



CETC Newsletter, Volume 6, Issue 3

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Jim Mischler, CETC Newsletter Editor

Welcome to the first-ever CETC e-newsletter edition. This is an exciting venture for the Caucus. There are some new features that will be very useful to our members.

One advantage of this new medium is its "interactive" nature. For example, articles may now contain hyperlinks, such as <http://www.cetesol.org/>, that lead to additional content on the CETC Web site or to related areas of the World Wide Web. This will allow readers to view actual examples of teaching materials and techniques, consider complex issues from several angles, and even respond to an idea through e-mail and discussion boards. E-mail addresses (editor@cetesol.org) will also be hyperlinked for quick access. These features can improve the value of the content and increase the communication options for the caucus membership.

I encourage all CETC members to take advantage of the features of the new e-newsletter format. They will help us to teach well and to serve as ambassadors for Jesus Christ.

P.S.: By the way, both the CETC Newsletter and the caucus Web site are currently soliciting articles for publication (see below for details). This is another avenue to communicate and share your ideas with the membership.

CETC on the Web

Frank Tuzi, CETC Webmaster

The Web site staff took a needed vacation this summer. As a result, little was done over the hot summer months on the CETC Web site <http://www.cetesol.org/>. Now that autumn has arrived, we are back on the job with new content.

NACFLA

The site has a new article about the North American Christian Foreign Language Association (NACFLA). Dave Smith from NACFLA highlights the role of the organization and the advantages it brings to CETC. The article also highlights a new journal, the *Journal of Christianity and Foreign Languages*, which is of interest to us at CETC. If you are interested in discovering the flavor of this journal, you can read the last two years of editorials for free at <http://www.spu.edu/orgs/nacfla/publicat.htm>.

Call for Papers

There is an open call for articles to be published on the CETC Web site and in the Newsletter. If you have a paper, teaching tip, research study, or book review that is written from a Christian perspective, submit it for consideration. There are more details at <http://www.cetesol.org/>.

Call for Materials

People visiting our site are asking for more teaching materials! If you have quality ESL materials written from a Christian

worldview, and you would like to share them with the wider community, please let us know. We would be happy to post your materials on the CETC Web site. For more information please contact the CETC Webmaster at webmaster@cetesol.org.

Feature Article: Applying the THRIL Technique in a Christian Context

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, Recife, Brazil

From Alliteration to THRIL

One of the most powerful memory-activating strategies used by human beings is that known as "alliteration". The Dictionary of Literacy, published by the International Reading Association (1995: 6) defines that concept as "the repetition of the initial sounds in neighboring words or stressed syllables, as "The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew; The furrow followed free" (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*). Interestingly, alliteration seems to be one communicative strategy used in preaching. Thus, U.S. missionary-linguist Muriel Ekdahl (personal communication, August 11, 2003) states that many preachers rely on the repetition of an initial letter while planning their communication. For instance, the words compassion, courage, and conviction would serve as mnemonic reminders for a message on the Apostle Paul.

Granted the apparently universal use of alliteration in Indo-European languages, especially in poetry, such cognitive-enhancing processes are not as systematically and deeply explored in second language learning, as they should be. In my article focusing on techniques for humanizing vocabulary use (Gomes de Matos, 2002), I make a case for probing alliteration through the threefold repetition of a sound/letter in a message that can be both memorized and memorable (Note the repetition of word-initial "m"). This could be expressed in a sentence thus: Memorize memorable messages. This is called the THRIL technique, for THreefold Repetition of Initial Letter.

Applying THRIL in a Christian context

One method for using THRIL, which can be adapted to learners of different proficiency levels, is that of challenging users of English to construct Christian messages concisely. The task, to be carried out by pairs or small groups, would require that all messages begin with a verb, so as to convey a Christian message. Each group would both present and justify the messages created. Spiritual values embedded in the texts would be discussed and, if possible, a consensus would be reached on the most meaningful memorable messages.

Real-world Examples

Below are some examples produced by teachers of English in a workshop I conducted a couple of months ago. Note that varied formats can be adopted, such as the word-initial repeated letter can be supplied (e.g., "A_____ a_____ a_____"), or the verb form can be made explicit ("Honor h_____ h_____"). In the workshop, given the advanced proficiency level of the participants, only the repeated sound/letter was given in advance.

Anchor your actions on amity.
Behold the bedridden with a beguiling smile.
Honor humility and honesty.
Treat teenagers with tenderness.

The Benefits of THRIL

This mnemonic activity can provide both spiritual and linguistic dividends. On the latter, discussion and clarification of word choice appropriateness, paraphrasing each principle as one or two paragraphs, expressing the spiritual value through a related biblical quotation. In any event, the list of possible activities is quite long and will ultimately depend on the creativity of your classroom community. In short, "Guide and generate your ESL mission with God's grace."

References:

Gomes de Matos, F. Teaching vocabulary for peace education. *ESL Magazine* 5 (4), 22-24.

About the author(s): Francisco Gomes de Matos, fcm@hotlink.com.br, teaches EFL in Recife, Brazil. He has also taught ESL at the University of Michigan, USA, and Applied Linguistics at the University of Ottawa, Canada.

Reviews: Materials for the Classroom

by Kitty Purgason, Department of TESOL and Applied Linguistics, Biola University

Common Ground, by Michelle Ballou (1997-2001)

This three-level curriculum (beginning, intermediate, advanced) is designed to teach English and "character" at the same time, especially in international contexts (the author has experience in Central Asia). Each level can be covered in 16 two-hour lessons, either done intensively over a semester. The language focus is on both conversation and pronunciation. Examples of topics (at the advanced level) are Trust, Friendship, Submission - Family, Ambition - Career, Mercy - Legal System, and so on. Teacher's manuals have everything to make teaching easy, even for a novice teacher. A typical lesson in the conversation section includes introductory questions, a story, response questions, reaction questions, role play, and application. See <http://www.commongrounded.com/>.

Adventures in English, Exploring English, and Adventures in Business

These materials have been developed for the Evangelical Free Church of America for use in their Outreach English Classes, part of their short-term international missions strategy. Adventures in English is a two-book set for multi-level classes (high-beginning-intermediate) focusing on conversational English. Book 1 covers 12 topics such as family, communication, food, occupations, and sports. Book 2 contains reading sections on the life of Christ. For students of lower English proficiency, there is an entry-level book which covers basic vocabulary and grammar on the same 12 topics. Exploring English is similar in goals and format. Here the 12 conversational English lessons cover marriage, communication, agriculture, employment, etc., and the reading book includes as nine Old Testament accounts as well as three from the life of Jesus. Adventures in Business has eight conversational English lessons focusing on business and eight conversational Bible lessons. Business vocabulary, idioms, and cultural information are included. See <http://www.efca.org/international/shortterm/outreachenglish.html>.

Spechtree.com

One of the challenges of doing conversational English is knowing what to talk about. The "spechtree" website is a great resource with more than 100 conversation topics. It is connected to "Talktime," a model for ministry with international students involving conversation in English, started by a church in Bellevue, Washington supported by International Students, Inc. For each topic, there is a whole page of specific questions very helpful to get the conversation flowing, along with (optional) related Bible verses. Topics are divided into abstract themes (such as age, beauty, freedom, panic), academic matters, daily life (e.g., advice, hospital, internet), hobby topics (e.g., movies, travel), holidays, nature, personal history, personal values (e.g., decisionmaking, forgiveness), relationships, work, and world and culture. See <http://www.spechtree.com/>.

Soon Magazine, <http://www.soon.org.uk/>

An "easy-English web magazine for the world" is how the site describes Soon. Run by an evangelical ministry in the U.K. with goals of clear, but respectful outreach through English, the home page draws students in with, "Whatever you are searching for, Soon is the magazine with the answers: advice on visiting Britain, learning English, interviews, problems of life, sex, science, religion, stories and poems." A link titled "What is the world's best-selling book?" tells readers about the Bible. Interviews with famous people present Christian movie stars and Olympic athletes. "Easy English True Stories" use this popular format to present testimonies such as that of an Azeri youth trapped in a subway fire who prayed for safety. "Current Affairs: the stories you don't hear" include an account of the Reconciliation Walk in which Christians asked forgiveness for the Crusades. Other links are less explicitly Christian, but popular with visitors: advice columns, interactive greeting cards, pen friends, etc.

Announcement: The Conference on Christians in English Language Teaching

When, Where, Who?

Tuesday, March 30, 2004 (before the national TESOL convention) in Long Beach, CA (venue to be announced). Open to all Christians involved in teaching ESL/EFL, this conference is being coordinated by several groups, including the Christian Educators in TESOL caucus (see <http://www.cetesol.org/>) and various southern California Christian institutions and organizations involved in TESOL.

What?

Sessions may include featured speakers, discussion groups, and concurrent sessions organized according to strands. Possible strands may be:

- Teaching ESL/EFL in Seminaries
- Ethical Issues in Sharing Values with Students
- Materials Development
- Church-based ESL Program
- Volunteer-based Programs
- Teaching in "Limited-Access" Contexts
- Culture and Christianity in TESOL
- English Camp Programs

and/or others as interest is expressed. Strands may also be developed according to level and context of teaching (K-12, university, adult, U.S., international, etc.).

Why?

Mission agencies, local churches, schools, training institutions, and individual teachers who are working with ESL/EFL have much to learn from each other. Communication, collaboration, and partnership will make our work more effective.

What's next?

A leadership team is being developed. Volunteer leaders for each strand will be responsible for soliciting speakers; other volunteers are needed for logistics. Send ideas for volunteers, as well as ideas for presentation content and speakers to Kitty

Purgason kitty.purgason@biola.edu and Adelaide Heyde-Parsons ahparsons@semovm.semo.edu by December 1, 2003.

[Editor's Note: See more details on the CETC Web site at <http://www.cetesol.org/>.]

The Last Word: I Corinthians 13 for the ESL/EFL Teacher

by Kitty Purgason, Biola University

I Corinthians 13 for the ESL/EFL Teacher

If I speak English with the most perfect accent, as well as the languages of all my students, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I can explain all the mysteries of English grammar and know all there is about the English lexicon, and if I have faith that my students will acquire English, but have not love, I am nothing.

If I pour out all my personal time and resources to teaching my students, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient with the slowest and least motivated students. Love is kind to the meanest colleagues and supervisors. Love does not envy those who have better-paying jobs. Love does not boast of better students or superior results. Love is not proud of better training and finer methodology. Love is not rude even when students are impolite. Love does not seek to run the classroom in "the way we teach."

Love is not easily angered by disruptive students, incompetent administrators, or the lack of resources. Love keeps no record of how bad things are in this school or this culture. Love does not delight in the way evil is manifested in the local culture, but rejoices in the ways God has revealed his truth in the local culture. Love always protects those students who are most vulnerable, always trusts that the seeds of God's kingdom planted among students will bear fruit, always hopes that students' lives will be better because of what they've learned, always perseveres even with students who never seem to make progress.

Love never fails. Communicative language teaching will cease. The English language itself will someday be stilled. Second language acquisition theories will pass away. For TESOL is just part of the big picture. When Christ comes, he will speak to all in the language of their heart, and all the faults of our languages and our teaching methodologies will disappear.

When I was in my home culture, I talked, thought, and reasoned as all do in that culture. As a professional, I need to be able to put away that which is tied to my culture. Now our communication is marred by misunderstandings and by strong accents. In Jesus' kingdom, we shall communicate perfectly. Now my students and I understand each other only in part. Then, comprehension will be complete regardless of which language we speak.

And now these three remain: faith in our professionalism, hope in our students' progress, and love for our students. But the greatest of these is love.

CETC Mission Statement

The Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus (CETC) is composed of persons who have a common interest in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and who share a common belief in Jesus Christ. The CETC has been established for the following purposes: 1. To identify with others in TESOL of like faith in Jesus Christ. 2. To provide a framework for networking among Christians within TESOL. 3. To create an awareness of the global opportunities for Christian educators in TESOL. 4. To share and disseminate information regarding effective teaching ideas, materials, and resources. 5. To foster fellowship and encouragement for Christians within TESOL.

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About This Member Community

Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus (CETC)

The Christian Educators in TESOL Caucus (CETC) is composed of persons who have a common interest in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and who share a common belief in Jesus Christ.

Leaders:Chair: Adelaide Parsons cetc@tesol.org

Chair-elect: Mary Wong

Newsletter Editor: Jim Mischler

Member discussion e-list: Visit <http://www.tesol.org/getconnected/> to join CETC-L, or <http://lists.tesol.org/read/?forum=cetc-l> if you are already a subscriber.

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