

SAN DIEGO CATESOL

CATESOL San Diego Chapter Newsletter

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From the Chapter Coordinator

CATESOL San Diego Chapter Is Celebrating Its 5th Anniversary

This fall, the CATESOL San Diego Chapter is celebrating its 5th anniversary. Like a team without an arena or an orchestra without a concert hall, the chapter is grateful for the kindness of the English Language Academy at the University of San Diego for providing us with the meeting space for our meetings. The sharing of ideas and concepts within the ESL community has continuously been facilitated by the ELA. The chapter officers would publicly like to thank Francine Chemnick and the ELA at USD for their generous support. We look forward to a continuing partnership.



CATESOL San Diego Chapter's very first meeting on November 3, 2011, just before we moved to ELA.

For information about upcoming meetings go to
catesolsandiego.weebly.com

Immigrants' Service Encounter Interactions: Friendly or Threatening?

by **Soo Min Lee**

ESL learners' utterances often cause miscommunication in everyday interactions due to the learners' lack of knowledge of pragmatic use of the English language. ESL learners do not have any intention to damage their interlocutor's 'face.' The concept of 'face' refers to a self-image that every person wants to claim for himself or herself (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). Nevertheless, ESL speakers' vague or incomprehensible utterances can be perceived as a face-threatening act that can further be considered rude, insulting, or offensive. Interactions in service encounters when a service or good is provided are frequent communication situations and display mainly a transactional aspect of language (Ryoo, 2005). If a speaker is not a competent language user, he or she can even cause a conflict in face-to-face service communication in a store, restaurant, or café (Bailey, 2000).

As a nonnative speaker of English, as well as an ESL educator, I would like to present the following communicative episode, which struck me as highly illustrative example of an ESL learner's lack of understanding of the consequences of miscommunication without small talk, and an apparent lack of manners. The ESL learner in this case was a Korean immigrant in her early 50s. She had spent a substantial amount of time in Japan before she came over to Southern California to learn English about ten years ago. Her English was at the high beginning level upon her arrival in the U.S., and she took various ESL courses both at IEPs and at the community college.

On a sunny Saturday afternoon, I accompanied her to an ice cream shop. Two young female employees were on duty. While my companion and I were trying a few flavors, I noticed that she neither smiled nor acted friendly to the sales associates. When she wanted to order, she held out a five-dollar bill in her hand, reached toward the ice cream stand, and repeated, "Strawberry, strawberry, strawberry!" She said the words demanding and very fast, as if she was in a hurry. However, the sales associate still could not understand what she wanted to purchase. Her demanding behavior and insistent utterance were surprising to me, and the associate seemed to be taken aback by her apparent rudeness, and had to ask her again.

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CATESOL SAN DIEGO CHAPTER CELEBRATING ITS 5TH ANNIVERSARY 2011-2016

CATESOL San Diego Chapter

Embracing the Past—Planning for Future Writing Instruction

by Ann M. Johns

I was pleased to read the title of this year's CATESOL Annual Conference because we should learn from the past and apply it in new ways to current writing instruction. Drawing from my own work (2008, 1997) and that of others, especially Silva (1990) and Hyon (1996), I wrote this piece as I prepared for the annual conference.

Background. The United States and Canada were the first countries to offer writing as a subject, and it continues to be central to Common Core K-12 classrooms and in colleges, universities, and adult schools. Of course, teaching ESL/EFL/ELL students requires modifications in pedagogies (see, e.g., Barkaoui, 2007), so some excellent teacher volumes support appropriate practices (e.g., Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Hyland, 2016; Leki, 1992; Paltridge, 2001). This article provides a brief overview of how our writing instruction has evolved, following, in many cases, the theories and practices influencing college English instruction for native speakers. One constant has been the case: our understanding of what writing entails has become increasingly complex, placing new demands upon instructors. So let's look at important eras in writing teaching history, outlined in my 1997 book but expanded in recent work (e.g., Johns, 2008; 2015).

The Structuralist/Form-based Era. Do you remember Structuralism or the Audio-lingual Method (ALM), popular following World War II? Using ALM, teachers concentrated primarily on linguistic forms, and good writing was found in "perfect," error-free products. The structure for the Five Paragraph Essay was first created; and when they wrote, students mimicked the essay templates (e.g., comparison/contrast, cause/effect) which survive today as "discourse modes," ways in which parts of more complex texts can be developed.

Expressivist/cognitive periods. The mid-1960s brought to composition classrooms very different approaches from the rigid textual one, as students' creative and cognitive processes became central. Initially, the emphasis was upon Expressivism, creative writing whereby the student was "a unique individual with a tale to tell" (Elbow, 1981). Soon, however, Linda Flower, a rhetorician, and John R. Hays, a psychologist, introduced research on students' writing processes that forever changed our classroom pedagogies (Flower & Hays, 1981). In the Writing Process Movement, the teacher was coach. As Silva (1990) put it: [The] teacher's role is to help students develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, generating ideas, focusing, and planning), for drafting texts and peer review, for revising (adding deleting, modifying, and rearranging ideas) and finally, for editing (attending to sentence-level issues) (p. 15).

Of course, students were not to produce severely flawed texts, particularly under test conditions; however, how students brain-stormed topics and developed and revised their texts was central to both research and instruction.

Social-constructivist (genre) era. But what was still missing? *Emphasis upon situated genres.* Brought into pedagogies in various ways was serious consideration of the complex issues of writer persona/identity, context, and audience. Now current are pedagogies inspired in Australia by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), sometimes limiting genres to a distinct number and using a "Teaching-Learning Cycle" (see Macken-Horarik, 2002 & Oliveira & Iddings, 2014). Theorists and practitioners from English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Rhetorical Genre Theory (RGS), without a single pedagogical approach, argue that genres are evolving and perhaps infinite in number (Wardle & Downs, 2016), not to be taught as text structures but as socio-cognitive writing

schemas that evolve as situations change (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2012). ESP, my area, concentrates first on text and then context, analyzing linguistic features as writer, audience, context, and genre motivated (Hyland, 2016). Drawing from John Swales (1990), I attempted to describe a writer's genre knowledge: ...an individual's genre knowledge is abstract and schematic... (and) as individuals have repeated, situated experiences with texts from a genre category, their schematic memories of these texts and relevant contexts become increasingly reliable.. (thus) this knowledge provides a shortcut for the initiated for the processing and production of familiar texts (1997, p. 21).

Therefore, if teachers are to follow current thinking about what it means to write successfully, we need to encourage students to become rhetorically flexible, open to revising what they know about genres to create texts that are appropriate for an audience, a context, and, not incidentally, for themselves, perhaps pushing reading and writing into new directions (Tardy, 2016).

How do we respond to current writing pedagogies? Practical applications for the classroom taken from ESP and RGS will be the focus of my Featured Presentation at the CATESOL Conference.

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The Bilingual Brain and English as a Second Language

By Margarita Bacigalupo-Diaz, Ed.D

Learning English as a Second Language (ESL) can be a very challenging task. Some English Language Learners (ELLs) have difficulties learning a new language system. This situation may discourage students from being persistent in their learning. Others succeed and enjoy a rewarding learning experience. All ELLs have strengths in different areas. They can be successful when teachers are equipped with an understanding on how the bilingual brain works — and when they honor ELLs' backgrounds, promote their participation, observe, assess and reflect on their students' learning strengths, use appropriate ESL instruction and strategies, and adapt instruction to meet their students' needs.

How Does the Brain Work When You Learn a Language?

Thanks to imaging technologies like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and electrophysiology, which can reveal what processes are happening inside our brain when we listen, speak, understand and produce a second language, there have been new interesting discoveries related to neuro-anatomical differences bilinguals due (The Guardian, 2014).

According to University of Houston professor, Arturo Gomez, “bilingual’s languages peacefully co-exist in the brain and share resources.” Alison Mackey, professor of linguistics at Georgetown University, compiled a number of research studies on how the brain works. Among them, she reported a study by Swedish scientists who found that learning a second language can increase the size of the brain. These researchers also found that being bilingual is a benefit even if you learn a second language later in life. They studied 853 participants and the data showed that bilinguals had better memory and were more “cognitively creative and mentally flexible than monolinguals”. Mackey also reported that Canadian investigators suggest that Alzheimer’s disease and dementia “are diagnosed later for bilinguals than for monolinguals, meaning that knowing a second language can help us to stay cognitively healthy well into our later years” (Mackey, 2014).

Language Representation in the Brain

Well over 100 years ago, researchers Paul Broca and Carl Wernicke did clinical work on the brain and suggested that language is located in some specific areas of the left hemisphere. They postulated that the brain has two memory systems and that lexical memory and the declarative memory processes are connected and rooted in the hippocampus and proximal areas.

Many researchers are now studying the organization of the orthographical, phonological, morphological, semantic, syntactic and grammatical information inside the brain. Some studies suggest that the first and second languages are both represented differently in the left cerebral hemisphere of the brain. Other researchers believe that bilinguals have a bilateral representation in the brain. Yet others have found that bilinguals represent each language in different cerebral regions and have distinct neural networks. Their conclusions have been based on the findings from electrocortical brain stimulation studies, functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and functional brain imaging techniques (PET) (Swiss Archives of Neurology & Psychiatry, 2013).

Language Switching in the Bilingual Brain

Several studies on language switching indicated that bilinguals can naturally select to speak the target language and rarely say a word that belongs to the other language. In a first study 27 Spanish-English speakers read 512 sentences in the two languages alternating the language every two sentences. The sentences had some cognates in red. These were read

and processed faster than the control words, which suggests the two languages were mentally active all the time (Indivero, 2013).

Bilingualism has also been found to improve inhibitory processing across the lifespan (Bialystok, 2007). This effect could be affected by socioeconomic status (Morton & Harper, 2007). According to Hernandez (2009), “inhibitory control is an important construct that carries a great deal of weight in everyday life” and bilinguals have a better inhibitory control as shown in several studies using neuroimaging techniques. According to Indivero (2013), “when you are switching languages all the time it strengthens your mental muscle and your executive function becomes enhanced.”

Bialystok, E. (2007). Cognitive effects of bilingualism: How linguistic experience lead to cognitive change. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 10, 210-223.

Hernandez, A. (2009) Language switching in the bilingual brain: what's next? *Brain and Language*, 109(2-3):133-40

Indivero, V. (2013). Think twice, speak once: Bilinguals process both languages.

Mackey, A. (2014). What happens in the brain when you learn a language. *The Guardian*.

Morton, J.B., & Harper, S.N. (2007). What did Simon say? Revisiting the bilingual advantage. *Developmental Science* (6):719-26. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7687.2007.00623x

Margarita Bacigalupo-Diaz, Ed.D., teaches ESL at San Diego Continuing Education, NCC/Miramar Campus.

Join the Chapter

There are **many reasons** to get involved in the local CATESOL chapter:

- ◆ Develop professionally
- ◆ Boost your resume
- ◆ Network, network, network

There are also **many ways** to get involved:

- ◆ Come to our monthly meetings or social events
- ◆ Volunteer at chapter-organized workshops
- ◆ Write an article for publication in our Newsletter
- ◆ Sign up for our mailing list

Or better yet ...

- ◆ Become a **chapter liaison** for your school

To learn more, visit us at

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Immigrants' Service Encounter Interactions, continued from p. 1

This authentic example of communication provides the basis for my belief that small talk should be taught in the classroom from the early stages of language education.

Previous Studies

In order to contextualize the above example in professional literature, let me present some research findings. In a study of communicative behaviors between Korean immigrant retailers and African-American customers in Los Angeles, Bailey (2000) provides interpretation of both parties two years after the 1992 Los Angeles Riots. The researcher points out that daily communication through oral production, which is an essential tool of marking and preserving social identity of a group, also plays a role in creating boundaries that separate social groups. In this study, African-American customers perceived Korean immigrant retailers as lacking respect, and many considered it a serious offense. The customers mainly complained about the lack of interpersonal engagement of the retailers, i.e., the lack of "expression of approval, solidarity, and interest," which typically involves greeting with a smile, maintaining eye-contact, and making small talk (Bailey, 2000, p. 91). Bailey claims that a lack of such behaviors may be perceived as improper or offensive in face-to-face service encounters and can lead to a serious conflict between ethnic groups and affect the formation of social identity.

Additionally, Ryoo (2005), a Korean native, presents a research study of several communicative exchanges between Korean immigrant shopkeepers and their African-American customers in service encounters in a U.S. Midwest city. Two Korean immigrant-owned stores were the focus of her study, one in an upper-middle area of the city, and the other in a ghetto. Even though she found some unpleasant incidents during her data collection, the researcher points out that there were also a lot of positive and friendly interactional efforts between the shopkeepers and customers, including using in-group identity markers such as 'we' and 'us,' having a sharing attitude and giving support, using the speech act of compliments, and initiating personal communication. Each of these elements played a crucial role in building solidarity and rapport in spite of dormant tension and conflict between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Ryoo's findings are in line with the argument of Placencia (2004, p. 215) that phatic communication (or small talk) is important in "fulfilling important social functions" and plays an essential role in communicational relationships.

ESL learners' negative yet unfriendly service encounters at various places can threaten service providers' faces, and their utterances can even be seen as insulting and offensive, contrary to their original intention. On the other hand, positive and harmonious interpersonal interactions with an effort to make small talk can alleviate intercultural conflicts and contribute to the formation of social identity as members of the larger community. Additionally, they can enhance community support and intercultural communication. Thus, I suggest that service encounters and small talk be discussed extensively in ESL classrooms, so learners will become more competent users of English in varied communication situations.

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Favorite Classroom Techniques

Bob Thomas presents:

Questions About You

Adapted from Cambridge Games for Language Learning by Wright, Betteridge & Buckby

Have each student write six questions to ask somebody. The questions should be based on the students' own interests. For example, my questions could be:

- A. Do you like the ocean?
- B. Do you like to garden?
- C. Do you like to travel?
- D. Do you have pets?

1. Model the questions on the board and ask several students for one thing they like to do.
2. Help the students write theirs, and circulate around the classroom assisting them if needed.
3. Model exchanging the papers with another student and asking each other a question.
4. When finished, take our papers back and model finding another student to exchange papers with.
5. When everyone understands, students stand up and do this as a mingle activity, circulating and exchanging papers.

This is a great community building activity to be used at the beginning of a semester and periodically during the semester as students come and go in our open enrollment program.

Bob teaches ESL at San Diego Continuing Education, César E. Chávez Campus.

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CATESOL San Diego Chapter

STUDENTS SPEAK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE



**Iryna
Pavlyuk**

from Ukraine

interviewed by
Bob Thomas

*San Diego Continuing Educa-
tion, César E. Chávez Campus*

**What is your first memory
of an ESL class in the U.S.?**

I came from the Ukraine in October of 2015. I take my first English class at César E. Chávez Adult School in San Diego. It is a Level 2 class. It wasn't too hard, so I go to a Level 3 class. That was very hard, and I go back to Level 2 (laughing). In the spring, classes are full in the morning, so I go to a conversation class in the afternoon. Conversation classes are my favorite; I think I learn more in them. I bought the book and studied hard at night.

Is life very different here in the United States compared to the Ukraine?

There is a big difference between our countries. Sometimes I miss the Ukraine, but people here are very kind. I think people are happier in the Ukraine (laughing).

Why are you studying English?

Because I am going to live in America, and it is very important to speak with people. I can see a lot of people that do not speak English and they always ask to their children to explain to the doctor, and they can't find good work.

How have you learned English so quickly?

I go to school every day and I study at home every day. At home, I read books, write sentences, and work on the computer. I live with my daughter and her husband. They speak English very well. I always speak English with them.

What is difficult about learning English?

I think everything is hard about learning English (laughing). In the beginning, when you study something it is very hard, but each step becomes easier.

What advice would you give to ESL students?

If you really want to learn English, I think it is not enough to only go to school. You must study at home and also try very hard to only speak English. Teachers can explain to you, but to study the words and grammar at home is very important. A lot of listening to English is also what I do. At school, I always speak English with my Mexican friends. Movies with the words are very good also.

What are your future plans?

In my country, I have a diploma in accounting. When my English is good, I hope to get my certificate here to work in accounting.

Self-Assessment of Public Speaking Skill through Video Recording

by Celeste Coleman

Since oral presentations develop skills students will need in university and beyond, it is important to include them as part of a speaking class curriculum (Ritchie, 2016). For this reason, oral presentations are a popular means of speech assessment in English-language classrooms. However, giving effective feedback to such assessments can be practically challenging. Presentations can be long, and trying to assess many of them back to back leaves teachers weary. The quality of the feedback given suffers, as does the usefulness of this feedback to students (Rian, Hinkelman, & McGarty, 2012). Students also lack firsthand evidence of knowing how they sounded/looked during the presentation.

To ameliorate this situation, I use video recording in my public speaking classes. This addresses the issues of instructor fatigue and insufficient feedback time, and also allows students an opportunity to see and hear exactly how their presentation went. The procedure I use is as follows:

1. After students have prepared their presentation outlines and had some time to practice them in pairs, they give their presentations in front of the class for the first time. The presentations are video recorded using a digital video camera with a tripod. (If this equipment is not available, a smartphone with sufficient memory propped against some books can also work just as well—where there's a will, there's a way!) While their classmates are speaking, students listen to each other, take notes, and ask questions. They are asked to hold off on making evaluations of one another's work until later.

2. After class, the recordings are uploaded as unlisted videos on YouTube. Only people with the link can see these videos. They are not available to the public. Each student is sent the link to the video of his/her presentation.

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Public Speaking, cont. from p. 5

3. For homework before the next class, each student watches the video of his/her own speech and fills out a self-evaluation form (adapted from "Self-Evaluation," 2015).

4. At the next class, students choose partners and watch each other's videos. This can be accomplished in a computer lab, but again, a smartphone can work just as well for this purpose. Students can pause and re-listen as necessary in order to fill out peer-feedback forms. We like to use the one provided in our textbook, *A Speaker's Guidebook* (O'Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein, 2015, p. 61).

5. The instructor watches each speech and gives feedback using a rubric. When finished, the instructor compiles the three sets of information for each student (self-, peer-, and instructor-evaluations), noting the similarities and differences of each.

6. During the next class, the instructor distributes this feedback and conducts a one-on-one conference with each student to go over it and make an improvement plan. While these conferences are occurring, the rest of the students have time to work on perfecting their presentations based on the feedback they've received.

7. Finally, the students repeat their speeches in front of a new (but similar) audience. (Typically, this is another class at around the same level.) This time, the instructor issues final written feedback in real time, focusing on the ways in which the student has improved the presentation.

Adding self-evaluation to the peer- and instructor-evaluations typically given to student presentations tends to raise the quality of presentations (a finding echoed by Ritchie, 2016). Ritchie also notes that this opportunity for self-assessment can help to develop students' meta-cognitive skills, which are needed in various ways during the process of obtaining a degree, and promote student achievement across disciplines.

O'Hair, D., Stewart, R., & Rubenstein, H. (2015). *A Speaker's Guidebook: Text and Reference* (6th ed., p. 61). Boston, MA: Bedford St. Martin's.

Oral Presentation Self-Evaluation Form. (2015). In *Oral Communication Focus at Univ of Hawaii at Manoa*. Retrieved September 20, 2016, from http://hawaii.edu/gened/oc/self_evaluation.htm

Rian, J.P., Hinkelman, D., & McGarty, G. (2012). *Integrating video assessment into an oral presentation course*. In A. Stewart & N. Sonda (Eds.), *JALT 2011 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.

Ritchie, S. M. (2016). *Self-assessment of video-recorded presentations: Does it improve skills?*. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 1469787416654807.

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You don't need to be a CATESOL member
to attend a chapter meeting.

Featuring **Saladin Davies (Sal)** Assistant Coordinator



Growing up in NYC, I was exposed to many people from diverse cultural and language backgrounds. My neighborhood as well as my grandparent's home was alive with the sounds, images, and smells of lands far away. All of this richness and diversity inspired me to want to see the world and learn firsthand about the people we share this planet with.

While an undergraduate in psychology (minoring in French) at Towson University in Maryland, I had the opportunity to study

French language and culture at *Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier III* in France. Going through the summer intensive French language program, followed by two years of additional language and academic courses, really provided me with a profound sense of empathy for what it is like to be a second language learner living in a foreign culture. It has been nearly thirty years since my study abroad sojourn, but I still carry that experience with me every day as I work with my English language learners.

After returning to the US, I finished my degree and applied to graduate school in psychology. However, living abroad really changed my outlook on life, and I knew that I wanted to live and work outside of America. So I researched possible job opportunities overseas. Since, I had worked as a long term substitute teacher in Baltimore, and was at that time employed as a resource teacher in reading, I decided to apply for a position as an assistant language teacher in Japan. Working as an EFL professional in Japan allowed me to explore a career path that combined both my love for cultural diversity and language with education and lifelong learning. That experience ultimately inspired me to get my TESOL certificate and to complete my masters in TESOL at Alliant International University.

These days, I'm an adjunct professor of ESOL at Alliant as well as an instructor in the CTCL/CLAD certification program. Additionally, when I'm not working with English language learners or K-12 teachers, I'm busy researching and working on my doctorate.

Call for Contributions

If you have a story, opinion, strategy, or website related to teaching ESL which you would like to share, please send it for consideration by the editors to catesolsd@gmail.com. For ideas, feel free to look at the past issues of our Newsletter at our website catesolsandiego.weebly.com