



ORTESOL NEWS

OREGON TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

ORTESOL Quarterly Newsletter Volume 35, No. 3, Summer 2012

Portland State University, P.O. Box 751, Portland, OR 97207

ORTESOL Board Adds New Member; Two Other Members to Step Down in January: Three Interviews

Heather Dittmore

ORTESOL Vice President

Heather Dittmore, the current Vice President of ORTESOL, interviewed two outgoing and one incoming board member for this edition of *ORTESOL News*. Please enjoy the interviews below:

Outgoing Board Member Luciana Diniz

What is your teaching context?

I teach ESOL at Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus.

What positions have you held at ORTESOL?

I was the tech person from 2008 to 2011 and the vice president (in 2011) and president (2012).

What do you think you have brought to the board during your service?

Because of my interest in technology, I was able to help the board to process information faster; for example, by transferring the membership renewal and conference registration to an online system. My favorite part is to help organize the conferences. I love creating the schedules, helping with proposals, etc.

What are your plans after you step down as president?

I think I'm going to take a break. Then, I would like to volunteer at TESOL to gain some experience with bigger organizations.

Do you plan to still be involved with ORTESOL in other ways?

Sure. I think most members can help ORTESOL by advertising the conference and other events, encouraging colleagues to publish articles on the newsletter or journal and/or present at the conference,



Luciana Diniz and Annae Nichelsen are stepping down from their ORTESOL board positions.

etc. ORTESOL is part of our profession, and we don't need to be on the board to actively participate. Also, TESOL is coming to Portland in 2014! I'm sure most members will be involved in the organization of the conference.

Outgoing Board Member Annae Nicholson

What is your teaching context?

I teach at Portland Community College Cascade Campus. Our student population is incredibly diverse, which is one of my favorite aspects of teaching at Cascade. I've worked with students from nearly every country, ranging from international students to refugees to graduates of local high schools. I've also taught in the Developmental Education department working with native speakers on pre-college writing skills. In addition, we just began offering an online grammar course that I'll be teaching this Fall. PCC has such a wide scope while still maintaining a small community feeling, and it's exciting to be a part of.

What positions have you held at ORTESOL?

I began serving on the board in 2009 as a Volunteer Co-Coordinator. ORTESOL really depends on the excellent volunteers we have for our events, so I enjoyed recruiting and working with our volunteers during the conferences and workshops. In this position I also learned a lot about organizing our events, which led me to my current position as Conference Co-Coordinator.

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What do you think you have brought to the board during your service?

The ORTESOL board is an incredibly collaborative and creative group of people, and I have loved being part of the team. I believe that my skills in working cooperatively and listening openly to others have been big assets.

Also, my dedication to the mission and values of our organization has helped me succeed in my roles on the board. In ORTESOL and all areas, I love to see a job well done.

What are your plans after you step down?

After stepping down in January, I look forward to having extra time for my students and classes, as well as some more time to be involved at PCC.

Do you plan to still be involved with ORTESOL in other ways?

Absolutely! I'm very excited about attending our conferences and workshops as a participant. I also hope to present again in the future. And of course I will keep in touch with all of the amazing friends and colleagues I've met as a board member. Being on the ORTESOL board has been such a rewarding experience, and I'm really thankful for the opportunity.

New Board Member Angelica da Costa

What's your current position with the ORTESOL board?

I have taken over the Higher Education SIG (special interest group) chair position after Dawn Allen left for Texas.

What's your affiliation with ESL teaching in Oregon?

I am in my last term in the MA TESOL program at Portland State University. I have volunteered and taught Community ESL at Kelly Elementary all year long last year (SUN Program).

Do you have any prior ESL/EFL experience?

Yes, I have taught EFL in Brazil for almost 20 years (K-12 and Bi-national language centers). By the way, I retired in Brazil before moving to Portland!!!

Why are you interested in being part of the ORTESOL board now? What do you hope to accomplish as a leader in this capacity?

I want to build connections and learn from this experience. I want to be helpful and contribute to the organization in whatever way possible. Despite my previous experience in Brazil, I feel this is a new start.

Do you have anything else you'd like to share with our members?

Yes. It is a quote by Paulo Freire, and it put in words my feelings and choices in this new stage in my life here in Portland. "No one can be in the world, with the world, and with others and maintain a posture of neutrality. I cannot be in the world decontextualized, simply observing life." ~ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom*



Angelica de la Costa is joining the ORTESOL board, replacing Dawn Allen as Higher Education SIG

ORTESOL Fall Conference 2012!

ORTESOL Presents:

Teaching in the Time of Transitions

November 16-17

PCC, Sylvania Campus

Plenary Speakers:

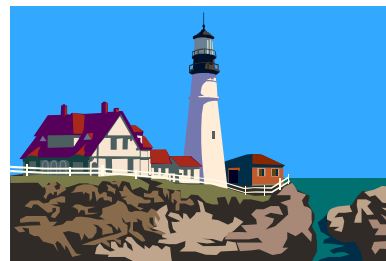
Cristina Cavage, Savannah College of Art and Design

sponsored by Pearson Longman and

Lillian Wong, University of Hong Kong, sponsored by TESOL .

Registration begins in September 2012

www.ortesol.org



Spring Workshop Blossoms New Ideas in Reading and Vocabulary

Annae Nicholson and Young Mi Choi
ORTESOL Workshop Coordinators

ORTESOL's annual Spring Workshop, held this year on Saturday, June 2nd, was a great success thanks to our excellent presenters and members. Over 150 participants gathered at Portland Community College Cascade Campus to learn and share ideas on reading and vocabulary, and the event received very positive feedback.

The day began with a keynote presentation by Dr. Neil Anderson on curricularizing reading fluency. Dr. Anderson first defined the characteristics of engaged readers as well as the meaning of reading fluency. He then gave numerous examples of activities that teachers can use to help students increase



Dr. Neil Anderson

their reading rate in addition to comprehension. Dr. Anderson's enthusiasm and knowledge of his field gave participants a lot of strategies and methods for improving their students' reading skills.

The morning keynote session was followed by a lunch break and then two afternoon sessions. The first afternoon session featured Dr. Carmen Caceda giving excellent ideas and resources in reading and vocabulary, particularly for K-12 teaching. This presentation ran concurrently with Julia MacRae's informative session on Extensive Reading, which is designed to build fluency and overall enjoyment of reading on the behalf of language learners.

The second afternoon session included two very enjoyable and relevant presentations. Dr. Kathy Harris detailed techniques and approaches for effectively working with literacy students, while Dr. Susan Conrad explained the reasoning behind using corpus linguistics in the classroom as well as some great activities and resources.



Julia MacRae's Session on Extensive Reading

Many participants remarked during and after the workshop that they really enjoyed the focus on reading and vocabulary. As one member commented, "I think literacy and vocabulary are topics we can always revisit." Other members appreciated the attention given to K-12 in the themes and speakers. Based on this feedback, ORTESOL will continue to provide further opportunities for professional development in these areas, as well as others. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at ortesol@yahoo.com. Materials from the sessions and the keynote presentation can be found at ortesol.org.

Thank you for your participation and support, and for making our Spring Workshop a success!



ORTESOL Participants Enjoying Themselves

Book Review: *Listening in the Language Classroom* (Field, 2008)

Beth Sheppard

University of Oregon

I found John Field's 2008 book after reading the article "Into the mind of the academic listener" (Field, 2011), which I highly recommend. In his article, Field summarized the results of several studies on intermediate-level, university bound ESL students' listening skills and discussed the implications of these studies for classroom practice. I was so impressed that I immediately searched out his other work.

Listening in the Language Classroom is not a training book for new teachers, like *Teaching Second Language Listening* (Lynch, 2009) and *Teaching ESL/EFL Speaking and Listening* (Nation & Newton, 2008); it is a call for all LT professionals to rethink their approach to listening instruction. Broadly, Field notes that the skill of listening is often neglected in language classrooms (perhaps because it seems difficult to teach effectively) but that it is an essential skill that allows students to interact and to access input in their L2. He proposes that the current "comprehension approach" to listening instruction be replaced with a "process approach," in which language learners' listening skill is consistently developed by focused practice on aspects of successful listening performance.

Part I of the book is dedicated to a definition of the comprehension approach and an explanation of its strengths and weaknesses. Field's depiction of the comprehension approach will be familiar to most ESL instructors, with a pre-listening phase to build schema, activities to be performed while listening, and a variety of meaning-focused tasks or activities after listening. According to Field, this approach is not sufficient. It does have a place in listening instruction, since it provides a good deal of essential listening practice ("experience and exposure," p. 32), but it asks learners to reach again and again for the end goal of listening (comprehension) without providing instructions on how to get there. Field argues convincingly that practice alone is not enough; targeted instruction in listening is both necessary and possible.

In Part II, Field further critiques the comprehension approach by describing various approaches to learner autonomy and various styles and types of listening. He emphasizes that the comprehension approach looks only at limited sorts of listening texts and limited sorts of listener actions, and suggests additional types of listening texts and tasks, as well as different roles for the listening teacher. Many of these ideas are interesting and inspiring, and can help a language teacher re-conceptualize listening instruction to engage students more actively. This section also includes some discussions of instructional technology that seem outdated, at least in my context.

Parts III and IV make up the heart of the book, in which Field describes his "process approach" in detail. The basic ideas are that a variety of processes are required for effective listening, that student weaknesses in various processes can be diagnosed, and that short,

focused exercises can be developed to correct these weaknesses. Here, Field makes a subtle distinction between subskills of listening, which may or may not exist as psychological constructs, and listening processes, which are component behaviors of effective listening. Processes are grouped into decoding processes and meaning-building processes (terminology which Field has deliberately chosen rather than bottom-up and top-down – see pp. 132-133). Four chapters describe listening processes, from recognizing and distinguishing target language phonemes to interpreting hierarchical discourse structures. Each process is described, and then implications for second language teaching practice are explored. In most cases, one or more sample activities are presented. These activities are short and focused, each one drawing learners' attention to a specific essential listening process and allowing for intensive practice. Although they are presented as universal for any L2, some of the ideas don't extend beyond English or closely related languages. Still, most teachers should be able to draw several new and valuable ideas from this section of the book.

Finally, Parts V and VI discuss how listening instruction can prepare students for the demands of listening outside the classroom, with a focus on authentic materials and listening strategies, and a conclusion envisioning a combination of approaches for a complete program of listening instruction. Overall, the focus is on developing students' listening ability step-by-step, diagnosing and treating needs as they arise, and offering specific strategy instruction as needed, with an assumption that strategy instruction will be needed less as listening proficiency increases.

Throughout the book, Field characterizes L2 listening as marked by greater uncertainty than other skills, since it is fleeting and cannot always be repeated. He argues against pedagogical assumptions carried over from reading instruction and emphasizes that the goal of listening instruction must be the skill or process of listening, not the comprehension of specific texts. *Listening in the Language Classroom* is full of food for thought and good ideas to try out in the classroom. Although it may not be as easily applicable for L2s other than English, and although some technical suggestions seem outdated, the argument for a new approach to listening instruction is intriguing, and it is carefully and coherently (if sometimes slowly) built. This book is changing my classroom practices; it might change yours, too.





TESOL Report from ORTESOL Grant Recipients: Part 1

This year, ORTESOL sent two members to TESOL 2012 in Philadelphia as recipients of the Nattinger Travel Grant: Dan Davis from Portland Community College, Rock Creek and Jesse Blackburn-Morrow from Portland State University. This edition of ORTESOL News will feature Dan Davis's report from the TESOL conference. Look for Jesse Blackburn-Morrow's description of major workshops in the Fall newsletter.

Dan Davis

Portland Community College, Rock Creek

This year's TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo was held from March 28-31 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The convention drew a record 7000 attendees, with professionals and scholars traveling from all over the world. The convention's theme, "A TESOL Declaration of Excellence" celebrated an "opportunity for members to declare their vision of excellence in all aspects of the profession". The conference provided many examples of how our profession is growing and improving both internationally and right here in Oregon. As a first time attendee, I was overwhelmed with the scope and quality of the plenaries, presenters, and contributions of everyone. For three days, I frantically dashed between presentations and shared notes and experiences with colleagues. I would often find myself sitting in a writing or grammar instruction session wondering whether the communicative activities or research-based session that I had passed on was a superior, or even a career-changing piece of professional development which I would regret having not attended for the rest of my life. Anyway—I found it best to ameliorate such anxieties by coordinating with a colleague and sharing notes if one of us ended up seeing something really fantastic.

This year's strong contingent of plenary speakers included Alberto M. Carvalho, superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools; William Labov, professor of linguistics and director of the Linguistics Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania; Kurt Kohn, chair professor of English and applied linguistics at the University of Tübingen, Germany, and director of the Steinbeis Transfer Center Sprachlernmedien/ Language Learning Media; Christine Coombe, currently on the English faculty of Dubai Men's College, UAE and outgoing President of TESOL; Heidi Byrnes, the George M. Roth Distinguished Professor of German at Georgetown University and Jun Liu, a past president of TESOL International Association and currently associate provost for International Initiatives at Georgia State University. The plenary speakers that I witnessed,

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Kurt Kohn, Heidi Byrnes, and Chirstine Coombe were uniformly excellent. Kohn in particular was eye-opening. His research on various "Englishes" and language ownership questioned traditional ideas and assumptions in the field, such as whether or not language "belongs" to the native speaker and how an ELL can transform an instructor's English into "my English"—an English based on the target language, but necessarily suited for the learner's different needs.

I was made very proud to be an attendee representing Oregon. Congratulations to members of ORTESOL who brought strong representation as presenters and attendees.

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Rosemary Zhang from PCC received the Dedication to Community College ESL Teaching award at TESOL 2012



Oregon K-12 Newsflash: Major Changes Underway!

Barbara Page

ORTESOL K-12 SIG Chair

The landscape of public education is changing rapidly across the country as a variety of “next generation” school reform initiatives take shape. Oregon is on the brink of a major shift which will soon affect English language learners (ELLs) and ESOL teachers in our K-12 schools.

On July 18, Oregon was granted the ESEA “flexibility” waiver that allows for changes to the provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) laws. One of the changes affecting ELLs will be in how accountability for schools and districts will be measured. Data will continue to be reported for ELLs, but school and district accountability will be determined by growth and graduation rates of ELLs, students with disabilities, the historically underserved and economically disadvantaged students *combined* rather than the “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) required for each separate group under NCLB. The new accountability system will determine which schools are “priority” and “focus” schools, i.e. schools in need of improvement.

Some advocates for ELLs have voiced concerns that the flexibility of the ESEA waivers will allow our students to be “left behind” academically. Will schools and districts continue to direct funds and focus instruction for ELLs at the same levels as accountability for the group changes? It will be important for all stakeholders, including teachers, to stay involved as we see the waiver provisions implemented in our schools.

Another big change for ELL teachers and classrooms will be the waiver’s requirement to adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond with state college and career standards no later than the 2013-2014 school year. Oregon is one of 45 states to adopt the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and Oregon is working with other states on ELP standards that will link to the new Common Core. The ELL SCASS (State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards), led by Kenji Hakuta of Stanford University, is a group of 19 states including Oregon working on the development and adoption of new ELP standards and assessments.

Both the WIDA Consortium and the California Department of Education recently rolled out new standards which could influence Oregon’s adoption. WIDA’s *2012 Amplification of the ELD Standards* will be debuted in its 29 member states in August. California’s draft of its *English Language Development Standards* is open for public comment through August and is scheduled for adoption in the fall. Oregon’s timeline is tight, with new ELP standards and assessments aligned to the Common Core expected to be reviewed and adopted by the State Board of Education by early 2013. An additional, and controversial, provision of the ESEA waiver is that teachers and administrators be evaluated to some

degree by student “growth,” generally defined as improvement on standardized tests such as the ELPA. Evaluation systems attributing student performance on tests to individual teacher effectiveness are being hotly debated nationally, and it is an especially complex issue for “specialist” teachers such as ELL and Special Education.

Section III of Oregon’s waiver, *A Statewide System for Teacher and Leader Effectiveness*, includes a pilot project which is meant to determine, “how and whether” standardized test scores can be used as one measure to evaluate educator effectiveness. The federal plan, however, requires that student growth be used as a “significant” factor in educator evaluation. The guidelines for Oregon’s teacher evaluation system are due to the U.S. Department of Education by July 2013 and all districts are to begin implementation in the 2013-2014 school year.

The Oregon Department of Education, headed by its newly-appointed Deputy Superintendent Rob Saxton, is working with stakeholders on education reforms in our state. Susan Inman, ODE Learning Opportunities, Options & Supports director overseeing Title III/ELL, is holding an informational session as part of ODE’s “ESEA Odyssey” on August 14 & 15 in Eugene, and feedback on draft ELP standards will be solicited as they are developed. Again, it will be crucial for Oregon ESOL teachers to stay informed and add our voices to the process.

With all the acronyms and jargon, school reform can be confusing. What is clear is that the “next generation” standards and assessments being developed now will have high stakes, and teacher input is vital. Attend ORTESOL’s November 17th K-12 sessions at our Fall Conference, *Teaching in the Time of Transitions*, to get the latest updates and get involved in ESOL education in our state.

Resources:

ODE’s *Next Generation of Accountability – ESEA waiver info*
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3475>

CCSSO ELL Program

[http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/English_Language_Learners_\(ELL\).html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/English_Language_Learners_(ELL).html)

Understanding Language

<http://ell.stanford.edu/>

WIDA ELD Standards

<http://wida.us/standards/eld.aspx#2012>

California ELD Standards Draft
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp>

Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality
<http://www.tqsource.org/publications/July2010Brief.pdf>



Mark Van Ness, Sara Bailie, and Luciana Diniz at TESOL 2012 in Philadelphia

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Presenters from Oregon included PCC's Luciana Diniz and Sarah Bailie presenting "Developing and Teaching an Online Grammar Class" on designing curriculum for an online grammar course. PCC and Mt. Angel Seminary's Mark Van Ness presented "Developing Ethical and Respectful Minds: Research and Practice", research-based work on how to be ethical and respectful in multicultural contexts. Errin Beck and Monika Mulder presented "Learner-Centered Classroom Activities for Advanced Academic Writing", which demonstrated effective hands-on, learner-centered activities to guide writing students. Special congratulations to Rosemary Zhang of Portland Community College who received the Dedication to Community College ESL teaching award by the conference. Other Oregon attendees included Heather Dittmore, Banu Yayali, and Linnea Spitzer.

For anyone wondering whether TESOL is worth the time, money and effort, the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" I returned with new connections with colleagues, renewals of past ones, and stacks of teaching materials and strategies (many of which I am still finding ways to incorporate). And yes, I did find time to see a little bit of Philadelphia! Next year's convention will be held in Dallas, Texas from March 20th-23rd, 2013.

Launching "Behind the Whiteboard"
Satirical Newspaper for ESL Teachers
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The ESL industry now has its own satirical e-newspaper! *Behind the Whiteboard* is *The Onion* for hardworking ESL teachers. Here visitors will find articles satirizing the ESL industry, absurd polls, a horoscope for ESL practitioners, and a photo gallery of our own "Engrish" from Southeast Asia. However, the site is more than just comic relief. In the column "Career Paths," visitors will read how veterans in the field grabbed opportunities that took their careers in unique directions. Another section profiles doctorate programs in the field, and visitors will find conference information from across the country. Want to show off your creative side and think you have a knack for satire? *BtW* wants to hear from you! Submit content or ideas and make money from your writing.