



Three Rivers TESOL

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Three River TESOL Members!

As 2009 starts, I want to take a moment to thank everyone who participated in the 2008 Three Rivers TESOL conference at Franklin Regional Middle School. We had a great conference, with quality presentations. You can check out some of the presentation handouts and power points on the 2008 conference website page. We also had a poster session contest at the 2008 conference. This year we had many high-quality posters full of relevant information for everyone in the TESOL field. Alonya Litvinskaya and Takako Shimoda won first place with

their poster- Native Speaker Model in Teaching ESL/EFL. Both Alonya and Takako are in the MA TESOL program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Frank Giannotta, from Duquesne University was awarded second place for his poster- Integrating learning Skills into Basic Reading. Theophyle Muhayimana, was awarded the third place poster session award for his poster- The Impact of Critical Pedagogy in ESL/EFL Teaching. Theophyle is also in the MA TESOL Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. First through third place winners received a certificate and their photographs will be on our website.

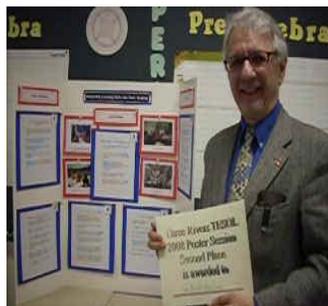
Alonya and Takao with their first place award. Dr. Frank Gianotta with his second place award and Theophyle with his third place award .

In the upcoming months we will be planning our spring meeting and the 2009 Fall Conference. There are so many exciting opportunities for professional development in the upcoming months. I look forward to seeing you at the March 2009 TESOL Conference in Denver, and at our Spring Mini-Conference Meeting, on April 18th and our Fall Conference on Oct. 17th.

Best Wishes,

Janet L. Pierce

Poster session contest Winners at the 2008 conference.



TESOL

Spring 2009

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Call for Articles!

We'd love to hear from YOU!

If you have an article, teaching tips, lesson plan, or news pertaining to the TESOL field - let's hear it.

Please submit your articles or ideas to:
editor@3rtesol.org

Three Rivers TESOL changes conference concepts

Three Rivers TESOL announces a new concept for their Fall 2009 Conference.

The conference will be Saturday, Oct. 17th at Point Park University. Beginning at the spring meeting on April 18th, the board will talk with ESL teachers in the field who are interested in pairing with a graduate student/university professor to combine theory and practice for hour and a half long workshops at our fall conference. "The idea of *Developing the Leader Within You*, our theme for the Spring meeting/mini-conference dovetails nicely with the fall conference theme and will help us see who is interested in participating in this venue," stated Three Rivers TESOL President Janet Pierce. "Those who attend the spring meeting will receive more information for proposal submissions for the workshops. Our 2009 fall conference theme is *Adapting*

to Change: 21st Century Techniques and Technologies for Teaching ESL. We also hold our board elections at that time. Anyone interested in running for the office of Vice President for a three year commitment or Treasurer for a two year commitment, should contact our Vice President Emily Corrado with a paragraph highlighting his or her interest and qualifications to run for that position, which we will then send out to members via email so members will know our slate of choices for the spring meeting."

The fall conference will continue to promote poster sessions for TESOL professionals and graduate students who want to submit posters depicting "Practical Theoretical Applications". Certificates will be given for first, second and third place winners. In addition, however, this year Three Rivers TESOL will add a Poster Gallery

for posters from ELLs in Grades K-12 depicting the theme: "Adapting to Change". ELL Poster winners will have their poster featured on our website with their name, grade, ESL teacher's name and school district.

"We are excited about the new conference concept and there should be something for everyone this year," Pierce concluded.

We hope to see everyone at our Spring Meeting April 18th from 9:00 am till noon

The address is GPLC Downtown Center 411 Seventh Ave., Ste. 525 Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Directions to the Duquesne Light Building, 7th Avenue in Pittsburgh will be posted on our website along with the site of our fall conference when it has been finalized."

Challenging the Stereotype: Reexamine the Speech Act of Compliments and Compliment Responses among Chinese

Speech act strategy is a central topic in pragmatics. One major discussion is the compliment response types (Herbert, 1986; Nelson et al, 1996; Pomerantz, 1978). Studies indicate that Chinese are reluctant to accept compliments; they always avoid acceptance and give downgrade or denial responses (Chen, 1993; Gu, 1990; Ye, 1995).

However, my argument is that language is dynamic and changeable, thus, pragmatic knowledge needs to be updated. Otherwise, the stereotype may cause pragmatic misunderstanding. In this research, I reexamined Chinese people's response to compliments, aiming at seeing whether Chinese are unable to accept the compliments as described in literature. The two research questions are 1) Are Chinese people reluc-

tant to accept compliments? 2) Are those Chinese people who live in the U.S. able to respond compliments in the same way as American people?

Forty-five conversations in China and seven in the U.S. were collected by seven people. The data collectors offered compliments based on the given social context and wrote down address-

Challenging the Stereotype– continued

ees' responds. The Chinese language was used in China; both English and Chinese were used in the U.S. All conversations were translated into English for the content analyses.

The results showed that Chinese people were able to receive compliments and reply with acceptance and agreement. Moreover, none of them refused or downgraded the compliments. However, in China, none of them used the appreciation token, such as "thank you" in their responses. In the U.S., Chinese people used appreciation tokens to English speakers all the time

and to Chinese native-speaking peers sometimes.

The study challenges the stereotyping perception of Chinese people's practice of compliment responses stated in literature even though in China none of them directly used appreciation tokens. Interestingly, Chinese who live in the U.S. are able to adapt themselves in the English-speaking community and reply to compliments appropriately. Thus, further investigation is needed to address whether teaching pragmatic knowledge is needed.

Lan Wang, doctoral candidate, Composition & TESOL, Indiana University of Pennsylvania



DICTATION: AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT TO YOUR ESL CURRICULUM

Progressing from concrete to abstract is an important strategy that facilitates CALP. The use of short dictation activities can be invaluable to the emerging English reading skills of ELLs and can build visual memory. Dictation can be easily included in a Learning Journal format as well as provide a change in the routine if your LEA uses Kidwriting or similar approach. English Language Learners orally describe their experiences as the ESL Program Specialist writes verbatim into the Learning Journal. The instructor then reads the dictation to the student who confirms or adds details. Immediately, the student

is given the Learning Journal and independently reads the dictation piece.

Some wonderful pieces can be developed from simple subjects such as the Halloween experience, building a snowman or sled riding. At Thanksgiving, a first grade Muslim student with poor writing skills wanted to create a dragon rather than the offered turkey craft. He

had never seen a turkey. He dictated a paragraph about his creation made from an empty toilet paper tube. This was entered into his Learning Journal:

It amazed me that he could independently read the piece. When his mother viewed the Learning Journal during Parent Conference Day, she was excited and asked to take the Learning Journal home to review it with her son.

Dictation activities will surely enhance your instructional strategy repertoire.

Anne Solarz

ESL Program Specialist

Indiana Area SD



MY DRAGON
My dragon is green. His name is Joey. He has a long tail. He eats dinosaurs. Some dragon bit him on his wing.

Developing Reading Fluency in ELLs

English Language Learners need to be exposed to instructional strategies based on best practice and designed to foster learning. In the Indiana Area School District, the ESL and Learning Support programs collaborated to develop an initiative designed to enhance reading fluency. "Good readers read words accurately, rapidly, and efficiently" (National Reading Panel, 2000). Software in the amount of \$550

was purchased through an Educational Initiative Grant. Grant materials enabled students to become aware of their progress as well as empowering them to monitor their growth. A technology aspect (digital tape recorders, stopwatches) provided motivation. Pretests and posttests used were grade leveled according to the Hampton Brown Assessment system. Fluency Formula materials purchased were used as the intervention. Each child was administered a

minimum of 12 sessions using the Fluency Formula materials. Students then graphed results as words per minute. Students were made aware of their miscues and were given three attempts for each session. They controlled the stopwatches and digital tape recorders. This intervention lasted one school year.

Continued...

In the ESL program, the students with the least proficiency at the outset of this fluency reading development program showed the greatest improvement gains. Of those tested, an average improvement of 36.6 points from the pretest to the post test was shown. In the Learning Support program, an average improvement of 40 points was shown. A surprise benefit to all of this was the students' interest in graphs, statistical data gathering, and the EXCEL computer program.

Anne Solarz, ESLProgram Specialist & Joanne Lonsdale Learning Support Instructor

ESL SPOT LIGHT ON : Professor Walter Rodriguez

In this newsletter, we are proud to Spotlight Professor Walter Rodriguez, our guest speaker for our upcoming Spring mini-Conference Meeting. Professor Rodriguez will speak about "ESL Teachers as Leaders in their schools. Professor Walter Rodriguez has a Master Degree in Elementary Education from Millersville University, an Administrative Certification from Penn State University, and an ESL certification from Juniata College. Currently he is enrolled in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Doctoral Program at Temple University where he is presently conducting research in the area of effective parental involvement for Hispanic/Latino Parents in Americas' Schools.

Professor Rodriguez teaches in the Educational Foundations Department at Millersville University in Pennsylvania

and is an Educational Leadership Consultant working with School and District Leaders to create exemplary schools for students in the United States and in the countries of Australia and Ecuador. He facilitates ELL Leadership Institutes nationally for the National Institute for School Leadership in Washington, D.C. He has achieved a proven track record educating students and teachers in Pennsylvania for twenty-five years; sixteen as a school teacher and nine years as an administrator at inner-city school environments with diverse learners in Philadelphia, Lancaster County, Hershey



Professor
Walter Rodriguez

and Harrisburg Pennsylvania.

Professor Walter Rodriguez is a former recipient of the Keystone Achievement Award, from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for increasing student achievement, is a graduate of the Pennsylvania Education Policy and Leadership Center, a former member of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Review Committee for NCLB Legislation, a 2002 recipient of the Milton Hershey School Achieving Collaborative Excellence Award, was elected to the Pennsylvania Middle School Association State Executive Board in 2001, is a recipient of the Temple University Marlene Smigel Korn Humanitarian Award in 2000.

EVENTS

Pennsylvania Department of Education in partnership with Penn State University - Harrisburg and the Center for Schools and Communities invite you to join us in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for the 2009 English as a Second Language (ESL) conference - *Multiple Cultures, Multiple Voices: Expanding and Strengthening Practice, Policy and Partnerships* at the Hilton Harrisburg, June 14-16, 2009.



Multiple Cultures, Multiple Voices:
Expanding and Strengthening Practice,
Policy and Partnerships

Three Rivers TESOL Spring Meeting

When: Saturday, April 17, 2009

Time: 9:00am—12:00pm

Where: GPLC Downtown Center
411 Seventh Avenue, Suite 525

Topic: ESL teachers as School Leaders

Keynote Speaker:
Professor Walter Rodriguez

Please RSVP and Bring a Photo ID for this event. Security at the Duquesne Light Building Requires that we put your name on the guest list for you to enter the building even if you are not 100% certain that you will attend the meeting. Please RSVP to Emily Corrado at vp@3rtesol.org or ecorrado@gplc.org no later than April 15. We hope to see everyone there!

Three Rivers TESOL



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