

In This Issue

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ORTESOL Journal Editors

This issue of *The ORTESOL Journal* marks the transition not only to a new look but also to a new approach. Past issues featured two or three primary research articles, sometimes from first-time authors. The newly reinvented *ORTESOL Journal* departs from this tradition, focusing on classroom-oriented articles by established professionals sharing their teaching practices and classroom experiences. The four feature articles are firmly anchored in the literature but not heavily referenced. Each encourages readers to reflect on their own practices. Three Teaching Notes and one book review round out the issue. The book review is unique, referring you to a link on the ORTESOL web site where you can read an extensive synopsis of the entire book.

Tom Scovel, noting that students don't always learn what we think we are teaching them, offers suggestions for teaching what students need in ways that are easy for them, rather than teaching what's easy to teach. He gives suggestions for creating better writing prompts and suggests that writing teachers de-emphasize subordination, allowing students to sometimes write the way they speak. He reminds us that humans are "biologically designed to acquire language via speaking and listening," not by reading and writing. He makes the case that certain grammar points would be easier for students to acquire "if teachers help students rely on their ears."

Julie Haun presents a collaborative approach to research paper writing. She has discovered that when students work together to read and write about a common topic they are more motivated and successful. As students develop competency in discussing the issues, they read more deeply, become more curious, and "transform their knowledge base" so that they can more easily organize their notes, synthesize the material, and support a thesis in a coherent, well-supported research paper.

Martha Iancu finds Fluency First to be a highly effective technique, offering students a way to become effective readers and thence good writers. When it comes to focus on form, she points out connections to Diane Larsen-Freeman's principles and practices of grammaring, i.e., grammar as a process and a skill rather than a body of knowledge that too often remains inert in the learner.

Katherine Long looks at how non-native speakers perceive themselves as English teachers. The three non-native speakers who participated in her study did not think of themselves as exhibiting the stereotypical negative teaching behaviors that educators may believe they have, citing "cultural factors and theories about language acquisition" as reasons for not conforming. Long offers practical, effective suggestions for teacher educators and supervisors based on her study.

In *Teaching Notes*, three ESL professionals describe their successes in the classroom. Reuel Kurzet explains how to teach tag questions in an authentic context while protecting the environment by recycling outdated handouts. In her pronunciation classes, Talisman Saunders illustrates ways to model sounds kinesthetically, using arm and hand movements to mimic mouth movements. Patricia Pashby shows us how she prepares her students for conferences to work on their pronunciation and come up with a plan for regular practice.

Bill Walker's *From the Bookshelf* article explores a new way of reviewing a book. After he offers a brief overview of Norbert Schmitt's *Vocabulary in Context*, in which he challenges us to reexamine our cherished beliefs about vocabulary teaching, Walker invites us to read a much longer, in-depth synopsis of Schmitt's book online at ORTESOL's web site, www.ortesol.org.