation of such programs geared toward meeting the specialized needs of adolescent English language learners in helping them to achieve the same high academic expectations and goals of their native-English-speaking peers. These programs must lead to full standard diplomas that allow them to further their postsecondary education and access job opportunities that require a high school diploma. As this population of learners continues to grow, resources should be committed for these programs as well as for providing professional development for educators trained to meet these learners' unique needs. However, when these resources do not exist or have not yet been sufficiently developed, TESOL supports the rights of English language learners to remain in attendance in their appointed high school until such time as the law requires them to leave.

Finally, school districts should establish transitional programs to assist students in identifying and developing their long-term goals. Such transitional programs would seek out a variety of vocational, apprentice, and precollegiate support for students according to their specific needs. TESOL strongly advocates for collaboration and articulation between secondary schools and local post-secondary institutions (such as adult education programs or community colleges) so that these learners can complete their educations and achieve academic success.



*Approved by the Board of Directors
March 2006*

Response to the Debate on Comprehensive Immigration Reform

On December 16, 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (HR 4437), a border security bill targeting illegal immigrants. Since its passage, the debate over the issue of illegal immigration in the United States has resulted in significant public protests. These protests have been carried out by immigrants and their supporters from such diverse groups as educational institutions, civil rights organizations, social service groups, unions, and houses of worship. No one is left untouched by this debate. In fact, the eyes of the world are carefully focused on the how this debate will result in political and cultural change in the United States.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) represents approximately 14,000 members in more than 120 countries, in addition to 91 independent affiliates (47 inside the United States) composed of more than 47,000 additional members. As an organization whose mission is to ensure excellence in English language teaching to speakers of other languages, and whose members in the United States work daily with immigrants and their families, TESOL is very concerned about several of the immigration reform proposals currently under consideration in the U.S. Congress, as well as the tenor of the nationwide political debate.

With estimates of 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, there are clearly challenges with the U.S. immigration system. However, the issues are more complex

than suggested by many of the proposals currently being made in the U.S. Congress. Solutions will not be reached by demonizing immigrants and their families. Draconian proposals such as building walls and turning undocumented workers into criminals are not only unworkable, but also are contrary to the values of pluralism, acceptance, and tolerance that make the United States such an attractive country in which to work, learn, and live.

Furthermore, TESOL is troubled by proposals to penalize those who offer assistance to undocumented workers and their families. English language educators working with immigrants and their families are focused on effective language teaching leading to high educational achievement for all learners. The deepest responsibility of educators is to educate their students well – not to police their students' immigrant status.

TESOL values respect for diversity, multiculturalism, and collaboration in a global community. The United States has grown and prospered through the measurable and immeasurable economic, linguistic, and cultural contributions of both documented and undocumented immigrants, and continues to do so. As such, TESOL urges fair immigration reform proposals that create pathways to citizenship and opportunities to learn English. Problems with the U.S. immigration system will only be fixed with equitable solutions that treat all human beings with respect.

Position Statement Against Discrimination of Nonnative Speakers of English in the Field of TESOL

For decades there has been a long-standing fallacy in the field of English language teaching that native English speakers are the preferred teachers because they are perceived to speak “unaccented” English, understand and use idiomatic expressions fluently, and completely navigate the culture of at least one English-dominant society, and thus they will make better English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers than nonnative English speakers. As a result, nonnative English-speaking educators have found themselves often implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, discriminated against in hiring practices or in receiving working assignments in the field of teaching ESL or EFL.

However, as English language learners, nonnative English-speaking educators bring a uniquely valuable perspective to the ESL/EFL classroom, and so can closely identify with the cross-cultural and language learning experience that their students are experiencing. Research has shown that students do not have a clear preference for either native English-speaking educators or nonnative English-speaking educators, demonstrating that, in general, students do not buy into the “native speaker fallacy.”

In many cases the nonnative English-speaking educator may also be an immigrant to an English-language-dominant country, and thus had to master both a second language and a second culture. These personal experiences may be similar to those of their students, and thus the nonnative English-speaking educator can serve as a powerful role model for stu-

dents.

The distinction between native and nonnative speakers of English presents an oversimplified, either/or classification system that does not actually describe the range of possibilities in a world where English has become a global language. More important, however, the use of the labels “native speaker” and “nonnative speaker” in hiring criteria is misleading, as this labeling minimizes the formal education, linguistic expertise, teaching experience, and professional preparation of teachers. All educators should be evaluated within the same criteria. Nonnative English-speaking educators should not be singled out because of their native language.

TESOL strongly opposes discrimination against nonnative English speakers in the field of English language teaching. Rather, English language proficiency, teaching experience, and professionalism should be assessed along a continuum of professional preparation. All English language educators should be proficient in English regardless of their native languages, but English language proficiency should be viewed as only one criterion in evaluating a teacher's professionalism. Teaching skills, teaching experience, and professional preparation should be given as much weight as language proficiency.

*Approved by the Board of Directors
March 2006*



Printer Ink, Toner and More!
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Hawai'i TESOL would also like to extend a special *ma-halo* to Mr. Ink Plus, the Honolulu-based discount cartridge store that has been supporting our fund-raising drive for the past

year. Mr. Ink Plus sells inkjet cartridges, laser toner, copier toner, thermal fax ribbons, and dot matrix ribbons for up to 80% less than brand name cartridges. Mr. Ink Plus also supports local non-profit organizations by accepting empty cartridges for \$1.00 each and then recycling the cartridges (helping both the organization and the environment!) So far we have raised over \$200 for our Travel Grant Fund through this fundraising project.

Hawai'i TESOL members, you can help us earn money for the Travel Grant Fund!

Now, Mr. Ink Plus co-owner Terrence Iwamoto is offering us a **special deal!** For every purchase order submitted to Mr. Ink Plus from a school or institution with Hawai'i TESOL members, Mr. Ink Plus will donate 5% of that order to our travel grant fund. This is a great opportunity, not only for Hawai'i TESOL, but also for your school. Help us spread the word by talking to the people in charge of ordering cartridges at your work place and encouraging them to take a look at Mr. Ink Plus' affordable products.

If your school does submit a purchase order to Mr. Ink Plus, remember to include a note indicating that you would like to support the Hawai'i TESOL fundraising effort J

For more information about Mr. Ink Plus and to see a product catalog, go to www.mrinkplus.com

For more information about this Hawai'i TESOL fundraiser, contact Sally La Luzerne-Oi (slaluzerneoi@hpu.edu) or Yoneko Kanaoka (ykanaoka@transpacific.org).



NOTE: The editors of *The Word* would like to apologize for the accidental omission of Maryna Tsehelska as a co-writer of the interview article written by Sally La Luzerne-Oi which was published in the February 2006 issue of our newsletter.



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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, August 18, 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