

VATESOL



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2005-2006 Officers

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Dudley Doane

About the Officers

Bullets about Barbara!

- Taught French and Spanish at one middle school in Roanoke City for 28 years.
- One husband for 31 years. He is retired from teaching History for Roanoke City Schools for 31 years.
- No children—except for the thousands of students we taught throughout the years.
- Raised Golden Retrievers and West Highland White terriers for show and performance.
- Currently have 2 Standard Poodles and 1 Miniature poodle that I show in performance—Agility, Obedience, Tracking, Rally.
- Taught Aerobics for 15 years at the Roanoke Athletic Club.
- Currently teach Yoga and Pilates for the past 9 years at the Roanoke Athletic Club.
- Currently serve as the Coordinator of Foreign Languages and ELL for Roanoke City Schools for the past 2 years.
- Training Director for Star City Canine Training Club for the past 8 years.
- Serve on the Mayor’s Multicultural Affairs Committee for the past 2 years.

About Judy Marlow:

Judy Marlow has been teaching elementary ELL in Roanoke City since 1993. In a previous life she taught middle school French. She has lived in a variety of European countries, including Switzerland for 9 years, where she taught both English (adult classes) and French (to refugee women whose husbands would not allow them to go out at night to the “real” class taught by native speakers. Ours was the fun class!) Judy has a MAT (French&English) from the School for International Training, in Vermont. Her greatest education comes from raising 3 kids in a French speaking country, where “sink or swim” was the educational plan. She can really feel for the kids and parents during the wonderful stage of language/culture acquisition that we politely call “adjustment.” That doesn’t exactly make her an expert, but she is willing to keep learning.

About Kathleen Cahoon

This is my third year as VATESOL treasurer. I first became interested in the world of ESL during my studies at a university in Germany. I enjoy meeting and working with people from other countries, so I earned a Masters Degree in Applied Linguistics, TESOL emphasis, from Old Dominion University

in 2003. I taught ESL at Tidewater Community College in Virginia Beach for two years before earning a K-12 teaching license. I currently tutor ESL students enrolled in Norfolk Public Schools and teach adult ESOL evening classes at the Adult Learning Center in Virginia Beach.

About Dudley Doane:

Dudley Doane directs the Office of the Summer Session, January Term, and Center for American English Language and Culture at the University of Virginia. He holds an M.A.T. in TESOL from the School for International Training and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and Policy Studies from the University of Virginia. Doane has been an educator for over 20 years with 15 years at the post-secondary level. He has worked with English language learners in Ecuador, Korea, and Indonesia; received TESOL-related grants from Fulbright and USIA; and published on the topic of campus internationalization.

About Judy Richardson:

Judy R. has retired as a full professor and professor emeritus from VCU’s School of Education. She is a specialist in reading in the content areas, English Second Language, and technology innovations in teaching. She has taught for 36 years in the roles of classroom special education teacher, English teacher in the high school, English second language teacher, Department of Defense teacher, and college professor. Currently, she directs a federal grant through Virginia Commonwealth University, titled: Professional Opportunities for Developing Excellent Teachers in English Second Language (PODETESL)

About Judy Snoke:

Judy S. had her first teaching experience with high school students in Nigeria. She got an MAT from the Harvard/Radcliffe Graduate School of Education and taught high school social studies before moving to Turkey. There, she taught audio-lingual EFL at Middle East Technical University and studied Turkish. After moving to Blacksburg, she began as an ESL volunteer in a church basement and now directs the English Language Institute of Virginia Tech. Living in Nigeria and Turkey has given her a perspective on what it means to be a foreigner and studying Turkish was a crash course in comparative linguistics.

About Jen Kuchno:

Jen Kuchno is a Graduate Research Assistant at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she is studying Spanish and TESL. Jen has worked as both an ESL and elementary classroom teacher. She holds a Master's degree in Teaching and a B.S. in Sociology and Anthropology.

About Bob Faychak:

Bob Faychak is an elementary ESL teacher in Stafford County Public Schools, an adult ESL teacher for Rappahannock Regional Adult Education, and a volunteer ESL teacher at St. Mary Catholic Church in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

About Martha Holmes:

You never know what you may be doing before you finish your working life, is a thought that I have had quite frequently in this my first year of teaching Second Language Learners. I started out as a French/German teacher and eventually became endorsed in Elementary Education although I never actually taught on the elementary level until two years ago when I worked part time in the Norfolk tutoring program for ESL students and have gradually taken courses in this field.

It's great fun revisiting my elementary school education, relearning everything from algebra to Virginia history to reading excerpts of The Diary of Anne Frank.

My interests include being practically a full time listener to Public Radio and viewer of most of the English "stuff" on Public Television and travel. I used to go on walking tours, mostly in England, but summer before last I discovered Scotland and last summer I went for three weeks to the Scandinavian countries. A boat ride through a fjord in Norway was the best.

As the Eastern Representative for VATESOL, I hope to have a roundtable soon of ESL teachers in the Tidewater area to come together and show support, educate, and share ideas.

About Jo Tyler:

I began teaching ESL in 1991 as a volunteer in a program for employees of Rocco Turkeys sponsored by James Madison University. The following year, I taught English in the high school of a rural town in Costa Rica. After those wonderful experiences, I decided to make ESL my career and began graduate school at the University of Florida where I received my Ph.D. in linguistics in 1999. My next career move was back to Virginia where I was hired to start a graduate program in

ESL teacher education at Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington). I am now in my seventh year of that job, and still loving it!

About Barbara Radebaugh:

I am an elementary ESOL teacher in Prince William County, VA. I received my M.Ed. degree from the University of Mary Washington. In addition to my M.Ed degree, I have an M.A. degree in Gerontology from George Washington University. Prior to becoming an ESOL teacher in 2002, I worked for AARP (the American Association of Retired Persons) in Washington, DC, as a consultant and member services representative. I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Niger, West Africa. While I was in Niger, I taught English as a Foreign Language for two years.

Going to a VATESOL conference is like opening a treasure box. It (the conference) is filled with gold nuggets and precious stones. The gold nuggets are the seminars and vendors at VATESOL. I have learned about new teaching strategies and materials from attending the wide variety of seminars offered at the conference. I've also left each VATESOL conference with catalogues and information from the many vendors represented.

The precious stones are the people I've met at VATESOL conferences. I've been privileged to hear excellent keynote speakers over the years and to meet or renew acquaintances with many ESOL colleagues across the state. I encourage all of my ESOL colleagues to attend the 2006 VATESOL conference so that you, too, can leave with a "treasure box" of information and friendships.



Some Final Observations

From Dudley Doane, VATESOL Past-President

It was my distinct pleasure to serve as President of VATESOL for the 2004-2005 administrative year.



VATESOL completed an active and productive year. Evidence for this includes the expanded fall conference, three substantive newsletters, the western regional workshop, enhancement of the web site, an active listserv, growing membership, the recruiting of new leaders, continued cooperation with VESA, and a re-

invigorated relationship with TESOL - best represented through our first affiliate speaker grant.

None of this would have been possible without the contributions of our members and the work of our Board members. All deserve our thanks, but I want to thank Judy Snoke, Judy Richardson, Karen Medina, Ross Retterer, Robin Miller, Kat Cahoon, Jo Tyler, Kieran Hilu, Margaret Whitt, and Faye Madigan in particular as each of them was called on many times in the past year. Each has numerous responsibilities yet took the time to serve VATESOL.

Our members and the English language learners they serve continue to face challenges related to ineffective policies and inadequate funding. Many local, state, and national leaders continue to ignore the fact that languages other than English are not liabilities but assets. Many of those same leaders grossly underestimate the demands of cultural and linguistic transition and overlook the generational effects associated with under funded schools and support services.

Of course, linguistic obstacles are not limited to English language learners. Users of a dialect thought to be non-standard can lose out in the classroom, in the workplace, and in the community. Thankfully, more, though not sufficient, attention is being directed to helping such individuals learn how to code switch without demeaning the value of their native dialect.

The challenges are considerable, the work has never been more important, money is tight, and ours is a small organization run by volunteers, but a game of ain't it awful is simply not an option. If we think of the courage and abilities of our students, consider the explosion of research and new initiatives in our field, and acknowledge the talent and good will of our colleagues, it is not difficult to see reasons to be hopeful and confident. Indeed a primary goal of this organization is to provide a variety of opportunities to interact that inform and inspire.

I am certain that that VATESOL will continue to provide these opportunities for you and your students under the leadership our new president, Barbara Carper.

The October 1st Conference

The annual conference was a great success! Eighty-three percent of attendees said they would recommend this conference to others. Eighty-eight percent rated the conference as 3-4 (4 being highest rating).

The keynote speaker was Dr. Loraine Valdez Pierce. Her talk was "Why Standardized Tests Aren't Enough." Her five key points concerned: standardized test mania; test validity and reliability; assessment schizophrenia; classroom assessment for learning; linking classroom assessment to state standards.

As Sharon Boothe, one participant wrote: "I enjoyed the conference a great deal. The workshops I went to were very valuable to me. I felt I gained an understanding for the ELL student that I had not had before. Being a classroom teacher, it is not always easy to work with or understand my ELL students. Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend."



Membership Report

As of November 10, 2005, there are currently 132 paid VATESOL members. An updated 2005-2006 membership form has been added near the top of the VATESOL web site for prospective new members and/or for membership renewals.

Treasurer's Report

Income since 10/1/04	
Membership/Conference Dues	\$9696.00
Expenditures	
TESOL Affiliate Dues	\$197.00
Virginia.com (website hosting)	\$132.41
VESA \$50.00	
Aramark Catering (conference)	\$1861.18
UVA Facilities (conference)	\$334.41
Miscellaneous	\$944.28
Total Expenditures	\$3519.28
Balance 11/4/05	\$10012.74

3 to 5 Years

By Jo Tyler

How long does it take to repair a major section of the New York subway? Three to five years, according the Transit Authority president.

How long does it take for a baseball team to turn around a losing streak or for children to adjust to new step-parents? Three to five years.

How long does it take to earn a black belt in karate or to discover the hidden flaws in a new house? You guessed it: three to five years.

For those in the field of English as a second language, three to five years is a familiar time line. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), all

English language learners in our schools will have to meet state standards in reading/language arts and math within three to five years.

Did you ever wonder why the law states this particular time line? It isn't based on research, because research shows that English language learners need seven to ten years or more in typical educational settings to achieve the academic standards of their native speaking peers (Thomas & Collier, 1997).



What's interesting is that three to five years is such a common time range for so many different activities. Some scientists think that the reason this time frame is so frequently used is because of the way the human mind works, and not because so many things actually take three to five years. George Lakoff, a linguist and cognitive scientist from the University of California at Berkeley, has suggested that the human mind is capable of recognizing between three and five countable items at a time (Lakoff & Nunez, 2000).

Lakoff is famous for his book (with Mark Johnson) *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). In this book the authors point out that the human mind uses metaphors to make abstract concepts tangible—such as talking about time in terms of spatial relationships. For example, we use the phrase “a long time,” defining time in terms of distance, and we say we are “in time” or “on time,” defining time in terms of a place. When the mind contemplates abstract concepts, it has to map these onto concrete objects and phenomena in order to make them useful.

What's interesting is that three to five years is such a common time range for so many different activities. Some scientists think that the reason this time frame is so frequently used is because of the way the human mind works, and not because so many things actually take three to five years.

We have made the concept of time useful by turning it into a concrete object. When we quantify time,

we are also using metaphor—relating time to an object that can be divided into countable pieces: years, days, hours, minutes. Thus, because the mind must concretize time and chop it up to make it useful, and because the mind tends to count objects in ranges of three to five, Lakoff might say that it is just a natural part of human cognition to make a three to five time frame estimate: whether three to five minutes, days or years.

Other cognitive scientists confirm that our metaphors for time affect our ability to estimate or forecast time durations (Casasanto, et al., 2004) and that there is a tendency for human beings to prefer similar estimations for different dynamic images of time (Glicksohn & Ron-Avni, 1997). Mark Turner of Case Western Reserve University has suggested that three to five years is an estimation people automatically associate with the time needed to undergo personal transformation (quoted by McGrath, 2005).

It appears that the time frame required by NCLB for English language learners to undergo the transformation to academic language proficiency is based on nothing but mental imagery, a cognitive metaphor. As Lakoff and Turner state “Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it” (1989, p. xi).

And that is the danger. Three to five years, which probably originated as a cognitive metaphor—a figment of the imagination, has become a time frame so ordinary and unnoticed that it has ended up as the law of the land without question or controversy, and without any basis in empirical research or reality.

Jo Tyler is Associate Professor of Linguistics and Education, University of Mary Washington, and Chair of the VATESOL Teacher Education/Program Administration SIG.

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Saudi Scholarship Program

By Judith Snoke

Late this summer the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia (MOHE) began to issue provisional



scholarship letters to qualified students, apparently as a result of conversations between President Bush and the then Crown Prince, who is now Sultan. Perhaps 4,000 such letters will be issued this year. These letters promise full scholarships for one year

of ESL plus an undergraduate or graduate degree.

This is both an opportunity and a concern. ESL and academic programs are generally delighted to welcome fully funded, academically qualified, Saudi scholarship students, but the deluge of applicants has been daunting.

In order to activate the scholarship, a potential undergraduate has to obtain both an I-20 from an intensive English program and a letter of provisional/conditional eligibility for admission to an academic program. The MOHE clearly wishes to invest its money in students with potential for success in their studies. This initiative may be extended over the next few years to involve up to

20,000 supported students. Students in great numbers are coming forward to take advantage of this opportunity.

This program came as a surprise to intensive English programs and to colleges and universities around the country. Our programs have been flooded by applications from students who appear to believe that the letters of nomination that they have received are sufficient financial guarantees and that IEPs can issue letters of conditional admissions for academic programs and Form I-20s for five years of study. Some schools have already received applications and preliminary scholarship forms from as many as fifty students. This is both an opportunity and a concern. ESL and academic programs are generally delighted to welcome fully funded, academically qualified, Saudi scholarship students, but the deluge of applicants has been daunting. The sheer number of the students and the amount of time spent in responding to students who do not understand US academic procedures has been draining. Still, intensive English programs are pleased to be able to enroll these high-quality, serious, strongly motivated students. Their numbers present intensive English programs with an opportunity to rebuild after the 9/11 crisis and resulting drop off in enrollments.

Judith Snoke is Director of the English Language Institute of Virginia Tech

Different Worlds

By Susan Boland

I always have an ESL laugh the first day of classes. While other instructors are doing the last-minute scurry around the halls looking for their classrooms, I am able to walk directly to mine, for it is always the room from which the most noise is coming. ESL students talk -- loudly -- to one another.

Talk about different worlds.

I recently served as a team member from my community college at a summer institute offered by the National Center for Academic Advising (NACADA). There were about 130 participants, about 20 of whom were faculty. Of those 20, I was the sole ESL teacher. The summer institute ran for a week, and in that week I asked a lot of questions and I did a lot of listening. Once again, I was struck

with the dissimilarities when it comes to ESL students.

Academic advisors, I was told, repeatedly pose this question to the student sitting across from their desk. *What do you want to do here?* The usual reply is *"I don't know."* Now, when I ask my students, *what do you want to do here?* I have to preface the question with this statement: *We are now going to have a discussion. I am going to ask the whole class a question. Do not shout out what you want to say. **Raise your hand** and I will call on you, one by one, ok?"*

ESL students have BIG plans. This semester I am teaching everyone from a future heart surgeon to a future auto mechanic. There is no doubt in my mind that each one of my students has the ability and determination to make their dream come true, but they will need an academic advisor to help them find their way.

Now, you may be recalling your own experience with academic advising as a teacher who helped put your schedule together and ensured that you were taking the right courses in order to graduate in four years with the degree you wanted. However, academic advisors have it in their means to do much more than that: my academic advisor helped me make one of the biggest decisions of my life.

After completing my freshman year of college, I did not feel connected to the college I was attending. I decided, as an English major, to do my sophomore year at a university in England. I felt connected there; in fact, I felt so connected that I remained in England for my junior year as well. At the close of my junior year abroad, I found a university stateside that would accept my freshman credits as well as the 60 credits I had accumulated during my two years abroad -- every one of which was in English Literature.

Upon my arrival back in the states, I was scheduled to meet with an academic advisor to review my transcript and set up my schedule so that I could graduate the following spring. The advisor asked me several questions, one being what were my

plans after graduation? *I don't know*. He pursued his line of questioning. Well, when you graduate, are you going back to England or staying in the States? *I don't know*. There was a long hmmm, as he considered my circumstances. He then wisely advised that I take some courses with the word American in the title. Together, we came up with Early American Literature, American Political Thought, and another A – Anthropology – because clearly I had an interest in different cultures.

So I read James Fennimore Cooper's tale of pioneers immersed in the uniquely American experience of the Adirondacks in the early 1800's. I worked my way through *The Federalist Papers* for my American Political Thought class, and I actually began to understand the Constitution. This was all stitched together in Anthropology, which allowed me to step back and understand the origins and development of culture, and how a culture's values are manifested in things like, well, the Constitution. After graduation, I didn't go back to England. I remained stateside, and went on to become an ESL teacher.

My academic advisor saw that much more was at stake than just the completion of a degree. He saw a young woman who was lost between two shores, and he thought to give me the tools to make a decision that would impact the rest of my life.

Our students will make similar life-defining decisions as they transition from ESL classes into the programs of study where they will learn the skills that will enable them to reach their goals. This can be a complicated progression not only through the labyrinth of an institution of higher education but also the at-times-impossible challenge of crossing cultures. As their ESL teachers, we want them to be prepared.

Academic advisors will not only assure that they have taken the right courses. They are on stand-by for all those other decisions that come upon our students on this difficult road they have chosen.

As much as there are dissimilarities between different bodies of students, there are similarities between ESL teachers and academic advisors. As I listened and watched these good people devise actions plans to take back to their campuses in order to make their program more effective, I witnessed the same passion for what they do that I witness whenever I get together with my ESL colleagues. Their critical role is not understood nor appreciated enough by institutions of higher education. These people are trained professionals. These people are ready. And, trust me; these people CAN help our students solve some of life's more complicated dilemmas.

Susan Boland is an Instructor of English as a Second Language

Moodle Mania!

By Holly Dilatash

I plunged into the world of Moodles last year, and am thoroughly enjoying the adventure!

"Moodle is a course management system (CMS) - a software package designed to help educators create quality online courses. Such e-learning systems are sometimes also called Learning Management Systems (LMS) or Virtual Learning Environments (VLE)." Moodle is password protected. Moodle is FREE. <http://moodle.org/>

After first learning about Moodle possibilities at two consecutive conferences, I participated in one of TESOL's 2004 pre-conference online courses exploring Moodle applications. Subsequently, I enrolled in TESOL's Principles and Practices of Online Teaching certificate course, which has entailed more in-depth Moodle exploration, and the impetus to dabble in piloting my first Moodle course (at that time I was a Visiting Professor at the University of Korea, and used Moodles extensively with English Conversation classes there).

'Moodling' is an ongoing learning experience, and I would love to share Moodle stories, humorous misadventures, rewarding successes, challenges, etc. – particularly as relates to adult ESOL. Are there other VATESOLers who are dabbling in

Moodle? I'm hoping there's interest in a VATESOL Moodle support group, perhaps with the target ambition of a collaborative presentation at next year's conference?

It has been my experience that 60% or more of any given adult ESOL student group participates regularly and reports that their Moodle adventures are very worthwhile for their English language learning.

The Charlottesville City Schools Adult Education Program, with funding from an EL/Civics Grant, has piloted an ESL @ Home hybrid distance-learning course this Fall 2005 session, using the Crossroads Café video series.

A hybrid (or blended) distance learning course is a balance of online and face-to-face learning where the majority is online but with a significant face-to-face learning component.



One optional component of this course is student participation on a Moodle designed for the Crossroads Café course. This Moodle site offers discussion forums, a glossary, additional enrichment (photos, links to quizzes

targeted to participants' needs, online dictionaries and translators, links to local resources relevant to the episodes' cultural connections, etc.). As of this writing, eleven students of the pilot participant group have registered on our Moodle site.

It has been my experience that 60% or more of any given adult ESOL student group participates regularly and reports that their Moodle adventures are very worthwhile for their English language learning.

What are your stories? If you've been pondering a plunge into Moodle, I hope this article will be the nudge you need to try it, and I hope you'll share your questions, successes, challenges, and suggestions. My contact information is below; I hope to hear from you (email preferred)!

Holly Dilatush is ESL and GED Instructor, Dialogue Café and Distance Learning Project

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<http://www.tabulas.com/~smilin7> and
<http://www.tabulas.com/~blogblossoms>)

Reflections of a new teacher

By Bob Faychak,

My initiation into adult education commenced with a volunteer ESOL program at my church. Since that time I have continued to pursue a Masters in



Education with an endorsement in teaching English as a second language. Many have asked me why I have chosen to teach English. Imparting what I know about the

language to others is one reason. Presenting a stress free environment for English language learners is another answer I have proposed. The less profound response is that I simply enjoy it.

This year I have completed my transition from a long career in healthcare insurance to answer the call of teaching. Family and friends have asked if I am satisfied with my decision. The response is a declarative *yes*.

I thrive on the interaction with the diverse adult student body. The merging of cultures in one classroom is stimulating. My adult students are eager to share their culture with me as I present insight into my culture.

VATESOL has offered a forum for professional development in this field. I have attended the October conference for the past three years. I am consistently awe-inspired by the effective integration of theory and application in every mini-presentation that I have attended. This year's theme

with a focus on assessment was both timely and relevant to all professionals in education. As a teacher of both adults and children, I was particularly inspired by the purposeful account of our keynote speaker, Dr. Lorraine Valdez Pierce. I concur fully with her position that standardized tests are an insufficient, if not misleading, measure of a student's progress in any academic area. A more holistic approach to assessment should be within the repertoire of every teacher. Likewise, teachers should be attuned to what standardized tests actually measure (e.g. according to what standards are these exams designed?). We should ask ourselves if the standards are culturally relevant to our students.

Reflecting upon my teaching experiences, my personal motivation and the professional contacts I have made through VATESOL, I realize that my answer to the queries of both family and friends can be summarized succinctly.

I teach to instruct.
I teach to share.
I teach to learn.

Robert Faychak is an ESL teacher in Stafford County



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