



CETC Newsletter

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A periodic newsletter for TESOL members.

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Leadership Updates

From the Editors

Meredith Bricker, meredith.bricker@gmail.com, and Michael Lessard-Clouston, michael.lessard-clouston@biola.edu

Welcome to the June 2007 issue of the *CETC Newsletter*! We are pleased to bring you another issue of the newsletter and hope you will find it interesting and informative. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce the various features of this issue and also keep you informed about some changes that were recently announced by TESOL.

At the 2007 TESOL Convention in Seattle we had the privilege of attending a newsletter editors' meeting, where we learned about various other newsletters produced by interest sections and caucuses. We would like to highlight a change that relates to your online access to caucus/interest section newsletters and e-lists. Until now, access to interest section and caucus newsletters and e-lists has been limited to the members of that particular interest section or caucus; those TESOL members who were not also members of the Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus, for example, were unable to receive the *CETC Newsletter*. However, on June 1, TESOL implemented a new "open access" policy regarding caucus and interest section newsletters. Among other things, this means that you now have access to all caucus and interest section newsletters via the TESOL Web site, at no additional cost. For those of you who contribute to the *CETC Newsletter*, one impact of this decision is that your work will have a larger audience than the roughly 1,000 CETC members. Because TESOL members who are not members of CETC will now be able to read our newsletters and e-list, we look forward to sharing your contributions with a wider audience and range of perspectives. We nonetheless hope that all CETCers will maintain their membership in the caucus when they renew their TESOL membership and continue to support CETC.

In This Issue

This newsletter offers an opportunity to become more acquainted with the CETC leaders for the 2007-08 year. In her "Letter From the Chair," Gena Bennett presents a special call for the members of CETC to become involved, while Michael Pasquale, incoming chair, describes some of the "tides of

change" he has encountered in TESOL and CETC. To help you stay connected with the latest caucus information, we also present several announcements in the "News From CETC."

The articles in this issue present a diverse selection of reflections, research topics, and practical teaching suggestions. Priya Honeyman Livengood describes her impressions and experiences at Seattle Pacific University during the 2007 CELT Conference in March, and John Liang develops his philosophy of the spiritual dimensions of learner development. Eleanor Pease presents the results of her research regarding university expectations of ESL students, and Janice Penner, Iris Devadason, and Cheri Pierson share their pedagogical experience and ideas in the classroom from their perspectives as Christian ESL teachers.

You'll also notice a new feature in this issue of the *CETC Newsletter*: "Spotlight on CETC Members." We asked several CETC members five simple questions in order to help others in the wider CETC community learn about the experiences and perspectives of others in the caucus. Through these short interviews, we hope you enjoy learning more about some of our colleagues in this diverse group of educators united by our commitment to Jesus Christ.

As always, we'd love to hear from you! If you have an article you would like us to consider publishing, a willingness to be "spotlighted" in a future issue, some news you would like to share with your caucus members, or a suggestion or comment about this issue of the newsletter, please contact us. The deadline for us to receive drafts for possible publication in our next issue (hopefully in November) is September 14.

Blessings,
Meredith and Michael

Letter From the Chair: CETC Supports TESOL's Strategic Goals

Gena Bennett, genabennett@yahoo.com

As of February 20, 2007, the Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus (CETC) had 958 members. These 958 members of TESOL receive support and professional development through CETC. These 958 members also help further TESOL's Strategic Goals by being members of CETC.

Below are the overall TESOL Strategic Goals and Objectives and my own description of how CETC contributes to these goals and objectives. At the end of this letter is a special call to CETCers to help exemplify the important role CETC plays in the overall role and success of TESOL. Please read, consider, and respond.

TESOL Strategic Goals for 2005-08

GOAL: Policy Promotion for the Profession—to fulfill its standing as a recognized authority on the teaching of English as an additional language by providing critical insights for policymakers.

Objectives:

- Increase TESOL's professional visibility
- Identify, develop, and approve policies on professional issues
- Develop the role of English in multilingual/plurilingual societies
- Strengthen the status of English language teaching as a profession

CETC Contribution:

As members of a professional organization that strengthens the status of English language teaching as a profession, Christian language teachers who are members of CETC have an influence on the institutions and organizations in which they serve.

GOAL: Professional Development—to provide a wide variety of learning, networking, and knowledge-sharing opportunities relevant to the changing needs of ESL/EFL professionals worldwide.

Objectives:

- Ensure that professional development programs, publications, activities, and resources are relevant to the changing needs of the profession worldwide
- Revise and strengthen leadership programs

CETC Contribution:

Many CETC members participate in conferences not only locally, but also internationally. More than 15 sessions at the international TESOL convention in 2007 were presented by CETC members, without any official TESOL sponsorship (unlike Interest Sections). In addition, CETC members around the globe are active in TESOL affiliates.

GOAL: Research—to monitor, evaluate, and encourage the association's research-related activities in coordination with association entities involved in conducting research and disseminating research results.

Objectives:

- Promote the value of and increase research for TESOL teachers worldwide

CETC Contribution:

Many CETCers are active researchers, involved in research relating not only to the goals of CETC but also to English language teaching in general. Research projects and publications are ongoing by CETC members. (A list will not be printed here, so as not to leave anyone out, but please respond to the call at the end of this article.)

GOAL: Standards-to facilitate and promote the development of teacher, learner, content, performance, and opportunity-to-learn standards and frameworks that influence curriculum development and assessment in local contexts worldwide.

Objectives:

- Augment organization resources for developing and implementing TESOL's standards-based projects
- Become a resource for the development of standards for English language teaching in new contexts
- Develop and promote TESOL standards for new and emerging areas in the field of TESOL

CETC Contribution:

As members of a professional organization, CETCers have access to TESOL benefits such as the e-list, the convention, and the new TESOL Resource Center, all of which allow members to be more informed professionals and provide better resources for nonmember colleagues.

GOAL: Worldwide Professional Participation-to expand worldwide involvement of TESOL affiliates in collaborative research-based activities.

Objectives:

- Increase collaboration between TESOL and other organizations in the field
- Conduct research toward establishing profiles of English language instructors
- Support efforts to encourage professional participation in local organizations and TESOL affiliates

CETC Contribution:

More than 50 members of CETC are internationally based. Internationally based members represent countries such as South Africa, Rwanda, Indonesia, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Madagascar, Canada, Australia, India, Japan, Tanzania, China, Malaysia, Philippines, United Kingdom, Costa Rica, Netherlands, Thailand, Lebanon, Vietnam, Tunisia, and South Korea.

GOAL: Organizational Sustainability and Growth-to cultivate and sustain the financial and human resources, structures, and processes that support and extend TESOL's mission.

Objectives:

- Fulfill fiduciary role
- Increase TESOL membership worldwide
- Expand nondues revenue sources to support member programs and initiatives worldwide
- Support implementation of a new leadership structure
- Analyze costs/benefits of association programs and services
- Establish mechanism for members' input into decision-making about member benefits

CETC Contribution:

An institutional member has a responsibility within that institution to hold leaders accountable and contribute to the wellbeing of the institution. By attending the CETC business meeting at

the annual convention, which reports to the overall TESOL organization, CETC members are an active part of organization sustainability. Over 100 members attended the CETC annual business meeting in 2007!

Call for Participation

The Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus, as well as the other five TESOL caucuses, plays an important role in furthering the Strategic Goals of the organization. A few examples are discussed above, but I know contributions reach far beyond my short description. As a CETC member, please consider each TESOL Strategic Goal. Reflect on how you and/or other CETC members contribute to that goal. Write in to the e-list explaining your and others' contributions. Write an article for the newsletter detailing contributions. Let's let TESOL know that CETC is important not only to members as individuals, but to the TESOL organization as a whole!

Letter From the Incoming Chair: Spanning the Globe, Tides of Change

Michael Pasquale, michael_pasquale@cornerstone.edu

The month of March was an invigorating and sometimes exhausting one for me and reminded me of the reasons I absolutely love my vocation and ministry as a TESOL professor and teacher-trainer. As I reflect on the theme of the 2007 TESOL Convention, "Spanning the Globe: Tides of Change," I would like to give you a brief introduction and also share some thoughts about the future.

I began the month of March with a trip to Budapest, Hungary, during our spring break at Cornerstone University. I went to help train English teachers from Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, and Poland. I spent time with expatriate teachers from the West and look forward to more interaction in the future with national EFL teachers. My travels as a teacher-trainer have also sent me to Brazil, Central Asia, Spain, and Great Britain. I am so encouraged that CETC has begun to build a relationship with the Nonnative English Speakers in TESOL caucus over the past year. This kind of collaboration is vital for supporting and encouraging NNEST teachers around the world, and an area of service in which Christian English teachers should take the lead.

The Christians in English Language Teaching (CELT) conference at Seattle Pacific University and the following TESOL convention in Seattle were my next stops in March. I come from a university with a small TESOL program, so it is wonderful to be able to fellowship and network with others from CETC and TESOL to exchange ideas and encourage one another. I am excited to join the ranks of CETC leadership, and I look forward to working with Gena, Eleanor, Michael, Meredith, Anne, and Frank.

My last stop in March was hosting the 6th annual ESL ministry conference at Cornerstone University in Michigan. We have hosted this conference as a way to train church-based ESL teachers and administrators and to provide a small dose of the idea exchange and encouragement we can find at a larger CELT conference or TESOL convention. We were taught by a fellow CETC member, Dr. Laura Hahn from Illinois, who helped explain pronunciation issues in ESL classrooms. It is my hope that smaller regional gatherings such as these will help CETC members connect on a regular basis!

So, the month of March was one of "spanning the globe" on a very literal basis for me! It was also one that revealed some "tides of change." I join the CETC leadership with excitement and with a bit of anxiety. Being a part of the leadership team is a change for me, but one I look forward to!

News From CETC

CETC Member Wins Prestigious TESOL Award!

We are delighted to report that CETC member Janice Penner, of Douglas College in New Westminster, B.C., won the 2007 TESOL Mary Finocchiaro Award for Excellence in the Development of Pedagogical Materials, which was presented at TESOL 2007 in Seattle. This award, which includes a financial prize and registration for the annual TESOL convention, was given for the book and CD of *Think First, Then Write: 101 Writing Topics to Photocopy* that Janice and her colleague published. We asked Janice to write briefly about her work and are happy to point you to her article in this issue, which includes a sample writing prompt.

CETC Incoming Chair Elected

Thanks to all of you who voted earlier this year. The position of incoming chair, 2007-08, has been filled by Michael Pasquale of Cornerstone University. You can read his "Letter From the Incoming Chair" elsewhere in this issue.

Book Reviewers Needed for the CETC Newsletter

We would like to publish reviews of several books in upcoming issues of the newsletter. If you would

be willing to read and write a review for a future issue of the newsletter, please contact coeditor Meredith Bricker. At the moment we would like to have a review of the *Faith Encounters I and II* series that is discussed in Cheri Pierson's article elsewhere in this issue. Please contact Meredith if you would like to review these or other materials.

CETC Working Committees

CETC working committees have been established to help us make lasting contributions to TESOL, and we need you to help us! Please review these descriptions and sign up to be a part! A *Resources and Bibliography* committee will compile a list of materials that have been written by members of our caucus, may be of interest to members of CETC, and/or will help our educational or ministry situations. The committee will also find out what skills Christian educators in TESOL offer so that those in need of a particular type of ability will know where to look. To sign up for this committee please email Mary Wong at mwong@apu.edu. The Mission Statement and Caucus Documents Committee will draft new documents (e.g., job descriptions for the leadership) and revise existing ones (e.g., the caucus mission statement) to help ensure that our literature reflects what CETC does, who is invited to participate, how we contribute to the TESOL profession, and why CETC is important. To join this committee please contact Michael Pasquale at michael_pasquale@cornerstone.edu. The Affiliate Committee will investigate the possibility of establishing local or regional CETC affiliates to facilitate greater networking and resource sharing opportunities for Christian educators in TESOL. Please email Karen Asenavage at karenas@sas.upenn.edu to sign up for this committee.

Web Site Updated!

Thanks to Web manager Frank Tuzi, the CETC Web site (www.cetesol.org) has been updated since the 2007 TESOL Convention with pictures from the open business meeting there, as well as other information from the CETC leadership. If you would like to contribute to the Web site, please email Dr. Tuzi at webmaster@cetesol.org.

CELT 2008 Conference at Nyack College

Following the successful conference at Seattle Pacific University this spring (see the report by Priya Honeyman Livengood elsewhere in this issue), please put Tuesday, April 1, 2008, on your calendar for the 2008 Christians in English Language Teaching (CELT) Conference, which will be hosted by Nyack College at its Manhattan campus, the day before TESOL 2008 in New York City. If you would like to volunteer to help with the planning and organization, please email conference chair Eleanor Pease at eleanor.pease@nyack.edu. A call for participation will appear this fall.

Articles and Information

Writing Prompts: Some Background and an Example



Janice Penner, pennerj@douglas.bc.ca

Editors' note: As explained in the "News From CETC" column elsewhere in this issue, CETC'er Janice Penner won the 2007 TESOL Mary Finocchiaro Award for Excellence in the Development of Pedagogical Materials. We asked her to comment briefly about her award-winning work, and are grateful for the opportunity for others to learn about it here.

Background

For the past 20 years I have required fluency writing in my academic preparation ESL classes. Over this time I have developed a system and created many topics that students have found fun, meaningful, and challenging. I have also presented workshops on fluency writing and finally decided to compile the topics for teachers to use. Heather Barnes, my colleague at Douglas College, has used my topics over the years, so I asked her to help me in the final stages of putting a book together. I self-published it as *Think First, Then Write: 101 Writing Topics to Photocopy* (Penner & Barnes, 2005), but I hope that a major publisher will consider it so that it can have wider distribution.

Description

The book uses prompts in order to help students develop fluency in their ESL writing. There are actually 114 topics divided into 13 themes, including self, beliefs/values, celebrations, cultural reflections, education, family, friendship, global issues, language learning, life experiences, technology, travel, and work. Each prompt is divided into two main parts. The first part, "Think First," offers a set of questions that provide a schemata or context. The second part, "Then Write," gives them the opportunity to write their ideas in different formats such as lists, poems, letters, paragraphs, sentences, brochures, responding to quotes, sketches, and charts. I have provided an

example on spirituality below. The teachers' guide provides ideas for setting up a systematic fluency writing program, evaluating the writing, and using the topics for research, discussion, and process writing tasks.

Actually, I think the CD version of the book is the best to use because teachers can cut and paste and even change the questions and formats. One peer has used the CD for developing student blog projects. The book and CD can be purchased through Delta Systems, Inc. (www.delta-systems.com) or through my own distribution company (AACE - All About Communicating in English, aacejgtp@telus.net). I spent thousands of dollars on this project but I feel it was worth it because I do like sharing materials.

Students always tell me that they will keep their fluency writing journal forever. Here are a few comments from students:

- "The topics are a very good way to help teachers know what the students are thinking and doing, which is necessary for students to reach their goals." (PRC male EFL teacher)
- "The topics helped me develop my ideas in writing. Fluency writing directly improved my writing ability." (Russian male)
- "Through writing journals I am not so scared about writing anymore. I put all my heart into writing my topics." (Chinese female)

Indeed, the journal is a special "record" of a student's thoughts and English skills at a particular time in his or her life, and I encourage others to use fluency writing in their classes, whether they use their own prompts or those I have developed.

Janice Penner is an ESL instructor at Douglas College in New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada, where she covers mainly Canadian studies, global issues, and cross-cultural communication in her classes. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and photography.

Reference

Penner, J. G. T., & Barnes, H. A. (2005). *Think first, then write: 101 writing topics to photocopy*. Vancouver, BC: All About Communicating in English (AACE). ISBN: 1-0-973769-1-X

Sample Writing Prompt

(Source: Penner & Barnes, 2005)

Title: *Spirituality*

Think First

Most people believe they have physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. A spiritual life helps some people understand the meaning of life. To be healthy, they eat (physical), learn (mental), and express their feelings (emotional). To take care of their spiritual needs, they may follow a religion, pray, meditate, do yoga, go on a silence retreat, and so on. What about you? What do you do to fulfill your spiritual needs?

Then Write

Imagine your close friend is healthy, wealthy, and very educated. However, s/he feels "empty" and feels there is no meaning to life. S/he has never thought about meeting the spiritual needs in her/his life. Write a letter to your close friend about what you think may help her/him explore the spiritual side of life.

Wow! Reflecting on CELT 2007



Priya Honeyman Livengood, pree@pobox.com

Wow! That's how I'd like to begin my reflections on the Christians in English Language Teaching (CELT) 2007 conference. CELT 2007 was held in Seattle, Washington, on March 20, right before the TESOL convention, on the beautiful campus of Seattle Pacific University, a lovely setting for the powerful experience that many people had that day. As a firsttime CELT attendee, I consider myself privileged. I am incredibly grateful to God for the gift of professional development. The conference theme was "Spirituality and Professionalism," but three additional themes seemed to recur throughout the various sessions that I was able to attend. The first was social justice, the second concerned personal character and being other--

centered, and the third was more philosophical, but involved moving away from seeing God and faith

from a modern/enlightenment viewpoint to one that may not be traditionally western, but may be as close or even closer to the heart of God. In this brief reflection I'd like to share my experience at this wonderful conference.

In the morning the first session I attended was a report with lessons from an experience with "International Teacher Collaboration on the Thai/Burma Border." Mary Wong and her graduate students Chen-Ju Chen, Yu-Hsin Lin, Chia-Pei Lin, and Hsiang-Chun Liu challenged us to ask ourselves if we are working only with the elite, or if we are using the skills God has given us to serve the poor. They also called us to serve local teachers and not to disrupt their way of doing things when we go to serve them. This presentation was a great reminder to ask ourselves if we are connecting to God's heart for the poor and oppressed as we serve Him in our daily lives.

The second session I attended was by Cherie Rempel on "Mentoring Volunteer Teachers." Although none of the themes I mentioned really flowed through this session, it was still one of the more powerful for me because it was very practical. Cherie included an outline of the training that she takes her volunteer teachers through before they go to teach. I plan to mentor many volunteer teachers as my husband and I serve overseas, so I appreciated the training framework that Cherie provided.

The first plenary speaker, Suresh Canagarajah, blew me away. Through him God was speaking and tapping into the very fiber of who He has created me to be. This plenary was a fabulously woven together, jam-packed presentation of a non-Western, quasi-postmodern faith expression that was beautiful. I have a lot of respect for Dr. Canagarajah and am thrilled that he is editor of *TESOL Quarterly*. Wow. He really challenged us to ask ourselves questions in light of certain biblical mandates. Justice, love, and truth—what is our teaching and pedagogy like in light of these things? He also talked about world Englishes, which is something I've thought very little about and appreciated the exposure to. I enjoyed hearing his discussion of the concepts in linguistic terms that are acceptable to all linguists, Christian and non-Christian alike, although I found myself personally translating ones such as "the Babel myth" into phrases more in keeping with my spiritual beliefs. His presentation was done humbly with humor that was disarming. Although he may have ruffled a few feathers, I think he dealt with potentially controversial issues incredibly skillfully.

After lunch, in the afternoon I attended a session by Carolyn Kristjansson on "Social Justice, Identity, and Language Learning." Although I felt that it was over my head, this presentation connected with my first theme, social justice, and I wish I had understood more. I then attended Dana Ferris' talk on "Living Out Your Life Mission Statement in a Secular Classroom." It was great to be reminded about issues of character and playing favorites in class, as well as to consider integrating who God has created me to be with who I am as an English teacher. The next session I attended was Brad Baurain's on "Interrogating TESOL Professionalism From a Christian Perspective." What I took away from that session was a challenge to see professionalism as involving not just attending conferences, subscribing to journals, observing classes, and so on, but also as seeing ourselves as professionals in our "beingness" as well. He encouraged us to see our faith and character as part of professionalism, which was a good point.

Finally, David Smith was the second plenary speaker, and once again the presentation was fabulous. I loved the intentionality with which he discussed "Viewing Language Learners As Spiritual Beings." His use of narrative and a real person's story as a foundation for language teaching is powerful as his students encounter the soul of a real person in their language journey. Later his students are required to go out and interview an elderly person for more language use. The concept is great, and I would love to use something like that in my class sometime. The conference ended with a brief worship service and short homily—a great end to a great day.

Overall, about 120 people attended the conference, which offered 21 concurrent sessions by some 26 presenters, two plenary talks, a ministry fair, and a forum discussion. Perhaps as a first timer I am a little "green" around the ears, hence my overwhelming enthusiasm. Even so, I believe that God speaks to us, and if we have ears to hear we just might learn something. The themes that surfaced for me were the ones that God wanted me to hear, and CELT 2007 provided the opportunity. So let me express my thanks to conference chair Kathryn Bartholomew and coordinators Gena Bennett and Kevin Gibbons, and all the presenters and volunteers. Well done!

Priya Honeyman Livengood has taught in China and currently works at The Language Institute in Pasadena, California. She is an MA TESOL student at Biola University and enjoys working with short-term team projects at her church, hiking, catching up with friends, going to concerts, and participating in other refreshing activities in her free time.

Institutional Expectations of ESL Students



Eleanor J. Pease, Eleanor.Pease@nyack.edu

Editors' Note: This article comes out of a presentation in the

Interconnections Colloquium during the TESOL 2007 convention in Seattle on issues in language learning and cultural adaptation. We are grateful that we can share it with you here.

Introduction

Nyack College, Rockland, is located about 20 miles north of New York City on the west side of the Hudson River. The college's second location is in lower Manhattan. Both campuses serve a community of students whose diversity is the highest in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. With this population, it is clear that a good number of students are ESL speakers; some use two languages, one for the home and one for outside of the home, and others, such as Dianne, come directly from other countries to study at Nyack.

An international student from China, Dianne had arrived in the United States a few weeks before entering Nyack College as a secondsemester transfer student. She had two goals: to study business and to become an ESL teacher. The admissions director and I (ESL coordinator) developed a program for her first semester that we felt Dianne could handle academically while growing in English language proficiency. She started classes and wavered for about a year before deciding to become a TESOL major. Her ability in English grew steadily as she took a full slate of courses each semester.

Dianne excelled academically and socially. She received high evaluations from the cooperating teachers during her student teaching experience. She graduated with high honors and received the prestigious Apple Award from the School of Education; this is the highest award given to education students. She had no difficulty obtaining a teaching position in New York City and was accepted into a master's program at Columbia University's Teachers College.

Dianne's story represents a successful use of the ESL student support at the college where I am a faculty member. Those of us involved in these programs would like to be able to say that ours is a perfect system, but we must confess that some entering students fall through the cracks; therefore, we must continue to develop our system and determine other means by which we can locate students who are struggling academically because of language problems.

The Survey

When asked to be a panelist for the Interconnections Colloquium at the recent TESOL convention, I prepared a survey that was sent to the faculty on both Nyack campuses. I kept it simple in the hope that many professors would respond. Just over 30 did.

The survey asked several questions of professors:

- (1) How many ESL students are in your classes in a given year?
- (2) Do you have the same academic expectations of ESL students as of native English speakers? If no, briefly explain any accommodations you might make, such as grading content in written work and more or less ignoring errors in grammar. If yes, explain briefly.
- (3) If you discover that an ESL student in your class is struggling academically because of language problems, do you refer the student to the ESL professional on campus?

Question one gave some options and questions two and three were essentially yes/no questions, although I asked the participants to elaborate on their responses to question two.

Considerably less than half of the faculty responded; however, many respondents added explanations of varying lengths to clarify their responses. These comments gave a good overview of their expectations of the academic performance of ESL students.

The ESL Program

Though the Nyack, Rockland, campus has only a part-time ESL student coordinator, the New York City site has a full ESL program with a director. There are two opportunities for second language learners: (a) enrolling in the English Language Institute, which prepares ESL students during the summer at reduced tuition rates, and (b) taking ESL courses during the regular academic year. In addition, there is an immersion program for Korean and Spanish-speaking students with assistance in their second language for English-only core courses.

The survey provided an idea of the numbers of ESL students in the respondents' classes: 15 professors indicated that they have two to five ESL students in their classes each academic year and 14 indicated that they have more than five in their classes each academic year. A note from one of the music professors gave a picture of our diversity: The number of ESL students in New York City continues to expand as we reach out to the Chinese and Korean communities. Our Web site also attracts people from all over the world, including Myanmar, Philippines, Slovakia, Korea, Japan, South America, and Ivory Coast, as well as the Caribbean. We love the diversity!

When they suspect that students struggle with language, some professors refer students to the ESL departments. Of the 29 professors who responded to question three, 21 stated that they usually refer ESL students to the ESL professionals, 2 said that they sometimes do, and 6 said that they did not refer students for ESL help. And then there was the one on my campus who said, "Didn't know I

could," despite email reminders almost every semester.

Faculty Expectations of ESL Students' Academic Performance

In order to answer the question, "What is the institution's expectation of ESL students?" I present responses and comments from the survey.

In response to question two, 20 out of 32 respondents marked yes; the other 12 responded no. This result suggests that about one third of the respondents indicated that they do not have the same expectations for ESL students. The survey then called for an explanation. The explanations revealed a caring representation of the faculty who hold to the standards:

- For a research course: "I might be more flexible with initial submissions but end products must get to an acceptable level."
- "I will help them as much as possible, but I do not lower the standards."
- "I am willing to make accommodations if the student seeks them, but I do not like to hold any students' hands. . . . I remind (students) that there is additional help available, including tutoring."
- "I try to have a fair number of multiple choice questions as well as essay questions so that the ESL students will be able to do something on tests."

Among those who responded "no" to question two regarding academic expectations, some responded as follows:

- "Content only. I'm not as demanding with the grammar."
- "I act as an English professor and make corrections but do not drop the grade. I still expect them to master the content."
- "I put more weight in grading content, and I am more lenient with grammar. Group with English speakers."
- Global Literature course: "With in-class essays and quizzes, I don't grade for the grammar but for the content (for the whole class) because I have so many ESL students. In addition, on quizzes I don't count the grammar of the answers. I . . . give the ESL students extra time for writing. I expect them to accomplish all the reading, however, with understanding."
- Education: "Some professors indicated that they correct the grammar in order to help the ESL students."

One professor wrote that for the first time she failed an ESL student in her World Civilization class. She quickly realized the student was struggling and had trouble understanding what was going on in class. The professor told the student to withdraw and also referred her to the ESL professional. The student insisted that she didn't need help. In the end, after repeated attempts to help the student, the professor had to fail her. After the grades went out, the student tried to get the professor to change the grade and also went to the ESL professional, but at that point it was too late.

My conclusion is that most of the responding professors grade by the same standards, but offer help to individual students by personal contact, by recommending tutoring, or by referring the student to the ESL professional on campus.

Success Stories in Nyack's School of Education

With a college-wide New York State Board of Regents charter and Middle States Association and NCATE accreditation, the School of Education requires students to maintain high academic standards. At the same time, many ESL students declare education as their major.

There are many success stories. One female student who struggled with English language skills ended her program as an honors graduate and recipient of the Outstanding Student Teacher Award. She is now a successful bilingual kindergarten teacher in Miami, Florida. However, I want to conclude with an unusual success story that shows the benefits of close cooperation between the education faculty and the ESL faculty. The ESL director sent this to me as part of her response to the survey.

Maria (a pseudonym) is a single mother with three children; she worked as a lunch lady in a public school in New York City. Maria credits her success to proactive staff on the New York City campus. One ESL instructor gave her extra help, homework, and CDs to take home and watch. She states that the ESL director and writing instructor, Professor Bowen, gave her "a lot of hard time because she made me write my essays two or three times. If she hadn't pushed me, I wouldn't have learned how to write English." Professors in the School of Education encouraged her; they all believed that she could do it, and they told her so. Today, Maria has three teaching licenses: early childhood, childhood, and bilingual education. Her goal is to become a school administrator in order to influence the system. A scholarship recipient, Maria is already pursuing a master's degree in education.

Conclusions

Although the results would have been more conclusive if a larger percentage of instructors had responded, from this survey I discovered that the majority of professors on the two campuses of Nyack College maintain standards for ESL students, but at the same time they give of themselves to encourage, help, and sometimes gently push these students to do well.

After presenting the results of the survey at the 2007 TESOL Convention, I have reflected on my observations during my 12 years on the faculty at Nyack College and the survey findings. I have reached these conclusions: (a) A higher education institution that accepts ESL students must provide adequate support for these students, especially in their freshman year; (b) it should be assumed that many faculty members are not equipped to help ESL students and faculty development workshops must include sessions that provide training and assistance; (c) the registrar's office must work closely with the ESL professional on campus; and (d) conditionally admitted ESL students must be required to meet with the ESL professional regularly during their freshman year. I'm happy to report that Nyack College is on its way to fulfilling these requirements. I would be interested to hear what other higher education institutions are doing during these days of increased diversity.

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Questioning Theological Texts: Strengthening Reader Identity



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Introduction

This article is a description of my attempts to help advanced students of theology decode a difficult text independently by asking questions of it. Having taught postgraduate students for 26 years in a theological college, I now offer my tried and tested method to other teachers. Both theory and practice reinforce my conviction that this method is indispensable to those who wish to read profitably and with involvement, in private (as reading is normally done), without the English teacher's help. My argument is that reading is not just a receptive skill and should be as productive as writing is. Thus, I have used various aids to

introduce the idea of reading as interaction between the reader and writer and as being a recognition of the writer's voice.

Questioning a text *before* and *while* reading is often a new idea for students as they are typically questioned *after* reading a text when the emphasis is on recall of content only and not of anticipation or of making intelligent guesses. "Good" reading skills and insightful questioning make it easy for the students to write a questionnaire for field education projects later in their academic career or even to subjects in pastoral counseling. Students acquire poise as individuals and gain confidence as scholars. The results are both academically and socially useful for the hesitant L2 reader.

The Situation of General Interrogation

When I began my research, I considered the following questions: *What do questions imply? Why do I stress the importance of this method of reading? Where do we encounter questions in daily life?* Questions are the prerogative of authority figures such as parents and teachers, the first major authority figures we encounter in life, as well as doctors, counselors/pastors, and police personnel, lawyers, and judges.

Questioning as a tool to delve deep into another's mind also finds a metaphor in the world of biotechnology. As I lay recovering from surgery to implant a pacemaker, a computer technician roused me from my sleep saying, "I want to interrogate your pacemaker!" His use of the word *interrogate* amused me. I wondered what he would do and how. To me this usage was new, but in fact, I now realize that all such devices (X-rays, cardiograms, MRIs, etc.) reveal what happens inside a person and are vital tools for extracting hidden meaning. If I may extend the metaphor, students' reading text may resemble a doctor examining the human body: a vast area of physical mass that may be studied at the level of the physical but that may conceal an equally vast area of complexities made up of nonphysical "meaning," including fears, attitudes, and imaginary pains that are a challenge to the physician.

In the same way, questions can be regarded as tools for extracting meaning, for tracking down hidden or latent inner knowledge. We need to ask: What is the author actually saying that is not just surface content? Asking questions goes beyond the tangible text and often amounts to a kind of eavesdropping onto the "inner monologue" of the author. Thus, questioning text opens up new areas of thoughts, facts, and interpretations. *It allows the questioner/reader to assume a new role as authority, a new identity as reader.* As we lead our students into the field of theology, which is such a varied field of truth and opinions and inferences, it is useful to equip them with the skills of mastering a text.

The Problem

The problem may be that nonnative English-speaking (NNES) students are often passive learners, a kind of *tabula rasa*, waiting for the teacher's help to fill their minds with information. Native English-

speaking teachers often complain that NNES students—even NNES teacher trainees when in the United Kingdom or United States—are passive and offer no insights of their own. However, this is a cultural trait; in Eastern cultures the teacher as "guru" is a formidable figure whom one must not question. Such students have to be taught how to question a text. The idea is often new to them. I now offer my six practical solutions to this problem.

Six Solutions: My Methods in Class

In my first solution, I begin with a bit of drama! I get two students, strong in English, to read a dialogue between a Book and the Reader. This dialogue aims to get across the idea of questioning text and interacting with it, not viewing the text as a firm and final authority on a subject. This is an unusual concept for the students and gains their interest at once. I then give out copies of a simple text to read, normally taken from *India Today*, a newsmagazine similar to *Time*. I encourage them to start with basic questions of literal comprehension: what, who, which, when, where and also how and why, though these are deeper questions. I cite Kipling's poem, "Six Honest Serving Men," to substantiate the idea of questioning being an important skill: "I keep six honest serving-men (They taught me all I know); Their names are What and Why and When / And How and Where and Who" (Kipling, 1902, p. 60). Students wonder how they are to ask questions if they have not read the text yet, and so I help them with obvious prereading questions such as "Who wrote this article?" "When was it published?" "What does the author say of —?" which activate their latent knowledge, as in schema theory. This is followed by practice with skimming and scanning while asking all the Wh-questions. The fact that the students do not have to answer these questions but just frame them is a new idea that they have to accept and practice for their future study.

The underlying rationale behind these particular questions is that all students have knowledge simply through life experience, but they are unaware of what they do know. The teacher helps to bring out latent knowledge in them and helps them to bring this into play while decoding unfamiliar text. They are forced to be active participants and thus shed their earlier passiveness resulting from cultural inhibitions and dominating teachers.

Second, to supplement these introductory reading skills, I also use methods that are implemented outside the classroom including the "Super Reading Programme" and the SRA cards box, both from the United States. Both programs have been employed to reinforce what I have taught in the classroom and are done out of class as they contain scope for slow work such as self-evaluation which can be done without competition from peers.

Third, when the students are confident of asking well-structured questions and see the need to prepare to read by asking questions, I play a game known as the Re-Quest procedure to help them find their voice. This game is based on literal comprehension questions and group work, and the idea is from Whitaker (1983). In my 2-hour classes, I divide approximately 30 students into three groups and split one long text between them. Sections in the text are marked out for each group though all have the whole text with them. For 5 minutes only, the students are allowed to skim the reading, then they have 10 minutes to compose five or six questions in groups plus 10 minutes to write them on the board for others to see. The board becomes full of questions arranged in three columns according to group. Both teacher and students are very thrilled at this stage as the students thus far have worked entirely on their own.

After the students skim through the questions and the other sections of the reading, each group is then asked to judge whether the other groups' questions helped them to read the other parts of the text with understanding. This intensive reading brings out good responses as the students are fully involved in critiquing each others' work. Depending on the students' proficiency, I can expand the activity by proceeding to higher levels of questions.

Fourth, after my students master these introductory levels of questioning, I next introduce more sophisticated tools of questioning as compiled by Nuttal (2005) in *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. These tools include six kinds of questions that are based on Barret's Taxonomy: questions of literal comprehension, personal response, reinterpretation or reorganization, inference, style, and evaluation. Each of these types of questions parallels Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students must understand and be able to use each type of question. I evaluate their usage of these questions by assigning them to read articles from *Time* or *India Today* and then write all of the question types. I also encourage them to develop their questioning style by telling them that the first two levels are acceptable for high school or pre-university students but that they as postgraduate students should be asking more important questions as this will help them to be good readers and critical thinkers. Because the students are not used to this type of activity, they often stop short of a good question, so I have told them to answer their own question and to then question their answer. This has worked very well many times.

Fifth, by moving from general texts (such as local and topical texts with which they were familiar) to theological ones, I am able to train students to read any text with confidence. As they begin to work with theological texts, such as "*Breaking Fellowship With God*," (Schofield, 1964) I do not allow them to develop questions of literal comprehension as this is very easy for them by now; instead, I push them to consider higher levels of questioning. Questions of personal response or appreciation are relevant because these require them to relate the topic to their own church backgrounds and experience. Questions of reinterpretation or reorganization involve relating the topic to outside

situations, which calls not for reading that is linear and accumulative but for reading for meaning, which involves cross-referencing and reading between the lines. This challenges students as they may have never been encouraged to think for themselves in their prior learning situation for a number of reasons. Often they consider text to be like the Gospel. I have learned over the years to sympathize with students who take everything in the text as perfect and conclusive. However, with all this training, they do perform better with asking questions of evaluation as now they see their own views as being important.

Sixth, I have been able to demonstrate to my students a "real life" use for developing their ability to question by means of a research project I designed for them that required that they write and administer a questionnaire (based on Budd, 1989). As they prepared to draft their questionnaire, I asked them to consider first questions that would figure in the introduction of their essay, then questions relating to the body of the essay next, and then the concluding questions for the conclusion of the essay. This method helped to focus the topic of the questionnaire and ensured easy transference of respondents' input later. However, in addition to development of students' writing and thinking skills, the project also enabled students to meet and ask questions of people from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds: from people in authority such as church leaders to lowly workers such as railway porters, truck drivers, cobblers, blind or handicapped people, prostitutes, alcoholics, and victims of AIDS. The effect on the students from this type of questioning was emotionally powerful. Learning the skill of self-confidently asking questions has also helped them to meet those in authority without fear.

Conclusion

When I was a student of literature in the 60s we used to speak of the omniscient author who knows all and sees all. Now as teachers, we are asking readers to listen to the inner voice/monologue in the text, to do a kind of permitted eavesdropping; otherwise, their reading will be pointless. Asking questions is thus a way of instilling confidence in students who have never been permitted to think for themselves or "disturb" a class by being critical. It has great benefits all around but especially in turning diffident students into active scholars who interact with learning materials and develop into bright scholars. Asking questions in both social and academic situations is a very useful tool and I heartily recommend it to other teachers. In the gospel of Luke we read of those who have ears and don't hear and those who have eyes and don't see. Reading involves seeing and hearing at a deeper level, and asking questions is a useful tool to do so.

Iris Devadason recently retired from United Theological College in Bangalore, India. She is the author of "Doing" Reading in English (Bangalore: National Printing Press, 1997). Readers who would like further details about the activities described here are welcome to contact her for more information.

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Issues and Options in Teaching English for Theological Purposes



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Introduction

Because of the paucity of resources in a large number of languages, students of theology are usually required to read theological literature in English. For example, as Dodd (2003) stated, "in the Chinese language, spoken by nearly one-quarter of the world's population, there may be about 50 theological books of any kind. . . . A student of the Bible and specifically of theology must be able to read English" (pp. 5-6).

Doing academic studies in English as a second or foreign language is a real challenge, and this is no less true for students studying English for Bible and theology (EBT). In fact, Lessard-Clouston (2006, in press) recently confirmed this challenge through research on students in one graduate school of theology in Canada, particularly regarding learning the specialized

vocabulary of theology and their strategies in doing so.

Thankfully, a number of people working in TESOL have focused some of their efforts on teaching English for theological purposes in order to understand and address the challenges our students face (Pierson, Dickerson, & Scott, forthcoming; Purgason, forthcoming). As a result, there is much we can learn from and contribute as we work with EBT students. The goal of this article is to discuss some issues and options in teaching ESL/EFL to students whose purposes for learning are to take seminary or Bible courses and/or to access biblical and theological resources in English.

Designing EBT Courses

In an earlier article I outlined how to design an EBT course (Pierson, 2003a). In summary, I argued that the following issues and steps are important:

- Conduct a needs analysis to determine (a) how students will use English in their theological studies and (b) what the specific English language requirements are of the seminary or Bible school they are attending (or plan to attend).
- Identify and classify all biblical and theological resources available to students.
- Determine realistic goals and objectives for the course, given the needs analysis results above.
- Decide on course content and learning activities, given the context and students.
- Cultivate autonomous language learners, who will be able to use learning strategies beyond the classroom. (Pierson, 2003a, pp. 235-236)

Resources for English for Theological Purposes Students

In addition to researching one's context and designing appropriate EBT courses, it is crucial for teachers to become aware of the resources available to ESL/EFL students that can help both them in their teaching and their students in their learning.

Two such resources are Debbie Dodd's (2003) *Dictionary of Theological Terms in Simplified English* and the companion *Dictionary of Theological Terms in Simplified English Student Workbook* (Pierson, 2003b). This dictionary and workbook are intended for international students who have an intermediate level of English. The list of theological words has been selected from common terms used in systematic theologies and theological dictionaries. For example, terms such as *pneumatology* and *salvation* are included because they often appear in theological writing without explanation. On the other hand, terms that have very limited usage (e.g., "anhypostatic Christianity") are not defined in the dictionary. The entries in the book offer concise definitions of 50 to 70 words (Dodd, 2003, p. 8).

The companion student workbook (Pierson, 2003b) for the dictionary provides a range of activities that will help EBT students strengthen their dictionary skills. The dictionary quiz assesses a student's knowledge of some of the specialized vocabulary contained in the dictionary. The various chapters cover specific areas such as alphabetizing, guide words, special features of a theological dictionary, and defining word parts. The last five chapters deal with theological topics and vocabulary strategies, such as developing a vocabulary notebook with sections of theological vocabulary, general academic vocabulary, and extended vocabulary practice (e.g., lecture notes). An answer key is provided so that students can assess their own progress.

Exploring Theological English: Reading, Vocabulary and Grammar for ESL/EFL by Pierson, Dickerson, and Scott (forthcoming) is an ESL/EFL textbook currently being developed to help learners who become more proficient at reading English publications related to Bible and theology. Its primary focus is on introducing students to important concepts and terminology used in theological writing. The secondary emphasis is on helping students to acquire the necessary reading skills that good readers use every day. These include strategies or techniques for comprehending the type of language used in the classroom and in scholarly writing, developing a broad general vocabulary, and figuring out complex grammatical structures used in academic writing.

Each chapter consists of (a) readings that deal with biblical and theological concepts and vocabulary, (b) reading and vocabulary learning strategies, and (c) a variety of exercises to help students develop their language skills as well as interact with the content of the readings. Most chapters also include a focus on general academic vocabulary and/or grammatical structures common to theological writing. As students gain competence in these key areas, they will be better equipped to read theological publications as well as other academic writing. This curriculum is designed especially for high-intermediate to advanced learners of general-purpose English. However, it can be adapted for use with learners at a somewhat lower proficiency level. The accompanying Teacher's Guide addresses the needs of those who are new to teaching ESL/EFL. It discusses the specialized area of EBT, offers detailed guidance for using the textbook, and provides an annotated list of resources for continuing work in theological and biblical studies as well as ESL/EFL.

Iris Devadason's (1997) *Doing Reading in English* is a subject-specific text of advanced English for students of theology at the tertiary level. The text is in two volumes with teachers' manuals. The book combines authentic theological prose for reading comprehension as well as for learning grammar and vocabulary. Each unit is reinforced with tasks for students to perform. Different types of exercises such as prereading, sentence completion, and word formation are included in the text.

Some of the chapter topics are Christian education, religions, the history of Christianity, and church and society.

Gabrielle Kelly (2004), a Dominican sister from South Australia, has written *English for Theology: A Resource for Teachers and Students*. This discipline-specific text presents a diverse range of theological readings. The text addresses reading and language skills and demonstrates how theological argument is developed. The book highlights different aspects of contemporary theology. The first section (11 units) focuses on reading skills such as mode of discourse and genre, whereas the second section (13 units) focuses on applying reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. Glosses and appendices are also included.

Another curriculum that focuses on biblical content is composed of the *Faith Encounters* and *Faith Journey* (Tiessen & Lepp-Kaethler, 2006a, 2006b) teaching tools by Gail Tiessen, Elfrieda Lepp-Kaethler, and Linda Little. This adult Bible-based curriculum for beginner to advanced adult learners focuses on the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and encourages communicative competence. *Faith Encounters I* has 21 units based on the text of Hebrews 11, focusing on the men and women of faith in the Old Testament. *Faith Encounters II* has 24 units on the Gospel of John. According to Tiessen, the material is designed so that the trained or untrained teacher can use it. Content- and task-based methods are integrated, and sample chapters are available online at <http://prov.ca/bookstore/tesol.aspx>.

Although other materials are available (see, for example, Cirafesi, 2004; Dickerson, 2007; Eby, Stahl, & Zumwalt, 2003; Edwards, 1999; Maxwell, 1999; Sewell, 1998), those listed above focus more on students who are engaged in academic study. A valuable resource for reading and researching scripture online is BibleGateway.com (<http://www.biblegateway.com>).

Teaching Strategies for EBT

Beyond the courses themselves and resources available for teachers and their students, ESL/EFL teachers still need to integrate strategies and activities in order to teach their EBT students effectively. For example, good readers integrate a range of strategies to help them understand what they read, remember what they read, and apply what they've learned in other situations. Teachers need to activate their students' background knowledge about certain theological topics such as salvation or the Christian life. Second language reading research suggests that reading comprehension is enhanced when prior knowledge is activated.

Certain activities such as brainstorming, predicting, and asking questions about a topic before reading about it can encourage engagement in the topic and better comprehension. Other strategies such as skimming a passage to discover the main idea, scanning to locate specific information, or outlining to identify main points are helpful strategies for students to become more successful readers.

Of course, many other strategies and techniques can be addressed. For example, students should always check the table of contents, index, and headings in order to become acquainted with their textbooks. They should also challenge themselves to apply a wider range of strategies that help them succeed in their academic studies.

Conclusion

ESL students represent a large percentage of students studying at English language seminaries in North American contexts, not to mention EFL students at seminaries and Bible schools worldwide. This article has discussed some principles for designing EBT courses, some resources of interest to EBT teachers and their students, and some activities that teachers might use in teaching English for theological purposes. It has also pointed readers to resources of interest.

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[The Image of the Learner: Toward a Christian Philosophy of Learner Development](#)



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A Story

Last summer I visited a prestigious high school in Beijing, 50 percent of whose graduates go to Beijing University and Tsinghua University, two top universities equivalent to Harvard and MIT. At the entrance to the school, I found myself stunned by the beauty of the campus. Never had I seen any school so neat and clean, with so beautiful a campus. The school's director of the International Department showed us around. "Look at the auditorium in the middle of the campus. What does it look like?" She pointed at a magnificent structure before me. Gazing at the building, I fumbled for the right word. Seeing me trying hard, she uttered, "Doesn't it look like a doctoral cap?" "Yeah, that's right!" She further explained, "In fact, there's a meaning to the design. The auditorium symbolizes the Palace of Knowledge. We want our students to be knowledgeable like a PhD." She then pointed to other buildings on the campus and explained the symbolism for them, including the library, which looks like books. "On this campus, each building has its meaning. Collectively, the architecture conveys our beliefs about education: the development of the mind, body, and aesthetic appreciation." "True!" I agreed.

The buildings on campus were creatively designed to convey such themes. However, I somehow felt that one theme appeared to be missing. "I feel that there still seems to be something missing on the campus. Don't you think so?" I tentatively commented, fearing that I would offend her. To my surprise, she quickly responded, "You're right! Look at the lawn in the middle of the campus. For 3 years we've tried to find something that could best represent the spirit of our campus, but we haven't been able to find a good symbol yet. Perhaps you could help us," she said earnestly. "So, for 3 years your school hasn't found its spirit yet?" I replied. She smiled awkwardly.

Initial Reflection

Later, back in the United States, I read the school's material one night, and a photo of the auditorium caught my attention. Marble slabs along a path leading straight from the main entrance to the auditorium had various mottos: *science, humanism, creativity, and individuality*, as well as famous remarks by Nobel laureates. I seemed to see a picture of students walking in the steps of science, humanism, creativity, and individuality to enter the Palace of Knowledge. The motto of the school is *unto the development of man, unto the shaping of character, and unto quality education*. I was instantly intrigued. If the purpose of education is to develop full-grown people, how does it do so? What makes a full-grown person? A full development of the intellect, the body, and character? It appears to me that according to the beliefs of this school, like many others in China and in the United States, becoming a full-grown person requires full development of the intellect and the body. As for the education of the spirit, it is often partially or selectively addressed (as in cultivating a sense of artistic appreciation), if not completely ignored or inadvertently neglected.

In this article, therefore, I delve into the nature of learner development for answers to my questions. I first review current research on learner development, as it appears to be directly relevant. Although this brief review covers only research in second language learning, the philosophical principles uncovered are undoubtedly applicable to other educational settings. I then dig deeper into the philosophies of education that underpin our current view of learner development. In so doing, I uncover these educational philosophies' images of the learner, and in challenging these philosophies, I turn to a biblical philosophy of education to paint a complete picture of learner development.

The Concept of Learner Development

The concept of learner development is not new. Originating from the learner-centered instruction movement in the 1970s, it regards the recognition of learner diversity (learners' interests, needs, goals, attitudes, strategies, and abilities) as the basis of learner education, and emphasizes the need for learner-centered teaching to personalize instruction, tailor it to the learner's goals, draw on the learner's interest, respect students' learning style preferences, require active learner involvement in classroom language practice, use authentic material, consider learners' sociocultural backgrounds, engage learners in self-assessment, encourage student creativity and self-direction, involve learners in curricular decisions, and foster independent learning (Wenden, 2002). In a nutshell, for instruction to be learner-centered, it should be *individualized, personalized, and humanized* (see Altman, 1980, for a brief review).

In a close examination of the premises listed above, however, one may come to the realization that even learner-centered instruction is not truly learner-centered but teaching-centered; it focuses on how to improve classroom instruction and curriculum rather than on how to improve learners' learning. In reviewing past research on learner-centered instruction, Wenden (2002) contended that developing the learner's ability to learn should be the focus of learner development. Citing research on self-directed language learning, which emphasizes learner autonomy, and learner strategies in language learning, which emphasizes explicit instruction of successful language learners' strategies, Wenden proposed that classroom instruction should aim to cultivate the learners' "human potential" (p. 44), fostering the growth of learners' metacognitive knowledge of learning as well as their ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning. The term *learner development* means the fostering of an ability to effect efficient learning through self-management (including managing negative feelings such as learning anxiety and low self-esteem), self-regulation, self-instruction, and self-assessment.

Truly, a successful learner is often independent in shaping his or her learning. Yet, fairly similar to the educational beliefs of the high school I previously described, learner development theory appears to be primarily dependent upon a full development of metacognitive skills, or the development of the head. The education of the "heart," on the other hand, continues to be missing, though Wenden did briefly touch upon the affective aspect of learning. In reading a commentary on learner temperament, I learned of a teacher who noted that academically at-risk students are rarely self-managed; instead, it seems they are easily restless and distracted¹, reflecting an obvious disconnect between the development of the head and the heart.

Underpinnings of Modern Philosophies of Education

The emphasis on the language learner as an intellectual being in learner development is not a practice without a philosophical orientation. In fact, it reflects a humanistic philosophy of education that has greatly influenced modern and contemporary education. Some such philosophies are idealism, realism, neo-scholasticism, behaviorism, pragmatism, existentialism, progressivism, perennialism, essentialism, reconstructionism, futurism, multiculturalism, and critical pedagogy (see Knight, 1998, for a review of the various schools of philosophies and their influences on education). As it is beyond the scope of this article to review all educational philosophies, I will simply summarize in simple terms the tenets of modern and contemporary humanistic educational theories, particularly in the light of their definitions of the nature of the learner and the learning process.

Novick (1996) noted that subject to the various philosophical orientations, educational theories may fall into two major camps: the traditional transmission approach and the more innovative transactional approach. The transmission approach to education, with its subscription to behaviorism and other philosophies that emphasize truth as absolute, sees knowledge as the sum of discrete facts that can be learned and practiced in isolation of their function before being assembled into a whole. In this approach, to teach is to directly impart rules, information, and skills to the learner, and to

learn is to receive the meaning from the teacher. Thus, in one metaphor, the learner is just an empty vessel ready to be filled with knowledge by the teacher.

In her discussion of the transmission approach, Novick (1996) also noted a complementary approach to education: the psychometric philosophy of education, which posits that because learners possess measurable abilities, education is a process of imparting quantifiable knowledge and skills that can be objectively measured on standardized tests. In this approach, learning can be compared to a train racing on a railroad, and learners are the passengers, though some arrive on time, some late, some never complete the trip, and some—with an unusual ability—complete the trip unusually quickly. In short, within the transmission approach, learner development means change in an observable, if not quantifiable, behavior (Bode, 1995).

In contrast to the transmission approach that subscribes to the *subject matter* curriculum, the transactional model of education focuses on the learner (Novick, 1996). Drawing on the theories of Piaget, Dewey, and Vygotsky, this approach to education posits that learning is an active process, whereby learners, driven by innate curiosity and eagerness to learn, seek to make sense of their experiences in interacting with the social and physical environment around them, attempt to discover the meaning personal to them, and form and reform their knowledge of the world. As this approach subscribes to the *experience* curriculum, the learner is not seen as a passive, empty vessel ready to be filled with information, but rather as an intellectual adventurer, a rational and critical inquirer, an active constructor of knowledge, an experiential problem-solver, and an independent intellectual being who learns to frame and pursue his or her own educational aims (Novick, 1996). Unlike the transmission approach, learner development here means self-realization, self-discovery, and self-actualization.

Although these two educational approaches shed some light on the nature of learner development, they both focus primarily on the development of *the head*, seeing the learner merely as an intellectual being and failing to draw adequate educational attention to the role of *the heart* in the learner's development as a whole person (Bode, 1995).

Toward a Christian Philosophy of the Learner and Learner Development

But what do we mean by the education of the heart? From a biblical perspective on education, with all truth being God's truth, knowledge can be imparted to the learner as both information and as scientific observations, discoveries, hypotheses, proposals, and testing of theories (Bode, 1995). Therefore, from the head, the learner learns the Word of God as a revealed body of information (i.e., the name of God, His mighty deeds, His will for our lives, etc), studies other bodies of information such as centuries of wisdom (i.e., science, philosophy, literature, etc), and develops new understandings. Yet, the aim of education encompasses more than developing one's intellectual capacity; it also includes learners coming into a right relationship with God, with others, and with their selves (Bode, 1995) and coming to an understanding of their purpose in life, in accordance with which they act. The coming into right relationship and attaining a vision of life form the education of the heart. This education includes the shaping and reshaping of learners' spiritual, moral, emotional, social, and thought lives, as well as their motivation, attitudes, and identities. Just as Proverbs 4:23 indicates ("Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life"), understanding the heart is key to understanding the nature of the learner and learner development.

The Image of the Learner

We now face another question: What is the nature of the learner? In the behaviorist transmission approach, the learner is seen "as a biological organism characterized by the current state of the evolutionary process and specifically by its own DNA" (Guillermin & Beck, 1995, p. 110). As such, learning means change in observable behaviors that can be conditioned. In the transactional approach, the learner is seen as "a self-expressing unit with unlimited potential" (Guillermin & Beck, 1995, p. 111). A Christian philosophy of education does not negate the fact that the learner is a person with a physical body created out of physical, chemical elements (Guillermin & Beck, 1995), nor does it negate the fact that the learner is also an intellectual being who has rational power and emotional capacity (Graham, 2003). However, a Christian philosophy of education does not stop there. It sees the learner as a person with a physical body that has a purpose, created to be committed to the Creator; it also sees the learner as a person with more than a physical body—a person that has both mind and heart, which are endowed for a purpose as well, that is, to be transformed and renewed in the likeness of Christ (see Romans 12:1-2).

In other words, a Christian philosophy of education does not see learners merely as people with physical bodies; they are persons who are spiritual beings created in the image of God (Guillermin & Beck, 1995). This means that the nature of the learner should reflect the mental, social, moral, and spiritual aspects of the nature of God (Edwards, 1995; Graham, 2003). Hence, as an intellectual being, the learner possesses intellectual power and has an ability to reason, to perceive, to understand, to conceptualize, to evaluate, and to relate intellectually to his or her surroundings. As an emotional being, the learner possesses volition, and can express and control emotions. As a social being, the learner has self-awareness and self-concept, and is capable of relating to other persons, depending on others, loving others and being loved by others, extending mercy to others, and receiving grace from others. As a moral being, the learner is capable of making a choice among behavioral alternatives, forming judgments about the ethics of actions, and is held accountable for the consequences of those choices. Finally, as a spiritual being, the learner is active and purposeful, has convictions, and is committed to the sovereign will of the Creator. In a nutshell, the learner is

rational, creative, moral, free, responsible, social, merciful, dependent, and convicted about knowing and living the truth (Graham, 2003).

The Nature of Learner Development

This perspective on the learner as a spiritual being carries significant implications for education. It means the education of learners should be an integration of both the head and the heart. In addressing the nature of learner development, Edwards (1995) contended that learners need development of their unique characteristics and their diverse needs that can "affect their desire for and efficiency of learning" (p. 170). As developmental beings, learners need to be molded and nurtured, instructed and guided, loved and disciplined by caregivers. As a developmental being with unique learner characteristics, the learner needs growth not merely in the cognitive domain, as in creativity, critical thinking, and rational inquiry, but also in other domains, such as character, personality, temperament, mood, motivation, attitude, learning styles, creativity, self-esteem, and beliefs (see Dornyei, 2005, for a detailed discussion of learner characteristics and individual differences). As a developmental being with a wide range of needs, the learner, on his or her way to becoming a full-grown person, should receive assurance of care, love, grace, and freedom from fear, rejection, alienation, and isolation. Finally, as a spiritual being in need of development, the learner should demonstrate learning outcomes that reflect the attributes of God—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22)—and exhibit the attainment of a vision of life.

Closing Thoughts: The Story Revisited

As I conclude, the comment by the director who entertained me at her school continues to linger in my ears. For 3 years they tried to find something to represent the spirit of their campus, but they couldn't find a good symbol. Clearly, in light of the discussion of the education of the heart above, an over-emphasis on the education of the head leaves out a fairly wide range of learner outcomes. Yet, if I were to express in one word what is missing as the spirit of that school, I would offer one that represents a significant, millennium-long moral teaching that has somehow been lost in the midst of people's increasing obsession with materialistic well-being over the past 30 years or so, which is also a moral teaching that has a spiritual mandate in the Holy Scriptures: *feng xian*, or self-sacrifice. It represents and reflects a vision, a purpose, a conviction. It marks the development of a full-grown person.

Note

¹ See the brief commentary at <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v4n14c1.html>.

Originally from China, John Liang is an associate professor of TESOL at Biola University in La Mirada, California. In his free time he enjoys surfing the Internet, playing with shareware and freeware programs, and collecting fun digital material for his grammar class.

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Spotlight on CETC Members



Amanda Baker, aabaker20@hotmail.com, Atlanta, Georgia, United States

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself. How are you connected with the world of TESOL?

My path to TESOL has been rather interesting, taking a few unexpected turns in the process. After the completion of my BA in French/Spanish, I naturally took the next logical step and flew to Japan! I taught English in northern Japan for three years and later traveled to northern China to teach English at a teachers' college for another year. My experience in China confirmed that TESOL was the right direction for me, so I returned home to Canada to pursue my MA in TESOL at Trinity Western University (TWU). With the terrific guidance and learning I received at TWU, I discovered a passion for research and researching, which led to a decision to further advance my education. Now I am studying at Georgia State University in the PhD in Applied Linguistics and ESL program and having an amazing, albeit sleep-deprived at times, experience!

2. What do you especially appreciate about TESOL and/or CETC?

The annual TESOL conference is high on my favorites list, although *Essential Teacher* and *TESOL Quarterly* are close seconds. Each of these has contributed to my knowledge base and has proved useful at several levels. The conferences provide insight into teaching practices and current research while *ET* has given me great ideas for the ESL classroom and *TQ* has contributed to the numerous papers I write for my doctoral courses.

3. Is there a relevant joy or challenge you experience that you could share with CETC Newsletter readers?

With the end of the spring semester just past, finishing the first year of the PhD program is probably one of the most exciting events in my life right now! At times I wasn't sure I would survive, but by God's grace, I made it through. In a few weeks, I will be returning to Canada for the summer to escape the humidity of Atlanta and enjoy the cooler yet still warm weather of Vancouver. A summer of teaching at TWU, cabining, and spending time with friends and family awaits!

4. What is your favorite Bible verse, and why?

Isaiah 40:31, which says, "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." This verse along with several others is the source of much strength in my spiritual, mental, and physical well-being. The word hope reminds me to never doubt in the Lord, that no matter what the circumstance, in the end, everything will be okay. And in many cases, the situation will be better than okay! With this in my heart, I can figuratively soar through troubles despite the turbulence on the way. This verse also teaches me perseverance, as one of the defining characteristics of hope is patience. As an ESL/EFL teacher, I find patience to be key, giving me the time I need to reflect on my students' circumstances and to figure out how to teach in a way that is hopefully more conducive to their learning.

5. Is there a book, article, or individual related to TESOL that has influenced you and/or your teaching? If so, could you explain how?

One of my main areas of interest is pronunciation instruction, so naturally the resources and people that have most influenced my teaching have to do with this topic. The book I have found most useful in teaching oral communication or fluency classes is *Learner English* (2001) edited by Michael Swan and Bernard Smith. Although the purpose of this book is not to provide techniques for teaching pronunciation, it is particularly valuable in describing the difficulties that learners of English frequently encounter when learning the language. This book provides cultural background on 22 different language groups including Spanish, Arabic, and Thai, and provides detailed information on the phonological, lexical, and grammatical issues these learners may have. When teaching a class of 10 or more students from seven different language backgrounds, I found that this book helped me to quickly learn about their potential problems, enabling me to design lessons that were more likely to address their needs. From that point on, I count on the education I received from Dr. William Acton who taught my graduate course in applied phonology at TWU. The knowledge he imparted to us coupled with several other resources has contributed a great deal to my current teaching and learning career.



Xuesong Gao (Andy), Xuesong.Gao@hkusua.hku.hk, Hong Kong, China

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself. How are you connected with the world of TESOL?

I'm a doctoral student in my final year in applied linguistics at the English Centre/Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. I was born in China and did my first degree in Wuhan, where I learned of Christianity from my English teachers. I taught English briefly in a technical college before I went abroad for postgraduate studies. Now I am planning to be a teacher educator. It's my current research and future career plan that brought me to be connected with the world of TESOL.

2. What do you especially appreciate about TESOL and/or CETC?

TESOL is an international organization for English language teaching professionals worldwide. I particularly like TESOL because it has many caucuses, among which is CETC. With my fellow caucus members, I can explore crucial questions related to my career: (a) Why did I become an English teacher? (b) How do I relate my professional practices to my ministry? As a Christian, I know that the Lord has been leading me toward something these years, and CETC is an important place to support one another in our professional work and service.

3. Is there a relevant joy or challenge you experience that you could share with CETC Newsletter readers?

It's a great joy for me to know that there are Christians active in our field, not only as teachers but also as researchers. The biggest challenge for me is to bridge the gap between my faith and professional practice. Throughout my training, faith has been separated from my profession. In fact, before I heard of CETC I never thought about how my faith could be integrated into my professional practices. I tended to place these into two different domains. For instance, as a research student, I spent much time building arguments and writing journal articles, but I wonder if God was in my thinking and writing. It was a bit of a struggle to engage in the CETC conversation, but somehow I have managed to enter this community and found that I am not alone.

4. What is your favorite Bible verse, and why?

One of my favorites is Jeremiah 29:11 ("For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"). This is a verse I received from my teachers when I was graduating from university. As I was reflecting upon the past 10 years, I saw that God's plan is gradually being revealed for me. Although I cannot state what it is exactly, I have much more faith in God's plans for me. This verse gives me peace and certainty, and comfort when things do not go well. I know that God has plans to give me hope and a future.

5. Is there a book, article, or individual related to TESOL that has influenced you and/or your teaching? If so, could you explain how?

I was greatly encouraged by the people I talked and listened to during the CELT 2007 conference in Seattle. Scholars such as Tom Scovel, Suresh Canagarajah, and David Smith have wonderfully integrated the faith into their academic and professional practices. They demonstrate how I can make my work into ministry. I believe that I will be doing a meaningful job if I build my knowledge and understanding on the Lord. I now have a set of targets and criteria for my future professional practices. May the Lord be my guide as I entrust my research and teaching to Him.



Carolyn Kristjánsson, kristjan@twu.ca, Langley, British Columbia, Canada

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself. How are you connected with the world of TESOL?

I was born in Canada, spent a number of years in Brazil as the daughter of missionaries, and married a man from Iceland. While in Iceland I was asked to teach English in a local junior college although I had no background in this area. After much thought and prayer, I reluctantly agreed. To my surprise, I discovered that teaching English was something I greatly enjoyed and, with God's help, was able to do in a way that students found helpful as well. In the summer of 1994, I relocated with my family to North America, and within 10 days I was enrolled in two courses at a TESOL Institute hosted by Iowa State University. That was eventually followed by a TESL certificate at Trinity Western University (TWU) and MA and PhD work at the University of British Columbia. I earned these degrees while teaching in the intensive English program and later in the certificate and MA programs in TESOL at TWU where I continue to teach at present.

2. What do you especially appreciate about TESOL and/or CETC?

One of the many things I appreciate about TESOL is the opportunity to get to know students and colleagues from many different cultures. What an incredible opportunity to learn! It's also deeply satisfying to be able to contribute positively to people's lives. Participation in CETC offers the added pleasure of opportunities to connect with colleagues who are committed not only to the profession but also to faith in Christ and are willing to explore and discuss how spiritual values influence their pedagogy. This is something I value greatly.

3. Is there a relevant joy or challenge you experience that you could share with CETC Newsletter readers?

Two of the greatest joys are seeing my students achieve their goals and meeting new colleagues in TESOL and learning from their perspectives. The single greatest challenge: not having enough time to do all the reading, research, networking, and professional development that I'd like to do!

4. What is your favorite Bible verse, and why?

One of my favorites is "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:13). When I was younger I struggled with extreme shyness. I still find myself tongue-tied and wanting to withdraw in some situations, but by looking to Christ for courage and strength, I have found that I actually can do "all things" that are needed. This verse is a daily reality in my life.

5. Is there a book, article, or individual related to TESOL that has influenced you and/or your teaching? If so, could you explain how?

One day in the summer of 2000, while doing some research related to my doctoral work, I stumbled across the second edition of Earl Stevick's *Memory, Meaning & Method* (1996) in a university library. From the very first chapter I was captivated by what I read and had a distinct sense of feeling at home with Earl's way of thinking. I was especially impressed by his attention to intrapersonal and interpersonal matters and the link between the two. As I read more of his writing, I came to realize the importance of this theme, made explicit with his "Inside and Between" principle in *Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways* (1980) and developed in various ways in subsequent works. His acknowledgment of the influence of spiritual values in shaping his views and the representation of language teaching as "sacramental" (1990) resonated with my own research interests regarding the influence of spiritual values in language education. Earl's articulation of such matters has greatly influenced my thinking and practice.



Frank Tuzi, ftuzi@yahoo.com, Inzai, Chiba, Japan

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself. How are you connected to the world of TESOL?

I have been a member of TESOL since the inception of CETC and have been working with most of the leadership since that time. I began working as a newsletter editor and shifted to the nonofficer position of webmaster a few years later. Since that time, I have worked with the chairs, newsletter editors, and e-list managers to coordinate information and communication.

2. What do you especially appreciate about TESOL and/or CETC?

I appreciate the connections available via CETC. It is good to see others in the field who are of like mind. I have long stressed the proverb "iron sharpens iron." TESOL, CETC, and the associate CELT organization provide opportunities to learn and assist others.

3. Is there a relevant joy or challenge you experience that you could share with CETC Newsletter readers?

As a techno-geek, I am glad to use the knowledge I have to assist others in their teaching objectives. In particular, I am glad to see web-based, operating system independent, applications that cost little to nothing for us educators and the students we interact with. For example, I like to discuss materials development that uses tools such as Audacity, e-Sword, or Hot Potatoes.

4. What is your favorite Bible verse, and why?

None in particular, but I do believe that scripture memorization is a good thing.

5. Is there a book, article, or individual related to TESOL that has influenced you and/or your teaching? If so, could you explain how?

Unlike many language educators, I live in the worlds of language and technology. That being the case, works by Warschauer, Liu, and MacLeod have impacted my understanding of the integration of language and technology in teaching and learning. I also have a strong interest in second language writing and assessment. Thus, the writings of people such as Stanley, Ferris, Hedgcock, and Braine continue to pique my curiosity and encourage me to ponder new connections between second language acquisition, second language writing, assessment, and technology.

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